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Time, or the Idea of the Good

A Dissertation Presented

by

Matthew Coate

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Matthew Coate

We, the dissertation committee for the above candidate for the
Doctor of Philosophy degree, hereby recommend
acceptance of this dissertation.

Edward S. Casey
Distinguished Professor, Philosophy

Peter Manchester
Associate Professor, Philosophy

Megan Craig
Associate Professor, Philosophy

Alphonso Lingis
Emeritus Professor, Philosophy, Pennsylvania State University

This dissertation is accepted by the Graduate School

Charles Taber
Dean of the Graduate School

Abstract of the Dissertation

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Emmanuel Levinas describes the face-to-face relationship with another as an “ultimate situation.” In this relationship, Levinas argues, we bear witness to an affection, coming from another, which is of a distinctly ethical nature: a “calling into question of oneself, a critical attitude which is itself produced in the face of the other and under his [or her] authority.” Obviously, by calling this relationship “ultimate,” Levinas means to say that it in some sense signifies the highest sort of dignity to be found in our lives. And yet, this is not the only or, in fact, even the fundamental sense in which Levinas uses the term “ultimate” here; for seen in its proper connection with time-consciousness—through which subjectivity is fundamentally self-constituted, as Husserl as well as Heidegger, each in his own way, was able to discover—the face-to-face relationship also signifies for us the critical determination of subjectivity, or its “ultimate” condition, on Levinas’s account: “time itself refers to this situation of the face-to-face with the Other,” he writes. But if this is so—i.e., if subjectivity necessarily presupposes a consciousness of time, while for its own part, time-consciousness does just as necessarily presuppose a relationship of an ethical nature spurring it on its way—then subjectivity must in some sense be counterpart to ethical responsibility. To be subject, essentially involving time-consciousness, would be, at heart, an ethical affair.

In the following study, I’ll attempt to clarify just what this claim can mean, and to demonstrate that it is in fact the case. In order to do so, I’ll need to show, firstly, that subjectivity necessarily involves time-consciousness: a demonstration that will primarily work through Husserlian and Heideggerian analyses of the phenomenon. But then, secondly, I’ll have to demonstrate that time-consciousness must ultimately be stirred or brought forth by an ethical encounter with another, an affection which calls into question the very being of the one made subject by delivering him or her over to the others in concern for their well-being or in fear of doing violence to them. By working through Levinas’s analyses on the relation between sensation, time-consciousness, and ethics, I will ultimately be able to both fully clarify the basic sense of my thesis, and to demonstrate it: at basis, we will discover, the primordial time-consciousness of subjectivity attests to a questionability of the subject’s own being, brought by another. The demonstration, which is thus in a sense “meta-ethical,” will for this very reason also uncover several basic dilemmas of our moral condition, from which subjectivity cannot be divorced by virtue of the questioning that subtends it.

For:

Hugh Silverman—a mentor and friend, who showed me the world; and
László Tengelyi—who welcomed me into a new land.



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List of Abbreviations

- AO* Aristotle, *Aristotelis Opera*, Edidit Academia Regia Borussica
- AP* Edmund Husserl, *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Syntheses; lectures on transcendental logic*
- BP* Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*
- C* Edmund Husserl, *Späte Texte Über Zeitkonstitution (1929-1934): die C-Manuskripte*
- CA* Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety: a simple psychologically orienting deliberation on the dogmatic issue of hereditary sin*
- DF* Emmanuel Levinas, *Difficult Freedom: essays on Judaism*
- DR* Edmund Husserl, *Ding und Raum; vorlesungen 1907*
- EA* Simone de Beauvoir, *Ethics of Ambiguity*
- EN* Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous: Thinking-of-the-Other*
- ET* Martin Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth: on Plato's parable of the cave allegory and Theaetetus*,
- FC* Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics; World, Finitude, Solitude*
- GB* Edward Casey, *Getting Back into Place*
- GO* Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*
- IT* Lanei Rodemeyer, *Intersubjective Temporality; it's about time* (Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers); 2006.
- L* Edmund Husserl, *Die Bernauer Manuskripte Über das Zeitbewusstsein (1917/18), Band XXXIII*
- LC* Claire Katz, ed., *Emmanuel Levinas: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers; Vol. 1, Levinas Phenomenology, and his Critics*
- LI 1* Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations, volume 1* (Investigation, chapter, and section number in parentheses)
- LI 2* Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations, volume 2* (Investigation, chapter, and section number in parentheses)

- MM* Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*
- MP* René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes* (Meditation number and section number in parentheses)
- MT* William James, *The Meaning of Truth*
- NH* Donn Welton, ed., *The New Husserl; a critical reader*
- NM* Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Bekker numbers in parentheses)
- OB* Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*
- OE* Emmanuel Levinas, *On Escape*
- PG* Plato, *Protagoras* (Stephanus pagination in parentheses)
- PH* Aristotle, *Physics* (Bekker numbers in parentheses)
- PM* Martin Heidegger, *Pathmarks*
- PR* William James, *Pragmatism*
- PS 1* William James, *Principles of Psychology, vol. 1*
- PS 2* William James, *Principles of Psychology, vol. 2*
- PT* Toine Kortooms, *Phenomenology of Time; Edmund Husserl's analysis of time-consciousness*
- SB* Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Structure of Behavior*
- SZ* Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (original German pagination in parentheses)
- TC* Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time* (page numbers from Husserliana, Band X, in parentheses)
- TI* Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*
- TO* Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other*
- TR* Plato, *Republic* (Stephanus pagination in parentheses)
- WD* Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*

Acknowledgments

Perhaps it is fitting that a work on time should take a rather long time to write. In fact, this dissertation has been possible only because of the patient help, and at times, the unfortunately needed last-minute aid, offered by countless people over this period of time. I would like to thank some of those who have given me this assistance (although sadly, I'm sure that the passage of time has caused me to forget some important names from this list).

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opportunity to learn from him more.

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Introduction

Introduction to the Study

Section I1—Objective of the Study

Emmanuel Levinas describes the face-to-face relationship with another as an “ultimate situation.” In this relationship, Levinas argues, we bear witness to an affection, coming from another, which is of a distinctly ethical nature, a “calling into question of oneself, a critical attitude which is itself produced in the face of the other and under his [or her] authority.”¹ Obviously, by calling this relationship “ultimate,” Levinas means to say that it in some sense signifies the highest sort of dignity to be found in our lives. And yet, this is not the only or, in fact, even the fundamental sense in which Levinas uses the term “ultimate” here; for seen in its proper connection with time-consciousness, the face-to-face relationship also signifies for us the most crucial determination of subjectivity or self-consciousness, its “ultimate” condition, on Levinas’s account. Or at least, this would seem to be Levinas’s position, given that he claims both that “time itself refers to this situation of the face-to-face with the Other,”² as well as that the consciousness of time constitutes the distinctive and peculiar “distance with regard to oneself” that allows a self-conscious subject to be such a being in the first place—a being that “hovers over its own existence,” Levinas writes.³ Assuming for just a moment not only that I’m correctly construing what Levinas means to advance in the passages I’ve just referenced, but that all this is true, the consequences for our understanding of ourselves, as self-conscious subjects, would be profound. For if this is so— i.e., if subjectivity does necessarily presuppose a

¹ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alfonso Lingis (Duquesne University Press, Pittsburgh); 1961: p. 81 (brackets are mine). Hereafter listed as *TI*.

² Levinas, *Time and the Other*, trans. Richard A. Cohen (Duquesne University Press, Pittsburgh); 1990: p. 79 (my italics).

³ *Totality and Infinity*: 210. Hereafter listed as *TO*.

consciousness of time, while for its own part, time-consciousness does just as necessarily presuppose a relationship of an ethical nature spurring it on its way—then subjectivity must in some sense be counterpart to ethical responsibility. To be subject, essentially involving time-consciousness, would be, at heart, an ethical affair.

We've read a few of Levinas's words, now, and there's no need to deny that they're "nice words," possibly "uplifting," or at least, seemingly well-intended. Merely on this basis, however, it must surely be impossible to ascertain their precise meaning, let alone, to offer any support for the general sort of claim that these words apparently advance. Even assuming that subjectivity has a necessary connection to time-consciousness (which is itself not entirely clear), time-consciousness and ethics would surely appear to be two totally distinct phenomena, without intrinsic relationship. Further, the meaning of the term "ethics" or "ethical affection" here remains quite vague; nor is it clear why, if subjectivity were at basis an ethical affair, people (or self-conscious subjects more generally) would ever act unethically at all. And yet there can be no doubt that we *do* sometimes act unethically, perhaps all too often, no matter how the term "unethically" is to be defined.

This all seems straightforward enough, even irrefutable. After all, everyone knows that the meaning of subjectivity is clear as day, that things simply come to appear before the conscious subject as a sort of irreducible given, that the experience of time is nothing but the procession of these givens and that ethics is merely the sort of thing that, here or there, a subject gets himself or herself into, or not. Levinas's claim would appear spurious, then—unless, that is, there is much more here than meets the eye. But how could we possibly support the claim that, because it necessarily involves time-consciousness, subjectivity is *essentially* or *at basis* moved by an ethical stirring or affection, or by "the strangeness of the other" which, according to

Levinas, is “precisely accomplished as a calling into question of my spontaneity, as ethics?”⁴ How could this claim ever be justified? It seems that, at *best*, pronouncements like these might function merely as a sort of “inspirational rhetoric;” at worst, they would seem to constitute the sort of irrational or obscurantist, even vaguely mystical, discourse that a more enlightened humanity should need to dispense with for any number of reasons (and we need not rehearse the reasons here). So convinced, we might dismiss the whole matter, and without the slightest twinge of bad conscience.

Nevertheless: the entire purpose of my study will be to defend this claim. I will of course need to fully explicate the position that Levinas is advancing in passages like the ones just given in order to demonstrate its veracity, so apparently, this will take some doing. For this to be possible, in any event, something must be wrong with the “refutations” above. Perhaps we are not quite so sure about what subjectivity, or time-consciousness, involves.

⁴ *TI*: p. 43.

Section 12—Path and Method of the Study

Assuming that there is any hope of accomplishing the task I've just set forth, the way forward at least seems clear. In the first place, I'll need to show that subjectivity necessarily involves time-consciousness. While doing so, moreover, I'll need to continuously keep an eye out, as it were, for the sort of relationship that might hold between time-consciousness and ethics, so that after completing the first part of my task, the next will already be prepared: to demonstrate, ultimately, that time-consciousness must be summoned or brought forth by an affection coming from another which is somehow able to turn the subject away from an absorption in his or her own being, which calls this very being into question by delivering the one made subject over to the others in concern for their well-being or in fear of doing violence to them. My argument will therefore be twofold in a sense, although, strictly speaking, the two parts of the argument (not to mention, as I hope to show, the two "phenomena" of ethical affection and time-consciousness) are not truly independent of one another.

This should give the reader a preliminary notion of the objective of my study and the path I'll take to achieve it. As for my method: the analyses I will present in both of the two divisions of my argument will owe everything to the phenomenological method—the only method I believe up to the task, a claim I will need to defend to some extent but which I hope will in any event prove itself as my work progresses. Not only Levinas, but Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger—all renowned proponents of the phenomenological method—have already blazed at least sections of the trail I will follow, so I'll be drawing extensively from their analyses in constructing my own, which I believe will both synthesize as well as go beyond the works of the three in various ways.

The opening sections of my work will be greatly indebted to Husserl's original analyses of time-consciousness. In these analyses, Husserl demonstrates that our consciousness of events and of beings' being "in time" is founded upon a time-consciousness of an "internal" sort, i.e., the retention of our own passed-by phases of experiencing and the anticipation of phases of our own experiencing to-come. After working through these demonstrations I will then turn to Heidegger's elaborations, in which he tries to show that this temporal hold on our own being has a fundamentally "existential" sense, which is to say, that it entails an occupation with the issue of our own being, or perhaps better, with the "meaning" of what we are to-be. Time-consciousness always involves something like a transcendence of the immediate here-and-now, I will argue, so that the present comes to be made significant or to find its orientation on the basis of the wider life the subject is living.

If these demonstrations hold true, I will have apparently gone some way towards the ultimate demonstration of my thesis. But we should not confuse the Heideggerian position with the one I'll be defending; for despite the sense of "responsibility for one's being" that Heidegger discovers within time-consciousness, there is no sense on his account that this must or even *can* come primarily from others, nor that it necessarily bears the ethical significance of the affection that Levinas describes. But might time-consciousness or the subject's temporality, as Heidegger describes it, have a more profound significance than he was able to recognize? Levinas, for his part, does not so much contest Heidegger here as attempt to "dig" beneath temporality to discover its condition. This will be my method, also.

But how can we hope to discover the condition of time-consciousness? Especially since, if the analyses that I'll put forth in the first part of my study are accurate, time consciousness, thought through to its most primordial sense, must serve as the condition of subjectivity, and

thus, of any possible conscious experience whatsoever? Provisionally, we can understand the course that I'll be pursuing in the second Part of this study as an attempt to disclose and clarify the relationship that must hold between the immediacy of sensation "prior" to consciousness, on the one hand—or the "*non-temporal*," as we might put it—and the subject's temporality or consciousness of time, on the other. Despite the fact that the sensibility of the subject must be "opened up" to time (and we'll in fact finally discover that it is precisely in sensibility that the subject's temporally constitutive hold on his or her own being transpires) there is nevertheless a certain sense, according to Levinas, in which the subject remains riveted to the pure immediacy of sensible life all the same. Without this being the case, on Levinas's account, there could be no consciousness of time at all. But assuming that this is so (which will in any event become plain in the course of my analysis), the question that will then emerge will be as follows: how can a living being, in the first place riveted to the immediacy of its own living or sensible life, or to the "here-and-now," the satiations and sufferings, of all its strivings, come to be in a certain sense placed at a remove from this life while nevertheless remaining in absolute identity with it? This "remove" within identity must constitute the very condition of temporality. But how can we understand it; what might this "remove without remove" signify? On the "level" of immediate sensibility, we will see, the strivings of sentient life are, as it were, "everything" for themselves—and we know well that, in an irreducible fashion, the satiations and sufferings of others can never be anything to us, in that we are riveted to our own sensible life alone. And yet by a veritable revolution which comes to strike each one of us in this isolation, the pains and pleasures of another can somehow come to affect us even more deeply than our own, tearing us from an absorption in our own being by obligating us to take the other into account. This is the "situation" that Levinas calls "ultimate," the face-to-face encounter with another, in which the

other reveals himself or herself as such, in his or her otherness, precisely by exposing the one made subject to judgment. The basic contention that I will defend is that this relationship fundamentally conditions time-consciousness, and thus, subjectivity itself: the “remove without remove” from immediacy which makes possible the subject’s fundamental temporality is through and through an ethical affair.

Assuming all goes according to plan, the only thing that will remain at this point will be to show precisely how, on the basis of this “remove” within identity or of the calling into question of the subject’s own being, the basic structure of temporality, as we will already have come to understand it in my study, is stirred or summoned forth. With this, the demonstration of my thesis will be complete. Thus, in the last Chapter of this study, I’ll show how the three primordial temporal orientations or “ecstases” that figure in the subject’s occupation with his or her own being, disclosed already in the first Part of this work—that is, the subject’s original directedness to the past, present, and future, which make up the basic determinations of temporality—emerge, in their essential unity, in rejoining the obligation to which the subject finds him- or herself subjected by others. As I work through the relationship between the face-to-face encounter and temporality, I will thus in the very same stroke come clarify the precise nature of the relationship that holds between the responsibility called forth in the face-to-face encounter—a responsibility of an explicitly ethical order—and the sort of “responsibility” which, constituting the essential temporality of the subject, characterizes the subject’s fundamental concern for the issue of his or her own being.

All this must be explicated and demonstrated in the body of my work. Before moving on to the end of my introduction and then to the body of my work itself, however, I’d like to note that, at the closing moments of this study just outlined, the analysis I’ll be advancing may well

go beyond that of a merely theoretical exercise; for as we'll discover as this work proceeds, the relationship between temporality and the face-to-face relationship is not simply one of foundation, but instead bears within itself an irreducible tension constituting an ever-present tendency to lapse ethically or to "evade the other's gaze." This is to say that, for fundamental or irreducible reasons, the ethical relationship always stands in need of renewal, despite the difficulties in which, as we will see, this must necessarily involve the subject. Understanding these difficulties better might at least offer a little help in this continuing task; my study will thus have something of a practical side to it. If Levinas is correct, in fact, this "practical reflection" is not merely something added on to the theoretical concerns of philosophy or derivable from this or that philosophical conceptualization, but rather, keeps to the fundamental vocation of philosophy, and thus in a very precise sense, radicalizes the practice of philosophy itself. Obviously this remains to be seen. But at the least, we can recognize the importance in philosophy for a critical engagement with subjectivity; after all, the notion of the self-conscious subject has been central to philosophy for a long time, so much so that in recent years, we have witnessed the never-ending attempt to "go beyond" a "subject-centered" philosophy. Yet it is my contention that this cannot be done without an analysis which is not *merely* meant to show that the subjectivity of the subject is constituted concretely in the ethical relationship to another, but which is also undertaken in such a way as to hold the subject firmly to this realization.

In a certain sense, my study will constitute a recapitulation of sorts; for this is a theme, again, that has already been championed by Levinas, as well as by others working in a similar vein. And yet, the reception of this work in the English speaking world has been hampered by difficulties in situating it in relation to that from which it takes its cue—specifically, the phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger, which for its part already attempts a "de-centering"

of subject-oriented philosophy by seeking out the foundations of subjectivity in the syntheses of its temporality. Yet these are not the only relevant difficulties: it doesn't help matters much when the reception of Husserl and Heidegger's work on the temporality of the subject is itself subject to all sorts of differing, even contradictory, interpretations. I believe that a study is needed, then, that will work through the phenomenological analysis of the subject's time-consciousness in a manner which is not simply straightforward in its presentation, but also, ultimately directed by the aim of demonstrating that this temporality is essentially moved by an ethical inspiration which comes from without or from others and places the very being of the subject in question. Explicating and elaborating upon the work of these prominent phenomenologists, I mean to offer such a study.

This concludes the initial overview of my study that I promised above to provide. Before finishing this Introduction and moving into the main body of my work, however, I'd like to do two more things: first, to say a few more words about the methodology of my study, and second, to introduce its "prelude," which will advance the basic argument to be explicated in these pages in a condensed and provisional form. To this end, I'll conclude this Introduction by giving the most rudimentary of introductions to the phenomenological method itself, noting the basic motivations which have led me to employ it. The reader should remember that the basic justification for employing this method can only come in the work itself; the method is justified if and only if it proves itself useful for the bringing to light of the phenomena that I intend to examine.

Section 13—Note on the Phenomenological Method

Before even saying a word about “phenomenology,” I think it will be helpful to discuss the sense in which the word “phenomenon” is used in the term itself. As Heidegger points out in the introduction to *Being and Time*,⁵ the word phenomenon comes from the Greek noun φαινόμενον, itself derived from the verb φαίνεσθαι, literally, to appear or become shown. A “phenomenon,” then, is a being insofar as it comes to be manifest or to show itself, which is to say, to appear before a being *for which* it would be a phenomenon—i.e., to the being *to which* it shows itself or comes to appear, the experiencing subject.

Perhaps this seems simple enough. Before we get ahead of ourselves, however, we should take a bit of a closer look at the word “appear,” for the word itself is ambiguous. It suggests *not only* the appearance or presentation of an entity (whether of a “physical” thing, or else something with a much different sort of being, like the meaning of a word “coming into view,” etc.); the word “appear” can *also* suggest the notion of an “appearance” in the sense of something’s “showing up” *indirectly* (such as in an indication, representation, or symptom), or else, even that of “mere appearance” (i.e., falsehood and error). Which of these various senses of the word is intended in the word “phenomenology?”

After going over these other meanings of “appearance” and still more in addition, Heidegger, for his part, notes that these are all derivative cases, and do not coincide with the primary sense in which the phenomenologist uses the term. This is because, to take an example of the first “derivative” case above, the very possibility of a symptom as “appearance”—for instance, a viral infection “appearing” through the mediation of an overly flushed complexion or

⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Harper & Row, San Francisco); 1962: p. 51 (28) ff. Hereafter listed as SZ (all translations modified).

a “look” of feverishness—presupposes already a phenomenon as the “appearance” or manifestation of a being in the *primary* sense: i.e., the unfortunate individual whose complexion is all too flushed or whose temperature strikes the perceiver as far too high. The possibility of “mere appearance” or falsehood likewise presupposes that a being has already shown itself in some way—for instance, the flushed, feverish person who, in appearing thus, is taken to have a viral infection, even though it just so happens that the cause is actually, let’s say, food poisoning. For a falsehood of this sort to be possible, a being must show itself in some way (here, the feverish person), and in such a way that it causes us to suppose something further which turns out to be false.

What is *primarily* a phenomenon, then, is the being that originally comes to show itself, in whatever way it thus comes to appear. This is to say that, prior to the consciousness of a symptom, a falsehood or “mere appearance,” or any other derivative sense of an appearance which I haven’t already touched upon (a representation, signal, etc.), some being must have already come to appear in this or that way, so that that being’s manifestation can then “point beyond itself” in one or another fashion (as the manifestation of the feverish or flushed individual points beyond itself to a viral infection afflicting him or her). This, at least, is the *primary* sense of the word phenomenon for the phenomenologist; in a certain sense, of course, a being like a viral infection becomes a phenomenon *itself*, even if only in a mediate sense, whenever it comes to be shown or to show itself through something like a fever (in the event that the fever is grasped as a symptom of such an infection, of course). The symptom-phenomenon, we should note, thus possesses a “founded” structure, as it were, given that the primary phenomenon (i.e., the person showing himself or herself in his or her feverishness) points out a cause or “secondary” phenomenon (i.e., the individual’s affliction), which thus *also* appears to

the one for whom the symptom is thusly understood. Through the manifestation of a being that comes to serve as a symptom, *another* being thereby shows itself—which is to say, is a phenomenon in its own right. But in *either* event, it is in becoming manifest or in coming to show itself, and to the very individual who directs or relates himself or herself towards it (whether in a “perceiving” or a “thinking” manner) that a being comes to be a *phenomenon*. This holds for all phenomena; the case of falsehood or “mere appearance” changes nothing, even though, in such a case, that which is made manifest is in fact misapprehended or only appears inadequately (i.e., the affliction made manifest in the symptom-phenomenon is actually a case of food poisoning and not a virus at all—or, in the simpler case of direct misapprehension, the primary phenomenon itself inadequately comes to light, such as when for example a person is perceived as flushed only because of a trick of the light, or even when a mannequin has been misperceived and is not a person at all). If the mistaken apprehension were not directed to anything at all (albeit, in a manner which is inadequate to the being towards which it is directed) then we could never say that it was false. A deceptive appearance is still an appearance.

So much for the meaning of “phenomenon,” then? Not quite: for although this notion of “phenomenon” is the operative one for the phenomenologist, the phenomenologist, perhaps strangely enough, does not study phenomena in this sense. Who, in fact, studies phenomena or beings which happen to become manifest or to show themselves? We *all* do this, whether in the sciences or empirical investigations of whatever nature, or more generally, in “real life.” The phenomenologist does not study phenomena, but rather, studies phenomena *insofar* as they are phenomena; stepping away from life in the everyday sense, he or she puts to one side all usual compartments, and looks instead towards the structures of the phenomenon’s appearing, or, put differently, towards the various sorts of grasping or being-directed on the part of the

experiencing subject which allow for the appearing being to show itself.

With this understanding of “phenomenology” in hand, we can see that, reading through the last few paragraphs, we’ve already done a bit of phenomenology for ourselves just now, since in my discussion of the symptom-phenomenon I pointed out that in order for something to appear as a symptom, the appearance must be structured in a certain fashion, a structure I then very briefly described. Gone over more thoroughly, it should be evident that the inner structure of the symptom-phenomenon actually includes three essential “moments” or internal distinctions: that of the primary or *indicating* phenomenon—such as the feverish individual; that of the secondary or *indicated* phenomenon—in this case, the viral infection; and finally, that of the *indication* or symptom *itself* which compels the one directed to the first of these moments to become directed towards the second. We can note further that, correlated with these three “moments,” there is a likewise thrice-articulated directedness towards the beings which (as indicating, indicated, and indication) come to show themselves within the symptom phenomenon: a directedness towards the afflicted individual as so afflicted (towards the primary or indicating phenomenon, in this case, perceptual); towards the being which is to blame for the affliction as a virus (the *indicated* phenomenon), and—most significantly, as far as the symptom-phenomenon is concerned—towards the symptom *as a whole*, by which an original directedness towards one being (the feverish person) becomes enriched by a further directedness towards another (the virus at work).

A phenomenon can always be examined in regards to both the structure of its appearing and of the directedness which seizes it as such. I won’t take the time to go over this point too closely, but it may have already become clear from what I’ve just said that not merely the symptom-phenomenon, but a phenomenon of *any* kind always involves a basic distinction in its

structuration like the one I've just noted: between what is usually called *intention* or the intentional comportment—which is to say, the directedness towards a being—on the one hand, and its *sense*, on the other—i.e., the way that the being to which the subject relates him- or herself in the intentional comportment is thereby *understood* and comes to appear. One of phenomenology's most basic (not to mention, most crucial) discoveries is that this two-fold or correlative structuration characterizes any possible phenomenon or appearing of a being whatsoever. Put otherwise: *consciousness* is always *consciousness-of*, a directedness towards beings which allows beings to come forward in this or that light. (This is the sense in which the phenomenologist speaks of “intentionality;” the reader should not assume other senses of the term, even other philosophically determined ones, whenever I use the term in this work.)

The question still stands, then: what are the phenomena that the phenomenologist studies? In a very important sense, the constitutive moments of an intentional comportment towards an appearing being, or correlatively, of the sense or structure of its appearance, cannot be considered phenomena themselves. Instead, they are the conditions of possibility of phenomena, necessarily “in play” whenever a being manifests itself at all. And yet, as I just noted, we can study these internal structures or the constitutive moments of phenomena, and as soon as we direct ourselves towards these “internal” moments, they *themselves* come to appear—and thus, become phenomena—for our discourse or study, a discourse on the inner constitution of the manifestation of beings, or put otherwise, on the conditions of conscious experience. It is in this sense that the discourse or “logos” which seeks after the essential constitution of phenomena or the appearance of beings is called “phenomenology.”

I hope the few words I've just given on the phenomenological method have made it clear why I'll be employing it for the purposes of my study. Firstly, in order to justify my claim that

subjectivity necessarily involves time-consciousness, I'll try to demonstrate that the inner structure of any possible appearance of a being (both in its intentional constitution and constituted sense) involves temporal "moments." Secondly, via an analysis of the structure of this constitutive temporality, I'll then attempt to show that its own possibility implies an affection by others which ethically obligates the being thereby made subject. Thus, the phenomenological method will be indispensable for this study. I will not, however, merely attempt to *demonstrate* the thesis I've set forth by means of the phenomenological analyses I'll work through; the vagueness which all the notions constituting my thesis must possess at the beginning will become progressively clarified as I describe the inner structure of the phenomena involved and the systematic relations between them. In the very process of demonstrating my thesis, then, I'll be explicating my intended meaning for terms such as "time-consciousness," "ethics," "subjectivity," and so forth, and in a much more thoroughgoing manner than if I had merely tried to define these terms in an extrinsic fashion at the beginning of my study.

Section I4—Introduction to the Prelude of the Study

We've now come to the end of my introduction; the work promised can thus commence. The body of my study will be divided into two Parts with three chapters each, although, prior to this, I'll be leading off the work itself with a Prelude (titled "Me, Myself, and the Other") in which, in a single concise argument, I will provisionally lay out the concepts and themes I'll be working with over the course of my whole work. Because of my Prelude's merely preliminary nature, I'll need to go over all of the major themes that it introduces in much greater detail in Part I and II of this study. However, it will take some time to work through all of the various analyses that I intend to *provide* this greater detail and, ultimately, to lead us to the demonstration of my thesis: thus, in order that, while working through these analyses, the reader can keep in mind the broader project of which they are a part, I'm providing the following Prelude meant to give the reader a sense of the basic sweep of my study in advance. I will of course refer back at every opportunity to my thesis as a whole as this study progresses, but I believe that even these references will mean little without the inclusion of my Prelude, which is to say, unless the reader has been provided with a more thorough sense of my whole argument than the introduction you are now almost finished reading can itself provide.

I begin the Prelude with a reflection upon self-consciousness. The notion of the subjectivity and its consciousness is, potentially at least, a sprawling one, without an obvious leading clue for an investigation likely to bring its essential characteristics into view. How ought I begin this analysis, then? Especially given that different thinkers apparently intend quite diverse connotations with the same word "subject?" This is conceivably a very thorny issue. However, at the very least we must accept that, from time to time, the subject—whatever this

is—comes to self-reflect of be conscious of self. This simple fact can in fact serve as a basic starting point for not only an analysis into subjectivity, but for a demonstration of my thesis: for as we will see, an analysis into self-consciousness—or more precisely, into the conditions of possibility for an act by which a being specifically thinks about itself—must, if it is to analyze the phenomenon in any depth at least, come to terms with the essential temporality of the self-conscious subject. But ultimately through this, it must come to terms with the ethical affection by another which comes to compel the subjected one to answer for him- or herself, the very condition, we will ultimately discover, of subjectivity and its temporality.

My prelude will therefore begin with an analysis of the conditions of possibility of the self-conscious act, or the “*cogito*,” as it has come to be known following the work of Descartes. Descartes himself believed that the *cogito* is necessarily conditioned by the “Idea of the Infinite,” an idea which according to Levinas “designates a relation with a being that maintains its total exteriority with respect to him [or her] who thinks it.”⁶ But what could Descartes mean by such an “idea?” And what might it have to do with time-consciousness and ethics? These questions will be the basic starting point for the following Prelude, which will follow Levinas’ re-conception of the idea of infinity in order to advance the basic demonstration of my thesis in a rough or preliminary form. The reader should note that, though at face, Descartes’ and Levinas’s “concrete conceptions” of infinity differ greatly—Levinas conceives of infinity as something like the face-to-face relation or the “ultimate situation” of subjectivity, while Descartes conceives of it as a perfect and necessarily existing being, i.e., God—this difference should not cause us any difficulties, or at least not in the first place, since my prelude will begin by focusing upon merely formal aspects of the *idea* of infinity which are affirmed on both the Cartesian and Levinasian accounts.

⁶ *TI*: p. 50.

Prelude to the Study

Me, Myself, and the Other; Time, Self-consciousness, and the Cartesian Idea of Infinity

Section P1—Self-Consciousness

§ a

At least one thing is certain: as a thinking being, I exist.

Or so it has been asserted, most notably, of course, by Descartes. This essay won't dare to argue against it: for how could this be otherwise?—how could the “*cogito*” (or the thinking being's certainty in thinking of its own existence) be anything *but* true? As Descartes points out, nothing could be more plain; I exist, at the least, at the very moment in which I find myself thinking, in which an act of my thinking occurs. Doomed from the outset is any “critique of the subject” that depends for its very life upon some purported demonstration that the *cogito* is *false*.

And yet, we do the *cogito* no service by refusing to submit its apparent self-evidence to questioning. What is the basis of this self-evidence? What can we say of the *cogito*'s “condition,” if such a thing might be brought to light? We would be mistaken if we assumed that, simply because the *cogito* serves as the foundation of Descartes' first philosophy, he therefore takes it to be “unconditioned.” According to Descartes, in fact, any thought of the finite—and thus, any thought of *myself*, for I can only think of myself as finite—is possible on only one condition: that the infinite has come to pass. The Idea of Infinity, Descartes argues, is the condition of possibility for the *cogito*, and thus, of the certainty it affords the thinking subject.

But what does Descartes mean by “Infinity,” or its “Idea?” What does it mean to say that the infinite has come to pass? Much has been written on Descartes' “cosmological argument,” but very little about Descartes' failure to think through that upon which this purported

demonstration is based: the Idea, or the so-called Idea, of Infinity. If this “idea” is the very condition of the *cogito*, as Descartes argues, then the thought of infinity cannot merely be one thought amongst others. It may well be that it cannot be a thought at all. Descartes, after all, claims that it must have been given to us in some sense, that we cannot have come upon this idea via the exercise of our own cognitive powers alone...

If it's thus already clear in Descartes' work that the *cogito* does not rest upon some pure self-possession of the thinking subject—or put more precisely, that the self's grasp on itself is in some sense “mediated” or conditioned by its subjection to the “infinite”—we will nevertheless be forced to turn elsewhere to uncover the real significance of the idea of infinity: specifically, to the work of Emmanuel Levinas, where the exceptional uniqueness of this “idea” is more rigorously examined. Intimately linking the idea of the infinite with *ethics*, Levinas argues that the *cogito*, and the self-consciousness by which it is necessarily subtended, emerges only in response to a more primordial questioning, to an interrogation that comes from another.

Does Levinas's reasoning hold? For reasons already set forth in a preliminary manner, demonstrating this will demand an analysis of the possibility of the *cogito*, and thus, of the self-conscious subject for which it is an essential possibility. But this in turn will require an analysis of *temporality* or our “sense of time,” for as I'll argue below, time-consciousness is not merely the basic condition of any conscious act or comportment towards beings, but in its primordial sense is coextensive with self-consciousness. And what, then, of ethics? Because temporality, as I'll try to show, is inextricably linked with the question of *ethical responsibility*, the inquiry just sketched out aims to conceive the *cogito* and its self-certainty in a novel sense, facing us with a questioning of the self far in excess of anything that might be mustered by some hasty attack on the *cogito* itself.

I'll begin this demonstration by recalling the third of the *Meditations on First Philosophy*, by which point Descartes has already declared that, no matter how hyperbolic the doubt, the self, in the very act of thinking about itself, possesses certainty of its own existence. Thinking is always the self's thinking, no doubt, the thought thought by a thinking being.⁷ And yet at this point in the *Meditations*, the thinking being (or perhaps more accurately, Descartes himself) not only still lacks certainty regarding its (or his) own *exterior*: Descartes remains self-certain of his own existence only in the "here-and-now," the present constituted by his cogitation—there is nothing, as of yet, to secure knowledge of a subject's persistence through *time*.⁸ In order to become certain regarding *transcendence* in either of these two senses (that of either the exterior world or of time, that is),⁹ Descartes must seek out a thought that would be unthinkable were he alone in the cosmos, or more broadly speaking, were his own being *at present* the whole story of being.

He will discover that the thought of infinity conforms to this exigency. To the finitude he cannot but find marking his own thought (after all, a non-finite being could not doubt, let alone doubt absolutely)¹⁰ is juxtaposed the infinite—incomprehensible, yet of which Descartes nevertheless has a notion.¹¹ A thought, then, about that which is beyond all that the *I* can think, is one that can in no way find its origin in the self's thought of its own finite nature, according to Descartes; in fact, Descartes argues, the thought of the self as an essentially limited being (and

⁷ "The fact that it is I who am doubting and understanding and willing is so evident that I see no way of making it any clearer." René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* ("Second Meditation"), in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol II, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge); 1984: p 19 (sec. 29).

⁸ *MP* ("Second Meditation"): p. 17 (sec. 26). Hereafter listed as *MP*.

⁹ Whether that of "exterior" beings (other beings, thinking, or else "physically" extended), or else of his own past (let alone, future) which in an apparently different way transcends the living present of his thinking.

¹⁰ *MP* ("Third Meditation"): p. 31 (sec. 46).

¹¹ "I do not grasp the infinite[...] it is in the nature of the infinite not to be grasped by a finite being like myself." *MP* ("Third Meditation"): p. 32 (sec. 46).

thus, the *cogito* itself) is first possible only as a *subjection*, the coming of the infinite to “show up” the subject’s finitude—the apparently paradoxical “cognitive event” of the appearance (or perhaps “non-appearance”) of that into which all powers of cognition can make no headway.

Thus, Levinas’s characterization of the idea of infinity as “a thought that thinks more than it thinks.”¹² all that would remain for the thinking being here would be a trace of the passing of infinity alone, like the mark of which Descartes speaks, purportedly made upon the soul of the thinking being in the very event of its own creation—a mark marking the subject in its subjection before the infinite. But how, *concretely*, might a being find itself faced by that which wholly transcends its powers of thinking, thinkable only as unthinkable, which is to say, as that for which it can only have a sense that “this” is beyond all sense? How might a subjection of this sort ever come to pass in the first place? And why should we think that the very possibility of self-consciousness, or of a being’s recognition of its own finite being, hinges upon its passing? Given that in the introduction to this essay I linked these problems to the phenomenon of temporality, we might add to these a further question. What has any of this to do with our sense of time?

We can begin to make this more concrete by recognizing two propositions that must immediately follow, if, as Descartes claims and Levinas concurs, something like the idea of infinity truly *is* the condition of the *cogito* or of all thought of the (finite) self, of all self-consciousness, in general.

Given firstly that, according to Descartes, the idea or trace of the infinite must come to thought without being constituted by it, it seems evident that a subjection to the infinite, if there is such a thing, would not be a matter of “sense,” but of the *sensibility*, leaving as its mark an

¹² “And does better than think,” Levinas continues— of great importance to the discussion that follows in the next section of this essay. Levinas, “The Idea of the Infinite in Us,” in *Entre Nous: Thinking-of-the-Other*, trans. by Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav (Columbia University Press, New York); 1998: p. 221. Hereafter listed as *EN*.

apparently “aesthetic Idea.”¹³ Thus, Levinas’ insistence that the idea of infinity, or the “adoration and bedazzlement Descartes speaks of in the last line of the *Third Meditation*” is, “from top to bottom, affectivity.”¹⁴

Secondly: by subtending all consciousness of a finite self, the relationship or subjection that the idea of the infinite designates would need to signify, not merely the possibility of an ostensibly certain knowledge of some existing transcendence or exterior being (the move Descartes makes in his “cosmological argument”), but the primordial manner of the subject’s confrontation with transcendence or exteriority *recognized as such*. There could have been no sense of exteriority more primordial than this, after all, if the mark of this subjection does in fact make possible a being’s consciousness of itself in the first place. Thus, before any opportunity for it to be seized upon as part of a discourse seeking infallible certainty, the idea of infinity would represent the very dawning in a being that it has anything like an exterior, the principal realization that it is not alone.

Taking these two propositions together, then, we see that any talk of something like an idea of the infinite as the condition of the *cogito* must come back to the claim that we have in some sense *felt* ourselves to be subjected to exteriority or transcendence, and in a *primordial manner*, before finding ourselves, as thinking subjects, capable of any attempt of making sense of this subjection for ourselves, however futile this attempt would then need to be. An analysis meant to make this “idea” more concrete will thus need to turn towards a level of our being wholly prior to thinking or the possibility of any self-conscious comporting—something like a *pure* sensibility, which, unilluminated by the thought which would direct it out onto beings, would remain absorbed without remainder in sensation and “animal” behavior or in the pleasure

¹³ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press); 2005: p. 192 (5:314).

¹⁴ “The Idea of the Infinite in Us,” in *EN*: p. 220-221.

and painfulness of these strivings, so that no otherness or transcendence could, *as such*, show up. If there is anything at all to this notion of an idea of the infinite, then the subjection to alterity which leaves its mark must first leave its mark here.

§ c

While striving to clarify the Cartesian notion of the idea of infinity, I've so far only managed to raise more questions still. The "idea" of that which is beyond all that the subject can think would need to be the mark of a sensible affection which would first open the sensibility to that which transcends it, and thus bring the subject to itself in its finitude. But how could a subjection of the sensibility leave as its mark the trace of that which the subject could afterwards only bring forward as wholly in excess of all its abilities for bringing to light? And what sort of a sensible affection could this be, that would first mark out the breaking in of a sense of otherness, striking a sentient being hidden away in an absolute absorption in its life, or in a behavior wholly without self-consciousness? I'll try to answer the latter question first, for once I've done so (assuming this is possible) it should thus have become clear why an affection of the sort would necessarily leave a trace of that which could then only be thought of as exceeding all the thinking being's powers for thought. In order to answer this question, however, I'll need to describe Levinas's basic account of the primordial significance of otherness. As I go, we'll begin to discover the essential connection that must hold between the revelation of otherness, on the one hand, and a sort of affection that, on the other, comes to leave its mark upon a sensibility lived out prior to or outside of any belonging, as something like a "faculty," to the self-conscious subject.

According to Levinas, "the strangeness of the other, his [or her] irreducibility to the *I*, to my thoughts and my possessions, is precisely accomplished as a calling into question of my

spontaneity, as *ethics*.”¹⁵ Interrupting all its strivings, the subjected one is awakened to exteriority by the obligation into which it is placed by another, Levinas argues—by the ethical relation, the relation to another *as such*, “where the same,” in Levinas’ words, “takes the irreducible Other into account,”¹⁶ where the other being’s otherness, absolutely without “my” own interiority, comes to be recognized. To have recognized the other as *other*, irreducible to an object of my conscious experiencing or without the spontaneous *conatus* of being in which everything is reduced to “me,” would thus be to have been turned inside-out before the other, so to speak, in order that the other might be my judge—a reversal of *conatus*, of the striving of merely sensible being, in being given over to the others. For reasons that I’ll be examining in more detail later, but which I’ve already just foreshadowed, we could, with some justification, call this a revolution in sensibility, the fomenting of revolt.

According to Levinas, this exposure to the others’ judgment (or “revolution in sensibility,” as I’ve just written) comes to pass in the face-to-face relationship with another being, in which the other comes to reveal himself or herself as such. The sufferings or satiations of another are not given to me: I do not “feel” them, no doubt, but neither do they appear by means of thought; I can only think of the others’ pain and enjoyment (or experienced life in general) as that which this thinking could never bring forth to me as such—a “thought,” crucially, that “thinks more than it thinks.” In a very real sense, the other’s sensible life, his or her own satiation or suffering, can be nothing at all to me. And yet it becomes *everything* to me in the affection by which the other reveals himself or herself as *other*—in “the excellence of love, of sociality and ‘fear for others,’”¹⁷ which, according to Levinas, marks the very breaking open of a living being’s absorption in the strivings of its own being.

¹⁵ *TI*: p. 43 (my emphasis).

¹⁶ *TI*: p. 47.

¹⁷ “The Idea of the Infinite in Us,” in *EN*: p. 221.

In the affective exposure to another, by which a being, prior to all self-consciousness, is “torn from itself” or “separate[s] itself from its own inwardness”¹⁸—by which it ceases to live, in Levinas’s words, “as if it occupied the center of being and were its source”—the subjected one, Levinas insists, “receive[s] from the other beyond the capacity of the I, which means exactly: to have the idea of infinity.”¹⁹

In the short sketch that I’ve just given of Levinas’s account of the other’s self-revelation—an “appearing” of the other as that which *cannot* appear to the one so affected—we’ve seen how something like an affection of pure sensibility might first reveal the significance of otherness or transcendence by calling the spontaneity of the living being into question. Later in this study, I’ll begin to develop the “paradoxical” nature of this revelation so that the sense in which it thrusts itself upon thinking as the “infinite” can be made more clear. However, a more pressing question must be attended to first; for even if we assume that a being might be “torn from itself” in the matter I’ve just described, why should we believe that it is only *thus* that it might be brought to itself so that we can then speak of self-consciousness? Why could only an affection by the other first come to confront me with my own being by calling me to responsibility or by obligating me to answer for myself? Why must it be only through a “welcoming of the other” or “commencement of moral consciousness”²⁰ that I first find myself, struck by my own finitude or the fundamental limits of my being?

Levinas’ rethinking of Descartes’ idea of infinity no doubt presents the thinker with something far more concrete to grapple with than Descartes’ still too vague notion of a mark found upon the subject’s soul. Yet however evocative Levinas’ own account as I have presented

¹⁸ Levinas, *Otherwise than Being; or beyond essence*, trans. Alfonso Lingis (Duquesne University Press, Pittsburgh); 1998: p. 49. Hereafter listed as *OB*.

¹⁹ *TI*: p. 51.

²⁰ *TI*: p. 84.

it, it has doubtlessly at this point in my essay acquired little more than an evocative force at best; it remains, in any event, undemonstrated. Demonstrating its veracity requires that we ask: why *must* we think the mark of the infinite, as Levinas has rethought it, as the very condition of self-consciousness, and thus, of the *cogito*? Why must a subject be subjected in this manner in order to think itself at all, and to be certain of its own existence through this reflection?

Unless we're able to address this concern, we will have only apparently made Descartes' intuition more concrete; thus, we'll need to examine the structure of the *cogito*'s self-certainty more closely. For reasons that will immediately become clear, however, this in turn requires that we turn to the question of *time*.

The self, in all its activity, is present to itself: Descartes already clearly recognizes that the self-certainty of the *cogito* is founded upon the self-presence of the thinking being within any possible cogitation—the “sense,” that is, that this experience is “*mine*.”²¹ Perhaps this “mine-ness” of conscious experiencing is obvious enough. Refusing to remain with the obvious or self-evident, however, the structure of this self-presence can be described.

As we will discover in just a moment, the “mine-ness” of experiencing is the correlate of the self’s self-presence, or put otherwise, is constituted by a subject’s presence to itself. Yet crucially, the subject’s self-presence and its temporality or “sense of time” cannot be disassociated. What is the connection between self-consciousness and time-consciousness? Husserl, in his work on the passive syntheses (or the most basic “cognitive apprehensions” involved in the comportments of a conscious being) discovered that, via something like its “longitudinal intentionality” (a constituent moment of these syntheses), the experiencing subject has a hold on itself in, or rather *as*, the constitution of the time it lives through, the enduring of the subject’s intentional acts or cogitations—a present which, pregnant with self-protentions (or immediate “anticipations” of “my” own being) and trailing off into the self-retention of that which has just passed of “my” experiencing, is already lived through as though “thick” with time. Via this “hold on itself” or “self-grasping,” the self is continuously self-identified, retaining, in the very “now” of its experiencing, passed phases of its experiencing as past phases of the experiencing of the *self-same self*, while “at once” futurally opening itself out onto the being it is to be, i.e., its experiencing to-come; the hold the self keeps on itself, its very self-identification, is thus part and parcel of the retentions and protentions, or the basic temporal

²¹ See footnote #7.

apprehension, of its own enduring.²² The self-identification of the subject and its consciousness of time are therefore inextricable phenomena. Yet despite the selfsameness of the self, which lives as identical through all the phases of that which it collects together, by means of this self-grasping, as its own conscious acts, this “hold” nevertheless presupposes a *distinction* between the phases of the experiencing self which are grasped or held together (which are “retained” and “protained,” that is) throughout this constitution of its sense of the flux or passage of the time it lives through—self-identification is, in Levinas’ words, an “ageing.”²³ The self identifies itself as “identical in its *difference*,”²⁴ Levinas writes in *Otherwise than Being*; its selfsameness is experienced as an internally differentiated duration.

What, then, of the “mine-ness” of experiencing? We discover the “mine-ness” of all our experiences in “ageing,” the self’s presence to itself or experience of its own identity as the self-same being temporally enduring, “living through time.” Evidently, for this experience to be mine—or at the least, for it to be experienced as such—is for it to be experienced as given to a being—namely, to *me*—who stands over and against it: a being whose identity consists precisely in finding itself, in its every experience, as the very being it was and, ostensibly, will be. “Mine-ness” is thus correlated with a pre-reflective self-awareness underlying even the most unreflective moments of our experiencing, which are nevertheless already given over to our past and future, to yesterday and tomorrow, to an entire life of which they live themselves out as a mere part—given over to *my* life: to the life each one of us lives. But this is then to say that the self’s ageing or self-presence—its identification of itself as the same in difference, throughout what it thus recognizes as the passing current of its experiences—is one and the same

²² Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, trans. by John Barnet Brough (Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers); 1991: p. 130 (126-127), and 197-198 (190-191); see also fn #107. Hereafter listed as *TC*.

²³ *OB*: p. 38 (italics are mine).

²⁴ *OB*: p. 34 (emphasis, again, is my own).

phenomenon as the mine-ness of every experience. To live through time is to be self-aware, and to experience my own experiences *as my own*.²⁵

The “perseverance” or self-presence through time of which I speak cannot be reduced to the *conatus* of the living being that has no consciousness of itself—the “willfulness” of a living activity which, unreservedly absorbed in its “immediacy,” or in the mere here-and-now of an enjoyment or the unfolding of its own self-satiation, may effect an endurance across a time it in no way recognizes or assumes as its own. To live *through* time is to age: only a self-conscious being ages. No doubt, all living beings *decay*, become afflicted by wounds that time will never heal, lose their footing, encumbered, under its ever increasing weight. But only the self-conscious being *ages*. To find time that has passed *as* our past, and, beyond the promises of the mere here-and-now, to find ourselves approaching a future transformation, a long sought after goal or a new assumption of responsibility—a coming-of-age, a confirmation, adulthood, sagacity; to recognize alteration within our very self-identity, advancing through our lives while the years disappear and the end draws ever closer: only a self-conscious being ages.

Ageing, or the subject’s “temporalizing” consciousness of self, is thus irreducible to mere decay or the subjection of a being to a time of which it is not itself conscious. But what precisely is implied in this distinction between the living being absorbed in its immediacy and the self-conscious being conscious of time in its ageing? This question, in fact, brings us to the most crucial point of my analysis: for as a self, the ageing being must remain *over and above* all the strivings of the mere here-and-now in which it *nevertheless* finds itself—to which, as a self, it must in fact at once remain inseparably *bound*—if it is to identity itself as the self-same being living throughout all of its phases in time, if it is to gain, or to lose, in years. All this, in fact, is

²⁵ See, for example: Dan Zahavi, “Inner Time-Consciousness and Pre-reflective Self-awareness” in *The New Husserl; a critical reader*, ed. Donn Welton (Bloomington, Indiana University Press); 2003. Hereafter listed as *NH*.

implied in the claim that a being identifies itself in its “difference,” and thereby constitutes its (the subject’s) sense of time; a being must be both riveted to and disjoined from itself in each and every here-and-now of experiencing if their identification as distinct phases of the subject’s duration (via its ageing or “temporalizing” self-identification) is to be possible. We might be struck by the strangeness of this “distinction-without-distinction” in the heart of all ageing. But what can we make of it? And what might its connection be to the idea of infinity, as Levinas, more particularly, has rethought it?

I’ll get to this question in just a moment. Before doing so, however, I should say a few more words about *the cogito* explicitly. It may have become obvious by now, in fact, that the ever-present potential within all our experiencing to which Descartes alerts us—the potential, in reflecting upon ourselves, to become certain of our own existence—is possible only for a being that ages: for a self, that is, a being which experiences itself as “identical in its difference.” A being that did not find itself living through time could never shed light upon itself: absorbed without remainder in the immediate here-and-now, it could never, in the strictest sense, appear to itself even “pre-reflectively” as a self at all, as the self-same being experiencing all of its own experiences. As Descartes has recognized, the *cogito* and its self-certainty is motivated or made possible precisely by the subject’s “pre-reflective” self-consciousness or, as we can now say, via its temporalizing self-identification or ageing; without ageing, all self-reflection, and hence, the self-certainty of the *cogito*, would remain impossible. Only a being that lives through time, a “doer” that has in some sense separated itself from the mere here-and-now of a “deed” so as to be able to identify itself in all the moments of its living, can have any knowledge of its own existence.

So much for the *cogito*, then; how, we might now ask, is *ageing* possible, requiring the

liberation of a being from the immediacy of the living activity to which it yet, “at the same time,” finds itself at every moment still riveted? We will have to discover the manner by which the idea of infinity, rethought as the exposure of a living being to the others, subtends ageing or the self-identification of the self in difference, and thus, serves as the condition not simply of the *cogito*, but the self-conscious self itself—that is, how the “distance-without-distance” between “me and myself” necessary for the apprehension across difference of the selfsame-self is that of a being called into question, a being under the accusation of the other, by which a living being can exist as an *I* or self, a being to which its own being can appear or be an issue for itself.

§ *e*

What, then, of this “distinction” or “distance” within the identification of the self and itself, subtending all ageing, which is to say, all temporal constitution and pre-reflective self-consciousness? That this “distance,” breaking all spontaneity, or at the least, troubling it in advance, is *ethical obligation*, is disclosed in the experience of shame or remorse, in which, according to Levinas, “the impossibility of declining responsibility is reflected.”²⁶ Paradoxically, shame can only occur as the opening to a distance-without-distance “between” the self and itself—between, that is, the self and the very thing from which it is impossible for it to take its distance.

In shame, we witness a “distance” or radical distinction: the self appears to itself as though foreign—its means and motivations, unquestioned in their spontaneity just a moment before, now appear unthinkable in their vanity. How could I have acted this way? How could that have been me? Or even more radically: how can this be me *now*? I am tortured in shame merely to find myself associated with this being with whom I can no longer remain in alliance—that is,

²⁶ *OB*: p. 6.

with myself.²⁷

And yet at once, shame is the impossibility of taking any distance from my self at all. There would quite evidently be nothing to torture me in shame were I not absolutely unable to disassociate myself from this being that I am, were I not compelled to recognize *as myself* this being whose thoughtless being now revolts me so. Shame or remorse radically discloses this impossibility of flight, “the suffering of constriction in one’s skin,”²⁸ as Levinas writes in *Otherwise than Being*; in shame, I realize I cannot escape myself, I cannot get even an inch outside of myself so as to avoid the horrifying recognition that this shameful creature is *me*.

A distance without distance, then: I appear distinct from myself insofar as I find my very being an abhorrence, but without being able to take leave of myself, so that shame envelopes the whole of my being, so that I cannot evade responsibility.

Does shame thus disclose something essential about self-consciousness? In a no doubt loose or “everyday” way of speaking, in fact, we find it useful to simply call the uneasiness of shame our being “self-conscious” pure and simple (as in “her gaze made me feel really self-conscious,” etc.)... Shame, of course, is not self-consciousness itself, and yet the experience of shame apparently discloses in a quite exemplary fashion the strange distance-without-distance which must serve as a precondition for all ageing or (pre-reflective) self-consciousness.²⁹ In order to firmly grasp how this is so, I’ll have to unfold what has thus been disclosed with an eye towards the phenomenon of ageing itself. This will bring us explicitly back to the issue of the

²⁷ “Ill at ease in one’s own skin” (*OB*: p. 108); the ego is “forced to detach itself from itself” (*OB*: p. 110).

²⁸ *OB*: p. 110. Also: “the undeclinability of the ego,” Levinas writes, “is the irremissibility of the accusation, from which it can no longer take a distance, which it cannot evade.” *OB*: p. 112.

²⁹ This “distance-without-distance,” presupposed by all ageing or “pre-reflective” self-awareness, is certainly not made thematic in it, given, for one, that nothing pertaining to the self is thematic here. At the same time, while in the full blown act of self-consciousness (a “reflective” act motivated by the self’s self grasping in ageing), the self does thematically grasp itself in some way, it once more does not thematically grasp the distance-without-distance *per se* which makes possible this reflective turn itself. Shame appears exemplary in that apparently few other phenomena of subjectivity disclose the self’s distance-without-distance from itself rather than merely depending upon it while hiding it from view in some fashion.

idea of the infinite as we've begun to understand it (in my analysis of Levinas's rethinking of the subjection to obligation, that is), so that, finally and at long last find, we'll be able to understand precisely how, as a mark made upon the subjected one in his or her exposure to another, this "idea" preconditions all self-consciousness and the *cogito* thus motivated.

What can be said of shame's disclosure?

§f

In the "movement" of revolt by which a self turns on itself, the self finds itself split in its irremediable unity. I've already argued that every experience or comportment of a self-conscious being *presupposes* an internal distinction-without distinction which conditions its self-presence, or, put otherwise, which allows it to be at once a temporalizing pre-reflective consciousness of self. And yet, an analysis of the affect of shame allows us to see that shame brings this "distance-without-distance" itself into view, so that the latter appears, in Levinas's words, as "a loosening up or unclamping of identity, the same prevented from coinciding with itself, at odds, torn up from its rest [which is to say, from "complacent" absorption in its behavior or the living being's "spontaneity"]."³⁰ Put differently, shame discloses the self as a being which, in its very self-identity, is by necessity *self-opposed*: a being riveted to its here-and-now on the one hand, while turned against itself, on the other, so that, compelled to watch over its being, it can be an "I,"—as though it were at once torn from itself or distanced from itself as in accusation: a self in the "accusative mode," which is to say, *me*. Shame, again, merely brings forward this strange self-opposition; it is because the distance-without-distance between the self and itself allowing for the subject's temporalizing self-identification is an "opposition" of this sort—i.e., a self-rivetedness struck by the obligation to answer for itself or to be held accountable—that shame itself is a possibility.

³⁰ *OB*: p. 68.

The subject is both bound to and distanced from its own being, as if, again, under accusation: a cleavage or “fault” is exhibited in the self, prior to any particular faultiness for which it might be brought to feel shame. The notion of “accusation,” however, leads us back to the idea of the infinite, for the “me,” or the psyche in Levinas’s terminology—the ψυχή, literally, the breath taken in, an “inspiration”³¹—appears *itself* to be the very mark made by transcendence or infinity, by the relation to another as such: the “psyche in the soul is the other in me,” Levinas writes.³² As a cleaving of the subjected one to and from itself, the psyche is a trace left by the revelation of the one whom, revealing himself or herself as other, humbles all self-absorption, showing up the vanity of the being that would go on as though the “center of being and its source.” Showing up “my” vanity: the affection by which the other comes to face me thus leaves no merely incidental mark, but rather, opens a schism within me without which I could never be a self at all, without which there could be nothing like a subject. The trace of this passion will thus never cease to trouble my spontaneity or more generally, the strivings of the subjected one, incessantly haunting the subject even after having been driven utterly from the mind, lapsing into unconsciousness or the oblivion of the forgotten. As a self-conscious being, the subject is essentially marked by its subjection before the others, which is just to say, by the obligation to live as though it were not the only one.

³¹ *OB*: p. 141.

³² *OB*: p. 69. The trace of the other’s affection is thus no memory, but the incessantly recurrent division in the self-identity of the self, against which the self, in its “longitudinal intentionality,” is able to take hold of or identify itself in, or as, the passive synthesis of time.

Only by recognizing this can we avoid the apparently insuperable difficulty which confronts David Michael Kleinberg-Levin in his illuminating 2008 text *Before the Voice of Reason* (Albany, State University of New York): p. 232-235. Because Levinas denies that the trace of infinity is a memory (claiming that it comes from an “immemorial past,” preceding the self-consciousness of the subjected one—see *OB*: p. 88, quoted in Kleinberg-Levin: p. 233), Kleinberg-Levin is left insisting that “Levinas leaves the phenomenological characterization of the process of retrieval[...] insufficiently worked out” (p. 224), and that the trace must be a “memory” of the “flesh.” This term is highly ambiguous, however (does Kleinberg-Levin mean “muscle-memory?,” etc.), unless we patiently work through Levinas’ analysis of the difference-in-self-sameness of time-constituting self-consciousness and its becoming effected as a permanent trace of ethical affection, as this prelude, and the work itself, attempts to do.

We saw above that ageing, as a temporalizing self-presence subtending all the conscious experiencing of a subject, is necessary if a being is to explicitly seize upon itself, if the *cogito* is to be possible. We can now recognize that ageing itself is possible only for a being *exposed*, for a being finding itself obligated by others, and so, held at a “distance” from itself or from its immediacy as the very mark of its exposure. Ageing occurs because, as Levinas points out quite simply, “time passes:”³³ because the present passes itself by, a phenomenon that can show itself “diachronously” within the self in its ageing only on the condition that the here-and-now of a solipsistic striving for enjoyment has been broken through, opened without, while yet leaving the *I* bound to this striving from which it has been extracted: a being thereby finding itself having to answer for itself. The manifestation of the passing of time in the self is accomplished precisely in the living being’s being delivered, always in advance, from a total absorption in its here-and-now striving—that is, as ethics. Unfolding in ageing, then, self-consciousness and the passive synthesis of time presuppose my responsibility before another, before the *other* who “comes to interrupt an enjoyment in its very isolation,” as Levinas writes, “and thus tears *me* from *myself*.”³⁴

In this essay, I’ve argued that a subject becomes present to itself via the passive syntheses of time-consciousness, recollecting itself in the constitution of the life of subjectivity. The self-certainty of the *cogito*, I noted, is motivated precisely by this self-presence. But beneath the self’s presence to itself, lies the trace of infinity or of the exposure by which the subject has been denied a pure coincidence in its being; before the *subject*, its *subjection* to the other, a subjection which is not a self-alienation but the very selfhood of the self.³⁵ For it is only as a being called

³³ Perhaps the shortest possible refutation of the doctrine of the transcendental ego... *OB*: p. 52.

³⁴ *OB*: p. 55. Also: “The other is in me and in the midst of my very identification” (p. 125).

³⁵ “I exist through the other and for the other, but without this being alienation: I am inspired. This inspiration is the psyche.” *OB*: p. 114.

into question by the other, as an ethically obligated being, that a self, a being present to itself in all its cogitations or intentional acts, can be extracted from up out of its merely living activity: a being that is only *then* able to say “I am, I exist,”³⁶ with all the self-certainty with which this utterance is thereby afforded.

³⁶ From the passage to which the celebrated “*cogito, sum*” is generally attributed: *MP*: p. 17. As a side note: as should by this point be all too obvious, we should in no way take this self-presence to amount to some sort of Hegelian coincidence of “substance” and “subject,” or any such claim to an absolute or self-given being. A Cartesian notion of “self-presence” is entirely other than this: the attestation, instead, of not only the self’s irremediable finitude, but also, and as the condition of this attestation, of its being placed under obligation from without.

Part I

Chapter 1

Objective Time

Section I—Time as explicit object

§ 1

If we want to understand our experience of time, we really ought to begin with the simplest examples. Unfortunately, none of our experiences of time really seem to be all that simple.

From the very get-go, then, a considerable difficulty seems to beset my analysis—or rather, any analysis—of time-consciousness, given this lack of an obvious point of departure. There are all sorts of ways in which we experience something like time; should I merely choose any one of these at random to serve as my starting point? Is any starting point as good as any other, which is to say, is there simply *no* good starting point for an analysis of time-consciousness?

However, rather than wanting for an obvious point from which to begin my analysis, it may be that one is in fact forced upon me. We can have no doubt as to the “existence” of experiences that involve an *explicit*, or as we might say, a *thematic* grasp of time, but we cannot merely take for granted that there are also experiences that exhibit a merely *implicit* or *nonthematic* temporal awareness. It seems obvious on the face of it that there *are* such experiences, or even, that *all* of our experiences in fact exhibit something like a nonthematic grasp of time (at least, when they do not grasp time thematically), but we ought not baldly assert such claims without demonstration. Because of this, it seems that the most straightforward way for me to begin my analysis of time-consciousness will be to begin with experiences in which we

grasp time thematically, experiences whose “existence” is not only beyond any real doubt, but which we can easily bring about any time if we like. Sadly, I won’t be able to *stop* with this sort of experience, for despite the apparently direct access to the phenomenon of time that thematic experiences of time offer us, or perhaps even because of it, they won’t prove capable of disclosing the most important features of time-consciousness to analysis. Nevertheless, by beginning with such experiences, I can at least start my analysis on an assured basis.

There are, however, a number of different sorts of experiences in which we come to seize upon time thematically; I’ll thus begin with what appears (to my mind at least) to be the most straightforward of these, before going over some of the other forms of thematic time-consciousness in order to fill out my account.

Firstly, then: there can be no doubt that in the course of things, we sometimes happen to find ourselves struck by the realization that a certain “stretch of time” has elapsed during the unfolding of our own perceiving or thinking, or correlatively, during the unfolding of the occurrences or affairs of which we are thereby conscious. Lined up in a queue at the supermarket, for example, I become impatient because of the wait; or, early some fine morning, I find myself taking a bit too much time getting out of bed: in either of these cases, I immediately become conscious of the duration implicated in the experience. There is nothing unique about these experiences, for we all at least *occasionally* have experiences of the same sort, in which we thematically attend to a “span” of time “taken up” by an event as it unfolds itself, i.e., the duration of an occurrence in which we are at present involved. By attending to such a duration or making it our theme, we can, if we like, always remark to others or even to ourselves that the “span” of time has been a “long” or a “short” one, or that it has “taken up” this or that “amount” of time, which would be impossible if we hadn’t noticed the duration in the first place. I’ll wait

until later to deal with experiences in which specific conventional standards (hours, seconds, days, and the like) enter into this theme—something that, perhaps for essential reasons, always appears *possible*, but which for the time being I'll assume is not *necessarily* in play in these sorts of experiences. After all, we sometimes become thematically aware of the ongoing duration of an occurrence (or perhaps, of the consciousness of such an occurrence) without knowing how “long” the occurrence has lasted, so that we thus find we must ask others, or consult our watch, etc., in order to figure out how much time has actually passed in the “while.” My eyes are closed, maybe the sheets are pulled over my head, but I can hear birds singing outside and I know that I've been hearing them for some time. I ought to get up.

In this opening section of my study, I will argue that there is something fundamental about this sort of experience (one in which the duration of an ongoing occurrence comes to be seized upon), and I'll go on to analyze such experiences in some depth. For the sake of simplicity, I'll split this first type of thematic time-consciousness in two, and will concentrate on acts in which we come to be thematically aware of the duration “taken up” by some *occurrence* of which we are conscious (“this movie has lasted forever,” for instance), while leaving aside those apparently more complex acts in which we become thematically conscious of the duration “taken up” by our *own* consciousness or experiencing (“I've been watching this movie for forever”). Before doing so, however, I'd like to examine a few more kinds of experiences in which we also attend to time thematically, albeit in a different fashion. This is certainly not the only sort.

Secondly, then: not only can the duration of an occurrence of which we are currently conscious show itself to our attention (not to mention, again, the duration of the *consciousness* of the occurrence); the *objects* or *beings* that show themselves to us all along the way can also show

themselves as though characterized or qualified, in a certain sense, by time, as if time left its mark as a “property” or characteristic of the thing which, here and there, we might come to notice. “He looks so much older since that whole ordeal began,” we say, or perhaps, “that book looks brand new”—these are expressions of typical experiences in which this sort of characteristic makes itself known. Of course, time does not *cause* such “properties” itself, as though something called time stole in one evening while a man slept and assailed him, wounding him and thus bringing about the “oldness” we now notice. Beings are somehow “in” time, so that “things” can happen to them; properties like “oldness” or “newness” simply bring this fact to the fore.

In what sense does time come forward to our attention in experiences of the two types that I’ve just distinguished? In the first, we attend to some specific ongoing duration; in the second, to the characteristics or properties of an object that bear some sort of a “reference” to time, properties “pointing” to the duration in which these properties came to bear upon the object or during which the thing came to appear in such-and-such a manner. However, nothing like “time” comes forward thematically in either of these two types of experiences, if by this, we mean time as attended to in a discourse or mode of thinking that would aim to describe time “in itself,” “as it really is,” as we say (in whatever strange way that time “is” or can be said to be); a person can see that a man is old, and even say as much, without being able to offer any coherent statement about time *per se*. While our awareness of time in the two types of experiences that I’ve just described is certainly thematic in one sense, it’s quite unlike the thematic awareness of time that prevails in, for instance, a scientific or philosophical discourse on the subject, in which the “character,” the “inner structure,” etc., of time itself is at issue. Experiences of the latter sort would constitute a third type of thematic time-consciousness, another sort of experience in which

we become explicitly aware of time.³⁷

Moving on, I can immediately add a fourth type of thematic time-consciousness to the three already outlined: one in which time has come to be measured by our conventional standards for measuring it. The measurement of time in such experiences can be more or less determinate (“about twenty minutes” as opposed to “twenty minutes, 3 seconds, and forty-two hundredths of a second”), and can bear upon either an awareness of the duration of an ongoing event (e.g., in the experience expressed when I say “I must have been lying here in bed for at least twenty minutes”) or an awareness of the characteristic or property of some being, reflecting the marks “made by” time (e.g., “that book looks like you just bought it yesterday;” “that statue must be more than two thousand years old;” etc.). Or, as another subset of this type of experience, we can add those sorts of experiences in which we “bring to mind” the time of day, the day of the week, the calendar date, and so forth (“it’s 9:18 PM, November 15th”), or else, conceive of the conventionally measured duration of an event in which we are not currently involved (“the first French revolution lasted ten years, beginning and ending in the years 1789 and 1799 of our Lord”). Finally, there is perhaps the most extreme form of this type of experience, in which we employ logical or mathematical variables in the place of conventional measurements of time in a discourse dealing now with totally abstract temporal conceptions (“ $v = d/t$ ”).

Beyond these four types of thematic experiences of time or explicit time-“consciousnesses,” are there any other sorts of experiences in which we thematically seize upon time in some way? At the very least, one more type of experience seems to cry out for attention: memories and expectations, at least in the sense of an episodic remembering or expecting (i.e.,

³⁷ I should note that, strictly speaking, the study you are reading does not represent an awareness of this sort, because in these pages, I’ll be examining, not time, but time-*consciousness*. Nonetheless, these two types of examination are not wholly unrelated, a matter I’ll say a few words about later on.

bringing occurrences or experiences to mind via a phantasied visual, aural, etc. medium). Here, no doubt, time is a theme. Or is it? I'll set aside both that which is remembered or expected in episodic memory or expectation (in the sense of the occurrence or experience that we remember, or whose arrival we expect) as well as the act of remembering or expecting itself, for what is unique to (episodic) remembering and expecting, so far as thematic time-consciousness is concerned, belongs to neither. Remembering and expecting instead impress themselves upon us in a discussion on the topic of time-consciousness precisely because, by remembering or expecting something, we become aware of "how long ago" the occurrence we remember in fact occurred, or how "far into the future" we expect it to happen. This awareness is a matter of grasping, not the duration of the remembered or expected occurrence, nor that of the act of remembering or expecting *per se*, but rather, the duration or "distance in time" *between* the two, which is to say, the time that has elapsed or that will elapse between the remembered or expected occurrence and the act of remembering and expecting it. Obviously, we *must* have some awareness of this "distance," whenever we remember or expect anything; otherwise, we would be dealing only with something like pure fantasy, shorn of the particular "temporal sense" that marks the remembering or expecting act as such.³⁸ We could remark that, *prima facie*, the sense of this "distance in time" sometimes appears to be a merely implicit or nonthematic one, for I can

³⁸ Ed Casey examines questions such as these, and more generally, the phenomena of remembering and expecting, in much greater detail in his works *Remembering; a phenomenological study*—(Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis); 1987—and *Imagining; a phenomenological study*—(Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis); 1976. A thorough analysis of Casey's *Remembering* should in fact leave us in no doubt that the "phenomenon" of remembering, taken in all its various permutations, goes beyond that of time-consciousness, and thus, as we will see, of consciousness in general; memories such as "body" and "place memory," for instance, seem to have their place in sentient life before or without all consciousness. As will become clear before the end of this study, we might in fact regard the trace of the relation to the other who reveals himself or herself in his or her alterity as a body memory of an absolutely unique sort (what else can we make of it as *trace*?), one that in fact opens the possibility for consciousness of "mind" precisely by first bridging something like the "gap" between "mind" and body. Questions having to do specifically with the great multiplicity of phenomena falling under the heading of memory or remembering, however, obviously go beyond the boundaries of the present study, although there can be no doubt that they occupy a crucial place in any fleshed out account of consciousness, and perhaps even of sensibility or sentience.

remember my walk this morning, a walk whose “pastness” I do recognize, without yet explicitly thinking about when exactly my walk occurred, how long ago into the past, etc.; in such experiences, I seem to “know” that my walk happened some time before, but I don’t dwell on the fact—an apparently nonthematic awareness of time, which I’ll set aside for the moment, since I’ve already decided to concentrate on thematic experiences of time first. Nevertheless, we certainly *do* become thematically aware of something like the “beforeness” or “afterness” of the remembered or anticipated occurrence in at least *some* cases of episodic remembering or expecting (even if not necessarily in all), as is the case when, for instance, I remember my walk from this morning and pay as much attention to my walk’s being such-and-such an “amount” of time in the past as I do to the remembered experience (my walk) itself. This thus constitutes yet another sort of experience in which time becomes the theme of the experiencing—although we can’t yet be sure whether there is anything unique about it, or whether this sort of thematic time-consciousness can instead be reduced to one of the types of time-consciousness that I distinguished earlier. For important reasons, I’ll actually begin to look at questions of this sort below.

§ 2

In §1 of this study, I distinguished a number of different types of experiences in which time comes to be thematically experienced (five such types, to be exact, which I list below:

First type: thematic consciousness of the duration of an ongoing event of which we are conscious;

Second type: thematic consciousness of a property “reflecting” time;

Third type: consciousness of time in a theoretical analysis on time or temporality;

Fourth type: consciousness in which time has come to be measured by our conventional

standards for measuring it (with its various subtypes);

Fifth type: episodic rememberings or expectings in which the “distance” in time

“between” the remembering or expecting and the occurrence remembered or expected becomes a theme).

But what has been gained by distinguishing them? Can these distinctions help me to demonstrate that time-consciousness, or something like the “temporalizing” of the subject, necessarily subtends all consciousness or subjective activity (or, ultimately, that this temporalizing necessarily bears the trace of an ethical affection coming from another, which would thus condition all consciousness and somehow give subjectivity its orientation)? Given the unsystematic, and most likely, non-exhaustive nature of the set of types of thematic experiences of time I’ve just outlined, it might well appear all the more implausible that anything has been gained by making these distinctions. Nevertheless, now that our thematic consciousness of time has been preliminarily distinguished in regards to at least a few essential kinds, we can start to inquire into the condition of possibility of these kinds or (put more precisely) into those features of the experiences without which they could not be the sorts of experiences that they *are* (namely, forms of thematic time-consciousness, experiences in which time is a theme in this or that sense). By examining these features, we might learn something about the nature of time-consciousness itself. What, then, can such an examination bring to light?

To begin with, we can note that many of the types of thematic experiences of time that I’ve distinguished are “*dependent*” upon those acts in which the subject thematically seizes upon the unfolding duration of a currently experienced occurrence (i.e., are dependent upon the first type of experience that I outlined above) in the sense that they (the “dependent” experiences or acts) either *include* some thematic grasping of the first type as an essential feature (in general, as

something upon which the “dependent” experiences further elaborate), or else, *presuppose* knowledge or habits that could only have been acquired via some prior act of the sort.³⁹ For instance, an experience in which some ongoing “amount” of time is measured or grasped according to conventional standards (an experience of the third type, bearing upon one of “type one” as we saw above) depends for its very possibility upon the prior occasion of an experience of the first type outlined (in which, again, a certain “length” of time has been attended to *without* a concomitant judgment being made about its “length” in conventional standards—an experience which, as I noted before, can apparently go on fine for its own part without any conventional measurement coming to intervene). Judging the duration of a currently unfolding occurrence to be of this or that “amount” of time, according to a specific set of standards or conventions, *must* presuppose some act or acts in which an “unmeasured” duration had been made the thematic object of consciousness: for after all, all of our units for measuring time—seconds, days, years, and so forth—as well as the units delimited by any other actual or even possible temporal standard, are *themselves* durations.⁴⁰ How can I understand such standards? I must have first had some duration brought to my attention, and then named for me a “minute,” for example, in order to understand what a minute, or “about twenty minutes,” etc., “feels like” at all (i.e., to have any sense of what can and can’t be done in that time). It would be impossible to measure time conventionally if, prior to this measurement, we were unable to attend to a duration unmeasured

³⁹ The distinction here is between *founding* and *sedimented* acts—see, on founding: Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations, volume 2*, trans by J.N. Findlay (New York, Routledge); 2001: p. 115-116 (Investigation V, Chapter 2, §18), hereafter listed as *LI 1 & 2*—and on sedimentation: Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. by David Carr (Evanston, Northwestern University Press); 1970: p. 26-27 (Part II, §9b).

⁴⁰ Heidegger makes the same point in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis); 1988: p. 250-251. Hereafter listed as *BP*.

by such standards.⁴¹ This recognition helps us to clarify both the nature of acts in which we judge an unfolding duration according to our conventional standards for measuring time, and crucially, the way in which these acts are dependent ones: such acts “first” thematically take hold of the duration *per se*—that is, they begin as, or at least necessarily involve, experiences of the first type outlined above, which is to say, they are *founded* upon such an experience—“before” seizing upon the duration as being of such-and-such a “length,” according to conventional standards—that is, such experiences also presuppose “*sedimented*” acts in which a thematically grasped duration was *first* given over to such-and-such a standard, i.e., acts in which the subject first came to learn the standard (minutes, hours, etc.), something like an “ur-measurement.”

⁴¹ This is not to say that we aren’t always able to give an at least approximate measurement of either a thematically grasped duration utilizing such standards, or of the “amount” of time which must have passed for an object to exhibit a certain property whose recognition refers us to the passage of time (the first and second sorts of experiences I outlined above). Surely, in fact, we always *can* do just this, or at least to a greater or lesser extent: “too long in bed” can always be distinguished more precisely as “about twenty minutes” or an ancient-looking statue can always be said to be “two thousand years old or so”—or rather, it can be so distinguished by one who has become habituated to thinking of time according to such standards. It might even be that some “implicit” sense of a duration’s measure according to conventional standards is exhibited in *every* such experience in which time is thematically grasped (by an individual, again, who has been socialized into conforming his or her own thinking to the relevant conventions) *whether or not* this measure is itself thematically grasped of or not. How else, we might ask, could a person thematically attending to this-or-that duration prior to any “measuring thought” then think “it must have been at least twenty minutes since my alarm woke me up” (to give one example) if the duration thrust front and center to attention (prior to this “measuring thought,” that is) had *not* already been in some sense grasped *implicitly* as such? The ability to explicitly measure an “unmeasured” duration of which we are thematically conscious seems to imply that the duration has already been implicitly “pre-measured.” It would then be as if the thematic taking-of-measure or the thought attempting to “pin” a measurement on a duration already given to attention would simply attempt to make this “pre-measuring” more precise or even to simply bring it to mind, and thus that there would be, underlying all thematic conventional measuring of a duration, some “motivation” (in the Husserlian sense) exhibited in the attentive experience of the duration *per se*, a “pre-given” sense of the conventional measure of the duration upon which the thematic measurement coming after the fact might take its bearing.

I’d still like to hold off for a little longer before examining the possibility of anything like an implicit sense of time. Nevertheless, the considerations I’ve just raised do nothing to call into question the fact that acts of the “fourth sort” that I listed above (those which attend to a duration by explicitly grasping it as being of such-and-such a “length” according to conventional standards for measurement) are founded in acts of the first sort (those attending to a duration in which no such standards intervene). Assuming even that we do take something like an implicit measure according to some set of conventional standards of the duration of an experienced event, it would still depend for its possibility upon some prior act attending to a duration without measuring the duration according to such standards. A convention for measurement would need to be learned before it could be either implicitly or explicitly (i.e., attentively) “utilized.”

Experiences of “dating” or taking heed of the “time of day,” *a fortiori*, must be similarly derivative: for “9:20 am,” for instance, just means that nine hours and twenty minutes have passed since midnight. The difference between “dating” acts and acts in which a currently unfolding duration is conventionally measured is that “dating” acts need not be founded upon (i.e., include) acts in which an unfolding duration comes to be seized upon thematically (to give one example: I obviously need not have lived through the first French revolution, let alone be living through it, in order to understand what it means to say that it lasted ten years, or that it occurred about 220 years ago, and so forth); such acts, however, *do* presuppose sedimented measuring acts, without which they would have no sense (i.e., I can understand what it means to say that the first French revolution lasted ten years only because I “know” what a year is “like”).⁴² Acts employing logico-mathematical variables in the place of some determination of time, for their part, simply presuppose “dating” acts *in general*; a person who had never come to conceive of an occurrence as having happened at such-and-such a date could never understand what might be meant by a phrase like “event *e* occurs at time t_1 .” Only a being that measures time can “date,” and only a being that “dates” can abstract from this dating (via what Husserl calls “eidetic intuition”) in order to use logico-mathematical variables for temporal notions. But as we’ve seen, an act in which time is measured according to standards or conventions both includes and presupposes acts in which the duration of an unfolding occurrence comes to be thematically seized upon *per se*, without any conventional measurement.⁴³ The latter (my first type of thematic time-consciousness) thus represents a more primordial experience of time.

⁴² Heidegger claims that a duration is *essentially* datable; in order to fully understand his reason for claim this, however, we would need to work through his understanding of the basic structure of time as an experienced duration. I work through Heidegger’s account below, without, however, returning to the notion of dating *per se*. See: *BP*: p. 263 ff.

⁴³ We could certainly go into the structure and sequence of this foundedness and sedimentation in far more detail, were it necessary for the purposes of my study. Doing so now would take me too far afield, however.

If all experiences of my fourth type (involving something like conventional standards) are in some way dependent upon experiences of the first (in which the duration of a currently unfolding occurrence is noted or attended to “as is”), then certainly, the same must go for experiences of my third type, in which time “*per se*” is made into an object accessible to scientific study or to the sort of profound metaphysical claims that philosophers are (for better or worse) wont to make. This claim is obvious enough that I won’t bother to provide a proof. Suffice it to say, nobody begins making scientific or philosophical claims about time, or in fact, could ever do so, without ever having previously attended to this or that duration or “stretch of time” in everyday life.

What about the thematic consciousness of time that we see in experiences of the fifth type outlined above (i.e., in episodic memories and expectations, whenever we dwell upon the amount of time that “separates” the remembered or expected event from the remembering or expecting act)? Does this also depend for its possibility upon experiences of the first type of consciousness that I distinguished? In the former (i.e., the episodic rememberings or expectations in which the “distance” between the act and occurrence remembered or expected is a theme), we bring to mind a certain length of time which *exceeds* the duration of that occurrence or experience in which we are currently engaged (i.e., the time that the act of remembering or expecting itself “takes” or “fills up”); there is thus an obvious difference between “type one” and “type five” experiences. Nevertheless, there appears to be some kind of connection between the two as well, one which might in fact cause us to wonder: can the first sort of thematic time-consciousness that I distinguished be *reduced* to that which is exhibited in the sort of episodic rememberings or expectings here at issue? It isn’t inconceivable, in fact, that the thematic awareness of the duration of an ongoing event (my first type) is merely a matter of remembering

and expectation, so that any act attending to such a duration will necessarily involve something like either the episodic recollection of something like the beginning of the occurrence or the (likewise episodic) expectation of its conclusion (or at least, the remembering or expecting of some earlier or later “point” in its course). If this were the case, then the first type of thematic time-consciousness I outlined would be reducible to the fifth, as a mere subtype involving relatively “short” time-intervals (remembering, let’s say, something that happened or began to happen ten seconds ago, instead of much earlier today or a year ago, etc.). Despite the fact that we can certainly entertain this position, however, it is *not* in fact the case: for the “beginning” of some occurrence that I am *now* experiencing (or conversely, its “end”) is in no way remembered (or conversely, expected) in the same fashion that, to give an example, my walk from much earlier this morning might be remembered (or conversely, that the lecture I’ll be giving later this afternoon might be anticipated). This is because I can attend to (to use another example) the fact that *for some time* I have been in bed, listening to the birds singing, without *any* episodic remembering or expecting whatsoever, which is to say, while remaining fully engaged with the sounds of the birds, the feeling of the bed beneath me, and so forth. Or if there is some sort of “disengagement” exhibited here, whenever I attend, not simply to that which is “at hand,” but to the duration of its unfolding, then at the least, I can certainly so attend while engaging in a peculiar “disengagement” with the perception which is directed, not towards some past or future experience which I represent to myself in phantasy or thought”—i.e., via some sort of visualization of earlier or later moments of the occurrence—but in a reflective fashion, merely towards that which is *presently* perceived *itself*. Of course, if I wanted to I *could* begin to engage in some sort of active recollection or expectation of the “beginning” or “ending” of the occurrence, but I need not do so in order to become aware of its duration. Assuming, then, that

there is anything like a “retaining” or “anticipating” at work in our awareness of a duration as it unfolds, which allows precisely for our thematic awareness of its unfolding, this cannot be conceived of as a remembering or expecting in the usual sense (i.e., as an episodic remembering or expecting); thus, the first sort of thematic time-consciousness that I distinguished (thematic awareness of the duration of a currently experienced occurrence) cannot be reduced to the fifth type at all. In fact, once my analysis has advanced to the point where the nature of these non-episodic “retentions” and “anticipations” can be disclosed (Section II and III of this chapter), it will appear far more likely that the reverse is true, i.e., that were we to have no sense of the duration of an occurrence in which we are currently involved, we would have no sense at all of anything like the amount of time which, “extending” beyond its bounds, “reaches” “backwards” or “forwards” past its limits onto some further event brought to mind either in memory or expectation. For the time being, in any event, it is enough that we do not hastily collapse the distinction between these two sorts of thematic awareness of time.

Finally, we can inquire into the relationship between the first two types of thematic time-consciousness that I outlined above, i.e., that exhibited in experiences in which a currently unfolding duration becomes our theme or the intended object, and that in which the “property” or characteristic of some being attesting to a duration of greater or lesser span is grasped. Does the latter depend upon the former (as do experiences of the third, fourth, and possibly even fifth type above)? The question is a difficult one, given that in the first place, the notion of the “property” of a thing is admittedly vague enough to give us all sorts of problems for its own part so long as it remains unclarified. In order to keep from getting sidetracked, I’ll steer clear of this difficulty, one which is in any event beside the point right now;⁴⁴ for, irrespective of the relationship between these two sorts of thematic time-consciousness, we’ve already discovered that

⁴⁴ Although I may need to make a very brief remark or two later on about the topic: see Chapter 2, Sec. 2.

experiences of the first sort must serve as the foundation of a great number of other experiences in which time is also made the object of attention in some way. Thus, if we really intend to determine how we, as conscious subjects, are conscious of time, and thus, to determine whether or not or perhaps in what way temporality is an essential feature of subjectivity, a further analysis of experiences of this first sort would appear to be the most promising way to push ahead.

§ 3

What is necessarily involved, whenever we attend to the duration of an unfolding occurrence or experience? How does such a thing come about? Turning back to one of the examples that I've been using, we can note the obvious sort of "motivation," in the typical sense of the term, that must "lie behind" the act by which I turn my attention to the length of time in which I've failed to rise from bed. For example: I think about how long I've been lying awake in bed because I worry about running late for my class—if I miss my train there will no doubt be students anxiously waiting for my arrival (or worse, happy to leave before I arrive), etc. Were it not for motives such as these, I'd likely never find myself actively attending to the duration of the occurrence at all (i.e., to the time I've spent just lying there, listening to the birds singing away). Perhaps I won't be generalizing too much if I claim that some motive of the sort is always to blame for bringing us to attend to this or that length of time, *whenever* such a thing occurs; otherwise, we'd probably simply attend to the matter at hand without worrying about how "long" or "short" an amount of time happened to be elapsing in the process. No doubt, motives like these can take incredibly varied forms.

Whether or not this more general claim can be demonstrated is not very important here. This is because some other phenomenon, far more important for my purposes, must be exhibited

as part of any experience in which a subject attends to the duration of a currently experienced occurrence: the duration *itself* must already be (or perhaps, must already have been) experienced, although crucially, without yet having been made into a theme or attended to as such. Whether or not we must always be motivated in some manner (in the usual sense) if we're ever to actually attend to some currently unfolding stretch of time or to make it our theme, it is indubitable that, were the duration itself not already *unthematically* experienced—were we to have no *implicit* sense of the experienced occurrence “stretching out” or becoming “longer and longer in time”—then there would be no duration available for the act (the thematizing act, that is) to attend to at all. Put otherwise, the act intending the duration of an experienced occurrence must always be “motivated” in the *phenomenological* sense of the term; the duration must have already showed itself or appeared in some manner, if the act which thematically seizes upon it is to have anything to seize upon in the first place.⁴⁵

We can take this point a step further, still: for if, given the proper motivation (in the mundane sense), an active turning of the attention can *always* seize upon the duration of a currently experienced event—i.e., if experiences in which time becomes the object intended are always possible for the conscious subject—then in every last one of our experiences, we must pre-thematically experience or “possess” some “sense” of the duration pertaining to whatever it is that we in fact take as the theme of our experiencing in that experience itself. Put differently: all conscious experiencing must involve a consciousness of time, whether we explicitly attend to

⁴⁵ Above, I noted that an implicit sense of the conventional measure of a duration could well underlie any explicit or thematic grasp of the duration of an experienced event (for individuals for whom such conventions have become “ingrained,” of course) in order for it to be possible to thematically grasp the duration *as* so measured. Now, however, it has become apparent that this implicit sense of conventional measure, if anything of the sort is in fact exhibited in such experiences, would have to qualify an already operative implicit experience of an experienced event's duration *simpliciter*. This is, again, because we can recognize along the same lines that if duration *per se* were not to have been grasped nonthematically in the experience of a particular event, we could never then attend to this event's duration or make it a theme for our experiencing.

time in any given case or (as is more often the case) not—even, in fact, if time is the “furthest thing from our mind” in the experience. Subjectivity cannot be divorced from time-consciousness, and in particular, from time-consciousness of an implicit or nonthematic sort.

What does it mean to say that, as subjects, we always possess (or perhaps better, are possessed by) an implicit sense of time? Why must all of our experiences in some way be experiences of time, or of occurrences experienced as “having” a *duration* (i.e., as “taking up” a greater or lesser “span of time”)—a duration somehow experienced *as* duration “before,” and irrespective of, any act of thematization that might come to grasp it attentively? At this point, of course, I’ve by no means adequately determined the nature of anything like the implicit time-phenomenon or of its fully nonthematizing grasp, nor fully demonstrated that the latter constitutes an essential feature of all consciousness. The crucial next step in my analysis will be to do just this (in Section II of this study).

However: in order to clarify this claim—and in the process, to demonstrate it—we will need to understand not only how time is grasped in this experiencing (what it “shows up like”), but also, the way that this grasp is nonthematic or implicit. What can I mean, by speaking of time-consciousness in this manner? I’ve said almost nothing so far about the sense in which the experience of time that I mean to uncover is “implicit,” although numerous questions certainly present themselves in this regard: for how can we have a conscious “sense” of the duration of an experienced occurrence without actually consciously attending to anything like duration? And what can I possibly mean when I use the word “implicit,” here, in the first place? Taken by itself, the term (“implicit”) certainly does nothing to clarify the phenomenon at issue, quite simply because I *cannot* be using the term in its usual sense: when we say that something is “implicit,” after all, we usually mean that it goes unsaid but not unrecognized, and yet I haven’t been using

the word “explicit,” its evident contrary, to mean anything like the contrary to this usual sense (i.e., “stated”)! No doubt, many of the various sorts of “explicit” or thematic experiences of time that I outlined earlier need not involve anything like a linguistic utterance, or even anything like a “thought” (as an “interior” utterance, making use of a phantasied aural or visual medium for putting words forward) at all; in order to see a statue as “old,” for instance, I need not remark to anyone or even to myself that “it is old:” I simply perceive the statue as such. In fact, many of the types of “explicit” experiences of time we encountered may well even *cease* to exhibit the same sort of time-consciousness once an utterance comes into play, or at least, may well involve something like an “additional” consciousness once expression gives words to the experience—saying “that statue is old” is certainly not the same thing as perceiving it in its “oldness.” In any event, as long as my attention is drawn to the statue *as* old or in its oldness, then this can be a *theme* for my consciousness, and thus, *time* is in a certain sense a theme for my consciousness, which is to say, is “explicit” in the specific sense in which I’ve been using the term.

What can I mean, then, by an implicit or nonthematic consciousness? How, specifically, is *time* “there” for consciousness when it is not “there” as a theme? There are numerous ways in which we can speak of an “implicitness” of conscious experiencing, or put differently, numerous sorts of “consciousnesses” that display essentially different types of nonthematization; we’ll come across several distinct sorts, in fact, as I advance in this work. Therefore, whenever I claim that such-and-such constitutes an implicit or nonthematic sort of experiencing, the reader will need to wait for me to present a concrete analysis of the phenomenon in order to actually understand the sense in which I’m claiming *that* it’s implicit. No simple rule covers all the cases.

This last point is not merely incidental. We will not simply happen upon various sorts of “implicitnesses” or “nonthematizations” as I go; uncovering, not simply *what* is implicit in the

subject's conscious comportment, but *how* it is implicit, will be an absolutely crucial element of this work.⁴⁶ This implies nothing like an esoteric realm of experiencing: again and again in this study I'll be examining, not the most uncommon or extraordinary sorts of phenomena, but rather, the most ordinary of them, that which is so familiar that we may never take notice of it. We rarely pay attention to the air we breathe, no doubt, and especially not when it's in abundance.

Implicit time-consciousness is the most common phenomenon imaginable; or perhaps, so common that we have trouble imagining it. What can we make of this phenomenon?

⁴⁶ We could perhaps argue that the phenomenological method does nothing but distinguish and explicate the various modes of implicitness that are exhibited in thematic consciousness, or put differently, that phenomenology is simply the science of the implicit in this sense. To do so would obviously go far beyond the confines of this study.

How are we conscious of time in everyday, unreflective experience? This question is already ambiguous, because the word “how” can be interpreted in two different ways. By this question, we might mean: in what way does time “show up” to us, in our experiences, *as* experienced? What “form” does time take when experienced in the sort of experiences that do not actively attend to anything like time, but yet have some sense of the passing of time nonetheless, as all conscious experiences apparently must? The question could also mean, however: how is it possible that time can show up to us at all? What is the inner constitution of a being with experiences that are in some way “shaped” temporally, a being that (or rather, who) has some grasp on time in being conscious of things (and even when, or even especially when, time is not a theme)? In order to avoid confusion, I’ll use the term “time,” or better, “the time-phenomenon,” in referring to the “object” aimed at or made into a problem in the first interpretation of this question, and the term “temporality” in order to refer to the topic of the second. Ultimately, I hope to get at the phenomenon of *temporality* in this study, for reasons that I’ve already duly set forth. And yet, the only way to gain access to this phenomenon is through the phenomenon of time. Temporality “constitutes” time, in the phenomenological parlance; it opens us up to time or makes our experience of it possible, and is thus inextricably correlated with the time it constitutes (as a “noesis” always is to its “noema,” to parade about a bit more of the technical jargon). Only after we have the phenomenon of time securely in our grasp, will we be able to trace it back to its constituting correlate with any real assurance.

Taking hold of the time-phenomenon may not be the easiest of tasks, however; it is known for being a devilishly difficult matter to grasp conceptually, and for good reason. Why

not simply begin with the most mundane observations? Time is made up of “nows:” this, at least, seems obvious. Each “now” continually passes away as another “now” emerges, so that each one, taken alone, must be “bordered” on both “sides” by other “nows;” thus, time can be thought of as a line composed of “nows” in the same way that a line in space is ostensibly made up of points, a “time-line” stretching endlessly in both directions, i.e., towards future and past “nows.” This line, for sure, is time. Unlike a line in space, however, the line of time mysteriously possesses an asymmetricality of sorts to its bearing, an incessant directional “flow” leading always towards the future nows, so that time could be conceived simply as a flow of “nows,” progressing from one to the next without end. The line “moves,” or else, perhaps better, we move “along it.” Already, these mundane observations seem to call for reformulation; for not only is this a strange line which “moves,” unlike other lines which are apparently static, but with as much right, we also seem to be able to say that there is no “line” of “nows” at all, but only *one* “now,” the now “right now,” while the past and future “nows,” other moments which either “flow towards” the now or else which have already “flowed away” from it, are precisely nows-no longer or else merely nows-to-come. The image of a “single now” instead presents itself; “immobile,” as it were, while “changing matters” come to flow “in” and “out” of it. Yet then we still find ourselves wondering “where” the “changing matters” “come from,” and “where” they “go to” when they pass.

So much for mundane observations; evidently, they seem more likely to lead us to confusion than to help us to understand the time-phenomenon any better. Granted, I’ve only given a few examples of the no doubt countless interpretations of the time-phenomenon which we might strike upon when asked what time is, or is like. Should I give a more exhaustive survey instead, and, in order to be especially thorough, include references to indicate who has believed

or currently advances each of the views thus presented?⁴⁷ Aristotle begins in this way, for one, and although because more than two millennia have since passed, many of the views he surveys now seem quite dated to us, many nevertheless still seem *au courant*.⁴⁸ But for what reason does he provide such a survey at all? Why, for that matter, have I provided a somewhat abridged (and admittedly somewhat flippant) version of the same? Spurious as such “usual” conceptions of time might appear, they nevertheless give us something to go on; it is not for no reason at all that we often think of time as akin to a line, or that we say at other times that it flows or moves, or that further, we sometimes see the now as a container for passing contents, even if these images ultimately prove not only inadequate but even misleading. We are not simply *mistaken* in noting such things, as if we were making pronouncements about a discipline we’ve never learned much about ourselves; something of the time-phenomenon shows up in them. For this reason, at least, a survey of these observations can be helpful. And yet, there is a more important reason for presenting such a survey: claims about time which seem to have a certain legitimacy nonetheless contradict each other, and thus in a different sense leave us completely in the dark about the whole matter. We find that we perhaps don’t really know anything about time at all. This puts us in a bewildering predicament: for why should it be so hard to conceive of time, when apparently, we know nothing *better*? After all (as I’ve already worked a bit to demonstrate) all of our experiences appear to be subtended by something like time-consciousness. We *must* know time, and know it well. And yet, to paraphrase Augustine, our knowledge about time flees from us the moment we’re asked about it.

⁴⁷ McTaggart’s “B-series” would correspond to a “static” “time-line,” and his “A-series,” to a “moving” one. See: “The Unreality of Time” in *Time*, ed. by Jonathan Westphal and Carl Levenson (Indianapolis, Hackett); 1993. The doctrine that “only the now is” is sometimes called “presentism;” George Herbert Mead offers perhaps one of the more interesting versions of this; see *The Philosophy of the Present* (Amherst, Prometheus Books); 2002.

⁴⁸ Aristotle, *Physics*, trans. by R.P. Hardie and R.K. Gaye, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle, Volume 1*, ed. by Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, Princeton University Press); 1984: p. 816-818 (217b29-218b20). Hereafter listed as *PH*.

What do we experience when we nonthematically experience time? What is it that we are so fully and intimately acquainted with in our acquaintance with time that we find ourselves unable to speak coherently of the matter? Luckily, we don't have to reinvent the wheel here. Many thinkers have worked through the "common" or "everyday," nonthematic experience of time with some precision already; we might as well take a look at some of these analyses. I'll actually begin by going over the analysis of time that Aristotle advances in his *Physics*—according to Heidegger, the "first great treatise on time."⁴⁹ I'm not picking Aristotle's account out of the proverbial hat, though; in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger works through this analysis as a sort of propaedeutic on the way to giving his own analysis of the time-phenomenon (and later, of temporality), and since I plan to eventually turn to some of Heidegger's analyses (among others), this seems like as good a place to begin as any. For his part, Heidegger appears compelled to justify his use of Aristotle's analysis in advance, citing, for example, its historical influence. This is no doubt quite decent of him, but in order to save a bit of time, I won't bother to do the same myself. There shouldn't be any need for me to do so, in fact, because the usefulness of the Aristotelian analysis of time can only truly prove itself to us if, as we work through this analysis, it helps us to reach a more assured conception of the time-phenomenon.⁵⁰

§ 5

In his *Physics*, Aristotle famously describes time as "αριθμὸς κινήσεως κατὰ τὸ

⁴⁹ *BP*: p. 231.

⁵⁰ Before beginning this analysis, I should note that I'm completely uninterested in justifying my reading of the Aristotelian text as its correct interpretation (or Heidegger's, for that matter, if my own reading somehow differs from his). Of course, I think it's accurate, but this is beside the point, for in turning to the Aristotelian account of time, my only purpose will be to help bring the phenomenon of time to light. Thus, if the analysis I'll be drawing from Aristotle's account does in fact prove helpful in doing so, it wouldn't bother me at all to ultimately learn that it actually trades upon some misreading of Aristotle's text. Or at the least (and this is what is important for this study), it wouldn't in any way alter the force of the argument I'll be offering.

πρότερον και ύστερον,”⁵¹ or “number of motion in respect of ‘before’ and ‘after.’”⁵² Time, on Aristotle’s account, is something which is “counted” (Aristotle explicitly says that time is number in the sense of “what is counted” as opposed to “that with which we count”⁵³); and it is what is counted in regards to the “before” and “after” which characterizes a movement *as* a movement, or put more generally, which characterizes any sort of change, transition, or occurrence as such. Something is numbered or counted of an occurrence with respect to its “before” and “after,” Aristotle claims, and this, on his account, is time.

What can we make of this? Aristotle’s “definition” of time poses numerous problems, not the least of which is that, *prima facie*, time hardly seems to be anything like a number of anything, or something which is “counted.” Perhaps even more worrisome, however, is the fact that this definition appears circular, given that the notions of “before” and “after” (or even worse, of “earlier” and “later,” as πρότερον and ύστερον can also be translated) are quite evidently *temporal* notions, or at least, serve as such in this definition. But if this is so, then the purported definition collapses: time, on Aristotle’s account, would simply be that which is counted in regards to time, an account which, if it is not simply false, would in any event apparently tell us nothing. So much for Aristotle’s account of time, then? Legions of first year philosophy students, no doubt thinking themselves clever enough to seize upon an error that Aristotle was unable to recognize himself, have thus “refuted” his account. Why should we think any differently, here?

If Aristotle’s account does not simply trade on a “circular definition,” then there must be some sense in which the phenomenon of time that he describes, the duration of occurrences that we experience in our everyday or unreflective consciousness of things, in fact depends upon a

⁵¹ Aristotle, *Aristotelis Opera, Edidit Academia Regia Borussica*, ed. by Immanuel Bekker (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft); 1960: p. 219b8. Hereafter listed as *AO*.

⁵² *PH*: p. 821 (219b8).

⁵³ See, for instance, *BP*: p. 239.

“prior” grasp of time which serves as its condition of possibility. Time, as that which is somehow “counted” of an occurrence in regards to its “before” and “after,” would “be there” *as* counted, or perhaps, as the “counted out” articulation in the experiencing of an occurrence, only because the subject who experiences time as such would *already* find himself or herself directed towards the “before” and “after”—i.e., towards the past and the future—in some way. Put differently, time would be experienced as the temporally counted only because the subject, already somehow familiar with temporal “notions” of a sort, would “temporalizingly” “count” or “number” it. Yet it is not immediately obvious how any of this might be the case.

I’m going to try to make the matter less opaque. I’ll begin by briefly going over the sense in which Aristotle calls time “number” (hint: it isn’t because there is anything overtly “mathematical” about time-consciousness itself). After that, I’ll examine the sense in which the time-phenomenon refers to the “before” and “after” of an occurrence. At that point it should have begun to become apparent in what way time, as it is experienced nonthematically, is something “numbered” or “counted” of movement in this reference to a “before” and “after.”

Because I’m not interested in Aristotle’s text here in order to explicate it for its own sake (and especially not to offer a historical survey of its various readings) but rather, merely insofar as it might help to illuminate the phenomenon of time, I won’t spend too much time on textual analysis. For my purposes it will be enough to note three reasons why time can be called “number.” Firstly, then: in the experience of time, we always seem to apprehend a greater or lesser “amount” of it, an “amount” which we “count out” in a certain sense, which is why Aristotle says that time is in a certain sense a “measure.”⁵⁴ No doubt, in our everyday experience of time we don’t literally count out numbers to mark its passing, as the child playing “hide and seek” would, for instance. The time-phenomenon isn’t something we represent to ourselves via

⁵⁴ For instance, *PH*: p. 825 (220b33).

numerical symbols, and by experiencing it nonthematically, we precisely do *not* explicitly keep track of the “amount of time” passing as we go about our business. Nevertheless, time *does* seem to us to “add up” as it passes, or else, to be taken away or “subtracted.” There is something like amount here, and even if the relation to an overtly numerical amount seems analogical, time is thus like number in one sense. It is like number in still others: for secondly, we also grasp time according to an ordering, as if it were arranged (or perhaps, as if it arranged something) in a fashion not wholly unlike the order of numerals the child playing hide-and-seek passes through in counting (whether aloud or merely “in his or her head”). As I’ve already indicated, Aristotle claims that this “ordering” always has to do with the “before” and “after” of movement,⁵⁵ a matter that I’ll be returning to shortly. Of course, not everything ordered is ordered according to amount (for instance, an alphabetized series), but it seems that the time-phenomenon, like something numbered, is. So it is like number here, also. Finally, time, like number, appears to be independent of that which is “counted,” for though our experience of time has some sort of a connection to motion, or so Aristotle insists, it is as little dependent upon any *particular* motion or occurrence as a number or amount is dependent upon any particular entity or set of entities which, in being counted, it “counts out” or keeps ordered as being of such-and-such an amount. “Number is not bound to what it numbers,” as Heidegger notes in his reading: it “can determine something without itself being dependent, for its part, on the intrinsic content and mode of being of what is counted. I can say ‘ten horses.’ Here the ten indeed determines the horses, but ten has nothing of the character of horses and their mode of being. Ten is not a limit of horses as horses;

⁵⁵ “But we apprehend time only when we have marked motion, marking it by 'before' and 'after'; and it is only when we have perceived 'before' and 'after' in motion that we say that time has elapsed. Now we mark them by judging that A and B are different, and that some third thing is intermediate to them.” *PH*: p. 820 (219a22-24).

for in counting with it I can just as well determine ships, triangles, or trees.”⁵⁶ Of course, it is doubtful that we could speak of number if there were nothing for numbers to count—in this sense, number is dependent for its very possibility on the counted or countable *in general*—but obviously numbers (or rather, something like “numbered amounts”) remain independent of any *particular* thing or type of thing which they come to number in this or that concrete act of numbering. According to Aristotle, the same can be said of time in regard to motions, for although we could not speak of time if nothing were movable or changeable (this is implied by the claim that time is something counted of motion in respect to its before and after, or that “we apprehend time only when we have marked motion”⁵⁷), nevertheless, time remains independent of any particular motion; it certainly does not terminate when a particular motion ceases.

This admittedly partial account of the Aristotelian notion of time as “number” should nonetheless be sufficient to allow us to move on to the next element of Aristotle’s formulation. What is meant, then, by the “before or after” of a motion or occurrence? As Heidegger is quick to point out, Aristotle deals with this issue elsewhere in the *Physics*, where he argues that motion or κινήσεως is primarily characterized as μεταβολης, which is to say, by its being (in Heidegger’s words) “a turn or change or better a transition *from something to something*.”⁵⁸ The determination εκ τινος εις τι, “from something to something,” defines any motion *as such*, no matter what type, on Aristotle’s account⁵⁹—Aristotle is taking κινήσεως or “motion” here in the most general sense possible (which is why I’ve mostly been using the word “occurrence,” which I find more general than the English term “motion” and thus more fitting in this context). It’s

⁵⁶ *BP*: p. 249 Unlike the number which numbers some object, on the other hand, the noticed order of a spectrum is nothing other than the continual alteration of some color field, and is thus inextricable from the colors it orders.

⁵⁷ See fn #55.

⁵⁸ *BP*: p. 242 (my italics).

⁵⁹ *PH*: p. 838 (225a1).

pretty obvious that the determination “from something to something” defines *spatial* motion.⁶⁰ a movement in space simply involves an object going *from* one spatial position *to* another, “ἐκ τινος εἰς τι.” The point that Aristotle means to make, however (and that Heidegger, as the quote above implies, wants to stress), is that *every* type of “motion” or “occurrence” is likewise determined according to a transition ἐκ τινος εἰς τι, “from something to something.” A qualitative transformation (αλλοιώσεις) such as, for instance, an object becoming a different color (perhaps as it’s heated up, or for some other reason) is characterized by the object’s “moving” or transitioning from one hue (or value of a hue) to another, i.e., *from* “something” (one hue or value) *to* “something” (a *different* hue or value, or perhaps even the same value, in the case of something like “qualitative rest,” in which an object’s quality remains the same, relatively speaking, in relation to other, changing, things). Every type of motion or occurrence similarly exhibits an “ἐκ τινος εἰς τι” structure, and can only be understood as such if it is to be understood as a motion or occurrence at all. In fact, this determination is general enough that Heidegger can claim that on Aristotle’s account an object at rest is merely “the moving thing in its limiting case” (a notion I’ll say more about later on, but that I’ve already touched upon in my remark about “qualitative rest” just above).⁶¹ In any event: whenever we encounter a movement, change, or occurrence of any kind, we always apprehend the manner in which it involves a transition ἐκ τινος εἰς τι, “from something to something,” which fundamentally characterizes the motion, etc., *as such*; otherwise, we’d never actually recognize the motion *as* a motion.

Strictly speaking, in fact, whenever we “perceive” a movement, we do not perceive the movement *per se*; instead, we perceive the moving *thing*, the *being* in motion—whether, again,

⁶⁰ Which Aristotle refers to with the term *κίνησις*, and which the English term “motion” primarily connotes: hence, the relatively problematic nature of the English term “motion” here: for the reader naturally considers this sort of occurrence to the exclusion of all other types.

⁶¹ *BP*: p. 252.

this “motion” is a change of position, or of quality, etc. We thus perceive the motion by perceiving the thing as it “goes through” these states, i.e., by perceiving some being transition “from something to something,” whether the transition is from spatial location to spatial location, from qualitative state to qualitative state, or so forth: Heidegger thus writes that “in experiencing motion we keep to the moving thing, and we thus see the motion *with* the moving thing but do not see it as such.”⁶² Not only this, however: the motion or change which is, again, always the motion or change of a *being* (a being’s transition “from something to something”—even if the two determinations coincide, so that, relative to other changing things, we only perceive the being as being at rest), always “traverses” a *continuum*, or put differently, involves a continuous “running through” of the states of the being through which the being transitions, the phases or “places” that the being is perceived as transitioning “from” and “to” whenever we perceive it as being in motion.

When Aristotle speaks of a before and after in regards to movement, he means nothing other than the “ἐκ τινος” and the “εἰς τι,” the “from something” and the “to something” of the being’s transition which characterizes the motion as such. What does it mean, then, to say that time is what is counted of a motion in regards to its “from something” and “to something,” a being’s “going” from a “there” to a “here?”

We already saw that the time-phenomenon is at the very least akin to number in that when we experience time nonthematically, we nevertheless encounter a sort of amount that orders what it orders via the marking of the amount. To experience time would be to mark out an “*amount*” of *movement*, and to order or articulate the movement by this marking. But in respect of *what* would this “amount” be grasped as something like an “amount of movement,” by which the movement would be ordered as such? In respect of the “before” and “after,” or the “from

⁶² BP: p. 244.

something” and “to something,” of the movement, if Aristotle is to be trusted. We experience something like time, he claims, whenever we encounter anything like the “from something” and “to something” of a movement, which are articulated or ordered precisely insofar as a “number” or a “counted amount” of the movement, or rather, a “counted amount” of the continually joined “phases” of the movement, is “counted” *between* them, i.e., an “amount” of the positions, states, etc. of a being in its transitioning, which when taken together *as* phases of the transitioning, distinguish and link the “before” and “after” in a single stroke, thereby presenting the movement as a being’s “coming from” and “going to” these positions or states.

Time is thus an “amount of movement,” but it certainly does not appear as an amount of movement in the sense of the magnitude of the change or transition that a movement always involves (such as the distance traversed between the beginning and end points of a movement in space, or the amount of difference between, let’s say, the original and ultimate hue of an object in a certain qualitative change); nor, however, is time that which is used in the *measurement* of an amount counted in respect to the before and after of a movement, i.e., according to standards or units (“the apple took five seconds to drop,” etc.)—which is just to say, time is not a measurement of time⁶³—for here we are dealing with number as that which is *used* to count, and not as that which *is* counted or the amount *itself* (e.g., a second is used to *count* time, and, as a counting unit, is not itself what is counted of motion regarding its before and after).⁶⁴ Neither, for

⁶³ For instance, see: *PH*: p. 825 (220b15-32).

⁶⁴ Aristotle writes that “[n]ot only do we measure the movement by the time, but also the time by the movement, because they define each other” *PH*: p. 825 (220b15-16). To give an example: a duration, such as an amount of something like the “phases” of an apple’s dropping between its release and its hitting the floor (the duration of an occurring), can itself be measured, in this case, let’s say, as “five seconds.” “Five seconds” is not, strictly speaking, an amount of the *movement* as is time, but is instead an amount of *time*. The time can be measured; this is what standards or units of time do. And yet: a second, as a unit of time, is defined by a movement, such as the movement of a watch’s smallest hand, while this movement itself, insofar as it is a movement (the one “ticking” of a watch hand), is itself “measured” by time as the “amount” of motion (or a stretch of continua) in relation to the movement’s before and after (the beginning and ending point of the single “ticking” of the watch hand). In this way, time and movement “define each other” (define each other via measuring, that is, even beyond the way in

that matter, is time equivalent to the “phases” of movement taken singly or as a totality, i.e., with the states or positions of a being, which, when “added up,” instead give the *movement*, and not the time implicated in it. The “amount” of movement here at issue, instead, is equivalent to something like the number *counted* of a continual “stretch” of these states or positions, an amount which can manifest itself as such only when the “ἐκ τινος” and “εἰς τι” of the being’s transition “through” these states has been noted or marked out.⁶⁵ This is what Aristotle means by calling time the number of motion in respect to its before and after.

If this is the case, then in being aware of time, we must in some sense “take together” the before and after, or the whole continuum of states comprising the “from something” and “to something” of a being’s transitioning. The being taken together or “synthesized” (“placed” in the same “grasp,” so to speak) of these states or position is precisely their being numbered or counted. Yet as Heidegger points out, the “phases” of the being’s motion do not coexist for us as

which movement appears in the definition of time itself as the number of it regarding its before and after), but the mutual definition is not symmetrical: the “measurement” of movement which is time must come before the measurement *of* time (i.e., before the temporal conventions, by which time is measured).

For more on the matter of time and its measurement, see pg. 47-50.

⁶⁵ An analogy with a usual case of counting might help clarify the matter more fully. An amount of horses is counted, ten of them; here, horses are counted, but ten, which is its number or amount (the number counted of the horses), is not a horse, nor the totality of them. Nor is it the unit of counting, in this case, one horse, by which ten horses is enumerated. We can just as easily find the same amount elsewhere: ten other horses, ten ships or triangles, etc.

In the case of time, then, we have a movement, which is counted, but time is not that movement: it is the amount counted of it. Different movements can thus take up the “same time” (we want to say the “same amount of time,” partially to distinguish them from being simultaneous, but also for reasons I’ll get to just below). As an amount counted, time is counted by a unit: in this case, something like the phase of a movement. Time as amount is as little the unit (the “single” phase) as it is the totality of phases (the movement itself).

What can we make of the “single phase?” Many of the problems encountered in understanding time as amount come down to the fact that, as a “part” of a continuum, the “phase” can always be divided itself (no doubt the account would, at face, seem simpler to grasp, were we able to deal with mere indivisible phases). This means that the phase is always *itself* a motion, and thus, that it itself “takes” time (there is amount in respect to its before and after): thus, insofar as any movement can be broken down into “sub-movements,” a time can always be measured by its “parts.” This is why “a time” is always in a certain sense an “amount of time.” For more, see footnote #64. (I should note that though Aristotle is convinced that time is infinitely divisible, the question of whether the division of time must at some point cease has no bearing here whatsoever. The account here advanced does not imply either the infinite divisibility of time nor its contrary, and need not, or rather *ought* not, take a position on the matter, for this question falls squarely *without* the bounds of phenomenological inquiry.)

though they were points on a line: “if we merely re-count the individual places in the motion [whether these “places” are positions in space, phases in a qualitative transition, or whatnot], reckoning together all the individual theres and heres, we do not experience any motion”⁶⁶—but thus, we do not encounter any time, as its “number.” Time is what is counted of motion, but again, only in regards to its *before* and *after*. We thus experience motion because the “from something,” the “there” or continuum of states from which the moving thing is grasped as transitioning, is recognized in the “counting” experience of time precisely *as before*, in the sense of the earlier or antecedent; and the “to something,” the “here” to which the moving thing transitions, is recognized in the counting experience of time precisely *as after*, in the sense of the later or subsequent. The “from something” of a being’s motion must be *retained*, then, and the “to something” of the motion, anticipated or “*protained*” (in the phenomenological lingo), or we would never experience anything like movement, nor time, as the “number” of it, counted of the transitioning of a being (e.g., its being in motion or even, at the limit, at rest). Retaining the before and protaining the after, a transition appears along with the duration it “spans;” Heidegger thus writes that “the counting perception of motion as motion is at the same time the perception of what is counted as time.”⁶⁷

The “counting”—i.e., the retaining and protaining awareness, or in a word, the *time-consciousness*—which encounters the motion as a motion by marking its “before” and “after” marks it out by marking time. But this is just to say that, in each case, it marks a *now*: “το φερονεμο ακολουθει το νυν,”⁶⁸ Aristotle writes, which Heidegger translates and then glosses as “the now follows the moving thing, the object making the transition from one place to

⁶⁶ *BP*: p. 245.

⁶⁷ *BP*: p. 257.

⁶⁸ *AO*: p. 219b22.

another.”⁶⁹ Every conscious experience, I’ve argued, involves a nonthematic consciousness of time. But this nonthematic consciousness of time constitutes itself precisely as the experience of the now.

§ 6

This should give us enough of Aristotle’s account of time to go on. Maybe it isn’t obvious that this is so; for I claimed above that the Aristotelian account of time grasps the essential characteristics of the unreflective time-phenomenon, and yet the “now” no doubt still remains murky. How is the now precisely what is experienced in our nonthematic consciousness of time? How, in “counting out” the now, do we mark out the movement or transitioning of a being in respect to its “before” and “after?” We can begin to clarify this difficulty by noting something very obvious (which was already presupposed in everything I described above): that is, anytime we perceive such-and-such a being, we always relate ourselves to it as it shows itself “in the now.” This may seem so obvious that it can go without being stated; for in perceiving some object (i.e., sensorially) here before me, I perceive it as it is “now,” not as it will be tomorrow or as it was yesterday. I perceive the being in the now. But as I argued above, we must be nonthematically conscious of duration in every possible conscious experience.⁷⁰ This would imply that in perceiving a being in its “nowness” or “now-being,” we are at once nonthematically conscious of some duration, i.e., of the time-phenomenon. The Aristotelian formulation, as I have unfolded it, would say as much. But how, in perceiving a being as it is “now,” does the subject exhibit a nonthematic consciousness of time? It is important to understand this in a thoroughgoing fashion.

⁶⁹ *BP*: p. 246.

⁷⁰ A consciousness of duration, we saw, wholly “prior” to even the most basic *thematic* grasp of duration, and thus *a fortiori*, prior to any of the various attentive modifications of the time-phenomenon following from this most basic thematization, which is always possible given sufficient “motivation.”

Right now, we'll note, I'm perceiving some being which is involved in some sort of "motion," in the exceedingly broad sense of this term that I've been using. The "cursor" on my computer monitor is "blinking" as I pause to think about what I should type next; or, my tea cup has just been snatched away by a barista, even though I haven't finished drinking my tea. In being perceptually conscious of the being or beings involved in this or that occurrence (the "cursor," which "blinks;" the tea cup, which is moved), I necessarily "take note" of them (the beings) in relation to the "something" from which their motion or the occurrence in which they are involved *originated*. Were I not to be aware of the being's position or state *right now* as a later "step" in the transition "*from something*," and crucially, were I not to be struck by this awareness in the *very act* of experiencing or perceiving the being *as it is now*, there would be no experience of the being as being in motion at all. Thus, the cursor, which is now "on," is so experienced (*as being now "on"*) as a "step" in the qualitative change of its blinking which was earlier "off," and which "*came from*" this being "off;" and the teacup, which is now over there in the barista's hand by the sink, is so experienced (*as being now over "there"*) as a step or phase of its movement *from* the table in front of me—a movement, again, *from* the table, *to* its position now at the sink (into which the barista will *then* pour my still quite drinkable tea).

The experienced now, or better, the experience of a being as *now-being* in such-and-such a state, position, etc., is thus experienced *as such* only in relation to the earlier or the retained to which it is "juxtaposed" or with which it is "taken together" so that, as the experienced now, it is at once the experienced duration of a being's movement or motion (or more generally, of the occurrence in which the being is involved) which is thereby made manifest. This is the fullest sense in which time, encountered as the now, is that which is counted of a motion in respect to its "before" or "from something." My teacup, *now* over by the sink, is "counted" as such in regards

to the before of its motion, which is to say, its change of place *from* the table, by means of a counting which takes the two, or rather, the continuum of places, together. Counted out as a transition “from something” (from a continuum of “before” phases), the experienced “now-being” simply is what we nonthematically experience whenever we nonthematically experience time.

Once more, for emphasis: were the experienced now (or rather, a being’s being-right-now in such-and-such a state, position, etc.) *not* to be experienced in this sense, were what we experience *not* in fact experienced precisely in respect of the retained “before” without which the now would never actually show itself as such (as is the case, we will later see, for the mere sentience of a nonconscious experiencing, which is characterized by “immediate sensation” as it affects a living being without the intervention of any real consciousness of time), then we *could never be conscious of anything like motion*, or better, of a being’s being involved in it. By encountering the now in respect of that which is not now but *from which* that which *is* now “has come from” or “is proceeding” (even if this is only its being in the same position or state, i.e., at rest, relative to other movements or alterations in which the thing at this particular junction is not itself caught up), duration is made conscious and the movement (or rest) of a being appears.

In like fashion, we can understand the way in which time, “perceived” in the duration of the now, is that which is counted in respect to a motion’s “*after*” or “*to something*.” I experience my teacup’s being-now in the barista’s hand by the sink as being so not merely as a step along the way from its being-*before* on the table, but also as a step along the way to its being-*after* turned up in the sink. Of course, unlike the being’s “being-before,” its “being-after” is not fully determined here, but instead owes of various “degrees” of determinate anticipation, depending in large part on my familiarity (or rather, on the familiarity of the subject in question) with the

things perceived and with the occurrences in which the perceived things are perceived as being now caught up. In horror I watch the barista transporting my teacup to the sink, understanding all too well what is to come next. In unfamiliar circumstances, no doubt, the protained “to something” of the moving being is less determinate; and yet for all that, the being, perceived in its being-now, is always as much perceived to be going “to something” (to such-and-such a state, even if only the same as in rest) as it is perceived to be coming “from something” (its before).⁷¹

To say that I experience my teacup’s being-*now* in the barista’s hand by the sink as being so as a step along the way from its being-before on the table to its being-after turned up in the sink, is to say that the now-being of the cup—or further, of any being whatsoever—is experienced *as such*, as the way the being *now* is, because this “position” or “qualitative state,” etc. (i.e., the cup’s being in the barista’s hand by the sink) is experienced as a transitioning from earlier, and to later, “positions” or “qualitative states” via an experiencing that keeps this state in relation to the others and thus manifests the transition or motion as such. In a word: the now, marking out a transitioning, is always experienced as a “bridging over” onto the no-longer and not-yet, and so, is always experienced as the “counted out” number or “amount” of some motion or occurrence in respect to its continuum of “to somethings” and “from somethings,” the “before” and “after” from which and to which a being in motion transitions. But this is just to say that the now is what is experienced “implicitly” as duration in our nonthematic consciousness of time.⁷²

⁷¹ Surprise, an ever present possibility of perceiving, would be impossible were this not the case. Even when we say “nothing would surprise me right now,” we well know it to be hyperbole. It is simply that the “to something” counted by the now remains far more “open” than it is in most other experiences, so that surprise is much less likely.

These considerations can be sharpened by working through protention (as well as retention) as I will later later on in this chapter.

⁷² Put summarily: A being, perceived as being in this or that state or position, is perceived as such only by being perceived as “coming from” and “going to” other states or positions, thereby “giving” the movement of the be

With the help of Aristotle's formulation, I've been able to provisionally clarify the nonthematic time-phenomenon. The duration of experienced occurrences which we are conscious-of in consciously attending, *not* to anything like time, but instead, to those beings to which we relate ourselves in perceptual consciousness, is simply the experienced *now*, the duration of a being's transitioning or rest (or in general, of the occurrence in which the being is experienced as being involved). Because this is so, however, the experienced now or nonthematic time-phenomenon must have a threefold structure to its appearing, i.e., a thrice articulated sense. Firstly, there is the "from-something" or a being's being-no-longer in such-and-such a state or position, the *retained* or before-being which is "held onto" (re-tained) in the experience of a perceived being's now-being as that from which it is transitioning. There is, secondly, the "to-something" or the being's being-to-come, the *protained* or after-being which is likewise "held in advance" (pro-tained) in the experience; and finally, what we might call the "*maintained*,"⁷³ i.e., that which is "taken" or "held at hand" (main-tained) as the perceived being's now-being, precisely by being reckoned in relation to the retained and protained in the manifestation of the being in its transitioning (or rest). A being's now-being, again, is grasped in a "holding" that keeps the before and after "in hand;" in this way, the now always "spans" or "bridges over" onto the before and after, and is thus always experienced as a duration.

The duration to which we are delivered in experiencing the now is what we primarily experience in experiencing time, i.e., the time-phenomenon always grasped nonthematically so long as there is consciousness of anything. The question that remains—and it is *the* question, insofar as time-consciousness is concerned—is "how" the subject is thus conscious of time. To

ing—a movement always marked out by the amount of the "phases" continually "traversed" between the two (the "from something" and "to something"); i.e., is always marked out by time, encountered as the enduring *now*.

⁷³ This amounts to something like the present "phase" of an object, which is given by the phase of perceiving self-constituted by what Husserl, from his L-manuscripts on, calls "primal presentation" (*Urrepresentation*). By "maintaining," then, I will mean what Husserl calls "primal presentation."

be more precise: we've discovered the "how" of time's *appearance* in terms of the "form" of its appearing (i.e., "how does time appear?" as "what does experienced time get experienced 'like'"), but not in terms of the *constitution* of this "form" of its appearing or its sense; which is to say, we've discovered the *noema* of time-consciousness but not the *noesis*. To understand time-consciousness, we must seek out the *intentional correlate* of the time-phenomenon, the subject's "temporal apprehension" which takes time into its grasp or allows the now to (nonthematically, in the first place) appear.

The time-phenomenon always points back to this, its intentional correlate or the subject's time-consciousness: it is in fact this "pointing back" that could have led us, were we unwary, to hastily conclude that Aristotle's "definition" of time is circular. Instead, we can now see that the purported circularity of Aristotle's account is instead its greatest virtue; for, in complete opposition to any sort of "question-begging," the reference to temporal notions that Aristotle's account presupposes refers us to the issue of constitutive time-consciousness, and does so only because the account grasps the essential features of the time-phenomenon with such thoroughness and insight. Time, Aristotle claims, is "number" or is "counted:" it is thus only because the subject "counts" it—i.e., because the subject is conscious of time, and possesses, or is perhaps possessed by, some sort of temporal "pre-understanding"—that time is able to manifest itself.⁷⁴ "The Aristotelian definition of time does not contain a tautology within itself," Heidegger insists: "instead Aristotle speaks from the very constraint of the matter itself.

⁷⁴ *PH*: p. 832-833 (223a22-223a28). Aristotle, of course, is thus led to wonder if time can be without the subject—though the question regarding how time "is," or in what manner it commands beings independent of the subject's time-consciousness, has again been bracketed in this study. It remains to be seen if, in a certain sense, this bracketing will "come off" at any point in these pages, i.e., if in the phenomenological analysis of time-consciousness something of time will appear absolutely presupposed, thus giving us a guiding line towards a phenomenologically clarified metaphysics of time. As I stated above, however, it will not be my goal to determine whether or not this is the case and what can be made of it if so, even if the results of my inquiry might turn out to be of the greatest use for an inquiry of the sort.

Aristotle's definition of time is not in any respect a definition in the academic sense. It characterizes time by defining how what we call time becomes *accessible*. It is an *access definition* or *access characterization*[...]. *By its own phenomenological content* common time points back to an original time, *temporality*.⁷⁵

What, then, of time-consciousness? How does temporality unfold itself, so that something like a “pre-understanding” of time is always exhibited whenever the subject perceptually relates himself or herself to some being, and so that the now, which spans, is counted in relation to the before and after of the being's movements or rests? The ultimate intention of my study is to draw back from time-consciousness to the ethical relation (i.e., to show that time-consciousness is in a certain sense spurred on by the obligation into which each one of us is placed by another), but in order to do so I'll of course first need to draw back from the now to time-consciousness. I am now in a position to do just this.

Clearly, we've *already* come across something of time-consciousness, in fact, in my clarification of the now or the nonthematic time-phenomenon; for the retained, maintained, and protained all represent structural features of the now only because the subject somehow retains, maintains, and protains (i.e., because as subjects, we “temporalizingly count”), or, put more precisely, only because a retaining, maintaining, and protaining always hold sway in the subject's perceptual compartments. But insofar as the now is nonthematic—which is to say, insofar as the proper theme of perceiving is not time, but the perceived *being*—retaining, maintaining, and protaining cannot be understood as anything like acts attending to the past, present, and future: they can only be understood properly if we instead understand them as components of the *act of perception*, temporally articulating the manifestation of a perceived object so that, grasped in its “nowness,” it can manifest itself as moving or at rest. Correlatively,

⁷⁵ BP: p. 256-257.

the retained, maintained, and protained must be understood according to the precise manner in which a perceived being shows itself in its transitioning.

It will thus be crucial for me to show how a being shows itself in perception. This is a theme I've barely touched upon so far, for despite my insistence that we remember that it isn't a motion, but a moving *being*, that we perceive, far too often I've merely inserted the perceived being extrinsically into my analysis of the now (for reasons of expediency, of course!), "tacking on" the object of perception in such a way that has made it impossible up until now to grasp the way in which its manifestation is *intrinsically* temporalized—and so, the way in which the three structural "moments" of time-consciousness grasp the time-phenomenon as part and parcel of the apprehension of this or that being, whenever the subject relates himself or herself to a being perceptually. In order to truly understand how our consciousness of time opens us up to the nonthematically grasped time-phenomenon, then, we must look more closely at the manner in which a being comes to show itself to our perceiving. In this way, we'll be able to discover what in this is a matter of temporal determination and so, is *essentially* connected to the manifestation of time.

So far, I've characterized the nonthematically experienced time-phenomenon as the *now* which, spanning a duration, measures out the before and after of a being's motion or, more generally, of an occurrence in which an object of perception is involved. However, I've been content throughout to deal with the notion of the perceived *object*, or the being that moves or changes, merely as some thing which "just so happens" to move or change (or even to stay the same, relatively speaking) in this or that occurrence. Is the object simply "there" for us, as a sort of "bald" or irreducible fact, so that it can then somehow get itself involved in a change or transition, or rather, get grasped by us as such? Or is it in fact the case that a being can only come forward as an object of perception insofar as a retaining, maintaining, and protaining "time-constitutingly" seize upon it by allowing it to become manifest in its now-being, so that in order to truly understand time-consciousness we will have to understand it as that which, first and before all else, allows beings to come forward or show themselves to us? My negligible treatment of objects has been sufficient for a provisional account of the time-phenomenon, but in order to thoroughly clarify this phenomenon and its constituting correlate, I can no longer let the matter rest as such. But what more can be said of objects, of a perceived being given as such?

Before I begin my analysis of the perceived object-phenomenon, or what Husserl will call "objective sense," I'll take a moment to define the word "perception" and its correlate, an "object." Broadly speaking, we can (along with Husserl, in his "wider interpretation" of the word "perception") use the term "object of perception" to mean any "object" whatsoever, as it is given in the sort of act in which "objects" of the sort come to be presented.⁷⁶ For example, the meaning of some word or the sense of a concept is, in a certain sense, "perceived" in the thought that

⁷⁶ See, for instance LI VI §45.

seizes upon it, and is thus the “object” of such a “perception” (i.e., of the thought). In order to analyze the manifestation of objects insofar as this bears a special relationship to the time-phenomenon, should we turn our focus to acts such as thinking acts and their “ideal” objective correlates, or even, simply to presenting acts of consciousness *in general*, along with their correlated “objects” of *whatever* kind? Or is there a notion of an “object” and of its “perceptually” constituting consciousness whose analysis would give us access to the nonthematic character of time-consciousness in an exemplary sense?

If we desired, we certainly *could* analyze the way in which an act such as a thought grasps its “object” (a word’s meaning, for instance) according to the temporal unfolding proper to it. (Aristotle, for one, points out that we perceive the “movement” of our thoughts even when we aren’t perceiving the movement of any object within the world: certainly, this “movement” might be described.⁷⁷) This, however, is not the path I’ll take. Instead, I’ll focus on the manifestation of objects of perception in the *strict* sense, the appearing of a “physical” or “natural” being grasped *sensorially* (i.e., perception in the sense of *sense* perception, Husserl’s “narrow” interpretation of the word). Is this an arbitrary limitation? No: for sense perception, properly understood, is the subject’s primary form of commerce with beings; the act of sense perceiving thus “presents” the time-phenomenon in its most “everyday” or familiar form (which is just what Aristotle’s analysis of the now has disclosed for us). We encounter time chiefly in our perceptual dealings with beings, things moving about in this way or that or caught up in all the occurrences in which things inevitably get caught up; an analysis of sense perception or of the sensorial manifestation of beings will thus allow us to investigate time-constituting consciousness in the most straightforward manner, particularly in regards to its nonthematizing character. What, then, can be said of the manifestation of an object of perception in the strict

⁷⁷ PH: p. 819 (219a4-219a5).

sense, an object of sense perception, perceived sensorially in its movements or rests?

If an object is to appear as moving or changing, or even as at rest, it must appear as the *same* object throughout the occurrence in which it is perceived as being involved. A certain unity must obtain throughout all of the phases of the object's transitioning, despite the differing positions it occupies or qualitative states it boasts; the object, that is, must show up as the selfsame in its "from something" and "to something." If it is not immediately evident how this is the case, the matter can be clarified by analyzing how a being is manifest to us in the first place whenever sense perception takes hold of it as its object. By doing so, we will come to discover the essential structure of *objective sense* (i.e., of a being insofar as it comes to manifest itself to sensorial perceiving), along with the essential relation of objective sense to temporality.

How, then, is a being manifest such that it can show itself as the self-same throughout all the phases of the transition or occurrence in which it is perceived as being involved? We can start to clarify the matter by considering Husserl's preliminary summation of it: an "object," he writes, always "calls out to us, as it were: there is still more to see here, turn me so you can see all my sides, let your gaze peruse me, draw closer to me, open me up, divide me up; keep on looking me over again and again, turning me to see all sides. You will get to know me like this[...]."⁷⁸ The idea seems clear enough: an object gives itself to us as having "always more" to give than is given in any single presentation of it, so that we can "get to know" the object only by perceiving it in a variety of different situations. Setting aside, perhaps, the unfortunate allusion to a sort of violation here (a theme to which I may need to return much later on), this nonetheless only goes so far towards clarifying the nature of the phenomenon. If we can discover that an object always gives itself as "possessing" more than can be grasped in any one presentation of it,

⁷⁸ Edmund Husserl, *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Syntheses; lectures on transcendental logic*, trans. Anthony J. Steinbock (Kluwer Academic Publishing, Dordrecht, the Netherlands); 2001: p. 41. Hereafter listed as *AP*.

which is to say, in any one phase of perceiving, then we'll have come some way towards understanding how an object can be given as the self-same thing throughout a perception of it, or of its being involved in this or that occurrence. But why does the object always give itself in this way, as “possessing more?” And how is this “excess” thereby grasped?

A perceived object shows itself as extant, and thus able to be “at hand” (or “in attendance”) for its perceiver. By giving itself as extant, the object makes itself manifest as being both *spatially extended* (in three spatial dimensions, for sensorial perceiving) as well as *perception-independent* (which is to say, independent, in its spatially-extended extantness, of the perception to which it gives itself as such; or, put differently, as being “here” whether or not we were in fact “there” to perceive it). These two structural moments of extantness—the spatial extension and perception-independence of the perceived being—are in fact thoroughly interrelated; for in perceiving a being as spatially extended (which is, again, the way in which sensorial perceiving always grasps a being), we perceive it as having its various “sides” or facets “in space,” only *some* of which are beheld by us, or on view, at present.⁷⁹ To perceive an object is to (sensorially) behold one feature or facet of a being which manifests itself as having *other* features or facets, those that are also “here” for beholding even though they are not presently beheld: a being which shows itself as though given from one side although it has other sides hidden from view. Only as such can an object be given, i.e., as a spatially-extended/perception-independent being; its perceiver must somehow grasp the other sides or facets as those which are

⁷⁹ Apprehending a being as spatially extended, we apprehend it as “going beyond” or exceeding the side currently on view, or in fact, as being impossible for us to have in view all at once. This is the case even for the smallest of things, for no matter how small, we cannot perceive an object from all sides at once, given that our perception only catches sight of it or lays hold of it from one of the sides while as spatially extended it must extend to a greater or lesser extent in three dimensions. Tactile perception can get around some of the limitations of visual perception, but even here, if we enclose the “outer surface” of an object fully in one hand, we still feel nothing of its “interior” surface. Furthermore, we can always focus our perception (whether tactile or visual) more precisely on this or that detail of even that facet of the object currently beheld (what Husserl calls its “interior horizon:” *AP*: p. 43).

not in view, but which might nevertheless be *brought* into view via some effort on his or her own part (they are “apperceived,” as Husserl puts it⁸⁰). Assuming that such an effort has been expended, the presently beheld facet will obviously no longer remain so beheld, as other facets of the object instead come into view, in which case the object will no doubt still show itself as if the side which has gone out of view or (more generally) out of the subject’s sensorial beholding remains as much “there” to be brought into view as do those facets *currently* out of the subject’s sensorial beholding—not to mention, as much “there” as the *whole object* will still be taken to be if the subject turns away from it completely. The object, we say, is “transcendent:” to perceive the moon is to perceive it as if it would still be “here” even if we weren’t “there” to perceive it, even, in fact, were we to die, and thus, lose the possibility of ever perceiving it again.

How does a being manifest itself as such? Or put differently, what is the structure of its sense such that, in becoming manifest, it gives itself as though extant, as perception-independent in its spatial-extendedness? And what does this have to do with time?

§ 8

The sides of an object that are not on view are still somehow “there” for the subject who perceptually relates himself or herself to the object as such. In a sense, they are perceived as *not perceived* in the perception of the object, or given as not given; without this “apperception,” again, a being could never give itself as an object to sense perception. Because the “unperceived” facets are “there” for the perceiver in their “unperceivedness,” they belong to the object’s objective sense, as an essential constituent of the physical being-phenomenon. The objective sense of an object thus consists of a schema of sorts, a “scaffold-like” system or framework comprising all the object’s different facets, features, “sides,” or possible surfaces, which is “fleshed out” or determined to a greater or lesser degree given the subject’s familiarity with the

⁸⁰ For instance, see: *AP*: 54-55.

being in question (in fact, the phenomenon of perceptual familiarization with an object, “built up” over the course of experiencing, is nothing other than the establishment of a highly determinate objective sense).⁸¹ Whenever perception seizes upon a being, it grasps it on the basis of its objective sense, this more or less determinate schema of possible surfaces.⁸²

How are the “not given” sides or possible “façades” of an object “given” in the perception of it, if they are not given by sensing as those that are “on view?” Put differently: how is a “whole” perceived object, which is grasped by its perceiver on the basis of a schema of sense, given as such, when the full range of its facets, features, or possible façades is never given to the perceiving subject to behold with the senses all at once? The “apperceived” determinations of the schema of its sense are in fact intended in perception precisely as the sides, facets, or features of the object with which the perceiving subject should come to be confronted if he or she takes up the appropriate stance or perspective from which to perceive it. It is precisely as the possibility of an *anticipation* that these articulated determinations of objective sense are “at hand” for the perceiving subject, or more precisely, that the “*whole*” *object* is “at hand” for the perceiving subject, including that which is, and that which *isn't*, now “on view.” Husserl thus writes that “out of the indicative systems of the horizons [or the schemata of objective sense],

⁸¹ The objective sense of an object consists in such a schema, but not only in such a schema, for perception of an object always seizes upon it as a thing within the world, causally affected and affecting other things, so that its perception always involves a sort of placing in context. Expanding my analysis in this direction would take us too far afield at this point; however, this will become a theme in Chapter 2, when I deal with the significance and the “worldliness” of things. For now, it will be enough to deal with objective sense *qua* system of features, facets, sides, etc., of the object.

⁸² Husserl writes of a perceived table as “a constant substrate of actually appearing table-moments [its sides or features actually given through phases of sensing], but also of indications of moments not yet appearing[...], indicative tendencies that point towards the appearances not given. They are, however, not single indications, but entire indicative systems.” *AP*: p. 42.

It must be always kept in mind that schemas of objective sense always “possess” a degree of indeterminacy. In the case of objects that are totally “new” to a perceiver, the schema will not, however, be totally indeterminate, but will have a very general prefiguring (or perhaps a highly determinate prefiguring), given similar objects with which the perceiving subject has already come to be familiar. See, for example, *AP*: p. 47.

certain indicative lines are continually being actualized as expectations.”⁸³ The apperceived articulations of an object’s sense are given in these “indicative lines,” as façades or features of the object that ought to be given whenever the required conditions for the object’s being so given have been met.

It is for this reason that, as the perceiving subject moves about in relation to an object during the course of a continuing perception of it, a steady stream of anticipations will emerge for him or for her, more or less determinate, on the basis of the object’s sense. In connection with perception, anticipation “takes hold” or “seizes upon” that which should be given. In fact, “perceptual anticipating” appears to be not merely connected to perception, but to play a crucial role within perception itself; for if, on the one hand, the anticipations come to be steadily fulfilled, the perceiving will be “concordant,” remaining within what Husserl calls “naive perceptual certainty,” in which the being of the object is, as it were, straightforwardly grasped.”⁸⁴ in this case, a perceived thing is simply identified or grasped throughout the course of its perception *as* this or that thing, present or “at hand” for the subject, without further ado. Turning an object in the hands, manipulating it or else moving about it so as to view it now from this side, now from that, the subject thusly comes to perceive the object in the great diversity of its facets or features, no doubt becoming more and more familiar with it as the perceiving concordantly progresses, but in any event, continuously reinforcing the certainty that the perceived being is, and will thus endlessly continue to give itself, exactly as he or she takes it to be. If, on the other hand, the emerging anticipations do not come to be fulfilled concordantly in the course of perception, something like the experience of doubt will follow suit, so that the being manifesting itself can come forward only as if, for example, “teetering between” senses (e.g., “is it a vine or a

⁸³ AP: p. 44.

⁸⁴ AP: p. 78. On page 63, Husserl also calls this an “originally non-modalized consciousness of being.”

snake?—I really can't tell"); in such cases, the subject is typically led to "reexamine" the matter, so that the perceived being can be identified unequivocally and thus show itself without ambiguity (i.e., so that a single objective sense can be fixed upon, rather than being given in an oscillation or wavering).⁸⁵ When objective sense is equivocal, a being gives itself, but in something of an "ambivalence" (as either a vine or a snake, for example); no such equivocality is exhibited in concordant perceiving, which is altogether more common, and in fact, even "underlies" discordant perceiving in a manner of speaking: for discordant perception has "too many" senses, and *not* none. Were there no schema of objective sense intended, no being would show itself at all.

Anticipation follows the movement of the subject in relation to a perceived object, but also, the movement of the *object* in relation to the *subject*, whether the object is perceived as if moving itself or at least, as being moved about by some exterior force. By "movement," here, I mean the exceedingly broad notion that I've been using throughout this chapter; the schema implicated in the sense of an object must thus be made up not only of all the facets or features that a perceiver would anticipate of an object whenever he or she grasps that the proper spatial relation will obtain between the two, but also, all those that the perceiver would anticipate of the object assuming it undergoes this or that qualitative transformation, etc.⁸⁶ I anticipate, for instance, that my hot teacup will feel cooler to the touch after letting it sit a few moments. If the perceiver and the perceived object are *both* perceived as being in motion, the course of

⁸⁵ Husserl writes that "[g]iven that an object is perceived and that we progressively come to know it in the perceptual process[...], this would have to occur: {either} the process of determining more closely, which is a fulfilling process, or[...] disappointment, annulment of sense, and crossing out," *AP*: p. 59. See for instance p. 431-432 on this "wavering."

⁸⁶ "Change is a continual process of becoming otherwise; however, this becoming otherwise maintains a unity, namely, a unity of the object remaining concordantly the same as a substratum of its continual alterations in and through which it becomes otherwise, and in and through which it becomes otherwise time and again." *AP*: p. 64. This (Husserl's notion of an "altering object") leads to the notion of causality, and the relation of the object to other objects within the world, a matter upon which I remarked in footnote #81. See also: Husserl, *Ding und Raum; vorlesungen 1907* ed. by Ulrich Claesges (Den Haag, Martinus Nijhoff); 1973: p. 343-346. Hereafter listed as *DR*.

anticipation will proceed according to something like the product of both (watching my teacup being carried away, I will anticipate it to show a different course of facets or features if I am also moving than I would were I stationary), while if both the perceiver and the object perceived are instead perceived to be at rest, then all things being equal, the perceiver will simply anticipate the presently given facet of the object to remain as such.

To summarize: An object is given to the perceiving subject as extant or “at hand” precisely by being given as a thing defined by framework or system of facets, features, or so forth. The facets or features that belong to a schema of sense but that are not presently given to the perceiving subject sensorially (“given as not given,” as I earlier put it) are instead given as those that always *could* come to be given by sensing or brought “into view,” if the conditions necessary for this were to be met (taking up such-and-such a perspective on the object, for instance); thus, they are always given as that which is “there” for the subject in a possible being-anticipated. The schemata implicated in objective sense, for their part, are “built up” over the continuing course of a subject’s commerce with things in the world, so that, whenever a high degree of familiarity has been achieved, an object can come to show itself (to the thusly “familiarized” subject) with a high degree of determination. Given the sensorial presentation of only a small range of its features or facets, it is nevertheless “there” for the subject in all its “richness”—or a good deal of it, anyways, for doubtlessly there will always be more for the subject to discover, no matter how thorough his or her familiarity with the object has become.

This being so, it becomes evident that an object is no mere “given,” which the perceiving subject just so happens to find involved in this or that motion or else at rest (whatever the case may be) only “after” the object has already been given *simpliciter*. To seize a being perceptually is already to have a “sense” of how it may come to be exhibited in a wide variety of different

circumstances; the perceived object is thus *essentially* grasped as that which preserves its identity throughout all sorts of motions in which it is or can be caught up, as well as movements on the part of the subject relative to it. This is why Levinas calls an object of perception a “*meuble*.”⁸⁷ literally, the “furniture” of our world, but also, as the French connotes, the *movable*. To perceive a being as extant (which is simply to say, to *perceive it*, as long as perception here is sense perception) is to perceive it as being “movable,” in the widest possible sense of this term—even if this only means as being the same object for perception “despite” all the movements that a perceiver makes in relation to it. To remove the sense of being a *meuble* from the sense of an object of perception would be to utterly remove its sense: it is only *as such* (i.e., as a “movable”) that a being can perceptually manifest itself.⁸⁸

Insofar as there is anything like (sense) perception, then, it appears that time-consciousness must be at work, given that through perception, the perceiving subject relates himself or herself to a being grasped in its extantness or as “at hand,” and yet this is only possible if the perception takes hold of its object as something *movable*. An object always comes forward to perception as something which either is or can be in motion, which is to say, as something which can always—or rather, which is always—involving itself in some occurrence (rest as a limit case). We have seen, however, that the perception of a movement or occurrence of any sort requires the perception of *time*. But how, concretely, does something like time-consciousness (or a retaining, protaining, and maintaining) grasp a being in its *movability*?

The account of objective sense that I’ve just presented is still very preliminary, but is sufficient to begin an examination of the relationship between the object-phenomenon, its perception or coming to appearance, and the nonthematic time-phenomenon (i.e., the now), so

⁸⁷ *TI*: p 157.

⁸⁸ Husserl makes a similar point in *AP*: p. 267-268.

that the time-consciousness prevailing over all perception can finally be clarified. Temporal notions have already begun cropping up in my account of objective sense; I've spoken, for example, about "anticipation," "familiarity" having been "built up," and "presentations" or sides "now on view." But what is the precise nature of this relationship to time? To ask this is simply to ask: how are the articulations of time-consciousness (i.e., of the nonthematic consciousness of the now) at once the temporal articulations of perceiving; what is the structure and interrelationship of the retained, protained, and maintained, and ultimately, of *retaining*, *protaining*, and *maintaining* themselves (i.e., of our implicit consciousness of time) such that in them, or by their means, something like a being comes to be perceptually grasped, and seized continually as the selfsame?

§ 9

We've just seen that, as an object of a perceiving consciousness, a being is perceptually grasped on the basis of a schema of sense, and thusly, as being a "moveable" (or that which can remain the selfsame throughout various occurrences in which it might be involved); however, because an object of perception is always perceived in its "now-being," this schema of sense must be given to perception according to the structure of the now. But we discovered before that the now, as implicitly grasped duration, is thrice articulated: objective sense, then, must be given in a thrice articulated manner, so that, correlatively, the perceiving of an object must itself be articulated in a three-fold structure: as I've already had reason to assert above, retaining, protaining, and maintaining constitute the temporal articulations of the perceptual relation to a *being*, and not a thematic grasp of time. Thus, these three temporal articulations of perceiving, which seize upon the now and allow it to manifest itself nonthematically precisely by allowing an object to show itself in its movement or rest, must do so by seizing upon the schematic

determinations of objective sense in some way, i.e., by taking hold of some assortment of the possible façades belonging to a schema of sense. In fact, as we'll see soon enough, it is only thusly that the object can manifest itself as “movable,” and thus as extant—which is to say, simply as a perceived object—at all. We have a perceptual consciousness of beings if and only if the now, enduring, is “there,” nonthematically made manifest. In order to thoroughly understand retaining, protaining, and maintaining—or the time-consciousness of which they are inextricably and systematically a part—we must understand them in this light.

I'll work through each of the three in turn, beginning with protention. Why must protention be “in play” if a being is to be manifest perceptually? How is its being “in play” precisely an aspect of this perceptual bringing to manifestation? We've seen that, as an articulation of the nonthematising grasp of the “now,” protention (or less ambiguously, protaining) always seizes upon the “to something” of a being in its movement or rest, i.e., the “states” (spatial positions, qualitative determinations, etc.), or rather, the continuous course of “states,” that a perceiving subject anticipates a moving or resting being will “go to” as the “after” of the occurrence in which it is perceived as being involved. But evidently, this is just the notion of perceptual anticipation that we saw earlier in my analysis of objective sense. We can thus “flesh out” the notion of protaining with the recognition that the protained (or perceptually anticipated) “state” or “position” of an object must be seized in advance as one to be given in conformity with the sense of an object, which is to say, in a facet, feature, or side belonging to this schema. Protaining thus “draws forth” an anticipated feature or facet from the schema of an object's sense, in tandem with the movement or occurrence in which the object is perceived as being involved; in this way, the “after” is made accessible. I have a “sense” of what my teacup looks like from its other sides; as the barista carries my cup away, I anticipate it will show itself

accordingly. These sides, after all, are “there” for me in perceiving even though they are not on view, and in fact, *must* be “there” for me as such, if the cup is to show itself to me as extant, i.e., if I am to grasp it *as* a being, giving itself to me perceptually, at all (an object “physically” within the world). If I perceive the cup as being moved in such a way as to bring these sides into view, then, I must anticipate the imminent exhibition of these sides.⁸⁹

Co-constituting the “now” by holding out for its “after,” protention, as a grasp of objective façades to come, is thus a necessary element of all perceiving—or at least, of any perceiving in which the subject perceptually relates himself or herself to a being grasped as either moving or at rest. Not only this, however: protention also has a hand in grasping a being on the basis of its sense, and thus, in bringing a being forward in the “first place” (something first intimated in my talk of “concordance,” above). Although an object may no doubt appear quite different, given its various sides or the qualitative states that it can transition “through” (my teacup looks much different in profile, as I see it now in the hands of the barista who has just snatched it up, than it did from above at my table, as I gazed down into its still tea-filled depths), nevertheless, I am able to grasp it as the *same* teacup, in concordant perceiving. This is possible precisely because of this concordance, which is to say, precisely because the façades of the thing given to sensing all “belong” to the schema of objective sense of one and the same object (i.e., my teacup) and follow one after another *just as I anticipate them* to follow given the movement (or rest) in which I perceive the cup as being involved.⁹⁰ Therefore, protention is not only

⁸⁹ “The continual protentional intention in connection with a perception actually taking place harbors, at every moment, the anticipatory certainty of what is to come[...]:” *AP*: p. 131.

⁹⁰ See, for instance, *AP*: p. 48. Strictly speaking, the being comes forward as the selfsame being not only because the “sides,” etc., given are what I anticipated, on the basis of the sense by which I have been intending it as this or that being, but also because I anticipate I can still “go back” to the ones no longer given. In cases where this is not so—I anticipate my cup shattering when it falls, but now that it has, I no longer anticipate again being able to view the sides, etc. that I had previous seen—perception takes on a new cast. The cup has essentially transformed into a different thing; it is now grasped as objectively other than it was.

implied in all perceiving—at least assuming, again, that the object perceived is perceived as being involved in any sort of motion, or else at rest—but is also *necessary* if, throughout a course of perceiving, a being is to be grasped continuously as the selfsame, i.e., if it is to be continually identified or grasped as the same object throughout (i.e., a being defined by one and the same sense).⁹¹

This of course implies that some schema of objective sense has “already” been brought to bear in bringing forth an object *as* precisely what it has in fact been perceived as (i.e., that identification has “taken place”), as well as that the object is “already” perceived as being involved in this or that occurrence (movement or rest). (Protaining, again, “draws forth” the protained from objective sense and perceived motion *together*.) Consequently, these (an object’s sense and the occurrence in which it is involved) cannot come to perceiving through protention, or rather, not through protention alone, despite the fact that protention has something like a hand in bringing forward both (manifesting the “after” of a being’s motion and allowing a being to come forward continually as the selfsame given an already operative grasp of its objective

This brings with it two considerations: firstly, that when movement is perceived, some being is *always* grasped as the selfsame *throughout*—so it is the glass, and not glass *cup*, perceived to have undergone qualitative, etc., alteration and “motion” (in the broad sense) “beneath” the essential transformation of cups to shards. Considerations of this sort led Aristotle to exclude essential transformations from his notion of “motion”—rather, the spatial, qualitative, or quantitative motion of some being, is always seen as having underlain essential transformation.

Secondly: identification, as the perceptual grasping of a being on the basis of such-and-such a sense (“it’s a cup”), and identification in the sense of numerical identification (“it’s the same cup”), are not the same, though they are clearly linked. Because an equivocation on this point will make no difference here, however, I neither make this distinction explicit, nor work through their connection, in the body of this work.

⁹¹ Continually giving itself as that which the subject takes it to be, an object shows itself throughout concordant perceiving as the same thing. But in discordant perceiving, an object is nevertheless able to show itself as the “selfsame”—one given in the confusion of its sense which is perhaps later clarified (for instance, first as a snake, then as “either a snake or vine,” and finally, as a vine, but nevertheless, as the selfsame being throughout, grasped as such)—despite the non-fulfillment of anticipation, due to the fact that there is *some* fulfillment of anticipation, on some level—no matter how great the level of surprise—so that that which comes to be maintained is able to cohere in the unity of a single sense (e.g., “it’s not a snake, but a vine”). In such a case, a being shows itself as the selfsame being which was first grasped wrongly as this or that, but now, otherwise. In the case that a new presentation cannot cohere *at all*, then the perceiving subject is left with a *complete* transformation in the being so that there is in fact, not one being, but two, perceived—one thing is perceived as having simply changed into another, as in the case of wood becoming smoke when it is burned.

sense). How, then, do sense and occurrence come to perception at all?

In order to clarify this issue, we'll need to move on to the matter of retention. We've seen that, as the complement of the protention, the "before" of an object's motion or the just-passed course of its positions or states is retained. However, while in protention these states or positions are merely "cast forward" as those anticipated, in retention they are held onto as those which have already been given perceptually. They thus cannot be given in the giving of those façades, belonging to the schema of an object's sense, whose arrival is perceived as *imminent*, but rather, in those that have *already* "showed up." This allows for us to flesh out the notion of retention in an analogous manner as the notion of protention above; but, as was the case with protention, it does so by allowing us to see the part that retention plays in something like perceptual identification or the grasping of a being according to objective sense (which is to say, the part it plays in perception, the manifestation of a perceived being, *simpliciter*). We could as little perceive the motion of a being in its transition "from something" without identifying the being as the selfsame in its "before" than we could perceive the motion of a being in its transition "to something" without identifying the being as the selfsame in its "after." In a sense, the mere fact that a system of indications defining an objective sense has been built up in past perceiving already presupposes that something like retention is in play.⁹² Insofar, however, as our current perceiving goes (which is presupposed by all "building up" of sense; after all, I could not be

⁹² In a sense, we can say that retained objective profiles in long passed retainings are "brought back;" so that what is now affective in retention, rather than being the sides of the thing that I *just* before saw, e.g., before turning it around to see another side, are instead those that I saw "*awhile ago*" (after which I went on to perceive a great many things, etc.). This is not yet a matter of active memory; the sense of the past profiles "being-before" is simply that of a much more "*distant*" or "*longer away*" "before." (Because of this, something like a motion can also show up in these (utterly common) circumstances, although, the movement is constituted somewhat differently in the former case (something like inference is involved). For example, the long passed retained presentation of an object, "brought back" (or rather, affective) in familiar perceiving, had presented the object as being upright, but now I see it on its side; I thus "perceive" the thing as having fallen over onto its side somehow.)

This notion of "bringing back" "old" retentions into the sphere or duration of the now belongs completely within the topic of what Husserl calls *affection*: see, for instance, *AP*: p. 226-229 (reemergence of affection from what Husserl calls the "nil" or "sedimented" sphere of our past).

familiar with a being in a later perceiving were I not to have perceived it in the first place), retaining is implied as a keeping hold of what has been given as the selfsame being, on the basis of the orderly conformity of objective presentations with the same sense: a sense perhaps first “built up” in this perceiving (having seen the “back side” of my cup before the “front side,” the “back side” is now just as much “here” for me as the “front,” despite the fact that the “back” is not given in sensing), or perhaps merely “brought back” if the perceiving is a more or less “familiarized” one. It must thus be the case that a being could never show up as such to perceiving without *both* retention and protention being in play, for as we’ve seen, a being can only come forward or manifest itself to sense perception—as extant or movable—on the basis of a schema of sense, but it is only via retention that a being can come forward as *having been* identified or grasped on the basis of this or that schema of sense, and it is only via protention that the identification of a being on the basis of the *same* sense can continue.

It is by retaining a being in its having been identified that the perceiving subject “casts forward” the course of presentations to-come, i.e., those which are protained (e.g., having seen the “back side” of my cup, which is now “here” for me even though I only behold the “front,” I will now anticipate quite precisely what is to be given if my cup is turned back around).⁹³ Having come to “know” a being or to identify it as this or that being on the basis of a schema of sense, I can continue to identify it, and in fact *will* continue to identify it, assuming things go as I anticipate on the basis of what I’ve just perceived, so that, e.g., I remain quite sure that, throughout a course of perceiving, I am confronted with just my cup all the while, given that all the presentations given belong to my sense of it (as this has been “built up”). An “interplay”

⁹³ Husserl thus writes that “[t]hat aspect of the object which has already appeared is partially lost again as it moves away from givenness[...]. But it is not lost. I remain conscious of it retentionally and in such a way that the empty horizon of the appearance present at this time receives a new prefiguring that points in a determinate manner to what has already been given earlier as co-present.” *AP*: p. 49.

between retaining and protaining is exhibited, which, however, points us to the issue of *maintaining*, in which their true unity is to be found. Like retaining and protaining, maintaining has a hand in the identification of a being or the intending of objective sense, and does so in the particular manner in which it “takes in hand” an objective façade—through which is given, however, not as the before- or after-being, but the now-being of an object. Within maintaining, then, the identification of a being on the basis of a schema of sense (grasping an object as this or that particular thing) must be of a piece with the perception of it as being involved in this or that occurrence (motion or rest), i.e., as being in a state or position coming “from something” and going “to something.” Once we discover how this is so, we’ll finally be in a position to grasp the systematic coherence of time-consciousness in its three articulations, and thus, to fully clarify the nonthematic constitution of the now.

We’ve seen that protaining allows for the *continuing* identification of a being (insofar as the “after” of a being’s motion or rest is always “cast forward” via what it has been taken to be, on the basis of a schema of sense—if things go as anticipated, I will continue to grasp here a being defined by the same sense, the same thing whose no-longer beheld sides can be brought forward again with the right change of perspective, etc.⁹⁴) while retaining keeps hold of a being as *having been* identified (a being grasped “before” on the basis of this or that sense). It is by means of maintaining, however, that a being actually comes to be identified, grasped as being “here” in its full extantness (defined by a more or less determinate schema): strictly speaking, an object is grasped according to its identity or defining schema of sense when, and only when, maintaining adequately “fulfills” a just-passed anticipation, or correlatively, when that which is maintained in perceiving gives itself as just that feature, facet or side that had *just been* protained (i.e., that which was protained concomitant with a retained “now-being,” before this “now-

⁹⁴ With certain qualifications: see footnote #81.

being” passed and became retained as the “before”).⁹⁵ On the basis of the passed-by course of a perceiving, the perceiving subject protains a course to-come; assuming that each phase of this course *does* in fact come as anticipated, it will be maintained as such (as “fulfilling” the prior protention), so that the being comes to be identified and in fact to be continually identified in perception, and so that the perception’s protaining will continue to “cast forward” its protained presentations on the basis of the same schema of sense.⁹⁶ Protaining and retaining, in their own way, both make possible the identification of a being, but it is in maintaining that the perceptual identification is again and again, or continually, concretized. A being comes forward as the being it is, or at least, as the being that it shows itself as or is taken to be, because perception continually maintains it in its identity.

By identifying a being or bringing it forth as the being it is grasped as being, maintaining concomitantly manifests the being’s motion or rest. In fact, the identification both of an object and of the occurrence in which it is involved are part and parcel with one another (“in experiencing motion,” again, “we keep to the moving thing, and we thus see the motion *with* the

⁹⁵ John Drummond, for instance, writes that “no object could be constituted unless the *material* content of the retained perceptual phases [i.e., the retained phases as sensings] continued to affect the present perceptual intention thereby providing the basis for a material unification of the manifold of appearances [or perceptual phases] in a *presently* intended agreement of sense” (*Husserlian Intentionality and Non-foundational Realism*, (Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers); 1990: p. 164). It is only as an “agreement of sense” that an object comes forward as such, and thus, not in anything like an instantaneous sensation.

In the beginning of a perception, a perceiving may not already have a retained course belonging to it. In this case, the object is simply identified as being defined by a very indeterminate schema. Or else (and this is not an either-or proposition) identification operates *fully* through past familiarization with objects; given this or that sensing, objective presentations which have become associated with it in past perceiving will become “called up,” so that there is already an at least somewhat determinate course for anticipating (or perhaps, several “lines” of anticipation, in the case of an “oscillation” of sense (“is that a snake or a vine upon which my eyes have just rested?”). As the course of perceiving concordantly or non-concordantly comes to fulfill what is anticipated, the identity of the object comes to be maintained with assurance.

The “calling up” or recall of features which gives a schema unfolds along the lines of “association,” and operates, in Drummond’s words (p. 167) in a “homospecific” and “homogeneric” fashion. This is a matter with which Husserl deals at length in his *Analyses of Passive and Active Synthesis*; see, for instance: p. 47.

⁹⁶ Husserl calls “objective sense in the original mode of being [i.e., given in the perceiver’s “naïve certainty” of it]” that which is given “in a continual coincidence, that which is, so to speak, continually identified in the process of constitution; it is the correlate of the unbroken concordance of original intentions.” *AP*: p. 361.

moving thing”). For on the one hand: to identify a being is to bring it forward on the basis of some schema of sense; but as we’ve now discovered, this always means to identify the being (e.g. the continually selfsame thing) throughout a course of perceiving in which maintained presentations fulfill and further keep fulfilling those which were just perceptually anticipated.⁹⁷ In this course, the being is always made manifest as being involved in some occurrence, i.e., in some sort of movement or else at rest: an occurrence that is itself “identified” or “perceived” insofar as all the objective façades in a retained course, “terminating” with the maintained one, not only simply belong to the same schema of sense by conforming to it systematically (in the manner just elaborated above, essentially involving protention), but do so by “charting” a coherent or orderly “path” of façades “through” the schema (the steady “transformation” of “cup sides” facing me as my teacup is raised, turned, and taken away, for instance).⁹⁸ On the other hand: a being can only ever be identified, or taken to be the particular thing it is taken to be, by being perceived as being in movement or rest; for not only *must* the perceptual identification of a being bring it forward as being involved in such-and-such an occurrence (given, as we’ve just seen, that this must have a temporal “width”), but also, the course of protained or perceptually anticipated objective *presentations*—by which, in their fulfillment, identity is continually grasped—can *only* be so protained provided that something like a motion has been concomitantly discovered. Again, protention is “cast” forward on the basis of a being’s perceived *motion or rest*, along with the sense of its being (e.g., I anticipate the “tea-cup sides” that should appear right away given my sense of both the cup *and* its current motion). It thus becomes

⁹⁷ This is why Husserl, for example, claims that “[t]he aspects [of an object] are nothing for themselves; they are appearances-of only through the [temporal] intentional horizons that are inseparable from them” (*AP*: p. 43). The feature or facet of a being presently grasped is grasped as such only on the basis of its “pointing to” other features or facets, those already seen and those to be imminently given. Without these horizons, nothing in the strict sense shows itself.

⁹⁸ *DR*: p. 117-121 and 263-269.

evident that the perceptual identification of a being is inextricable from the perceptual identification of the occurrence in which it is perceived as being involved. In the intricate fashion elaborated above, the maintained, retained, and protained features or facets given of a being are “taken in hand” together, or systematically take up a relation to one another, so that in this “togetherness” or through this systematic relation, an object can come to show itself as that selfsame thing which is given throughout the duration of the now in which it is perceived, and as being involved in this or that motion (in the most general sense) all the while.

When I first uncovered retaining, protaining, and maintaining, I was adamant we keep in mind that, although they constitute our most ubiquitous sense of time, these three articulations of time-consciousness are not articulations of a *thematic* grasp of the now (which is in the first place nonthematically grasped), nor even of the motion whose before and after the now counts. Instead, I maintained, they are the articulations of a *perceptual grasping* for which, properly speaking, a perceived *being* or object is the theme (we “see the motion *with* the moving thing but do not see it as such”). Now we are able to see precisely how, in their unified “operation,” retaining, protaining, and maintaining *in fact* bring forward an object as a theme, i.e., that extant or “movable” being to which the subject perceptually relates himself or herself as such (extant in this or that concrete manner), and further, why without their “aid,” an object of perception would never come forward at all. It is *time-consciousness* which brings forth beings or allows things to show themselves: without it, or the temporal articulations of the act, we would simply be without any consciousness whatsoever, insofar as consciousness is always consciousness-*of*.⁹⁹

This brings us to the most fundamental characteristic of time-consciousness, that

⁹⁹ Strictly speaking, I have demonstrated this claim only insofar as consciousness of “physical” or extant beings is concerned; in order to demonstrate it fully, I would have to examine how time-consciousness is implicated in *all* other “perceiving” acts, different types of intentional relations correlated with beings of other sorts (such as thoughts seizing upon the meaning of a word, introspective acts seizing upon something like a sensation, etc.). As this study continues, however, any worry that might linger in this regard will be dispelled.

consciousness (or better, “feature” of consciousness) that “brings forward” the nonthematic time-phenomenon or the “now.” For what is it about something like a sensation, such that it can count as a “moment” of a perceiving consciousness (of sense perception, that is), given that this consciousness must be “at once” a consciousness of time? It is only because a being is perceptually grasped in its now-being, its being in a state “coming from” and “going to” other states—i.e., because a nonthematic time-consciousness is in play—that the being can come forward as extant, as a spatially-extended/perceptually-independent being, or a “movable.” The object of perception is not given to sense perception as some bald fact, irrespective of anything like time and motion, to be only then grasped as being caught up in this or that motion or occurrence as if after the fact; therefore, no being would ever come to manifest itself to anything like a simple sensation which would remain blind, as it were, to the course of sensation just-passed or to-come. “Alone,” a sensing would be *merely* sensing; sensing is sense *perception*, bringing forth a *being*, because it is “with” just-passed and to-come sensing (i.e., according to the systematic relationship we were able to discover above). Put otherwise, or correlatively: past and future experiencings must be “brought into play,” “pressing in” or making themselves “felt,” if a sensing, thereby “transformed” into a consciousness of the now, is to count as the perceptual consciousness of a being, if it is to maintain a being in its now-being.¹⁰⁰ It is because of this “pressing in” of future and past experiencing—because of a “connectedness” of phases of experiencing that makes them phases of the *same perceiving*—that the perceived being is able to

¹⁰⁰ In her work *Intersubjective Temporality; it's about time*—(Dordrecht, Kluwer); 2006, hereafter listed as *IT*—Lanei Rodemeyer puts it thus: “What I perceive ‘now’ actually goes beyond any concept of an immediate, sensual flow of impressions. For example, my understanding now goes beyond the guttural sound being voiced by my partner at this immediate moment to the whole word and sentence and meaning she is expressing now overall (the expanded ‘now’). Or for another example, my experience now encompasses the back side of the building across the street (as well as its other perspectives) while I am facing its front. In both cases we see how my consciousness stretches *beyond* what is immediately ‘present’ with regard to content, constituting my experience as a unity in a temporal flow” (p. 42).

come forth or become perceptually manifest.

What can we make of this “connectedness,” then, which holds between something like sensory experiences, such that they are not shut up in themselves, but instead, take their “place,” so to speak, as temporal articulations of the perceptual grasp of a being, seizing upon what is given of a being insofar as this “comes from” and “goes to” something else (the other states or positions of the being presenting itself)? We saw before that the subject must have a “sense” of time, or “temporalizingly count,” in order for the now as the duration measuring a being’s motion or rest to “show itself” in the perception of the being. We can now see that this “counting” must ultimately consist in the synthesis of something like a course of sensation or sensory *experiencings*. We say that the phases of experiencing must all “belong to the same consciousness,” if there is to be a consciousness of anything, which is just to say that the sensory experiencings of a conscious being (the subject) must somehow be temporally “open to each other,” and not simply “captivated in themselves.”

This point is absolutely crucial for any analysis of time-consciousness; for, by being temporally “open to one another,” i.e., by being connected to the other sensings as “members” of a series of sensings or experiencings belonging to one and the same consciousness, these sensings are preserved *as arranged* or organized *in* such a series. Put more precisely, they are organized or arranged as constituting the earlier and later of a perceptual *consciousness*. In order to retain, maintain, and protain something like the façades of a being so that a being manifests itself as the being it is (or is taken to be) and as being involved in this or that occurrence, the retaining, maintaining, and protaining phases of consciousness must themselves be somehow “kept track of” as an earlier or later experiencing in the constitution of a “stretch” of consciousness, or be open to the other experiencings on the basis of such a “keeping track.” But

this is just to say that, “prior” to the retaining, protaining, and maintaining of an object in perceptual consciousness, something like time-consciousness must already be in play.

In the next chapter of this study, I’ll be examining this more primordial consciousness of time, which keeps hold, not of the earlier and later states or positions of a perceived being, but of the earlier and later *sensings* or *experiences*, which can serve as the phases of perception precisely on this basis. By constituting the ordered organization or series in which these sensings can cohere as a single consciousness, this “prior” consciousness of time is constitutive of that which we ultimately call the *conscious life* or *lived history* of a subject. But if time-consciousness in this sense both keeps hold of the passing, and “holds out” for the approaching, moments of the life of the *subject*, then it is nothing other than the *self-consciousness* of that subject—or at least, nothing other than the subject’s self-consciousness, taken in its most primordial sense.

Chapter 2

Subjective Time

Section IV—Time and Self-Consciousness

§ 10

Despite the fact that we must distinguish between the temporal articulations of our consciousness of an object and the temporal articulations of our consciousness of *self*, we shouldn't imagine them unconnected or independent of one another. This is because (as the analysis below will demonstrate) there are not, strictly speaking, *two* "consciousnesses" here: perceptual consciousness, which seizes upon a being within the world, is "at once" a consciousness of self. It stands to follow that the temporal articulations of perceptual consciousness are "at the same time" those of self-consciousness, or, put otherwise, that the retaining, maintaining, and protaining of an object must retain, maintain, and protain the self.

For those who continue to toil under the old empiricist dogmas, however, the question will nonetheless remain: are time-consciousness and self-awareness essentially connected *at all*? That is, is it really necessary to conceive of our consciousness of time as something inextricable from our own self-apprehension or the self-manifestation of a streaming conscious life, or can we not instead simply imagine that our encounter with time is first produced in the temporal apprehension of the various moments of the *objects* that we perceive (or rather, of the events in which they are involved), without any need for the apparent intermediary of an apprehension of the various moments of our own experiencing? At one point, in fact, Husserl was seduced by a position not too far removed from this: not only did he disregard the entire issue of self-consciousness in his earliest accounts of time-consciousness, but in works written in roughly the

same period, he also insisted that “we must leave theories of this sort [of the *necessity* of “inner perception”] on one side, so long, that is, as the need to assume the unbroken activity of inner perception cannot be phenomenologically demonstrated.”¹⁰¹ For a time, Husserl labored under the old empiricist dogmas himself.

Soon afterwards, however, Husserl came to realize that “the unbroken activity of inner perception” *must* be assumed, and precisely because his investigations into the nature of time-consciousness led him to recognize that a fundamental relationship holds between self-apprehension and the constitution of time. It is not enough to “have” experiences that are temporally extended, Husserl discovered; the passed-by moments of consciousness must be apprehended *as such* if “through them,” the past “phases” of a temporally enduring object are to be grasped *as* its past “phases,” and the objective duration (i.e., the “now”) is to become nonthematically manifest. Something corresponding obviously must also be said of moments of consciousness to-come, etc.¹⁰² Why should we assume that this is so? The matter should be apparent enough, given the analysis of transcendent perception that I advanced in the preceding chapter of this study—for there, it becomes plain enough that time-consciousness *cannot* originate in the apprehension of something like the past moments of a perceived being (or the event in which it involves itself) once we recognize that, firstly, *nothing* of the being is even “there” for the subject, given or made manifest, without the constituting work of perception—“prior” to this work, there is simply nothing like an object of consciousness “there,” in any sense, to be grasped in its temporal “flowing”—while secondly, perceptual constitution presupposes that something like a sense of time is “*already*” in play. Sensation alone, we discovered, brings forward nothing: unless sensations are apprehended each in their place in an unfolding series,

¹⁰¹ *LI*: p. 87 (Investigation V, Chapter 1 §5).

¹⁰² See, for instance: *TC*: p. 355-356 (343-345), as well as *IT*: p. 23-24; and Toine Kortooms, *Phenomenology of Time; Edmund Husserl's analysis of time-consciousness* (Dordrecht, Kluwer); 2002: p. 83-84 (hereafter listed as *PT*).

nothing appears or is made manifest by their means, no being is grasped given that there is no conscious directedness towards anything. Outside of its being apprehended in regards to its temporal position, that is, sensation is not an intentionality, conscious *of* nothing at all. Thus, “before” objects come to be perceptually apprehended, and the objective “now” comes to be made manifest as the measure of the movements or rests in which such perceived beings always gives themselves as being involved, time-consciousness must effect itself *primordially* as the temporalizing self-apprehension of the moments of experiencing themselves.¹⁰³

At least in passing, we’re all familiar with this sort of self-awareness; to be conscious-of anything is to have a concomitant understanding, however “implicit,” of the unfolding of our own lives. In the prelude to my study, I analyzed this phenomenon under the heading of the term “ageing,” pointing out that, as we go about our daily affairs, our minds fixed quite firmly on the business at hand, as it were, we are nevertheless possessed of the sense of “where” our experiencing has just “come from” and “where” it is “going,” and assume all that we come to be

¹⁰³ See fn #107.

The objection might be raised against the account I’ve just given that the matter stands differently, once we examine conscious acts other than transcendent perception. What of our consciousness of something like sensations themselves? Is there not a “perceived thing” here which “flows?” Of course, the question is generally posed without phenomenological clarification; once we clarify it at all, the objection vanishes. Not only is a thematizing immanent perception, in which something like sensations become the object of consciousness, an act clearly “secondary” to transcendent perception; it takes its “object” (an “immanent content”) as an enduring one, and thus, apprehends its “object” “through” a course of temporally linked sensation-experiencings in a similar manner to transcendent perception’s apprehension of a spatio-temporal being. In the same way, then, the temporalizing self-apprehension of moments of experiencing is therefore necessary for immanent perception also (taken, again, as the thematic presentation of an “immanent content”).

The mistake that the empiricist makes is to take sensation as something in itself *intentional*, as though mere sensing were an act, the consciousness of a “red” (an object of consciousness from which, according to the empiricist, we further infer the existence of something like an apple, etc., “behind” the “red”). Such an account has been vehemently resisted since the very founding of phenomenology in Husserl’s early work. The simplest phenomenological analysis demonstrates that a sensation is just an experience; there is no *consciousness* until there is an intentional relation, i.e., until a being is given. But a being is only given in the temporalizing self-apprehension of moments of experiencing—by which sensation is not given as object of consciousness, but as that which consciously relates itself to an object *itself* (primarily, as apprehension of an extant being), i.e., insofar as moments of sensation are temporalizingly open to each other. “Before” this, sensation has nothing to do with consciousness.

This “openness” will be analyzed in this chapter. As for sensing “before” this, see Chapter 4 of this study.

conscious-of on the horizon of this unfolding life, i.e., understanding beings on this basis. In contradistinction to this, a nonconscious animal always and by necessity “loses itself” in the experience; here, there is no “framing” of the experience on the horizon of a streaming or unfolding life, and consequently, no real sense of the passage of time or of beings “existing within” it.¹⁰⁴ Insofar as we are, each one of us, a conscious being, we must assume these experiences as our—or rather, “my”—own: each experience, given as part of “my” ongoing or unfolding life.

The temporalizing self-apprehension of a conscious, streaming life is thus the most familiar of “phenomena:” there is in fact no “phenomenon” with which we *could* be more familiar; yet in a certain sense, this “phenomenon” remains a mystery to us, and apparently not despite, but because of its all-embracing familiarity. Perhaps, the reason for the peculiar “self-concealment” of time-constituting self-consciousness might come to light in the course of an investigation of it. Whether or not this is so, it is absolutely indispensable for the purposes of my study to adequately clarify this “phenomenon” itself, i.e., time-conscious in the most primordial sense.

Yet if, as I claimed above, a conscious life’s temporalizing apprehension of itself is in a certain sense of a piece with its perceptual apprehensions, this connection cannot be ignored without hindering our understanding of the primordial constitution of time. How, then, can we conceive of this connection? Husserl speaks of time-consciousness as a “double-intentionality,” and insists that we must “clarify the double-intentionality of the flows of consciousness” in order to understand how *both* an external object *and* the enduring act that apprehends it come to be constituted or made manifest:

[o]n the one hand, the unity of [...] an appearance of something external [i.e., of

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter 4, Section X.

an *act* of perception] is constituted in a flow of consciousness. This occurs through the form of the flow. On the other hand, an external object, which is itself a temporal object and whose time is objective time, becomes constituted in the flow. This occurs through the intentionality peculiar to the elements of experience belonging to this flow (by virtue of which every experience that is an appearance, as a moment of experience belonging to the flow, has an external intentionality).¹⁰⁵

What can we make of this “double intentionality?” How are we to understand the relationship between the time-constituting apprehensions of self and perceived being? In the first place, to claim that the unity of an appearance of a transcendent being is constituted in a flow of consciousness, “through the form of the flow” itself, is to claim that, as a result of the very process of its unfolding, a streaming conscious life always apprehends its own perceptual acts as such. This apprehension comprises the first “segment” of our “double intentionality,” its “internal” apprehension, so to speak. By virtue of this “inner” intending, i.e., “through the intentionality peculiar to the elements of experience,” there is, further and necessarily, another, *objectivating* intending, which, as we discovered in the preceding chapter of this study, is necessarily time-constituting insofar as it “brings forth” the “now” as part and parcel of the perceptual bringing to manifestation of an extant being (the external object is a “temporal object,” “whose time is objective time,” Husserl writes). This is the sense in which the intending is “double.” But this is then to say that the very flow of conscious life is structured so as to somehow make manifest unities of its own streaming—the unity of an enduring perceiving act, whose moments bear an essential temporal relation to each other—so that, through this unity, a perceived being is constituted or brought to appearance in the manner I worked to clarify in the preceding chapter of this study.

The question of the essence of time-consciousness thus resolves itself into the question of the basic structure of a streaming conscious life, i.e., of the “form of the flow.” What, then, can

¹⁰⁵ *TC*: p. 312 (300).

we make of this structure? How, precisely, does a conscious life bring *itself* forward, making manifest the temporally ordered unities of its own streaming, so that, on this basis, transcendent beings can come to show themselves? At the conclusion of the previous section of this study, we first found ourselves in a position to begin to describe a sort of “inner” time-consciousness. “Prior” to *objectivating* time-consciousness, we saw, conscious life itself must somehow “keep hold of” or retain the just-passed “phases” of what thereby comes to be grasped as its own experiencing, and “hold out for” or retain phases to-come of the same, so that each and every experience positioned in the flow can maintain itself as such, on something like the horizon of the unfolding series or as a “part” of the “flow” of conscious life itself. What Husserl calls the form of the flow of consciousness is simply this temporalizing self-constitution—self-constituting insofar as a streaming life is somehow brought forward or “made present” to itself, and temporalizing insofar as its moments are brought forward *as* streaming, given as the passed-by, to-come, and present moments of the selfsame conscious life.

§ 11

Husserl sums up what he has discovered by distinguishing between three “levels” implied whenever there is consciousness of anything, writing that:

it would be good to establish and run through systematically for once the different levels of constitution in their essential structure:

1. the things of empirical experience in objective time[...];
2. the constituting multiplicities of appearance belonging to different levels, the immanent unities in pre-empirical [or what Husserl elsewhere calls “immanent”] time;
3. the absolute time-constituting flow of consciousness.¹⁰⁶

At “level one,” we have objects given to consciousness “in” the “now,” constituted or brought forth via the acts or experiences that make up a conscious life or the streaming life of subjectivity. As “phenomena” at “level two,” however, these acts or experiences are themselves

¹⁰⁶ TC: p. 77 (73).

constituted by means of what Husserl calls “the absolute time-constituting flow of consciousness,” or put differently, by the temporalizing self-constitution of the streaming conscious life. The full clarification of time-consciousness requires the clarification of this ultimate “level” of constitution, the form of the flow of consciousness itself.¹⁰⁷

As is usually the case for phenomenological analysis, however, we can gain access to the constituting only via analysis of the constituted. A conscious life is “temporalizingly” conscious of itself; in order to “get at” this (self-)consciousness, we’ll need to work back from the “unities” of conscious life insofar as they are thusly “brought forth” or made “self-present.” How, in the noematic sense, is a conscious life given, or given over, to itself? What is this self-manifestation “like?”

We can begin to clarify this “phenomenon” by coming to understand two of its major characteristics: firstly, the “pre-reflective” nature of temporalizing self-apprehension, or rather, of the streaming conscious life insofar as it is time-constitutively self-apprehended, and secondly, the relationship of the latter to the perceptual constitution of “objective time” or the “now.” I’ll begin by examining the sense in which we can say that the temporalizing self-presence of a conscious life (or of a subject to him- or herself) is “pre-reflective,” and as such, non-objectivated. Husserl writes that:

[e]very act is consciousness of something, but there is also consciousness of every act. Every experience is “sensed,” is immanently “perceived” (internal

¹⁰⁷ Strictly speaking, what I will be dealing with under the rubric of “absolute time-consciousness” is *not* what Husserl means to refer with this term. In his accounts of absolute time-consciousness, unities are constituted at both “level 2” and “level 3”—a sort of excess is reserved for something like a transcendental self, over and above our mere “empirical ego,” which is a being constituted by this supposed ultimate level, and is in a certain sense the self-manifestation of the latter, but is not strictly speaking identical with it. I will be saying a few words about this matter below, attacking the account (or accounts) Husserl advances on this supposed “absolute time-consciousness” and instead advancing the account he advances in his “C manuscripts,” in which the chimerical transcendental self has been discarded. I nevertheless am retaining the term “absolute time-consciousness,” for lack of a better one.

All of these issues are treated more thoroughly in an appendix attached to this study titled “Time, or the mediation of the now.”

consciousness), although naturally not posited, meant (to perceive here does not mean to grasp something and to be turned towards it in an act of meaning)[...]. “Perceiving” here is nothing other than the time-constituting consciousness with its phases of flowing [self] retentions and protentions.¹⁰⁸

The general idea here is easy enough to understand: the streaming conscious life is conscious of objects exhibiting themselves “in” time *as well as* of itself, or of its own acts in their streaming duration, but its grasp of the latter (of the acts) is plainly not the same as its grasp of objects, i.e., as its consciousness in the usual sense of the word. Correlatively, the conscious life does not “appear” to itself via its temporalizing self-constitution in the same manner as do its objects in the strict sense. There are here, residing in one and the same conscious act, two quite distinct “sorts” of consciousness, and correlatively, of constituted sense. For the uninitiated, this claim might sound shocking or even preposterous, but there should no longer be anything surprising about the claim for *us*, at least not *prima facie*—for even assuming that, before beginning this study, we were of the sort inclined to scoff at such notions (“different kinds of consciousness?;” “within a single conscious act?;” etc.), we should *now* no longer be able to dismiss such claims with ease. After all, we’ve already seen that the “manifestation” of the now is of a sort distinct from that of a perceptually apprehended being, and furthermore, that this “manifestation,” possessing a certain nonthematic or “implicit” character, is nonetheless inextricable from the thematic apprehension of a perceived being (the two different kinds of apprehensions belong to one and the same perceptual act, so to speak—there is nothing preposterous about *this*).¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ TC: p. 130 (126-127).

¹⁰⁹ By speaking of a nonthematic manifestation of the “now,” I mean here a difference fully of kind and not degree. No doubt, the appearance of objects (or less generally, of physical beings perceived within the world) can be characterized by a sort of implicitness or nonthematic modality, and this appears to constitute a mere difference of degree in relation to the thematic apprehension of a thing; I refer here to the “background” of perceived objects (the table beneath my snatched away teacup, the wall behind the barista who is carrying it away, etc.). If we liked, we could no doubt categorize those experiences by which “background” things are thusly apprehended in the same class as the “manifestation” of the “now” (and certainly many other sorts of “implicit” experiences also), referring to all under the broad rubric of “nonthematic experiences,” and yet there is plainly a difference between the former and the latter. Nonthematically intended objects are temporalized just as are thematically intended

The conscious streaming life, insofar as it is temporalizingly self-apprehended, is grasped “nonthematically,” but in a manner as distinct from the nonthematical character of the implicitly grasped “now” as the character of the latter is from that of any other “nonthematically” grasped object (e.g., secondarily or tertiarily intended “background” objects, etc.). To refer to all of these as “nonthematic experiences” (or “nonobjectivated,” etc.) thus accomplishes nothing, or at the least, very little—as I had reason to insist before, it is only via concrete analysis that we can discern the precise manner in which each form of constitution just mentioned *is* a sort of “nonthemating,” and is just the sort of “nonthemating” that it is.¹¹⁰

It is in any event certain that there *is* something “nonthematic” as regards the enduring unities of conscious life given to us (i.e., to that life itself) via temporalizing self-consciousness, even if the nature of this “nonthematicity” (upon which the crux of the entire issue of primordial time-consciousness will ultimately turn) is not yet clear to us. In fact, if, as I’ve argued above, the manifestation of any object presupposes something like the implicit “co-perception” of the “now” (marking or “measuring out” something like the “distance” between the before and after of a perceived being’s transitioning), while this “co-perception” or

ones, but it is by means of the “now” that they are temporalized; thus, the “now” cannot be counted as just another being classed with things in the “background,” despite the fact that a turn of regard can make either the theme of attention. This obvious fact is reflected in the differing act-qualities exhibited whenever background objects, as opposed to the “now,” become thematic: background objects (assuming concordant perceiving or another “positive act-character”) are quite simply posited as beings once they become actively intended; we assume something like a “passive positing” of their being was in fact already in play. The “now,” however, does not come to be grasped as anything like a being when our regard seizes upon *it*; it is instead grasped as such-and-such an *occurrence*, and thus, as something like a perceived being’s process of being (the motion or rest in which its being is always caught up or unfolds itself). Numerous difficulties confront us in regards to these distinctions, all of which go beyond the confines of this study. Suffice it to say, consciousness of a “background” object and consciousness of the “now” are totally distinct “sorts” of consciousness, despite or even because of the fact of their inextricability.

¹¹⁰ Husserl, at one point, equates the nonthematic character of “inner perception” with that of “background perception” (see: *Phantasie, Bildbewusstsein, Erinnerung. Zur Phänomenologie der anschaulichen Vergegenwärtigungen, Texte aus dem Nachlass* (1895-1925), ed. by E. Marbach (Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers); 1980: p. 266; quoted in *PT*: p. 84), though it is intuitively evident that he goes too far. Just how much he goes too far will only become evident upon further investigation of the issue at hand—although, keeping in mind that the “givenness” of the one is supposed to found that of the other, the conflation of the two seems especially absurd.

constitution of the “now” unfolds itself only on the basis of the constituting life’s own temporalized self-givenness, then this “givenness” *cannot* be that of its objects in the strict sense. Dan Zahavi makes just this point, albeit put correlatively, writing that “the claim that self-awareness only comes about when the act is apprehended by a further act ultimately leads to an infinite regress.”¹¹¹ Evidently, to speak of an act apprehended by a *further* act is to speak of *reflective* self-consciousness—a sort of act always *possible* for the subject, motivated by the conscious life’s “pre-reflective” apprehension of itself while remaining totally distinct from the latter. Whenever we reflect upon our own conscious life or (more specifically) upon this or that act, we nonetheless remain pre-reflectively aware of ourselves all the while—in this case, *as* reflecting upon ourselves (and not, e.g., as simply perceiving such-and-such a being, which is so in the far more common case of basic transcendent perception).

Granted that the nonobjectivating nature of temporalizing self-consciousness is indubitable, nothing is gained if we merely insist upon this and leave off there. Zahavi, for his part, asserts again and again that this consciousness is different from that of our consciousness of an object, as if by merely repeating the claim anything could become clear to us. In order to understand the nature of its nonobjectivating, we’ll need to clarify precisely this consciousness *itself*.

With this in mind, I’ll turn to the relationship that obtains between that which is given in temporalizing self-apprehension (i.e., the streaming conscious life itself, insofar as it is given to itself in its enduring unities, however “nonthematically”) and the perceptual constitution of “objective time” or the “now.” Precisely because it is via a sort of “double-intentionality” that the self in “immanent time” and perceived objects in “objective time” are constituted together, we must first understand this relationship—or put more precisely, we must understand how the

¹¹¹ *NH*: p. 162.

“appearance” of the former subtends the constitution of the latter—if we are to clarify temporalizing self-apprehension *per se*; for here, we discover the precise point at which the “inner intentionality” (time-constituting in the most primordial sense) transforms itself into one of an “external” or transcendent sort.

We’ve already seen that a perceived being is retained, protained, and maintained in its “nowness” only “through” the self-retained, -protained, and -maintained moments of experiencing, moments which are temporally apprehended *as* phases of the unfolding or streaming conscious life (i.e., *as* “parts” of the unified “series” of our experiencing—*enduring* experiences constituted or made manifest as temporally “extended” unities). “Two things are intentionally constituted together,” Husserl writes: “the appearance [i.e., the enduring perceiving *act*] and that which appears [i.e., a transcendent being], with the latter appearing as unchanged or as changing in different appearances [i.e., as at rest or in motion, in the extremely general sense I’ve been using].”¹¹² This is to say that, via the (primordial) constitution of time, the streaming conscious life is not simply apprehended, as if some brute fact; it is apprehended, or rather, it apprehends *itself*, precisely as being conscious-of whatever it is in fact conscious-of (for example, as enduringly perceiving this or that being, e.g. my teacup being carried off, etc.). Put more precisely, the enduring conscious life apprehends itself as having-been perceiving, for example, this or that being (itself in its self-*retained* moments), as being “about to” perceive the being moved this or that way or else at rest (its self-*protained* moments), and as *now* perceiving the thing, precisely insofar as this “now perceiving” is “framed” on the horizon of the passed-by and to-come experiencing (the conscious life, that is, as self-*maintained*). But by being still more precise in our description, we can bring out the exact manner in which the double-intentionality of time-consciousness is produced. Beginning with the past-wise orientation of

¹¹² TC: p. 99 (94).

time-constitution, we can thus note that the enduring conscious life retains itself as having-been perceiving this or that being by retaining itself as having-just apprehended this or that *side* or *aspect* of the being, through which the “from something” of a being’s movement or rest—i.e., the *perceptually* retained—is given. This, according to Husserl, is a “process” that “makes the initial phase and the preservation-phase [of a perceiving process] continually following it sink down in the flow of time; and in doing this, the process makes what the phases carry along with them[...] sink down in the flow of time as well.”¹¹³ Thus, because the passed-by moments of experiencing are grasped *as such*, that which is, or rather, that which *was* apprehended in each one of them comes to be apprehended in its pastness also, and precisely as much “before” as is the moment of conscious life to which it had originally given itself. In this way, self-retaining is at once a perceptual retaining, “keeping hold” of a being’s “being-before.”

The same evidently goes for protaining: because the streaming conscious life exhibits a protaining or anticipatory apprehension of moments of its own experiencing to-come, that which will have been apprehended in these moments (if they do come to pass as anticipated) is also anticipatorily apprehended (i.e., along with the self-protained moment) in its futurity, and precisely as much “after” as is the moment of experiencing to-come by which it will have been apprehended. Self-protaining is at once a perceptual protaining, “holding out” for a being’s “being-after.” But because of this—because each self-retained and self-protained moment bears with it is correlated objective moment—the duration of experiencing and the duration of perceived occurrences are always isometrically related: “the phenomenological [i.e., immanent] time to which the data of sensation and the physical-thing apprehensions belong must coincide point for point with the spatial time of the physical things,” Husserl writes.¹¹⁴ In a sense, the two

¹¹³ TC: p. 135 (132).

¹¹⁴ TC: p. 98 (93).

durations are the *same* duration (which is why, as we saw in the very first subsection of this study (§ 1), the thematic apprehension of the duration of an occurrence can always easily slip into a thematic apprehension of the duration of our *experience* of the occurrence).¹¹⁵

This isometry, however, only goes so far. Although both immanent and objective time “present” a series, temporally “running off,” that which is made manifest “in” immanent time, i.e., the streaming life of subjectivity, is not made manifest *merely* as though “running off” in a series, but is also given to itself precisely as though “serially” constituting for itself the very sense of the series thereby made manifest (i.e., both of its own enduring unities as well as of the occurrences in which perceptually apprehended beings always give themselves as being involved). Understanding how this is so, we’ll be able, on the one hand, to fully clarify the constitution of objective time, but also, on the other, to provisionally apprehend the temporalizing self-apprehension by which this constitution is subtended (which is to say, again, the “inner” aspect of the “double-intentionality” of time-consciousness, the “form of the flow” of consciousness itself).

How is the streaming conscious life given to itself as being not merely “there” in its streaming or “serial” being, but as “serially” bringing forward or making manifest this very “serial” being, its own enduring unities (or acts)? We can begin to clarify this (perhaps astonishing) phenomenon by recalling the peculiar nature of the temporal syntheses that must “gather together” the moments of (sensorial) experiencing making up a perception as an enduring conscious act, if a being is to be brought forth by their means at all—syntheses, again, without which these moments of experiencing would bring forward nothing. But what is so

¹¹⁵ Without the slightest awareness of the transformation, that is, the thought that “this movie has been going on for ages” can change itself into the thought that “I’ve been watching this movie for ages”—a point which indirectly confirms the point earlier at issue, that consciousness of such-and-such a being is totally inextricable from the self-consciousness of the enduring experience itself, by which the being is apprehended.

peculiar about these syntheses? As we discovered, it is via the fulfillment of a protaining—or via the fulfillment of a protaining that has been *retained*, more precisely—that an object comes to be identified and thus, made manifest as the being it is made manifest *as* (whether unambiguously in concordant fulfillment or ambiguously in discordancy). This process of fulfillment plainly belongs to the conscious act itself, and is effected by means of its self-temporalization. I am perceptually aware of this, my cup, being taken away, simply because I’ve seen, and keep on seeing, more or less what I’ve anticipated myself seeing assuming that this is my cup and it is in fact being carried off, etc.—which is to say: the self-protention of a series of sensations that can “count” as presentations of my cup from this, now that, angle, etc., come to be retained and concordantly fulfilled when just such an experiencing or series of sensations in fact comes to pass.

It is therefore apparent that, in the unfolding of the perceptual act, a moment of consciousness (or rather, of the streaming conscious life) is (self-)retained not *simply* as having-been perceiving such-and-such, its (objectively) retained “from something” of a being’s “being-before” (my cup, having-been right here at my table); crucially, the passed-by phase of experiencing is also retained as having-been retaining and protaining *other moments of experience* in the streaming conscious life. This is crucial to understand for two reasons. Firstly: it is only because the retained moments of experiencing are retained as having retained moments of experiencing *themselves* that the ordered series of experiencing (the unities of conscious life) are given as “stretching” continually “backwards,” and thus that, through this, perceived occurrences are given as “receding” further and further “into the past” (I am not only aware, e.g., that I was just now sitting here with the cup at my table, but that I was doing so for quite some time before my cup was taken from me). Secondly: it is only because the retained moments of

experiencing are also retained as having-been *protaining* moments of experiencing to-come (a protaining that “unfolds itself,” as we’ve seen, on the basis of what it was retaining—it is precisely because I have just watched my teacup being taken from my table to the sink over there that I now helplessly await the unfortunate demise of my still drinkable tea)¹¹⁶ that the moment of experiencing to-come does in fact come as *fulfilling* the just-passed protention (either concordantly or discordantly, to whatever degree and in whatever fashion). By maintaining a moment of experiencing as such—as fulfilling a retained protention in this or that way—a perceived being thusly comes to be made manifest, enduringly presented in its motion or rest.

Strictly speaking, then, the peculiar “loopback” structure that we discovered in my analysis of the act of perception, its “going-back-in-order-to-come-forward-to-itself,” belongs to the *temporalizing self-constitution* of the act. The object of perception, or rather, the occurrence in which the object shows itself as being involved, obviously doesn’t display anything like this “loopback” structure itself; here we are dealing with a merely unfolding sequence or linear course of events, in which the perceived being is continually apprehended, and apprehended as the selfsame. No doubt, the streaming conscious life continually apprehends itself as the selfsame also, “flowing” both “backwards” and “forwards” towards its just-passed and to-come moments (it is through this enduring “self-identification” that it can grasp the enduring identity of perceived objects and concomitantly, the “now” of their enduring). But along with this (merely) linear passing, the self-apprehended unities of experiencing also exhibit the “loopback”

¹¹⁶ What I anticipate, objectively, is of course my cup turned over in the sink, and this is so insofar as I anticipate myself *perceiving*, with all due dread, my teacup dumped there. However, this anticipated perceiving is protained precisely as the sensing to be given in just that case. This offers further confirmation of our discovery that sensation only brings forward that which it discloses because of the temporal syntheses binding the sensation to others in an enduring consciousness; for we can imagine the “same” sensing coming to pass as part of a series of experiencings unfolding completely differently, in which it would then serve as the manifestation of something much different, perhaps a different teacup being taken to the sink by the same barista at some other point in time. For that matter, we can also imagine the “same” sensing all alone, in which it would then serve to manifest nothing.

or “back-and-forth” “movement” of synthetic fulfillment. A streaming conscious life is given not merely as enduring serially; it grasps itself *as* grasping itself in each of its moments, as “holding out for” and “holding onto” itself, and as such, as always having “held out” for its own coming.¹¹⁷

As I noted above, none of this goes on thematically—or at least, not originally. However, because these “features” of the streaming conscious life are nonetheless self-given in temporalizing self-consciousness (given “nonthematically,” that is), a reflective act can always come to seize upon them, or at least can do so, given some “motive” (in the mundane sense) to turn the regard in this “direction.”¹¹⁸ It might not be immediately obvious that this is so; an example, however, can help clarify any confusion on this point. “Looking back,” for instance (for this whole tea episode actually happened quite a while ago, now), I easily remember that, watching the barista carrying off my teacup, I anticipated my teacup’s dumping with all due dread, given that, at basis, the anticipation I remember was an anticipation of the *experience of mine* that was to-come: an experience sadly bereft of tea, or rather, merely prefigured as such.

Were I not to have retained this self-anticipation, however, then “looking back,” I could never

¹¹⁷ In fact, it quickly becomes apparent that, by the term “the subject,” we can mean nothing else than a self-constituting streaming conscious life *qua* self-constituting life, unless we use the term to mean (as I think is most often meant, albeit unreflectively) something like the “now,” or *self-maintained moment*, of this life. However, if the term is being used in the second of these two senses, then talk of the subject as self-constituting, or as retaining itself, etc., become at the least misleading, for the “now” moment of a streaming conscious life, as will become clear soon enough, is constituted by this life’s self-constitution, and thus, in a certain sense cannot be said to constitute itself, it does so only through the mediation of the other moments at the least, as part of the streaming totality. The equivocation is harmless insofar as, constituted as a moment of the streaming conscious life, the “now” moment of experiencing, self-maintained, itself continues the temporalizing self-constitution of that very life (via a process which will, also, soon be made clear), and thus, constitutes “itself” or “self-temporalizes,” etc. However, insofar as something like will or volition emerges in the “now” moment of a streaming conscious life (for this, see Chapter 4), the equivocation potentially leads to all sorts of confusions—it is for this reason, for example, that, with phrases like “the subject self-protains, etc., we almost cannot help but imagine a sort of willful activity that some entity called a “subject” can begin, or quit doing, at whim.

¹¹⁸ Husserl: “I not only can occupy myself with other things, but also, with myself and, with it, with myself as occupied with this or that. I not only am, I am constantly also for myself, and as always and necessarily conscious of myself in the most primordial originality.” Husserl, *Späte Texte Über Zeitkonstitution (1929-1934): die C-Manuskripte*, ed, Dieter Lohmar (Dordrecht, Springer); 2006: p. 364-365 (C16, No. 82a). Hereafter listed as *C*. Quoted in *PT*: p. 282.

remember (as I now do) that I surely *never* anticipated how embarrassed I'd end up feeling when the barista suddenly stopped, before pitching my cup, and turned to ask me if I'd finished drinking my tea.

A streaming conscious life continually grasps itself *as* grasping itself, as “holding out for” and “holding onto” itself. As conscious beings, then, we not only temporalizingly apprehend our own acts as enduring unities of experience—an experiencing which is thereby a consciousness-*of*; we also temporalizingly apprehend our own temporalizing self-apprehension. By reflecting upon our acts, then (a reflection always “motivated,” in the *phenomenological* sense, for the reasons I've given), we are always able to apprehend them not only as acts of this or that sort, acts by which we apprehend (or have apprehended, in the case of recollection) such-and-such a being perceptually, etc.—acts, thusly, whose structure we can always describe phenomenologically; we're also able to apprehend our acts insofar as they temporalizingly apprehend *themselves*: a (self-)consciousness whose structure we can then describe, also! Primordial time-consciousness, that is, is accessible not simply by “drawing back” from the enduring unities of experiencing it constitutes; it is also accessible “in” these very unities, as part of the very acts that make up our lives.

§ 12

The goal of this study, again, is to demonstrate that and describe the manner in which subjectivity, because it necessarily involves the constitution of time, is subtended by something like an ethical affection, a trace left by the approach of another or his or her self-revelation as such. In the attempt to demonstrate that this is so, however, it soon became necessary for me to investigate time-consciousness in its most primordial sense, i.e., the temporalizing self-apprehension of a streaming conscious life. Having noted several essential characteristics of this

life insofar as it is temporalizingly apprehended by itself, I should now be in a position to at least provisionally describe this most primordial level of time-consciousness. At any rate, we should be able to grasp something of the “form” of this consciousness, though as we’ll soon see, what we discover in this fashion can only be considered preliminary. It will, however, form the basis of a guiding clue of sorts that will allow me to discover heretofore unnoticed characteristics of the various intentionalities at work in levels of constitution I’ve already described, characteristics whose clarification (in Section 5 and 6 of this study) will itself ultimately lead to the clarification of primordial time-consciousness itself (Chapter 3).

Moments of a streaming conscious life are always apprehended (or more precisely, maintained) as fulfillments of retained self-protention: it is thus that enduring perceptual acts make themselves manifest just as the specific acts they are, and that, as such, each act makes manifest what it, as such-and-such an act, intends, e.g., some transcendent extant being. How, then, are each of the moments of a streaming conscious life apprehended as fulfillments of a prior protention, of what has come before of the selfsame life? Plainly, this is possible, firstly, only if this life actually does protain itself, anticipating not only that it will continue, but that in this continuation it will imminently *be* in such-and-such a manner (the form in which a life concretely anticipates its to-come). The streaming conscious life must also retain itself, not only because its self-protention can take no concrete form without having something to go on, as it were, but because the moment of experiencing to-come could never come to pass as any sort of a *fulfilment* of what has come before (either concordantly or otherwise) unless the moment to-come *itself* comes to pass as a self-retaining, “keeping hold” of what came before of (what is thereby) the selfsame streaming life. By retaining itself, or put better, by retaining what has come before of this life, the “new” moment thus retains the just-passed *as* having protained itself, and

as having protained itself in such-and-such a manner, so that the moment to-come comes to pass as the fulfillment of this protention, concordantly or otherwise, according to its own vicissitudes.

This dynamic lies at the basis of time-constituting self-apprehension. In a certain sense, self-protaining shows itself here as having a privileged status, for if the streaming conscious life were not to have protained its coming, and furthermore, were it not to continuously keep on protaining itself—projecting itself, as it were, upon the being it is to-be—then the “now” of experiencing, or those to-come, could never actually retain what has already come *as* what has come of the selfsame.¹¹⁹ Self-retaining is in fact able to “welcome” what came before of the selfsame life *as* its own “before” only because, for its own part, what had come before had already anticipated itself, i.e., because it itself was self-protaining, open for the arrival of the experiencing to-come of the selfsame streaming life. For this very reason, Heidegger insists that “since the *Dasein* [or “being-there”] always comes-toward-itself from out of a possibility of itself, it therewith also always comes-back-to what it has been.”¹²⁰ However, it is not only because of this “privilege” of self-protaining that a streaming conscious life is able to *retain* its having-been: it is in fact only because this life, as just noted, “returns to itself” in such a way as to come “towards itself”—i.e., because it retains itself as having-been already open for its own arrival—that it is able to maintain itself in its self-presence as well. By having *been* such as to *anticipate* itself, through the dynamic just described, each moment of a streaming conscious life comes to be understood on the temporal horizon of that life. It is only as such that the present moment of the conscious life *maintains* itself, apprehending itself in something like its now-being. It is thus that a conscious streaming life is conscious of itself as streaming, as having

¹¹⁹ Husserl rhetorically asks if the self-protentional “striving” that “steadily leads to realization, steadily arouses *new* striving, etc.?”—an “awakening” I will need to discuss in more detail later on—see, *C*: p. 350-351 (C16, No. 79c); quoted in *PT*: p. 255-256 [my italics]. On “self-affection,” see, for instance: *C*: p. 364 (C16, No. 82a).

¹²⁰ Heidegger, *BP*: p. 270. Also, see p. 266: “since the *Dasein* [“being-there”] always comes-toward-itself from out of a possibility of itself, it therewith also always comes-back-to what it has been.”

“come from something” and as “going somewhere,” “between which” its present moment always stretches itself out. In this consciousness of its own streaming, this life maintains itself (or apprehends itself in its “nowness”) as the unfolding of this or that act, and so, apprehends its object in the strict sense throughout the object’s involvement in the occurrence thusly made manifest through this life’s temporal articulations.

I’ve spoken of fulfillment here, in relation to the streaming-conscious life’s retaining self-projection, but Husserl points out that there are in fact two distinct, albeit necessarily related, sorts of fulfillment thusly consummated: a *particular* and a *general* fulfillment. To speak of a “*particular* fulfillment” (“through which the correlates of the consciousness of the basic series are distinguished,” Husserl writes),¹²¹ is to speak of the sort of “agreement” that comes to obtain between, on the one hand, the self-protection “cast forward” by a streaming life in the unfolding of a specific act or unity and, on the other, the moment of experiencing that either comes to prolong the act in some way (in concordant perceiving) or else (in non-concordance) “turn” it otherwise. Conversely, “*general* fulfillment,” as the term implies, is fulfilled whenever *any* moment of experiencing comes to prolong the streaming conscious life *in general*. General fulfillment thus pertains, not to any particular act which comes to develop, transition, and pass away in an ongoing or unfolding life, but to that life *itself*: it (general fulfillment) will go on just as long as a streaming conscious life continues. It can only go unfulfilled at death (although unlike all that otherwise goes under the name “unfulfillment” as this term is used phenomenologically, there can evidently be no consciousness of anything like unfulfillment,

¹²¹ Husserl, *Die Bernauer Manuskripte Über das Zeitbewusstsein (1917/18)*, Band XXXIII, ed. Rudolf Bernet and Dieter Lohmar (Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers); 2001: p. 29-30 (hereafter listed as *L*). “Auf dieser seite haben wir auch ein Analogon der besonderen Erfüllung, durch welche die Bewusstseinskorrelate der Grundreihe ausgezeichnet sind.”

here—this unfulfillment would be unfulfillment in an absolute sense).¹²²

It should now be evident that a streaming conscious life temporalizingly apprehends itself in such a way as to fulfill itself both particularly (in relation to the acts that come and go throughout this life) and also generally. With the discovery of general fulfillment, however, we finally come to discover something only indirectly touched upon before—something possibly astonishing, in fact, but in any event, absolutely indisputable, as regards the temporalizing self-constitution of conscious life: for we discover here that the constitution of this life is equivalent to its very production! In no other instance does constitution, in the phenomenological sense, coincide with anything like production; for instance, to constitute an object of perception is certainly not to bring it into being, but simply to bring a being to its manifestation—it is the *sense* of the being, and not the being *per se*, that is thereby “produced.” For the temporalizing self-constitution of the streaming conscious life, however, the matter is totally different: for in this case, sense and being coincide, leading Husserl to again and again insist that that, for “immanent objects,” “*esse is percipi*,” i.e., their being just *is* their being perceived.¹²³ As we’ve already in fact discovered, there would quite simply be no act at all, no consciousness seizing

¹²² Husserl’s reflections on general fulfillment in the C Manuscripts lead him to broach the issue of death; see, for instance C: p. 96-106 (C4 No, 21c).

As I note below, it is in these manuscripts that Husserl jettisons his “consciousness-behind-consciousness” view of absolute time-consciousness—an account in which “consciousness” stands outside of all constituted temporality, taking its own enduring existence as mere object, in some sense wholly transcendent to itself. As long as this position held, death could be understood as affecting only empirical life, and as failing to reach the “atemporal,” transcendental ego, leading Husserl (in his lectures on the passive and active syntheses, for one, see: AP: p. 466-471) to posit the “immortality” of the transcendental ego. Husserl’s reflections on death in the C Manuscripts are thus very different. He is no longer able to see the ego *per se* as being beyond time.

Granted that the ego does not survive its time, perhaps something may still be retained of the notion of “immortality,” however. In these pages, after all, we may come to see a sort of resuscitation of the notion of “Freedom” as well as “God” (in the sense of the very “production” of alterity, or the ethical relation, faced down by another); can “Immortality” then be far behind? Perhaps not; but the issue requires far more attention than can be devoted to it in these pages. Suffice it to say, if the the notion is not to fall back into uncriticality, no sense of “continuing survival” can be retained by it: like the notions of “God” and “Freedom,” this notion also must be purged of all Being, so to speak, if a discourse on it is to have any bearing on the trace of infinity.

¹²³ See, for instance, AP: p. 55.

upon an object, were it not for the temporalizing self-apprehension that gives every moment of experiencing its “place” within an act as a unified unfolding series in the streaming life of a conscious being. For the very same reason, there would be no conscious *life* without its own temporalizing self-apprehension; we obviously cannot speak without absurdity of a conscious life without *consciousness*. It is via general fulfillment, effected by means of a life’s retained protention of itself, that this life not only continually brings itself forward in its being, but continues to be.

Such a thought, however, may give us pause, for, apparently, the situation described appears to be that of a being bringing itself into being. How could a streaming conscious life bring itself into existence if it did not already in a sense exist? And why should its consciousness, in all other events “nonproductive,” here produce *anything*, let alone, *itself*? Such misgivings, however, dissolve immediately the moment the matter is clarified. A conscious life, we’ve discovered, can only be a conscious life if it is conscious of itself, which is to say, if it is temporalizingly self-apprehending. The “interior” relation that holds between all the moments of experiencing that make up this life, allowing each one to find its place within the series or the unfolding totality, is thus productive of that very totality, of a life that is aware of itself—i.e., it is productive of the very being of the subject. In no way, however, does this imply that these moments of experiencing would *themselves* be without being were it not for the “inner” relatedness that gathers them up or collects them, as it were, as the moments of an unfolding series; temporalizing self-apprehension brings each experience into the life that unfolds itself as such, and as such, transforms each mere experience into a *conscious* experience, but it does not create the experience whole cloth. It will in fact be phenomenologically demonstrated¹²⁴ that something like a stream of experiences, nonconscious and without any temporalization in the

¹²⁴ See Chapter 4.

strict sense, “pre-existed” the strictly speaking *conscious* streaming life, before the latter had somehow come to gather itself up from out of this stream—a stream we naturally attribute to the purely sentient life of the infant (although such “natural” assertions must be bracketed by phenomenological discourse, or rather, at least until such time as their own irrefutability can be phenomenologically demonstrated).¹²⁵

We can in fact go further than this. It is not simply the case that, “prior” to the life of consciousness, something like a stream of sentient, but nontemporalizing and thus nonconscious, sensation-experiencings must have progressed or unfolded themselves: rather, “beneath” any streaming conscious life, such a “stream” *continues* to unfold itself—a course of temporally “disparate” experiences, as it were, going on nonconsciously, despite the transformation to which these experiences are subject in being temporalizingly gathered up into the life of subjectivity. Although I cannot dwell on this point at this time, it will be of the greatest importance later on, when I look to uncover, not the nature of time-consciousness, but its *condition*. However, in order to clarify its condition, time-consciousness itself must first be understood, which is just the issue at hand.

At this point, I’ve been able to bring the subject’s time-constituting self-awareness to a *preliminary* clarification. And yet, this consciousness remains almost as much a mystery as before, for, despite my initial clarification, we still haven’t come to understanding anything more of it than its basic form. Having disclosed its form—i.e., that of retaining self-projection, fulfilling itself in general and particular fulfillment—we are no doubt given something to go on; but what sort of consciousness is this, which must realize itself thusly? What is its character, given that it appears a sort of consciousness *sui generis*, and certainly, is nothing like an

¹²⁵ Husserl comments in his Bernauer manuscripts on the beginning of conscious life: see *L*: p. 11-12 (quoted in *PT*: p. 180). On the subject of infancy in relation to this issue, see also: Anne O’Byrne, *Nativity and Finitude* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press); 2010: p. 109-110.

objectivation, however nonthematic? Given that it *cannot* be anything like an objectivating, since, by bringing together a continuing course of experiencings into a series—experiencings which can perceptually relate themselves to beings, and thus, “have” an object at all, *only on this basis*—it is this consciousness or temporalizing synthesis itself that *first allows* for anything like objectivation (along with the nonthematic manifestation of the objective “now”)?

It will not be possible for me to realize the aim of this study without first working through the difficulty at hand. This issue is, in fact, one that particularly concerned Heidegger, involving, as it does, our apparent inability to conceive of something like the self-“presence” of a streaming conscious life *differently* than the presence of an extant being; or correlatively, to conceive of temporalizing self-apprehension as something other than an objectivation. According to Heidegger, “Greek ontology and its history, which determines even today[...] the conceptuality of philosophy, is the proof for this, that the Dasein [or “being-there”] understands itself or being in general from out of the ‘world.’”¹²⁶ Put otherwise: being has always been understood as the presence of an *object*, even when the being in question is our own. But how can we understand the being of the streaming conscious life otherwise? In order to do so, the preliminary account that I’ve advanced of this life’s self-temporalization must be further developed.

In order to do *this*, however, we’ll need to go back to what we learned above, namely, that the subject’s temporalizing self-consciousness is part and parcel of its intentional grasp of beings (or its objects in the strict sense), insofar as, by apprehending each moment of experiencing *vis-à-vis* its temporal relation to the streaming totality, each experiencing is taken hold of as the giving of a being. Because this is so, something of the character of the subject’s self-“presence” or nonobjectivated self-manifestation must be reflected in the appearance or

¹²⁶ SZ: p. 43 (21-22).

manifestation of its objects, such that objective sense itself must bear within it some connection or intrinsic relation to the temporalizing self-manifestation of a streaming conscious life. In my earlier analysis of objective sense, however, we saw nothing of any such connection (there, we only came across the way in which objective sense refers back to the perceptual act and its temporal articulations, but not to the act insofar as it is temporalizingly *self-apprehended*); at the very least, I must have hastily “glossed over” this connection in my earlier analysis, if I didn’t simply leave it out completely. In order to uncover what I’ve missed, then—i.e., some characteristics, pertaining to objective sense, which in some sense exhibit the subject’s time-constituting apprehension of him- or herself—I’ll return to this analysis (of objective sense) in the next section of my study (“Section V”).

As we work our way through the “new” features of objective sense that we’ll soon discover, it will be important for us to steer clear of a certain seductive, though mistaken, position—a position that may appear quite reasonable as long as the nonobjectivating nature of primordial time-consciousness eludes us. Although nothing that is given of a conscious being’s experiencing *via* its temporalizing self-apprehension is given as if “outside of” the life thusly constituted—a life which, as we’ll soon see, is primarily occupied in its concerned commerce with things—it is nonetheless all too easy to understand the temporalizing self-apprehension of subjectivity as if it were somehow “atemporal,” and perhaps thus somehow ultimately “beyond” all the worldly concerns of the streaming conscious life itself. This problem is greatly exacerbated by the ease with which we can declare that temporalizing self-apprehension is no objectivation (let alone, a thematizing), while we nevertheless go on conceiving of this consciousness, in every relevant way, as though it *were* all the same. For a long time, Husserl fell into this trap: his formulation of an “absolute transcendental ego” *distinct* from its “empirical”

manifestation followed from this error, the product of Husserl's long-held conception of the subject's "presence" to itself as something like the presence of an object before "another" subject, the subject taken in a "deeper" sense—a wholly "otherworldly" subject, even, or rather, a subject without a world. Husserl eventually came to rid himself of this view, for after discovering the manner by which a conscious life temporalizingly constitutes *itself* (via its retaining self-projection, that is), the room for anything like an "absolute ego" in this sense is precluded.¹²⁷

There is thus no sense in which we can speak of the "atemporality" of time-constituting consciousness; no "higher level" of constitution remaining totally without all constituted immanent time, a "level" which would never "fall into" the enduring, and ultimately ceasing, finite intentional life. The temporalizing self-constitution of a streaming conscious life does *not* stand outside of, or at even the slightest remove from, the life it constitutes, and in fact *cannot* stand outside it, given that this consciousness can apprehend the moments of a life in their temporal position *vis-à-vis* the totality only because it is thusly "placed" *itself* by this life's other moments: as we discovered above, the retaining of a passed-by phase of the experiencing of the selfsame, welcoming this "having-been" as its own life, is in fact only able to retain this phase as such because, for its part, this passed-by phase had already, as a moment of living holding out in advance for this moment as its own arrival, projected itself or opened itself out onto its own continuation. Temporalizing itself, then, the streaming conscious life coils over itself completely

¹²⁷ See, for instance, *PT*: p. 233, and p. 259-261. The entire motivation for the belief that there is some sort of consciousness "behind" our streaming conscious life consists in the fact that it seems necessary to posit such a thing, in order to understand how this life, and each act or unity of experiencing that it comprises, comes to be seized upon in its enduring (without which, again, none of its perceived objects, which are always made manifest in their motions or rests, could come to be made manifest at all). However, once we've discovered how a streaming conscious life is temporalizingly *self*-apprehending in the strict sense, this motivation drops out, and it becomes apparent that the "transcendental ego," understood as an "absolute consciousness," distinct from and conscious of merely "empirical" conscious life, is nothing more than a piece of intellectual construction.

and without remainder; its self-constituting temporalization is itself constituted by itself (i.e., by this very life), and not by some “other,” “otherworldly,” subject. Nothing of the subject is outside time. Or rather: if there *is* by necessity a remainder here, and thus, a certain sense in which we *can* in fact claim that something of the subject stands absolutely outside of itself, or of its own life, in its temporalizing self-constitution, this remainder will not come to the subject in relation to another, “higher” aspect of *itself*. It will come to the subject only in relation to another.

Steering clear of the mistaken position that I warned us of above, the path is open to clarify time-consciousness in its most primordial sense. Some phenomena related to objective sense, which I missed in my initial account of it, “reflect” back, not simply the temporalizing act which manifests a perceived being in its extantness, but the temporalizing self-manifestation of this act itself. Turning back to objective sense, we can uncover these phenomena.

An object always “promises” something. To encounter an object is to encounter it before something like the horizon of an “in-order-to;” to apprehend a being is already to understand what we can *do* with it.

The “promise” that an object conveys no doubt belongs to its sense, or at least, is inextricably related to it. Were this not so, then in order to make use of an object at all, we’d either need to reason our way from the appearance of the object to its potential utilization, or else, actively remember what we’ve learned about it as regards its utility. However, although we do cognize thusly on occasion, this is certainly not the case in *most* situations. Seeing the key to the front door of my apartment, for instance, I “know” that it can be used to gain entry into my apartment without a moment’s thought—with as little need for anything like an act of contemplation or deliberation, in fact, as perception requires for its protaining of the oncoming presentations of the objects it apprehends. I neither reason from the appearance of my apartment key to the end it might be used to realize (i.e., getting in my front door), nor disengage from my perception of the key, however momentarily, in order to remember its function: the key is simply perceived *as* something that opens my apartment door, bringing this use with it, so to speak, in its very perceptual manifestation. The phenomenological evidence could not be clearer on this point.

For this reason, we cannot deny that the sense of an object includes more than the schema of its more or less determinately prefigured features and facets: the in-order-to is *also* given with it. Along with this, something like an object’s “towards-which” is also given, i.e., a sort of “sense” of those other objects or states of objects that are to be produced “along the way”

towards the in-order-to or the end that the object “promises” (an unlocked lock and opened door, for example). These “references” (the in-order-to and towards-which of the object) are, in Heidegger’s words, “not considered themselves, but are instead ‘there’ in concerned surrender to them.”¹²⁸ We as little see (or feel or hear, etc.) the in-order-to as we see (or feel or hear, etc.) the unsensed but still “there” facets or features of a perceived object; nor do we imaginatively, etc., make a theme of them in straightforward perception. However, the object’s “practical reference,” though evidently connected to a schema of prefigured features, is certainly not simply reducible to such a schema, as if this were just another sort of feature (getting in my front door, that is, is not a “side” of my apartment key). But because this is so, then, there must be some structural feature of the perceptual act responsible for the constitution of the in-order-to (or for the “practical reference” just described in general) that I still haven’t brought to analysis, since retaining, maintaining, and protaining cannot account for this constitution by themselves—or at least, not on the basis of what we have seen of them in my analysis so far.

This isn’t all, though: for the in-order-to would be meaningless if an object—appearing along with something like a “practical” horizon, now—did not somehow “refer to” or “indicate” all those objects *with which* it is to be employed. The key has its lock and door, just as the pen has its paper and the hammer, its nails. Whenever I perceive my apartment key, and perceive it as that which allows entry into my apartment, I concomitantly apprehend something of my apartment’s front door as well as the lock keeping it secure (not to mention, something of my apartment itself): for what would it mean to gain entry, if door and lock were not at once also “brought to mind?” Heidegger thus insists that “*an* equipment never is, strictly speaking,” for “[t]o the being of equipment always ever belongs an equipmental totality, in which it can be the

¹²⁸ SZ: p. 105 (74).

equipment that it is.”¹²⁹ Along with the in-order-to (as well as its towards-which), then, the “with-which” also makes up a “moment” of objective sense, or at least, is connected to objective sense in the same intimate manner. To perceive an object is to apprehend, not simply an extant being with such-and-such physical characteristics, but one which might be manipulated, together with those other objects with-which it is to be manipulated, in-order-to realize certain specific ends.

An object apprehended on the horizon of its in-order-to is apprehended according to its “promise;” an object apprehended on the horizon of its with-which is apprehended according to the contexture of other objects with which this “promise” is inextricably “wrapped up.” However, these two apprehensions, which thus presuppose one another, *also* presuppose that something, or rather, that *someone* is similarly apprehended with them if, over and above its self-giveness through a schema of possible presentations, an object is to show itself as utilizable. Perceiving an object in its utilizability, that is, the perceiver somehow grasps those for *whom* the “promise” is in fact a “promise,” i.e., those “for-the-sake-of-whom” the promised ends are to be realized. The “practical apprehension” of an object requires this. I take up my apartment key not simply so that some lock will be turned and some door opened, but in-order for-*me*-to gain entrance, which is to say, *for-the-sake-of* a longed-for determination of my *own* being. The with-which, towards-which, and in-order-to would “mean” nothing and would never move anyone to act without this apprehension. We are moved to act, however, not only for our own benefit; thus, when objects are apprehended according to their “promise” or utilizability, some sort of apprehension of the being of *others* is often also exhibited. Putting pen to paper in solitude in-order-to compose a letter, the one for whom the writer writes is also “there” with him or her in the writing; taking hammer to nail and wood, the family of the builder, who are supported by his

¹²⁹ SZ: p. 97 (68).

or her work and are thus those *for-the-sake-of-whom* he or she works, are also in a certain sense “there” as well—not to mention, the ones who are to reside or work within the building’s walls, even if the builder remains ignorant as to the determinate identity of these future occupants (“in the manufacture of goods by the dozens,” Heidegger writes, “this constitutive reference [to those for-the-sake-of-whom the goods are made] is in no way lacking; it is merely indefinite, points to the random, the average”¹³⁰). Just as I would never use the key to my apartment were entrance of no benefit to me or were it not constitutive of a longed-for determination of my own being, the letter-writer would not write to *no* one, or would in any event write differently otherwise, and the builder would not build a house to stay empty, or would not work were there no one to be supported by the wages that the work is to procure. If the perceiving subject’s own being is thus somehow “there” in the for-the-sake-of that underlies a perceived object’s “promise,” then through this, the being of others is “there,” also; Heidegger thus writes of “the friend, whom every *Dasein* [or “being-there”] carries with it.”¹³¹ To apprehend an object as “promising something,” as something to be manipulated in some way in-order-to bring about a specific end meant to benefit others (whether a precise person or group of people, or even a relatively indeterminate set of others) is to carry the ones to be benefitted within us, in a manner of speaking, to bear them “in mind” even when not explicitly paying them any “mind” at all.

This determination, that of those for-the-sake-of-whom an object bears its “promise,” carries with it not just those to be *benefitted*, however; the enemy can be as much “there,” “referenced” in the perception of an object calling for this or that manipulation, as is the friend to be brought benefit, or even the “neutral” fellow to be given his or her “due” in the “everyday” or customary sort of consideration exhibited in most of our activity. The letter-writer, after all, can

¹³⁰ SZ: p. 100 (71).

¹³¹ SZ: p. 206 (163).

always correspond, not to comfort, but to hurt—the pen, now perceived as if a weapon, can be wielded in-order-to do harm, which is to say, “for-the-sake-of” the enemy’s *detriment*. Likewise: the builder can build a wall to hinder the other; I lock my door to keep others *out*. Assuming, of course, that the conscious being has enemies, which, at least within certain limits, appears inevitable, the enemy would in fact seem to be *just* as much “there” (apprehended in a manner determinative for the “practical” perception of an object, and thus, for the activity of the subject) as is the friend or the “neutral.” Is this so? We all likely hope that our enemy is not “there” for us as *fundamentally* as is our friend; and further, we hope that by hoping this, we aren’t merely being “hopeful,” or desiring to see only the best in ourselves. However, there does in fact appear to be some justification for the position, given that in most cases, we can safely enough assume that we only work “for-the-sake-of” the hindrance or detriment of the enemy in relation to a *further* for-the-sake-of—we are moved, more fundamentally, to look after the friend, or even the “neutrals” with whom we belongingly dwell. The builder of walls might build to hinder the other, but precisely for-the-sake-of protecting his or her family, or perhaps for-the-sake-of all those fellow citizens to be kept safe from possible invasion. By and large, harming an enemy constitutes no “end in itself;” rather, it is sometimes required, however unfortunately, in-order-to assist certain others or to protect them from harm. No doubt: and yet, this assertion doesn’t put to bed every disquieting thought implied in the above worry, and not simply because in some cases (i.e., sadism), it does in fact appear that harming an enemy can at times represent something like an “end-in-itself” for at least some of us.¹³² Even more critically, we might wonder why it should

¹³² For the sadist, this is obviously so; in this case, things evidently must be perceived, quite often, as objects to be wielded for-the-sake-of inflicting harm. But is this limited to the sadist—for we sometimes fear that this impulse is not wholly foreign to any of us? Given this, an explanation is required to make sense of this phenomenon, if in fact subjectivity is at heart moved by an *ethical* affection coming from the other. But we discover just such an explanation in Levinas’s account of the will to “murder,” an “impulse” that can at least potentially show itself as soon as the self-tending temporalization of a streaming life is in play: for if the interrogatedness of the being of the

be so that our friends, along with those people with whom we dwell or to whom we “belong” in some sense, are to be given due consideration while others are not, to the extent that we have no problem working for the detriment of those in the latter “camp” whenever it appears required for the well-being of those in the former. It is not a matter here of what we *in fact* do (which, within limits, cannot be disputed), but of what we *ought* to. But this line of questioning introduces a theme that I must put off for later (Part II of this study), until such time as its full significance for the phenomena at hand becomes apparent.

In any event, it is evident that any time an end is to be realized, a longed-for determination of the being of *some* being is always at issue, and is thus concomitantly “there” in the perception of an object insofar as the object “promises” anything. By claiming that the one for-the-sake-of-whom an end is to be realized is “there,” however, I certainly do not mean that the individual is “there” in the sense of being an object of contemplative thought or imagination, not to mention, “there” in the same way that the perceived being is present. This determination, the for-the-sake-of, is instead “there” in the same way that the object’s “promise” is “there,” along with the contexture of things with-which it is to be realized: without any act of reasoning or imagination, the being whose being is somehow seized upon as that for-the-sake-of which an end is to be realized somehow “shapes” the perception of a perceived object, as does the end given as its “promise” and the contexture of beings with-which this “promise” cannot be extricated. Even if for the moment the writer thinks only about the writing and doesn’t bring to

subjected one—to which he or she is subjected by the other’s approach, or by self-revelation of the other as such, in an unconditional love for the other—is always taken up, in temporalizing self-responsibility, as the being-at-issue of the subject’s own being, and if in this self-tending, the self-temporalized subject always thus finds himself or herself committed to various projects meant to “make good” on this self-responsibility which can only be traced back to responsibility for the others, then the subject can always fear the further approach of another which can always then in turn affect the subjected one as subjection to interrogation of this already established response, of his or her projects—as accusation that this response, that is, has never been responsible enough. But then, the subject can always “protect” him- or herself *via* sadism, or the “will to murder,” however much these efforts exhibit a sort of “bad faith,” and might well be shown up in their vanity as soon as the other’s approach has once more “broken through” such defenses to call the subjected one to answer for his or her being anew.

mind the one for whom the letter is written at all, the one for whom the correspondent writes his or her letter is “there” as (at least a part of) the motivation for the writing; even if the builder thinks only of the work at hand, or has his or her mind on something totally different (what to have for lunch, etc.), the ones for whom he or she builds “call forth” through the “promise” of an object (a hammer, etc.), constituting the very “reason” that the builder sees it as an object to be manipulated in some specific manner. Likewise, even if I myself and the fact of my being are the farthest thing from my mind, “I” am “there” whenever I use my apartment key to gain entrance into my apartment. But how does this apprehension of self and others come about, and thus determine the “practical” apprehension of an object of perception? As was the case with the in-order-to and the with-which, we find ourselves faced once again with the question regarding the nature of that constituting feature of the perceptual act responsible for the manifestation of the “practical assignments” or “feature” of an object.

To sum up what we’ve discovered in this section: those for-the-sake-of-whom the subject acts, as those to be benefited (or hindered) by the act, are somehow “there” in the perceiving of an object insofar as the object gives itself as one to be worked with or manipulated at all, in the same way that the state of affairs to be realized by the object’s manipulation (which will bring benefit or hindrance) and the contexture of objects with-which the object is to be manipulated for this purpose are both “present” in the perception, also. The key is perceived *as* something to be manipulated along-with door and lock, in-order-to open the door and gain entrance, for-the-sake-of the subject who would determine his or her being thusly. The with-which, in-order-to, and for-the-sake-of-whom must thus be regarded as determinations of an object’s sense, or at the least, as belonging to objective sense in some fashion, because perception somehow apprehends them in the very process of bringing a being forth, or at least insofar as the being is brought forth as

utilizable. In fact, such determinations *always* belong to an object as perceptual phenomenon, “giving themselves” as though determinations of the object itself, for objects are always given, not merely as things, but as things to handle, to let be, or even to avoid, for-the-sake-of longed-for determinations of the being of the perceiving subject, along with that of those with whom he or she dwells or even to whom he or she is opposed. All perceiving, that is, is “practical.” The necessity that such “practical” determinations be given in the perceptual manifestation of a being is in no way compromised in the case of some purely theoretical examination, given that, here, an object nonetheless shows itself *as* something to be examined, *along-with* instruments specially developed to aid examination (telescopes, barometers, and the like), *in-order-to* bring about a better understanding for-the-sake-of the inquiring subject. If the object did not show itself as such, then the subject would quite simply never be able to subject the object to a theoretical analysis. In the same way, we could as little use a key to open a door, or a hammer to build a house, were the key not to show itself as a thing to be taken up *in-order-to* open a door for-the-sake-of entrance, or the hammer, as an object to be handled with nails and wood *in-order-to* build a house for-the-sake-of-our dwelling or to shelter the lives to be lived within its walls.

Heidegger calls this “practical” determination (comprised, again, of the *in-order-to*, the *towards-which*, the *with-which*, and the *for-the-sake-of*) *Bedeutung*, or the “*significance*” of things. Because the manifestation of an object to perceiving is always significant in *some* fashion (even if it’s merely perceived as a thing to be avoided or “left alone” for the time being), the significance of things evidently bears an essential relationship of some sort to objective sense. In the next section of this study, I’ll go over this relationship in detail, in order to finally clarify the relationship that holds between the temporal articulations of the act of perception and the *self-*protaining, *-retaining*, and *-maintaining* (i.e., the temporalizing self-consciousness) that

constitutes these articulations, bringing forth moments of experiencing precisely as moments belonging to a streaming unified act (i.e., so that they are the protaining, retaining, and maintaining of some perceived object). Having clarified this relationship, the precise character of temporalizing self-consciousness can then be clarified itself. Before continuing on, however, I'll have to go over several more features somehow belonging to objective sense which, like significance, cannot be reduced to the mere *schema* of objective sense: features whose clarification will also be necessary in order to draw back to an assured conception of a streaming life's temporalizing self-presence.

§ 14

Objects, we've seen, are not apprehended as "mere things" whenever perception comes to make them manifest; they are apprehended according to their significance. This is not all, however: the grasp that takes hold of them also takes something like their affective measure. For the one who needs to write a letter, a pen will show itself as something to be taken up in-order-to write it, etc.; but as such, the perceiving (and perhaps also writing) subject finds himself or herself *affected* by the pen in some manner also. If the pen bleeds as it is taken to paper, then the writer might perceive it as a frustrating or exasperating thing. If the pen has gone missing, then upon its discovery the one who would write might perceive it excitedly, as an elating object, "lightening his or her world." If, conversely, the one who is to write dreads the very prospect of writing the letter that is to be written, then the pen might show itself to the perceiver as an object of anxiety. And if the pen is right where it was anticipated and functions just as it should, so that the task at hand can unfold pleasantly and in a straightforward manner, then the pen is likely to show itself as a comforting item to the perceiving (and contentedly writing) subject. *Some* affect is always in play: whether touched by the calm "neutrality" of everyday contentment or the

volatile “fireworks” of more powerful passions, the perceiving subject always takes the affective measure of an object whenever one is perceived. No doubt, we become so accustomed to the “comforting nature” of, e.g., the street we live on, or of our home and all that it houses, etc., that we may fail to recognize that such an affect “belongs” to these objects at all; but certainly there is an affect here, one different, for instance, from that of unfamiliar objects or surroundings.

The affection that “comes to” the subject in the perception of an object is in a certain sense perceived as though a “property” of the object itself. A moment’s reflection nonetheless makes it obvious that this is not so, or rather, that the affective “charge” of an object belongs to it in a way that differs greatly from that of one of its features, etc. To apprehend an object according to its affective measure is in fact to apprehend something of the *self*, insofar as, by apprehending the object thusly, the object is apprehended precisely insofar as it affects the subject (or conversely, that the subject is affected by it). For this reason, Heidegger names our “sense” of the affective charge of things “*Befindlichkeit*,” a neologism referring to the German “*wie befinden Sie sich?*,” rendered colloquially in English as “how are you?” or, literally, with the only slightly less common “how do you find yourself?.” “*Befindlichkeit*,” perhaps too literally, can for its own part be translated as “foundliness,” though at first sight “locatedness” or “situatedness” seems better, since “*befindlich*” in German means “located” or “situated.” However, in English the word “locatedness,” etc., has no reference at all to the emotional; thus, I think terms like “self-adjudgedness” or “affectivity” seem a more suitable translation. Of the two just given, the latter is certainly less awkward, though perhaps less ideal, because “affectivity” fails to indicate something like the reversion back onto the self that the word “*Befindlichkeit*” obliquely indicates. However, although “self-adjudgedness” *does* indicate something like this “reversion,” it seems to do so only by connoting an act of *reflection*, which certainly is *not* in

play, or at least not necessarily, in the phenomenon here at issue. A reflective act is evidently called forth whenever we respond to the question “how are you doing?,” and yet, prior to such a judgment about something like the state of our own being, that state had to have been “there” in some sense in nonreflective experiencing—we certainly don’t bring this state forth for the first time through reflective judgment about it, as there were no sense of our own “emotional state” before thinking about “how we feel.” For this reason, I’ll prefer the term “affectivity” over “self-adjudgedness,” although as I use the term we’ll need to bear in mind the sense of “finding-oneself” that isn’t connoted by the word “affectivity” at all. In the usual sense of the word, in fact, *everything* has “affectivity” of a sort—a rock can be affected in its own way, not to mention, a sentient living being without consciousness, but there is nothing of the self, or rather, of the way that a being finds itself, in either of these.

We might have already noticed that, in the perception of an object, something of the subject shows up to him- or herself as well, insofar as the object gives itself in its *significance*. Catching sight of an object, the perceiving subject is immediately given to understand certain ways in which the object at hand can be manipulated in-order-to benefit him- or herself, or more generally, in order to realize a longed for determination of his or her own being. Not only that, though—an object may also be perceived insofar as it can be utilized to benefit others, too; and yet, because those to be benefited are those to whom the subject holds himself or herself to be obligated in some concrete fashion, the subject is “self-present” here, also, and perhaps here especially so. Working to benefit another, I labor to determine myself as a good friend, a helpful neighbor, etc.; thus, in whatever way an act is meant to help or to hinder others, the subject is always *also* moved for-the-sake-of a longed for determination of his or her own being, so that, by perceiving an object as that which can be acted upon in this or that fashion, the subject in *every*

case exhibits a certain sort of self-presence. Is it any wonder, then, that we should seek the proper conception of the subject's temporalizing self-consciousness in this (i.e., in significance)? To perceive an object in its significance is to perceive it as significant for *me*, for my own ends or projects.

The sense in which a conscious being is “present” to itself, however, is even more apparent in *affectivity*: for here, we are dealing with the way in which a perceiving being directly, albeit pre-reflectively, “finds itself” (*Befindlichkeit*). As we've just discovered, an object can be perceptually apprehended as an overjoying, unnerving, exasperating, or contenting one, etc., only because the subject finds *himself* or *herself* overjoyed, unnerved, exasperated, or contented by it. For this very reason, Levinas writes that on “the Heideggerian analysis of *Befindlichkeit*[...]—a very admirable theory of double intentionality—all emotion, all fear is finally emotion for self, fear for self, fear of the dog but aguish *for* self.”¹³³ We should note, though, that for a subject to find himself or herself affected—overjoyed, unnerved, exasperated, contented, and so forth—is, crucially, for that subject to find himself or herself involved in certain projects whose achievement, or lack of it, the affect signals: the affective measure of an object always measures the way in which the object's appearance marks some sort of *success* or *failure* for the subject who perceives the object on this basis. This consideration will be of the utmost importance once we begin to examine temporalizing self-“presence” directly; before doing so, however, there is one further determination pertaining to the manifestation of objects whose distinction this examination will require.

§ 15

A perceived object does not only give itself in its perception-independent spatial-reality,

¹³³ “Philosophy, Justice, and Love,” in *EN*: p. 117. Levinas's mention of the “double intentionality” of emotion leads us directly into the essential problem of primordial time-consciousness, which I'll begin to tackle in the next Chapter of this study.

as something with significance and a certain affective charge; the object belongs to a shared, social, world, or takes up its place in one. There is already a sense in which, by being given as a spatially-extended perceptually-independent thing, the object is “shared” or “within a world,” for not only can the sides of an object that are “there” for me, though I do not presently see them, etc., actually be on view for another perceiver: they are in fact always perceived by me *as such*, as “viewable” by others, or even as now on view by them (i.e., I perceive that, from your vantage point, you see something I don’t). Yet much more than this is at work in the perceived object’s “sharedness” or its being within a “world,” a world in which the perceiver exists along with others. Perhaps after examining these other features of an object’s “sharedness” in depth, we’ll come to discover that they are in some sense the condition of an object’s “sharedness” in the narrower sense of our mere recognition of its co-perceivability by others.

In any event—what, *further* (or beyond the mere recognition of co-perceivability), constitutes an object’s being “shared,” its “belongingness” within a world shared with others? We’ve already seen that by perceiving an object according to its significance, the ends of others come to be taken into account (or to “impress themselves” upon the perceiving subject) in some specific or concrete fashion. However, it would be impossible for this sort of “consideration” to show itself in the very perception of an object, unless the perceiving subject were not only possessed of an “understanding” of the ends of others, but also, of the relation of the object to a system of the “projects” aiming at these ends in their “intertwining” which, taken in its totality, constitutes something like a social network—a nexus of various projects that mutually fulfill, or sometimes, hinder each other. The pen can certainly show itself to me as something to be manipulated in-order-to write a letter to a long-lost friend, but only if I find myself wielding it in a world with those who *read* (not to mention, “containing” a postal service to bear my letter

abroad, etc.). A hammer can show itself as something to be handled in-order-to build a house for-the-sake-of those who will come to dwell in it, but only if the builder finds himself or herself in a world in which we dwellers dwell with the others precisely by being separated from them by brick and mortar, doors and windows. And so forth. An object only shows itself as “promising” just what it “promises” because the one who perceives it as such perceives it on the “horizon” of some social world. No doubt, there is a sense in which the “practical possibilities” of an object are already “contained” within its (objective) sense as a system of potentially realizable states. Insofar as they merely belong to a schema of sense, however, these “possibilities” are not yet significant: I might for instance protain the marks a “pen” will make on some surface given its proper manipulation, and yet unless the pen comes to me from out of its belongingness to a world in which the marks “mean something” as signs given to another, the mere protention of these marks will never draw from me the sort of action that it does—such a “possibility,” that is, would otherwise never show up in its significance, i.e., as an in-order-to or the “promise” of the thing. It is only because an object is discovered on the horizon of the social world that the objective sense of the thing, as a schema, is a bearer of significance.

By giving itself as belonging in some way to a world—i.e., in its “worldliness”—an object shows itself precisely as *what* it is, which is to say, according to its *type* or “empirical” *essence*: the pen appears *as* a pen, the hammer as a hammer and the house as a house. Therefore, it is on the basis of its type—coextensive, again, with an object’s givenness within a social world—that its appearance is significant, and that, at least indirectly (as will later become more clear) the object “possesses” its affective charge.¹³⁴ Perhaps it isn’t altogether clear yet what an object’s “whatness” (its type or essence) has to do with the manner in which it “belongs” to a

¹³⁴ Already we have seen that an object’s affective charge measures the way that its appearance bears upon the realization of ends to which the subject finds himself or herself committed—ends that the subject can attempt to realize only because objects already show themselves in their “promise.”

social world or totality—for how, concretely, does this belongingness determine a subject’s perception of the *sort* of being that an object is, or at least, that it is perceived *as* being? Does the “worldliness” of an object actually determine anything of the sort at all? However, this matter can be clarified by examining a particular, and in fact somewhat remarkable, sort of “promise” that any object *whatsoever* “possesses”—albeit, crucially, in its own way, or rather, in a manner determined (like all objective “promise,” as this examination will help demonstrate) by the object’s *type*.

One of the ends “promised” by an object is that which can move its perceiver to undertake further examination of it, i.e., a familiarization carried out in-order-to become more familiar with the object. Generally speaking, a perceiving subject is drawn to examine an object, in-order-to get to know the object better—again, a “promise” perceived in it—only in-order-to realize some *further* end (i.e., I learn more about a tool in-order-to use it more efficiently, etc.); although in *any* event (and as is *always* the case for any in-order-to), always for-the-sake-of some longed-for determination of the perceiving subject’s *own being* (e.g., even if he or she perceives the object as something to be examined merely out of curiosity, i.e., for no other end than for-the-sake of being a “knower of it”). The examination “called for,” however, is always one which will seek out *a specific sort* of “information” pertaining to that object, as opposed to other “information;” not all that can be discovered of an object will be taken to be of equal relevance (except perhaps in certain sorts of examination, for instance, an aesthetic one). In fact, if the end of having become familiar with the object *in some particular way* is one “promised” by some object (as one of its “in-order-tos”), then, assuming that the significance of an object is a matter of its type, and thus (which is the real issue here), of the way in which the object belongs to a given social world, the goal of familiarization that an object “promises” must

somehow be derived from the social totality, or from the object's belonging to a world. But how, concretely, does the "empirical" essence of an object determine the way in which it "promises," as an end to be achieved, its being grasped in full familiarity, i.e., a supposedly adequate knowledge of its being? And how, then, is it in fact the object's manifested "worldliness" which, by determining the object in its whatness, guides the very way in which the perceiving subject comes to know the object or to familiarize himself or herself with it?

According to Husserl, a sort of "idea" guides all objective familiarization precisely as a notion of the "true being" of the object to be known.¹³⁵ "The thing itself in its saturated fullness is an idea located in a sense belonging to consciousness and in the manner of its intentional structures," Husserl writes—and yet, this idea is "practical:" for "what suffices as practical counts as the [object's] self."¹³⁶ If we can clarify this claim, the matter at hand will become clear itself. But in what way is this idea "practical," and how does it guide the manner in which we attempt to fully grasp the object as it is, "in itself" so to speak?

Thematic interest that lives itself out in perceptions is guided by practical interests[...]. Thus, the house itself and in its true being, and specifically with respect to its pure bodily thingly nature, is quickly given optimally, i.e., experienced as complete for that person who regards it as a buyer or a seller. For the physicist and the chemist, such ways of experience would seem completely superficial and miles away from its true being.¹³⁷

Familiarizing him- or herself with a house, a realtor "knows" what to look for, in-order-to turn a good business (it is in-order-to realize this further end that, for the realtor, the house "holds out" as a "promise" the realization of its becoming-familiarized by means of examination). The realtor "knows" what to look for, however, only because he or she "knows" what a potential customer wants *out of* a house; that is, by understanding how others dwell, the realtor

¹³⁵ AP: p. 61.

¹³⁶ AP: p. 61.

¹³⁷ AP: p. 61.

understands what home-buyers are looking for, and is only *thusly* guided in the house examination. Owing to his or her “sense” of the position of a house in the social nexus, so to speak (i.e., all the things we “use” houses for, and why), the realtor possesses a particular “idea” of “the thing itself in its saturated fullness,” which guides his or her examination so that, by means of this examination, the realtor can come to familiarize him- or herself with the house in such a way as to come to know it just “as it is”—“what suffices as practical,” again, “counts as [the object’s] self.” This acquired knowledge of what “counts as [the object’s] self” insofar as it is “what suffices as practical” is just what the house “promises” as an end to be realized by an examination in the “realtor mode”—or at least, is just what is “promised” for the realtor, who “stands” to the house in just the social relation necessary for the house to show itself as such. Matters stand somewhat differently for the physical scientist coming to know the “same” thing: for here, though the object likewise shows itself as a being calling for an examination in-order-to comprehend it in adequate knowledge, what will count as knowledge of the being at issue is obviously not the same. The “same” being is still embedded in a shared, social world—but here, not that of the realtor, of buyers and sellers of property, but of the practicing physical scientist; what counts as adequate knowledge of the being is different because the being is apprehended on the basis of a different set of social relations, projects, and ends to be realized (in which the scientist’s own project is situated). But this is just to say that the being is apprehended differently as regards its *essence* or rather, empirical type; for it is only because an object is grasped insofar as it belongs to such-and-such a class that an examination undertaken on this basis can be said to bring the object forward “in its true being” (or at least, that the examination will be understood as having accomplished as much). This is *why* Husserl claims that “what suffices as practical counts as the [object’s] self”—“thematic interest as practical interest,” he writes, “prefigures a relative

self.”¹³⁸ The “practical idea” of an object, given on the basis of a shared, social world, determines “what” the object shows up *as* to the perceiving subject, its “what-being” or essence, and so, determines the manner in which the perceiving subject will go about examining it if such an examination is in fact called forth.¹³⁹

A thing is significant because it is grasped in its essence, but it is grasped in its essence because it shows itself in a world. The importance of our apprehension of a being in its “worldly” essence cannot be overstated: it is, again, because the “worldliness” of an object (or its belonging to a shared social “milieu”) manifests itself along with it that it shows up as this or that *kind* of thing, as a being apprehended according to some “practical” type or kind; but we live *primarily* in a world of kinds, of keys and pens, of bottles and cars and subways and houses. The things that we perceive, insofar as they are significant, are always perceived as things of the world, so that, like an object’s significance as well as its affective charge, the “worldliness” of things must bear a necessary relationship of some sort to their sense.

This being so, it will prove necessary to uncover the nature of this relation, along with the relationships that obtain between objective sense, on the one hand, and the significance and affective charge of objects on the other. In the final section of this chapter, I will attempt to

¹³⁸ The “true being” of an object, according to Husserl, “is, as it were, a *s*<system> of all optima that would be won by sketching in the optimal frameworks. Thematic interest that lives itself out in perceptions is guided by practical interests in our scientific life. And that thematic interest comes to a rest when certain optimal appearances, in which the thing shows so much of its ultimate self as this practical interest demands, are won for the respective interest. Or rather, the thematic interest as practical interest prefigures a relative self” *AP*: p. 61.

¹³⁹ On the basis of the type, e.g., insofar as it gives itself as a house, an act meaning to “build up” the object’s sense, or rather, its determinateness, can be called forth. But where does the type itself come in? Obviously some minimal familiarization (“building-up” of objective sense) “calls it up,” so to speak; however minimally, objective sense have already been constituted in order for an object to come forth as, e.g., a house at all. But any activity whose purpose is familiarization for this end is already an *in-order-to*, belonging to the *as yet* “untyped” object: thus, objects whose type has not yet been determined must all at least belong to the world as those to be determined *according* to their type, so that the object appears as one to be examined *in-order-to* determine what it is. In this case, belonging to the world as a “question mark,” so to speak, we find the affect of puzzlement, a sort of wonder. For more on the latter, see: “Love, and Other Kinds of Wondering,” forthcoming.

clarify these relations, so that, in the process, the phenomenon of temporalizing self-consciousness will finally come into clarity itself. Before doing so, however, I'll take a moment to address a question which might otherwise leave us troubled as we go on. Allowing that the perception of any object whatsoever does necessarily maintain that object in its "worldliness" (given, for one, that an object is always apprehended according to its significance, which "comes to it" through its "worldly" type), we might immediately be led to wonder: how can something like a "natural thing" ever be perceived *as such*—a thing belonging, not to my social world, but to something like the "earth?" A thing, in any event, purely "non-artifactual," which has not been produced by any activity coming out of that nexus of practices and norms characterizing a shared dwelling with others, but which came to be as it is "all on its own," as it were, or rather, according to purely "natural" processes? To perceive a natural thing *as such* would instead require that it be perceived in its pure "physicality" or "earthiness," which is to say, in its "non-worldliness!"

However, the fact that a natural thing, seized upon as such, must thus be perceived in its "non-worldliness," does not contradict the claim that objects are always apprehended according to the way in which they "belong" to a world or their "position" *vis-à-vis* a nexus of intertwined practices and projects (in other words, that a necessary relationship holds between the sense of an object and its manifested "worldliness"). Even ignoring the fact that, in general, the natural thing is always given according to the possibility of its being *made* "worldly" (insofar, that is, as it can be taken up as material in the manufacturing of something, for instance),¹⁴⁰ it is obvious that whenever a thing comes forth or shows itself as *not* belonging to the world in which the perceiving subject finds himself or herself situated, the world of the subject must nonetheless be "there," situating the perception. For an object to come forward as a "natural" thing is thus in no

¹⁴⁰ See, for instance, SZ: p. 100 (70).

way for it to be apprehended simply on the basis of its schema of sense without any relation to the social world, but instead, for the being thus apprehended to be given in relation to a social world in which it is given precisely as having no “place” on its own. The “natural object” is thusly given not only as *essentially* a natural thing (i.e., as belonging to such an empirical type), but according to some various subtype of “natural essence” (metals, woods, plants, and so on). In the first place, these subtypes refer to their possibility of being utilized in some act of production, etc.; and yet, the physical sciences (the sciences of φύσις, or nature) are always capable of developing these subtypes of natural essence to the highest degree possible, thus coming to understand natural beings through and through in their “naturalness” or “foreignness” to the world. While the “physical” being studied by the sciences is thus able to give itself “as it is,” *unqualified* by “human” practical endeavors or the social worlds in which our projects find their place, it is, in a “quasi-paradoxical sense,” only *on the basis* of the shared, social practices of the practicing scientist, however, that a being can give itself to us in this way at all—according to Hubert Dreyfus’s apt characterization, science is in fact a practice “for achieving access to things that are *independent* of all our practices,”¹⁴¹ or rather, of things insofar as they are *as such*. Whether “artificial” or not, belonging to a “natural” or “manufactured” type, then, a being is always given to perception on the horizon of the shared, social world in which its perceiver is embedded.

We’ve seen that the “worldliness,” significance, and affective charge of a perceived object are not determinations of the object only afterwards discovered of it (after its initially “neutral” perception, that is), “attributes” simply “added” on to the object at a later time, as it were; the givenness of these determinations is inextricable from the very manifestation of an

¹⁴¹ Hubert Dreyfus and Charles Spinosa, “Coping with Things in Themselves: A Practice-Based Phenomenological Basis of Robust Realism” in *Inquiry* Vol. 42, No. 1 (March 1999): p. 49-78 [emphasis mine].

object to perception, such that their apprehension must thus be considered a necessary feature of the constituting act. However, although these determinations are necessarily given whenever an object is made manifest, they nonetheless cannot be taken to actually *belong* to the objective sense of the appearing (or perceived) being itself: the significance of an object, for example, is, as I've already noted, no "side" or "facet" of it, no possible feature belonging to the schema of its mere extantness. This fact is a crucial one for the purposes of this study—for while, as we've already discovered, the constitution of the *sense* of an object (in the sense of its schema of features) refers back to the constitutive work of the subject, and especially, to the temporal articulations of its perceptual apprehension, a direct relationship seems to hold between the "worldliness," significance, and affective charge of an object and the *self-manifestation* of the perceiving subject or the *givenness* of the perceptual act itself on the horizon of a streaming or unfolding life. But if, then, the schemata of objective sense are constituted by the temporal articulations of perceiving (i.e., by the retaining, protaining, and maintaining of a perceived being), might not the "worldliness," significance, and affective charge of things, which seem to mark an object precisely in its relation to the perceiving subject, thus refer back to the time-constituting self-consciousness subtending the perceptual act as a temporal unity? Might not these "moments" refer back to the *self-retaining*, *-protaining*, and *-maintaining* of a streaming conscious life itself?

If, however, significance, affective charge, and "worldliness" reflect the subject's temporalizing self-presence, this gives us a leading clue into the self-temporalization of the subject itself. Assuming that this is so, we can undertake an analysis of the subject's temporalizing on their basis.

To perceive an object is always to perceive it in its *now*-being, and thus, to maintain the being that is perceived in relation to its being just-passed and to-come, i.e., in relation to that which has been retained and protained of it. However, in order to retain, protain, and maintain the being thusly apprehended, and in fact enduringly apprehended, by an unfolding act of perception, the streaming conscious life to which the perceptual act, as an enduring unity, belongs must somehow retain, protain, and maintain *itself*. As we've come to discover, the moments of an unfolding course of sensations (or sense experiencings) can come to be constituted as the phases of an ongoing perceptual relationship to this or that *being*—phases taking hold of the object of perception in the apprehension of its being-*now*, -*just-passed*, and -*to-come*—only through a sort of pre-reflective self-awareness “gathering” together all these moments of experiencing according to their temporal “position” as part of a conscious, perceiving, life—moments of experiencing which can only thusly be deemed the “phases” of the selfsame intentional life or living. In this way, the perceptual manifestation of a being is subtended by something like the self-manifestation of a streaming conscious life. But thus, the question as to the primordial character of time-consciousness becomes a question of the streaming conscious life's self-constitution.

What is the nature of the temporalizing self-apprehension of subjectivity? We've seen that this apprehension can be nothing like the manifestation of a perceived object given in its transcendent now-being, though without yet being able to discern its precise character as a “*non-objectivation*.” We've also discovered that, unlike any other type of consciousness, here constitution and something like production coincide, given that the temporalizing self-

apprehension of the streaming conscious life is part and parcel of the very being of that life. No doubt, if each moment of a course of experiencings becomes “*my*” experience, a moment of an unfolding conscious life, only by being “collected together” through a self-retaining, self-protaining and self-maintaining, then this life can be nothing without exhibiting this time-constituting hold on what are only thereby its moments. Specifically, such a life unfolds itself, “building” itself “forward” or “stretching itself out” futurally, on the basis of the self-protention of its already temporalized (i.e., its self-retained and self-maintained) moments—a protention continually fulfilled, so long as the streaming conscious life continues, by means of its becoming self-retained.

However fundamental these characteristics are for the phenomenon at issue, their enumeration can only help so much, so far as a description of the time-constituting self-apprehension of the subject is concerned; there is in fact a good deal more to be said if we’re to adequately clarify a life’s temporalizing self-constitution or understand, precisely, its character (and *thus*: if we’re to draw back to the condition of temporalization in order to see how all subjectivity, insofar as it self-temporalizes, is stirred by something like an ethical affection). Earlier, I claimed that, because it subtends the retaining, protaining, and maintaining of an object, the self-retaining, self-protaining, and self-maintaining of the life of subjectivity must somehow “show up” in the perceptual apprehension of the object itself.¹⁴² Using this as a guiding clue, I went on to examine three different determinations of objective manifestation that cannot be reduced to the the schema of an object’s sense, though they must bear a necessary relationship to its constitution—determinations which seem to “reflect back” something like the subject to him- or herself. By appearing as significant, an object shows itself as a thing to be acted upon in-

¹⁴² Or more precisely, that that which is self-retained, -protained, and -maintained of this life must somehow “show up” or “be reflected” in the manifestation of perceived objects.

order-to produce some end for-the-sake-of a longed for determination of the subject's own being, and by appearing as affectively charged, an object shows itself in regards to its relevance for the projects in which the subject finds himself or herself involved, i.e., insofar as it spells triumph or trouble for the subject. By appearing in its worldliness—which is to say, by being given in the “place” it is afforded *vis-à-vis* the context of those intertwining projects in which individuals in a shared social world are involved: a world to which the subject himself or herself belongs—an object shows itself according to its essence or the type of thing that it is.

How are these three determinations of objective manifestation related to time-consciousness? If all perceiving is time-constituting, but if the significance, affective charge, and “worldliness” of an object do not, strictly speaking, belong to that object itself, but rather, belong only to its perceptual manifestation, then these determinations must bear a direct relationship, not to the retaining, protaining, and maintaining of an object, but to the *self*-retaining, -protaining, and -maintaining constitutive of the perception (of the object) itself. Thus, by examining each of these three determinations of objective manifestation with an eye towards their connection to the time-constituting self-manifestation of a streaming conscious life and its intentional unities, we can bring out the manner in which the subject is “grasped” or takes hold of him- or herself in his or her very apprehension of an object.

Firstly, then: What is the relation of an object's *significance* to the act by which it becomes perceived? An object shows itself in its significance by “promising” those ends to be produced by means of its manipulation, whose termini lie in those potentials of self and others to be realized by their production. The apprehension of these ends, however (whether I am speaking here of the in-order-to or, especially, of the object's for-the-sake-of), cannot be reduced to the retaining, protaining, or maintaining of the object, given that these time-constituting

apprehensions (or rather, temporalizing articulations of a perceptual apprehension) each seize upon some objective facet or feature insofar as the latter belongs to a schema of sense: the ends that an object promises instead involve that object with *other* objects, and ultimately, with the projects and goals of the perceiving *subject* (along with, again, those of the others for whom the subject concerns him- or herself). The “promise” of an object cannot be reduced to its mere aspects, and in particular, to its protained or perceptually anticipated aspects. Nevertheless, there is obviously *some* connection between the temporalizing constitution of objective sense and the apprehension of an object’s significance: for, as possibilities to be realized, the ends “appearing” to perception as those that an object “promises” must show themselves in conjunction with the *protained* presentations, or at least, with the potentially protained presentations, of that object. An object has significance only because, amongst all those appearances by which it might come to show itself (to be produced through a manipulation of, or interaction with, the object of whatever sort), some of these appearances are apprehended as those *to be* produced, in the sense that they are those that the subject is “in for.”

A conscious being always perceptually relates itself to some being or beings as such; and yet whenever we perceive an object and thus, grasp the object in its now-being, we not only exhibit a grasp on the object’s being-to-come (or the “after” of the transition in which it is involved): we concomitantly grasp what this “promises” for our *own* potentialities. On the basis of *this*, we are moved to act accordingly: were we *not* to exhibit an apprehension, not merely of the protained determinations of an object, but also, of the significance of this for the *determination of our own being*—that is, were the objective presentations given as those “on the way” *merely* given as such, as “neutral” facts with no relation whatsoever to that which “I” am to-be—then we could never find ourselves called upon to employ the object or to act upon it in

any manner (even if this is just to let it be for the moment). A conscious being determines its own behavior (or at least insofar as it *is* a conscious being, as we'll later need to distinguish) only by somehow apprehending what the presentations that might be produced of a perceived object "spell" for its own being.

Given this, it thus becomes clear that the protained articulations of the subject's self-"presence"—i.e., the "futural" aspect of a streaming conscious life insofar as, subtending all perceptual protaining, it is grasped by this life's temporalizing "apprehension" of that which it is to-be—are in fact protained, precisely, as that which is *to-be determined*, or more precisely, as that which is to-be determined in accordance with certain longed-for determinations of the being in question. To self-protain is to grasp a moment as that which must be determined in the determination of what "I" am to-be. It is only because of this that an object "promises" anything, or that things are perceived in their significance.

With this, the basic character of self-protaining has provisionally come to clarity. In order to fully clarify the sense of this "phenomenon," however (that is, of self-protained moments as those that "I" need to determine—from which, as we'll see, the notion of a "possibility" is primordially drawn), we'll need to clarify the relationship that obtains between a streaming conscious life's self-protention and its apprehension of the only *potentially* protained facets or features of an object (which, again, are always apprehended according to their significance). The aspects of an object that are not at present on view, we saw earlier, are nevertheless "there" for perception insofar as these aspects belong to the schema of an object's sense; they belong to this schema, however, precisely as those that might be brought into view given the proper movement (on the part of either the subject, object, or both). They are thus "there" as "protainable." But what can it mean to say that the aspects of an object, belonging to its schema of sense, are given

as “protainable,” as those which *will be* protained assuming the initiation of a suitable motion? Without the very fact of protention, certainly, there would be no sense in calling the unseen aspects “protainable;” and yet concretely, protention cannot be equated with the (“mere”) apprehension of what *can be* brought into view of an object, for to protain an object is precisely to (anticipatorily) apprehend what *will* come into view of it, i.e., what is *actually* on its way (and of course, whether or not this apprehension turns out to be fulfilled in concordant perceiving or not). In every case, that is, a being is perceived as being involved in some motion in the broadest sense *vis-à-vis* the perceiving subject (even if both are only perfectly at rest in relation to one another); thus, of the incredible diversity of protainable sides, features, etc. of an object, in any given phase of perception precisely *one* such side, or rather, *one* “line” or determinate stream of them, will *actually* be protained. However interconnected they evidently are, to be objectively protained, and to be objectively “protainable,” are not identical.

How, then, *are* the unseen (or, more generally, the unsensed) aspects “there” for the perceiving subject as protainable or in their protainability? And what is the relationship between the protainable and protention in the strict sense? As will presently become clear, the unseen aspects are “there,” as protainable, only via the subject’s *self*-protention (which therefore plays an even more crucial role in perception than I indicated before). To prefiguringly apprehend the various aspects belonging to the schema of an object’s sense as those which might be brought into view is precisely to “have them” as those which will be protained given initiation of the proper movement or manipulation (i.e., I apprehend certain “sides” of the teacup in my hand as those that I anticipate seeing if I turn it this way, rather than that). To “have” the various unseen aspects as those which might be brought into view, however, is thus to “have” my *own* possibilities, or more precisely, to apprehend my own possibilities *as such* (in the first place, no

doubt, nonthematically), for were I to have no apprehending access here to the options for my own conduct, I could never prefiguringly apprehend that which will show itself given my “selection” of this or that option. Thus, the futural self-apprehension that perception always implies involves not merely some anticipatory apprehension of the sort of experiencing on the way (which will “fall within” the stream of “my” experiencing), but the apprehension of various possibilities for my own conduct or behavior, which is precisely imbued with the recognition that each of these possibilities will have its own effect on the world, on how beings will be and thus, on how they will go on to be given or to present themselves to me. It is only as such that, “informing” a mere sensation or sensory experiencing, the system or schema of aspects of a single, enduring being can be “there,” and that the sensation can thus give one of these aspects thereby “there” as the side of the being *now* “on view.” The protention of the streaming conscious life thus subtends the “accessibility” of the aspects of an object insofar as they are “there” in perception, *as protainable*; but in so doing, self-protaining is at once the concrete protaining of an object: for since I am *always* selecting from amongst the possibilities of my own conduct or behavior, I am thusly given to anticipatorily apprehend the future course of my experiencing and, through this, the future course of the perceived object’s presentation.

The self-protained moments of a streaming conscious life, given as that experiencing which is to-be determined, are given according to an array of possible experiencing, one “line” of which is always being “actualized.” It is in this way that the self-protained moments of subjectivity subtend (insofar as they *are* self-protained) all objective protaining, and thus, perception itself, given that perception necessarily has its futural element.¹⁴³ But because of this

¹⁴³ This clarification helps to further clarify the distinction between general and particular fulfillment: self-protaining, “apprehending” that experiencing which is to-be determined according to an array of possible experiencing, is itself what is fulfilled just as long as that which is to-be determined comes in fact to be determined in any way whatsoever; but insofar as, maintaining itself, the life of subjectivity always “selects” from possibilities,

(and confirming an assertion whose sense I only partially clarified before), perception *necessarily* apprehends its object according to the object's significance, since, of the array of possible experiencings to-come given in the streaming conscious life's self-protention, some "lines" of experiencing are given as being "better than the others." Thus, for an object to be protained on the basis of the streaming conscious life's *self*-protaining is precisely for the futural manifestation of the object to be apprehended on the basis of a having to determine *what this life is to-be*, the life of an individual thusly working towards various longed-for determinations of his or her own being. In this way, the object shows itself as *utilizable*, in-order-to realize specific ends for-the-sake-of the one who acts. It "promises."

A phase of experiencing, again, "comes forth" as my own being to-come by being given (in self-protention) as that which must be determined, as that which *I* must determine, in the determination of what I am to-be. This "having to be determined," which, as the fundamental character of a self-protained phase of experience, distributes itself according to an array of possibilities, is, however, nothing like what shows up via a mere *imagining* of future possibilities. The imagination of one of my possibilities (whether an active deliberation over possibilities, or mere "fantasy") is instead a *thematizing* act; "such grasping" according to Heidegger, "takes from the projected its very character as a possibility, reduces it to a given, intended content."¹⁴⁴ There is no doubt a relationship between the imagination of future possibilities and self-protention, insofar as the former is evidently founded upon the latter; and yet, as the thematized correlate of an act of deliberation, an imagined possibility stands (as

a particular "line" from this array of possible experiencing is anticipated, and thus comes to be fulfilled concordantly or discordantly in particular fulfillment (as long as general fulfillment goes on, that is, which is to say, that the conscious life itself does).

¹⁴⁴ "Such grasping takes from the projected just its possibility-character, pulls it down to a given, intended content; while *projecting*, in throwing, throws before itself the possibility and allows it to be as such." SZ: p. 185 (145) [emphasis mine].

Heidegger notes) as an object of consciousness and thus, cannot constitute the being to-come of the streaming conscious life insofar as this is given in its time-constituting self-apprehension. Given that it is a sort of “activity,” in fact, deliberation or the imagining of possibilities has its own goals or ends to be achieved—it is undertaken in-order-to...—and thus, can so little be identified with a self-protaining *per se* that it must instead be subtended by one, to which the apprehension of these ends (which draws forth the deliberation) refers back.

The “protainable” facets and features of an object can draw forth activity by delivering the self-protained subject over to the object’s “promise” (i.e., those *to be* produced), but they can “show up” as such, delivering the perceiver up to practical activity, only because the subject to whom the object is perceptually made manifest protains him- or herself—or rather, protains that being to-come which *will* have been his or her own, precisely as that which is to-be determined in the determination of what he or she is to-be. Always needing to determine the matter of his or her own being, the self-protaining subject is always “in for” something, “taking a stand” on the matter. But thus, the future is “there,” or rather, objects are “there” in their “being-after”—and thus, in their “being-now,” insofar as this is always a transition or bridging over onto the not-yet—only on this basis. The question can then be asked: is the objectivity of objects thus “dissolved” in “practical” concern? Since an object can come to give itself to perception only on the basis of a subject’s having to determine what he or she is to-be, are objects therefore manifest only as that which is to be “dealt with”—as if the subject were unable to “see past” his or her own concerns? Or even as if the object had no being outside of its being “dealt with,” or at least, could never be understood as such?

This worry, which has tended to encourage an “anti-realism” of sorts in a number of “pragmatic” philosophies, nonetheless trades on an equivocation: for to be given only *via* a sort

of “practically concerned” self-apprehension (or at basis, an existentially concerned one, as will ultimately become clear) is in no way to be comprehensible merely as a thing that the subject has to “deal with.” In fact, it seems evident that, on the basis of a streaming life’s having to determine itself, objects *do* give themselves in their objectivity, and sometimes, even according to their purely “physical” or “non-worldly” nature. Or in any event, the latter is not excluded on any *a priori* basis (a phenomenological analysis itself should have nothing to say in regards to the question of whether or not, in any given cognition, a being is adequately made manifest or not, and in what specific way). The “self-mattering” of the subject’s to-be—or correlatively, the “self-tending” of the streaming conscious life, by which its to-be is constituted *as* its to-be—is so little a sort of “closing off” to beings, that it is in fact the very opening out onto beings, apprehended *as such*. In everyday, “practically” concerned perception, through which objects are grasped according to their “handiness,” objects are no doubt “merely” grasped with an eye towards the work at hand; yet for all that, the perceived being is “there,” apprehended as such, even if only in relation to its utility or what “belongs” to it in this regard. The same can be said for an object given in its “*pure*” objectivity or “mere extantness” (a being apprehended only in relation to what “belongs” to it in *this* regard), which, as we saw above, can be given through the project of a scientific endeavoring.

All perceptual apprehension, whether of a being in its “handiness” or else as “merely extant,” takes place on the basis of the “self-mattering” of the subject’s being to-come, or correlatively, of his or her having to determine what he or she is to-be. This fully clarifies the sense in which the self-protection of the subject, as a being’s primordial “welcoming openness” out onto the being it is to-be, is no apprehension of an object, and certainly, not a theoretical one

(or an apprehension of an object in its *mere* “extantness”¹⁴⁵). That which is objectivated is always given so as to take hold of an in-order-to, but the in-order-to always refers back to the for-the-sake-of which grants it significance—i.e., to the being or experiencing given in self-protaining as that which must be determined. So little is self-protaining the apprehension of a given object, then, that it in fact always take the form of a “having to *be*” this experiencing or conscious being to-come, a “need to be” that being to which it is only thusly given over *as* its own “to-be” or futural experiencing. That which is self-protained of a streaming conscious life, that of it which is “ahead-of-itself” is, in Heidegger’s words, “a not-yet which ever a Dasein [or a “being-there”], as the entity that it is, has to be.”¹⁴⁶ We miss the whole point of the claim if we interpret this “has to be” as a mere will to sustain existence, or, even worse, as some sort of necessary character pertaining to the being of the one in question; instead, this constitutes the precise sense in which, before all reflection, some being to-come “presents itself” as *mine*, or as the subject’s *own future*. A “phase” of experiencing is primordially given as my own being to-come only by “mattering” to me in the sense of my “having to be” it, my being moved to act for-the-sake-of its determination in the determination of that which I am to-be.

Through an analysis of the significance of things, we’ve been able to discover that the life of the subject, insofar as it is *to-come*, must always be “present” to itself as “self-tended,” apprehended as that which must be determined in the determination of that which this life is to-be. Can we determine the precise character of the streaming conscious life’s time-constituting

¹⁴⁵ As a point of note, the apprehension of a being insofar as it is merely extant should not be hastily equated with scientific cognition; it is in fact in *aesthetic* examination that an object primarily comes forward as such. See, for instance, Mikel Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, trans. by Edward S. Casey (Evanston, Northwestern University Press); 1973: p. 84-92.

¹⁴⁶ *SZ*: p. 288 (244). Regardless of that which the subject is “in for,” or the concrete way in which he or she works out the matter of what he or she is to-be, this is so: the “need to be” characterizing temporality is thus, in its essence, so little a drive to survive, that it plays itself out even in the sacrifice of that very being that is at issue, i.e., the unfolding of the subject’s own life—a life thusly determined, in its self-sacrifice, as a *heroic* life, for example, or as the life of a committed parent, who will never stand idly by while his or her child is in danger, etc.

self-apprehension *in general* on this basis? And what of affectivity and the “worldliness” of objects; what role do they play?

§ 17

Self-protaining, as the futural articulation of primordial temporalization, must effect itself in something like a “being-at-issue” of the subject’s very being, insofar as the self-protained “moments” of a conscious streaming life are given (to itself) as that which need to-be determined. But if the future is primordially “there” in this sense, how is it that the past being of a being is likewise “there” for it? Or for that matter, its present?

It was by tracing out the significance of things, of course, that we were able to discover the precise manner of “appearance” of a conscious life to itself insofar as that life is self-protained (a moment of the selfsame to-come). In like fashion, we should be able to trace back the *affective charge* of things to the temporalizing self-presence of subjectivity; but if so, to which of its articulations? Perception, as we’ve seen, always measures the affective charge of an object, but to which temporal articulation of perceiving is the taking of this measure most closely related, and what does this tell us about the correlative articulation of time-constituting self-consciousness?

It is only insofar as things show themselves as “spelling” some sort of triumph or trouble for their perceiver that they are perceived as “possessing” an affective charge; and yet it should be obvious enough that things can show themselves as such (i.e., insofar as they “spell” anything in this way) only because their perceiver finds himself or herself already involved in various projects. Objects, that is, show up as “affecting,” i.e., as “possessing” some affective charge, only given the self-apprehension of a subject as a one working towards various ends—ends to which the subject has already been delivered over, or rather, to which the subject *finds* himself or

herself delivered, precisely in the determination of the being that he or she is to-be.

How does this consideration help to clarify the matter at hand? In Section IV, we discovered that self-retaining retains the just-passed moments of a streaming conscious life precisely as a retaining of that which was self-*protaining*; but, as we just discovered at the end of § 16, the self-protained moments of the streaming conscious life “show up” to their protaining “apprehension” as that being (or more precisely, experiencing) that needs to be determined in the subject’s determination of the being he or she is to-be. Therefore: for the streaming conscious life to retain itself (i.e. its passed-by moments) is for it to “take over” the manner in which it has *already* been determining itself, or put otherwise, for a perceiving subject to find himself or herself already determined in the (self-)determination of the being he or she is to-be. In this “taking over,” the subject finds himself or herself having been furthered or hindered in some way as regards the realization of his or her projects: but this is just what is meant by calling the affectivity of the subject a sort of “self-finding” (“*Befindlichkeit*”).

Because it is only *as such* that objects can show up as having an affective charge, to perceivingly take an object’s affective measure is always a matter of the object’s *retention*, or rather, is due to the fact that the retaining of an object is always or necessarily self-retained. No doubt, retention itself takes hold of the being-before of an object, and not anything like its “affective qualities;” but because the perceptual retaining an object must always be *self-retained* if it is to retain an object at all, and self-retained precisely in the manner of a subject’s finding himself or herself already self-projecting or working out that which he or she is to-be in some determinate fashion, the (objective) retaining must always keep hold of its object as one whose “passed moments” have been given in the just-passed moments of a life which has drawn more or less “close” to its longed-for determinations precisely as a result of the “intervention” of the

object that has thusly become manifest all the while. The self-tending life always “works towards something;” how has this “working-towards” been turning out? Or rather, how has that which has come to show itself come to affect this “working-towards?” Through the self-retention of the experiencing which is thereby a perceptual retaining or an apprehension of that which has been retained of an object, a “measure” of this affect is taken, and taken precisely as the object’s affective measure.¹⁴⁷

Does this account hold for *all* affective measure? If so, how can we explain affects such as excitement or fear, in which the subject evidently concerns himself or herself, not with his or her past, but the future? Or rather, in which a perceived object comes to be apprehended insofar as it “concerns” the future of the subject: doesn’t the obvious “future-orientation” of fear, excitement, and numerous other affects like these contradict the orientation towards the past that affects ostensibly *ought* to display, if they are primarily a matter of the subject’s *self-retention*?

Though this might appear to problematize the account of affectivity that I’ve just advanced, attention to the phenomenological facts of the matter will show that these worries are unfounded. Because dispelling these worries will also help to further clarify the way in which a self-retaining “taking-over” of the streaming conscious life’s “having-been self-projecting” finds its perceptual “measurement” of a thing’s affective charge, it will be instructive to go over the matter in a bit of detail.

Excitement, for one, no doubt concerns itself with the future. An object is found to be exciting precisely because it promises the opening of possibilities heretofore closed off,

¹⁴⁷ It is thus that the object is “affectively judged:” the affective charge of the object is precisely an adjudging of the object “derived” from the subject’s self-“adjudging,” insofar as, having come to “spell” triumph or failure, the “working-towards” of the subject has been furthered or hindered. This is why all affective charge “reverts back” to the life by which it is apprehended, as we discovered earlier; “a mood,” Heidegger writes, “makes manifest ‘how one is and will be:’” *SZ*: p. 173 (134). See also: p. 181 (141), where Heidegger writes that “fear,” as a mode of *Befindlichkeit*, “co-primordially discloses innerworldly entities in their threateningness and Being-in with regard to its being threatened.”

possibilities whose realization is distinctly longed-for. Finding, for instance, the screwdriver I've needed in-order-to replace a failing drive on my laptop, I become excited: now, I can finally get underway on its repair, and will soon have a fully functioning computer on hand. Receiving an email offering me a fellowship that I've applied for, I likewise become excited: my "future looks brighter" for it. In examples such as these, the "future-orientation" of excitement is apparent—and yet, it should be *equally* apparent that in both of these examples, the objects at issue (the screwdriver or the email) would never come forth *as* exciting (or would, conversely, never bring about excitement in me) were it not for the fact that I find myself in the "position" of *having-been* self-projecting such as *to* be so affected, i.e., of having-been in need of a screwdriver, or as having-been working to establish some sort of an academic career. The screwdriver, for instance, can certainly signify according to its possibility of being utilized in-order-to complete some necessary repairs without necessarily *exciting* me; it is only because the screw driver had gone missing, so that the possibilities it offers were previously "blocked off," that now, by "reopening" them with its appearance, it shows itself to me as exciting. Similarly, an email offering the furthering of my academic prospects can excite me only because I "have access" to the fact that I've been working for just this; the same email sent to someone for whom this is not the case would evidently *not* excite.

The appearance of a thing as "fearsome" (in the sense of actually inducing fear in its perceiver) follows a similar dynamic. As surely as excitement "registers" the "opening up" of longed-for possibilities which were previously "blocked off" or otherwise not "open," fear has an orientation towards something like the future—in this case, one in which longed-for possibilities of the streaming conscious life are instead "blocked off," made more "distant" or even annihilated (or at least, they are "given" as such), by the appearance of the "fearsome" thing.

And yet, if the subject had not *been* in such a way as to be “in for” these possibilities, or rather, had no grasp on him- or herself *as* having-been in this way, then he or she could never be fearfully affected: the longed-for potentials that the “frightful” being comes to threaten must be seized upon as being those that the subject has been working-*towards*, if a being is ever to show itself, in the “now,” as one inspiring fear.¹⁴⁸ Because, in fact, the retaining, protaining, and maintaining articulations of temporalizing self-consciousness effect themselves only in their systematic unity, the affective charge of things is never made manifest *except* in unison with self-protaining and self-maintaining: it is for this reason that affects can always exhibit something like an orientation towards the future (as well as towards the “here-and-now”), as we discover in affects such as fear or excitement. Affectivity however, effects itself *essentially* via self-retaining.¹⁴⁹

What role, if any, does the body play in this? Many, if not most accounts of affective phenomena ascribe a central role to something like “bodily states,” sometimes to the extent that affective phenomena are taken to consist of nothing but such states.¹⁵⁰ However, in my (admittedly short) analysis of affectivity, meant simply to describe its foundational syntheses, we’ve yet to come across anything like “bodily states” at all—nor, for that matter, does

¹⁴⁸ For this reason, Heidegger writes that “*back to* the entity that I am, the threatening can become awaited and thus the being-there [*das Dasein*], threatened, only if that back-to-which... is already ecstatically open” (SZ: p. 391 (341)): a claim that can be understood only if we understand that that “back-to-which,” i.e., our “having-been,” is (or perhaps better, *was*) “ecstatically” open precisely as a having-been-*projecting* which was therefore “in for something”—a “something that, in the case of fear, the threatening being comes to threaten (i.e., a threatened possibility of our own being as one we have been going after but which might now be “blocked off”).

¹⁴⁹ The (self-)retaining apprehension of the subject’s having-been-self-projecting “belongs to a future and present,” Heidegger writes, “in such a way, however, so that pastness modifies these equiprimordial ecstases [or co-related temporalizations of future and present].”

¹⁵⁰ See, for instance: Jesse Prinz, “Emotion, Psychosemantics, and Embodied Appraisals” in *Philosophy and the Emotions*, ed. Anthony Hatzimoysis (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press); 2003: p. 69-86—for a contemporary example of an account in which “bodily states” have a crucial role to play in affective phenomena; and Anthony Damasio, *Descartes’ Error*, (New York, Random House); 2008—for an example of an account in which affects are nothing but “bodily states,” or rather, are nothing but the way that the brain becomes either excited by them or at least stimulated through the same “channels.”

Heidegger ever mention them in his analyses of *Befindlichkeit*, from which my own analysis has been drawn.¹⁵¹ Have I (along with Heidegger) simply overlooked the essential role that states of the body play in affective phenomena? And if so, is my account of these phenomena thus essentially deficient? This worry is at least partly attenuated by recognizing that perception must always have a “bodily” aspect, insofar as the presentations of objects are, as we saw earlier, always correlated with the movements of the perceiving subject.¹⁵² This recognition, however, does not resolve the matter completely, as will become especially clear in the second part of this study. However, at the same time it will also become clear that the question regarding the relation of “bodily states” and affectivity cannot be properly broached until the relation between consciousness and *sensibility* has been subjected to analysis (which is just the theme of this study’s second part). Relatively few accounts of affectivity bother to undertake such an analysis

¹⁵¹ When he mentions the body at all in *Being and Time*, it is only to note that he will not deal with the problematic in its pages (SZ: p. 143 (108))—though Heidegger doesn’t deal with the issue elsewhere to any great extent either. I will also pass on the issue for the time being, although unlike Heidegger, I do deal with the matter in depth later in this very work (it becomes an overriding issue in Part II).

¹⁵² Because of this, an analysis of spatiality can lead back to the temporalizing self-apprehension of the perceiving subject just as easily as can an analysis of the temporal articulations of the manifestation of a perceived object: the former is in fact closer to the path that Heidegger takes in *Being and Time*; the latter, by contrast, is evidently closer to the path of the study at hand. However: although an analysis *leading up* to something like pre-reflective self-consciousness could thereby avoid time-consciousness in the sense of objective temporality, it must still run into the problematic in order to analyze this consciousness of self itself; for, as we have already discovered, the fundamental self-apprehension of subjectivity is essentially self-temporalizing. In *Being and Time*, then, we see that Heidegger only comes upon the retaining, protaining, and maintaining of perceptual consciousness as well as the objective time it constitutes *after* he discovers the retaining, protaining, and maintaining of self (and furthermore, that he only analyzes objective temporalization because he hopes to “flesh out” his analyses of self-temporalization by further analyzing the way in which its syntheses found consciousness of the now and the perceptual manifestation of beings). In connection with this, we can see that any attempts to combat a supposed “bias towards time” in phenomenology are doomed—unless the hope is to push past phenomenology and the analysis of consciousness to a phenomenologically clarified metaphysics. Ed Casey’s *Getting Back into Place*—(Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis); 2009 (hereafter *GB*)—moves towards the the *latter* sort of inquiry, at which point it perhaps dovetails, at least in part, with the work of Deleuze and Guattari. See Yoko Arisaka, “Spatiality, Temporality, and the Problem of Foundation in Being and Time,” in *Philosophy Today*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Spring 1996); p. 36-46, however, for an example of the former. (I should perhaps reiterate at this point that *this* study, an analysis of the ethical relation as inspiration of temporality, does not for its own part involve anything like a “phenomenologically clarified metaphysics” in the above sense—Levinasian “metaphysics” is something different, if not unrelated to this, in that it seeks to illuminate the strange “unconditional condition” of the manifestation of being, without getting embroiled in questions about the being of beings itself. Suffice it to say, though, I do think the findings of this study, like those of any phenomenological analysis, may have relevance for such an inquiry, albeit one which would nonetheless take me too far afield here.)

before attempting to work out the relationship that obtains between affective phenomena and “bodily states,” and almost none approach the relationship between consciousness and sensibility on the basis of a clarification of the essential issue of *time-consciousness*. And yet, if the relationship of consciousness to sensibility is to be properly understood, it is essential to possess an adequate conception of primordial time-consciousness, and not simply because, without such clarification, all talk of consciousness (because consciousness is necessarily time-constituting), and thus of its relationship to sensibility or to something like a being’s “bodily states,” is necessarily subject to confusion and equivocation; in fact, as we’ll later see, it is only through the clarification of primordial time-consciousness that the essential connection that consciousness bears to sensibility or to something like the states of a body can itself come forth and be clarified. Thus, no adequate account of the affects themselves can be undertaken without this clarification—which is to say, as we’ll ultimately discover, without an adequate understanding of *ethical* affection or the self-revelation of the *other* as the very condition of temporalization. At such a point, it will become obvious that ethical affection is not simply one affect among others, but, insofar as it underlies the temporalization of subjectivity and thus, the affectivity of its self-retaining, is in fact their (the affects’) essential condition as well.

It would of course be impossible for me to give a thorough account of the affects within the confines of this study; for my present purposes it will be sufficient to simply recognize that the self-retained moments of a streaming conscious life are “given” (by this life’s self-retaining) as having-been “projectingly” “in-for” the realization of specific determinations of that which this life is to-be—determinations which have come to be helped along or else hindered, so that these moments are thus “given” inextricably with the affective measure of things. The givenness of these (self-retained) moments therefore bears an essential relation to the “phenomenon” of

self-tending that we discovered in self-protection. We saw before that the self-protained moments of a streaming conscious life are “there” for it precisely in the sense of being that which needs to be determined in the determination of what this life is to-be, “given” according to an array of possibilities from which one determinate “line” is always being “selected.” But now we have discovered that the self-*retained* moments of a streaming conscious life are so retained as those that have-been self-tending (in precisely the above sense of the term “self-tending”), in that the subject always finds himself or herself “in for something” and as succeeding or failing at this in some way. If the primary sense of “having a future” thus comes to a being by its having to determine what it is to-be, then conversely, the primary sense of its “having a past” comes in this “self-finding,” insofar as, having to determine what he or she is to-be, the subject finds him- or herself “already” working-towards (or “in for”) specific determinations of his or her own being.

Self-tending thus begins to emerge as the basic character of a streaming conscious life’s time-constituting self-apprehension, and thus, of subjectivity in general. Its futural “moment,” in fact, seems to bear a certain privilege also, given that the self-retained moments of this life appear in a sense to be “there” ultimately in the “service” of self-tending’s projection, i.e., of a life’s determination of that which it is to-be: for, as an affective self-finding, these moments “function” as a sort of predetermining of the subject’s determination of his or her own being, “throwing” projection this way or that. Insofar as moments of experiencing *are* self-retained, that is, they are “taken over” in such a predetermination—although how exactly they do in fact come to be so “taken up” is always a matter of the “course” to be concretely taken by this continuous self-determination, i.e., by the conscious streaming, or—as we can now say—self-tending life. Yet in order to deal with how, precisely, this “course” continues itself, we must finally clarify the

phenomenon of its “now,” or more precisely, of the moments of this life insofar as they are self-maintained.

§ 18

Like maintaining, we discovered, self-maintaining only effects itself in connection with self-protaining and self-retaining. It is thus only via something like a detour through its own life—a detour bringing the exigencies of that life into every “now”—that a moment of experiencing is pre-reflectively conscious of itself in its “nowness,” apprehending itself as a moment in the life of a being among beings, which is always dealing with these other beings in some way. But the future and the past of this life, its moments to-come and moments just-passed, are “present” for it, weighing in upon the “now” or bringing into it their exigencies, only through this life’s self-tending, or put otherwise, by means of this life’s always having to determine that which it is to-be. The subject, “coming to itself” in its “now,” “comes to itself” via nothing other than a tending after the issue of its own being.

To understand the character of the self-apprehended “now” moment of a streaming conscious life is thus to understand the way in which moments are given as such (*as now*) on the basis of this life’s self-tending, “shaped,” as any such moment must be, by the “futural” givenness of an array of possibilities in the apprehension of that which is to be determined, and by the “pastwise” givenness of an affective self-finding (“how’s ‘it’ going?”) in the apprehension of a being “thrown” in some “direction” in this self-determination. In this way, the “now” moments of a streaming conscious life are given as something like a fulcrum: for “in” these moments, the subject continually determines that life which is thereby always constituting itself. The very constitution of such a life (its being made manifest or “self-present”) *is* simply its continual self-determining, the maintaining of itself in a “working-towards,” in an acting to

realize longed-for determinations of itself or of the being of the subject thusly produced, a “working-towards” always “thrown” in this or that “direction.” Or conversely, its continual self-determining *is* just this constitution or self-manifestation of the streaming life: for it is the very way in which the other moments are “there,” and thus, give the “now” moment over to the streaming totality, that this moment is always the determination of a life, the “present” moment of a being incessantly having to determine what it is to-be. In actual fact, then, these two “characteristics” are one and the same: the time-constituting consciousness that “keeps” a multiplicity of moments of experiencing in their place in an unfolding streaming life is one and the same as this life’s continual working to determine itself, an “occupation” that in each instance effects itself as that life’s “now.”

It is only in this way that some being is given to itself, *now*, working with beings—and working with them precisely in-order-to realize ends for-the-sake-of longed-for determinations of its own being or experiencing, possibilities that the beings it encounters arrive to further or hinder in some way. Others are also thusly encountered, and even, as we’ve seen, when not present: for, perceiving beings in their utilizability, the conscious being maintains itself in a shared world with others insofar as it works for, and thus sometimes against, specific others in its dealings with things.

If beings are able to “show up” only because, at the crux of a life’s continual occupation with itself or determination of that which it is to-be, a moment of this life maintains itself as the “now,” beings are able to “show up” in the precise manner in which they *do* “show up” only because this life maintains itself in a *world*. Beings present themselves, or are made manifest as present—i.e., are maintained—not only in their extantness, but their “worldly” essence, as we’ve seen: but this is because the subject, working with, for, and against other beings in his or her

determination of the being he or she is to-be, is “in” a world, in which the intertwining and interconnected projects of a great many individuals dovetail, determining each other and thus, determining for perception the “practical idea” or what-being (the essence) of things in relation to the social nexus. This being-placed “in” a world is primarily given as that “social position” in which the subject maintains himself or herself in any given “point in time” (i.e., in the “now”). By maintaining himself or herself in the world, that is, the subject maintains himself or herself in some *role*.

How precisely, is a role self-maintained in the constitution of the “now” moments or phases of experiencing? The now-being of an object is essentially determined by its “whatness;” it is not, again, simply some “blank” being or a mere “thing” for perception, but, for instance, a *cup*, that *was* here before me on my table, *is* now in the barista’s hands, and thankfully after, *will be* returned to me. The now-being of the cup is maintained in relation to its “before-” and “after-being,” but precisely *as* a cup, not as the mere extant thing defined by its objective schema: a schema, once more, that is constituted only on the basis of the time-constituting self-apprehension—or better, *self-tending*—of a streaming conscious life. The cup is *significantly* given in its “cup-being” (according to the futural self-givenness of this life), i.e., it “promises something;” and yet, the precise way in which the cup gives itself as a cup or in its “worldliness,” and thus, gives itself in any given case with its “promise,” depends upon the manner in which the perceiving *subject* takes up some determinate role in the world. The particular “worldliness” afforded an object, that is, can only manifest itself in the object’s perception if the subject is “worldly” placed him- or herself. Why is this so? In fact, this fact may have already become apparent to us, during my earlier analysis of the “practical idea” of a thing; for there, we saw how differently something like a house will become manifest, given the role in

which the perceiver maintains him- or herself (a realtor, as opposed to a chemist, for example). The same no doubt goes for my teacup, which appears to me as an object to drink from, but to the barista, as an object to (amongst other things) keep clean. It is only because the barista takes up a position *as* a barista that, upon seeing my (apparently) empty cup, she is moved to carry it away to clean it. In contrast, I, as a customer, am evidently *not* moved to wash out the teacup I've just used after I'm done using it; being a considerate customer, I'll likely be moved to bring my cup up to the front counter once I've finished my tea, but nothing more. To do any more than this would simply seem "wrong" in this situation, if it even "seems" to be a possibility (i.e., shows up as the cup's "promise") at all—although obviously, the situation is entirely different at home, where the teacup I use is given as mine to wash alone (and if I befriend the barista and have her over for tea, I'll probably be washing her teacup, also). All this simply goes to show how important the roles we take up are in "framing" the way in which objects are given to us: the same object signifies much differently for the barista and the customer, or for the host and the guest.

If, then, an object shows up to perception, "immediately," as it were, with its "promise," and does so only because it is seized upon or maintained in its now-being as being classed under the essence it receives on the horizon of a shared social world, then the perceiving subject who thusly seizes upon the object or maintains it in its now-being must maintain himself or herself in such-and-such a "position" in that world, i.e., must apprehend himself or herself as now "taking up" some determinate role. I perceive my teacup in the significance appropriate to the "here" and "now" only because I "know my place." (Obviously, once again, this apprehension goes on nonthematically, or at least, for the most part; it "shows" up, for instance, in the simple fact that the tea cup appears to me in the coffee shop as something to be carried up to the front counter

when I'm done with it, and not as something to wash out myself, as is instead the case for the barista.) This "place," however, is "fluid;" in general, the role in which a perceiving subject always maintains himself or herself changes continually throughout the day, sometimes even moment-to-moment—and yet, despite the frequency of these changes, the subject continuously goes on to "know" his or her "place" in the new situation, and usually, without even the slightest hesitation into which something like a thought could insert itself. This immediate grasp of role and appropriateness is possible only because the subject is present to him- or herself, as he or she is in the "now," precisely *as* a customer or barista, a host or guest, a friend or parent or son, a student, partner, stranger, or so forth, which is to say, as "occupying" some role. For a conscious being to encounter itself in the "now" is precisely for it to be delivered up to a role, a position in the social totality (something that is so, and perhaps especially so, even when the perceiving subject does *not* "know" his or her place, i.e., when he or she, feeling ill at ease in some situation, lacks certainty regarding what is or is not appropriate in it: so little does such a case prove a "counterexample" to the claim that the subject always maintains himself or herself in a role that it in fact shows how all-encompassing is the necessity that the subject maintain himself or herself as such, the "ill fit" being merely a privative determination of this).

With this discovery—i.e., that the subject maintains himself or herself (or put otherwise, apprehends his or her own "now experiencing") as a being socially positioned or "placed in" a role, out of which the self-determination of conscious life thereby unfolds—I am now in a position to conclude my analysis of "subjective" time. In order to constitute the objective now, we discovered, a streaming conscious life must somehow be given to itself in its streaming, or rather, its own moments must be given in their temporal "position" *vis-à-vis* this streaming; but despite this finding, the essential character of the time-constituting self-givenness of these

moments appeared opaque to us. However, by working back from (or tracing the constituting correlate of) the significance, affective charge, and “worldliness” of things, I’ve been able to clarify the character of this givenness, which is to say, of the self-protained, -retained, and -maintained moments of a streaming conscious life insofar as they *are* so apprehended. The moments of this life are “there,” for this life itself, precisely as *self-tended*: as that which must be determined in the determination what this life is to be (its self-protained moments); as that which determines this determination or “throws” it in this or that “direction” (its self-retained moments); and, as we’ve finally come to see in § 18, as that “in” which this determination is continually actualized, selecting from an array of possibilities (the self-maintained moment of the streaming conscious life). This “selection” (i.e., self-determining), we’ve just discovered, is in fact always connected to the manner in which a role is taken up; the subject, as that being or experiencing that always has to determine itself, concretely determines itself in its everyday commerce with things by embodying a particular social role and taking up some determinate relationship to it. It is thus that, returning a teacup, or inspecting a house, or writing a letter, we are able to realize ourselves as a considerate customer, a successful realtor, a good friend, and through it, to live the life at which we aim in our own self-projection.

I began this study by claiming that subjectivity is moved fundamentally by means of an essentially ethical relationship, by which another reveals himself or herself *as such*, given that subjectivity is essentially *time*-constituting, and that time-constitution is essentially a response to our being placed in obligation by others. All perceiving, we’ve seen, is a time-constituting, in that perception always manifests the objective now “through” which a perceived being comes to enduringly show itself. However, because perceiving is only able to constitute the “now” in that an experiencing is present to itself in something like the streaming unity of the life to which it

thereby belongs—a streaming, unified conscious life given to itself precisely insofar as it is self-tending, always needing to determine itself via the determination of that which it is to-be—then the ethical encounter must subtend the *self-tending* of subjectivity, if, in fact, this encounter, as a being's being placed under obligation before another, truly *does* subtend time-consciousness and with it, all subjectivity. In order to demonstrate the thesis of this study, I must now demonstrate that the approach of the other somehow inspires a life's tending after itself, which, as the very self-constitution of a streaming conscious life, is nothing other than “absolute time-consciousness” or consciousness of time in the most primordial sense.

For this reason, in the next chapter (Chapter 3) I'll analyze “absolute time-consciousness” (i.e., self-tending temporalization) itself. Upon doing so, however, we'll quickly discover that a life time-constitutively manifests or “tends after” itself according to one or another of *two fundamental modes*: its “authentic,” or “inauthentic,” mode of self-tending temporalization. What could it mean to call a mode of self-tending time-constitution “inauthentic?” Although the subject is always present to him- or herself in its being tended-after, the issue of his or her (self-) determination is nonetheless usually “the farthest thing from the mind;” the subject instead busies himself or herself with beings without any thought to the “why” of it all. The beings to be “busied with” do appear, and appear insofar as they are concretely to *be* “busied with,” only on the basis of the self-manifestation of a streaming life as that which must be determined, but generally speaking, the latter unfolds itself only in such a way that this life “loses sight” of itself, or perhaps better, of the ultimate meaning of these everyday dealings insofar as they “take aim” at a concrete manner of determining this life. In actual fact, this “losing sight of itself” is no accident of subjectivity: instead, it constitutes a particular mode of self-tending into which subjectivity necessarily always “tends”—a mode that effects itself in that perceiving and acting

which is most common or “everyday.”

How does a conscious being come to thus “lose itself?” In what way does the subject determine what he or she is to-be precisely by *failing* to determine this, or rather, by failing to determine this him- or herself, by “passing the matter off?” To examine this issue is to examine the “inauthenticity” of the subject. Because an examination of inauthentic temporalization will lead us into the heart of the problem of temporalization itself, and eventually, to its most profound condition, it is to this that I now turn.

Chapter 3

Absolute Time-Consciousness

Section VII—Inauthentic Self-tending

§ 19

Initially and for the most part, a conscious life “loses itself” in the moment, which is to say, in the “now.” To be conscious of anything is to constitute time, i.e., to bring forth beings in the “now;” but to constitute time is to *be* in such a way that the “current” phase of living is always “pressed in on” or “weighed upon” by the other moments of experiencing of what is therefore a single streaming life, so that in each and every one of its moments, this life is continually in the position of having to determine what it is to-be. To know itself in its “now” is precisely for the conscious life to bring its own past and future to bear upon this “phase,” to open up what is thus grasped as its “now” to its other moments; what, then, can it mean to say that a conscious life *loses* itself in the “now?”

This appears to present us with a problem, for although the “phenomenon” at issue is no doubt the most common thing in the world—so common, in fact, that at first sight it appears to defy description—it nonetheless would seem, given what we have discovered, that to speak of “losing oneself in the moment” must thus simply mean to lapse into nonconsciousness. And yet, this is certainly *not* what we usually mean when we speak in such a fashion. So little, in fact, is the “inauthenticity” of “losing oneself” in the moment a lapse from consciousness, that it makes up an essential mode of consciousness itself—precisely its most common mode, or perhaps, the very phenomenon of “commonness” itself. For essential reasons, as we’ll discover a bit later on, it would be impossible for a life to temporalize itself or to “tend” after its own being, to always

be in the position of having to determine that which it is to-be, were it not to sometimes “lose itself” in the “now” or “lapse” into so-called “inauthenticity,” and, in fact, were it not to remain for the most part *in* inauthenticity as its most common state.

Because this is so, it must be the case that, by being “lost” in the “now,” the subject absorbed in this fashion nevertheless does *not* “lose consciousness” of his or her “other moments,” the other moments of the streaming conscious life, without which (via his or her self-temporalizing) the subject would not be as such at all; rather, inauthenticity must mark one precise manner in which self-protaining, -retaining, and -maintaining accomplish themselves, or put correlatively, in which the self-protained and self-retained moments of a conscious life are “there” for it, “exercising their force.” But if these moments are “there” as part of the self-temporalizing of a subject nevertheless “lost” in the “now,” then they can only be self-protained and self-retained by means of a sort of self-*evasion*. It is for this reason that Heidegger refers to the inauthenticity of a being as “a fleeing in the face of itself,”¹⁵³ while nevertheless warning us that “we must be careful not to confuse ontico-existential characterization with ontologico-existential interpretation”—we must not, that is, conflate the peculiar character of a self-tending temporalization that somehow “turns away from itself,”¹⁵⁴ in Heidegger’s words, with the simple factual *lack* of any self-tending.¹⁵⁵ So long as it continues to go on or to unfold itself, the streaming conscious life unfolds itself precisely by temporalizingly tending after itself: as a ubiquitous form of consciousness, “lostness” in the ‘now’ or the self-evasion of inauthenticity must thus constitute *one* particular manner of the streaming life’s self-tending.

¹⁵³ SZ: p. 229 (184).

¹⁵⁴ SZ: p. 229 (184).

¹⁵⁵ “Only insofar as ‘being-there’ [*Dasein*] is ontologically essentially brought before itself through the disclosedness that in general belongs to it, *can* it flee *before* it. In this falling turn away, admittedly, that before which it flees is *not grasped*, nor even experienced in a turn toward. But it is indeed disclosed “there” in the turn away *from* it. SZ: p. 229 (184-185).

In order, then, to clarify the manner in which the streaming conscious life inauthentically constitutes and, correlatively, “appears” to itself, I’ll have to examine the self-protaining, -retaining, and -maintaining peculiar to this mode. Doing so will allow the “phenomenon” of authenticity to come forth by contrast, and to be clarified as well. But once *both* of these two basic modes of self-tending time-constitution have been clarified, however, the basic character of self-tending *in general*, as time-consciousness in the most primordial sense, will become clear.

I’ll begin my analysis of inauthentic temporalization with an analysis of inauthentic self-protaining. Before I do so, however, I’ll need to say a few words about the terms “authenticity” and “inauthenticity” themselves, or about these terms as I’ll be using them; otherwise, their terribly loaded nature will likely lead to all sorts of ambiguities or misunderstandings. As the reader will surely recognize, these two words are used here as translations, though perhaps unfortunate ones, for Heidegger’s German neologisms “*Eigentlichkeit*” and “*Uneigentlichkeit*,” respectively. In ordinary German, the word “*eigentlich*” means “actual” or “proper,” and Heidegger often uses it as such; the word “*uneigentlich*,” its simple privative form, obviously then means either “improper” or “not actual,” and Heidegger also regularly uses it in this standard way.¹⁵⁶ However, Heidegger also uses these two words, along with the nominalized version he creates by adding the suffix “*keit*” to them, as *technical* terms—two of the most well-known in Heidegger’s unique idiom, no doubt; and it is as translations for Heidegger’s technical employment of “*eigentlich*” and “*uneigentlich*”—and as translations for this usage of the words only—that, according to a convention stemming from the Macquarrie and Robinson translation of *Sein und Zeit*, “authentic” and “inauthentic” are employed. “*Eigentlichkeit*” and “*Uneigentlichkeit*” are, of course, rendered accordingly as “authenticity” and “inauthenticity.” Yet the English terms “authentic” and “inauthentic” or “authenticity” and “inauthenticity,” when

¹⁵⁶ See, for instance, SZ: p. 218 (174), as quoted in fn #179 below.

applied to people or our compartments, connote something like “honesty” or “dishonesty,” as well as implying a moral evaluation. None of this is intended by Heidegger in his technical employment of “*eigentlich*” and “*uneigentlich*” (although not because, as is too often claimed, there is nothing of normativity in *Being and Time*—rather, Heidegger saves his moral condemnation for those phenomena he calls “non-genuine,”¹⁵⁷ a matter I’ll touch upon later on).¹⁵⁸ Instead, as Heidegger makes clear enough in his own glosses on these terms, “*eigentlich*” and “*uneigentlich*” are used to qualify modes of being (and *not*, we must insist, anything like types of *people* or *lives*¹⁵⁹) in which we somehow “take hold” of ourselves according to that which is most proper to our being, or else, in which we fail to do so:

And because being-there [*Dasein*] essentially is ever its possibility, this entity *can*, in its being, “choose” itself, win itself, it can lose itself, i.e., never and only “apparently” win itself. It can have lost itself and not yet won itself only insofar as, by its essence, it is possibly authentic [*eigentliches*], which is to say, self-appropriated [*sich zueigen* (my emphasis)]. Both the modes of being of *authenticity* and *inauthenticity*[...] are founded in the fact that being-there [*Dasein*] in general is determined by *mineness*.¹⁶⁰

The reader should keep in mind these considerations, whenever I use the terms “authentic” and “inauthentic” (and I will be using them quite often in what follows).¹⁶¹

Having warded off some initial issues with the term “authenticity” and its contrary, I’ll

¹⁵⁷ See, for instance: Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth: on Plato’s parable of the cave allegory and Theaetetus*, trans. Ted Sadler (London and New York, Continuum); 2002 (hereafter listed as *ET*), as well as fn #192.

¹⁵⁸ *SZ*: p. 220 (175-176).

¹⁵⁹ Heidegger writes, for one, that “what we have called the seldomness of resolute action [which, as we’ll see, is precisely the realization of authenticity] is a unique feature of the moment of vision, and one precisely by virtue of which the moment possesses a quite specific relation to its temporality.” *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics; World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis); 1995: p. 295 (hereafter listed as *FC*).

¹⁶⁰ *SZ*: p. 68 (42-43).

¹⁶¹ Also, we should remember that the German word “*eigen*”—from which “*eigentlich*” and “*uneigentlich*” themselves are after all formed—simply means “own,” as in “*seiner eigenen Person*,” “his own person.” “Own-ly,” then, would perhaps serve to better translate Heidegger’s technical use of “*eigentlich*” than the word “authentic,” although it is undoubtedly clumsy. “Self-owned,” perhaps, is thus better, or else, “self-appropriated”—to use Heidegger’s own gloss above—but for once, I will bow to convention and stay with “authentic.” No translation of “*eigentlich*” is perfect, in any event.

now return to the matter of inauthentic self-temporalization itself, and specifically, to begin with, to the self-protaining that belongs to it. Via self-protaining in general, as we've already seen, the moments to-come of a conscious life are "there" for it, i.e., self-given, precisely as that which needs to be determined in the determination of what this life is to-be—"given," in fact, as a sort of array of possibilities, from which one "line" is always being "selected" (and "selected," according to the way in which the subject maintains himself or herself in a role). If, then, this self-protaining, as inauthentic, somehow "loses" or "evades" itself, it must therefore involve the "projection" of that which this life has to determine in such a way that, while nevertheless "weighing upon" the self-maintained "now," this "to-be" is somehow made more "distant," even "put off."¹⁶² All urgency regarding the issue of what "I" am to-be must be absent, here, even if there is perhaps urgency of another sort, pertaining, in this case, to the issue *at-hand*. This distinction must be understood.

Inauthentically self-temporalized, the subject gets "caught up" in the present. If the "now" is nonetheless always understood on the horizon of the to-come—if, that is, that which perception maintains, its object, is always perceived as an in-order-to, and the in-order-to "comes forth" only in relation to that *for-the-sake-of-which* it is an in-order-to, a longed-for determination of the being that the streaming conscious life is *to-be*—then the subject, "caught up" in the present, must "put off" all "minding" of what nevertheless is "there," shaping the "now:" namely, his or her own being to-come. In fact, the subject's "to-come" must be "there" precisely *as* "put off," protained or held in advance, as it were, only "at arm's length:" the subject must protain his or her own being to-come in such a way as to be "*oblivious*" to it—although in this "obliviousness" that characterizes lostness in the moment, again, this being to-

¹⁶² "But insofar as, in the unity of the temporalizing of concern, an awaiting ever takes the lead[...], the concerned being-there's own can-be is nevertheless posed in care [i.e., "self-tending"]." SZ: p. 405 (354).

come must nonetheless be “there” since it is only *for-the-sake-of* the to-come that objects “in the now” can come forth as utilizable and be dealt with as such at all. The inauthentically self-temporalized subject is thus moved for-the-sake of longed-for determinations of his or her own being without making this determination itself an *issue* in the slightest: the subject instead simply acts on this basis. It is in this peculiar “obliviousness” of the streaming conscious life to its own being to-come—in the self-oblivion of a self-protaining which is nonetheless all-controlling, since objects, again, can come forth as utilizable, and thus be acted upon, only on its basis—that inauthenticity maintains itself: inauthenticity is just this self-oblivion. In fact, it should be apparent that, *because* of this “obliviousness” and not in spite of it, the longed-for determination of the subject’s “to-come” is *all the more* “all-controlling.” Shorn of its “obliviousness,” the “end” to be realized might not seem so self-evident.¹⁶³

This provisional conception calls for further clarification. Depending on the degree of “lostness” in the moment, or more precisely, on its different variations, the immediate “end” to be realized can always have been brought “to mind” to varying degrees or in varying fashions. For example: seeing my apartment key as something to be used right now in-order-to get into my apartment, I might be well aware of my “desire” to do just this; and yet in such a case, inauthenticity is not to the slightest extent lessened: for in this case (to continue with my example), entering into my apartment is not simply and without further ado that for-the-sake-of-which the key has “promise,” but, as a towards-which, implies a further for-the-sake-of—e.g., entering into my apartment is protentionally “given” as a determination of my own being to be realized for-the-sake-of being warm and comfortable, etc.—of which, for its part, I at least remain “oblivious.”

¹⁶³ On the “givens” of consciousness, see p. 215-217, below.

But isn't this further for-the-sake-of (being warm and comfortable, etc.) *itself* a towards-which, which always has a further for-the-sake-of "behind" it in its turn? As Aristotle made clear in his analysis of "the good," we are quickly led to infinite regress in our conception of means and ends, unless we recognize something like an *ultimate* for-the-sake-of, to which all others refer: namely, that concrete "sort" of life to be realized in the determination of "my" own life—a determination realized by the continual realization of this or that "relative" end, precisely insofar as the end is "called for," in accordance with the specifics of "time and place," as that to be realized by a life lived in conformity with this sought after determination.¹⁶⁴ Entering my apartment, so as to be warm and comfortable, is just the thing that "one" living the sort of life I am living, or rather, am endeavoring to live, would do. Things stand exactly the same with the realtor in his or her examination of a house "at hand," which, as we saw, is given as an object to be examined in-order-to turn a good sale, etc., not only for-the-sake-of some "immediate" end, but for the realization of that which the realtor is to-be in the *broadest sense* possible, i.e., a successful realtor, a good provider for his or her family, an upstanding member of the community, and so forth.

The self-oblivion of inauthentic self-protaining is, *in the strict sense*, obliviousness to this "broadest sense," to "one's" *ultimate* end. What is to-be determined—i.e., the subject's own being—is given to be determined precisely on the horizon of some ultimate determination of a life, but without in any way making an issue of it. This is then to say that, while being "lost" in the moment always involves "obliviousness" to the future of the streaming conscious life in the sense of keeping "at bay," if not that which is to be immediately realized, at least *some* "stretch" of the "chain" of longed-for determinations of the subject's own being, towards-which he or she

¹⁶⁴ *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin (Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company); 1999: p. 1 (1094a18-22). Hereafter listed as *NM*. For more on the notion of the "good life," see p. 256-258, below.

always works (precisely by making whatever choice he or she makes at any given moment), this does not define the protentional aspect of “lostness” in the moment *at basis*. The *essential* longed-for determination that is kept in self-oblivion in this “lostness” is that which pertains to the basic orientation of the streaming conscious life. Thinking of the future, in like fashion, changes only the specific modality of being “lost” in the moment without extricating itself from this (i.e., from inauthenticity), so long as the act remains caught up in itself in the manner just specified.

Saying this, I should be clear, also, that inauthenticity is not dispelled, or at least, not necessarily dispelled, by merely bringing to mind something like this ultimate determination of self-protaining—a for-the-sake-of-which, again, which orients all self-projection of that which the streaming life is to-be by “ranking,” as it were, the possibilities thereby “given” (which only show up *as* so “ranked”) or by “giving” some of these as those “relative ends,” towards-which the subject is in any given case given to act (by “selecting” from such possibilities). Without departing from inauthenticity, from “lostness” in the moment, “one” can always bring to mind, or further, enunciate for the whole world to hear, that which “one” is “all about.” This is perhaps the case with certain Christian believers, for example, who have been instructed to continually bring to mind their own “purpose,” precisely in-order-to communicate it to others who have yet to be won over to the faith; this, they have been taught to believe, is necessary if “one” is to-be a “good Christian” (which is just this “purpose”), and such believers fervently want to *be* good Christians—it stands here as their ultimate for-the-sake-of, as that which such believers are principally to determine themselves to-be. Yet by bringing this ultimate “purpose” to mind, these believers nonetheless go on only “*obliviously*” working-towards this longed-for determination of their own being, at least for the moment in question—and irrespective of whether or not this

determination has been self-chosen, in a sense I'll later elaborate—precisely because the issue, although it might be “there” fully “before the mind,” is *not* an issue here at all. As a basic possibility to be realized, it orients the choosing of possibilities, but is not itself “there” to be chosen—it is “there,” as we will shortly see, as *assumed*, which is just what is meant by its being “given” in the mode of “obliviousness.” Inauthentic self-protaining is inauthentic precisely by exhibiting this self-oblivion in the projection of its ultimate for-the-sake-of. In this way, the “one” caught up in proselytizing still remains caught up in the “now,” and so, within inauthenticity, however clearly aware of his or her ultimate “purpose.” (Noting this, it should be remembered that I am implying no negative evaluation by the label of “inauthenticity”—a point which is especially relevant when we consider that the talk that issues in proselytization often explicitly deals with something like the authentic mode of our being, and perhaps even contains something of the power to bring us back to this mode, although it need not possess this.)

So little, then, can we equate the “urgency” of authentic self-protaining (as I called it above) with the urgency that might sometimes characterize our being caught up in the “now,” that it should instead be obvious that the occurrence of an urgency of the latter kind must always make anything like authentic self-protaining all the more distant. This is because the urgency that characterizes absorption in the moment focuses “one” more and more upon the *matter at hand*, as when our kindly realtor must get a deal done *now* or else the sale is off; but this, of course, prevents the realtor from fixing upon that for-the-sake-of-which he or she is *ultimately* moved to act. The moment *any of* us worry about this basic orientation, or find ourselves fixated upon it in whatever fashion, we hesitate, however briefly, to concern ourselves with the work needed to “actualize” this determination of ourselves—but such hesitation is precisely what is precluded whenever we find the matter at hand an urgent one.

In inauthentic “lostness,” then, the to-come is indeed self-protained and bears its “influence,” but merely “obliviously”—an influence, again, which is in a certain sense greater for being out of mind. But to say that inauthentic self-protaining only “obliviously” projects the streaming conscious life upon its moments to-come or upon that which must be determined in the determination of what this life is to-be, is to say that it casts itself “forward” towards that which it will determine itself *as*, some longed-for determination of its own being, only *unquestioningly*, as if this were a mere matter of fact. The “sense” of the to-come thereby exhibited is thus one which is “*practically*” minded: absorbedly oriented towards its “immediate” goals—and thus, in the matter-at-hand—although what they are truly *for* recedes further and further from “view.”

With this, we have come to a basic description of the phenomenon of inauthentic self-protaining. On the basis of this, can we describe the character of self-protaining, as the futural orientation of self-tending temporalization, in *general*? And what of inauthentic self-*retaining* and *-maintaining*? What can they tell us of the nature of primordial temporalization *per se*?

§ 20

Inauthentic self-protaining represents merely one of two possible modes in which self-protaining *per se* unfolds itself. More precisely, it represents the mode in which self-protaining unfolds itself whenever some “practical” matter, or the matter at-hand, takes precedence. In my descriptive analyses of “subjective time” (or of the givenness of conscious life in its streaming), by which I meant ultimately to bring forth its constituting correlate—i.e., the streaming conscious life’s temporalizing constitution, or “tending,” of itself—I admittedly kept privileging the “practical,” or at the least, took this mode to be exemplary in regards to the description of temporalizing phenomena in general. This was not without some justification, for as we’ve seen,

even cognitions as apparently “disinterested” as those constituting scientific inquiry are nevertheless constituted by concerns of a “practical” sort: because all conscious activity would thus appear to be rooted in “practicality,” all self-temporalization would appear to be the self-constitution of a “practical-mindedness.” And after all: isn’t self-tending, as I’ve so far described it, through and through a concerning of “oneself” about the “practical?” But this merely begs the question as to whether or not the description I’ve given so far has been one-sided—biased, as it were, towards all things “pragmatic,” towards self-tending temporalization in what, following convention, I’m calling its merely inauthentic mode. If this is so, however, then it must be the case that, until we have a fully adequate conception of the other, *authentic* mode of self-temporalization, our conception of self-tending temporalization *per se*, and thus, of the essence of subjectivity in general, will remain at best partial. And such partiality (assuming that there is in fact partiality here) would surely prevent us from tracing the “phenomenon” of subjectivity back to its ultimate, ethical, condition.

Keeping this in mind, we should nevertheless persist in obtaining a fully clarified conception of that which has, up until now, more or less encompassed the whole of my account of self-tending time-constitution, its “everyday” or inauthentic mode; having clarified the latter, the authentic mode of self-tending should *also* disclose itself, or at least, should have become prepared for its proper clarification. But having already described the self-protaining of inauthenticity, I’ll now go on to the self-retaining and self-maintaining that *belongs to it*, beginning with the former.

How, then, does the streaming conscious life retain its own having-been, whenever there is “lostness” in the “now?” In inauthentic self-protaining, we discovered a peculiar way in which the self-temporalized subject, nonetheless “apprehending” his or her to-come as that which needs

to be determined, “puts off” any question of this determination, absorbing him- or herself unquestioningly in precisely that working-towards in which he or she loses itself. An “obliviousness” or even “evasion” of sorts is thereby exhibited. How, then, is such an “obliviousness” exhibited in self-*retaining*, whenever self-*retaining* unfolds itself in an inauthentic mode?

To speak of “oblivion” is, strictly speaking, to speak of forgetting, and it is as a sort of forgetting that the self-*retaining* that belongs to inauthentic self-*protaining* effects itself—the streaming conscious life here “takes over” its having-been, which “gives to it” the concrete way in which it is already working to determine itself, by *failing*, in a sense, to “take this over.” By taking over its own having-been, we saw, the conscious life continually finds itself “thrown” in the “direction” in which it has been “aiming itself” or self-projecting. But therefore, whenever the self-oblivion of inauthenticity characterizes self-*protaining*, so that the streaming life throws itself “forward” unto that which it ultimately determines itself “as” without, as it were, a second thought, the self-*retaining* which belongs to this (inauthentic) self-temporalization must, for its part, find itself in its “thrownness” only via a sort of “forgetting,” a “forgetting” of the way in which it finds itself determining itself—a “forgetting” which somehow retainingly constitutes its having-been, as a having-been working-towards “something,” without making this an issue in the slightest. “Forgetting” the concrete manner in which it finds itself determining itself, the streaming conscious life is thusly “oblivious,” if not of the issue of any of the ends towards which it takes aim, at least of that for-the-sake-of-which it ultimately works to realize these ends, constituting the basic orientation of its being. It is for this reason that Heidegger calls inauthentic temporalization a “forgetting self-abandonment [*vergessenden Sich-überlassen*],”¹⁶⁵ and claims that it exhibits “coverings and obscurations” or even “dissimulations by which the being-there

¹⁶⁵ SZ: p. 396 (345).

[*das Dasein*] seals itself off from itself.”¹⁶⁶

But what can we make of this “forgetting?” By using this term, I certainly cannot be making reference to any sort of forgetfulness in the *usual* sense (nor can Heidegger, for that matter): e.g., the act of trying, but failing, to recollect. Not only is self-retaining *neither* an act of remembering nor of forgetting—for both of these are the constituting correlates of a *thematizing* act (the only difference being that one of these acts does, and the other doesn’t, “hit its mark”): despite the character of “forgetfulness” or “obliviousness” that attaches to it in its inauthentic mode, this cannot mean that inauthentic self-retaining simply fails to “apprehend” its having-been (the passed-by being of the streaming conscious life), as does a forgetting in the usual sense. Whether inauthentically or authentically self-temporalized, the subject’s “past,” as we’ve seen, must nevertheless by “there”—“mineness,” as Heidegger points out, “belongs to the existing being-there [*Dasein*]:”¹⁶⁷ but “mineness,” we’ve discovered, is precisely self-temporalization, the “living” of a life that is always given to itself as having “come from” “something”—a having-been which, furthermore, always “casts” this life on its way. The “forgetfulness” of inauthentic self-retaining must thus characterize a positive mode in which a streaming conscious life retains its own “past,” not the mere disappearance of that “past.”

How, then, can we properly characterize the “forgetfulness” or “obliviousness” that we see exhibited, initially and for the most part, in self-retaining? This “phenomenon” can be clarified by simply describing the occurrence of an “everyday” emotional affect like excitement, providing that we pay attention to the distinctive way in which the “having-been” of the excited subject is “there” for him or her in the affection. Earlier, I gave the example of an exciting email,

¹⁶⁶ *SZ*: p. 167 (129).

¹⁶⁷ *SZ*: p. 78 (53): “to the existing being-there [*Dasein*] belongs mineness as the condition of possibility for authenticity and inauthenticity [“and belongs to it,” Heidegger continues, “as the condition which makes authenticity and inauthenticity possible”].”

sent to offer some fellowship to the aspiring academic (specifically, to me). The email excites by signaling the greater fulfillment of a “project” of mine, one which, we discovered, I have “taken over” precisely by means of its being retained in the self-retention of my having-been. But how, in such a case, do I concretely “take over” this having-been? Nonthematically, it is “there” for me in such a manner as to be *taken for granted*, which is to say, so obvious that it “goes without saying.” This obviousness constitutes the precise manner in which a subject’s self-retained having-been inauthentically falls into a sort of “forgetfulness” or “oblivion:” for it is in fact precisely insofar as it goes without saying that my having-been *is* “there” for me in everyday experiencing, and thereby constitutes, as it were, the “element” from which my self-projection draws its “nourishment.” I take over my having-been self-projecting, and continue to project myself on its basis, while all the while “forgetting” to make an issue of what is most essential in it—its projection upon that for-the-sake-of-which I ultimately *am*—simply by virtue of this taking for granted.

We can easily convince ourselves that the same holds for any emotion or affect of an “everyday” sort; it is only in affects belonging to a delimited class, which Heidegger calls “fundamental moods,” that such “obliviousness” is *not* exhibited. In most affects, conversely, we find ourselves caught up in our “immediate reaction” to the matter at hand¹⁶⁸—a phenomenon which precisely defines inauthenticity. But, as we’ve now discovered, the matter at hand is one in which we get caught up only because we merely project ourselves “obliviously” upon that for-the-sake-of-which we ultimately *are*, and we only “obliviously” do so because we “forgetfully” take this over from our own having-been as that which is so obvious it goes without saying.

At this point, I’ve been able to at least provisionally describe the “phenomena” of both

¹⁶⁸ In any given case, such a “reaction” may be “genuine” or not, however. On the matter of “genuineness”—which is precisely not to be equated with that of authenticity, though it bears a relation to it—see p. 198-200, below.

inauthentic self-protaining and inauthentic self-retaining. What, then, of inauthentic self-*maintaining*? In a sense, this ought to constitute the most important of the articulations of inauthentic self-temporalization, given that inauthentic temporalization always effects itself as a being “lost” in the “*now*.” In order to fully clarify the “phenomenon” of inauthenticity, then, it is to the self-maintaining which belongs to it that I will now turn.

§ 21

The “now” carries the day, as it were, in inauthenticity. Because this is so, the other orientations of self-tending temporalization (self-protaining and -retaining) must somehow “serve” self-maintaining, taking up a sort of supportive role, whenever temporalization remains in its inauthentic mode. In order to understand how the “now” maintains itself inauthentically, we’ll thus need to understand how self-protaining and self-retaining take up such roles, allowing the inauthentically self-temporalized subject to take hold of him- or herself, or rather, to fail to take hold of him- or herself, absorbedly in the “now.”

Although the “now” of a streaming conscious life is given only on the basis of that life’s apprehension of itself in its streaming, in inauthenticity, what is “given” of this life that is merely “caught up” or “lost” in the moment nonetheless is still “given” as if but a mere sliver of it. The moment is still lived as such, as a moment or part of the streaming life; this life as a streaming totality is thus there in its streaming, part and parcel of this life’s temporalizing constitution of itself. Absorbed in what is nevertheless “given” on the horizon of the unfolding streaming life, these greater horizons of this life are thus “there” though overlooked or disregarded in some fashion. In the last two sections of this study, I’ve described the way in which this overlooking disregard unfolds itself. Insofar as the *to-come* of the streaming life is *inauthentically* “apprehended,” its ultimate determination is merely “passed on,” something “for later.” Because

“what is to be done” in regards to this being to-come, or rather, “what it is ultimately to-be,” is *always* at issue, or is in fact *the* issue, for the self-tending temporalization of a streaming conscious life, a “decision” is always being made in this regard, or a “stand” taken upon the matter. In inauthentic temporalization, however, such a “decision” is simply made in the sense of a “passing off,” as if there were always time to come back to it, the essential matters. Likewise, insofar as the *having-been* of the streaming life is inauthentically “apprehended,” this issue is “passed up,” something “long gone.” Although in inauthentic temporalization, the “forgotten” having-been of this life continues to weigh upon it as that which ultimately determines it in its self-determining, and in fact, weighs most forcefully upon it insofar as it is only “forgetfully” “taken over,” this “taking over” simply effects itself in the sense of a “passing over” of that which is so obvious it goes without saying, as if the matter at hand summed up the whole of this life’s “interest.” In both cases, the other moments (those to-come, or else the streaming life’s having-been) *are* “there” in this life’s self-tending, constituting the sense in which the “now” of experiencing is precisely a moment of the selfsame streaming life: only in this way, again, is the “current” moment of experiencing always the apprehension of this or that object, on this basis of which things again and again come to be dealt with significantly. But in inauthentic temporalization, these moments are “there” merely in the sort of self-oblivion precisely constitutive for the way the “now” is thereby given as that in which the subject is “lost.”

Inauthentic temporalization plays itself out in a busying with things, into which the self-temporalized subject must certainly sometimes (or even for the most part) lapse, if he or she is to be in such a way as to determine what he or she is to-be at all. But if, in “everyday” life, we absorb ourselves in the things with which we concern ourselves on the basis, again, of something like a “decision” regarding the issue of our *own* being—that which we are always in some way

determining ourselves to-be—then this “decision” regarding our ultimate for-the-sake-of must merely be *assumed*. It is “taken over” in the manner of an assumption, drawn from what we *have-been* working-towards, with all the “obliviousness” of the absolutely obvious. But as such, we are (or continue to be) “thrown” towards possibilities thereby given to us as being “better” or “worse” than the others on the basis of that which, in self-oblivion, remains all-controlling. United together in this way, inauthentic self-retaining and -protaining “serve” the self-maintaining of inauthentic temporalization, in which the “now” moment of the streaming conscious life, its “current” phase, is given to itself marked by the sort of “clarity” which is the necessary corollary of the “obscuration” of that which remains in “oblivion:” here, the subject is “freed” to devote himself or herself wholly to the matter at hand, without being caught up in any issues that could only distract from it. All such issues, pertaining to the question of how the subject *is* in fact to determine what he or she is to-be, are thus “there,” in a sense, as totally *discharged*—discharged so thoroughly in fact that there is nothing left to say in their regard. No longer “caught up” in questions of this kind, the subject can instead find himself or herself fully “caught up” in the “now,” so that we can say that, temporalizing itself inauthentically, a life is *freed* for its “now”—although it must be insisted that this “freeing,” when looked at from another angle, so to speak, appears at the same time to be a sort of “*bondage*:” a bondage precisely to the subject’s “thrown” having-been, to the manner in which the subject *has-been* determining what he or she ultimately is to-be. A bondage, in fact, *all the more complete* in proportion to the extent that the subject becomes “free” for the matter at hand “in” the “now,” which is just to say, to the extent that the subject maintains himself or herself in inauthenticity.

By means of an inauthentic self-protaining and -retaining, the streaming conscious life maintains itself as absorbed in the “now,” and so, as freed for it. But we discovered in the last

chapter that, as self-maintaining, a subject always maintains himself or herself in some given *role*, or at least, in some determinate relationship to one. The way in which the subject takes up a determinate relationship to a role, we saw, is part and parcel of the way in which he or she determines his or her to-be, which is to say, it is at one with an always ongoing “selection” from an array of possibilities, self-protained as that which must be determined. Given that this is so, inauthentic self-maintaining, which is “freed” for the matter at hand, must constitute a particular manner of “role-taking,” one characterized by all the “obliviousness” of inauthenticity, in which freedom for the “now” constitutes itself. In such freedom, the subject simply “does” as “one does.” But for the subject to do so, to take on roles in the self-oblivion of inauthenticity, is for the subject to maintain himself or herself as “*oneself*.”

What does it mean to maintain oneself *as* “oneself?” How is “one” *merely* “one?” Heidegger uses the term “oneself” precisely to describe the way a “self” *is* when it is “not-being-itself [*Nicht-es-selbst-sein*].”¹⁶⁹ According to Heidegger:

the self of the everyday being-there [*des alltäglichen Daseins*] is the *oneself*, which we must distinguish from the *authentic*, which is to say, specifically grasped, *self*. As oneself, the particular being-there [*das jeweilige Dasein*] is *scattered* in the one and must first find itself. This scattering characterizes the “subject” of that mode of being which we know as concerned absorption in the nearest encountered world. When the being-there [*das Dasein*] is familiar with itself as oneself, this means at the same time that the one prefigures the nearest interpretation of the world and of being-in-the-world.¹⁷⁰

To merely be “oneself,” then, is simply to do, in general, what “one” does, to be, in general, as “one” is, and to understand the world as “one” understands it. The subject, rather than grasping himself or herself specifically, *for* him- or herself, instead apprehends the self, and the situation in which he or she finds him- or herself, just and simply as “one” ought, i.e., in accordance with the *usual* or *conventional* standards. Self-maintained merely as “oneself,” the subject is thereby

¹⁶⁹ SZ: p. 220 (176).

¹⁷⁰ SZ: p. 167 (129).

“scattered in the one.”

The “oneself” is precisely the subject insofar as he or she merely assumes some “public” way of being. When Heidegger writes that:

with lostness in the one, the nearest factual can-be of the being-there—the tasks, regulations, standards, urgency, and range of concerned-solicitous being-in-the-world—is, in each case, already decided upon. The one has always already taken the being-there away from seizing upon these possibilities of being. The one hides even its [the being-there’s] implicit discharge or release from the explicit *choice* of this possibility[...]¹⁷¹

he indicates the precise manner in which, by assuming the public or conventional manners—as all of us, for essential reasons, are continuously apt to do—we adopt from the “public” the basic “stance” or “decision” taken about the matter of our own being, which fully liberates us from having to decide upon this for ourselves. As we’ve seen, it is by merely assuming his or her own having-been that the inauthentically self-temporalized subject is “freed” for the now;¹⁷² “initially and for the most part,” however, the subject does not simply “free” himself or herself for the “now” by obviously assuming some “decision” (regarding the being that he or she is to-be) which, earlier, this subject had made *him* or *herself*: in general, the “decision” so assumed has been settled in advance by the “collective,” the social totality.¹⁷³ The subject merely assumes what has been “pre-given,” for, in having-been, the subject has always already conformed himself or herself to convention, to the mores and morals of his or her culture or to the socio-cultural practices in which the subject always finds himself or herself “embedded.”¹⁷⁴

the understanding self-projection of the being-there is, as factual, in each case

¹⁷¹ SZ: p. 312 (268).

¹⁷² See: § 20

¹⁷³ Or rather, the social totality just *is* this “settling,” insofar as with this term, we intend, not the sum total of individuals belonging to a “people,” but of conventions, mores and morals, i.e., an established way of being characterizing a given society or culture as such. Busying “oneself” with things, then, “lost,” inauthentically, “in the moment,” “one” maintains “oneself” as “oneself,” as anyone else does.

¹⁷⁴ Our being, Heidegger writes, is “totally taken, in the one, by the world and the being-there-with [*Mitdasein*] of others;” SZ: p. 220 (176).

already in a discovered world. From this it takes—and initially according to the interpretedness of the “one”—its possibilities. This interpretation has restricted in advance the optional possibilities within the vicinity of the familiar, accessible, communicable, of that which is proper and forward. This levelling of the being-there’s possibilities to the “everyday available” [ones] initially accomplishes a dimming of the possible as such. The average everydayness of concern becomes blind to possibilities and reassures itself with only the actual. The reassuring does not close off an extensive industriousness of concern, but on the contrary arouses it. Positive new possibilities are not then willed[...].¹⁷⁵

A subject maintaining himself or herself in this way thereby maintains himself or herself as a “concretization” of some “publicness,” as it were, which is just to say, as “oneself.” But being “freed” for the “now” is thus, as Heidegger puts it, merely the “*supposed* freedom of the one-self.”¹⁷⁶

“Caught up” in the moment, the subject is “freed” to deal with things just as “one” does. In this way, the self-determination of conscious life unfolds itself according to the mores and morals of a given social “milieu,” according to all of the established conventions of the social world and the values and ideals that regulate it. And yet, we are not *always* “freed” in this way, or at least, *need not* be; rather, there is always the possibility of at least occasionally finding ourselves faced with questions that inhibit such an experiencing, namely, questions about how we are to determine that which we are to-be. In such cases, we are “freed” in a *wholly different manner* than we are in inauthentic self-tending—“freed,” that is, for *ourselves*:

The one [as we read earlier] has always already taken the being-there away from seizing upon these possibilities of being. The one hides from it [from the “being-there”] even the accomplishment of its tacit discharge from an explicit *choice* of this possibility. It remains undetermined who “actually” [*eigentlich*] chooses. This choice-less being-taken by nobody, by which the being-there entangles itself in inauthenticity [*Uneigentlichkeit*], can only be undone to the extent that the being-there specifically takes itself back to itself from out of lostness in the one.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ “[...] but on the contrary, the available [possibility] becomes “tactically” altered so that the appearance arises of something happening:” SZ: p. 239 (194-195).

¹⁷⁶ SZ: p. 321 (276 [emphasis mine]).

¹⁷⁷ SZ: p. 312 (268).

In such “taking back,” we are “freed,” if only for a moment, from what otherwise unfolds itself as an unquestioning bondage to our social milieu, so that, for perhaps the first time, we find we must take up the matter of our own being for ourselves, “personally.”

To speak of deciding for ourselves, or “personally,” is to speak of what Heidegger referred to as a seizing upon “genuine possibilities of being [*echten Seinsmöglichkeiten*].”¹⁷⁸ But how can such a possibility or “can-be [*Seinkönnen*],” as Heidegger also says, be “genuine?” To speak in this way is surely to make a normative judgment, and this is no doubt at least implied in Heidegger’s work. However, the term “genuine [*echt*]” is a technical one in phenomenological literature, and should be treated here as such. In every case, a phenomenon is a “genuine” one either if it is an act which gives its object, or makes it present, primarily or for the first time (perception, as opposed to hearsay, for example), or else, if it is that which is seized upon in such an act (the genuine knowledge seized upon by perception vs. the non-genuine knowledge gained by hearsay). Being genuine is certainly not equivalent to being true (as the example I’ve just given should make clear); nonetheless, the distinction between the genuine and non-genuine is an important one, epistemologically, for not only is knowledge constituted primordially in genuine presentation (if and when it is in fact constituted at all, that is):¹⁷⁹ knowledge can also become confused and cease to be knowledge when it is communicated and appropriated non-genuinely, transmitted further and further from its source (i.e., from a genuine presentation of the matter) as in the child’s game of “telephone,” in which a message becomes more and more garbled as it becomes “passed along.” The distinction between genuine and non-genuine

¹⁷⁸ *SZ*: p. 218 (174). Heidegger also speaks of the “full and genuine ‘life’” that “one” feels “one” is living, which brings tranquility: see pg. 222 (177)—“the supposition of the one, to lead and to sustain a full and genuine ‘life,’ brings reassurance to the being-there, for all is ‘in the best order,’ and all doors stand open. The fallen being-in-the-world, tempting itself, is at the same time self-reassuring.”

¹⁷⁹ For a succinct summation of genuine and nongenuine presenting, see *Phantasy, Image, Consciousness, and Memory (1898-1925)*, trans. John Brough (Dordrecht, Springer); 2005: p. 157-158.

presentation, however, is even more important where phenomenological analysis is concerned: for if the reader of a phenomenological analysis does not follow through with the analysis for him- or herself, or even worse, simply reads off the “results” of the analysis as though they were the conclusions of some argument, then the matter must end up confused—the phenomenon itself will remain unthematized, “hidden” from “view” from the reader who is given to hear only phenomenological hearsay, so that preconceptions of all sorts, coming to “flesh out” those few details of the phenomenon in question that he or she has in fact genuinely grasped, will ultimately make the phenomenon itself unrecognizable.¹⁸⁰ But if this is so for phenomenological analysis, how much more must it be the case for something like an authentic deliberation over possibilities, in which the issue of “my” own being, of what “I” am ultimately to-be, is precisely in question? Can I take someone else’s world on the matter—especially considering that, by doing so, I have apparently in some sense “chosen” to do so, and thus, have somehow, however inauthentically, “decided” for myself *nonetheless*? By assuming, as “oneself,” all that I (or more generally, the inauthentically self-temporalized subject) assume from the “one,” I am made captive to what Heidegger calls mere “gossip,” a sort of discourse in which the most important matters, having been seized upon by others, are passed along and taken up without further consideration, becoming more and more confused along the way.¹⁸¹ In this way, what has been discovered ceases, for the “one” who merely assumes it, to constitute anything like a genuine understanding; the possibilities of being that are merely assumed, “going without saying,” are thus (in Heidegger’s words) “mostly made unrecognizable [*unkennlich*], but nonetheless familiar [*bekannt*], by ambiguity.”¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ If the reader is in fact to come to any knowledge by its means, that is, the phenomenological text must indicate the phenomenon it describes as an object to be intuited by its reader him- or herself. See: *FC*: p. 293-298.

¹⁸¹ *SZ*: p. 211-214 (167-170).

¹⁸² *SZ*: p. 435 (283).

If inauthentic self-temporalization is at times necessary—and who, without abatement, could remain transfixed by the most crucial matters of his or her own existence in every last moment of it?—it is nevertheless *unnecessary* to merely assume our own most basic stance upon these issues, to live out our days according to a non-genuinely grasped possibility of that which we are ultimately to-be. And yet, when we get “carried away” by inauthenticity, we become all the more caught up in the “now,” where questions of such matters can no longer reach us, so that there is never the opportunity for more than a non-genuine appropriation of such possibilities of our own being, and so that, because they are merely “passed along,” such possibilities become all the more non-genuine. Such is the “decadence” that worries Heidegger so¹⁸³—a decadence which he believes has come to afflict an entire civilization. Although, however, a society of those for whom self-questioning is a wholly alien activity—in which no one exhibits any real concern over the issue of his or her own being, nor is thereby led by any great sense of purpose for his or her life—is certainly no ideal one, it nonetheless seems that the troublesome totalitarianism of Heidegger’s thought stems precisely from this worry, which was perhaps thus excessive in his case. But if Heidegger is led astray here, it may well be because he erroneously takes this situation of the subject—authentic concern over the matter of his or her own being—to be the most essential, in the sense of exhibiting for us the very foundation of subjectivity (however enigmatic its very nature as a “foundation,” as we will later see, would have to be). But the demonstration that it is *not*—that the condition of subjectivity lies even beyond this—must in any event wait until after an analysis of authentic self-temporalizing and its possibility of genuinely appropriating possibilities.

So far, however, we have only uncovered how the subject gets “caught up” in the

¹⁸³ My translation of “*Verfall*.” see, for instance, Heidegger on the “spiritual decadence [or “decline,” “*Verfall*”] of the earth” in *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven, Yale University Press); 2000: p. 40 (*Einführung in die Metaphysik* (Berlin, Walter de Gruyter); 1998 p. 29).

moment by tending after the matter of his or her own being in the merely *inauthentic* mode of self-temporalization, which precisely “frees” the subject for this absorption. The ultimate horizons of the streaming life which “inform” the now must nonetheless retreat, in a manner of speaking, so that the matter at-hand can completely engage the inauthentically self-temporalized subject. If there is a mode of temporalization that unfolds itself differently, so that, somehow disengaged from the “now”—i.e., self-temporalized *authentically*—the “bigger questions” can emerge, then there must be another mode of nonthematizing self-temporalization (or apprehension of the to-come, having-been, and “now” moments of the selfsame life) *besides* that of an oblivious “passing off” and “passing over” the matter, which thereby binds a life to the “now’s” exigencies. But how can a life nonthematically apprehend itself in its streaming, how can it tend after its own being in the sense of its primordial self-temporalization, other than via the “obliviousness” that absorbs it in the “now” or the “now’s” exigencies? How can its ultimate horizons authentically “free” this life for themselves? And, what does such a mode indicate about self-tending temporalization *per se*—about its character in general, and, most importantly for the purposes of this study, about its *condition*?

Through an analysis of its authentic mode, we will discover that the self-tending temporalization of a streaming conscious life does not merely “free” for the “practical:” more fundamentally, it “frees” for that which is more pressing than the “practical,” for that which all practicality presupposes. Our “practical” engagement, we’ll see, always unfolds itself upon the horizon of the issue of our own being. But in order to clarify the manner in which this is so, we must make authentic temporalization our theme.

In that self-temporalization which, following convention, I have been calling “authentic,” the self-temporalized subject must be “freed,” not *for* the “now,” but rather, *from* being “caught up” in it, so as to instead find him- or herself riveted by something like the question of his or her own being. This is, once more, wholly unlike self-temporalization in its inauthentic mode, where that which the subject is to-be “goes without saying,” merely assumed, and precisely so that there is “freedom” to engage in the matter at-hand in the manner of a total devotion. I described earlier how this peculiar sort of assumption characterizes the primary way in which the streaming conscious life, in any given moment, constitutes itself for itself; how, then, can such a life constitute itself differently, so that it might “now” be freed *from* the “now” rather than *for* it?

We have seen in some detail how, by inauthentically tending after itself, a streaming conscious life “takes hold” of itself in an “oblivious” fashion, thus appearing to itself only as though “through a glass, darkly,” as it were. In so doing, however, a peculiar *clarity* is achieved, as we also discovered—namely, clarity of purpose: for “freed” for the “now,” everything is as if transparent, seen right through in the very beckoning of its “promise.” But then, it would seem that the order of this “clarity” and “obscuration” would need to be *reversed* for authentic self-temporalization, so that, while the authentically self-temporalized subject would instead clearly “catch sight” of his or her *own* being, *en toto* or as a streaming totality, here instead it would be things in the world which would come to be perceived only as though “through a glass, darkly,” which is to say, *sans* that clarity of purpose which characterizes “practical” engagement, or perhaps more precisely, its inauthentic self-temporalization.

What state of affairs is this that I mean to indicate, with the claim that perception, in its

authentic self-temporalization, only catches sight of an object according to a sort of obscuration of its significance? It is not as if, encountering objects via an authentically self-temporalized encountering, the perceiving subject would merely forget what “one” does with such things (just as little, that is, as “one” forgets, in the usual sense, that to which “one” remains *inauthentically* “oblivious:” i.e., the ultimate determination of what the streaming life is to-be); rather, it is simply that the “promise” of things would somehow only falteringly reach the authentically self-temporalized subject thus stricken with the unclarity of an indecision, as if, pressed upon by the question of how “one” is to determine “oneself,” the “why” of it all were no longer clear. But how does such a thing come to pass? And why does its occurrence signal that the conscious life has, however temporarily, begun to temporalize itself in a wholly distinctive mode?

We can answer the first of these questions with the recognition that it is precisely in *angst* that a subject, in full “clarity” of him- or herself, comes to only “obscurely” grasp the significance of things. If, therefore, we are to clarify the “phenomenon” of authentic self-temporalization, it will be necessary to clarify the affect of *angst*. In fact, it is precisely by means of being angstily “thrown” into “one’s” own self-determination—or perhaps, of angstily “throwing *ourselves*,” or “leaping,” into our own possibility—that authentic self-tending temporalizes itself. This being the case, it is to the affect of *angst* that I will now turn.

§ 23

Given that *angst* is an affect (or a mode of “*Befindlichkeit*”) it must be the case that objects can sometimes come to show themselves in an “*angst-like*” fashion, according to the taking of an affective measure (just as things can come to show themselves as being exciting, enlivening, fearsome, etc.). But how do things give themselves in this way? What, precisely, is “adjudged” of them in the experience of *angst*? As we discovered earlier, an object gives itself to

the taking of an affective measure precisely insofar as its appearance has come to “spell” some sort of triumph or failure, i.e., a furthering or hindering of the projects into which the subject finds himself or herself “thrown.” Yet it is not immediately apparent how an object that gives itself in an “angst-like” fashion actually gives itself as either furthering or hindering *anything*.

The experience of angst, I would venture, is not wholly unknown to any of us. But what occurs in its midst?

The whole world becomes an enigma whenever angst strikes. For what is there in it, but bewilderment, the appearance of the uncanny? Even the most familiar objects or surroundings, which have until now simply brought me comfort or at least, the ease of an everyday serenity, now strike me as strange, somehow appearing “foreign” or mysterious as if, really, I have never truly known them at all. In angst, it is as though I were merely a stranger in the midst of things, “not at home:” for everywhere, now, I only find concealment, nothing I can hold to; everything flees from me or keeps its distance, hiding all its secrets like an old tombstone memorializing some long-forgotten life, turning from me without showing its true being like the dark side of the moon. And not just “everything else” *but* me: now it is as though I’ve never really laid eyes before on *anything*, not even my own being. The *whole* world astonishes me and slips out of my grasp.

Do things further me in angst? Am I hindered by them? Surely in angst I find myself drawn in, irrepressibly swept forward; but what calls me forward at the same time repels or alarms me, keeping me at bay. “One speaks of a pleasing anxiety, a pleasing anxiousness,” Kierkegaard writes;¹⁸⁴ here, things are nothing if not ambiguous. As much hastened forward, then, as taken aback—drawn in *precisely* by what repels me, and repelled *precisely* by what

¹⁸⁴ Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety: a simple psychologically orienting deliberation on the dogmatic issue of hereditary sin*, trans. Reidar Thomte and Albert Anderson (Princeton, Princeton University Press); 1980: p. 42. Hereafter listed as CA.

draws me in—I thus find myself paralyzed, simply rooted to the spot. Wide-eyed and held fast, I am completely overwhelmed by the world, as thoroughly as a raindrop is swallowed up by the ocean, or a speck of dust is consumed in the vacuum of space.

What does such an experience disclose? What can we learn about the self-temporalization of subjectivity through the analysis of an affect such as angst? Struck by the strangeness of things, the angst-ridden subject no doubt becomes lost in them; but this “lostness” is nothing at all like the “lostness” of everyday engagement. Doing what “one does,” the everyday subject remains lost or absorbed in the matter at hand, in objects always possessed of some significance: a significance, which, as we’ve seen, finds its essential *telos* in that for-the-sake-of-which the subject is as he or she in fact is—namely, that ultimate determination of the being he or she is to-be—although this determination itself is nonetheless *never* at issue in everydayness, but “goes without saying,” and precisely to the extent that the subject remains so absorbed. The “oblivion” of this “goes without saying” indicates the essential character of inauthentic self-temporalization, or the way in which a streaming conscious life is primarily “there” for itself, so that its “past” and “future” moments weigh upon the “current” moment of experiencing. This very state of affairs, however, no longer holds in the affect of angst. In angst, on the contrary, “the world has the character of completely lacking significance,” as Heidegger puts it: “the totality of involvements of the ready and extant discovered within the world,” he continues, “is, as such, of no consequence. It collapses into itself.”¹⁸⁵ If, however, it is precisely via the subject’s usual mode of self-temporalization that the “now” comes to be all-absorbing, or that the subject remains, initially and for the most part, lost in it, then angst must signal the “collapse” of this mode; but then how, in such a case, does the temporalization of self-tending unfold itself at all? How is a streaming conscious life “there” for itself whenever angst strikes, if “there” for itself it

¹⁸⁵ SZ: p. 231 (186).

must be?

The mode of self-temporalization in which the subject can find himself or herself angst-ridden, or in which, as Heidegger puts it, “the ‘world’ can offer nothing more,” must be one which unfolds itself precisely so as to “steal” from the streaming conscious life “the possibility to fallenly understand itself in terms of the ‘world’ and public interpreted-ness.”¹⁸⁶ If, that is, inauthentic self-temporalizing constitutes the “everyday publicness of the ‘one,’” which according to Heidegger, “brings calm self-assurance, or self-evident ‘being-at-home,’ into the average everydayness of the being-there,” then the mode of temporalization in which angst manifests itself must instead bring “the being-there back from its falling absorption in the ‘world’” such that “everyday familiarity collapses.”¹⁸⁷ In this other mode of self-temporalization, the streaming life must somehow bring itself to itself precisely such that, in doing so, it “blocks” its own everyday absorption in the “now,” or “places” something like a “wall” between, on the one hand, it itself and, on the other, its usual way of understanding itself and its world and, thereby, of engaging with things. How this is accomplished remains to be seen.

How, then, *is* this accomplished? Constituted, as we have seen, in the streaming conscious life’s protention of itself, that for-the-sake-of-which this life itself *ultimately is* is, by and large, merely “oblivious” of itself, assumed. But what is to be worked-towards is, *instead*, a mere “question mark” in angst. It is in this sense that, angst-ridden, the significance of things drops away or is “of no consequence.” It is not that the “promise” of things is forgotten, as if, suddenly, the subject no longer knew at all what “one does” in this or that circumstance; rather, brought face to face, albeit *questioningly*, with the “why” of it all for perhaps the first time,

¹⁸⁶ SZ: p. 232 (187).

¹⁸⁷ SZ: p. 233 (188-189).

“what one does” is itself made strange. As *strange*, it is no doubt still “there,” but, crucially, it no longer holds sway over the subject or “goes without saying,” and so, no longer “moves” “one:” thus, the paralysis which takes hold in angst, the impossibility of moving an inch. A “wall” erects itself between objects and their “promise” since, unhinged from its ultimate *telos*, this “promise” “promises” *nothing*—the darkness or obscurity of the “nothing and nowhere”¹⁸⁸ from which angst always appears to emerge, and to which it always seems to beckon or compel us. But then, we are spirited away into this *insignificance* of things, not because, angst-ridden, that for-the-sake-of-which we have been living disappears, but precisely because, for perhaps the first time, *it shows itself*.

Objects show themselves in an “angst-like” fashion as bearing an utterly insignificant significance, in the sense just indicated. In affects of an everyday sort, objects are “adjudged” insofar as they hinder or further, in such-and-such a fashion, those projects that come to their terminus in some ultimate “can-be” of the streaming life that, absorbed in the moment, only “obliviously” self-protains this “can-be.” This “obliviousness” precisely brings the matter at hand into focus, so that it can be affectively so “adjudged.” When angst-ridden, however, furthering or hindering is beside the point, since, incapacitated by the question of the “why” of it all, the totality of the subject’s projects hang in suspension. If only “one” could still be contented by such matters! But what was “everything” before is trivial in angst, where uncanniness alone reigns. Things are affectively “adjudged” or encountered in their strangeness, then, precisely because they are given as “possessing” some purpose or utility without, however, being sure of the “point.”

Into what sort of a “situation” does angst thereby place the angst-ridden subject? In everyday or “practically” concerned engagement, in contrast, it is the “settled” nature of that

¹⁸⁸ SZ: p. 231 (187).

upon which the subject is self-projected—namely, the ultimate “aim” of those projects into which he or she has been “thrown,” “obliviously” assumed in inauthentic self-tending—that determines the “worldly” manifestation of objects and the “promise” which draws forth concerned engagement; and thus, that essentially determines the manner in which the subject will continue to determine that which he or she is to-be. This “settledness” does not, of course, preclude *something* like choice, for certainly, there is some “room,” here, for “leeway:”¹⁸⁹ as we’ve seen, various lines of possibility are always “available,” “given” by the subject’s self-projection as those which might, in this or that fashion, bring the subject further along towards that *ultimate* determination upon which the subject projects himself or herself—one merely assumed, to which the subject has only “obliviously” committed him- or herself. These “lines” are those “lines” of possible comportment from which the subject is always “selecting” in his or her everyday engagement with the “world:” but this is then to say that, in everyday or absorbed activity, “one’s” own possibility is only “encountered,” and only illuminates beings, on the horizon of the “tactical.” The whole realm of the “practical” or “pragmatic,” along with what we normally call intelligence, falls within these bounds. However, since the protained “self-presence” of that which is to-come of the streaming conscious life, as that being or experiencing of the selfsame life that has to be determined, is always given *as* possibility, and since it is this possibility that fundamentally illuminates beings by giving access to their own “potential,” the angst-ridden subject can be spirited away from the usual “pragmatic” givenness of his or her own possibilities and the correlative “potential” of things only by being delivered over to his or her own possibility in a different, and perhaps more primordial, fashion. Put otherwise: since the self-tending temporalization of a life is fundamentally a matter of that life’s having to determine what it is to-be, the self-temporalization in which angst can emerge must thus “give” the self-

¹⁸⁹ See SZ: p. 185 (145) or 407 (355).

temporalized subject to determine himself or herself in some other way—in, perhaps, a far more *primordial* way—than that allowed by the mere “tactical” selection of choices exhibited in “one’s” everyday “practical” busyness.

It will thus be of paramount importance for me to describe that self-giving (i.e., protaining) of the streaming life’s possibilities that must belong to the distinctive self-temporalization from which angst can emerge. The self-protaining of such possibilities can be clarified by drawing back from the possibilities so “given,” but these possibilities, for their own part, can be made accessible, at least provisionally, by focusing upon that peculiar choice with which the angst-ridden subject is confronted. What can we make of this choice? Angst, no doubt, can always be pushed away or shrugged off by merely clinging to the familiar; the “promise” of things, after all, is so little annihilated by the experience of angst that, in angst, it is encountered by the subject in an exemplary way. By persisting after the “promise” of things—and so, after that for-the-sake-of-which the subject has always been choosing, i.e., that which he or she is to-be, however “obliviously” this may always have been only merely assumed—angst will eventually come to be driven off, dispelled as though it were “nothing.” It is as though “one” shook “oneself” by the shoulders to bring “oneself” back to reality or into the “world,” as though it were indeed only too obvious what “one” is “in for,” namely, “this.” Here, in the phenomenon of *flight* in the face of angst, we see something like the making of a choice: but this presupposes at once that the subject can instead choose to *persevere* in angst, can choose to *not* drive it off. In angst, then, the angst-ridden subject is given to choose between either *ridding* himself or herself of angst by *driving it off*, or else, “*riding it out*.” But concretely, what is involved in such a choice? What does a subject thereby choose *for*, or conversely, choose against?

However paradoxical it may seem to put the matter, by driving angst away, the subject

chooses not to choose. The angst-ridden subject, no longer absorbed in the “now,” is faced with a choice of the most primordial sort, in the sense that here, the sort of being he or she is ultimately to-be is precisely in question; by driving off angst, however, the subject merely “takes a pass” on the matter. But then, by persevering in angst, the angst-ridden subject precisely *chooses to choose*. Angst therefore brings the subject before a “choice” of the most primordial sort, for in angst, which Kierkegaard was thus able to call “the alarming possibility of being able,”¹⁹⁰ the subject, freed from the domination of the “one,” finds that he or she must choose between either choosing or not choosing his or her ultimate “can-be;” angst, that is, “places” the subject in the position of having to decide whether or not *to* decide, for him or herself, in regard to the basic sort of being he or she is to-be.

Because of this, Heidegger likens angst to the liberation of one of the prisoners in Plato’s “myth of the cave”—a “liberation,” however, from which:

[there] arises nothing but confusion. What is shown to him [the liberated “prisoner,” i.e., the angst-ridden subject] does not take on any clarity and definiteness. For this reason he wants to return to his shackles. Removal of the shackles is thus not genuine [*echt*] emancipation, for it remains external and fails to penetrate to man in his ownmost [*eigenste*, or “most proper”] self. The circumstances of the prisoner change, but his inner condition, his willing, does not. The released prisoner does indeed will, but he wills to return to his shackles. Thus willing, he wills not-willing: he does not want to be involved himself. He avoids and shrinks back from the demand to fully give up his previous situation.

“Liberation,” Heidegger continues, is “only genuine when he who is liberated thereby becomes free for himself.”¹⁹¹ But by ridding the subject, however temporarily, of his or her absorption in the “now,” the self-temporalization in which angst emerges is thus an *authentic* one, in that in it, the streaming conscious life temporalizes itself precisely so as to be *free* from inauthenticity as that mode of self-tending temporalization which is characterized by the self-oblivion of everyday

¹⁹⁰ CA: p. 44 (translation modified, and emphasis removed).

¹⁹¹ Heidegger continues: “i.e., comes to stand in the ground of his essence.” ET: p. 28. For more on this “stand,” see p. 223-225, below.

absorption. Whenever angst emerges, the angst-ridden subject is self-temporalized in an authentic mode. And yet by driving off angst or “choosing not to choose,” the angst-ridden subject, although authentically self-temporalized, seizes only upon a *non-genuine* possibility of his or her own being (in sense of this term indicated earlier), while conversely, the angst-ridden subject can, by *persevering* in angst, seize upon *genuine* possibilities: thus, Heidegger’s assertion that “understanding is either authentic, arising out of its own self as such, or inauthentic[...]. In turn, authentic just as well as inauthentic understanding *can* be genuine or non-genuine.”¹⁹² Whether the authentically self-temporalized subject seizes upon some genuine possibility or not, however, in *either* case, the problem of the subject’s own being is brought forth, perhaps for the first time; for the subject, here, does not have merely to determine what he or she is to-be in reference to some ultimate determination of his or her own being *merely assumed*, as is usually the case (whenever the inauthentic self-temporalization of subjectivity holds sway), but (in temporalizing’s authentic mode) must instead determine, for *him* or *herself*, that for-the-sake-of-which he or she *ultimately is*. The determination of what “I” am ultimately to-be becomes an issue for me in angst, something “I myself” must take up—even, that is, if only by fleeing angst and once again failing to do just this.

§ 24

This is why Heidegger claims that “angst individualizes the being-there [*das Dasein*] for its most proper being-in-the-world, which, as understanding, essentially projects itself upon possibilities.”¹⁹³ This “individualization” is one which “takes the being-there back from its falling [i.e., from everyday absorption] and makes manifest to it authenticity and inauthenticity

¹⁹² SZ: p. 186 (146).

¹⁹³ SZ: p. 232 (187).

as possibilities of its being.”¹⁹⁴ By “taking” the subject “back from its falling,” angst shows itself as that essential mode of affectivity (or “*Befindlichkeit*”) by which, in *authentic* self-retaining, a subject can find himself or herself. But then, along with this, there must be something like a “non-oblivious,” i.e., *authentic* mode of self-*protaining*, which, unlike its inauthentic mode, “makes manifest” that which has to be determined of the streaming conscious life *not* simply as some limited “array” of “lines” of possibility—which are, again, always given in relation to the merely assumed ultimate “can-be” of this life (that longed-for determination of what it is to-be by which its selection of this or that “line” is always motivated)—but rather, “gives” this life its future in the form of a mere *question mark*, i.e., as a wide open “abyss” of possibilities.¹⁹⁵ For what could limit self-protaining and give it “direction” when its ultimate limit has exposed itself and thrown itself open to questioning?

As we’ve just seen, however, this “question mark” initially resolves itself into two basic possibilities: that of driving off angst and returning right away to the inauthenticity of everyday engagement, or else, of resolutely *persisting* in angst, in which case the angst-ridden subject is forced, as it were, to determine this ultimate “can-be” for him- or herself (once again: the individuation of the angst-ridden subject “makes manifest[...] authenticity and inauthenticity as possibilities” of his or her being). But in having to choose between these two possibilities, we encounter the very *freedom* of subjectivity:

[i]n “being-ahead-of-itself” as being towards its most proper can-be [*eigenesten Seinkönnen*], lies the existential-ontological condition of the possibility of *being-free for* authentic existentiell [or “concrete”] possibilities. A can-be is that for-the-sake-of which the being-there [*das Dasein*] ever is as it factually is. But only insofar as this being-towards a can-be is itself determined by freedom *can* the being-there even *unwillingly* comport itself towards its possibilities, *can* it be inauthentically; and, factually, it is initially and for the most part in this way. The

¹⁹⁴ SZ: p. 235 (191).

¹⁹⁵ Heidegger regularly uses the image of the “abyss” in this respect (for instance, SZ: p. 194 (152)), one he has no doubt adopted from Kierkegaard (see, for example, CA: p. 61).

authentic for-the-sake-of remains ungrasped, the projection of its can-be is left to the disposal of the “one.”¹⁹⁶

The freedom of subjectivity, which is in a sense latent in the “unwilling” self-oblivion of the everyday—i.e., in inauthentic self-tending temporalization—is “*properly*” effective only in the subject’s authentic or “proper” [*eigentlich*] self-tending, in which the individual subject is thrown back upon him- or herself, so to speak, so as to be forced to determine himself or herself *for* himself or herself. It is always in accordance with something like an ultimate “can-be,” as a sort of “ideal of life,” that the subject makes choices or works to determine that which he or she is to-be, but only in the individuation of angst, which thus brings the subject to his or her freedom in the proper sense, is this determination itself at issue. Insofar as the subject remains “oblivious,” this freedom is merely covered up or concealed from itself.

As a self-temporalized life, the streaming conscious life delivers itself over to the “need” to choose itself: this is what we know as its freedom. But this is then to say that the authentic mode of self-tending temporalization discloses its basic character, *per se*, in a *more fundamental manner* than its inauthentic mode, despite the fact that, “initially and for the most part,” subjectivity is only inauthentically self-temporalized:

The everyday way in which the being-there understands uncanniness [*Umheimlichkeit*, literally “unhomeliness”] is a falling turning-away which “dims” the not-at-home [*Nicht-zuhause*]. However, the everydayness of this fleeing phenomenally shows: to the essential condition of the being-there’s being-in-the-world—which as existential is never extant, but rather, always in a mode itself of[...] a *Befindlichkeit*—belongs angst as a fundamental *Befindlichkeit*. Calm-familiar being-in-the-world is a mode of the being-there’s uncanniness [*der Unheimlichkeit des Daseins*], *not the reverse*. The not-at-home must be existentially-ontologically grasped as the more primordial phenomenon.¹⁹⁷

Because it only effects itself as a sort of “dimming” of the uncanniness of angst—which, as we have now discovered, is at the same time the flight of the streaming conscious life from its

¹⁹⁶ SZ: p. 237-238 (193).

¹⁹⁷ SZ: p. 234 (189 [emphasis mine]).

freedom or from the “need” to determine that which it *ultimately* is to-be: a need, again, from which it can *never truly flee*, for this “fleeing” can only effect itself as the “oblivious” assumption of the already-decided—the everydayness in which the streaming life inauthentically maintains itself is but a mode of that uncanniness, its privative or “unwilling” mode, in which “one” conceals from “oneself” that “one” is *always* self-choosing precisely by merely assuming what is thus only “obliviously” chosen. Thus, as we read earlier, it is only because “being-towards a can-be is itself determined by freedom” that this “being-towards” *can* be “unwilling,” that it can unfold itself in the *inauthentic* mode, in which “one” only apparently avoids the freedom of having to choose by “obliviously” dissimulating “one’s” choice. *The self-temporalization of the streaming conscious life always delivers it over to its freedom, to its “need” to choose in regards to what it ultimately is to-be*, although this freedom is usually covered up rather than being properly appropriated. But then, understood as such, i.e., as deliverance unto its free having-to-determine itself, the ultimate character of the streaming life’s self-tending temporalization becomes clear: to be in the manner of a self-temporalization is to be in such a way that *that being is an issue for itself*.

Through an analysis of angst, we’ve thus been able to discover the basic character of self-tending temporalization *per se*:

the being-there is a being which, in its being, is concerned about this [being] itself. The “is concerned about” has become clear in the constitution-of-being [*Seinsverfassung*] of the understanding as a self-projecting being-towards its *most proper can-be* [*eigenste Seinkönnen*]. This [the “can-be” in question] is that, for-the-sake-of which any being-there is as it is. The being-there has, in its being, in each case already put itself together with a possibility of itself. Being-free *for* its most proper can-be and thereby, for the possibility of authenticity or inauthenticity, shows itself in a primordial, elementary concreteness in angst.¹⁹⁸

In angst, again, in which a subject *authentically* finds him- or herself, we see that the subject’s

¹⁹⁸ SZ: p. 236 (191 [emphasis mine]).

being is “explicitly” at issue, in that the angst-ridden subject is given to determine, for him- or herself, that basic possibility upon which he or she is always self-projected, so long as he or she is a subject at all, and thus, goes on determining that which he or she is to-be. But for this reason, again, “also in *inauthenticity* [as Heidegger writes] the being-there remains essentially ahead-of-itself, just as the being-there’s falling flight before itself still shows the condition that this entity is concerned about its being.”¹⁹⁹ Here, freedom is merely “dimmed,” in that the essential matters are “obliviously” assumed as “already decided”—a mode with the positive characteristic of allowing the subject to actually *work-towards* that very (i.e., already assumed) possibility of what he or she is ultimately to-be, to actively “do something” about it, whether this possibility towards which the subject continually “tends” is a genuine one (one he or she has seized upon in authentic choosing) or not.²⁰⁰ But as such, inauthenticity is in a sense merely derivative, and thus in being analyzed, only indirectly points towards the basic character of self-temporalization.

I wrote above that “our ‘practical’ engagement[...] always unfolds itself upon the horizon of the issue of our own being,” and that self-tending temporalization, as our primordial consciousness of time, frees us not only for the “practical,” but for “that which is more pressing than the ‘practical,’” “that which all practicality presupposes.” Now it is apparent why this must be so: for self-temporalization is fundamentally *free*, and not simply insofar as gives a merely tactical “leeway” to action or to our engagement with beings; the very “point” of all such engagement is made “manifest” by it as “something” upon which the subject must, by acting, take his or her stand, whether in the self-oblivion of mere assumption, or else, as an issue upon

¹⁹⁹ SZ: p. 238 (193 [emphasis altered]).

²⁰⁰ To be more precise, such “tending” is only continual, according to Heidegger, to the extent that the possibility towards which it is thrown is a genuine one. The less this is so, the more self-tending “falls” into more decadent or fallen forms of inauthenticity, so to speak, such as the comportment that Heidegger calls “curiosity” and analyzes in some detail in *Being and Time*. In “curiosity,” by contrast, the streaming conscious life is given to project itself upon now this, now that, possibility of itself, which is to say, to unthinkingly conform itself to whatever “ideal” is most fashionable at a given moment, only to drop it as soon as a new, more fashionable possibility, comes along.

which the subject must decide for him- or herself. In inauthentic assumption, once more, something remains of this “decision,” and thus, of its freedom, for here, in the temporalization of absorbed, “practical” engagement, the subject nevertheless keeps reaffirming something like a decision about such matters, albeit only “obliviously.” But as we’ve also discovered, it is only *as such* that absorbed, “practical” engagement unfolds itself. “Practical” engagement thus presupposes that issues of a purely “existential” sort are “there” for the engaged subject, since it unfolds itself essentially via their “oblivious” assumption.

Because this is so, subjectivity cannot be “practical” in its very foundation—the rock upon which any “pragmatic” theory of the subject always shatters itself (or at least, those theories which have ostensibly been drawn from the work of Peirce and James; it’s far from clear that these founders of “Pragmatism” make the same mistake themselves²⁰¹). Such theories certainly do not appear blameworthy, when they assert that our “cognition” or perceiving is essentially oriented by practical concerns; but yet they fail to limit these claims to the mode of inauthenticity. Because of this, the “goals” of the “practical” are always given in such accounts as mere givens—such accounts are *never* “non-foundationalist”—so that “pragmatism” becomes united with a naturalistic conception of consciousness as, at basis, a mere capacity, however “developed,” for successfully bringing about the satiation of something like “animal” need, as “*techne*” or a means to an end.²⁰² However, because *by its essence*, the occurrence of consciousness always in one way or another involves the taking of a stand on the matter of such “goals” *themselves*—as any sufficiently thorough phenomenological analysis on this point (such as the one I’ve just provided) will demonstrate—consciousness itself is decidedly *not* “natural”

²⁰¹ In fact, it’s obvious that James at least *doesn’t*: see his *Varieties of Religious Experience*—(London and New York, Routledge); 2002—in which this very issue is the prevailing theme: though the matter remains thematically unclarified, vis-à-vis subjectivity per se and the fundamental self-temporalization of the subject.

²⁰² See, for example: Heidegger, *Question Concerning Technology and other essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York and London, Garland Publishing); 1977.

in this sense.²⁰³

What, concretely, does the priority of the “existential” over the “practical” signify for the purposes of this study? By recognizing that the fundamental character of the streaming conscious life’s self-tending temporalization, and thus, of subjectivity *per se*, is *not* mere “practicality,” but “existentiality” in the sense indicated above, we’ve been able both to rid ourselves of a commonly held, though false conception of subjectivity, as well as to open up a path to uncover its true condition. Much earlier, we came to see that uncovering the condition of subjectivity would require us to first win for ourselves an adequate description of time-consciousness in its most primordial formation. But by means of an analysis of angst, we’ve finally been able to accomplish just this. The essential characterization of the self-temporalizing life is to be in such a way that it constitutes its own being as an issue for itself. It is in this way that its other moments are “there” for it in its “current” phase.

The path ahead is now clear: by allowing this “definition” to serve us as a guiding thread

²⁰³ Irrespective, of course, of the fact that this point has been lost, or is often lost, on a certain brand of “pragmatic phenomenologists,” who, though naturalists in the sense just mentioned, are, oddly enough, very rarely troubled by Heidegger’s own repeated dismissals of naturalism.

Hubert Dreyfus represents an interesting case, and not only because of his influence. In works such as his *Being-in-the-World: a commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time Division I*—(Cambridge, MIT Press); 1995—and even the recent *Skilled Coping as Higher Intelligibility in Heidegger’s Being and Time*—(Assen, Royal van Gorcum); 2008—Dreyfus both recognizes, and seems to affirm, Heidegger’s claim that in the experience of angst, that for-the-sake-of-which “one” is—taken over from a tradition and so forth—comes into question and can be decided for otherwise. Because angst, on Heidegger’s account, is in such cases temporalized (as we will see below) authentically and thus, he argues, in self-transparency, the inference would be that the being-there (*Dasein*) is essentially in such a way as to *always* take a stand on the matter of its own being, which is however covered up in inauthentic temporalization.

And yet: this is the same Dreyfus who claims (for instance, in his famous debates with McDowell: see Joseph K. Schear, ed., *Mind, Reason, and Being-in-the-World: The McDowell-Dreyfus Debate* (New York, Routledge); 2013) that there is nothing of the self, and with it, of consciousness, in our “skilled coping,” and that the self, etc., emerges only in “breakdown” situations. Claiming this, it is at once impossible to consistently claim, with Heidegger, that “a can-be is that for-the-sake-of which the being-there [*das Dasein*] ever is as it factually is” (my emphasis), since, were there nothing of self and consciousness in effective “skilled coping,” there could be no projection upon a for-the-sake-of-which or ultimate “can-be” in it, which as we’ve already discovered, essentially characterizes a being pre-reflectively conscious of itself. The result of this is that Dreyfus’s work lapses on occasion into the sort of “naturalism” that I’ve just criticized. And if his work does so, how much more so that of those who have followed in his footsteps, but without the firm grounding in Heidegger’s work that Dreyfus himself possesses?

(an “access definition,” as it were), we will be able to work out in detail the subject’s authentic temporalization in each of its three facets, or “*ekstases*,” as Heidegger puts it—authentic self-protaining, -retaining, and –maintaining, that is—and so, fully explicate an account of absolute time-consciousness. But doing this will finally allow us to discover the essential *condition* of time-consciousness, in both its authentic and inauthentic modes.

I'll begin this analysis with a clarification of authentic self-retaining. Earlier, I described the basic structure of the constituted *correlate* of this “phenomenon:” authentic self-retention, that is, constitutes itself in the affect of *angst*. From this, we can work back to the constituting “phenomenon” itself (keeping in mind, of course, that the “phenomenon” of authentic self-retaining can only be fully comprehended in relation to the essentially unified structure of authentic self-tending temporalization as a whole—a unity, however, which can only be progressively clarified by working through its three articulations in turn).

Inauthentic self-retaining retains “obliviously,” which is to say, without the “thrown” self-projection it constitutes being “given” as at issue. In *angst*, however, the “obliviousness” of inauthentic self-temporalization collapses; authentic self-retaining, then, must be such as to constitute a tearing away of the subject from everyday “obliviousness.” How can it do this? This cannot be accomplished independently of all inauthentic self-retention: for *angst* is constituted, again, precisely as a *collapse* of the everyday, as a being *torn away* from its “obliviousness.” The constituted correlate of authentic self-retaining includes, as it were, an essential “reference” to the self-oblivion to which it comes *as* a suspension; thus, self-retaining, as so constitutive, must bear within itself the motivation of this “reference.” In fact, this gets at the heart of the way in which it temporalizes itself.

How does authentic self-retaining constitute the having-been of subjectivity in reference to the very self-oblivion of everydayness (or more specifically, of inauthentic self-retention) that, *angst*-ridden, it suspends? Authentic self-retaining, like self-retaining in general, “keeps hold” of the having-been of the streaming conscious life, but it “keeps hold” of this having-been *as* an

oblivious having-been (or “thrown” self-projection). This implies, however, that authentic self-retaining temporalizes itself precisely insofar as it *concerns itself about* this “thrownness,” about that self-projection of the streaming conscious life which has “thrown itself,” into this retention, only “obliviously.” Awakened, as all self-retaining is, by the just-passed self-projection of a longed-for determination of itself, the self-retaining that is *authentic* is just that one *which has become struck by the apparent arbitrariness of this projection*—a projection which was, for its own part, only “oblivious” to the manner of its own being “thrown,” i.e., to the manner in which the streaming conscious life has been “carried along” in projecting itself.

In authentic self-retention, a streaming conscious life concerns itself about the self-oblivion of its own “thrownness:” a concern which constitutes itself as *angst*. It is precisely strange that, here I am, going about “my business” as though it were the most obvious thing in the world. As we saw above, however, the angst-ridden subject, who finds himself or herself from out of this self-oblivion, can always find this finding a mere hindrance; in such a case, the angst-ridden subject can only “choose *not* to choose” in regards to the basic determination of his or her own being onto which he or she is to be projected. But therefore, the angst-ridden subject chooses not only to remain “oblivious;” he or she chooses to be oblivious about his or her own self-oblivion. In such choosing, which is simply the attempt to pull “oneself” from angst, a non-genuine authenticity or “liberation” maintains itself—here, we find the individuated subject nonetheless fleeing back into the “one.” But in this flight, we find the essence of *inauthentic* self-temporalization, and not of its authentic mode.

In an authentic self-retaining that will allow for the seizing of something like a *genuine* possibility, then, this flight is reversed: here, the subject does not flee, but instead *exacts* angst of him- or herself. But then, angst is here constituted, *not* as a hindrance, but somehow, as a

furtherance of a kind, and thus, of something “in” which to persevere: Heidegger thus calls this self-retaining a “willingness for angst” [*bereitschaft zur Angst*]²⁰⁴ or a being’s “demanding-angst-of-itself” [*sich-Angst-zumutende*]²⁰⁵. But this is just to say that, when it “tends” towards its genuine realization, authentic self-retaining constitutes itself as a *persevering* in angst. More precisely, it is as a self-finding of “oneself” as “oblivious,” which, furthermore, does not find in this “obliviousness” something to be cast right away back into oblivion.

If angst, as self-finding from out of self-oblivion, does not give itself as a hindrance, the “being-at-issue” or “self-concern” that essentially characterizes self-tending temporalization is “properly” or authentically effective. In so doing, it gives the subject to be posed before a fundamental choice, i.e., regarding his or her being or that which the subject is ultimately to-be; but the analysis of this brings us to the matter of authentic self-*maintaining*.

Inauthentic self-maintaining, for its part, obviously maintains the subject in his or her “worldly” role; because of this, the subject, as the streaming conscious life’s “current” phase, is generally constituted as a perceiving which takes hold of the extant according to its “worldly” essence or “what-being.” On this basis, the “now,” “in” which extant beings manifest themselves, gives itself as the transitioning of objects made manifest in their essence. When “given” on the horizon of the streaming life that is *authentically* self-maintained, however, the “now” must give itself in a different fashion. How, then, is the constituting life self-maintained in such a way that its “now” is instead given as a sort of “suspension?” This must be clarified, if self-maintaining is to be clarified in its authentic mode.

The security of roles is denied to the angst-ridden subject, insofar as he or she becomes individuated in angst. The “oneself” collapses. But the usual roles have as little simply

²⁰⁴ SZ: p. 342 (296).

²⁰⁵ SZ: p. 353 (305).

disappeared from sight, so to speak, as have objects simply lost their “promise;” instead, the subject maintains himself or herself in a certain *tension vis-à-vis* the roles in which he or she has, in general, only “obliviously” maintained himself or herself, or perhaps, in a certain tension *vis-à-vis* this maintaining. After all, the roles I can take up seem no less strange to me in angst than “what one does” with things—“what one does,” that is, precisely by taking these roles up! Self-maintaining, in its authentic mode, is therefore as little independent from inauthentic self-maintaining as authentic self-*retaining* is independent from its own inauthenticity. The same must obviously go for authentic self-protaining in relation to its inauthentic mode—which we’ll verify soon enough—and thus, for authentic self-temporalization as a whole in relation to inauthenticity.

How, though, does the streaming conscious life maintain itself, precisely, such that it is maintained in this tension as regards its usual roles? So little, again, are its roles merely “absent” in angst, that in a very real sense, they are instead given genuinely for the first time. That is, they are given precisely in the arbitrariness of their usual self-oblivion. But this is then to say that the “discourse” of the world, of the social nexus, in relation to which the subject always maintains himself or herself via the taking up of some role or “position,” is so given as well, i.e., shown forth in its arbitrariness. Thus, a “new” sort of relationship appears: the angst-ridden subject, that is to say, is “given” in a novel relationship to his or her world or to the social nexus, insofar as there emerges a sort of tension with or uncertainty about the usual roles or forms of social relationship. But what can we make of this “novel” relationship in which the angst-ridden subject comes to be maintained?

The relationship in which a subject *authentically* maintains himself or herself, *vis-à-vis* his or her own world, is just that phenomenon which we usually call the *conscience*.

How does conscience serve as a form of “discoursing?” In what way does it come to be constituted as a relationship to the world or social nexus, in which the *authentically* self-temporalized subject maintains him- or herself? In everydayness, the subject keeps himself or herself in relation to the “discourse” of the world by merely doing as “one” does; angst-ridden, “what one does” becomes strange, so that, suspended, the subject is precisely given as having to genuinely come back to his or her “thrownness,” and thus, to come back to the world in a manner we might call self-possessed. But because of this, the conscience is a form of “discoursing” whose peculiar or distinctive feature is to *silence*: the conscience *calls*, but it calls precisely by calling the subject *back* from the “discourse” of the world so as to take responsibility for him- or herself:

Because only the self of the oneself is called and brought to hear, the one collapses. That the call passes over the one and the public interpretedness of the being-there, means in no way, that the call does not meet with the one. Precisely in the passing over, it pushes the one, which is keen on public reputation, into insignificance. But robbed, in the call, of this lodgment and this hiding place, the self is brought by the call to itself.²⁰⁶

In a sense, then, the call, which comes to the subject from *his or her own being*, “says” nothing, insofar as it merely silences the usual discourse of everydayness. “What does conscience call to the appealed? Strictly taken, nothing,” Heidegger writes: “‘nothing’ is called *to* the called self, but rather, it is *called* to itself, which is to say, to its most proper can-be.”²⁰⁷ And yet, despite *silencing* the everyday discourse, or rather, precisely because of it, *something* is “made known” to, and given to be understood by, the angst-ridden subject: the call of conscience, according to Heidegger, gives the subject to understand that he or she is “*guilty*.”²⁰⁸

Why, “guilty?” We will remember that, angst-ridden, the subject authentically retains

²⁰⁶ SZ: p. 317 (273).

²⁰⁷ SZ: p. 318 (273).

²⁰⁸ SZ: p. 325 (280).

him- or herself in a concernedness for that having-been which, inauthentically or “oblivious” of itself, has projected itself upon this “current” phase of the streaming conscious life. But by retaining himself or herself as such, the subject thus finds himself or herself as having “lapsed”—“lapsed,” that is, precisely insofar as, found “thrown” forward into his or her continuing self-determination, the subject maintains him- or herself as above all having to “correct” the self-oblivion of this “thrownness.”

With the term “guilt,” of course, we’re generally led to think of a specifically moral failing; and yet the term, at least at first glance, cannot, or at least cannot necessarily, carry such a connotation here. Heidegger, in fact, takes pains to separate the term “guilt” from any necessary connotation of moral fault, defining “guilt” formally as “being-ground for a being that is determined by a not [*ein Nicht*]—which is to say, being-ground of a nullity [*einer Nichtigkeit*, literally, “of a not-liness]”.²⁰⁹ The character of the “not” here is simply defined as the subject’s “thrownness:” “the being-there [*Dasein*], in its being, is thrown, brought into its ‘there’ [*Da*], *not* from itself[...],”²¹⁰ Heidegger writes; it is “*released* from its ground, *not by* itself, but rather, *to* itself, in order to be *as this* ground.” Thus, as Heidegger continues, “the being-there is not itself the ground of its being, insofar as this first springs from its own projection, but indeed, it is, in being-itself, the *being* of its ground.”²¹¹ To say that the subject is “guilty,” insofar as he or she is *not* the ground of his or her own being—which is, in fact, constituted by his or her *having-been* self-projecting—but that, by being as the self that he or she is, the subject *is* as this ground, is simply to say that “guilt” is given as a “lapse” to be *made up for*: finding “oneself” guilty, the subject is given as having to determine the matter of this self-projection for him- or herself, and so, to *take over* this “grounding,” i.e., to be as this “ground.” By merely being “oneself,” caught

²⁰⁹ SZ: p. 328 (283).

²¹⁰ SZ: p. 329 (284).

²¹¹ SZ: p. 330 (284-285).

up in the inauthenticity of everydayness, the subject in a sense does take over this “grounding,” i.e., his or her “thrownness;” but he or she does so only in self-oblivion, by merely following through without question the “direction” in which “one” finds “oneself” projecting. But this state of affairs is simply found negligent, for the subject who finds himself or herself “guilty:” the very sense of such “guilt” is in having to “*do something*” about the matter.

There is another, correlated sense in which the subject is defined by a nullity or “not-ness:” precisely by assuming the “direction” in which “one” finds “oneself” projecting, “one’s” self-determination or choosing from possibilities is prefigured (i.e., in conformity with the assumed orientation). But this “direction,” we’ve seen, is never set in stone; the subject always has a choice as to how he or she goes on determining (that is, choosing) what he or she is ultimately to-be, and to choose for one basic orientation is always to choose *against* others (irrespective of whether this choice languishes in self-oblivion, as is usually the case, or not). Because of this—because the streaming conscious life can only “run its course” in one basic “direction” to the exclusion of others: which is just to say, because it *has to choose itself*, whether through oblivious assumption or authentic choosing—the self-temporalized subject is necessarily “guilty” in this sense *also*; he or she is thereby not just “null” as regards his or her “ground,” but necessarily in conjunction with this, is always the “ground”—the “null ground,” then—“of a not” or “a nullity”²¹²—of a finite choice, which as it projects, necessarily rejects.

Hopefully, it has not only become evident in the above that Heidegger means to keep his conception of “existential” guilt free from any of the connections to normativity that the notion of “guilt” normally bears, but also that this attempt, at least within certain limits, is justified by the phenomenon in question. To say that “one” is guilty is usually to say that an individual has failed to “live up” to some given standard; and yet the phenomenon of “guilt” at issue *here*—a

²¹² SZ: p. 331 (285).

verdict of sorts, pronounced without speaking of the angst-ridden subject conscientiously called to him- or herself—gives itself precisely in the emergence of a *question* about what standard to “live up” to, or how “one” should “live up” to it. For his part, in fact, so little does Heidegger believe that the “guilt” of authentic self-maintaining is derived, as a sort of failure to “live up,” from a more fundamental normative structure, that he believes that the phenomenon of “guilt” here at issue instead serves as the *foundation* of all normativity: “the primordial being-guilty cannot be determined by morality, because [morality] already presupposes it for itself”²¹³ At first glance, it may not appear clear why Heidegger should say this: for it is surely impossible to maintain that “one” only finds “oneself” held to norms or some standard (to which “one” must “live up”) *after* “hearing” the pronouncement of “guilty!” in authentic experiencing, as if before becoming genuinely angst-ridden at some point, an individual would be wholly without moral concerns, standards or norms of whatever sort, or would find himself or herself totally unconstrained by them. And how could angst come to make the standards of the “one” seem strange if these standards, norms, etc., didn’t first weigh upon “oneself” at all? At most, we could only say that, prior to the hearing of this self-pronouncement, such norms or standards could never be maintained as ones to which the subject has truly committed him- or herself, so that such a subject could perhaps “slip out” of such “commitments” as easily as he or she had “obliviously” “slipped into” them—which seems to be what Heidegger is getting at with the claim that only “call-understanding” allows the “being-there[...] to take action in itself as to its chosen can-be” and as such, “*be* responsible.”²¹⁴ However: although it thus appears evident that the authentic emergence of the call of conscience cannot, by individuating a subject, *first* account for the constitution of anything like a norm or standard *for that subject*, it may well appear that

²¹³ SZ: p. 332 (286).

²¹⁴ SZ: p. 334 (288).

the call of conscience would have to serve as the condition of possibility for any *particular* norm or standard *itself*, insofar as *someone*, at some historic moment, must have found himself or herself “guilty” in the manner just described in order to then choose for that norm or standard for the first time. Only afterwards, would there then “exist” the possibility for others to “take over” this norm or standard (initially and for the most part, by merely being socialized to do so, and thus, by doing so “obliviously”).

In any event, “guilt,” as just analyzed, cannot be understood as being dependent upon anything that we would usually understand as a normative structure. Nevertheless, perhaps *something* of normativity remains within this phenomenon of “guilt,” all the same. Otherwise, why use the term “guilt” at all? *Why*, barring some sort of premonition, however vague, that here, we *also* see something like a failure to “live up” to a norm or standard of some sort? This suspicion is only strengthened when we read, for instance, Heidegger’s claim that “conscience gives the being-there to understand that [...] it *should* [*soll*] bring itself back to itself from out of lostness in the one, which is to say, *is guilty*.”²¹⁵ No doubt, this “*should*” belongs to the very phenomenon of “guilt” here at issue; but from where or what, then, does it emerge or originate? Were there nothing, here, of normativity—the demand that the subject called back to him- or herself *ought* to take up the matter of being “thrown” for him- or herself, rather than let it remain in self-oblivion—there would simply be no sense in claiming that the subject *should* do anything of the kind, or rather that, via the call of conscience, the individuated subject is given to understand that this is so. Such a subject would as soon simply “recognize” that he or she has been “lost” in being “oneself,” without having any compulsion to “correct” the matter—but instead, the “recognition” here at issue is constituted by the very force of this “*should!*”

“Lost” in the moment, the inauthentically self-temporalized subject labors away or

²¹⁵ SZ: p. 333 (287).

perhaps reposes, but in any event, goes about his or her business, in working-towards a determination of his or her own being which remains, in the “working out,” merely assumed. For the most part, this determination bears within itself norms or standards in a distinctly moral sense; but in all cases, it can be considered normative in that it marks out what the subject—who by essence always has to determine what he or she is to-be—is always “trying” to-be. In contrast to this, the *authentically* self-temporalized subject is given so as to have to determine this determination for him- or herself, such that the norms that usually govern, now at issue, are held in abeyance; but here too we find something like normativity, insofar as here, the streaming life is somehow given to itself (or rather, insofar as it here gives itself to itself) such that it is given to understand that it *should* choose itself, that it *ought* to determine for itself this ultimate determination of what it is to-be. Everything then unfolds as if it were never really enough to live a life which is “correct” in terms of this or that standard or set of norms, or to “live up” to that determination upon which the streaming conscious life projects itself: the call of conscience gives the subject to understand that the set of norms or basic standard at issue ought to be grasped in its “correctness” *itself*, or else, be replaced by another which can be so grasped. To fail to take up this question—and finding itself “guilty,” the streaming conscious life finds itself doing just this—would be to live something like a “half-life,” a vacuous life in which, really, nothing is genuinely grasped. The pronouncement of “guilty!” means nothing more or less than this.

While there *is* good reason, then, for claiming that “existential guilt” is prior to all normativity *in the usual sense*, it is nevertheless a mistake to believe that such “being-guilty” is therefore *not* given as a failure to “live up to” its *own* sort of normative standard, i.e., that the angst-ridden subject isn’t still given to understand himself or herself as “falling short” in a

unique way—and thus, to believe that this “guilt” is truly given prior to *all* normativity. “Existential guilt” can only be conceived as encountered in relation to a norm or standard of a different, or perhaps, a more profound sort, than any of those norms which might guide the everyday, concrete, activity of a life, and which might come to appear questionable by the angst-ridden subject. A norm, even, of the *most* profound sort? Or else: if this “ought”—to which the subject, as “guilty,” discovers he or she fails to measure up—does not constitute a norm in the most profound sense *itself*, then it must be maintained as the trace of a such a norm—of the ethical, perhaps, understood in its *primordial* sense?

By finding himself or herself angst-ridden, in any case, the subject takes up his or her own “thrownness” precisely as a having-been in self-oblivion; because of this, the angst-ridden subject is given to maintain himself or herself at a sort of distance from the usual “discourse” in which he or she is in general uncritically absorbed—separated, now, from the usual roles he or she would assume: a separation which is precisely the call of conscience, which without speaking pronounces “guilty!” But persevering in angst, at a distance from all the usual ways of comporting “oneself,” the individuated subject is given to determine for him- or herself something like that basic orientation normally only assumed, that ultimate possibility upon which the life of subjectivity is to project itself. The “for him- or herself,” here, is what *essentially* distinguishes authentic self-temporalization from its inauthentic mode, from that mode of temporalization in which the self-tending streaming life is only “obliviously” given over to itself as a streaming totality, and so, temporalizes the subject, as its “current” phase, only in the self-oblivion of uncriticality or mere assumption. And yet to speak, as I do here, of the subject’s determination of himself or herself *by* himself or herself—as once again we *must* do, when speaking of authentic self-temporalization—is nonetheless to court various mistaken

conceptions of the “phenomenon” in question. With the term “for him- or herself,” of course, I’m referring to the specific manner in which authentic temporalization *individuates*. As such, the “self” or subject is disengaged from the “oneself,” which is just what authentic self-maintaining, as the “call of conscience,” effects by giving the subject (to him- or herself) as “guilty.” But does this mean that by being individuated as “guilty”—guilty, precisely, of having only obliviously lived as “one does”—the subject is thus taken totally from his or her social situatedness and delivered over into something like an absolute isolation? Or that, by being individuated, he or she is thus made into a “non-conformist,” the “true individual” who, in a perhaps exclusively modernistic sense, lives according to his or her “own rules?”

Not at all. The first of the above misconceptions is undermined the moment that we recognize that the determination of the subject’s own being is always in a certain sense the determination of a concrete way of “conforming” to others, insofar as the determination of what this life is to-be *vis-à-vis others* is always at issue. Authentically self-maintained, the subject does not step wholly into some “non-conformity,” so much as he or she, for perhaps the first time, is given to decide on some “level” (with only varying degrees of penetration, and never wholly or without qualification) *how* he or she is to conform himself or herself to others or perhaps to a social totality. Even if the subject decides to “get away from it all” and live in so-called isolation (which is in any event only a partial “isolation” in all but the rarest of cases), his or her choice still includes others “in the equation” and, precisely by being a decision to live apart from others, nonetheless constitutes a choice of how to live in relation to them.²¹⁶ The subject always maintains himself or herself in a world with others, and thus, chooses for his or

²¹⁶ “Resoluteness, as the [being-there’s] authentic being-itself, does not detach the being-there from its world, nor does it isolate it so it becomes a free-floating ‘I.’ And how should it, when resoluteness, as authentic disclosedness, is nothing other than authentically being-in-the-world? Resoluteness brings the self right into its concerned being-by what is handy, and pushes it into solicitous being-with others.” SZ: p. 344 (298). On “resoluteness,” see footnote #225, below.

her own manner of belonging with them—if, that is, the subject chooses for himself or herself at all.

The second of these misconceptions is undermined as soon as we consider the fact that, called back “conscientiously,” the subject in no way relieves himself or herself of “thrownness,” as if this were some excess baggage to be discarded along the way in the journey of life: rather, as authentically self-temporalized, the subject simply finds that he or she has to “deal” with this “thrownness” in some way. Perhaps for the first time, the angst-ridden subject is given to understand that, as “guilty,” he or she has been only unreflectively carrying along the various traditions into which he or she has been acculturated or socialized, and if upon deliberation, some or all of this is found wanting in some way, it nevertheless seems certain that the remedy will also be found in the social “milieu,” whatever the transformation that the standards, values, ideals, etc. that are thus taken up will undergo in the process. At the very least, there is no reason to assume that, simply because the authentically self-temporalized subject is given such as to have to make a choice about the way he or she is ultimately to-be, and thus, to take responsibility in some sense for the traditions to which he or she belongs, he or she is given an absolute *mastery* over those traditions or the way in which these have “thrown,” and continue to “throw,” the subject forth. Nor is there any reason to likewise assume that the subject is a reservoir of “dreams” or “authentic” values or desires, which, when liberated from the shackles of tradition, shine forth in their purity. At this point, in fact, it would be better to assume *nothing* about the way in which the angst-ridden subject at last resolves himself or herself about the fundamental issues that are made manifest in authentic self-temporalization; this question in particular must be held in suspense, not only until the “phenomenon” of authentic self-temporalization has been adequately clarified, but in fact, until an adequate understanding of its condition (or of the

condition of time-consciousness *per se*) has come to provide a solution for it.

So much for these two misconceptions, in any event. There is, however, one further, and to my mind more tenacious, misconception that we must avoid here: the mistaken belief that, by taking it upon him- or herself to determine that for-the-sake-of-which he or she is to-be, the subject enacts an always merely arbitrary decision, and thus “creates values,” as it were, out of mere caprice or whim. The most prominent of the French existentialists (namely, Sartre and de Beauvoir) can be understood as having made just this mistake, i.e., fallaciously concluding from the fact that there would be no “values” without “man” (i.e., without consciousness or intentional activity) that “values” are thus merely our own invention; and further, that such “values” are ultimately the mere capricious invention of the individual, since it is in angst, as individuation, that “values” are ultimately constituted, and since, angst-ridden, the subject (as we’ve already begin to see) has in a very particular sense nothing to go on but him- or herself.²¹⁷ Phenomenological investigation, however, gives us no reason to make such an inference (which for its part, again, is not deductively valid, and thus, must be supported otherwise if it is to be supported at all); and in fact—as will become clear as this investigation progresses—nothing could be further from the truth. Admittedly, there would be no manifestation of anything like a “value” were it not for the fact that a streaming conscious life exists, and in so doing, always “projectingly” endeavors to determine what it is to-be according to or in conformity with some sort of standard or set of norms which it either determines for itself or else assumes from others; and yet by constituting such “values,” the subject no more *creates* them than he or she creates a perceived object by constituting *it*. More adequately put, they are, in both cases, *discovered*.²¹⁸

²¹⁷ See, for example, Simone de Beauvoir’s generally illuminating *Ethics of Ambiguity*, trans. Bernard Frechtman (New York, Citadel Press); 2001. Hereafter listed as *EA*.

²¹⁸ See Chapter 5, Section 15 of this study, where we discover that “value” is so little created that, by living it inauthentically, it is conditioned, reduced from an pre-original unconditionality.

By keeping at bay all of the misconceptions just considered, we can keep to the strict sense in which, by authentically maintaining itself, the streaming conscious life is given to understand its “guilt,” so as to need to “deal” with the “oblivious” “thrownness” it self-retains in the process of determining how it is *to-be* for itself. But in having to “determine how it is to-be for itself,” we find the basic character of authentic *self-protention*. Because in it, the basic character of authentic self-tending temporalization as a whole is to be found and brought to full clarity—and thus with it, as we’ve seen, the essential character of *self-tending temporalization in general*—it is to authentic self-protaining that I will now, at long last, turn.

§ 26

Self-protention gives the “can-be” of subjectivity. We’ve discovered that, by protaining itself, a streaming conscious life “casts forward” possibilities of itself, possibilities given as more or less “desirable” so that, by means of the maintaining that essentially belongs with this “casting forward,” some possibility of the given “array” comes to be selected (a selection, further, which, as a concrete engagement with things, always unfolds itself as a way of taking up a role in the world). We’ve also discovered that the greater or lesser “desirability” of the self-protained possibilities is, for its part, constituted on the basis of the *ultimate* determination of the self-protaining that the streaming conscious life continually *assumes*, i.e., some particular for-the-sake-of-which that guides the determination of that which this life is to-be as a streaming totality. Or at least, in *inauthentic* temporalization, self-protaining proceeds on just such a basis; in authentic temporalization, it would appear that matters stand differently.

How, then, does a streaming conscious life give itself its “to-be” to be grasped *authentically*? How, that is, does a subject authentically self-protain? Because temporalization—whether in the mode of authenticity or inauthenticity—always constitutes itself as a unity in its

three basic articulations, an outline of authentic self-protaining has in fact already been disclosed to us. It has emerged, if only “in the background,” in my analysis of both authentic self-retaining and authentic self-maintaining. But what has thus made itself known?

A quick reminder of the basic difference between inauthentic and authentic self-temporalization, as it has emerged by this point in my analysis, will help to orient our clarification of authentic self-protaining *vis-à-vis* its inauthentic mode. In each case, the streaming conscious life always temporalizes itself so as to give itself something like a decision to make in its “current” phase. In its inauthentic self-temporalization, on the one hand, the “other moments” of this life are “there” (or perhaps the whole unfolding life as regards its “direction”), but they are so only in order to withdraw, as it were, so as to serve as the “horizon” of a choice that pertains overtly to the “now.” However, in the *authentic* temporalization of the streaming life’s self-tending, on the other hand, these “other moments” are given precisely so as to present a choice pertaining to this life *as a whole*. Its “direction” is no longer merely assumed, to serve as the basis of a choosing; this, instead, is the very matter which is given to be chosen. Thus, authentic self-protaining must give to the streaming conscious life its ultimate for-the-sake-of-which, not as that on the basis of which it is to choose, but precisely as that which is itself at issue (which is just why it gets called “authentic”). But how, exactly, does self-protaining make “manifest” something like the ultimate “can-be” of the self-tending life? And how is this “giving” connected with authentic self-retaining, as a persevering in angst, and authentic self-maintaining, as a “guilt”-ridden taking-leave of all the usual roles and mores, a life calling itself back to itself in that “phenomenon” we call the call of conscience?

In order to clarify the matter, we must fully clarify the two basic possibilities that authentic self-protaining constitutes or “makes manifest,” which will then allow us to work back

to their constituting correlate. Authentic self-protaining, we've discovered, initially projects two basic possibilities of the streaming conscious life: a *fleeing* from angst back into the everyday (or into some pre-given role, into which the subject has been "thrown" and, as "oneself," takes refuge); and a *persevering* in angst, by which the subject is given to subject to questioning just that basic "direction" in which he or she *has* been "thrown." If the first of these is chosen for (or, rather, is *successfully* "selected"—like any choosing, this, too, can always miss its mark), then authentic temporalization summarily curtails itself. Angst is to be replaced by whatever affect the ready or extant effects in the fleeing subject, in accordance with that "thrown" projection to which he or she hastily attempts to return and take refuge. Everything will continue as if angst were but a curious, but ultimately trivial, suspension of "one's" proper business; as Heidegger points out, "one" will shrug it off and say "it was nothing," although what is taken as "nothing" is in fact the call from "my" self to take responsibility for my own being.²¹⁹ Prior to the culmination of this flight, we would expect to see a sort of straining effort to return to self-oblivion, as the subject, sometimes with difficulty, works to wrench "oneself" from angst; but this is just what is meant by "choosing not to choose." However, since what is being fled is the recognition of "oneself" as "guilty," we can only conceive of this strenuous effort as, in Heidegger's words, a "not-wanting-to-have-a-conscience," or perhaps better, as a wanting to *not* have one. Fleeing from angst, the angst-ridden subject chooses against having a "conscience" in the precise sense here indicated—which, in regards to the everyday understanding, often means that the subject simply *keeps* to that which has always been understood *as* the *conscientious*, i.e., to that which has come to count as such for the subject in question: namely, that system of norms or standards that governs the everyday determination of "what one does."

²¹⁹ "What is Metaphysics," trans. David Farrell Krell, in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press); 1998: p. 89. Hereafter listed as *PM*.

It should be recognized, that, by fleeing from it, angst comes to be understood merely as some sort of fear, which is precisely what angst “is” in general for the everyday understanding. For this reason, we think of angst primarily as a “fear of the unknown,” and most fundamentally, as a fear of the unknown possibilities of the self—possibilities, rather, that the subject does not *want* to know.

If, however, the other possibility is chosen—that is, a questioning that *perseveres* in angst—then authentic temporality does *not* cede itself; but therefore, it chooses for itself something like, in Heidegger’s words again, a “wanting-to-have-a-conscience.” Heidegger calls this phenomenon (*Gewissen-haben-wollen*—which can also be rendered “willing-to-have-conscience”) an “allowing of the most proper self to act in itself from out of itself in its being-guilty,” and describes it as follows: “wanting-to-have-a-conscience is, as understanding the self in its most proper can-be, a way of the disclosedness of the being-there[...], that is: self-projecting onto the ever most proper factual possibility of its can-be in-the-world [*des In-der-Welt-sein-könnens*].”²²⁰ “Wanting-to-have-a-conscience,” that is, is deliverance over to “myself,” in the sense of choosing to choose for “myself;” in it, Heidegger writes, “the being-there lets its very own self take action in itself as to its chosen can-be.”²²¹ But through this, authentic self-temporalization must thus “deepen” itself, in a manner of speaking, for “wanting-to-have-a-conscience,” the authentically self-temporalized subject no longer finds himself or herself in quite the same manner as he or she did in the outbreak of angst, i.e., as having to choose *whether or not* to choose for him- or herself. Demanding angst of himself or herself (“wanting-to-have-a-conscience becomes a willingness for angst [*Bereitschaft zur Angst*],” Heidegger writes²²²), the

²²⁰ SZ: p. 342 (295). It should be noted that Heidegger sometimes renders this term as “*Gewissenhabenwollen*,” *sans* hyphenation. It doesn’t appear that any difference hangs upon this stigmeological distinction, however.

²²¹ SZ: p. 334 (288).

²²² SZ: p. 342 (296).

choice is made in the affirmative, thereby vanquishing, as it were, the possibility of “not-wanting-to-have-a-conscience.” Heidegger thus writes that “the understanding hearing of the call [of conscience] denies itself a counter-discourse because it unconcealingly appropriates the call-content[...] and in this way retrieves the self from out of the loud gossip of the common sense of the “one.”²²³ But then, as angst deepens itself into the demanding of angst of “myself” or a being “angst-ready [*angstbereite*],” conscience deepens itself into what Heidegger calls “reticence [*Verschwiegenheit*],” the silencing of the discourse of the “one” or its “gossip.”²²⁴

What can we make of the basic structure of this “deepened” authentic self-temporalization—one from which, in a manner of speaking, there is “no going back?” And what can we say of that self-protaining which belongs to it, which no longer “gives” two basic possibilities from which to choose (inauthenticity and authenticity, or the two basic modes of the subject’s self-tending), as it did in the “preliminary” temporalization of angst—a “phenomenon” which now appears to be a sort of “cusp” phenomenon, the apprehensive welcoming of an authenticity that only truly comes to itself by *choosing itself*? Heidegger describes the matter as follows: “the understanding of the call [of conscience] reveals itself as *wanting-to-have-a-conscience*. But in this phenomenon,” he goes on, “lies the [‘being-there’s’] existentiell choosing of the choice of being-itself that we have been seeking and that, in correspondence with its existential structure, we call *resoluteness*.”²²⁵ “*Resoluteness*” lies within wanting-to-have-a-conscience precisely insofar as it (resoluteness) simply is that “choosing” that the angst-ridden subject chooses to undertake (i.e., of an ultimate “can-be” or a basic orientation or possibility of what “my” life is to-be) by *refusing* to flee angst, which is to say, by “affirmatively” demanding angst of the self and thus, by “wanting-to-have-a-conscience.” “Not-wanting-to-have-a-

²²³ SZ: p. 342 (296).

²²⁴ SZ: p. 208 (165).

²²⁵ SZ: p. 314 (270).

conscience” is to choose “*irresoluteness*” or inauthenticity, the mere assumption of “one’s” ultimate “can-be;” “wanting-to-have-a-conscience,” conversely, is to choose *resoluteness*, i.e., to fully realize authentic self-protaining, in which, finding “oneself guilty,” this “can-be” is itself at issue. Heidegger thus calls resoluteness “the reticent, angst-ready self-projection upon [the “being-there’s”] most proper being-guilty.”²²⁶

How, then, does authentic self-protaining “deepen” itself, when self-temporalization becomes “resolute?” We’ve seen that authentic self-protaining, preliminarily, gives itself the basic possibilities of authenticity and inauthenticity, or perhaps, the possibility of being either “resolute” or “irresolute.” Choosing for resoluteness allows the possibility of resoluteness thus given (of “my” own being resolute, that is) to gradually open itself up into those more or less genuine possibilities upon which the resolute subject can ultimately resolve him- or herself. The result of this, as regards the basic thrust of this study, is the following: authentic self-protaining exhibits a peculiar dynamic, namely, that although it would, as it were, “give” to the subject, right away and without mediation, genuine possibilities upon which to resolve himself or herself, it simply *cannot* unless and until the subject *chooses for this*, persevering in angst until such possibilities emerge for themselves. Thus, the gradual “deepening” that authentic self-temporalization exhibits (“wanting-to-have-a-conscience” is no instantaneous decision, but rather, one in which the subject must precisely *persevere*):²²⁷ “the resolution[...] must be held

²²⁶ SZ: p. 343 (296-297).

²²⁷ In the process, “wanting-to-have-a-conscience” begins resolving itself into a concrete resolution, by which some ultimate possibility of the streaming conscious life, taken as a whole or totality, is decided or resolved upon concretely. The process, which is a gradual one and owes of degrees, thus exhibits the gradual “deepening” of authentic self-temporalization, which is precisely why resolute authenticity does not constitute a self-temporalization of a completely distinct sort from authenticity proper. As the self-resolving, in which authentic self-temporalization comes to its fruition, works itself out, the angst-ridden subject must continue to remain suspended in angst.

free and *open* for the specific factual possibility,”²²⁸ Heidegger writes.

But then, we discover that authentic self-protaining—in which is to be found the very essence of the self-tending temporalization of subjectivity (we find here a streaming life’s “lookout” for what it *ultimately* is to-be)—bears, by essence, a sort of tension within itself. For reasons yet unknown, if authenticity is to “manifest” itself, it must first win itself or free itself from a continual propensity towards self-oblivion, as if self-tending indeed exhibited an essential “tendency” towards its *inauthentic* mode, which is just to say, the derivative mode of itself. I noted something like this tendency above, but now it is clear that there is nothing metaphorical about such talk; otherwise, authentic self-protaining could just “give” ultimate possibilities of the streaming conscious life right away upon the onset of angst, without the mediation of giving two basic possibilities, one of which always allows a “turning back;” otherwise, that is, the angst-ridden subject would not have to first, or rather, perseveringly, *choose* to choose for him- or herself, but could just immediately get on to the business, as it were.²²⁹

It is not, then, simply that the subject *in fact* always lapses back into inauthenticity, which is explicable by the simple fact that “nothing gets done” except in this mode of temporalization; the tendency to “lostness” in the moment exercises, as it were, a force, and one so strong that in the midst of authentic temporalization it still wrenches the subject back, as if authentic temporalization found itself hateful and had to win itself from itself or else gratefully lapse back into self-oblivion.²³⁰ This is what is meant by calling inauthenticity a “flight” from angst, a “tending away” which constitutes the very sense of the self-oblivion of the inauthentically self-

²²⁸ *SZ*: p. 355 (307).

²²⁹ The transformation is just that which Kierkegaard analyzed in *The Concept of Anxiety*, under the rubric of a development from ignorance or innocence (inauthenticity) to guilt or freedom (authenticity). See, *CA*: p. 41-46.

²³⁰ Heidegger thus writes that “this return to inauthenticity is an extinguishing of the moment of vision [or of the “instant,” *Augenblick*], an extinguishing which does not eventually come about through some external cause or other, but is essentially grounded in the momentary character of the moment of vision.” *FC*: p. 295.

temporalized subject, of the “forgetfulness” for that which is nonetheless “there” as that which is fled. But what accounts for this “force” or tension, wrenching the subject from his or her self-choosing? To point out here the “unpleasantness” of angst, i.e., how disagreeable it “feels” to “feel lost” without a clear “way”—a “feeling” of angst as hindrance, which makes the flight from angst seem explicable—only begs the question as to *why* angst should come to be experienced *as such*: that is to say, as a misfortune, *against which* the temporalization of conscious life should always incline itself—notwithstanding the fact that, when this “misfortune” *does* make itself fully felt, it is as if everything else in the world were trivial! This tendency or inclination away from its own “fullness” or self-transparency must be borne by a tension that temporality bears within itself, one which makes itself felt most profoundly in authentic self-protaining, and which *must* be clarified, if the nature of authentic self-protaining, and accordingly, of self-tending temporalization as a whole, is in fact to be fully grasped.

By considering this tension, we are pointed towards the clarification of two characteristics of authentic self-protaining, which can allow us to fully unravel the “phenomenon” itself:

Firstly, we are led to note the manner in which the subject is left to him- or herself, so to speak, by being authentically temporalized. Without yet being able to say *why* this should be experienced as an insufferable state—unless or until authentic temporalization wins itself for its resoluteness, that is (remembering that this always only occurs to a *greater* or *lesser* extent)—we *can* nonetheless recognize that, at least in large part, it is against a having to choose for “*myself*” that the angst-ridden subject always recoils. But in what way, concretely, is the authentically self-temporalized subject given to have to choose for him- or *herself*, in the sense of being left to himself or herself or having nothing else to fall back on? To “obliviously” choose

(inauthenticity) is, as we've come to discover, always to choose "on the basis of," namely, for-the-sake-of an ultimate "can-be" of the streaming conscious life, which in general allows "one" to fall back on others (or rather, the social totality) precisely by "making use" of it in this way. Something like a basic orientation always arbitrates between possibilities projected inauthentically—in that, as we have seen, they are manifest only *in light* of it—so that "one" can always get to work rooted comfortably in the significance of things; what I do, as it were, "makes sense." But the choosing to which authentic temporalization delivers us over leaves nothing further to arbitrate between the choices "given," because what has to be chosen here is precisely *how* "one" will "arbitrate." Heidegger, for this very reason, asks "towards what does the being-there disclose itself in resoluteness? For what should it resolve itself? Only the resolution itself is able to give the answer," he concludes.²³¹ It is in this sense, and only this sense, that, by being authentically self-temporalized—and thus primarily, through the protaining that belongs to this temporalization—the angst-ridden subject is delivered over to himself or herself in the sense of having nothing else to "fall back" on. And yet if this is so, it must be because, fundamentally, the self-tending temporalization of the streaming conscious life is the constitution of that life as being radically *responsible for itself*. A life that temporalizes itself by tending after itself—a self-conscious life, which is in the same stroke conscious of time—is fundamentally a life that gives itself to itself to be responsible for itself through and through as the life that it is. And yet this responsibility is such that it bears within itself a fundamental tendency to shirk itself in its most radical determination, to evade that most basic resolution for which it alone is responsible, and not in spite of itself or as the forfeiture of this responsibility, but in some strange sense, "for the sake of" it. But how does a life come to give itself in accordance with such a responsibility: a responsibility, again, that somehow appears, by essence,

²³¹ SZ: p. 345 (298).

to “tend” away from, or to contradict, itself? And why must we insist that this self-responsibility that “tends” against itself, at one with self-temporalizing, must be stirred, primordially, by something like a deliverance without—by a subjection to the *others*, that is—if, as I will argue, the ethical relation is the very condition of self-tending temporalization itself?

Secondly, consideration of the tension discovered above should also lead us to note the following:” namely, that authentic self-protaining *cannot* merely “give” or make manifest some greater or lesser “stretch” of the subject’s future; rather, it constitutes the being to-come of the streaming conscious life *as a whole*. How, precisely, are we led to this? It has by now become clear that authentic self-protaining must deliver the streaming conscious life over to itself to determine for itself its “most proper” possibility. However: because this possibility, unlike in its inauthentic mode, must *not* be “given” as this or that specific possibility to be determined—which is to say, as a possibility to be chosen *on the basis* of the basic orientation of such a life—but rather, must be “given” as that very orientation itself, i.e., *the determination of that which this life is to-be as a whole or a streaming totality*, it must be the case that authentic self-protaining “places” the streaming conscious life before what Heidegger calls its “whole-can-be” [*Ganzseinkönnen*], the totality of what it is to-be, its “future being.” This, in fact, is what gives authentic self-protaining its very specificity, the distinction from its inauthentic mode. But *as such*, it takes the form of a *being unto death*.

Why is it so, that, by projecting itself upon its “whole-can-be,” the streaming life exhibits something like a “being unto death?” What can we even mean with such a phrase—or perhaps more to the point, what could Heidegger have meant by it, given that it was obviously he who coined the term (“*Sein zum Tode*,” in German)? There is an obvious sense in which, by “being unto” (or projecting upon) the “*whole-can-be*” of a life, that life therefore exhibits a “being unto

death” as its own ultimate limit, since after all, the end of a life is in a sense a “part” of it, if we can speak in this way. And certainly, whenever we are delivered over to ourselves such that we find we have to choose something like a basic orientation for life, we are not given to choose this as though the life in question would go on forever. Such considerations, however, seem extrinsic to the “phenomenon” of authentic self-protaining itself, which on first sight appears to constitute itself simply as a choosing of how “one” will live, and not, how “one” is to die. Yet upon further examination, it becomes evident that the difference between the temporalization of the authentic and the inauthentic modes of self-tending lies wholly in the extent to which the self-protaining that belongs to each mode gives the streaming conscious life over to its *finitude*, its *mortality*.

Yet how can we understand the authentic and inauthentic modes of self-temporalization as fundamentally distinguished by the way in which each delivers the subject over to his or her mortality? Without needing to make a theme of it, death, as the possible and in fact ultimately unavoidable cessation of our own existence, is nonetheless always somehow “there” in our experiencing; as Richard Sembera succinctly puts it in his companion text to *Being and Time*: “the certain expectation of a future end influences and is experienced by Dasein in the course of its continued existence[...]. We experience the process of dying [not biological perishing, but “being unto death”] not only as a constant expectation of death but as the constant certainty that our possibilities for existence are limited precisely because of the imminent certainty of death.”²³² However, by turning the self-temporalized subject back to the matter at hand so as to get lost in the moment, inauthentic self-protaining conceals “one’s” own mortality, in the sense of making “one” “oblivious” to it in the special sense in which I’ve been using this term. Lost in the “now,” the subject is, in a sense, “short-sighted;” “grasping” “one’s” possibilities in such a

²³² Richard Sembera, *Rephrasing Heidegger: a companion to Being and Time* (Ottawa, University of Ottawa Press); 2007: p. 153-154.

way as to merely put off the most essential matters, death is put off as well. Along with “one’s” ultimate “can-be”—that basic determination of the whole of the streaming life to which, self-protaining, it gives itself over—death is likewise “there,” although usually only in the self-obscured way that typifies the mode of inauthenticity. This is most obviously exhibited in the fact that, without giving any thought to the matter—but most importantly, without being struck by the reason *why*—the subject in general comports himself or herself so as to avoid dying. Assuming that there *is* active thought about death changes very little in such a scenario; “one” can well think about death while, for instance, avoiding it, and still be related to it only “obliviously,” in the sense of “one’s” self-temporalizing “approach” to it. Death only comes to be “given” authentically if its being “given” is bound up in a “giving” of the ultimate determination for life, of its “direction” or orientation, as an issue to be decided. But because the basic orientation of life, chosen or merely assumed, is always a determination of a finite life, authentic self-protaining must *always*, by essence, be an authentic “approach” or “being unto” death. It remains still to work out the way in which this concretely manifests itself in authentic self-protaining, however.

Before doing so, we can first note the characteristic manner in which death is “given” in *inauthentic* self-protaining—or rather, in which it *conceals* itself. Although here, “one” well “knows” that “one” is mortal, “one” nevertheless usually lives the “now” as though it might go on forever, or rather, as though it were a moment that could repeat itself indefinitely: as though “one’s” life might make itself up of moments just like this one without end. “One” might even sit down to write a last will and testament, and yet experience that writing as though it were an everyday affair, without being struck by the fact that, for instance, “I” could well never find

myself touching pen to paper again, as I do now...²³³ Generally speaking, even when we *do* in fact do a thing while being *expressly* attuned to the fact that “it’s the last time” (for example: the last night I’ll ever spend in the house in which I was born and raised, since, tomorrow, we move out for good), nonetheless, as soon as we get caught up in the activity at hand (going to the kitchen for a bite to eat like I have a hundred thousand times before, or perhaps flipping open a book to pass a few moments, etc.), we can always live through the moment as though it were yet another recurrence of a “same” that could repeat itself forever, and “forget” our former apprehension, i.e., that this will never come again. In the same way that authenticity gives itself as a burden, we find it hard to live in this apprehension (or perhaps, this appreciation) for long—although, again, without yet being able to say why this is so.

Such “forgetfulness” is, of course, anathema to authenticity, and specifically, to the self-protaining that belongs to it, which cannot give the future as anything like the indefinite recurrence of this or that affair without losing its very authenticity. It is the *whole* of a life that is properly at issue, here—“what am I ultimately to be?—and this whole, as such, has its limits. And yet once more, authentic self-protaining, as a “being unto death,” cannot be conceived as a thematic deliberation of death or of “my” own mortality. For one, we are dealing precisely with the streaming life’s *nonthematic* “apprehension” of itself; and although this apprehension can, furthermore, always of course realize itself in the constitution of a (thematized) deliberation about “my” death, so little, as we’ve seen, does authentic self-protaining, as a “being unto death,” necessarily lead to a sort of preponderance over this matter, that if anything, it constitutes itself as a preponderance over the matter of *life*, over what “my” life, as a whole, is to-be. When the “whole-can-be” of life gives itself as at issue, no longer a matter of mere assumption, the

²³³ Although we hope, I think, that when writing such a document, an individual does come to terms authentically with his or her own mortality—and while, generally speaking, it seems more than likely that this is the case—there is always the possibility that the experience is less resolute.

issue of “my whole life” is, naturally, likely to come to the fore thematically.²³⁴ So what, then, of the nonthematic “manifestation” of *death* that, as I’m claiming, necessarily belongs to this self-protaining, to that self-protaining which does not assume its determination of the whole? How is it that the future of the streaming conscious life, as that which needs to be determined, is “given” nonthematically as necessarily having its end or its limit, and in fact, “given” in such a way that the “recognition” that takes hold of this necessity is decisive in bringing the self-tending temporalization of this life to its authentic mode? How, that is, does authentic self-protaining “give” itself its ultimate “end?”

We can begin by noting a sort of “apprehension,” in the somewhat more evocative sense of this term if we like, that authentic temporalization exhibits. Self-temporalized, we’ve seen, the subject *has* to “be” his or her future; and yet, the subject does not *have* to be. The apprehension of death that we can call “being unto death” is precisely the apprehension of *having* to-be that which *doesn’t* have to be—and which one day, in fact, won’t.

Just as angst “gives” to the subject the arbitrariness of the having-been which he or she has merely assumed, “being unto death” gives the angst-ridden subject to understand the radical contingency of his or her own being to-come, which will be what it will have been only on the basis of the decisions that he or she makes, the “stand” that the subject is to take in regards to that very being—if, that is, he or she will be *at all*. The “wide open” nature of the possibilities of the streaming life that is “given” in resolute self-protaining is thus simply the flipside of the “givenness” of death as the ever-present possibility of having no possibilities at all: “the *indeterminateness* of its own thrown can-be,” Heidegger thus writes, “first makes itself manifest

²³⁴ Kierkegaard, in fact, deals with this “coming to the fore” as the transition from “objective angst”—in which the thematic regard is towards objects, given in their strangeness (due to the self-temporalization of authenticity, as we’ve seen)—to “subjective angst”—in which questions of “my” own being take over thematically. See: *CA* (esp. p. 56-80).

whole in being unto death.”²³⁵ But given this—that the authentic self-projection of what this life is ultimately to-be, which “gives” this determination as a “question mark” or in its openness, *is* equivalent to the authentic projection of the radical contingency of its being at all, i.e., is equivalent to its authentic “being unto death”—it becomes right away evident that possibilities *in general* are given as such, that the subject is given to understand that a given moment of his or her own future living can come to pass in any number of different “ways” or that that which is to-be determined of the selfsame streaming conscious life is *open* in regards to what it can-be—which is just how possibilities are to be “given” by self-protection if they are given at all—*only insofar* as these moments of the selfsame living are given as that which simply might not come to pass *full stop*. This is to say: given over to the “fact” that I need not exist—to my *finitude*—I am given over to my possibilities. And vice versa: given over to my possibilities, I am given over to the “fact” that I need not exist, to the fact that I am a finite being.

We come back full circle, then, to some of the concerns with which I initiated this analysis of temporality. Things give themselves to us, the perceiver, as transcendent, as extant or spatially extended in their perception-independence; but now, the sense of the transcendence of things has finally become explicable. To perceive an extant thing, we will remember, is to grasp it as being “here” whether or not I were “there” for it in my perceiving at all—whether or not, in fact, I were to die and so, were never able to be “there” to perceive it again. My sense of the transcendence of things—given, “temporalizingly,” by the manifestation of my possibilities to myself—is part and parcel of my own sense of mortality. If, and only if, a being is given over to the fact that it need not be, is it given over to other beings as being “external” to itself. But

²³⁵ SZ: p. 356 (308). This, Heidegger goes on to say, is an indeterminateness “ever certain in resolution”—“the indeterminateness of the can-be,” which, as Heidegger writes, “only ever determines itself in a resolution on the specific situation.” Admittedly, this indeterminateness is *always* being determined in the mere assumption of inauthenticity, but yet without recognizing itself as such, as though the conscious life in fact had no choice about the basic “direction” of its being and so, determined nothing.

primordially, the givenness of this sense of finitude belongs to or is inscribed within temporalizing self-consciousness itself: it is this very “givenness,” that “I” do not have to-be *at all*, which gives to the streaming conscious life the radical contingency that marks the very “manifestation” of its being to-come, of that which must be determined in the determination of what it is to-be.

Of all the insights conveyed by *Being and Time*, this is arguably the most important of all:

The resoluteness transparent to itself understands that the indeterminateness of its can-be only ever determines itself in the resolution on the specific situation. It knows about the indeterminateness that pervades a being that exists. But if it wants to correspond to authentic resoluteness, this knowing must itself spring from out of an authentic disclosure. The *indeterminateness*[...] of its own thrown can-be only reveals itself *whole* in being unto death[...]. But resoluteness endeavors to demand this primordial angst of itself. It moves out of the way every concealment of the being-there's abandonment. The “nothing,” before which angst brings the being-there, *reveals the nullity that determines it in its basis, which the self is as thrownness into death.*²³⁶

In the apprehension of death as the impossibility of “my” own existence, this existence is opened to its possibilities. I need not be *at all*, so that which I am to-be, if in fact I *am* to-be, is always, for me, to be decided.

In the final analysis, it is for *this* reason that inauthentic temporalization is always “derivative,” as a sort of flight from authenticity: for although, “lost” in the moment, the inauthentically temporalized subject always “has” his or her possibilities, these possibilities cannot be “given” as such, in their radical contingency, without it being given that *none* of them might come to be realized because nothing further comes to be for the subject at all—without, that is, death being “given” as an ever abiding possibility. Unlike self-retaining, which always keeps hold of the subject’s own having-been with a pre-thematic self-certainty (irrespective of

²³⁶ SZ: p. 356 (308).

the fact that the thematic acts that this can always motivate can of course always fail to properly recollect what has been retained), and unlike self-maintaining, which always has “hold” of itself, pre-reflectively self-certain as the “now,” self-protaining simply does not project itself “forward” with any sort of absolute assurance or certainty of finding its “general fulfillment” (to return to the the more Husserlian language I made use of earlier)—although, inauthentically temporalized, self-protaining conspires, as it were, to hide this from itself. By obviously assuming the “direction” in which its having-been “throws” it, inauthentic self-protaining just as obviously awaits the coming to pass of that being into which it is obviously “thrown,” which is just how the now is “lived” as a sort of indefinite recurrence of the same. Death will come, but “not yet;” inauthentically, it is always over the horizon of the awaited future, which will unfold itself (the self-oblivious “one” is given to believe) just as “one’s” life does or as it ought to by this light—as it ought to, given that which I am “trying to-be.” Only as a “being unto death” in which this being is a responsibility to be borne, does the radical contingency of the streaming conscious life weigh down upon itself or make itself “felt”—which is why “being unto death” always belongs to the authentic self-protaining that perseveres in itself resolutely, as the full realization of its authenticity: “resoluteness does not merely ‘have’ a connection with fore-running [“*Vorlaufen*,” or authentic “being unto death”] as something other to itself,” Heidegger writes; “*it harbors authentic being unto death within itself as the possible existentiell modality of its own authenticity.*”²³⁷ As such, it “unveils to the being-there its lostness in ‘oneself,’ and brings it before the possibility[...] to be itself: but itself in a passionate, factual, self-angsting *freedom unto death* that is certain of itself and freed from the illusions of the one.”²³⁸

²³⁷ SZ: p. 353 (305).

²³⁸ SZ: p. 311 (266 [emphasis altered]). We should be careful to recognize that “being unto death,” as a sort of apprehensiveness of death or rather, of the subject’s own mortality, is not a fear of death. Or put better (because fear, as an affect, is constituted by self-retaining and not the projection of possibilities that always belongs to it):

By adequately clarifying the root of the “derivativeness” of the inauthentic mode of self-tending temporalization, and with this, the authentic mode of temporalization itself from which the former is “derived” by a sort of self-limitation or obscuration, we open for ourselves the possibility of describing that basic character of self-temporalization *per se* which subtends both its authentic and inauthentic modes. Of course, we’ve already seen that authentic temporality cannot do without its inauthentic mode, given that—irrespective of the nature of the absolute can-be that fundamentally orients the self-determination of the streaming conscious life, and whether or not this determination is one that has been genuinely chosen or not—the self-temporalized subject only actually *works towards* it when *inauthentically* self-temporalized. Nothing gets “done” in authentic temporalization. And in addition to this fact—that “in order to be able, ‘lost’ in the equipment-world, to ‘actually’ [*wirklich*] go to work and handle things, the self must forget itself,” as Heidegger puts it²³⁹—i.e., even over and above this “necessity,” we’ve discovered furthermore that the inauthentic mode of self-temporalization exercises a sort of “pull,” holding the streaming conscious life to this very mode barring only the most strenuous effort to be otherwise. Inauthentic temporality is thus not strictly speaking “secondary” in relation to its authentic mode: a self-tending life simply could not be *as such*, determining the manner of its own being, were it not for the inauthentic mode of its self-tending temporalization, however much it might also seem true that this self-determination will be without justification,

the angst which temporalizes itself in a unity with “being unto death” as a resolute authentic self-protaining is in no way a sort of fear of death or an anxiety regarding the finitude constituted by this “being unto death.” So little, in fact, is angst, as resolutely self-temporalized, anything like a fear of death, that there is instead always the worry that, on its basis, death can come to be conceived as the relief of a burden.

By “being unto death,” in any event, angst is not experienced in any sense as an encounter with that which is to be fled, unlike the non-genuine temporalization of this affect. In resoluteness, then, the angst-ridden subject, who reticently perseveres in angst, is so little in a “fearful state” in any usual sense of the term that Derrida can actually translate “sein zum Tode” as “putting oneself to death.” *The Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills (Chicago, University of Chicago Press); 1995: p. 10. Hereafter listed as *GO*.

²³⁹ *SZ*: p. 405 (354): “But insofar as, in the unity of the temporalizing of concern, an awaiting in each case takes the lead, the concerned being-there’s own can-be is nevertheless posed in care [i.e., “self-tending].”

vacuous even, without the at least occasional event of its authentic mode of self-temporalizing—although because of its essential tendency away from this mode, it always *is* as if vacuity were the better, or perhaps safer, option.

All the same, we should not think that the privilege given to authentic temporality in phenomenological analysis (surely, not simply in my own) is simply *mis-given*, as if the temporalizing called “authentic” had nothing more to show us about the essence of self-temporalization *per se* than its (only ostensibly?) “inauthentic” mode. In fact, we would never even have discovered the peculiar “will towards inauthenticity” that temporalization exhibits were we to keep to an analysis of the inauthentic mode alone; nor, crucially, would we have discovered that the subject is *always* (i.e., in *either* mode) “towards” his or her own future as that which, radically contingent, does not even have to be, despite the fact that this “being towards” is usually only lived in a disguised fashion, so that “one’s” choices are given (in the “oblivious” limitation of “one’s” possibilities) only as if they had *merely* to be “tactically” selected, to ensure the greatest realization of an “end” or “basic goal” that has not only been decided already but that dishonestly gives itself as though, really, it could not be otherwise.

It is therefore by analyzing the authentic mode of temporalizing that we have come to adequately describe the basic character of self-tending temporalization *in general*, or to fully clarify its sense as a “being-at-issue:” namely, that this, the fundamental level of time-consciousness *per se* as a constituting activity, is a life’s continual collecting together *of all of the moments of its living, so as to keep each one in turn oriented according to a basic ideal for the whole life which this life must continually select for itself as part and parcel of this very self-collecting orientation*—an ideal which, in the process, it nonetheless tends to keep in oblivion *to the greatest extent possible*, with the result being that something like a tendency towards such

“obliviousness” is *essentially* exhibited all the while. This is the basic sense of the claim that the self-tending temporalization of a streaming conscious life is at basis the being-at-issue-for itself of this streaming being as a totality, a totality for which it alone is responsible.

We have finally come to discover the basic structural character of our consciousness of time. Having done so, we can at long last attempt to determine its *condition*. How, then, does a life come to apprehend itself *as such*, such that its own being has come to be at issue for itself and so that it continually collects itself together in its streaming in order to orient each of its moments towards a basic ideal or determination of what it, as a whole life, is to-be? Why must this self-collecting that a life can somehow come to exhibit be such, that it *must* always select for itself the very ideal by which it goes on orienting itself in each of its moments, in light of which its possibilities become manifest and it selects from them by acting? And why does it nevertheless keep the continuous selection of this *ideal* from itself, by and large, in self-oblivion?²⁴⁰ Only when we have discovered how a life—which is thereby a streaming *conscious* life—can come to exhibit these three basic characteristics, we will have discovered the fundamental condition of its time-consciousness, which is just to say, of its consciousness *per se*.

But what allows a living being to live in this way? And what does this have to do with ethics; or with something like that obligation to which a being is always subjected by the others, as I’ve claimed, insofar as it finds itself in relation to the other as such?

§ 27

In the introduction to this study, I projected for its first part (Part I) the task, firstly, of demonstrating that consciousness is necessarily time-constituting, and secondly, of describing this consciousness of time. After discovering that a thematic consciousness of time is only possible because consciousness is always consciousness of time in a nonthematizing sense, I

²⁴⁰ As we will see in the next Chapter of this study: this is because it has already promised *itself*.

began to describe this nonthematic time-consciousness, which, we discovered, is made up of the retaining of the just-passed, the protaining of the to-come, and the maintaining of what is given of an object as a transitioning between the two. Nonthematic consciousness of time, we saw, is consciousness of the “now.” However, in the course of my description of the constituting “function” of retaining, protaining, and maintaining (separately but, most importantly, as a unity), we came to see that this constitution of “objective” time or of the “now” of things, as part and parcel of the constitution of an object of consciousness, requires that moments of the selfsame experiencing, just-passed and to-come, are “there,” so as to allow in the first place for the retaining apprehension of that which has just-passed, and the maintaining apprehension of that which is to-come, of its objects. A deeper level of time-consciousness announced itself, at one with the basic *self*-consciousness of the perceiving subject.

As such, I had to take up the task of describing this, more primordial, time-consciousness, the self-temporalization of subjectivity or of the streaming conscious life. In the process, we soon came to learn that this temporalizing self-constitution just *is* the being of the streaming conscious life, without which we would have nothing like the subject as this streaming life’s “current” phase of apprehending. But then, we saw, this time-constituting self-consciousness must represent a peculiar form of consciousness, distinct from all apprehension in the usual sense, given that it underlies the constitution of all that can be given as an “object” of consciousness, whether thematically or not. Thus, to describe time-consciousness is ultimately to describe this level of constituting in all its peculiarity.

I attempted to do just this, by describing the “phenomena” of the significance, affective charge, and “worldliness” of things. These, we learned, are always given of an object of consciousness, given that they reflect the basic character of the self-protaining, -retaining, and

-maintaining of the streaming conscious life. To self-retain, we thus discovered, is to be “given” the to-come as that which must be determined in the determination of what “I” am to-be; to self-retain, to be “given” the passed-by of “my” being as that which concretely determines how I am determining this being to-come; and to self-maintain, to be “given” myself in my own subjectivity as making the choice of this determination by working with things, and so, by taking up a “position” in the social nexus or a certain concrete mode of relating to others.

The three facets of self-temporalization—which for its part, thus discloses itself as the conscious life’s *self-tending* temporalization—therefore function, like in objective temporalization, as a unity; but this unified functioning, we saw, can unfold itself in two basic modes: *inauthenticity*, in which the possibilities to be determined are given on the basis of an ultimate determination of the streaming conscious life “obliviously” taken over in the sense of being merely assumed in self-retaining, so that the subject unquestioningly conforms himself or herself to this or that role and, so, does “what one does,” therefore losing himself or herself in the moment; or *authenticity*, in which this assumed orientation is given as questionable or itself at issue, so that the subject, finding himself or herself “guilty,” has to choose between possibilities of his or her own basic orientation for him- or herself. The giving (or self-protaining) of these possibilities, we learned further, allows them to be grasped in their contingency because, by constituting its to-come as that which is to-be determined, the subject is given as not necessarily needing to be at all. Coming to understand this, we could then grasp the very essence of time-consciousness, as primordial, self-tending, temporalization: the subject, self-temporalized, is always given to choose on the basis of or in relation to this life—i.e., “my” life—as a *whole*, a life which never needs to be and which is what it is to-be on the basis of what the subject will have decided. The self-tending temporalization of subjectivity is thus the being of a being that is

responsible for its own being, the being-at-issue-for-*itself* of this being's very being in its totality.

Having described the basic structure of time-consciousness, it will finally be possible for me to clarify the essential condition of time-consciousness itself, and thus, of all subjectivity. This condition must be such that it makes explicable: *firstly*, the being-at-issue for itself of a being's very being (how, that is, does a being come to be in such a way that it "lives" each moment in such a relation to its life as a totality, a totality for which it is thereby always responsible?); *secondly*, the fact that this "always having-to-choose" for "my" life always has to choose a basic ideal or *orientation* of this life, whether it does this expressly or by assuming an already given choice made in this regard (we could always instead imagine a life that would temporalize itself by "giving" its possibilities to be chosen for-the-sake-of some pre-given and absolutely unmodifiable ideal or possibility of itself, a life only responsible to keep itself on a "track" that could never be questioned;²⁴¹ but this is evidently not what the phenomenological facts give us to understand about our *own* experiencing); and *thirdly*, that self-tending temporalization necessarily always "tends" away from an authentic mode to its inauthentic one. Surely, these three characteristics of self-temporalization are not disconnected facts, but are essentially connected in the very essence of the matter; and yet, the essential connection between them remains murky. To bring to light the essential condition of time-consciousness will at the same time bring this connection into its full clarification.

We can provisionally make sense of this connection by supposing that it is precisely so as to keep all of its moments of living in conformity with something like the "*good life*"—which is

²⁴¹ And could go on imagining such a life, in fact, even if it in fact turns out to be an ontic impossibility—which I am certain is in fact the case, for reasons that we will come to discover later, in my analysis of exposedness. See, also: *FC*—where the phenomenon of boredom is examined as a sort of impossibility of the Dasein to remain in the everyday.

just to say, *to compose itself as such a life*—that via its self-tending temporalization, the streaming conscious life continually brings itself as a whole to bear upon and orient each of its moments in turn: for if this is so, then by all rights, the possibility should belong to it of “*checking*” to be sure that the ideal—i.e., the sort of life—that governs all its self-protaining (and so, all its choosing or self-determination) as this life’s ultimate possibility or “can-be” *is*, in fact, a “good” one; and yet at the same time, this possibility, the possibility of making sure for “myself,” would be one from which “one” would always have reason to tend away, since dwelling in such a possibility would always risk venturing, not *towards* the good life, but *away from* it instead (assuming of course, that the life in question is already given to conform its ongoing self-determination in accordance with a genuine understanding of the “good life”—but this would then be, in angst, precisely what *cannot* be assumed). This supposition, though, is just what we arrive at via the recognition that “existential” concerns, and not merely “practical” ones, lie at the foundation of subjectivity in self-tending temporalization. In fact, no other interpretation can do justice to the phenomenological facts. And yet it should be noted here—and this is obviously of huge importance for the purposes of this study—that in its broad strokes, this interpretation corresponds with Aristotle’s account of *morality*. We can add to this, further, that so little does Heidegger’s account of subjectivity or the “*Dasein*” skirt the whole matter of morality (as is so often claimed), that Heidegger instead makes regular reference to the *Nicomachean Ethics* (a *proto-phenomenological* account of morality, in fact, as can be demonstrated) and largely connects the Aristotelian account of morality to his own analysis.²⁴²

²⁴² See, for instance: *The Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, trans. Robert Metcalf Mark Tanzer (Bloomington, Indiana University Press); 2009. Of special interest in this work is Heidegger’s introduction of the notion of “being unto death” in his treatment of Aristotle’s peculiar passage on the problems that death and the delimitation of a life in its totality pose for his account of the relation between eudaimonia and the moral logos. Heidegger admittedly goes beyond the letter of Aristotle’s text in this treatment; and yet, nothing else explains better the inclusion in Aristotle’s text of this otherwise apparently unnecessary and even inexplicable passage.

Taking, however, this interpretation as our key—that is, that the self-tending temporalization of the streaming life is precisely the tending of that life towards, or in conformity with, the “good life,” or rather, what it *takes to be* such (unless or until this comes to be “angstily” placed in question, that is)—we are thus immediately led to wonder about the possible basis on which, angst-ridden, the authentically self-temporalized subject might determine just what sort of a life would *be* the “good life” at all. What, *precisely*, is the resolute subject to resolve upon? Should pure description simply leave off here—leaving us with all the problems of pure “relativism”—or must we instead insist that some resolutions are in fact “bad” ones (Heidegger’s own resolution near the beginning of the 30’s, for one—assuming that resoluteness was a phenomenon that Heidegger in fact lived at the time, and not one he merely wrote about)? This is a problem that, for his own part, Aristotle (merely assuming his readers have been “raised well”) completely ignores in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.²⁴³ It should not be so for this study, however; for when I uncover the condition of self-temporalization, this matter ought to become clarified also: it would be precisely in response to that which stirs responsibility in the being that is to be subject, as the condition of self-temporalization or as that which is somehow encountered in the event that enables this, that the authentically self-temporalized subject would be given to deliberate over or give consideration to any of the basic orientations for his or her life concretely given as such to a resolute self-projection. This is to say that that which inspires the subjected one to this vocation and so, to his or her self-tending temporalization, would thereby reveal itself as “due consideration”—unless it at once were to direct the one made subject beyond itself, so as to even subject him or her to a responsibility without limit? But in any event,

²⁴³ Though he does deal with the problem in the *Politics*, however inadequately. On some of the problems raised by the failure to deal with this in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, however, see, for instance, John McDowell, *The Role of Eudaimonia in Aristotelian Ethics* in *Essays on Aristotle’s Ethics*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (Oakland, University of California Press); 1980: p. 359-376.

this still leaves us the question as to how the subject comes to be subject at all, which is to say, how he or she comes to be self-temporalized in the manner of a life's tending after itself.

In order to answer this question (which this study has, at long last, brought us to ask in an adequately clarified way), we must seek out that being or experiencing which "precedes" subjectivity, and then discover how subjectivity comes to erupt within it. But to adequately answer the question, as we'll soon discover, will not simply mean to finally understand how that which was "prior" to all self-constitution (e.g., the life of the infant) came to be self-constituting (how it came to be self-aware, to self-"tendingly" temporalize itself), but in fact, to discover how that which has its being "beneath" self-temporalization *continually* comes to be self-constituting, or to "take its place" as a moment in the self-tending life. It became clear earlier in this study that, "underneath" the self-temporalizing of subjectivity, there must be a pre-subjective being or experiencing, which, as a "streaming totality" living itself out before any consciousness of "itself" *as such*, nonetheless "goes on" in its "streaming." Husserl calls this "sphere" the pre-egoic, or also, the "hyletic." It is the sphere of the purely *sensible*.²⁴⁴ The living of these experiences, according to Husserl, "does not accomplish a proper temporalization and is not a corresponding performance of consciousness."²⁴⁵

To inquire into this sphere is likely something that Heidegger, for his part, would never have countenanced. To do so is surely to come too close to conceiving of subjectivity, or of the "existence" of our "being-there [*Dasein*]", as if it were "life[...] *plus* something else,"²⁴⁶ which, according to Heidegger, can only lead us to misconceive the basic character of our own being. As we'll see in the next chapter of this study, there *is* in fact *something* correct about this

²⁴⁴ See, for instance: *LI 1*: p. 51-54 (Prolegomena, Chapter 4, §23).

²⁴⁵ Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologischen Reduktion; Texte aus dem Nachlass (1926-1935)*, ed. Sebastian Luft (Dordrecht, Kluwer); 2002: p. 181. Quoted in *PT*: p. 264.

²⁴⁶ *SZ*: p. 75 (50 [my emphasis]).

assertion, or the assertion that Heidegger makes in his oft-neglected account of “animality” or the being of living things: “we should not compare our own seeing with that of the animal without further ado,” he claims, “since *the seeing and the potentiality to see of the animal* is a *capacity*, whereas *our potentiality to see* ultimately has a *quite different character of possibility* and possess a *quite different manner of being*”²⁴⁷—which is to say, that nothing of the being of “the animal” belongs to *our* being, or to that being, insofar as we exist as beings essentially characterized by a time-constituting consciousness or apprehension of ourselves. And yet, are we *only* in this way? Or is there a certain complexity in our being, so that we can understand ourselves as “having,” as a “part” of our own being, also a “level” of “animality,” even such that this “animality,” as a “sphere” of pure sensibility or of the merely sentient living of life, can be considered “at the same time” both a “level” of the streaming conscious life as well as totally without its limits? It may well be the case, in fact, that although the streaming conscious life is in no way “life plus something else,” the concrete human life—or perhaps more broadly, the concrete life of the one *who is subject*—would, for its *own part*, bear within itself a relationship between its subjective and “pre-subjective” levels, so that subjectivity would belong to it without encompassing it in its totality. If, however, a “sphere” of purely sensible experiencing, as a “merely” sentient living, were to somehow “precede” the self-temporalizing constitution of the streaming conscious life as that which is “there” to be gathered up in its self-tending and made manifest to itself, then, “beneath” any sense of self, and with it, any sense of time, sensibility would in some sense “constitute” within us, as it were, a *nonconscious “core.”* But then, the question of the condition of the basic character of subjectivity, which is now to say, of the self-tending temporalization of a streaming conscious life, could not simply ask how this temporalization might erupt in a single stroke from out of something like “pre-temporal,” merely

²⁴⁷ FC: p. 231.

sensible, living—already a question that Heidegger was never able to even properly ask, let alone answer himself: it would also need to ask how this “eruption” is an incessant or *ongoing* one.

The second part of this study begins with just such an inquiry. I should note in advance, however, that if self-temporalization does in fact erupt (in whatever fashion) from out of a purely sensible experiencing, then it seems at the least highly doubtful that the condition of this could be properly conceived of as the dawning of the question of being in general, as Heidegger must have conceived of the essential condition of our being (i.e., of self-tending temporalization) to the extent that he ever asked about its condition at all.²⁴⁸ *Were* the dawning of the question of being in general a basic condition of self-tending temporalization (and thus of subjectivity), then Heidegger would be right to claim, as he does, that it is before Being itself that we ultimately find ourselves responsible—“man is the tender of Being,”²⁴⁹ Heidegger writes—which, for the reasons we saw above, would give us an “objective” basis, however tenuous, for discerning between various ways of understanding the “good life” (viz., the best life would be one that keeps open a genuine understanding of Being, allowing “it” to show itself as an abiding mystery). And yet, the question of being in general is essentially connected to that question of “my” own being which lights up for us in angst but subtends self-temporalization in either of its two basic modes: for to be struck by the question of “my” own being—i.e., “what am I to be?”—is, because it “puts everything in play,” to be struck by the question of being *per se*—i.e., “what is it all about?.”²⁵⁰ For this reason, it appears that such questioning cannot serve as the condition of self-tending itself. To ask after the condition of temporalization is to ask how a being’s own

²⁴⁸ This seems to be a basic contention of “What is Metaphysics?” See, for one, Heidegger’s claim that “in the clear night of the nothing of anxiety the original openness of beings as such arises: that they are beings—and not nothing. But this ‘and not nothing’ we add in our talk is not some kind of appended clarification. Rather, it makes possible in advance the manifestness of beings in general.” *PM*: p. 90.

²⁴⁹ “Letter on Humanism” in *PM*: p. 260 [translation modified].

²⁵⁰ Every genuine metaphysical question, according to Heidegger, brings every other such question with it: see “What is Metaphysics” in *PM*: p. 82.

being comes to be an issue for it in the first place, and thus, how in the authentic mode of that temporalizing, such a question, the *Seinsfrage*, is to be possible at all.

How, then, does something like time-constituting self-consciousness come to erupt from out of a sensible experiencing that knows nothing of time or of itself? How can the purely sensible being of an “animality” come to be struck by itself, in such a way that it precisely comes to be an issue for itself and has to work to determine, for ‘itself,’ what to “do” with its own being?

To ask such a question is to ask about our own *sensibility*. It is thus to sensibility that we will now turn.

Part II

Chapter 4

Sensibility and the Other

Section X—The Immediacy of Sensible Life

§ 28

“Prior” to the self-constitution of a streaming conscious life, there is sensation: sensation, or perhaps sense-experiencing, which in the temporalization of conscious life or in its self-constitution is continually taken up as a moment of its own unfolding, a moment of the selfsame. For its own part, this sensing is no consciousness-of; it intends nothing. Rather, a moment of sensing, *per se*, is a being-affected, and becomes a consciousness-of, an apprehension of this or that being within the world, only by being unified with other such moments via the temporalization of the streaming life’s self-tending, which, again, makes each such moment into a moment of the selfsame conscious life. Not a single one alone has anything of consciousness, unless or until it is “linked” up with the others, taken up or apprehended as a moment of the selfsame streaming—and yet, it certainly does not follow from this that these moments of sensing are “nothing” at all but what consciousness “makes of them,” as if they were merely some *prima materia*, with which perception, as it were, could fashion for itself whatever it liked. As a being-affected, they *impose* upon consciousness, so that the conscious life can only ever perceive what’s “there.” Perception makes its way within this imposition.

How does sensing impose? It is well enough recognized that it does. However, we cannot understand this imposition as anything like a chaos given without regulated distinctions of its own, as a haphazard array of discrete sensation-units or something like James’ “blooming, buzzing confusion:” this conception, which flies in the face of the phenomenological facts,

would in fact only return us to the notion of a consciousness uninhibitedly fashioning sense from a *prima materia* of sensation (and although it is not generally recognized, William James in fact wrote the words just quoted as part of a passage in which he argued that this is not how sensing imposes itself at all).²⁵¹ As a being-affected, then, sensation is not the imposition of some merely indiscriminate sequence of disparate experiencings that must first be parsed or articulated in some way, if they are to become a consciousness of anything meaningful at all. Sensation imposes itself, rather, in unities of affection, which is to say, in *prominences*. A sensation-experience is already a prominence in being-affected.

What sort of prominence is this? And how does *it* impose itself? We can begin to come to grips with the matter by turning to Husserl's analyses of those "fusions" to which he referred (at least at one point in time) under the heading of the "passive syntheses"—or rather, of the most basic type of this sort of "synthesis." However, we'll need to take care in interpreting these analyses, for it was only *after* lecturing on passive synthesis (three years later, at least) that Husserl finally came to adequately clarify the various strata of time-consciousness according to their true characteristics and lines of division; because he had not yet done so, it was all too easy for Husserl to mistakenly posit (as he did in these lectures) that these fusions take place on the "lowest," i.e., most primordial, level of self-temporalization, which is to say, within the scope of time-constituting self-consciousness.²⁵² Once we work through Husserl's description of these "phenomena," however, it will become evident that there can be nothing at all conscious about such syntheses taken in their own right, which is undoubtedly why Husserl later amended his account of them.²⁵³

²⁵¹ William James, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. 1 (New York, Henry Holt and Company); 1890: p. 488. Hereafter listed as *PS 1* and *2*.

²⁵² *AP*: p. 170-171.

²⁵³ See, for instance, *PT*: p. 288.

The sensation-experience, we discover, always emerges as a unity. Through something like the “accomplishment” of fusion and contrast, a sensible field comes to be articulated, forming such unities. Thus, for example, rather than a plethora of tactile sensings imposing themselves with equal weight, as it were, or impressed in something like a “point-by-point” fashion upon the palpatory surface of the body, we instead have this unified sensing “right here” as the experiencing of this “share” of the corporeal surface. The sensation-experience just is this unified sensing.²⁵⁴

What does it mean, then, to speak of an accomplishment of fusion and contrast? Fusion and contrast, firstly, work together in the delimitation of something like a “proto-spatial sphere,” articulating the surfaces of the sensing body or its sensible fields. Similar or homogenous gradients of tactile, or aural, or optical, etc. sensing “fuse” themselves into a unity; dissimilar gradients of sensing likewise differentiate themselves, so that a multiplicity of distinct unified sensings are able to distribute themselves across the sentient surface.²⁵⁵ Similarity and differentiation, here, operate “locally”²⁵⁶—e.g., a “rough” sensing-experience “on” one extended portion of the hand distinguishes itself as a unity in contrast to a “smooth” sensing-experience adjacent to it—but also, as we might say, “non-locally”—for instance, fusing similar sensings that recur on spatially distinct portions of the sentient surface into a single unity of sensing, such that something like a “repeating” or “patterned” sensing is bound together. Husserl describes the emergence of the former as follows—highlighting the fact that, and the way in which, “local” and “nonlocal” (or what Husserl calls “at-a-distance”²⁵⁷) syntheses of fusion and contrast work together in the articulation of a sensible field:

²⁵⁴ AP: p. 174-175.

²⁵⁵ AP: p. 182-183.

²⁵⁶ AP: p. 182 ff.

²⁵⁷ See, for instance, AP: p. 186.

Let us regard statically the coexistence of two or more objects [“immanent objects,” or more precisely, sensing-prominences] that are related with respect to content; although their unity through homogeneity already emerges in this case[...], the deeper characteristic among the combinations will be disclosed[...] in a comparative transition from one component of the relation to the other. The new uniform characteristic is given in such a transition as a “repetition” of the same thing.²⁵⁸

We can immediately recognize, here, Husserl’s debt to Ernst Mach’s *Analysis of Sensations*,²⁵⁹ so influential on he and other members of the “Brentano school,” from which “Gestalt Psychology,” for one, developed—a discipline which, owing to its empirical orientation, is for its own part no doubt better suited than phenomenology to study and distinguish *in concreto* the different types of fusions and contrasts that “bind together” the prominences in sensation-experiencing of various sentient organisms (human beings, of course, representing only a single member of this group). It is only by means of phenomenological analysis, however, that we can understand the role that such fusions play in the eventual self-constitutions of *conscious* life.

So much, in any event, for fusion and the “proto-spatiality” of sensation. Before moving on, however, we should also take note of the “proto” or perhaps “quasi-*temporality*” of these fusions as well. Husserl:

If we take any sense-field, that is, a field of coexistent homogeneity, then its stock of data will be a stock of concretely existing data: concrete, not only with respect to momentary coexistence, which cannot be anything for itself, but rather also with respect to succession. Something constituted as an existing datum and as prominent for itself is constituted as enduring, possibly beginning now, lasting awhile, and ceasing[...]. Concretion is only possible as fusion in the form of order, that is, as the fusion of something that is ordered temporally.²⁶⁰

This is to say that the fusions of sensation require something like a temporal “width” for their “operation,” if a sensing-experience is to be “synthesized” by their means at all, and a sentient being is to be affected *qua* sentience. The rough sensing-experience of a portion of the palm

²⁵⁸ AP: p. 176.

²⁵⁹ Ernst Mach, *Analysis of Sensations*, trans. C. Williams (New York, Routledge); 1914.

²⁶⁰ AP: p. 186-187.

“endures,” and in fact, only ever emerges as a prominence or unified experiencing insofar as it “has” some “endurance;” the notion of a unity or prominence in sensation at an instantaneous “time-slice” can only be understood as an abstraction. This “endurance” of the prominence in sensing, furthermore, isn’t an “all-or-nothing” matter: the “rough” sensing-experience *develops* or “fades in” and then “out” according to various “speeds” or “intensities,” and only emerges in its unity as a sensation-experiencing accordingly. As is the case with the “proto-spatiality” of fusion, the “proto-temporality” of fusion *also* operates “non-locally,” in addition to the sorts of “local” operation just noted (i.e., the synthesis of an “enduring” rough sensation-experience from something like successive or immediately “proximate” instants of a similar sort or quality of stimulation); “proto-temporal” “repetitions” and “patterns” (for example, a being-affected that “vibrates” in some fashion) become fused and differentiated via “proto-temporally *non-local*” syntheses, so that the experience endures not continuously, but according to something like a regular reiteration.²⁶¹ Without taking too much time to examine such syntheses in depth, we should note here that they can be highly complex: we discover, as a subtype of the fused prominences that they yield (of “non-locally” quasi- or proto-temporal prominences of sensing, that is), all the multifarious forms of *association* that will later become an issue for this analysis.

Sensing-experiences thus exhibit both a sort of “proto-spatiality,” insofar as they are differentiated “portionally” upon the sentient surface of the body, as well as a sort of “proto-temporality,” insofar as the differentiated unities that their fusion articulates always “have” a sort of endurance, rising and falling intensities. And yet taken as mere prominences in sensing, they exhibit nothing of either space- or time- *consciousness*: nothing is presented or made conscious

²⁶¹ “What we have expounded upon also holds where successions of discrete objects have been constituted in the unity of the streaming living present, and in particular, as successions of uniform or similar objects or processes. Thus, pure sounds follow one another, and among them for instance a series of repetitions of uniform sounds, where we say that it is “the same sound” being repeated.” *AP*: p. 177.

through them as being placed in this or that location *vis-à-vis* other things (spatial-consciousness) nor as being involved in this or that motion or rest as made manifest in some transitional “now” (consciousness of objective time).²⁶² These experiencings, again, always emerge “before” the self-temporalizing synthesis—which is to say, the self-tending—that “puts them in their place,” temporally speaking, as moments of the selfsame streaming life (*vis-à-vis* this life’s “other” such moments, that is): and thus taken on their own, do not yet constitute themselves as a relation to any sort of being as such, do not yet manifest anything or allow it to appear in its motion or rest and its spatial location in relation to other objects. In fact, not only are the “accomplishments” of fusion and contrast not conscious: they do not even effect themselves within sensing, taken strictly; instead, these are purely *organic* syntheses, organizing (as we will see soon enough) neural stimuli across the surface of the sensing body in intimate conjunction with the current workings of the whole central nervous system, “*prior*” to any affection in sensing *qua* sentience. Sensation “happens” only in the emergence of its unities, of the fused and contrasting, self-differentiated sensing-experiences or rising and falling intensities. But this is just to say, again,

²⁶² The concept of the “proto-spatiality” and “-temporality” of sensation can be fleshed out further by reference to Ed Casey’s notion of “placedness” (for example, *GB*: p. 338-340), and perhaps, to a Deleuzian-Guattarian notion of becoming: here, in the rising and falling of affective intensities, we find the production of spaces and times, distribution of localities and production of durings. However, we must distinguish then between sensible and perceptual “placing,” here: self-temporalization *presupposes* these productions in sensibility—which for their own part may well presuppose something like material productions of spaces and times in turn. Yet self-temporalization can be *reduced* to none of these, since we see here not just the production of durations (along with spatial distinctions, etc.), but a sort of duration, the enduring sense-experiencing, which somehow becomes manifest to itself as such—that is, we see here *sense constitution*, or more specifically, the sense-constitution of time, and in the first place, the self-constitution of the enduring experiencing itself (or what, in idiomatic fashion, Deleuze and Guattari sometimes calls the production of redundancies).

How do enduring experiences come to themselves in their enduring, which as we’ve seen, requires that each be experienced as a moment of the streaming selfsame—“placed” in that life—i.e., as the now-transition crux of a life having to determine what it is to-be? Answering this means explicating what is presupposed: already “placed” productions of spaces and times—which phenomenological analysis always presupposes: and to this extent the phenomenologist must always be a “realist”—but only so as to be able to analyze the *transformation* that must occur here, so that self-temporalization emerges from this: a being for which its own being is at issue (something which, as will become plain as this analysis goes on, cannot simply “supervene” (in the contemporary sense of this term) upon some enduring assemblage or self-organization in being, but must be emergent *in the strict sense* from out of this which it, as we will see, in fact comes to radically call into question or—put better— from out of that which has radically been made subject to questioning, and precisely as a response to this.

that the sensing-experience is always a *prominence*.²⁶³

The emergence of such prominences is evidently vital, so far as our consciousness of beings within the world is concerned: for it is a unified sensing-experience, and not some aggregation of disparate neural stimuli, that becomes self-constituted as an objective presentation or a giving of some object “facet by facet” via the self-temporalization that constitutes each such experience as a phase of “my” continuing perception. This “rough” sensing thereby becomes the giving of the presently apprehended side of an extant thing, a moment of a streaming life perceptually relating itself to its object precisely in the apprehension of it as this or that object or being. In order to understand the sensible “underpinnings” of conscious life, however, so as to be able to understand how the temporalization of a streaming life’s self-tending comes to emerge *at all*—which as we’ve already discovered, is just to say, how a stream of living comes to be responsible for itself as an unfolding totality—we will for the time being need to resolutely turn *away* from the relationship that comes to pertain between sensing and perceiving (or an act of consciousness more generally), and examine the sensing-experiences in their own right. Outside of its temporalization, or “prior” to this, a sensing-experience emerges as a unity. What is this experience or prominence, *taken in itself*?

In order to get at the heart of the matter, it will be helpful to recall a point that Husserl acknowledges, even if only in passing, by writing of “background lived-experiences to which the ego is not present and ‘in’ which it does not reside:” “tendencies,” he writes, “lived-experiences of drive, may be rooted in [these experiences], tendencies which for instance incline away from

²⁶³ If we like, we can of course imagine that neural *stimulation* amounts to an aggregate of totally disparate elements (which could conceivably be the case), isolated both simultaneously (“point-by-point” stimulation across the surfaces of the body, each nerve cell independently) and successively (“instant” by “instant” stimulation); the important point is that—irrespective of how anything like stimulation occurs—it is only in the fusion and differentiation of “enduring” and “extended” prominences *from this* that there is *sensation*.

malcontentment, but the ego is not present there.”²⁶⁴ Sensing-experience, this is to say, is already *behavior*. Only by understanding the basic character of such behavior, which unfolds itself “beneath” consciousness and thus, without any sense of self or time, can we understand the nature of the affliction that comes to transform a stream of pure sensing, so that it is made responsible for itself in its streaming: an affliction, befalling the one thereby subjected from a totally other shore, whose significance, we will discover, is ethical in a preeminent sense. But in order to finally clarify this, it will first be necessary to demonstrate that when self-tending temporalization comes to a stream of sensing-experiences as the self-responsibility of the streaming totality, it thus comes as a responsibility for that behaving in which each sensing-experience is inextricably caught up.

§ 29

What is the sensing-experience for its own part, and how is it connected with behavior? How is it, in a manner of speaking, behavior *simpliciter*? If this matter is to be clarified, we must clarify the phenomenon of *life*: not life as it lives itself in a consciousness of itself in its streaming—as it lives itself in its self-tending temporalization, that is—but life as it lives itself pure and simple. But what can we make of life, *sans* consciousness or without the subjectivity of the subject?

Outside of the bounds of subjectivity, which is to say, of time-consciousness, life lives itself in its immediacy. The “present” moment is lived, as it were, as if it were the “all” or the totality of being: and not because life, in its purely sensible unfolding, “cares” nothing for its own future, or for the totality of its own streaming being on whose horizon its own “present” would always be lived, but simply because it knows nothing of its future *at all*, i.e., because its own streaming living, *in* this very streaming, is as if nothing to it. All that “matters” for life *qua*

²⁶⁴ AP: p. 19.

simple sentience is the “here-and-now” in its isolation, which is just to say, as we’ll soon see, the immediacy of pain or pleasure alone. Its own being is in no way whatsoever at issue for itself.

This last point is undeniable: and yet it would seem to fly in the face of our usual understanding of non-human, or less specifically, of nonconscious life—insofar, that is, as we still attribute sentience to such life but at the same time, more than anything, take it to be driven by a sort of will to self-preservation. Ostensibly, this understanding would follow from purely Darwinian principles; as a result of natural selection, we imagine, a living being must always have as its goal its own survival and reproduction, so that in any given case we should expect the organism to comport itself in order to go on living and to reproduce itself. Accordingly, life would be intrinsically selfish. And yet as we’ve seen, the *in-order-to* is a phenomenon that belongs to *consciousness*, constituted by the streaming conscious life’s self-projection onto this or that concrete possibility, and so, ultimately grounded in an ultimate “can-be” or a possibility of such a life as a totality. Therefore, unless we are willing to concede that the squirrel, for example, is conscious of itself or of its life as a selfsame streaming—and as this analysis continues, it will become altogether plain that it is not (though probably this is clear enough already)—we must insist that the squirrel, and other living beings like it, do not have any such thing as a goal, and thus, *a fortiori*, do not act in-order-to survive and reproduce *at all*. Accordingly, the squirrel (and its ilk) cannot be considered “selfish”—although this is emphatically not because the squirrel is instead an altruist, but simply because such determinations (selfishness and altruism) have no meaning when applied to its being, or at least, cannot be said of the squirrel in their usual sense: speaking in such terms would imply, erroneously, that the squirrel knows of itself and its others, that it grasps its life as a streaming in its own belongingness to a world, and doing so, goes on to direct itself wholly and without

qualification towards the fulfillment of an aim which just so happens to be a totally self-centered one (i.e., for-the-sake-of its own self-preservation alone). But this is emphatically not the case. The squirrel thus exhibits neither a will to self-preservation nor selfishness in the strict sense. And yet: there can be no doubt that, viewing something like the “*result*” of the squirrel’s living, it is *as if* the squirrel *did* live utterly “for-the-sake-of” its own self-preservation (survival and reproduction), and thus, as though it *were* an ultimately “selfish” being. This apparent contradiction, which is in fact no contradiction at all, must therefore be thought through.

How, then, *does* sentient life live itself in its immediacy? And why is it that, generally speaking, this living should result in the self-preservation of the organism (if this living is “successful,” that is), and furthermore, in the appearance of its “selfishness,” *as though* the squirrel (to continue with a squirrel for example) took itself to be the most important creature in the whole of being, or better, to be, *itself*, the whole of being in its totality? This issue, which must be understood if we are to begin to understand anything of the sensibility of a *subject*, revolves itself around the issue of the *drive*.

Life, in its immediacy, is driven. The connection here is in fact so essential that we will need to understand sentient life, outside of or “prior” to anything like consciousness, simply *as* the unfolding of a multiplicity of drives—of drives which, comprising the concrete being of the organism, cohere together in something like a systematic unity. If this systematic unity is such as to ensure that the organism, in its driven unfolding, “tends” towards self-preservation and self-preservation alone, it is nonetheless the case that this “end” is nothing accessible to it or to the organism in its driven self-unfolding: which is just to say, that it is no *goal* or *end* at all, no goal or end in the strict sense. Lived in its immediacy, the drive thereby precludes anything like significance strictly put—or rather, driven behavior precludes significance so long as it remains

“beneath” its own *self-temporalization*, so long as it is lived “in advance” of its coming to be given, or to take up a “place,” in the streaming of that very life which is present to itself in its streaming: which is of course the very “point” at which significance, along with affectivity and “worldliness,” *does* come to constitute itself and thus, apparently modify the drive in some way (assuming significance does come to constitute itself at all, that is: for this is of course not so for the living of every life, but only for that of the one who is subject). Nothing like self-tending, that is, belongs to drivenness itself—i.e., to sentient life *qua* sentience—which, as such, cannot be understood as having an end or goal for whose sake it would determine itself. Or at least: cannot be so understood without entertaining the worst sorts of equivocation, which would surely undermine any attempt to attain clarity in these matters.

What must be understood, then, is how life, as driven behavior, unfolds itself, and such that it can always appear to an oversimplifying *theoria* as goal-oriented activity of a totally selfish sort. But before continuing, I should add (just in case this is not clear enough already) that the phenomenon of life here at issue is very strictly that of sensing, or better, *sentient* life. In order to understand the sensibility of the subject, there is no need to extend this analysis any further; thus, my analysis of life will be limited to the animal realm (in no way are the “vegetative” aspects of our corporeality relevant here, however much they might be presupposed); but furthermore, it will be limited to the realm of animals at least complex enough to be possessed of a central nervous system. Already, life seems to be a sort of drivenness *even in* its simplest modes: single celled “animals,” and even plants, seem to exhibit *something* like this (something like a “drive,” that is), since, unfolding in this and not that “direction,” life always seems to “read” its environment in advance, as it were, so as to preempt sufferance of the environment when this could be detrimental to the organism, and organize its own development

in the most favorable fashion. By doing so, life exhibits the peculiar and in fact astonishing capability to “redirect” impositions from without, employing, as it were, forces that would otherwise undo its own organization to instead *promote* just this. Life must thus be distinguished from “brute” material being, which in its perseverance or better, its enduring, merely *withstands* the elements; there is exhibited, in *life*, not merely this “bend but don’t break” attitude, but already, “*aikido*,” turning the enemy’s own force around in opposition to it. I mean this metaphorically of course; surely the fern or the amoeba, which *is* in this way, does not recognize its “enemy” as such, and neither, I am claiming, does the squirrel, et al. But it is just this issue—i.e., striving for life or for self-preservation without anything like a goal, and so, *without striving*; selfishness *without* anything like the *self*—that must be worked out.

Despite this similarity, however—i.e., that even the simplest form of life seems to exhibit a “proto-drivenness” of sorts—life taken without further qualification is not already of itself driven in the *strict* sense, which is to say, is not yet sentience. We’ve already seen that sensing is not equivalent to stimulation, and likewise, as will become plain, behavior is not equivalent to being merely “stimulated:” to sense is rather to leave the surfaces of the body “exposed,” in a manner of speaking, in the highly organized fashion specific to drivenness. As Henri Bergson writes:

the nerve fibers termed sensory are exclusively empowered to transmit stimulation to a central region whence the vibration will be passed on to the motor elements. It would seem then that they have abandoned individual action to take their share, as outposts, in the manoeuvres of the whole body. But none the less they remain exposed, singly, to the same causes of destruction which threaten the organism as a whole; and while this organism is able to move, and thereby to escape a danger or to repair a loss, the sensitive element retains the relative immobility to which the division of labor condemns it.²⁶⁵

What can this mean? Although deleterious conditions, such as immersion in too acidic a solution,

²⁶⁵ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margeret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (Doubleday Anchor Books, Garden City, New York); 1959: p. 139. Hereafter, listed as *MM*.

will without further ado stimulate withdrawal on the part of the amoeba (or the single-celled organism more generally), this withdrawal, when the single cell is instead part of a much larger and more complex organism, is, for the individual cell, no longer possible; the cell is instead left vulnerable to the elements and can only signal its displeasure, as it were, to the organism as a whole. Along with its immediate brethren, it is left to suffer and perhaps to die, but its sacrifice is not in vain: for the silent scream it issues has a “purpose,” so to speak; this mute cry may well help bring the *whole organism* to move itself such as to ensure its continuing welfare. The animal, we say, is in pain. This description, of course, is metaphorical as well; its anthropomorphizing must not be taken seriously. Nevertheless, it indicates quite precisely the situation of the sentient organism *qua* sentience, and its distinction from “mere” life (i.e., without sentience).²⁶⁶

Before going on, I should also note that, unlike the previous (and also, the following) sections of this study, scientific discoveries and analyses can have some role to play in the descriptive analyses that will make up *this* section. This is because phenomenology is taken to the limits of its proper sphere when the matter now at hand is at issue: for the question here has to do precisely with sensation as it lives itself *outside* the bounds of consciousness. Phenomenological analysis, no doubt, does not *simply* bring us to understand that something like a pure sensing “inheres” in our own being (as has become evident already in this study), but also allows us some “foothold” in the analysis of this sensing, since as is also evident, some share of

²⁶⁶ Bergson makes the same point on this distinction in *MM*: p. 138-140. The objection might be raised that the outer membrane of the amoeba functions analogously to the nerve cell in the complex animal, making the distinction between the animal in general and the sentient animal null and void. If we liked, however, we could certainly find something analogous here in the functioning of the atom or subatomic particle, also, from which by this sort of reasoning it would further follow that the subatomic particle was not merely living, but by the same token, also sentient, or even conscious. Plainly this is not so: “analogous” does not mean “the same.” While pointing out the analogous dynamics is all to the good, then, a fixation on this overlooks all the distinctions between different sorts of beings necessary to understanding them in their specificity.

this lives itself out in the streaming of conscious life. To understand sensation in its own right, however, requires that it be prescinded from its belongingness to consciousness, thus involving us in what Heidegger, in his analysis of “animality,” calls a “privative interpretation.”²⁶⁷ By means of such an analysis, we can describe the sensing-experience *per se* while taking care to keep our descriptions free from all of the confluences that might otherwise cast obscurity over its findings; but our analysis can thus always be aided by findings in biology and comparative psychology (although by the same token, work in the biological sciences, and especially, in comparative psychology, requires for its own part a more or less clarified phenomenology of the subject in order to first recognize that which distinguishes the experience or “cognition” of other living things by contrast with our own).

How, then, do drives unfold themselves as behavior such as to secure for the organism its self-preservation without the constitution of anything like a goal or end? The answer to this question is simple enough: the drive, or more fundamentally, the systematic unity of drives to which each particular drive belongs, is subject to the vicissitudes of natural selection. By keeping this in mind, we can proceed to clarify our understanding of drivenness as the being of the sentient organism, while at once keeping all anthropomorphizing (or rather, subjectivizing) tendencies at bay (and at the same time, avoiding the twin temptation towards simple reductionism, which helps just as little to clarify this phenomenon). We are too quick, generally speaking, to attribute goals to beings without self-consciousness: not only do we imagine that the merely sentient organism strives towards the ultimate end of self-preservation, but by extension, that it strives towards a number of relative ends, i.e., “toward-whiches,” as well. In this vein, we say that the squirrel buries its acorns in-order-to retrieve them and have food for the spring, or that the salmon swims upstream in-order-to find a place for mating. And yet the squirrel or the salmon,

²⁶⁷ SZ: p. 50.

knowing nothing of its own future, can thus have no sense that the “activity” in which it engages itself is to produce any sort of favorable outcome for the being it is to-be. Such behaviors, therefore, have *no goal*: the squirrel buries acorns not in order to realize some favorable future for itself, but rather, because at this very moment, doing so is the most enjoyable thing for it in the world. The salmon, driven to swim upstream, simply *likes* the swimming. Speaking of the drive somewhat loosely, then, we can say that its unfolding as behavior is an *end-in-itself*; and yet we cannot say this, or not without danger of equivocation, for doing so implies that, at least in theory, the drive *could* have its end outside of itself—which is to say, could unfold itself in-order-to produce something other than its own unfolding—but merely happens *in fact* to never do so, as if it were just contingently “set up” in this way. It is useless to speak of ends or goals *at all* in relation to the drive; rather, its unfolding as behavior *just is* its satiation, which is why Levinas claims that, on this “plane,” “sensible life is lived as enjoyment.”²⁶⁸

Why is it, then, that by and large, driven behavior, although lacking anything like a goal, nevertheless unfolds itself such as to ensure an organism’s self-preservation? Is this simply a matter of dumb luck? Obviously not. In order to understand how this is so, however, we’ll need to bring natural selection back into the picture: for it is because it is subject to the vicissitudes of natural selection, again, that generally speaking, the satiation of the drives that systematically comprise the being of an organism comes to secure the organism’s self-preservation. When this is in fact the case, we say that the organism is evolutionarily “apt,” or perhaps that its drives are. However, there is in the same stroke always the possibility of drives whose satiation, rather than securing self-preservation, “tends” away from it—the possibility, that is, of “inapt” drives: for as Levinas writes, “the contents from which life lives are not always indispensable to it for the maintenance of that life, as means or as the fuel necessary for the ‘functioning’ of existence—or

²⁶⁸ *TI*: p. 187.

at least they are not lived as such,” for it is sometimes the case, as he goes on to say, that “with them we die, and sometimes prefer to die rather than be without them.”²⁶⁹ It may always come to pass, for instance, that due to its organic make-up, an animal is driven to eat something that is poisonous to it, relishing the toxin fully, or perhaps, to throw itself off a cliff “for no good reason,” exhibiting in the process all the exuberance with which it might (when “aptly” driven) hurl itself from the jaws of a predator. Drives like these lead away from survival and reproduction, and thus, tend to be “ironed out” over the long-run (i.e., selected against), leading to the appearance, but only the appearance, that the organism “knows what’s good for it” or for its own self-preservation, and that it thereby acts accordingly. In actual fact, sentient life “knows” drivenness, and drivenness alone.

This account—which at least provisionally allows us to understand how the satiation of driven behavior ensures self-preservation without in any way being oriented towards something like a goal—nonetheless seems to be problematized by the phenomenon of association. It is apparent, that is, that disparate experiences of an organism come to be associated or to have some sort of connection forged between them, given that an animal’s behavior often becomes altered, for instance, when earlier experiences led to this or that other experience in turn, or perhaps, have consistently led to it. By hastily interpreting this phenomenon, we might be led to believe that the animal thus comes to learn something about beings understood as such, and as such, that some particular activity or manipulation of this or that being leads towards or away from its goals—i.e., that the animal is conscious of beings and goal-oriented—but for reasons that we’ve already seen to some extent, and which will become clearer and this analysis advances, we will need to insist that such an interpretation completely misconstrues the phenomenon at issue, trading hopelessly on all sorts of equivocations. Association, rather, is a

²⁶⁹ *TI*: p. 111.

way, or rather, *the* way, in which sensing-experiences can affect one another *without* being “there” for each other, which is to say, *without* being self-temporalized, without grasping themselves, in the very thick of their living, on the horizon of the selfsame streaming life. As we’ll see below, the streaming conscious life does in fact temporalize itself out of a stream in which associations are *necessarily* already in play, thereby “supplementing” them in a sense; but association nevertheless is not *by itself* self-temporalization. It enriches the way in which a sensing-experience can involve itself in the unfolding of a driven behavior totally captivated by itself or in its own immediacy, without, of itself, amounting to an opening up to beings made manifest as such, which is to say, to temporalization and consciousness. It is self-temporalization, and this alone, which constitutes the in-order-to and the for-the-sake-of, on the basis of which beings are intended or come to be manifest, showing themselves on the horizon of their possibilities. Even when we take into consideration the frequent involvement of association, we will see that the drive *per se* has no goals.

What then, *is* drivenness? How is sensation connected to behavior, and what does this have to do with the drive? Since, as we have seen, the streaming conscious life is constantly aware of itself in its streaming insofar as it temporalizes for itself a series of sensation-experiences—insofar, that is, as it continually self-protains, as the arrival of the “current” moment of the selfsame streaming, sensations that are thereby “illuminated,” and thus given to continue the ongoing self-tending temporalization of the selfsame streaming life by projecting themselves in turn—it has become obvious to us that we will need to understand sensation, taken in its own right, if we’re to be able to understand how self-tending erupts or temporalizes itself from out of a stream of *non*-temporalized sensation-experiences *at all*, and most importantly, if we are to understand the significance of this eruption. But if sensation, *qua* sensation or in its

immediacy, is in fact connected with behavior, and if this has everything to do with the drive or the drivenness of life, then the drive must now become our theme. Even before or without any sort of analysis of the drive, we surely have *some* sense of what a “drive” is, and of the fact that this phenomenon bears a connection to pleasure and pain and in some way grants a peculiar “access” to beings, which, as we have nonetheless discovered, decidedly cannot be a relation to beings as such: i.e., an apprehension or any sort of *consciousness* of them. Furthermore, we have seen that association plays some part in what we could call the “disinhibition” of drives. Yet these phenomena remain obscure; only *after* the clarification of all this will it be possible to discover how sensible life, somehow brought out of a total captivation in its immediacy, can come to claim itself or be delivered to itself in its streaming, so as to continually have to determine for itself the orientation of its own being, which is just to say, so as to be responsible for itself—our primordial consciousness of time.

How, then, does sensible life, lived in its immediacy, unfold itself as the unfolding of a drive? Something comes to “unleash” behavior; a drive, following Heidegger, is *disinhibited*, we can say: “in its instinctual relatedness to..., behavior is open for...,” he writes. “But as instinctual activity,” ” he continues, “it can at the same time only be touched or affected by something that brings the instinctual relatedness into play, i.e., by something that can disinhibit it.”²⁷⁰ Surely, the sentient organism doesn’t simply thrash about this way or that at random: its behavior is released by something “capable” of doing just this. In the phenomenon of disinhibition, we can thus already catch sight of something *like* an “access” to beings, along with pleasure or pain, since it is always some other being that releases behavior or “disinhibits” it, and further, which does so by coming to alleviate a “feeling of need,” so that the behavior is inhibited only when the drive has been brought to its satiation. The drive, then, is like a “want,” which

²⁷⁰ FC: p. 255.

behavior, when disinhibited, comes to fulfill. But this, again, does not take place in the manner of a goal to be produced, and thereby, as engagement with a being understood as such; further clarification is therefore needed to disambiguate drivenness with its disinhibitions from goal-orientation and consciousness.

In order to do so, we should note at once that it is always some *sensing-experience* that brings a drive into play: for example, the pang of hunger, as a particular sort of sensing, is lived, *itself*, as the drive to eat—a drive which of course satiates itself in the unfolding of the eating behavior. In a certain sense, then, the drive just *is* a sensing-experience, a “feeling” of one or another sort; but it is one that exhibits itself as a “readying of the body,” so to speak, which allows some *other* sensing-experience (the “food-sensing,” in the given example) to disinhibit a connected, self-satiating behavior, i.e., that behavior by which the drive relaxes itself. Already, then, there is something like association at work here (albeit “simultaneously,” or at least not necessarily in connection with a quasi-temporal fusion of experiences), in that one sensing (the hunger-pang) “enriches” another so that the latter (thereby, a “food-sensing”) disinhibits precisely that behavior whose unfolding comes as self-satiation for it (for the presently “live” drive, that is), transforming the “feeling of need” into fullness or fulfillment, drivenness into satiation and thereby, into inhibition of the disinhibited behavior. Drivenness and its satiation thus organize themselves according to a relationship of sorts: an association, or rather, an *instinct*—for association in the strict sense builds upon this in a way that will soon become clear—which connects sensing-experiences differentiated amongst themselves upon the surfaces of the sentient body in such a way that one can serve as the disinhibition of a behavior that another drives on, and in such a way that the behavior, unfolding itself self-satiatedly, can draw itself out until full satiation comes to inhibit it and no doubt then allow for other drives to be

brought into play.

In “practice,” of course, drivenness usually unfolds itself in far more complex a fashion than the account I’ve just given would imply: for a single drive often complicates itself—requiring for its satiation a number of “steps” or linked behaviors—and furthermore, is always incorporated in a *system* of drives (hopefully an apt one, for the animal’s sake) or what Heidegger calls a “disinhibiting ring.”²⁷¹ The hunger-drive of a bee, for instance, first drives on its flight-behavior, which the emergence of any one of a number of (let’s say) “yellow-like” visual sensing-experiences—depending on the type of bee, of course—might disinhibit: a sensing-experience that we, but—so far as it is possible to tell—not the bee, can recognize as being “of” a flower. However (and crucially, as regards the issue at hand), the bee’s contact with a flower, in which its driven flight-behavior then results, does not fully satiate or inhibit the drive, but rather, only inhibits *one* “aspect” of it, so as to allow for the disinhibition of other connected behaviors, e.g., landing and nectar-sucking behaviors. These continue on until the hunger-drive ultimately transforms itself into feeling of fullness: a “feeling” which not only inhibits the behavior, but then serves as a *further* drive itself, which sends the bee “home” where the contents of the stomach are to be emptied. We see here, in this simple example, both an instance of the systematic cohesion of drives, and of the inner complication of one of them.²⁷² The complexity exhibited by this situation can no doubt be such as to tempt us to anthropomorphizing (or more precisely, again, to subjectivizing) interpretations: we think that the bee knows that nectar can be found in the flowers over yonder and that that is good food, so that, when the bee feels hungry, it can embark on its journey in-order-to satiate itself. However: by making the proper distinctions between objective presentation with its in-order-to, on the one

²⁷¹ See, for instance, *FC*: p. 257.

²⁷² See, for example: Mandyam V. Srinivasan "Honey Bees as a Model for Vision, Perception, and Cognition" in *Annual Review of Entomology* Vol. 55 (January 2010): p 267-284.

hand, and the disinhibition of driven behavior, on the other, we can recognize that another interpretation is possible—an interpretation which all available evidence forces us to accept. Everyday experience with bees should make this plain, but for further confirmation, we can consider an experiment that Heidegger describes in his lectures of 1929-1930, in which he subjects drivenness to analysis:

it has been observed that if its abdomen is carefully cut away while it is sucking, a bee will simply carry on regardless even while the honey runs out of the bee from behind. This shows conclusively[...] that the bee recognizes neither this [honey] nor even—though this would be expected to touch it more closely—the absence of its abdomen. There is no question of it recognizing any of this, it continues with its driven activity[...]. Rather, the bee is simply taken by its food. This *being taken* is only possible where there is an instinctual “toward...” Yet such a driven being taken also excludes the possibility of any recognition of presence. It is precisely being taken by its food that prevents the animal from taking up a position over and against this food.²⁷³

Because of the “operation” it has undergone, that is, the unfortunate bee in this experiment will *never* break off its eating behavior—as if it could think “I’ve been at this long enough; it’s time, now, to be getting back to the hive and attending to my other duties”—for a feeling of fullness will therefore never come to transform its hunger drive into satiation and allow for the disinhibition of any other drive, and there is nothing else “for” the bee but satiation in all its immediacy. Captivated in immediacy, a merely sentient organism simply goes on in the unfolding of a self-satiating behavior until—or perhaps unless—the presently operative drive has been inhibited, and since inhibition has been precluded in this case by the maiming of the bee’s stomach, the poor bee will simply go on sucking nectar, apparently until it perishes. While complicating my basic account of drivenness, then, the addenda above do not essentially alter it, and should in no way tempt us to lose our discipline and instead interpret the episode as a bee’s “knowing” flight towards a flower, where it understands that it can feed and satiate its hunger.

²⁷³ FC: p. 242.

Instinct, rather, links together sensation-experiencings distributing themselves on the sentient surface such that some of these become enriched by others, serving to disinhibit those behaviors which progressively satiate the drive-experiences (and which as an extrinsic matter, lead to the organism's self-preservation—though only for an “aptly” adapted organism, again).

It is in this way that sensible life, lived in its immediacy, is pure drivenness without goal-orientation, a striving for satiation that in the strict sense is no striving: for all along, the sentient being, *qua* sentience, knows nothing of needs or the reality of alimentation, and nothing of any satiations or sufferings of the past—which by behaving in this or that way, it would strive to duplicate or avoid repeating—or the future—which it would ensure or avoid with this behavior. Instead, the “here-and-now” of sentient life, as captivation in behavior, is lived as an island of sensing, absorbed in itself without relating itself to itself, and thus—although satiating itself, and so in a sense, a “striving”—without the struggle, and by the same token that which is *struggled against*, being understood at all or appearing for it. Heidegger:

That which disinhibits and releases the inhibitedness of the instinctual drive, that which allows the instinctual activity to respond to the disinhibition, and thus allows the animal to move within certain instinctual drives, must always in accordance with its essence withdraw itself. It is *nothing enduring* that could *stand over against the animal as a possible object*—whether as something changed or unchanged [in the process].²⁷⁴

This is sensibility “prior” to or without intentionality, without an object—objects that always refer to a goal (as an in-order-to, again) and thus on pain of infinite regress, as we saw earlier, to an ultimate end or “can-be;” but as Levinas points out: “sensible ‘knowledge’ does not have to surmount infinite regression, that vertigo of the understanding; it does not even experience it. It finds itself immediately at the term; it concludes[...]. The sense datum with which sensibility is

²⁷⁴ An object, we will remember, is a “movable.” *FC*: p. 255-256.

nourished always comes to gratify a need, respond to a tendency.”²⁷⁵ The immediacy of life is pleasure without purpose; “sensitivity is the very narrowness of life,” Levinas writes.²⁷⁶

To be disinhibited, behavior requires instinct or this “original association” of sensing-experiences—sensing-experiences which, for their own part, are already unities of something like stimulation, prominences of sensing. It is only in this way, via these prominences or unities and the instinct that first determines that the one will “enrich” the other, that a drive becomes “live” and behavior, disinhibited. On a rather naïve conception of sentient living, by contrast, stimulation equals “input,” the “data of sensation,” which would first simply impress itself upon the organism and then, get interpreted in some way, so that on the basis of whatever drives might be in operation, the organism would “decide” upon a course of action (or at least, would then be moved to “act”). This conception, which would already make for a problematic account of consciousness, is surely totally off the mark for a merely sentient living, given that, for one, nothing like a decision can be exhibited by a being that does not constitute a towards-which for itself. Furthermore, however, and more to the point for the issue at hand: we will need to insist that either the stimulation of an organism *cannot* equal anything like “neural input,” or else—to stick to the way in which I’ve been using these terms—that “stimulus” and “sensation-experience” are not synonymous. My earlier analysis of sensing *qua* prominences demonstrated that this is so as far as consciousness is concerned (that is, for sensing-experience *qua* phase of perceiving), but this is just as much the case for living behavior, also. How can we know that it is sensing-experiences, as prominences or unities, that disinhibit behavior, and not mere neural stimulation? We could imagine, if we liked, that an animal’s behavior, or something like it, *were* merely “stimulated” or released by means of the “point by point” stimulation of a sensing

²⁷⁵ *TI*: p. 136.

²⁷⁶ *TI*: p. 138.

surface; this seems an apt enough description for very simple reflexes, in fact. As Maurice Merleau-Ponty demonstrates in *The Structure of Behavior*, however, it is a terrible description for any sort of full-scale behavior.²⁷⁷ Were it to be released in this way, the behavior of an organism would have to be assembled from “point by point” stimulation in such a way that:

one would decompose the stimulus as well as the reaction until one encountered the “elementary processes” composed of a stimulus and a response which were always associated in experience. For example, the action of the scratching stimulus would be analyzed into as many partial actions as there are anatomically distinct tactile receptors in the ear. The twitching of the ear which responds to this excitant would be resolved in turn into a certain number of elementary contractions. In principle, to each part of the stimulus there should correspond a part of the reaction.²⁷⁸

Such an account already seems quite fantastical as a purported explanation of the complex movements of any highly developed animal; a good half of *The Structure of Behavior*, however, is dedicated to the conclusive demonstration of its falsity.²⁷⁹ Instead, in Merleau-Ponty’s words: “it would be more in conformity with the facts to consider the central nervous system as the place in which a total ‘image’ of the organism is elaborated[...] which would govern the distribution of the motor influxes, which would immediately give them the organization to which the least of our gestures gives witness.”²⁸⁰ But this is just to say that the behavior of a complex, sentient animal is “stimulated”—or rather, is disinhibited—by *complexes* of sensation, by the fused and self-differentiated sensing-experiences whose synthesis Husserl has described in broad strokes, distributing themselves as prominences across the sensing surfaces of the body only via relations of homogeneity and contrast and the further forms in which they are integrated, and the instinctual relationships which bring a behavior into play and allow for its release as described

²⁷⁷ Merleau-Ponty, *The Structure of Behavior*, trans. Alden Fisher (Duquense University Press, Pittsburgh); 1983. Hereafter listed as *SB*.

²⁷⁸ *SB*: p. 11.

²⁷⁹ *SB*: p. xiii-xiv, From John wild’s “Foreword.”

²⁸⁰ *SB*: p. 23.

above.

Surely, in fact, behavior is usually disinhibited, not simply by a “complex” of sensing, but (as Merleau-Ponty’s words already indicate) by a “complex” of these “complexes” in sensing, by prominences further “fused” together via the syntheses of *association* into still greater unities: that is, by what Husserl calls a “purely immanent objectlike formation.”²⁸¹ Especially in the case of highly developed animals, it is these complex sense-experiencings (a complex of “complexes” or unities, again) that emerge as disinhibition for all sorts of varied and highly articulated behaviors. We can no doubt already discover something of association in the bee; in more advanced animals, however, the complexity reaches such a level that, failing to make the necessary distinctions, it becomes impossible to deny that the fish or squirrel, for example, “has” an object *stricto sensu*, i.e., is conscious of this or that thing *as such*. A squirrel seems to know which way to run and climb in order to find acorns and other assorted food-stuffs, since, evidently, *previous* movement in this or that direction has led to food: the squirrel, we think, has learned something about the world or beings. But does the squirrel in *fact* learn anything, in the *strict sense*? Does it know that it has found acorns up this particular tree before, and so, that “here, there be food?” No, this is eminently doubtful: for experiments have demonstrated that mammals with apparently even more highly developed behaviors, such as felines and canines, lack true object-consciousness.²⁸² Rather, association builds upon instinct, so that over and above what is merely instinctual, a drive-experience is able to “enrich” *additional* sensing-experiences as disinhibition for all sorts of behaviors that it drives on—behaviors which have become associatively linked with its satiation—*without* thereby constituting this satiation as

²⁸¹ AP: p. 171.

²⁸² See, for instance: François Doré, Sylvain Fiset, Sonia Goulet, Marie-Chantale Dumas, and Sylvain Gagnon, “Search Behavior in Cats and Dogs: Interspecific differences in working memory and spatial cognition” in *Animal Learning and Behavior* Vol. 24 No. 2 (1996): p. 142-149.

the *towards-which* of the linked behavior, or as a goal, for instance, that some “tree” given in a sensing-experience “promises” (the tree the squirrel would ostensibly climb in-order-to find food). Like the bee, then, the squirrel remains just as much absorbed in the movement-behavior “towards” its food—that is, the movement remains as much an “end-in-itself,” as it were—as the eating of food itself, in which the driven behavior in question finally issues or ultimately satiates itself. It is for this reason that Levinas writes that “even if the content of life ensures my life, the means is immediately sought as an *end*, and the pursuit of this end becomes an end in its turn.”²⁸³

The same goes for all behavior *qua* sentient life:

an existence that has this mode is the body, both separated from its end (that is, need), but already proceeding towards the end without having to know the means necessary for its obtainment, an action released by the end, accomplished without knowledge of means, that is, without tools. Pure finality, irreducible to a result, is produced only by corporeal action ignorant of the mechanism of its own physiology.²⁸⁴

Plainly, this is so for all sentient living without, or before, consciousness or its temporalization. We are only led to faulty interpretations (such as that the squirrel has learned something about this or that being belonging to its environment, rather than merely being habituated via the forging of association) when we fail to recognize that a conscious act—exemplarily, a perceptual relation to a being thereby made manifest as such—*requires* self-temporalization: more than all else, it is therefore phenomenological investigation which undermines equivocations like these and those closely related to them. The squirrel, then, *must* remain every bit as much captivated in behavior or absorbed without remainder in its “here-and-now” as is the bee, unless we were to argue that the squirrel is a self-conscious being and temporalizes its living (a position for which we have exactly zero evidence). *Association is not learning, not* (at least when taken on its own) *familiarization with any being apprehended as*

²⁸³ *TI*: p. 111 [my emphasis].

²⁸⁴ *TI*: p. 136-137.

such; just like the sensing-experience itself, in fact, we are led to insist that it is formed simply via organic synthesis, which no more gives to the associated sensing-experience a sense of any other (spatially or temporally distinct) sensing-experience to which the association has joined it than do the fusing and differentiating syntheses (which first bring forth the unified sensing-experience or prominence in sensing) make manifest anything like an object in its being. The moment we take association to be self-temporalization or, perhaps, to require self-temporalization (as many thinkers who advance a “bio-phenomenology” today often do²⁸⁵), we fall into confusions of all sorts, and are then led to subjectivize squirrels and fish and bees (and even single-celled animals, in some cases²⁸⁶) despite the evidence—i.e., that there are animals that “feel” and behave but do not know or understand, that are “self-organizing” but that have no sense of self or others. Association, instead, as a *further* fusion of sensing-experiences, is, as I indicated earlier, simply the way that these sensing-experiences can “bear upon” or further “enrich” one another *without* thereby being “*there*” for each other or for themselves: a past sensing, that is, can always “enrich” a sensing-experience, allowing it to disinhibit behavior in ever more “apt” ways, without the sensing life, in its immediacy, knowing itself in its streaming as having had just such an experience before, by which it came to relate itself to the very same enduring being with which it now finds itself confronted.

For the subject, however, things stand differently.²⁸⁷ No doubt, were it *not* for such fusions—for both associations as well as the more basic fusions of prominences in sensing, that

²⁸⁵ See, for example: Evan Thompson, *Mind and Life; Biology, phenomenology, and the sciences of mind* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press); 2007. Hereafter listed as *ML*.

²⁸⁶ For example, see *ML*: p. 146-147.

²⁸⁷ The immediate sensing is not *simply* “enriched” by past sensing in this way, that is: and this is so, whether the fusion at issue is that which “locally” joins a just-passed sensing-experiences with it into an enduring unity or prominence of sensing (i.e., a “here-and-now” of sensible life), or else, that by which the latter sensing is, via association, further “enriched” by those to which it is “non-locally” joined. Conscious requires, further, the syntheses of self-temporalization.

is—the streaming life would not only have nothing to temporalize, but could never come to familiarize itself with its world, which is just to say that conscious life always emerges from out of sensibility—Husserl:

in streaming, considered purely as streaming, nothing other happens than primal association in which experiences show the unity of simultaneity and succession. Every self-directing and being-directed of the ego presupposes “experiences,” presupposes internal and external, simultaneous and successive association, through which the experiences are united in a universal simultaneous-successive field²⁸⁸

—but it is as *temporalized* that these past sensing-experiences are “there” for a sensing-experience “now” as other moments of the *selfsame streaming life*, so that, bound up with these other sensings by living itself as the “*current*” moment of this streaming, it intends an enduring and selfsame object as that which gives itself or is made manifest throughout this unity of experiencing—a being about which the subject increasingly becomes familiar, learning (in the *strict sense*) something as to the being that *it is* so as to be able to utilize it on this basis. The hammer and nails, or the key, lock and door, are thereby grasped *as such*, understood on the horizon of the sense of their being or of the possibilities of each, in conjunction with one another and with reference to the shared social world out of which the subject is always determining the being that he or she is to-be. Only by being “self-intended”—or as self-retained, -protained, and -maintained, that is—in the streaming life’s self-tending temporalization, are the moments of this life are granted their “thereness,” which allows the life to “have” its world or relate itself to beings apprehended as such. Conversely, the past or future—and thus even the present, strictly speaking—are not “there” for pure sensing or for life lived in its immediacy; and although via

²⁸⁸ C: p. 122 (C7 No. 29). Quoted in *PT*: p. 272. By the term association, here, Husserl means the syntheses of fusion and contrast in general: “internal associations,” then, are those which fuse “quasi-spatially,” and “external,” those that fuse “quasi-temporally,” “at a distance”—what usually goes by the name “association.”

association, they have their effect, the sentient living being *qua* mere sentience knows nothing of it.

§ 30

This clarifies Husserl's claim that, in "background lived-experiences to which the ego is not present[...], lived-experiences of drive[...] may be rooted." Sensation *qua* sensation is itself drive and disinhibition, feeling of need and its satiation, and is thus caught up inextricably in behavior. By "illuminating" sensation, the self-tending temporalization of life will thereby "illuminate" *behavior*, or better, it will *orient* it. To clarify how this occurs, however, must be to clarify how self-temporalization erupts within a stream of sensation at all, something we should now be in a position to do. All that remains before this, then, is for me to conclude this clarification of drivenness such that we will be able to understand how, in its immediacy, sensible life both is and is not a sort of "selfishness" or unqualified striving after self-preservation—a "striving" after self-preservation despite the fact that there is no striving, here, or no goal-orientation, and nothing like the appearance of a self—and both does, and does not, possess a sort of "access" to beings.

Something like a "selfless selfishness" is on display: a "selfishness," in fact, whose absolute dominion would be ensured by the fact that nothing at all appears of the self. Drivenness, as we've discovered, does not in the least involve anything like the self-distinction of a being from its environment, if by "self-distinction," we mean anything like the *awareness* of a difference: drivenness is in fact characterized precisely by the fact that a moment of sentient experiencing, untemporalized, is *not given to* such a distinction, by the fact that the living being remains steeped, as Levinas will say, in the "elements" or its milieu. But to be "as one" with its milieu or environing "world"—autopoietically coupled, so to speak—as the sentient living being

qua sentience may be conceived, is not (as some might have it) to be participant in anything like a “peaceful” or “harmonious” relationship with the milieu (not to mention, with the cosmos or with every other being), but rather, for the living being to care *nothing for*—and in fact, to have simply *no possibility whatsoever* of being determined by a concern for—anything *other* than itself. Of course, by the same token, such a being can care nothing for itself either, strictly put; but its being is always *like* a selfishness insofar as it lives *as if* it were the only one, as though it were the “center of being and its source,” as Levinas aptly puts the matter. And yet for the sentient living being to live in its immediacy as though it were something like the whole of being or all that is, is precisely for it to have no concern, in its being, about this being *itself*—about what it, *as a streaming totality*, is to-be, or even, about whether or not it is to-be at all. Captivated without remainder in the “moment,” it is moved instead only by the pain or pleasure of the “here-and-now”—disinhibited.

To unfold self-satiatedly and without purpose, wholly absorbed in the “moment” and without any sense of anything other *or* of the self, is to be captivated in behavior. We have reached this phenomenon—captivation in behavior—by clarifying the sensing-experience just as it is, prior to the self-temporalization that makes of it a moment of a selfsame streaming life: a clarification that required us to refuse to this phenomenon all that *cannot* belong to it by virtue of its being “prior” to self-temporalization, which thus required of us a “privative interpretation.”²⁸⁹ Pure sensing is captivation in behavior: thus, when we witness a being exhibiting something like an awareness of itself and of others (or of extant beings within the world more generally); time-consciousness; “practical reasoning” (grasping the “promise,” etc. of the extant); and an understanding of its own finitude and always impending death, etc.—all of which we see in

²⁸⁹ Fn #267.

humans beyond infancy (assuming the one in question is not “feral,” that is²⁹⁰) and perhaps in a few other species²⁹¹—we are thus forced to recognize that the sensing that makes up such being’s life does not remain “pure:” which is to say, that this sensing is given over to itself via the temporalization of time. Lived without this self-temporalization, though—and even, in a sense still to be clarified, also merely “beneath” it (“under” the self-temporalizing consciousness of the one who is conscious, that is)—sensible life lives itself only in an “enjoyment,” which in Levinas’s words, is thus “egoist without reference to the Other,[...] alone without solitude, innocently egoist and alone. Not against the others, not ‘as for me. . .’—but entirely deaf to the Other, outside of all communication and all refusal to communicate.”²⁹²

To what, then, does sensibility, taken in itself, “find itself” related, if not to *beings*, if not to other things and living beings with which the sentient organism is actually, in its behavior, not only of course always inextricably involved or related, but to which it somehow *does* nonetheless have a sort of “access?” To sense is no doubt to be “open for” something. This is a problem Heidegger grapples with, writing that:

The animal as such does not stand within a manifestness of beings[...]. The animal does not possess the possibility of attending either to the being that it itself is or to beings other than itself, because the animal is directed in its manifold instinctual activities on the basis of its captivation and of the totality of its capacities[...]. Yet this not-having any manifestness of beings, this manifestness

²⁹⁰ A point not unrelated to the purposes of this study, whose ultimate aim is to uncover the sociality of the subject.

²⁹¹ All the available evidence, for example, gives us to believe that elephants understand the significance of death, and that cetaceans do their best to express themselves to others: there is thus no conceivable reason to deny that the elephant or bottlenose (for instance) is a *subject*, or at least “has” something like a share of subjectivity: and thus, as we will see, that, like us, the elephant and the bottlenose has been stirred by the ethical relation, which is to say, moved by the other (after all: elephants have been witnessed mourning the death other elephants, and bottlenoses have been witnessed saving the lives of not only other dolphins, but even human beings—who surely must seem strange and perhaps even threatening to them).

This, however (and for reasons that should later become clear, in Chapter 5), should not be taken to imply that ethical consideration ought be given, beyond humans, *only* to elephants, bottlenoses, and other types of beings that, like us, are or can be subject. To be exposed ethically is subjection to exposedness to every other in turn.

²⁹² *TI*: p. 134.

as withheld from the animal, is at the same time a being taken by. . . . [I.e., it is a being taken by “*something*.”] We must say that the animal is related to. . . , that captivation and behavior display an *openness* for. . . . For what precisely? How are we to describe what is encountered, as it were—in the specific openness of being taken—with respect to the drivenness of instinctual captivation? How shall we determine what the animal relates to in its behavior, even though this is not manifest as a being?²⁹³

An “access without access” to beings—tied fundamentally, as it is, to the sort of “selfishness without a self” that characterizes sensibility *per se* or sensing before time-consciousness: if not to beings apprehended as such, then to *what* does the living being, *qua* sensing, have “access?” Precisely to *disinhibitions*, to being *so far as* it disinhibits, but in no way whatsoever to anything insofar as it *is*. It is for this reason that, as we just saw, Levinas describes life as sensibly “steeped in the element:”²⁹⁴ in “elements” which are like “content without form,”²⁹⁵ or “qualities without support, without *substance*.”²⁹⁶ To be “steeped in the elements” thus does not amount to:

a mutilated or still stammering “thought” correlative of such phenomena [of “the element as a quality without substance,” that is]. To-be-in-the-element does indeed disengage a being from blind and deaf participation in a whole, but differs from a thought making its way outward. Here on the contrary the movement comes incessantly upon me, as the wave that engulfs and submerges and drowns—an incessant movement of afflux without respite, a total contact without fissure nor gap from which the reflected movement of thought could arise. It is to be within, to be inside of. . . . This situation is not reducible to a representation, not even an inarticulate representation; it belongs to sensibility, which is the mode of enjoyment.²⁹⁷

To call sensibility a “representation,” in fact—as we see all the time in the literature of comparative psychology and so forth, unfortunately—is *at best* to use a poor word as placeholder for a phenomenon that remains totally unclarified: for not only is the distinction between

²⁹³ *FC*: p. 248 [emphasis altered].

²⁹⁴ *TI*: p. 137.

²⁹⁵ *TI*: p. 131.

²⁹⁶ Most precisely, we can say *hyle* without an object. *TI*: p. 137 [my emphasis].

²⁹⁷ *TI*: p. 135.

representations and presentations likely to be totally ignored whenever the word is used in this way, but more importantly, the way that *both* of these phenomena, which are modes of consciousness, are distinct from the “phenomenon” of sensing, which in itself is *not*—the way they are distinct from an “access without access,” that is, which has no object as correlate, and thus, in which no being is *given*—is *also* usually suppressed.

Steeped in the elements as if in an interiority without an exterior, then, the organism is disinhibited as if by totally assimilated forces, as if the movement that the elements provoke in a living being originated in itself—the very movement whose unfolding is its own self-satiation. The disinhibition does not give something other. Nor does pain or the feeling of need, lived in its immediacy, signal a lack or limit for the sentient being, or anything like an exterior resistance to the unfolding of its behavior: “far from putting the sensible life into question,” Levinas writes, “pain takes place within its horizons and refers to the joy of living.” Nothing of behavior impugns this naivety, or gives it a world. And yet, we might object:

does not the “side of things” offered as an element refer implicitly to the “other side” [i.e., to beings themselves as such]? Implicitly, to be sure. And in the eyes of reason the contentment of sensibility is ridiculous. But sensibility is not a blind reason and folly. It is prior to reason; the sensible is not to be ascribed to the totality to which it is closed. Sensibility enacts the very *separation* of being—separated and independent.²⁹⁸

As self-satiation, that is, or a disinhibited drivenness unfolding itself in its own enjoyment, sensing is separation, the hollowing out of interior life: Levinas thus speaks of “the interiority which enjoyment opens up,”²⁹⁹ or which is “hollowed out by enjoyment.”³⁰⁰ This distinguishes

²⁹⁸ *TI*: p. 138 [my emphasis]. Levinas continues: “Sensibility is not a thought unaware of itself. To pass from the implicit to the explicit a master who evokes attention is necessary. To evoke attention is not a subsidiary work; in attention the I transcends itself. But a relation with the exteriority of the master was necessary to engage attention. Explication presupposes this transcendence.”

Much more will have to be said about the relation to another in a moment.

²⁹⁹ *TI*: p. 147.

³⁰⁰ *TI*: p. 149.

the living being from the whole of being in a peculiar fashion, for although here—in obvious contrast to “brute matter”—the organism does gain a sort of access to being *qua* the elements, it does so only insofar as it remains closed up within the “here-and-now” of living, within self-satiating behavior, and is thus precisely *not* given over to understand anything of beings as such, or to intend anything, objects of an act. For a moment of sensing to be self-temporalized, then—opened up to the being to-come and the being passed-by of the selfsame streaming life, and thereby, *part and parcel of this*, to beings made manifest as such or in their being—must therefore be for that moment to be *torn from itself* in some way: to be delivered, already, from the immediacy of life’s “striving,” from a self-absorption so total that we cannot speak of the self.

How then, this deliverance?

To understand the condition of self-temporalization is to understand just what *does* come to pass when a living being is somehow freed from captivation in its own behavior, so that in the wake of this, it can “throw itself” (projection and throwness) or give itself over, beyond the “here-and-now,” to its being to-come and its having-been—to its streaming being as a totality—and on this basis, to its own presence. But for this, we will need to allow the concrete analysis of self-temporalization presented in the first Part of this study to come to our aid. For if a moment of sensing must be “distanced from itself” in some way to be able to temporalize itself at all, or must somehow overstep or “transcend” itself—and only ever, we will see, in a “partial” and very specific sense—then certainly the “breakthrough” that we would like to study that allows for this “self-distancing” or “transcendence” cannot remain indifferent to the self-temporalization that will follow or collect itself in its wake. While remaining “separate” or enclosed within itself—still “steeped” in the elements of the “earth,” that is—the living being that will be *subject*

somehow comes to be obliged to come out into the world all the same: a being, essentially caught up in the struggle of the living, as all life is, that thus becomes characterized in its very being as a sort of struggle *with* this struggling, in the sense that now, it must make sense of it.

The streaming life of subjectivity is, first and before anything, a sensing life. But sensing is *behavior*, the unfolding of a drivenness. As we've just discovered, a "given" arrangement of prominences—of unified sensing-experiences—arrives as both drive and disinhibition of a drive or series of drives, which, for their own part, unfold themselves, and thereby satiate themselves, in behavior. When they come to pass in the *self-tending* life, however—as moments of the selfsame or the streaming life of subjectivity—such sensing-experiences, as self-temporalized, must be subject to a sort of modification. As part of *this* sort of a life, they will not simply unfold themselves in behavior—although they still will do just this, we will see—but must in the same stroke be given to be self-apprehended as the ongoing experiencing of the selfsame, and as such, be delivered over to themselves precisely as constituting an apprehension or relationship of understanding to some enduring being within the world: which is to say, must be made into a *consciousness*, which—grasping the significance of the being at hand on the horizon of a shared world and the projects by which the streaming life has come to determine that which it is to-be—thus is inextricably caught up in a *choosing* on this basis: the freedom, that is, of its self-determination. But insofar, then, as a moment of sensing is given over to itself, self-temporalized as a moment of the selfsame streaming life, this sensing, which will still go on unfolding itself as behavior in accordance with either instinct or else its habituated "reformation," will nonetheless unfold itself only under the watch, as it were, of that life's *guiding orientation*: its self-projection upon this or that "towards-which" on the basis of an ultimate "can-be." Somehow the moment of living, from "within itself," has been made to "step outside" itself (to transcend itself, that is) so as to give itself, as a moment of a streaming totality, a sort of guiding light. At times, the

concrete behavior connected with it is promoted by this guidance and cultivated further; at times, it is reproached or directed otherwise.

It is for this reason, initially and for the most part, that a conscious life can find itself at odds with itself as regards its “doing.” Self-conflict is not some happenstance or accidental occurrence that the one who will be subject just seems to exhibit on occasion, but is essentially grounded as a possibility in the very being of the subject, which is to say, in its self-temporalization.

There are, of course, numerous types of self-conflict, as well as modalities in which these can emerge.³⁰¹ By thinking through the possibility of self-conflict in *general*, however, we are led to the theme of self-alienation, and thus, to the utterly distinctive nature of the (self-)identity that comes to be forged in the self-temporalization of life from sensing-experiences. As we’ve already seen, the streaming conscious life is nothing other than or without its moments (it produces itself precisely as the continual unfolding of these moments, constituted for

³⁰¹ In cases in which there is *no* conflict whatsoever, the subject, in a state of what we may (following Husserl) call “*receptivity*,” allows himself or herself to go on being or comporting him- or herself towards the object at hand just as the behavior in its unfolding gives him or her to (and though those considerations that consciousness can always bring to an action in principle far outstrip what the unfolding of behavior can “grasp” of the circumstance, because of the effect of prior habituation of the drives or of driven behavior, the subject in receptivity can often enough simply “allow” the habit-body to unfold itself in its immediacy fully as if the habits themselves “knew” what only the body, caught up in its *self-temporalizing* illumination of things, can know).

When there *is* conflict, by contrast, the subject finds the need to assert him- or herself willfully, so as to strain against him- or herself, as it were, freeing the body from the deeply dug channels in which the course of its behavior is funneled. However, there are distinctions between the manners in which this conflict can appear: when nothing like belief intercedes on behalf of the recalcitrance of the habit-body, for example, this straining only has the significance of a “retraining,” such as when a sprinter, in order to run with more efficiency, finds he or she has to willfully stretch the legs out more fully than his or her habitual strides would allow. There is no sense, here, in *wanting* what the recalcitrant habit keeps on demanding, its short strides: “reason,” as it were, takes precedence. Yet sometimes the conflict has a different valence: namely, when the “want” of the habit-body, or better, of sensible life, comes into conflict with a projection of life in its streaming self-consciousness in such a way that the sensible want is *itself* possessed of some share of self-projection: the unfolding of behavior or its satiation, in other words, is *also* in such cases apprehended as a goal towards which the subject projects him- or herself. In such situations, there is then always a question of which goal is to take precedence.”

There are of course a number of difficulties here, some of which will have to be worked through later on in this study, but for present purposes this outline of the issue will be sufficient to move forward.

themselves), while each moment comes to itself or is self-present only on the horizon of the streaming life. And yet: since each moment can in its turn come into conflict with the orientation of the totality, it nonetheless always remains in some sense “alien” to the life as a whole—which is to say, to itself. There is perfect identity here at the same time as an ever possible opposition.

How can we account for the strangeness of this identity, which can at any moment become self-opposed: an identity conflicting with itself? However strange it may seem, the self-opposition borne within the subject’s self-identity is implicated in its very essence, which is to say, in the very fact that the self-constitution of the streaming conscious life (by which the subject’s self-identity is continually wrought or produced) is this life’s having to determine that which it is to-be, i.e., the stream’s being responsible for itself as a totality. As a sensing-experience “encountered” on the horizon of the selfsame or of this life as an unfolding totality, that is to say, the “current” moment of the streaming conscious life continually emerges as “me,” and yet in this continual emergence of “me” to “myself,” what emerges emerges *precisely* as that which “I” must continually “keep on track.” And yet this having to “stay on track”—whatever that “track” may be (and this of course takes on the most varied forms for individuals across cultures in concrete human life)—exhibits at once the *recalcitrance* of the drives; responsibility for “my” own being, part and parcel of a life’s self-tending temporalization, takes its stand always in opposition to a tendency towards errancy—a tendency to be led astray by “unthinking” indulgence in whatever “desire” happens to come my way; or to get caught up, once more, in the self-satiating drivenness of the mere “here-and-now,” and thus, in a sense, to “lose myself” in it. But that is to say, to “lose myself” in “myself”—while to resist the tendency towards errancy will then be to “win myself” *from* “myself,” though nonetheless, always *for* myself.

However paradoxical this might appear, we cannot imagine responsibility for “my life” in

relation to this or that concrete ideal except on the basis of an essential inclination, which must be mastered, to fail by its light. Struggling in the *strict sense*—a struggling with “my” own “animal striving,” even on occasion a struggling *against* that very “striving” which comprises my being *qua* living—comes into the world only in this way, with the living being that endeavors to comport itself so that each moment of its living will have been a moment of a life lived well (however such a life has come to appear by its own lights, and irrespective of whether or not this seems a noble life to you or I, or perhaps even amounts to little more than a life that goes on winning for itself the greatest possible satiation of its own appetites, as is sometimes the case for “one” who has been “poorly acculturated”³⁰²). Of course, we need not conceive of the drives as being of such a nature as to be, by this very nature, in *direct* opposition with that for-the-sake-of-which the streaming conscious life in any given case *is*; it is enough that the drives are not such as to be, in their immediacy, *necessarily* in keeping with that upon which the subject is self-projected, which is just to say, that conflict is always a possibility. For this reason above all we must insist that it is not by its own devices that a moment of experiencing comes to be a part of “something greater,” of a whole life: for the moment of experiencing to be present to itself is for it to see itself in the light of a finality that comes to it, in a sense, from without, from the horizon of its life as a *whole* or a streaming totality—an imperative that thus comes to each moment of living, in all its immediacy, as though *despite* itself, although what it signifies is precisely the issue of its *own* being. Otherwise, the moments of a sensing life make up only “a set of finalities which ignore one another,” as Levinas puts it, and thus, do not exhibit self-conflict in any real sense.³⁰³ Self-satiating, the unfolding of a drive suffices to itself.

As we saw at the end of §30, the self-temporalization of a streaming life presupposes that

³⁰² On something like “inadequate” acculturation in Aristotle, see *NM*: p. 3 (1095a2-11).

³⁰³ *TI*: p. 133.

every moment of “its” living—of what will only be produced as a moment of its living *via* this temporalization—has somehow been “torn from itself” already or delivered from the total captivation of its “here-and-now,” so that each one can, in its turn, be “more” than itself in its immediacy, a moment of the streaming totality. This deliverance is the condition of self-temporalization; but what can we make of it? On the one hand, it must prepare for the temporalization of self-tending, somehow...; but on the other, it must do so by producing a very specific sort of tension, a “difference-within-identity” that characterizes each moment of living *vis-à-vis* the streaming totality—and thus *vis-à-vis* itself. This tension precisely bears witness to the essential character of the deliverance that opens each moment of living to the possibility of its self-temporalization, so that it might be (self-)given, or grasp for itself its place within the streaming as such. What is it *precisely*, then, that is indicated here? Precisely what, following Levinas, I will call the *recurrence* of the self: a sort of exposedness of each moment of living, which keeps open a distance between the moment and that to which the moment cannot keep its distance—which is to say, between the moment and itself. The identity-in-difference of a streaming—which makes self-conflict ever possible, and which (following Levinas, again) I called a life’s “ageing” in the prelude to this study—points to a condition whose essence, in this prelude, I found most clearly exhibited in the affect of shame, where self-conflict is most pronounced: a condition that cannot be clarified by a merely formal analysis, as if the matter simply concerned some logical problem of identity. Like self-temporalization itself, its own condition has an “existential” significance—or rather, in this case, a significance more primordial than the “existential,” for it concerns, as we will see, that which first puts my existence in question so that it becomes an issue for itself at all.

How, then, has a life, the life of subjectivity, come to be as such? What has befallen it so

as to subject it to this self-responsibility, to a streaming self-identification thus bearing within itself a self-*alienation* of sentient being in its immediacy (whether this fact has, in any particular case, been illuminated as such in an experience of self-conflict or not)? This subjection must deliver life from its immediacy without simply dashing the immediacy of life, without abolishing the captivation or enclosedness in itself which is characteristic of sentience:

in the separated being [a being, now, that is given to itself in this “separateness”] the door to the outside must be at the same time opened and closed. The closedness of the separated being must be ambiguous enough for, on the one hand, the interiority necessary to the idea of Infinity to remain *real* and not apparent only[...]. But on the other hand *within the very interiority* hollowed out by enjoyment there must be produced a heteronomy that incites to another destiny than this animal complacency in oneself.³⁰⁴

Riveted to itself and yet torn from this rivetedness: such must be the sensing-experience capable of being brought out of the darkness of immediacy and into the light of time, illuminated in self-temporalization as a moment of the self-tending stream or life.

Everything now turns on our being able to clarify this deliverance—the condition of self-temporalization—or at least to the extent that this is possible. What is clear at least is that, since it is prior to all consciousness (and thus, before “emotion,” i.e., *Befindlichkeit* or the way in which “I find myself”), this deliverance must in some way be understood as a *purely sensible* affection—albeit, one which has the peculiar characteristic of coming to alienate the moment of sense-experiencing from itself. By the same token, it must somehow strike, *with all the immediacy of the sensible*, the sensible living so affected, and yet in such a way as to precisely challenge the very immediacy of sentient life, “immediately” divesting life of its immediacy, as it were: albeit never completely. If descriptions such as these seem more likely to lead us into profundity than clearness, though, we will at least be able to advance securely by keeping to the phenomenon of self-tending temporalization as we have come to understand it in this study: for

³⁰⁴ *TI*: p. 148-149.

by cleaving each moment of sensible life both to and from itself, the affection that we seek must come to deliver each one in such a way as to compel it—or perhaps, inspire it—to take responsibility for itself or determine itself in its streaming as a totality, and always according to something like an ideal or basic orientation that it must choose for itself, but in such a way as to continually keep itself oblivious to this choosing. We can clarify the basic character of the affection at issue, that is, precisely by keeping before us that in which, self-temporalized, the enigmatically affected sentient living is to issue.

This, then, clarifies the guiding line that will allow us to finally bring the basic condition of subjectivity to light. But one more consideration should be added to this: namely, that self-temporalization—as a life’s having to determine itself or that which it is to-be—is *part and parcel* of its openness to beings, or as we’ve seen, of each relationship, perceptual or otherwise, to a being made manifest as such. The subject is thereby “given” both itself *and* others, and in such a way that, by being-with the others or dwelling with them significantly in a shared, social world, he or she is able to seize upon objects on the basis of a self-projected possibility, which precisely constitutes a way of belonging to this world and living with others.

But as we will right away discover, this means that to reveal the basic condition of subjectivity and temporalization, we will need to discover how the other reveals himself or herself as such.

§ 32

The sentient life is open to something like a milieu; open to disinhibitions in its own way, or in the precise and distinctive fashion that characterizes each living animal. Despite this distinctive “openness,” however—or rather, because of it—the merely sensible life, *qua* sentience, is closed in on itself. In no way is it delivered over to itself in its own being; in no way

does it find itself in relation to any other being recognized *as such*. If openness in the strict sense comes to pass, then—and there is no doubt that it does come to pass: for despite all the skeptical doubts that a purely epistemological analysis discovers or else, invents (an analysis that always comes too late, as it were, to apprehend the “facts” of constituting existence), there can be no doubt that, as conscious beings, we live as *one being among others*—then it must be the case that sensibility undergoes a sort of transformation in the one who will be subject. But it is not that sensible life is, *pure and simple*, “opened up,” for in a very real and irreducible sense, the self-enclosedness or separation of sensible life is never, and could never, be “transcended:” although opened onto the world, we remain fixed in our own life, “rooted” in it—and in fact, as we will see just below, only a being who remains as such can have any sense of being at all. “My” experiences no doubt remain “mine” alone; we can certainly never step out of our own lives or experiencing in order to somehow experience that precise experiencing—the joy or elation; the feeling of vitality; the debilitating pain or abject misery; the suffering unto death—that is lived by *another*.

This “inability,” or rather, the recognition of it—which is to say, of the enclosedness of life within its own living or the rivetedness of the sentient living to its own being—is in fact *the* critical issue for our entire sense of exteriority, of otherness or alterity. To be open to the outside is precisely to “know” this rivetedness *as such*: this “knowledge” is *itself* the very deliverance, “breaking through” self-enclosedness, which as we saw, must be effected in a sort of sensible “affection” (in the primordial affection of subjectivity, in fact). Put otherwise—*it is by “feeling” myself closed up in my living that I am open to being*. For what could knowledge or familiarity with a world be to a being that did not find itself to be separate or in a sort of disconnect from the totality? And what could a *self* be that was not confronted with the life and experiencing of the

others—precisely the life and experiencing with which, strictly speaking, it cannot *possibly* be confronted, insofar as this is, for *it*, the unexperienceable, that which *cannot* be encountered? To be touched by the outside is at once to feel enclosedness from within, and with a certainty going beyond all the pretensions of knowledge (for there is no knowledge before this certainty).

How does a sentient living being come to be touched by the outside, then, by alterity or perhaps by another revealing himself or herself as such? How can a moment of living “feel” itself riveted to itself or to its “here-and-now,” “coming across itself” bound in the very rivetedness which should, strictly speaking, keep it from ever coming across itself at all?

The living being, we’ve discovered, lives its life “as though it were the center of being and its source, as if it drew everything from the here and now[...]:” “to it,” Levinas continues, “the forces that traverse it are already assumed—it experiences them as already integrated into its needs and enjoyment.”³⁰⁵ This is surely pretension; but a pretension that, as we’ve also seen, is part and parcel of sentience, caught up in the immediacy of its own living. Thus, if anything of alterity is to come to the moment, it can only be because, without simply doing away with the self-enclosedness of life or its captivation in the “here-and-now,” the moment of sentient living is somehow cleaved both to and from its immediacy, or from the unfolding of behavior or its self-satiation: because the self-captivation of this enclosedness—or its “self-centeredness”—is somehow thrown back on itself as such. For reasons that we’ve already encountered, this cannot come to pass through the emergence of any mere “problem of life,” through frustration of the *conatus* of sentient living; such “problems” or frustrations, insofar as they are “given” at all in sensible life, are “given” as further disinhibitions, which again spur on a self-enclosed living that

³⁰⁵ “The *I* and the Totality” in *EN*: p. 13.

simply does not appear to itself.³⁰⁶ If deliverance does occur—and for the one who is subject, it has and will—it can only come to pass by means of an absolutely exceptional breach, without precedent in the sensible order. The life that lives itself as if it were “the center of being and its source” is put in its place, shown up in its very partiality. It is humbled. But it is precisely the other who comes to humble or to disabuse “me” of my vanity, to compel me to live as if I were not the only one; “because of presence before the face of the Other,” Levinas writes, “man does not permit himself to be deceived by his glorious triumph as a living being.”³⁰⁷ By revealing himself or herself *as other*, then—which is to say, in his or her otherness or alterity—the other comes to subject me, the one made subject, to responsibility, obligating me to account for myself. The conceit of life, captivated as though its satiations and suffering were everything, is struck down; I am made to answer for myself or my own being.

Here, in the other’s self-revelation, we discover the primordial eruption of alterity. By the same stroke, I, the subjected one, am brought out of a total absorption in my immediacy, insofar as the interrogation coming from the other’s gaze immobilizes me or brings my being to a standstill—a me, facing the outside, that *as such*, is produced for the first time in this eruption. Of course, by accusing the one made subject—“me”—or by subjecting him or her to this humility, the approach of the other doesn’t *force* the subjected one to live as a one among others; rather, it *obligates* him or her to do so, makes the subjected one answerable before the other: it places *me* under the responsibility to do right by the one who has come to face me, to live as though I am not alone and so, to have to answer for my being before the other. To be obligated,

³⁰⁶ “For the totality of contentment to reveal its phenomenality and its inadequacy to the absolute it does not suffice that a discontent be substituted for contentment. Discontent still remains within the horizon of a totality, as an indigence which, in need, anticipates its satisfaction[...] The totality of contentment betrays its own phenomenality when an exteriority that does not slip into the void of needs gratified or frustrated supervenes[...] when this exteriority, incommensurable with needs, breaks interiority by this very incommensurability[...].”*TI*: p. 180.

³⁰⁷ *TI*: p. 179.

ethically, is to be made subject before another, to live in the revelation of the other one.

It by being affected by the other, whose approach obligates “me” or makes me answer for myself— that is, *via* the relation to the other *as such*—that the one made subject is stirred to subjectivity, given to collect himself or herself in self-responsibility: i.e., to self-tending temporalization or the self-constitution of the streaming conscious life. To have to determine what I am to-be is to respond to the other’s questioning, which for the first time, gives me over to myself. Levinas:

It is only by approaching the Other that I attend to myself[...]: in discourse I expose myself to the questioning of the Other, and this urgency of the response—acuteness of the present—engenders me for responsibility; as responsible I am brought to my final reality. This extreme attention does not actualize what was in potency, for it is not conceivable without the other. Being attentive[...] presupposes the call of the other.³⁰⁸

The subjectivity of the subject follows only in the wake of the other’s affection, the obligation to which the other subjects me—“responsibility is anterior to deliberation and is that to which I have thus been exposed and dedicated before being dedicated to myself,” Levinas writes.³⁰⁹

With this, the condition of self-tending temporalization—of the subjectivity of the subject—has finally revealed itself to us as the other’s approach and self-revelation; thus, the basic thesis of this study has been brought to its provisional demonstration. To demonstrate it comprehensively, however, will require us to fully clarify how the relation to the other as such delivers up the subjected one to collect himself or herself in self-responsibility, which is just to say, up to the three “ekstases” of self-tending temporalization—i.e., to the self-protaining, self-retaining, and self-maintaining of the living that thereby remains vigilant over its own being. This demonstration will be accomplished in Chapter 5 of my study. In order to prepare the way for this, however, it will be necessary to sketch out an answer to the three questions posed above

³⁰⁸ *TI*: p. 178.

³⁰⁹ *TI*: p. 5.

of self-temporalization—questions pertaining to its very essence, as we saw—precisely by referring self-temporalization to its condition in ethical subjection.

Doing so will bring us back to an analysis of the idea of infinity, as the mark made by the other *via* his or her self-revelation, or the relation to another as such.

§ 33

Life lives itself in its immediacy; but the life made subject has been subjected, in the very immediacy of each one of its moments, to an affection which comes from the other, calling its spontaneity into question and compelling it to answer for itself, or for the being it is and has to be. In this humbling that the other brings, the one made subject is delivered up to the other, *obligated*, so that, having to respond for his or her own being, the affecting living can thus temporalize itself or tend after its own being and, thereby, find itself affected (*Befindlichkeit*) as regards its projects or that which it strives to realize (self-projection). Before the self-revelation of the other, then, no discourse or self-responsibility, no being-in-the-world—which is to say, no subjectivity, no consciousness: this interrogation or accusation, coming from the other and delivering me up in what we could call ethical love, is my very condition *qua subject, qua* conscious life. My own being is given as the purest vanity outside of this demand for peaceableness, or to account for myself before the other and make my being good by his or her lights. A mark is made:

Flawless identity freed from all participation, independent in the I, can nonetheless lose its tranquility[...]. freedom then is inhibited, not as countered by a resistance, but as arbitrary, guilty, and timid: but in its guilt it rises to responsibility. Contingency, that is, the irrational, appears to it not outside of itself in the other, but within itself. It is not limitation by the other that constitutes contingency, but egoism, as unjustified of itself. The relation with the Other as a relation with his [or her] transcendence—the relation with the Other who puts into question the brutal spontaneity of one's immanent destiny—introduces into me what was not in me.³¹⁰

³¹⁰ *TI*: p. 203.

What can be said, then, of the other's self-revelation, when it is no appearance or manifestation? The outside must "break in" on the moment of living, "give" it what it did not and could not "contain," precisely by showing it up in the partiality that must otherwise preclude any opening at all; but by revealing himself or herself as other, the other precisely *does not appear*: it is instead by giving himself or herself as that which does *not* appear—or rather, as that which by necessity *cannot* appear, since the experiencing of the other gives itself across a chasm that cannot be crossed—that the other is revealed *as such*. The affection of the other, which thus "does not consist in *giving* us the Other's interiority,"³¹¹ is precisely the leaving of a *trace*: revealing or perhaps "giving" himself or herself as that which can never be given to me, as that which is outside the orbit of my own experiencing since it comes from a totally other sphere, the other affects me as such and commands me, with a significance that is preeminently of the ethical, to live under the sign of this recognition. We will thus need to insist that the other's approach, in its primordial significance, firstly: is not constituted for and by the subject *via* the apprehension of some object merely made manifest which then, in addition, is taken to indicate that it "possesses" its own "interior aspect;" and secondly: does not and cannot come to pass by means of any sort of analogy with my own interiority or experiencing—for here, we discover the very condition by which, on the one hand, an object can be made manifest or a being can show up as such *at all*, and on the other, by which my own experiencing, in its streaming, can be grasped by me or identified as such. As a sort of "appearance," then, the other's self-revelation is unprecedented, and in its primordially, is not given within consciousness at all. It is not even that the *trace* of the other is given to consciousness: consciousness is this trace. Calling immediacy into question, the approach of the other is an interrogation of the subjected one; subjectivity is the form of the response.

³¹¹ *TI*: p. 202.

This is then to say that subjectivity, a being's being responsible for its being or our self-tending temporalization, is inspired in a sentient living precisely insofar as that sentience is touched by the otherness of the other and obligated to answer for itself, to respond to the other's questioning or call. But the answerability of the subjected one, as a trace left by the other's approach, does not simply inspire a single moment of sentient living alone, to then go on its way, leaving life unchanged: were this the case, that life would right away lapse back into pure immediacy and would never come to be self-temporalized; the unaffected moments would remain buried in themselves or the "here-and-now" in which they live themselves out, where no self-temporalization could reach them. Rather, as subjection or subjectedness delivering me over to my subjectivity, the trace left by the other is such as to *incessantly* disturb the one made subject, to disquiet *me* in every moment of my living or for all the days of my life: it is only as such that each and every moment of living is beside itself with the other and, thereby, given to collect itself in the self-responsibility of its own temporalization. The other leaves a wound that will never heal—or perhaps, one that at most only death (like Plato's φάρμακον) could come to cure me of: the wound of love or the very "psyche in the self"—its "inspiration" or ψυχή, as Levinas puts it³¹²—which is thus closer to my own soul than my own being, for it is only through it that I am always given to draw near to myself in every moment of my living, to self-temporalize. Because the other's trace, as inspiration or subjectedness, brings from out of its lostness in itself *every* moment of the living of the one thereby made subject, Levinas refers to it, again, as "recurrence."³¹³ We discover, here, the irreducible disquietude that afflicts a being that has been "taught" otherness by the other: "a being," in Levinas's words, "whose very existing consists in this incessant repetition of teaching, in this incessant overflowing of self"—which, as

³¹² *OB*: p. 69, 149.

³¹³ For instance *OB*: p. 108.

Levinas immediately adds, “is time.”³¹⁴

Already in his *Meditations*, Descartes had discovered that the *cogito* (or his own self-consciousness, more generally) leads back to the Idea of the Infinite, a mark made in the very production or creation of his own soul. This mark is the trace the other leaves: which is to say, *me*, the self in the accusative—that which is “fished out” from sentient behavior or experiencing by the ceaseless inspiration of each one of its moments, thrown back on itself in having to answer for itself so that it can thereby get seized upon as “my” own. But in Descartes, also, we see that by the same token, this mark is an idea of *perfection*: “for how could I understand that I doubted or desired—that is, lacked something,” Descartes asks, were this not in contrast to an “idea” that “enabled me to recognize my own defects by comparison?”³¹⁵ Precisely insofar as I am exposed in this way, or shown up in the vanity of my self-absorption by the other’s approach or self-revelation (in the “imperfection” of this partiality, that is), I am subject to an *absolute* or unqualified command to justify myself, to answer ceaselessly and unevasively for that very being in which I remain caught up inextricably under the unending recognition that I am not alone. As such, the command that the other brings me—which is already complex and can be thrice articulated, as we’ll discover in the final chapter of this study—is unconditional, binding a life to an idea of perfection, of absolute respect for the alterity of the others. The subjectedness of the subject that I am, that is, signifies precisely insofar as I must answer for myself, and not simply insofar as I repose in an answer.³¹⁶ But this is just to say that the other, affecting me as other (or perhaps better, affecting as such what only will have been “my” sensible living), affects my being by subjecting it to a *pure* and *total* interrogation, and so, by making me absolutely answerable before absolutely every other as such—a command, then, to make myself good

³¹⁴ *TI*: p. 204.

³¹⁵ *MP* (“Third Meditation”): p. 31 (sec. 45-46).

³¹⁶ For more on the first one on the scene,” see Chapter 5.

beyond measure. In next section of this study, we'll see how this obligatedness of the subjected one (the other in me or psyche in the self) comes to limit itself by instituting itself as a concrete obligation—a for-the-sake-of-which, upon which I ultimately project my own being; and yet in its primordial significance—which Levinas calls “Significance” with a capital “S,” since it founds all significance by founding all being-in-the-world³¹⁷—it remains a command precisely without limits, unconditional. For this reason, Jacques Derrida writes that:

it is true that Ethics in Levinas's sense is an Ethics without law and without concept, which maintains its non-violent purity only before being determined as concepts and laws. This is not an objection: let us not forget that Levinas does not seek to propose[...] moral rules, does not seek to determine a morality, but rather the essence of the ethical relation in general[...]. In question, then, is an Ethics of Ethics [which] can occasion neither a determined ethics nor determined laws without negating and forgetting itself.³¹⁸

Although it introduces the subjected one into his or her sociality, then, and in this way, allows the subject, self-temporalized, to be brought into a social world, in conformity with the latter's norms and vicissitudes—or norms of *justice*—it is at once as though the other's approach or affection, as the very inspiration of subjectivity, then remained as a command to make the world better or more just in turn, to improve even these norms of justice. As though this were a love too good for the world, always having to diminish itself in order to bring itself into being.

If, however, the demand to which the other subjects the subjected one by his or her approach and self-revelation does primordially bear a sort of limitlessness, so as to always remain in some sense—as we've just seen however provisionally—an unconditional obligation, then in order to fully demonstrate the thesis of this work (that the essential significance of self-temporalization is ethical; that a streaming life of consciousness does indeed constitute itself

³¹⁷ Levinas, “Signification and Sense” in *Humanism of the Other*, trans. by Nidra Poller (University of Illinois Press, Urbana); 2003.

³¹⁸ Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics; an essay on the thought of Emmanuel Levinas,” in *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (University of Chicago Press, Chicago); 1978: p. 111. Hereafter listed as *WD*.

only in the wake of this subjection or as so inspired), it will be necessary for me to clarify just how the unconditionality of this demand coming from the other comes, *via* the self-tending temporalization of conscious life, to attenuate itself. We must discover, i.e., how the obligation into which a sentient living is placed comes to be lived, inauthentically, in *conditioned*, everyday obligations, and authentically, in the stricken search for something that could serve as the basis of these, which is just to say, for their condition as *ground* (which must then be opposed to ethical affection as the “unconditional condition” of subjectivity, a condition—or *com-dicere*, “speaking-with”—which unlike this term in its more familiar sense, does not pose upon a ground, but rather, unsettles). In the process, the one made subject comes to be brought out of the disquietude disturbing the “serenity” of “animal” captivation, and into a *new* sort of “serenity:” precisely the “complacency”³¹⁹ or “good conscience”³²⁰ (Levinas’s own words) of what we can call a “*reformed*” sensibility. In fact self-temporalization always issues in such a “reformation;” by collecting a life together from out of each of its moments, it is ultimately *nothing* outside of this issuance. But the one unsettled and compelled by the other to answer for his or her own being—to *respond*, that is—becomes “*resettled*” or complacent, satisfied now that he or she is “in the good,” *in* this very “reformation,” in the response given—given precisely by my being-in-the-world.

Is it useless to bemoan this? No doubt, the other’s affection would amount to *nothing* were it to never get itself conditioned so as to govern or direct “my” living, so as to be given as a possibility upon which the subject is self-projected (whether authentically or else obliviously, in which case it may thus hold sway all the more insistently)—or were it impossible, put otherwise, to take leave of the unconditionality of the command so as to find some ground upon which to

³¹⁹ For example, *OB*: p. 64.

³²⁰ For example, *OB*: p. 177.

take “one’s” stand and remain rooted. But as we will see, conditioning of the obligation is part and parcel of *complacency* in the response, or “good conscience;” this latter phenomenon is therefore not superfluous. This sobering fact must be brought to light or clarified fully. And yet faced by another still, any one of us can nonetheless come to be drawn further into self-questioning, and so, to be dislodged from “one’s” own world, in a manner of speaking, to be divested of the ground upon which we stand: “the little humanity that adorns the earth,” as Levinas puts it, surely requires this, “requires the just war waged against war to tremble or shudder at every instant because of this very justice..”³²¹ The approach of the other will threaten to cleave each one of us to and from our own being once more; love will tear us apart again.

For the most part, life will go on in the “good-conscience” of a now “reformed” behavior without any living doubt of being in the right; as though the unanswered suffering of the other could no longer reach me here, in my self-righteousness. Slumbering, as it were, I become lost in my world and remain light years from home—and precisely since, called out by the other and thereby turned against myself, home can be nothing but my own unending exile, absolute distance from my own life. But the life of subjectivity lives itself out primarily as this easy slumbering, lost in the world, precisely because (as we will see) it has to be a life: the life of a one—i.e., of *me*—ceaselessly self-present, since made without remission to live out a responsibility, however futile in the end this may be, to answer for my being before the others. Here is the possibility of my finding a meaning for this life, of discovering an orientation and keeping to it, so as to atone for myself, even for my ongoing self-captivation or absorption in the elements—and even if, like the rest of us, I am only ever given to open my slumbering eyes for an instant here and there, so that I might answer for my renewed somnolence in an always too small world. We can of course always hope to be awoken more often and profoundly, and

³²¹ “This weakness is needed,” Levinas continues. *OB*: p. 185.

perhaps, stirred to vigilance by the other, may be able to open our own eyes or perhaps keep them open a little longer “all by ourselves.” And yet if I fail to remain ceaselessly vigilant for the other’s approach, so that through “my own powers” I am no longer able to find myself troubled in my every waking hour in the world, no matter: having been unsettled by another, not a one of us on earth will ever sleep soundly again.

Having provisionally clarified the ethical relation and the trace of the other that belongs to it, we are now in a position to see how, inspired in this way, self-temporalization imposes itself within a stream of merely sentient experiencing and behavior. How is it, precisely, that temporalization, as a life's self-tending, comes to emerge in response to the other's affection, which makes "me" answerable for "my" own being? How does the subjection of the subjected one make him or her *subject*, self-temporalizingly open to a world?

Bringing *this* issue to clarification—which is just to say, clarifying self-temporalization (and thus, subjectivity) in light of the affection from without that inspires it—should allow us to fully grasp self-temporalization *per se*, in its unity and essential structure. After my earlier analysis of temporalization, we will recall, three major questions remained of it; the question of its condition (which has only been provisionally clarified at this point) represented merely the *first* of these, albeit the most important of them for the purposes of this study. At the same time, however, we saw that without tracing temporalization assuredly back to its condition, we would remain in the dark both as to why, on the one hand, the self-tending life does in fact temporalize itself in such a way as to not only orient all its moments in keeping with some ideal or ultimate possibility of its own being, but to have to choose this possibility for itself, while on the other hand, it should nevertheless always tend to keep this choice *from* itself, so as to choose only in the mode of an oblivious assumption. I will first address the latter of these two additional questions, which as we will discover below, concerns the essential unity of the authentic and inauthentic modes of temporalization.

Why does self-temporalization "tend" towards inauthenticity, which is to say, *away from*

its authentic mode and from the affect (or “*Befindlichkeit*”) of angst, in which the authentically self-temporalized subject finds himself or herself tormented by the question of his or her own being? Angst is perhaps a sort of terror, and for just this reason, we witness a terror of angst. As we saw earlier, however, the fact that the affect of angst *is* experienced as a terror—or that angst is a “negative” sort of experience, more generally, the sort of experience “one” would flee—is in no way self-explanatory; hidden within this fact, which only seems self-evident, is, in fact, the key to the whole matter of self-temporalization or primordial time-consciousness, specifically in light of the obligatedness to which it responds. Thus, an analysis of the issue at hand (“flight” from authenticity) will need to begin with a description of the connection between the trace of the other and angst.

What, then, connects *angst* to *ethical subjection*, or to the self-revelation or approach of the other as such to the one so subjected? *Prima facie*, both are akin insofar as they can be characterized as a sort of questioning: for while angst gives the subject over to the question of his or her own being or to the issue of that which he or she is to-be, the trace of the other marks the one made subject precisely as an interrogation, as absolute affection of ethical love or obligation to answer before the other who faces and “do right” in his or her eyes. But then, we should need to make the distinction between angst and ethical affection explicit: for put in this way, we risk conflating the two, though they are not the same. How do they differ, expressly? Struck by the otherness of the other, the subjected one “desires” nothing more than this exposure to the other or to the interrogation that the other’s approach always brings—or rather, can be considered nothing *but* this desire: Levinas thus writes of the “essential insatiability of conscience, which does not belong to the order of hunger or satiety. It is thus that we have defined desire. Conscience and desire are not modalities of consciousness among others, but its condition.

Concretely they are the welcoming of the Other across his [or her] judgment,”³²² and that this “is a desire that cannot be satisfied[...]. The metaphysical desire has another intention; it desires beyond everything that can simply complete it. It is like goodness—the Desired does not fulfill it, but deepens it[...] a generosity nourished by the Desired, and thus a relationship that is not the disappearance of distance, not a bringing together”³²³—but conversely, the subject “in” angst wants nothing more than the *cessation* of angst, if not by pushing it off than through the discovery, or perhaps better, the recovery, of “*meaning*,” or of that for-the-sake-of-which he or she is to-be. If ethical affection, then, is something like sincerity before the accusation or questioning that the other always brings me (insofar as there is affection by the other *as other at all*, so that the “breaking through” of immediacy is produced), then angst is a panicked pursuit that would once more remain settled in a response. Angst is a need for meaning in this sense, a hunger for it.

Stripped of something like meaning taken essentially—that is, of “one’s” ultimate can-be or that for-the-sake-of-which “one” *is*—a subject becomes ill at ease, lost without direction. The subject needs this orientation, cannot go on without it: but why *does* the subject need it, when purely sentient living gets on well enough on its own? If the subject, conversely, finds himself or herself as if “naked,” bare and alone, upon being spirited away from “meaning” or the discourse of the world by which, until this moment, he or she has been oriented, if he or she is thereby lost without all orientation, it is because before all else, the subject is oriented *without*: because the significance of a life is first and before all else *expiation*, its being justified. Angst gives what Levinas calls a “silent world,” without meaning, and he insists that it is “the silence that

³²² *TI*: p. 101.

³²³ *TI*: p. 34.

terrifies.”³²⁴ but then, it is the silencing of the *discourse of the world* that terrifies—which is just to say, the silencing of the others. Without their assent or affirmation, I become once more an unjustifiable insistence in being, a violence. Left to myself, my being is a vanity. To live in a discourse, by contrast, is to find deliverance, to be redeemed; “it is not I, it is the other that can say yes,” Levinas writes.³²⁵

Angst is at once always a striving for meaning or its recovery, and thus, although it has no explicit reference to the other (or, for reasons to be seen soon, actually “defaces” this reference), can constitute itself only in the “space” opened up for self-questioning by the other’s approach. Understood in this way, we are able to understand why self-temporalization “tends” towards the mode of an oblivious assumption. Even genuinely authentic self-temporalization does so, in its own way—for all that distinguishes this from non-genuine authenticity is its “patience,” as it were, its willingness to hold off, even if for only an instant, before giving itself up once more in the return of its oblivion. To “feel” angst is thus not only to “feel” a sort of hunger for significance, but one that is always on the verge of satiating itself with simply too much haste. But then, not simply the need for the return of significance, but also its haste, is thereby explicable. But why, also, the self-*oblivion* of the inauthentic mode, by which the significance of the world is projected—a mode, we’ve seen, in which a life appears to purposefully *keep from itself* that it might be otherwise than in accordance with the ultimate possibility that it has merely assumed? Why does temporalization tend not only toward the recovery of meaning, and with perhaps always too much haste, but at once towards a mode in which the recovered meaning is taken to be a “given,” without question or the most “natural” thing in the world? Simply because by doing so—i.e., by keeping itself in self-oblivion—the life

³²⁴ *TI*: p. 91.

³²⁵ *TI*: p. 93.

of subjectivity can always keep itself satisfied with the response it has given to its own interrogation, safe from all the troublesome questions that could come to upset confidence in its blamelessness, or a house already in order, so to speak. But this “safety” is thus a sort of incapacity to depart from that redemption that the subject finds granted in the eyes of the others. Angst always comes to unsettle inauthentic dwelling in a world, oblivious accordance with a discourse; what is thereby unsettled, then, is precisely what we can now understand as a *promise*.

Inauthentic self-temporalization, as oblivious being-toward... is being-toward a promise given. Why, a promise? What does it mean to describe inauthenticity thusly? “Because the subject is created by the relationship with the Other,” as Neal DeRoo concludes in his *Futurity in Phenomenology*, “the self’s existence is to exist as a promise.”³²⁶ To be self-projected upon an ultimate can-be is precisely *to be* as a sort of promise, or rather, as an attempt to live up to one, as a striving to fulfill a vow of sorts: for it is nothing other than a promise of what “I” am to-be that has been given to the other in response to his or her approach or the interrogation of “my” being by which, primordially, the other affects me as such and makes me subject. The “tending away” that keeps the subject *from* authentic self-temporalization, and *to* his or her self-oblivion, then—which, as we’ve seen, is a sort of horror³²⁷—is a fear felt by a one *already committed*, by one already dedicated or pledged to account for his or her own being in some concrete or determinate manner: to live for-the-sake-of just *this*. It is the fear, precisely, of breaking “my” promise. But since the striving to keep to this promise or to the basic orientation adopted is *just what* the subject, initially and for the most part, *is* (this “striving” is the inauthentic self-temporalization of the subject, that is), to risk breaking “one’s” promise is thus to risk losing “oneself.” As a fear of losing “oneself” or being taken from the striving “one” is, this fear

³²⁶ Neil DeRoo, *Futurity in Phenomenology: Promise and method in Husserl, Levinas, and Derrida* (New York, Fordham University Press); 2013: p. 94.

³²⁷ Heidegger, in fact, describes inauthenticity as a fear of angst, insofar as it is a flight from it.

(essential flight from angst) is no fear of dying, something which we've found good reason to insist already; "one" in fact might always go to "one's" death to keep to an oath. Rather: it is a fear of letting down the others, of failing the ones I have promised myself.

We can complete this clarification of angst in its connection with inauthenticity, on the one hand, and the other's affection, on the other, by comparing it to the affect of shame—or more precisely, to shame in a "vulgar" or mundane sense. While to feel shame, inauthentically, is to find that I have let the others down in some concrete manner—and thus, that I have let down myself: for "one" just is the striving to keep to this promise, again—to feel angst, by contrast, is to find myself in a world in which there is precisely nothing there to be ashamed of. This "fear," of a world without meaning, in which nothing I do or can do is any better or any worse than anything else—than any other act I might choose, or better, than any other life I might live—and thus, in which I have no possibility of finding redemption, is precisely a fear of a world in which the discourse coming from the others has been silenced.³²⁸ With this, angst comes to be described in its ultimate sense.

It should be evident now why angst must be experienced as a threat or, at best, a risk (as it may be experienced authentically—or put with more precision, as it may be experienced in *genuine* authenticity, in which angst emerges from its essential latency but is not immediately thrust off). To be settled, again—settled precisely in the "living out" of some concrete response to the questioning the other always brings, which is to say, precisely in the "good conscience" of everyday life: which is to say, precisely in inauthenticity—is for the one made subject to hold fast to *that very promise* that has been made of his or her own being. And yet if this promise or basic orientation for a life comes forth and seems strange, as it does in angst, and if furthermore,

³²⁸ A whole work could be devoted to Levinas's reinterpretation of the affect of angst as the giving of "a world absolutely silent," but this will have to be sufficient at present.

the angst-ridden subject is either unwilling or unable to push angst off and return to “normalcy,” then there can be no guarantee that, after being “tested by the fire,” the promise “one” has made of “one’s” own being, which is suspended in angst, will be either reclaimed or else (in some more “sublime” fashion) be somehow taken up anew; and furthermore, there is no guarantee even that some other promise, perhaps offering the one made subject over to the others in a much different fashion, will at least be able to come and take its place. It is perhaps better, then, to not think the matter over too much: Derrida thus writes that “for a promise to *remain* a promise,[...] must it not risk continuously, incessantly, in an endless imminence, to pervert itself into a threat? Not only that it threatens to remain untenable but threatens to become threatening?”³²⁹ It is in this sense that the conservatives of the day could always be right, or better, could have been justified in their worry or apprehension: for perhaps in this instance, the skeptical doubts of an angst-ridden subject bring only disarray and nothing more into his or her own life, and thus, into the lives of others; perhaps in this case, nothing *does* actually come of questioning “the social order,” etc., except ruin. “Curiosity killed the cat,” “one” says—and even if the “curious” one, our “cat,” had nine lives to begin with, perhaps it has lost eight of them already; perhaps one has finally gone too far. Perhaps it is for this reason, also, that the one who heralds the new often ends up just as dogmatic, or even more dogmatic, than the “serious” believers or the conservatives from whom he or she would break:³³⁰ for having been found so profoundly in the clutches of angst once before, and having nonetheless “come through to the other side” by having now discovered something to “*truly*” live-for, he or she likely, and understandably, becomes all the more resistant—which is to say, fearful—of falling into angst once more. Thus, no one is more fervent—which is just another way of saying dogmatic—than the convert, the

³²⁹ Derrida, “Avances” preface of Serge Margel, *Le tombeau du dieu artisan: sur Platon* (Paris, Minuit); 1995: p. 42-43.

³³⁰ Simone de Beauvoir makes a similar point in her description of the “serious man.” See, *EA*: p. 45-52.

revolutionary, the “born again,” etc.

Angst, once more, is like a hunger or drive—a *need for meaning*—which satiates itself and is inhibited in the renewal and insistence of inauthentic “good conscience”—with the return to a self-oblivious projection upon this or that ultimate can-be, that is, for-the-sake-of-which “I” am—by which a reformation of behavior, in accordance with this self-projection, commences or recommences. Yet as a “hunger” or “need for meaning,” angst no doubt does not simply constitute itself as one need amongst others, but for the subject *qua* subject, becomes his or her *essential* “hunger:” a need above all needs, given that the rest of his or her needs *mean nothing* until angst finds its fulfillment. The subject can thus as easily die for want of meaning as from starvation, insofar as suicide, or else helpless attrition, remains the only option left for a person who can find nothing to live for.³³¹

As soon as the subject’s essential tendency to flee into inauthenticity becomes explicable, the fact that authenticity must remain ever a possibility becomes at least provisionally explicable also. The subjected one, made answerable before the others, is *given to watch over his or her own being*, and as such, becomes an I. Responsibility issues in self-tending, in striving to live in accordance with a determinate way of being-in-the-world precisely in response or as an answer to the subjected one’s subjection to questioning, to which “one” will then hold fast as if his or her own life depended upon it, or rather, as if something more important than his or her own life depended upon it. But then, the possibility of finding this promise questionable in its turn—that is, of authenticity—is thereby inscribed *essentially* in the structure of subjectivity, “at the same time” as the very tendency for it to divert itself from this mode.

With this, we have brought clarity to the tendency of self-tending to temporalize itself in its inauthentic mode, in “flight” from authenticity, and have also begun to see why its ultimate

³³¹ On suicide and the other in the work of Levinas, see, for instance, *TI*: p. 146.

can-be is something that it must take upon itself, even though usually *via* oblivious assumption only. We are now in a position to bring the whole matter of temporalization to full clarity; but in order to do so, it remains to be understood precisely how a can-be, as a sort of promise given of “my” being to the others, comes to be assumed at all or in the first place, only to then remain in the oblivion to which it is initially and for the most part consigned. The other’s approach primordially affects “me” as interrogation of “my” being; how, then, is a response not only given or assumed, but seized upon in my “good conscience” as if it were itself beyond question? From where, or from whom, is given that in accordance with which “one,” initially and for the most part, is? And why does the tendency to remain in it obliviously succeed in some, but not all cases—for despite this tendency, self-oblivion *does* sometimes become disturbed? To answer these will be to answer the only one of the three remaining questions of self-temporalization that now still remains to be answered: the question as to why self-tending temporalizes itself in such a way as to not only always strive to keep itself to some ideal or ultimate possibility of its own being, but to have to choose this can-be for itself. This choice or assumption, we will see, has for its own part, a sort of “two-sided” nature. Its primary “side” is given precisely by “one’s” *participation in a community or tradition.*

§ 35

Initially and for the most part, the subject does what “one” does. To be “oneself” or do what “one” does means to understand and act in accordance with the usual or conventional standards. This characterizes the subject, we saw, insofar as he or she merely assumes that basic ideal of life or ultimate can-be upon which he or she is only obliviously self-projected—i.e., insofar as he or she is inauthentically self-temporalized, which, for necessary reasons, each subject initially and for the most part *is*. The “oneself” *is* the subject insofar as the subject *is*

towards some concrete ultimate can-be taken from the world, *is* a striving to-be just “this.” But given that this is so—that the subject’s primary way of being is striving in accordance with the usual standards—it must be the case, both initially and for the most part, that the basic orientation for living that gets assumed—or as we’ve now discovered: that the basic “answer” or response given to the interrogation coming from another that the one made subject gives by being in a world—is one that the subject has assumed precisely by obeying the other’s wish.³³² To be self-projected is already to have *conformed*. Strictly speaking, consciousness begins as soon as a living being starts to follow the rules of the other.

Perhaps nothing, at present, is so disparaged as “conformity;” it is as if everyone today were a “nonconformist,” following his or her “own rules.” Yet conformity, in the sense just outlined, is in fact the truest and most inherent power of the subject, of a living made free insofar as it lives itself out in that freedom. The reason this must be so is now clear: for since, as we are discovering, a sensible living is freed from captivation in the “here-and-now” of behavior and its self-satiation only through the interrogation or questioning to which the other subjects it, and since the one made subject recollects himself or herself as subject in response by self-projecting this questioned being upon some ultimate can-be to which this being is to be kept, the can-be assumed initially will then simply be that which is in keeping with the requests of the first one on the scene.³³³ Having to answer for my own being or “do right” by the other—to expiate myself in the other’s eyes—I conform myself and take the others’ approval as a sign of my redemption. In this way, it is through conformity (or socialization, we can also say), the subject’s primary assumption of a can-be, that subjectivity is a pledge or promise, according to which sensibility, as the “pre-subjective” being of the subject, first becomes reformed—although as a basic

³³² We will see in Chapter 5 that Consciousness begins with the “third.”

³³³ See, for example, *OB*: p. 11. “The first one on the scene” is of course a recurrent phrase in Levinas’s writing.

orientation assumed, it can no doubt always be subject to interrogation in its turn. But the turn against it, if such a turn is to come, will therefore effect itself as a conversion in the direction of a more thoroughgoing response given to the others, as movement towards a life lived in more perfect submission to the humility to which the other has subjected me in his or her affection (which gestures towards the sense, to be fully clarified in the final chapter of this study, in which the obligation to which the other subjects the subjected one can be called *unconditional* or *infinite*). Morality gets overthrown in the name of a higher morality, a “debt” that “increases in the measures that it is paid,” as Levinas puts it.³³⁴

After having provisionally clarified the essential condition of self-tending, I began working to remove this provisional character by clarifying authentic self-tending in light of its condition, the trace of the other, specifically in relation to inauthenticity and the tendency to flee into it and stay there obliviously. By clarifying the phenomenon of “assumption” insofar as it is a “choosing” of an ultimate can-be, however, we can finally grasp the issue of the “worldliness” of subjectivity: for as the primary mode of assuming or taking over a can-be, conformity—which is in fact always already in play, since I only come to consciousness in being self-projected upon “something,” and that to which I conform myself represents precisely this “something” in the first form it can have taken in my life—is precisely a belonging to or with the others. Rather, conformity is a belonging to or with certain, *specific* others and in certain, *specific ways*, since, by self-projecting conformingly, the one made subject acts in accordance with something like the bidding or behest of those first on the scene and thereby, takes them into account in just this fashion. But as such, conformity (the very basis of inauthentic self-projection) constitutes itself as *participation* in a community, state, or *polis*: i.e., as the “political nature” of our being in the broadest sense of this term.

³³⁴ *OB*: p. 12.

Participation in the community or *polis* certainly cannot be reduced to sensibility's "animal participation" in being, to elemental absorption—although it *is* complicit in this participation, or better, in a *return* to it or the elemental (and not only since participation in the *polis* effects the reformation of a sensible living, but also, as we'll see just below, because it lives itself out in the reformed sensibility's enjoyments). Rather, as conformity, participation in a shared world discloses itself as the original moment of "meaning-making," of sense constitution or consciousness. It gives the subject the can-be upon which, initially and for the most part, he or she is ultimately self-projected and so, orients each moment of a conscious streaming life, thus initiating what Levinas calls (for reasons to be seen shortly) the "*synchronization*" of subjectivity, which he associates with "a 'fundamental historicity' in the sense of Merleau-Ponty," and which, in Levinas's words, fixes the ethical in "structures, community, and totality," so that the subject is given "the original locus of justice, a terrain common to me and the others where I am counted among them, that is, where subjectivity is a citizen with all the duties and rights measured and measurable which the equilibrated ego involves, [...] equilibrating itself by the concourse of duties and the concurrence of rights."³³⁵ For this reason, Levinas claims that "justice, society, the state and its institutions, exchanges and work are comprehensible" only from out of what he calls "proximity,"³³⁶ or only on the basis of the relation to the other as such or of the trace that it leaves: on the basis, that is, of ethical exigency commanding the subjected one. Once instituted, however, the norms of the community or of justice always verge towards dogmatism, which as we've seen, is precisely the subject's hesitancy to allow the pledge made of his or her own being to be called into question in turn: Levinas thus writes that "being, totality, the State, politics, techniques, work are at every moment on the point of having their center of

³³⁵ *OB*: p. 160.

³³⁶ *OB*: p. 159.

gravitation in themselves, and weighing on their own account.”³³⁷ The response at once always risks perpetuation or institution of a violence for which, still, I have not answered. In conformity, we discover all the pathos of subjectivity, its ambiguity: for by taking on the norms of the community, the one made subject does answer for his or her own being; and yet by doing so, puts this answer beyond question. Am I not at once obligated to answer for it in turn? Although as we’ve seen, the suspension of conformity does always risk recklessness or irresponsibility, this is a charge that can always be levelled against unquestioning conformity as well, if in a different (though related) sense.

We’ve seen that, authentically self-temporalized, the subject found in angst becomes self-projected upon his or her whole can-be, so that the issue of that which he or she is to-be becomes paramount. By means of conformity, however, the subject totally passes over this sort of situation, to remain “at home” with “oneself” or in “good conscience,” and as such gets “caught up” in the present, self-projected upon various relative ends although that for-the-sake-of-which they are to be realized is nowhere in sight. It is ultimately because ethical subjection necessarily brings conformity into play that it implicates the one made subject in the ineradicable tendency to pass from temporalization of the whole streaming life it allows to be self-manifest over onto its mere temporalization of the “now”—its tendency to “flee” itself. In the same stroke however, it *further* implicates the subject in a sort of lapse back into the immediacy of sensing life, or the “here-and-now”—which is why, I will venture, Levinas can call the self-tending temporalization of subjectivity its “synchronization.” This further lapse back into the immediacy of life is what I will call the hedonic.³³⁸ To clarify it will be to fully clarify self-tending temporalization as “choosing” of the very can-be upon which a life ultimately projects itself, so that, at long last, my

³³⁷ *OB*: p. 159.

³³⁸ In a different but not wholly unrelated context, the economist speaks of a “regression to the hedonic” in regards to the tracing back of “goods” (objects with “promise,” etc.) to enjoyment.

provisional description of the trace of the other *qua* condition of subjectivity and time-consciousness can be demonstrated and brought to full clarity, and the three “ekstases” or temporal orientations of self-tending—that is, self-protaining, -retaining, and -maintaining—can be brought back in their unity to their inspiration in the other’s self-revelation.

§ 36

Conformity is how a self-questioning life “releases” itself, as it were, so as to now go on being *reformedly*, taking others into account in some particular fashion. It thus effects a passage away from the relation to the other as such, which precisely *suspends* the being of a sensible living or brings the unfolding of behavior, always caught up in its “here-and-now,” to a *halt*—a suspension of immediacy which is thus the original eruption of something like time, or rather, its “pre-original” eruption, insofar as the trace of the other conditions temporalization. But conformity is not alone sufficient to release the reformed sensibility: it requires the *hedonic* for this, as we will see right away, which is thus in a sense as much required for self-temporalization as it is produced by it, as if temporalization borrowed powers from sensibility, which is to say, precisely from that which the subjected one has departed or been distanced (the hedonic being just this “borrowing” that temporalization makes use of). Assuming this is so, however, it evidently cannot *simply* be the case that the living made subject is—in collecting itself *as* subject so as to be able to make a promise of itself in response—necessarily given to pass back *from* the (authentic) projection of itself upon the totality or whole stream of its living, *to* the “now” that is lived on the horizon of this self-tended life (that is: the “tending” to inauthenticity just clarified cannot “tend” towards the “now” *alone*): for in the process, a life would pass back, *furthermore*, into its immediacy. Temporalization would thus serve as a “detour” of sorts, insofar as through it, a humbled living, which has been stopped it in its tracks as a fear of doing violence to the

other, would return itself to itself in its “*here-and-now*” and thus go on unfolding, however reformed this unfolding may then be. By bringing into play its streaming being as horizon and on this basis, the (objective) time which is thus constituted or allowed to make itself manifest, the self-temporalization of a living would allow this living to continue on its way, and precisely *qua* sensible life.

How is the hedonic, as a sort of relapse or return to the “*here-and-now*” of enjoyment and behavior, implicated in self-temporalization? In order to make this clear, it will be necessary first to recall that for the subject, sensibility can always be lived as a source of tension. A particular driven behavior can not only resist its reformation; it can win out. We can of course always imagine that this can only ever occur when “‘one’ doesn’t know any better:” a whole tradition of thinking has been committed to the belief that a “rational being” always acts on the basis of what it takes to be *the good*, so that “one” would err despite “knowing” that “one” is erring only when “one” is *really not convinced* of this fact, in truth having become convinced, if for only a moment, that the erroneous course of action is *actually the best* one. Perhaps this must be so—or insofar, of course, as conscious behavior is at issue:³³⁹ for after all, if we wish to we can always discover some subterfuge justification that allows for a behavior that, however “akratic” it might appear, thus only *seems* to go against the basic can-be upon which “one” is self-projected. We need not subscribe to the specifics of any particular psychoanalytic account, etc., to justify this claim, for it is evident enough that an “akratic” course (one that goes against that to which “one” is committed, however obliviously) *can* get itself selected whenever the acting subject is able to

³³⁹ Behavior that would unfold unconsciously, such as those small gestures that might manifest some drive unbeknownst to the actor, must be excepted here, since, assuming they go on without consciousness at all, or at least until pointed out by another and thereby made conscious, they go on without self-temporalization and so, cannot manifest the tension at issue in any real sense. Husserl himself from the earliest noted that experiences in the streaming conscious life do not begin conscious, but “after a fashion become referred to an object” (*LI 2*: p. 109); there is, he goes on to determine, no a priori necessity that this “after a fashion” does come to pass for every one.

convince himself or herself, however temporarily, that it is a decent enough course, if not totally in keeping with that to which “one” is self-projected then at least—according to the temporary delusion of “akrasia”—not in direct opposition to it (something possibly enabled by the fact that, as we’ll soon see, it will usually come to seem “only fair” that the subject has his or her enjoyments, too). But if such justifications are to blame in at least some cases of apparent “akrasia,” then they *could* be to blame for all of them: and apparently *must* be, so long as it appears impossible to imagine the subject acting to achieve something that appears to be a detriment by his or her own lights.³⁴⁰ “Akrasia” would simply be the result of changing opinions, or inconstancy in “one’s” self-projection: from Plato to Descartes and beyond, this way of conceiving of the phenomenon has imposed itself regularly enough, and apparently, for good reason.

To understand “akrasia” in this fashion, however, is precisely to miss what is most important about it; it is to ignore the reality of a sort of “power” that enjoyment comes to possess in the self-temporalized life. But what sort of “power” is this: which can then be understood—in a sense, but precisely only in this sense—as a “passion” of subjectivity? Namely: one that is signaled by the fact that enjoyment can always attenuate self-temporalization and surmount its projection.

How can this take place? It is in fact an ever-present possibility, for overcome by a pleasure of the highest order, the burden of “my” own being or of self-responsibility is lightened: I “lose hold” of myself, as though the protaining, retaining, and maintaining of my being is a hold I keep of it and yet, conquered thoroughly by bliss, this grip is slackened so that my being slips through my fingers—even though for an “instant” only, the duration of a “here-and-now:”

³⁴⁰ Plato, *Protagoras*, trans. Stanley Lombardo and Karen Bell (Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company); 1992: p. 56 (358d). Hereafter listed as *PG*.

Pleasure is, in effect, nothing less than a concentration in the instant[...]. The instant is not recaptured until the moment when pleasure is broken, after the supreme break, when the [human] being believed in complete ecstasy[...] is entirely disappointed and ashamed to find himself again existing. We therefore note in pleasure an abandonment, a loss of oneself, a getting out of oneself, an ecstasy.³⁴¹

What we should not ignore, that is, is the reality of ecstasy as a form of the *hedonic*. The rush of euphoria or of ecstasy's rapture, of joy in its most heightened intensities, is such as to temporarily alleviate the subject's self-responsibility—which is to say, his or her self-tending temporalization, or conscious being. The subject is thereby returned to an “animal state,” as it were, or is returned to such a state to whatever extent he or she is overcome—and despite the usual protestation in treatments of “akrasia” that reason cannot be overcome in this way.³⁴² The subject “gets carried away,” so that as Levinas puts it: “in the very depth of incipient pleasure there opens something like abysses, ever deeper, into which our existence, no longer resisting, hurls itself. There is something dizzying to pleasure's unfolding. There is ease or cowardice. The [human] being feels its substance somehow draining from it; it grows lighter, as if drunk, and disperses.”³⁴³ But for the subject's being to be dispersed like this is precisely for it slip out of his or her “grasp” or more precisely, from the subject's self-collection or the self-tending temporalization of a life. It is to lighten responsibility: for though “in possession of myself” I could *never bear* to be so shamelessly, this becomes nothing to me, if for only an instant, when I am overcome by bliss—nothing to me, again, since if for only an instant, my being is not borne by me *at all*.³⁴⁴

Obviously, this dispersion is rarely if ever total. Empirical studies show that in a few,

³⁴¹ Levinas, *On Escape*, introduced by Jacques Rolland and translated by Bettina Bergo (Stanford University Press, Stanford); 2003: p. 61. Hereafter listed as *OE*.

³⁴² *PG*: p. 56 (358-359).

³⁴³ *OE*: p. 61.

³⁴⁴ On the burden of being in Levinas, see: *OE*.

absolutely ecstatic experiences, awareness of time becomes nil to such an extent that consciousness temporarily ceases,³⁴⁵ which indicates for us that self-temporalization has been, for an instant, overpowered. In general, however, the effect is not total; instead, it is as if time drew in around the “now,” *just about* concentrating experience into the pure sensuality of a “here-and-now.” As if this “now” were just about *everything*; but the subject maintains himself or herself enough on the horizon of life to at least “know” it. This concentrating of experience (back to the “here-and-now”) works in a wholly different way than does that “contraction” of time (so to speak) which our essential tendency to lapse into inauthenticity effects for itself, i.e., bringing a life from the totality of its streaming back to the mere “now:” there, the “contraction” is such that the “now” is made significant on the horizon of the total life that nevertheless recedes; here, the concentration is such that the can-be of life is simply withdrawn from itself, so that “‘one’ loses ‘one’s’ head” and behavior unfolds itself again in the isolation of its immediacy. It is *as such* that “akrasia” comes to pass, and if there is always, or just about always, some subterfuge justification that allows for it, a projection that misses the mark of the subject’s ultimate can-be (for which, afterwards, the subject may always feel shame or remorse³⁴⁶), this is a ruse possible only because pleasure has already *just about* come to reconcentrate life in its immediacy, so that self-projection loses most of its power (the will with which it has been invested), and if only for an instant more or less leaves sentient living to its devices. In such a moment, “one” can become “slave,” as it were, to “passions”—assuming that by “letting go” in

³⁴⁵ This is especially so for sexual pleasure, it seems; see, for example: R. Levin and G. Wagner, “Orgasm in women in the laboratory-quantitative studies on duration, intensity, latency and vaginal blood flow” in *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, Vol. 14 (1985): p. 439–449.

³⁴⁶ The difference between regret and remorse points again to the freedom of subjectivity: for it is a totally different issue to “feel terrible” for having missed out on some enjoyment as opposed to “feeling terrible” for *not* having done so when to give in to passion was to let myself down: i.e., to let the others down or to break the promise given them of my being. A difference in order between the satiations of the sensible and the “satisfactions” of conformity in “good conscience” is made plain—however much, as we will see just below, the former implicate themselves in the latter, and necessarily so.

this instance, behavior goes against or fails to obey those norms, mores, and ideals of the social world in accordance to which the life of subjectivity is self-projected and, as a freedom concretely realized, strives to live itself out. To “let go” is to no longer hold fast, and thus likely, to go astray, to err or “sin,” to miss the mark; moreover, it is evident that the more “one” fails to do so and does go astray, the less “one” becomes habituated (or perhaps better, that “one’s” drives become habituated) in conformity with that ultimate can-be to which the subject self-projectingly conforms him- or herself.

Rest assured, that in the reformation of sensibility (as Aristotle demonstrates in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, for one), drives become steadily habituated in such a way that living in accordance with the norms and mores of the *polis* becomes a pleasure; here, there is no question of tension.³⁴⁷ But this never is so, or at least not to a total extent, for an individual’s *every* drive.³⁴⁸ It is thus in the interval between a self-projection that *lacks* the drive-habituating it might ultimately come to effect, on the one hand, and the self-projecting that *has* effected this, on the other, that the phenomenon of *will* is exhibited. When conflict emerges between that possibility upon which I am self-projected, in opposition to the tendency of a behavior that in its immediacy pulls counter to this self-projection, or which has perhaps already begun to self-satiatingly unfold itself in such a way as to concentrate living in the mere immediacy of this unfolding pleasure, I can nevertheless “keep myself on track” by keeping that upon which I project myself, that which I am to-be, “in mind,” holding fast to it such that it can continue to

³⁴⁷ For example, *NM*: p. 113 (1151b32-1152a5).

³⁴⁸ With the possible exception, that is of the *φρονεμων* or moral exemplar: who by the same token, cannot be considered responsible—assuming that these norms and mores to which he or she has become totally habituated go unquestioned—in the strict sense in which I am using this term. Or, not unless the norms and mores of the *polis* to which the *φρονεμων* has become habituated somehow *demand* that they themselves be put into question or exposed untiringly to the interrogation the others bring (to whatever extent this is possible for a norm, assuming that it is at all).

On related issues, see fn #243.

exercise its power—which leads William James to write that:

We now see at one view when it is that effort complicates volition. It does so whenever a rarer and more ideal impulse is called upon to neutralize others of a more instinctive and habitual kind; it does so whenever strongly explosive tendencies are checked, or strongly obstructive conditions overcome[...].³⁴⁹ The essential achievement of the will, in short, when it is most ‘voluntary,’ is to ATTEND to a difficult object and hold it fast before the mind. The so-doing is the fiat[...]. Effort of attention is thus the essential phenomenon of will.³⁵⁰

To will is thus *to obey*: to conform “oneself” unsparingly to the vow that has been made of “one’s” being or to be “oneself” unflinchingly—except of course when it is to seek (as it may be in authenticity, when the latter is genuine) a *new order* or concrete command. It (will) is simply the power of self-projection to effectuate itself; to the extent that a life gives itself and keeps hold of an ultimate can-be, immediate possibilities are “constrained”—which is just to say, given—by it (the can-be) in accordance with its exigencies, and living being *is* as *subjective* being, choosing from these. To “lose ‘one’s’ will” is thus simply to falter in self-projection: or in a very strict sense, to “let ‘oneself’ down” (dispersal of “one’s” being).

Why concentrate, though, on “*akrasia*” (or more generally, on the “hedonic”), when this must be understood as a *breakdown* of temporalization? However necessary an analysis of the hedonic might seem for some other sort of inquiry, it appears totally beside the point so far as a work on time-consciousness is concerned. And yet: although the hedonic exhibits something like a mere *attenuation* of self-temporalization, this is nevertheless one *wholly necessary*, if the self-tending of a streaming life is in fact to temporalize itself at all. This is so for two related reasons:

The first of these can be witnessed in the phenomenon of *enthusiasm*. What is the significance of this affect? With the term “enthusiasm,” I do not mean the affect of mere excitement (which I analyzed earlier), or anything like simple eagerness, zeal for a project, or

³⁴⁹ *PS 2*: p. 303.

³⁵⁰ *PS 2*: p. 310.

intense “interest” in this or that topic or subject matter—“enthusiasm” in the *vulgar* sense, strictly speaking, since speaking in this way profanizes a word that has always been connected with the sacred. Mere eagerness, at most, bears the trace of enthusiasm in the strict sense: to be overcome in ritual or ceremony; or to be enthralled and swept up in the crowd or in the pomp and circumstance of the pageant, or in the chanting of the masses which becomes “one’s” own voice, the marching of the band whose rhythm takes over “one’s” stride. The affect has many variations, which should not detain us here: suffice it to say that each modification of enthusiasm is alike in that in it, the subject finds himself or herself taken over or caught up in something “bigger” than the self, something “greater” or “more powerful.” Enthusiasm thus lies at the heart of conformity, since it “makes the subject ‘one’” with a movement or a people, and though at times it appears to break sharply with conformity or with the everyday (which conformity essentially enables), it does so only to sanctify it in some way; for this reason, Levinas writes that “possession by a god, enthusiasm, is not the irrational, but the end of the solitary.”³⁵¹ And yet by the same token, it effaces the question the other brings “me” of “my” own being, since it “transports man beyond his powers and wishes,” as Levinas writes, only “by making beings participate, albeit ecstatically, in a drama not brought about willingly by them, an order in which they founder.”³⁵²

What makes enthusiasm so important a phenomenon to understand at the present point in this inquiry? Enthusiasm is tied essentially to conformity, which forms the basis of inauthentic self-projection; and yet it nonetheless involves a sort of attenuation, a relinquishing of sorts, of self-projection, by instead concentrating life in its “here-and-now,” in sensibility and behavior. Enthusiasm is precisely a form of the *hedonic*, that is to say: for enthused, the subject is

³⁵¹ *TI*: p. 50.

³⁵² Levinas, *Difficult Freedom: essays on Judaism* trans. Seán Hand (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press); 1997: p. 14. Hereafter listed as *DF*.

enraptured or in ecstasy and, becoming possessed by apparently “cosmic” forces or by the “spirit” of a people, loses all inhibition so as to become totally engrossed in the instant. “One” loses “oneself” in ritual, the pageant or the ceremony, getting “carried away”—except that this “self-loss” is at once a primordial sort of “*finding*” of “oneself” (of *Befindlichkeit*)—losing oneself in the crowd, e.g., in which not paradoxically, “one” most is “oneself”—since this coursing of forces and of the “spirit” through a living being makes it “one” with a totality and as such, sets a course for its living, propelling the subject who gathers himself or herself in its wake upon a path that he or she can conformingly assume. Enthusiasm is ecstasy *par excellence*, carrying the enthused subject away towards his or her self-projected horizons, and yet only by getting the subject “carried away” again in the pure bliss of being, the contentment or total “complacency” of a moment of living returned to itself once more: which is just to say, finding itself no longer ill at ease under the other’s accusation. Caught up in this distinctive form of the hedonic, the enthused moment of living slips out of the orbit of subjectivity, but so as to, at once, orient it or align “one;” enthusiasm thus not only underscores conformity, but confirms it or reconfirms it and *places it beyond question*, where the other’s accusation or questioning will not reach it. It is for this very reason that Levinas regularly warns us of enthusiasm, and furthermore, harbors such suspicion of the arts, whose products are linked by essence with ritual and pageantry or else, as decoration, prolong the power of the pageant and its enthusiasm into the everyday.³⁵³

Conformity thus relies upon enthusiasm as a primordial “making ‘one’”—for to be “one-with,” which enthusiasm effects, is finally to be “one,” belonging to a totality: i.e., the subject as “oneself” or member of the “social body.” But this means that the self-tending temporalization of

³⁵³ See, for instance, “Absolute Otherness and the Taste of Powdered Green Tea,” by the author, in *Levinas and Asian Thought*, ed. Leah Kalmanson, Frank Garrett, and Sarah Mattice (Pittsburgh, Duquesne University Press); 2013.

a life, which of itself “tends” toward inauthenticity, relies for this tendency upon what I’m calling the hedonic: upon its very self-attenuation or a return to a purely “elemental” participation, or to an upsurge of the immediacy of behavior or its “here-and-now.” The tendency towards inauthentic self-tending holds only to the extent that the effects of enthusiasm are still “felt,” i.e., that the subject remains bound to a people or movement or to some ideal in the most general sense. It is therefore, once more, as if subjectivity borrowed powers from the sensibility so as to diminish itself as that responsibility for “my” own being that comes from the other, and as if it diminished such responsibility precisely so as to be able to *live it out*: to put in into practice, as it were, by acceding to certain concrete norms and obligations, living a life made significant on the horizon of a shared, social world. There remains in subjectivity, then, a perhaps manageable, but nonetheless irreducible, residue of irresponsibility, of the hedonic, in the form of that enthusiasm which, captivating me and sweeping me up into some movement or crusade, bonds me to a people and thus, to a concrete way of tending after my being. Redemption is at hand, but hoping always becomes dreaming; with this, the renewal of somnolence. Enthusiasm, which enlivens, is a slumbering of the self, an essential residue of lassitude within subjectivity.³⁵⁴

As a mode of the hedonic, then, enthusiasm nonetheless bears an essential connection to temporality, and especially to the streaming life’s tendency to temporalize itself away from authentic self-projection—which, because it is as enthused that the subject first comes to

³⁵⁴ The “enthusiast,” by extension, is the “one” most lively, *and thus*, most “asleep.”

In some sense, we are all enthusiasts, or can be considered as such, insofar as, inauthentically self-temporalized, we necessarily find ourselves committed to something and get self-projectingly carried away towards it; and when “irresoluteness” or vacillation takes hold, we can always, and do often, “free” ourselves of it by reminding ourselves of this “higher purpose” so as to steel ourselves for the struggles to come. But if we are to speak of the “true” enthusiast, he or she must be the one who, for all intents and purposes, can no longer be reached by self-questioning in any way, in that his or her “strength of purpose”—which, again, is in league with the hedonic—is as if unbreachable. Such a one can be called dangerous, in the sense of being “one” who just cannot help but be “oneself.” To simply “be what ‘one’ is” is always to court atrocity.

bindingly assume a can-be or ultimate possibility, thus connects this issue of the “choosing” of a can-be with those of both the tendency towards inauthenticity and of the very oblivion in which inauthenticity keeps itself. How, precisely, can we conceive of this connection? On the one hand: enthusiasm, which as we’ve just seen “grounds” conformity, precludes (via the power of the hedonic) anything like a question coming to unsettle conformity, and thus, inauthenticity. On the other hand: it is only because it allows itself to become enthused that authenticity, when it is genuine, dies and issues itself in conformity. After all, enthusiasm can always emerge as an answer to angst: a light comes to break upon the “dark night of the soul,” which allows the subject to get carried away once more. Admittedly, of course, enthusiasm doesn’t always emerge only by breaking in upon angst; and yet to the extent not only that it is effective but even that its effects continue to be felt, angst is, if not expressly put to rest, then simply precluded.

To be enthused, then, is to be welcomed or perhaps re-welcomed into a world by or with the others, to merge with them in some way so that conformity comes “naturally.” Since, as we’ve just discovered, it permits subjectivity its ultimate can-be in some concrete form, the hedonic puts to rest authentic temporality (which has its can-be only as a question mark—authentic being-unto-death); it thus serves as an attenuation of temporalization that is necessary for temporalization itself. But there is also a sense in which the hedonic can come to put to rest *inauthentic* temporality, by granting it the “*relative ends*” towards which it self-projects: we discover, here, the phenomenon of the *moment of respite*.

By the moment of respite, I mean just what Levinas usually refers to under the simple rubric of “enjoyment,” or what James, in a different though not unrelated context, calls a “moral holiday:” “to let the world wag in its own way, feeling that its issues are in better hands than ours[...]. The universe is a system of which the individual members may relax their anxieties

occasionally, in which the don't-care mood is also right for men, and moral holidays are in order."³⁵⁵ The life of subjectivity—generally speaking, a human life—is precisely a life made subject or responsible, a life having to account for itself before the other. But to *live* a human life is, eminently, to take “oneself” *as having* accounted for “oneself,” and so, to take some respite, to relax and enjoy “oneself” after a day given to work; it is to eat and drink and be at ease with “one’s” fellows in a time made possible by this labor—a moment granted precisely by working together towards what are now our shared goals or our aspirations in common, the “marvel of the good time standing out from the continuity of the hours,” in Levinas’s words.³⁵⁶ It is to take a warm bath or to unwind in “good conscience,” in the apparent knowledge that “one” has done “one’s” bit and is thus now entitled to this moment of wholly deserved gratification. Unlike enthusiasm, the moment of respite does not consecrate, but rather, comforts; “the Sunday does not sanctify the week, but compensates for it,”³⁵⁷ Levinas writes.

A human life without such moments would be unliveable; it would not be a life. “My” life, again, is precisely that for which I must answer, and thus that for which enjoyment in all its immediacy is never a “given,” a life that can always be given to sacrifice—and yet if it is to be lived, it must still be a *life*: to sacrifice unceasingly and without respite leaves even a Jesus on the cross wondering why he has been forsaken. “Fairness” arises: I am for the others and might well die for them in the end, but as long as I am living it is “only right” that I have these moments of

³⁵⁵ James, “What Pragmatism Means” in *Pragmatism* (Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company); 1981: p. 36. Hereafter listed as *PR*.

³⁵⁶ *TI*: p. 148.

³⁵⁷ Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, trans. by Alphonso Lingis (Martinus Nijhoff: The Hague); 1978: p. In order to grasp the meaning of this claim, of course, we need to remember that for Levinas, as a Jew, it is *Saturday*, and not Sunday, that marks Shabbat—for the Sabbath is a day which evidently *is* meant to sanctify. However, Sunday obviously does happen to mark the Sabbath for Christians; thus possibly allowing us to divine here a subtle anti-Christian jibe coming from Levinas, or perhaps something worse than that. On the other hand, the Christian day of rest has also come to mark a simple “day off” in the (“merely”) secular public sphere, for which the day generally has the significance only of comfort or respite (or whatever the “weekend” now signifies). A sympathetic interpretation of Levinas’s assertion will obviously read it in this way, rather than as an absurd insult to Christian practices.

respite and renewal, just as it is for the others—and if for no other reason, so that I will have strength for the struggles we face ahead: we need “quietistic raptures,”³⁵⁸ in James’s words, “provisional breathing-spells, intended to refresh us for the morrow’s fight.”³⁵⁹ But even beyond this is the fact that, since I belong to the social sphere—brought or bringing myself in as “one” of the others, who dwell or are “there” together—I do so with all the rights as well as the responsibilities of any in my position. With “contemporaneity of representation,” Levinas writes, “the neighbor becomes visible, and, looked at, presents himself, and there is also justice for me.”³⁶⁰

The ethical would be without significance in the world did it not mark out a living that continues to need and want, and that, conforming itself or in a community, comes to “know” not only when it should resist enjoyment but when it should enjoy. Here it is exhibited precisely *qua* conditioned. But it would, furthermore, have no continuing significance or prolongation *per se*, *qua* unconditioned that is, were we not at times to witness an individual, ready to enjoy some “fully deserved” gratification, nonetheless stopped in his or her tracks, perhaps having to sacrifice even *this* for the sake of the other desperately in need:

to be torn from oneself despite oneself has meaning only as a being torn from the complacency in oneself characteristic of enjoyment, snatching the bread from one’s mouth[...]. It is not a gift of the heart, but of the bread from one’s mouth, of one’s own mouthful of bread. It is the openness, not only of one’s pocketbook, but of the doors of one’s home, a “sharing of your bread with the famished,” a “welcoming of the wretched into your house” (Isaiah 58).³⁶¹

But if this is perhaps a perfect characterization of the “saintly life,” even this life has to be a life so long as it goes on, requiring its satiations also.

³⁵⁸ James, *The Meaning of Truth* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press); 1975: p. 125. Hereafter listed as *MT*.

³⁵⁹ *MT*: p. 124.

³⁶⁰ *OB*: p. 159—continuing, of course, that “my lot is important. But it is still out of my responsibility that my salvation has meaning, despite the danger in which it puts this responsibility, which it may encompass and swallow up.” *OB*: p. 161.

³⁶¹ *OB*: p. 115.

This puts to us the very same dilemma in which James, also, finds himself entangled: for if, on the one hand, we need our moments of respite (James rather unambiguously writes that “I fully believe in the legitimacy of taking moral holidays”³⁶²) it nonetheless is plain, on the other, that (in Sami Pihlström’s words) “the fundamental Jamesian argument, ultimately, is of course *not* that we are entitled to take our moral holiday[...] but rather that there are in the end no moral holidays available to us. There is no possibility for any genuine rest or relaxation in moral matters.”³⁶³ Why? Simply because, in this renewal of enjoyment without which participation can always lose its will,³⁶⁴ the questioning of the subjected one’s own being, which calls him or her out as a subject, comes, if for only an instant, as if to its cessation. Out of sight and mind are always the others who have nothing. And even if, by some great miracle, all *were*, at this moment, really “right with the world,” rather than merely being misapprehended as such (as is to a greater or lesser extent always the case with the moment of respite), this difference would still be nil for the “one” who, enjoying himself or herself in “good conscience,” has “no time” for such questioning. For such questioning to flare up is precisely to refuse the subject this respite.

What does this signal, regarding inauthentic temporalization *vis-à-vis* the hedonic? The participation of conformity, which is, ethically, always both necessary and insufficient, projects itself obliviously upon its ultimate can-be, such that what it *is* given to seize upon are always the goals “along the way,” the “relative ends” or enjoyments given upon the greater horizon of this life *qua* its can-be insofar as they are in line with it or with the basic orientation obliviously assumed: which is to say, “warranted” or “acceptable” and in keeping with the mores and norms

³⁶² *PR*: p. 38.

³⁶³ Sami Pihlström “Pragmatic Realism and Pluralism in Philosophy of Religion” in *William James on Religion*, ed. by Henrik Rydenfelt and Sami Pihlström (London, Palgrave Macmillan); 2013: p. 95.

³⁶⁴ James’ notion of “brain-power” (see *PS 2*: p. 540) gives a physiological explanation for why this must be so: put as simply as possible, thinking takes a massive amount of energy. It is thus not only so that the conscious life requires its satiations biologically speaking, but that it must cease its anxieties for it least a moment in satiating itself if it is not to expend all the energy it thereby procures for itself, and for “nothing,” as it were.

of the social totality to which “one” belongs. Initially and for the most part, this is to say, “one” inauthentically projects “oneself” upon moments of respite (“things refer to my enjoyment,”³⁶⁵ Levinas writes; they “come to representation from a background from which they emerge and to which they return in the enjoyment we can have of them”³⁶⁶). But this is then to say that “one” inauthentically projects “oneself” upon that in which self-projection or temporalization attenuates itself, and at the limit, to nothing: for the moment of respite takes it repose in a return to immediacy, to a totally complacent enjoyment, where questioning will not reach it. Perhaps it “refreshes us for the morrow’s fight;” but the morrow precisely falls away from enjoyment in the moment of respite, in which “one,” as we say, “takes time off:” projection finds an end and rests there, if only for an instant.

And what else could it mean to call this a “relative end?” Were it not for this rest—i.e., for the leaving off of self-projection, or of temporalization and consciousness, even if only for an instant—we could not conceive of enjoyment as an *end* at all, albeit only a relative one: it would instead simply take its place as yet another means, on the way to a life lived well.³⁶⁷ That enjoyment is *also* an end and thus the termination of significance in a sense—though one which is always itself made significant or “for something” insofar as, necessarily, it continues to be posed on the horizon of life as a streaming totality (as we’ll see in just a moment)—is so only because *in* it, temporalization as self-projection takes a fleeting rest, relaxing itself in the upsurge of life’s immediacy: “the means themselves lose their signification in the outcome,” Levinas writes; “the end is unconscious as soon as it is reached.”³⁶⁸ This of course does not mean that

³⁶⁵ *TI*: p. 133.

³⁶⁶ *TI*: p. 130.

³⁶⁷ And though satiation without enjoyment might, on certain doctrines, be taken an ideal for life (the life of ἀπάθεια, for one), it is one which can nevertheless only be approached, since this life must still be a life. Sensibility retains its “autonomy;” and *must*, since it subtends consciousness.

³⁶⁸ *TI*: p. 95.

enjoyment in the life of the subject is fully unconscious; in the midst of the moment of respite, the subject nonetheless continues to be self-projected to some extent—insofar, that is, as this moment continues to be given on the horizon of the streaming life as a totality, upon whose horizon it gains its significance: for after all, the moment of respite does not usually rise to the level of complete ecstasy—and to this extent, the enjoyment is certainly conscious. In fact, we sometimes think of these (enjoyments or rather, moments of respite) as those moments that are most “conscious,” insofar as such experiences are amongst the most vivid in our lives. Yet they gain this vividness, not through the contraction effected by a life’s (inauthentic) self-projection—“concentration” on the work at-hand—but rather, through a concentration of life (in the sense I introduced earlier) effected by sensuous absorption, or the hedonic, a power coming from the sensibility subtending all constitution: and though it pulls this living away from itself *qua* streaming totality and towards the absorption in immediacy characteristic of sensible life, nonetheless it is welcomed into conscious life in its self-tending temporalization insofar as it is lived as a “special” moment—the “specialness” of the moment is of course equivalent to a recognition that the moment is different than others, uplifted *as* moment of respite. With this, the subject is given to rejoin the “animal world,” the “world of the living,” albeit with the dignity fitting his or her humanity, given that such enjoyments have ostensibly been “earned.” A human life, again, “needs” more than this, if it is not to falter before its obligatedness, its answerability or responsibility before the others, subjectedness of the subjected one affected by the other. Enjoyment (and enthusiasm, too) is a vanity, when isolated from “ethical love.” And yet, the life of subjectivity needs these enjoyments, its moments of respite, and not in spite of this.

All this is just to say that inauthentic self-temporalization—as participation in the community or as oblivious, embedded in the social fabric, self-projection of “oneself”—relies on

the hedonic or implicates, *in itself*, this self-slackening of self-tending's temporalization. It implicates this precisely by its reliance on the *moment of respite*—on “everyday” pleasures which are sanctioned, which are in keeping with the life to which “one” has committed “oneself” and upon which “one” thus continually self-projects, but in which self-projection eases or attenuates itself so as to allow for itself something of a return to the complacency of the immediate. Like authenticity in its connection with enthusiasm, then, inauthenticity thus also implicates itself in an irresponsibility before the others, a responsibility never responsible enough.

In its own way, therefore, authentic *as well as* inauthentic self-temporalization—and thus, consciousness in general—is connected by essence with something like a sort of attenuation or “self-slackening,” which each mode gives to itself via the hedonic: for this reason, then, “contentment, in its naïveté, lurks behind the relationship with things,” as Levinas writes.³⁶⁹ But why must either of the two modes of self-temporalization undergo such attenuation at all? Because self-temporalization, in general, *requires* it, needs this slackening: for the interrogation that stirs the subject's temporalization only ever effects anything in being through the reformation of behavior; the other's affection, strictly speaking, counts for very little if not nothing outside of “one's” conformity to various concrete mores and norms—from which this reformation precisely issues—whose institution, as response, it has come to inspire. And yet conformity to, or participation in, this or that established social totality, in no way self-evident, is by all rights subject for its own part to the interrogation or exposure that the other brings: to prolong itself, it (conformity or participation) thus requires an evasion of its own exposure, which is just what self-temporalization can win for itself through the hedonic, or the powers it “borrows” in advance from the sensibility it will always then come to reform. We've seen that

³⁶⁹ *TI*: p. 137.

the hedonic lends itself to two modes of such evasion. The primary mode of the hedonic, enthusiasm, can take over the subject completely in an instant of “madness”³⁷⁰ and bind him or her to a world; in it, we discovered, self-questioning attenuates itself to something approaching a nullity. However, enthusiasm cannot last, and though its powers prolong themselves in art and decoration and, to some extent, in all the little rituals of everyday life, it nevertheless must call upon the hedonic further to ensure for conformity its evasion from the renewal of ethical exposure or the interrogation brought by the other, i.e., to secure for it its self-obliviousness. The moment of respite, a second mode of the hedonic, comes to its aid, then, even if only indirectly, because in being self-projected upon such moments, i.e., upon something like a relative end or a pleasurable towards-which grounded by “one’s” ultimate can-be, the inauthentically self-temporalized subject is slackened that much more in thrall to the thrill of the imminent or upcoming pleasure (which, insofar as a behavior that has come to be associated with the moment of respite’s realization—labor, etc.—goes on unfolding itself, is always experienced as pleasure *simpliciter* by sensibility which, *qua* sensibility, knows nothing of an “in-order-to,” but only the immediacy of its satiations). Because, that is, self-temporalization is given to project the subject’s being upon those enjoyments that are “only right” to be enjoyed, and because the imminence of the enjoyment is already sensibly lived as a pleasure which, as it builds, begins to overpower temporalization, self-tending temporalization can win for itself its slackening or attenuation in just this way. Of course, subjectivity is slackened even more fully upon *realization* of the moment of respite, whose enjoyments may not reach the height of ecstasy but nevertheless approach it.

³⁷⁰ Kierkegaard, according to Derrida’s repeated evocation, calls decision “a moment of madness.” For more on this (and the perhaps liberal use of the quotation from, though perhaps not interpretation of, Kierkegaard, see: Geoffrey Bennington, “Moment of Madness: Derrida’s Kierkegaard” in *Oxford Literary Review* Vol. 33 No. 1 (July 2007): p. 103-127.

Because of this, we can and must conceive of the self-tending temporalization of conscious life as its “synchronization,” as Levinas puts it—as a sort of detour in being taken by a body, or by a sentient living that has been torn from and thrown back upon itself by the other’s approach so as to be answerable for its own being. By temporalizing itself, the living made subject gives itself time, projecting its being conformingly or in accordance with the biddings or pleas of the others to thereby expiate for it; but as such, it thereby “returns to itself” in the renewed serenity of its reformation or redemption. Temporalization, issuing from “wounding” or subjection, takes hold of the moments of sentient living, orients them, and returns them their complacency; producing itself in this self-tending temporalization from out of a sentient living, conscious life is a sentient being’s way of relating to itself and recuperating itself redemptively. Consciousness thus begins, as Levinas puts it, in “disincarnation—or more exactly, a postponing of the corporeity of the body,”³⁷¹ and is thus, as we have seen, as impossible to describe without reference to a sentient living body as without reference to time. But to recuperate itself redemptively is to “reincarnate” itself, to return itself to the paradisiacal state of animal complacency, as it were. It is thus that consciousness is, in Levinas’s words, “an event or adventure or advent of being that is concerned with being—or being in which being is at stake.”³⁷²

In a perhaps paradoxical, but nonetheless irreducible sense, then, time-consciousness, as synthesis or gathering of time—of the phases, firstly, of the “self”—is a *reduction* of something like our “sense of time” taken in its *original*—or rather, “pre-original,” because absolutely unsettling—sense: taken, that is, as idea of infinity, as trace of the other who approaches and tears a being from its immediacy precisely by making it answerable for itself. It is a reduction,

³⁷¹ *TI*: p. 165-166.

³⁷² “Dying For...” in *EN*: p. 212 [emphasis removed].

that is, of what Lisa Guenther calls the “*time before time* of an an-arche,” or of an unconditional responsibility.³⁷³ But then, this trace signifies not only insofar as the obligation to answer for its being to which a living being is subjected is the very “reason” for the whole adventure of subjectivity—not only insofar as the relation to the other as such, that is, marks out an “*absolute* adventure” (as Levinas puts it),³⁷⁴ producing “the psyche in the soul” or “the other in me,” which is the again very inspiration of subjectivity—but insofar as the renewal of self-interrogation is always possible, and can always reform the reformation of life whenever a suffering that “I” haven’t answered for comes to be expressed. The trace of the other left by his or her approach signifies at once this incessant demand of perfectibility.

What remains now is to clarify in full how this “miraculous abundance,”³⁷⁵ the trace of the other, delivers the subjected one over to his or her self-temporalization—to subjectivity, that is—in its three “ecstasies” or temporal orientations. To do so will be to remove the provisional nature from the demonstration of my ultimate thesis, allowing us to understand at basis how the temporalization of a streaming life’s self-tending emerges from out of the interruption of a sentient living’s immediacy or its being subjected to ethical responsibility, made to answer for its being or live subject to the recognition that it is not the only one. But as such, this clarification will disclose, in the only way fitting to it, the idea of infinity itself at the heart of self-temporalization, which refuses to allow a living being complacency in its behavior, and thus, lets a living effect itself in its own recurrence as the sincerity of a response.

³⁷³ Lisa Guenther, “Nameless Singularity: Levinas on individuation and ethical singularity” in *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy* Vol. 14 No. 1 (2009): p. 177 [my emphasis].

³⁷⁴ *TI*: p. 305 [emphasis mine].

³⁷⁵ *TI*: p. 97.

Chapter 5

The Idea of Infinity

Section XIII—Proximity and Presence

§ 37

In this study, I have sought to demonstrate that subjectivity is stirred by the ethical, and—what is most important—to clarify the meaning of this. To this end, I was led to subject that most essential of all “phenomena,” time-consciousness, to analysis in the first Part of this study: a “phenomenon” which, in its most primordial form, as we saw—the self-tending temporalization of a streaming totality— represents the very subjectivity of the subject. But the condition of self-temporalization, we then saw, must lie in its sensible or sentient underpinnings, for self-temporalization comes precisely to orient, in light of a projected possibility, experiences that must, for their own part, be described purely on the order of sensation, experience without intentionality. How does it come to pass that each of the moments of a sentient life come to be oriented in light of such a possibility, self-given as moments of the streaming selfsame—especially given that, for its own part, each such moment is characterized essentially by its self-*absorption*, which is just to say, by life living itself in its immediacy, in the purity of the “here-and-now?” What must come to pass in the order of sensing so that sensation can be brought over to another vocation, to temporality, or to the self-constitution of acts or intentional unities as enduring moments of the selfsame conscious life: a life giving itself to itself so as to always have to determine what it is to-be?

This led us to the first chapter of the *second* Part of this study, in which I was able to provisionally clarify the condition of subjectivity as *ethical subjection*: at heart or in its basis,

here, we began to discover, in however preliminary a fashion, that a streaming life's self-tending temporalization finds its inspiration in ethical encounter, the relation to another as such. After first describing pre-temporalized sense-experiencing and, then, the exigencies to which an event marking the deliverance of such experiencing to self-temporalization must conform, I described the subjection to ethical responsibility itself and then, by way of provisional clarification, worked to resolve some of the questions that remained of self-temporalization (from the first Part of this study) in light of this inspiration, and of the essential and necessary tensions in which it thereby must become entangled. We saw that, in order to respond to the obligation to which he or she has been subjected by the other, the one made subject must be able to free himself or herself from the weight of this obligation a little, making use of powers that I called "hedonic," borrowed, as it were, from the sensibility that this response will come to reform. For the very same reason, we saw, the one made subject must strain against the hedonic, or is continually obligated to do so. Self-temporalization, which is to say, subjectivity itself, can be discovered here, caught between these opposing pulls, and would thus seem to unfold itself only in this tension, a "space of meaning," as is sometimes said,³⁷⁶ which is at basis a space of (self-)questioning.

We will now be able to remove all provisionality from this account, and to clarify the meaning of the thesis of this study in full, by tracing the streaming life's self-tending temporalization in *each* of its *three temporal orientations* or "ekstases" back to the affection that originally, or perhaps pre-originally, stirs it, which comes from the other to break in on the immediacy of sensible life, its spontaneity, by calling it into question.

The accomplishment of the task laid out, which will bring the present study to its fruition, is the objective of Chapter 5 of this work. Before beginning this last task, however, I should make a few opening remarks as to its nature. To this end, I will note, *firstly*, that earlier—when I

³⁷⁶ See, for instance, John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press); 1996: p. xiv.

drew back from the various acts or intentionalities with which I began this study to the more foundational intentional complexes subtending them—I generally began by describing the *futural* aspect or orientation of the subtending phenomena, moving on after that to a description of its *past*-wise aspect and, finally, to that aspect or orientation having to do with the *present*—a sequence justified by the fact that, as we’ve increasingly come to recognize, the futural orientation of self-temporalization has a sort of preeminence *vis-à-vis* its other orientations or “ekstases.” In the analyses making up the final Chapter of this study, however, that sequence will be reversed. Why? Simply because the preeminence of the futural no longer seems to hold, here, where nothing is a given; where everything is questionable, or unsettled, under the accusation of a fault. There should be nothing surprising about this, that the preeminence of the futural does not hold here: for after all—or at least, as we have every reason to insist already—subjectivity, once we’ve traced it back to its condition, will not get traced back to something like a *foundation*, but rather, to something like the production of its being *without* a foundation, its being found unwarranted or unjustified and having to expiate for itself absolutely; which is to say that subjectivity finds its condition in what Levinas calls “the *exceptional condition* or *unconditionality* of the self.”³⁷⁷ The being that would be taken back to its condition in this sense would, precisely, be precluded from falling back on what it *is*, for subjectivity, as a response, “answers[...] to an absolutely heteronomous call.”³⁷⁸

Secondly, I should also remark upon the the “way” I will have to follow in these final analyses, which will often appear akin to the so-called “apophatic route” or *via negativa*. The reason for this is perhaps clear already. Phenomenological investigation of sensation *per se* already required “*privative* interpretation,” since that which was to be investigated in that case

³⁷⁷ *OB*: p. 112 [my emphasis].

³⁷⁸ *OB*: p. 53.

was life as it is lived *prior to* or *without* consciousness or its self-tending temporalization. But here, dealing with the unconditional condition of subjectivity, the situation is more drastic still: for the other, revealing himself or herself *as such*, is as little the “content” of sensing-experience (sensing-experience *qua* consciousness, that is, a moment giving itself as a moment of the selfsame conscious life: the “hyletic”) as the constituted sense of an entity, made manifest in its being. Of course, the other facing me always comes to be manifest as an object of consciousness—something, or better, *someone*, made sense of; but then, the other’s self-revelation, and the trace it leaves—to which consciousness itself must be traced back—will have to be prescinded from this constitution that it allows for and, for this very reason, to which it cannot be reduced. What remains from this prescission is “very little—almost nothing,” as Derrida was once able to write,³⁷⁹ leaving nothing to be described outside of the trace it leaves, which for its own part remains merely as a surfeit that exceeds the limits of subjectivity and that insinuates itself only through the irreducible tensions of subjectivity it arouses or shakes out of slumber (which in the previous chapter I already began to clarify). The method of description will have to respect this fact: hence, its “apophatic” character.

So much for the *provisos*, then. We will have to understand now how the other’s trace in me prepares for and exceeds each of the three temporal-orientations of self-tending temporalization, of subjectivity or the very being of the subject *qua* subject. My demonstration will thus comprise three stages. I will begin by tracing back the phenomenon of self-*presence*, or the self-maintaining of conscious life in both its inauthentic and authentic modes, to the ethical subjection of the subjected one. What will be at issue in this tracing back, specifically, is what we can call the *proximity* of the other, or put the other way round, the subjected one’s *exposure*. But in what way can we speak of the other’s proximity, or what Levinas elsewhere calls “the

³⁷⁹ *WD*: p. 80.

acuteness of the present” which is engendered in his or her approach or self-revelation? In what way is the other thereby exposed?

For reasons gone over already, we must insist that the other, in his or her primordial self-revelation, is not given: to be exposed to the other is not in the first place to be conscious of a being who gazes at me, since consciousness is called out only by the accusation of my being that the other brings me, so that I might then make a theme of the other or this gaze. The other, instead, reveals himself or herself as other, as that which *cannot* be given, precisely by making a mark: precisely by placing under obligation one made subject to this. No doubt whenever another comes to face me, there are “contents” here, inasmuch as sense-experiencing is involved, through whose synthesis (i.e., self-temporalization) the other will come to be constituted as alter-ego, this or that person, or “sort” of person, near me or off in the distance, a friend, or enemy, etc. But this constitution of the other—which as has become clear, requires the constitution of the selfsame—is only possible because the otherness of the other—which is precisely that which *cannot be given*: the suffering or enjoyment of the other, who is enraptured, or in pain, but always, vulnerable—has “given itself” as such, or been impressed upon me *by* the other, and has torn me from my immediacy so that I can “have” a world. To speak of the other revealing himself or herself as other is thus only to speak of the leaving of a mark: for the *ψυχή* *in* or inspiration *of* the self, or put otherwise, the troubledness and obligatedness of sensible life—the very subjectedness of a sentient living faced by another and shown up in its own vanity—signifies *precisely* as the other’s trace, as the mark he or she makes in and as this subjection. This is to say that it signifies at once as exposedness of the moment of sentient living: precisely as my rootedness to the “here-and-now” from which I am rooted. It is for this reason that Levinas writes that “backed up against itself, in itself because without any recourse in anything, in itself

like in its skin, the self in its skin both is exposed to the exterior (which does not happen to things) and obsessed by the others in this naked exposure.”³⁸⁰

As I will demonstrate below, the exposedness of a sentient living, i.e., “my” subjectedness to the other, can only be conceived properly as *unconditional*, or rather, as an exposure to unconditional obligation: and this, because it signifies before anything is given in the strict sense, and because in a manner of speaking everything is given on its behalf. But what does it mean to call an obligation unconditional? Every obligation in the *usual* or everyday sense (“mundane” obligations, we can say)—which the subject assumes initially and for the most part by conforming him- or herself and, upon which, projects himself or herself in making a promise of his or her own being—are what we can call *conditional* responsibilities. In this situation, I owe “that;” I am responsible for “such-and-such” to this or that person, to these individuals, to “my people.” And yet the obligatedness *here*, in *exposure*, signifies prior to all that, and remains irreducible to these obligations even as it moves the one who will be subject to conformity and to live his or her own life in accordance with some more or less coherent complex of said obligations. It must, that is, if it is in fact condition or inspiration of self-tending temporalization, of responsibility for that which I am to-be. But what, then, can we make of the purported *unconditionality* of ethical subjection? In fact, we bear witness to it as at one with the humbling of immediacy, or the unjustifiedness of the very being to which and from which the subjected one becomes rooted, precisely since this subjection is subjection to that “nothing” which never appears for me, which is never anything for “my” captivated self-absorption or for the vainly self-satiating immediacy of a life—a subjection, that is, to the otherness of the other—and which, precisely *as* that which could never be anything for me in this way, obsesses and inspires me, and commands me as if *everything*, or rather, as if it were more than everything. Albeit in a

³⁸⁰ *OB*: p. 112.

purely moral register, the other is the first mystery, divesting a being of itself by showing it up in the vanity of its partiality and arbitrariness, and investing it, in the sense of besieging it, with the glory of the exterior.

It [sensibility] reverts[...] to apprehension as an obsession by another who does not manifest himself [or herself]. On the hither side of the zero point which marks the absence of protection and cover, sensibility is being affected by a non-phenomenon, a being put in question by the alterity of the other[...], before the appearing of the other. It is a pre-original not resting on oneself, the restlessness of someone persecuted—Where to be? How to be?³⁸¹

In this way, I am placed into obligation without condition or “strings attached,” and *as such*, freed from my own being or the spontaneity of self-satiating life: an obligation that therefore could never have come from me. The very dawning of the otherness of the other, in my having to account for myself, or take the other into account: but thus, the very dawning of the *good*—of what Plato once even called a “good beyond being.”³⁸²

How does this obligatedness for the other that knows no condition stir a being’s self-identification, its *presence to self*? How, that is, does it motivate the inauthentic self-maintaining, a moment of living which maintains itself in some role or in its “worldliness,” along with the authentic self-maintaining of the same in a questioning distance from its world?

§ 38

As subject, a being always maintains itself in a world, which is to say, in some concrete role or collection of roles which are precisely ways of being in relation to the others (and as much the others who are not present to me “now” as those who are). Even in authentic self-maintaining this is so; in the critical distance taken from the world or a discourse, in which the meaning of things threatens to slip away, this being-in-a-role simply becomes all the more

³⁸¹ *OB*: p. 75.

³⁸² Plato, *Republic*, trans. G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company); 1992: p. 182 (509b); Hereafter listed as *TR*. Quoted, for one in *OB*: p. 95.

obvious. But being-with the others in the world is not simply the taking of a role *vis-à-vis* the others: it is also to give the *others* a role, which is to say, to understand them as well on the horizon of this world (and on this basis, ultimately, to grasp an object as this or that, in its essence). However: in the *primordial* self-revelation of the other, which is to say, in the ethical encounter, the other impresses upon me as if in *excess* of any role or possible role by which he or she can, and will, always come to be understood and be made manifest on the horizon of my world. How can this be so? How can a being be “given” to me as if irreducibly “beyond” any way in which this being might be understood—which is just to say, as irreducibly “beyond” any way in which that being could ever be given?

As difficult as it may be to conceive at first blush, the other impresses upon the subject in just this way, “possessing” a sort of an excess by which his or her otherness continues to signify. No doubt, as I just noted, the other comes to be made manifest within a discourse, just as things within the world do. This manifestation of the other should perhaps be considered all the more “significant,” given that the constituted sense of each object is always oriented *by* our discourse, by “being-with,” in which the self-projection of the subject always takes its bearing. Still, the other also comes forth precisely within this selfsame discourse, is given his or her place within it; the individual, like anything else, comes to be made sense of within a totality, given, in this or that case, as friend or fellow, or as a “neutral,” or even as an enemy: owed this or that deference, or perhaps not owed it, or perhaps even owed some retribution or reprisal (and in the end, even Socrates could not deny that justice always comes back to what “one” owes in this broad sense³⁸³). Encountering the other, I know who this *is* who now faces me, even if only as the stranger I encounter: I constitute a sense of the other’s being and make the other manifest according to role and particularity, always one of a type.

³⁸³ For justice always is a matter of what is “fitting,” or “doing one’s part.” see: *TR*: p. 110 (410b).

And yet if we cannot argue with any of this, it nevertheless cannot be denied that there is no discourse *at all* without the other. Levinas writes: “the Other does not appear in the nominative, but in the vocative. I not only think of what he is for me, but also and simultaneously, and even before, I *am* for him. In applying a concept to him, in calling him this or that, I am already appealing to him.”³⁸⁴ The other, that is, gets his or her “concept” in the discourse in which we are together, in my “being-with” him or her; but I can be given to this discourse at all only because, prior to it in the sense of its condition, the other has “appeared” to me in some way. Discourse, being-in-the-world, is possible onto for a one exposed by and to the other. Thus, if “ontology” is understanding of being or constitution of sense, and “metaphysics,” the subjectedness of a being before another, then as Levinas writes:

the relationship with a being infinitely distant, that is, overflowing its idea, is such that its authority as an existent is already *invoked* in every question we could raise concerning the meaning of its Being[...]. I cannot disentangle myself from society with the Other, even when I consider the Being of the existent he is. Already the comprehension of Being is said to the existent, who again arises behind the theme in which he is presented. This “saying to the Other”—this relationship with the other as interlocutor, this relation with an *existent*—precedes all ontology; it is the ultimate relationship in Being. Metaphysics precedes ontology.³⁸⁵

“Before” I weave my being into a discourse or take my place within a shared, social world, that is, the other affects me, calls me into question; the way that I am in the world, making sense of things—and of the others as part of this—so as to orient my living, is precisely what I give in *response*. It is only as such that the other receives the meaning I give to him or her, is constituted for me in his or her being: but also, that he or she can contest this meaning in turn. Levinas thus writes that “preexisting the disclosure of being in general taken as basis of knowledge and as meaning of being is the relation with the existent that expresses himself [or herself]; preexisting

³⁸⁴ *DF*: p. 7.

³⁸⁵ *TI*: p. 47-48.

the plane of ontology is the ethical plane.”³⁸⁶ The unconditional obligation into which the other places me or the subjection of my being that, *as such*, the other brings is, as the opening of discourse, the very condition of my sense constitution, and thus, of the “place” I give the other.

This excess of alterity beyond the theme in which the other is presented has nothing to do with some inadequate objective knowledge on my part about the other, or even, with any *irreducible* inadequacy on this score. Levinas writes, again: “the sense of our whole effort lies in affirming not that the Other forever escapes knowing, but that there is no meaning in speaking here of knowledge or ignorance, for justice [or ethics, more precisely—MC], the preeminent transcendence and the condition for knowing, is nowise, as one would like, a noesis correlative of a noema.”³⁸⁷ Surely, there will always be more that I can come to know about any given other—although the same can surely be said of any object whatsoever, no matter how essential my knowledge of it. This, however, has no relevance at all for the primordial significance of the other’s alterity: we can assume if we like that I can read the other before me like a book, as it were, so that nothing he or she does ever surprises me. Nor does the other’s otherness come down to a difference between our cultural “backgrounds,” or “experiences,” or personalities, etc., or at least, not in its essential significance: we can likewise assume I am “like” this other in every conceivable way. Nonetheless, the other is *other*. I will never feel the pain that the other feels as my *own* pain, and as much as I might share in the other’s pleasure or joy, it will in the strict sense never be lived as *mine*: an absolute chasm separates our being. But across this uncrossable chasm, I am struck by the other’s otherness when the other comes to face me; I have been breached by what could never breach my interiority—and precisely by this *as such*—in being riveted to the vanity of my self-absorption and moved to account for myself. Only in the

³⁸⁶ *TI*: p. 201.

³⁸⁷ *TI*: p. 90.

response given by my being-in-the-world or in the promise that I make of myself does the constitution of being come into play, and with it, anything like knowledge, which thus always comes too late for the other's affection. "Knowledge," here, should of course mean sense of beings or their manifestation and apprehension, before it means, derivatively, propositional and theoretical knowledge. This, I should note, is *not* to say that the matter of knowing has no relevance here whatsoever: for when I get "caught up" in the "now" or the manifestation of beings present to me, in my "knowledge" of things within-the-world, as is the case in inauthentic self-tending—in which that for-which I am does not come into question—I fortify myself against my exposure to the other or against the interrogation of my being to which the other's approach subjects me. "Knowing," as pre-reflective sense-making on the horizon of a discourse, brings about a slumbering of unconditional responsibility, or rather, unfolds itself in this slumbering. But this is in no way to say that the other's self-revelation in its primordial sense, calling my being into question and obligating me, comes down to a simple matter of surprise, i.e., familiarization and its lack, or has anything to do with the impossibility (which surely, again, we must admit) of ever coming to know him or her completely.

In any event, the significance of another's otherness does come, necessarily, to be occluded through the response given to the other—which is to say, in my self-determining consciousness of things, or the directedness of the self-tending life which *is* for-the-sake-of this or that. We will need to examine the nature of this; for precisely in it we find clarification of the issue at hand: namely, how the one made subject passes over into the very self-maintaining in inauthenticity which his or her subjection has inspired. In this passage, we will see, we find the source of all the internal tensions or irreducible dilemmas that we discovered earlier, involving the hedonic: i.e., the conditioning of responsibility, the necessary attenuation of self-

questioning. And yet if the one made subject only had to respond to the “first one on the scene,” however, it seems doubtful that any problems of the sort would arise at all. Conformity, or rather something apparently like it, would be a simple affair; all that would be required for a being in this case would be to adapt itself to the other’s immediate plea or requirement and then go on unscathed: “absolved,” Levinas writes, “the ego would become again absolute.”³⁸⁸ Or at the very least—if we conceived that a mark might be made by such an encounter, perhaps stirring something of subjectivity or allowing it to rear its head in some sense—we could not see why this should then be recurrent in the sense examined earlier. It perhaps would not be proper, then, to call it “mark” at all. Instead: the relation to the other as such comes to pass in the strict sense, leaving as its mark an *irreducible* trace and moving the subjected living to constitute itself *unbrokenly* as a streaming totality, only when the others of the other *also* weigh upon the subjected one in this subjection. It is here that we first encounter the essentially “political” “nature” of subjectivity, which we examined earlier.

Levinas often writes as though the latter would signify a further, unconditional subjection which would come to counterbalance a subjection to the singular other alone (to the “first one on the scene,” that is), “broadening” an “original” subjection which, though showing up the subjected one in his or her partiality would then be immediately given to partiality itself: “if proximity ordered to me only the other alone,” he claims, “there would have not been any problem in even the most general sense of the term. A question would not have been born, nor consciousness, nor self-consciousness. The responsibility for the other [...] is troubled and

³⁸⁸ “The I and the Totality” in *EN*: p. 19. Also quoted in: Robert Bernasconi, “The Third Party; Levinas on the intersection of the ethical and the political” in *Emmanuel Levinas: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers*; Vol. 1, *Levinas Phenomenology, and his Critics*, ed. Claire Katz with (London and New York, Routledge); 2005: p. 47. Hereafter listed as *LC*.

becomes a problem when the third party enters.”³⁸⁹ Roberto Bernasconi, in an essay on the “third party” in Levinas’s work, argues that such descriptions are metaphorical only, or else, that Levinas speaks imprecisely in such passages but ultimately does not take this position:

If Levinas, perhaps somewhat clumsily, attempted at times to express the relation of the ethical to the political by according a chronological priority of the face of the Other over the third party, his more careful formulations avoided casting it within a narrative idiom. By presenting the relation of the ethical and the political as a difference between layers of meaning, the focus passes from the priority of the ethical over the political to the point of intersection between them.³⁹⁰

Bernasconi is surely correct in claiming that the involvement of the “third party” in the ethical relation or in the mark it leaves is ultimately a matter of the “layers of meaning” of this mark, but perhaps goes too far with his claim that a “narrative idiom” has no place here. Perhaps it *is* the case, for example, that before the empirical infancy of the being that will be subject has drawn to its close, the relation to the other signifies only as a “one-on-one” encounter, so to speak, to only later involve the “other others;” subjectivity would fully crystallize only at *this* later point. Questions of the sort belong to philosophical anthropology and not phenomenological analysis, and I find it doubtful that Levinas ever wanted to decide for such questions in his texts.

Leaving this issue aside, then, it should be evident that the “third party” *does* signify in the face-to-face relation, or at the least must come to do so, so long as a trace stirring subjectivity is to be left by the subjection—“the relation with the face in fraternity, where in his [or her] turn the Other appears in solidarity with all the others, constitutes the social order, the reference of every dialogue to the third party by which the We[...] encompasses the face to face opposition³⁹¹”—and in fact, Levinas writes that “love itself demands justice, and my relation with my neighbour cannot remain outside the lines which this neighbour maintains with various

³⁸⁹ *OB*: p. 157.

³⁹⁰ *LC*: p. 49.

³⁹¹ *TI*: p. 180.

third parties.”³⁹² But precisely why is it that “in his [or her] turn the Other appears in solidarity with all the others,” or that in the immediacy of the face-to-face, “love itself demand justice?” Simply because the other’s self-revelation—which arrests immediacy and impresses upon the subjected one that he or she is not the all of being, i.e., his or her own vanity in self-absorption—does not reveal the other as though the other and the one made subject simply made two:

in the proximity of the other, all the others than the other obsess me, and already this obsession cries out for justice, demands measure and knowing, is consciousness. A face obsesses and shows itself[...]. The other is from the first the brother [or sister] of all the other men [and women]. The neighbor that obsesses me is already a face, both comparable and incomparable, a unique face and in relationship with faces, which are visible in the concern for justice.³⁹³

This is to say that the other reveals him- or herself as, for his or her own part, responsible for others: the subjected one, faced by the other or subjected and obligated to answer before him or her and do right in his or her eyes, is thus obligated to answer for all the others as well. Without this being so, subjection would, again, be simple adaption of a being’s behavior; it becomes interrogation of the being of the one made subject and the sincere giving of promises only when the other, before whom I am obligated, reveals himself or herself as one amongst countless others who are each owed the same unconditional accommodation. The exposure of the subjected one thus signifies in a universal unconditionality: it signifies that “every other is every bit other,” as Derrida puts it.³⁹⁴ Obligation to all the others calls for discourse, by which the responsibilities of the subject are balanced (or “equilibrated,” as Levinas sometimes says). But before it becomes discourse, then, and so that discourse can be stirred in the first place, the relationship with every other as other bears the significance of the face-to-face: of unconditional responsibility. “It is through the condition of being hostage,” or of subjection to the other as

³⁹² *DF*: p. 18.

³⁹³ *OB*: p. 158.

³⁹⁴ *GO*: p.

such, that, according to Levinas, “there can be in the world pity, compassion, pardon and proximity—even the little there is, even the simple ‘After you, sir.’ The unconditionality of being hostage is not the limit case of solidarity, but the condition for all solidarity.”³⁹⁵ Hence: the unconditionality of the obligation into which the other places the one made subject must become conditioned; and there must be, as Levinas says, “comparison between incomparables:”

it is on the basis of proximity that being takes on its just meaning. In the [...] anarchical provocation which ordains me to the other, is imposed the way which leads to thematization, and to an act of consciousness. The act of consciousness is motivated by the presence of a third party alongside of the neighbor approached. A third party is also approached; and the relationship between the neighbor and the third party cannot be indifferent to me when I approach. There must be a justice among incomparable ones. There must then be a comparison between incomparables and a synopsis, a togetherness and contemporaneousness[...].³⁹⁶

The excess of the other, over the theme in which he or she is made manifest, must be understood in this light. Answering for myself by my being-in-the-world, I have been brought out of the complacency of life’s immediacy by the other’s approach; but at once am given to the other only according to the roles and conventions to which a discourseser must tacitly agree, by which I would account for myself before all of the others but which, in any given case, the other’s approach might always contest or subject to interrogation in its turn. As such, the other is given both in a theme, and in excess of it; both calls my being into question, as one of the countless others for whom I owe an account of myself, and occasions the questioning of the very account given.

It is for this reason that Levinas can write:

the views that have been expounded can then not be reproached for the imprudence of affirming that the first word of the “mind,” that which makes all the others possible, and even the words “negativity” and “consciousness,” would be naive unconditioned “Yes” of submission, negating truth, and all the highest values! The unconditionality of this yes is not that of an infantile spontaneity. It is

³⁹⁵ *OB*: p. 117.

³⁹⁶ *OB*: p. 16.

the very exposure to critique, the exposure prior to consent, more ancient than any naive spontaneity.³⁹⁷

This is to say that in the strict sense, exposedness before all the others, which the self-revelation of the other or his or her subjection of the subjected one brings, is neither the mere affirmation of some pre-subjective drive resulting in “adaptation” to the other—by which the “other” would merely disinhibit, and, as just one disinhibition among others, would not reveal himself or herself as such—or else, a merely impressionable compliance to the first on the scene—however much, in conformity, responsibility might always devolve itself, and for necessary reasons. But however much the subject *does* come to be devoted in his or her being only to this or that other and only in such-and-such a manner, placed into something like an uncritical allegiance in conformity, the conformity of the subject or the inauthentic self-temporalization of being-in-the-world is, as we’ve seen, assumption, and thus, already something like a *choosing*: a having to take a stand on the most essential matters, which bears witness to the essential questionableness of the subject’s own being. The proximity of the other, then, must *universally* signify and affect the one exposed and subjected by with an *unconditional* obligation, which is thereby, originally or perhaps (for reasons we will see) pre-originally the exposedness to interrogation. Only in this way, again, does the immediacy of a being’s own being come to be called into question at all, so that, given to answer for itself, that being will be able to come into discourse, or put otherwise, that that being—a one made subject—will come to conform himself or herself to a specific mode of social (“political”) being in response.

I have now been able to clarify the unconditionality of the other’s self-revelation or proximity; what, then, can we say of inauthentic self-maintaining in *light* of this, or in light of the exposedness this brings about for the subjected one—specifically, insofar as that the latter finds

³⁹⁷ *OB*: p. 122.

its condition in the exposure to which the other subjects “me,” as I am arguing? The subject, we’ve seen, maintains himself or herself in discourse with the others. And yet since discourse presupposes the other’s approach *as such*, and in fact as an unconditional subjection to universal responsibility, the self-presence (or self-identification) of the one made subject must thus come to constitute itself only in the very passage to discourse (or into a shared, social world, that is) which my exposedness to all the others, brought by the other who has come to subject me, has motivated or spurred on. It is for this reason that self-presence is always presence *vis-à-vis* the *others* and in accordance with some concrete role or collection of roles, which is to say, is always consciousness of “what I am for the world” (“being-with”). But for the same reason, this (self-)presence is also always a having to choose, and to make a choice which is always *pressing*. This is to say that, having to do right by the others or to live as though I am not the only one, my behavior becomes troubled, “put on the spot,” so that immediacy, at issue for itself, becomes at once all the urgency, inescapability, and exigency that will make up the heart of the my “now.” “Here,” Levinas writes:

we are trying to express the unconditionality of a subject, which does not have the status of a principle. This unconditionality confers meaning on being itself, and welcomes its gravity. It is as resting on a self, supporting the whole of being, that being is assembled into a unity of the universe and essence is assembled into an event. The self is a sub-jectum; it is under the weight of the universe, responsible for everything. The unity of the universe is not what my gaze embraces in its unity of apperception, but what is incumbent on me from all sides, regards me in the two senses of the term, accuses me, is my affair.³⁹⁸

The incumbency of my “lived present” is given only because the others are incumbent on me; the “now” is pressing only because the others press in in my exposedness. Otherwise the “here-and-now” of life, which surely disinhibits without further ado, passes itself by without taking note of itself; its immediacy is otherwise never given as such. It is not the sensible effect on me that

³⁹⁸ *OB*: p. 116.

produces the inescapability characterizing the “now,” but rather, my being faced with the invisible effect on the being of the other that “I,” or more precisely, that the behavior in which this sensing is inextricably caught up, will bring about. The question “if not now, when?” has sense only for a one subjected to responsibility, concerned about the violence that his or her being might impose upon the others—and by “waiting” as much as “acting” in any given case.³⁹⁹

In the very same stroke, it is the ethical relation, or more precisely the trace that the other leaves of his or her alterity in this subjection, that allows for the subject to grasp the presence of *things*, and not just of the self. This is in part because, as we have discovered, an object is always encountered on the horizon of the world or within a discourse, in which the encountering subject participates only insofar as he or she answers before the others for his or her own being in some concrete way; and in part, because in being made responsible before the others, sensation is now able to give what it gives “here” and “now” precisely as something in *common*, shared or available to the other, something that is not just “for me.” Finally, it is because those objects that are present to me, as something incumbent on me or which can for their own part show up to the subject as “pressing,” are given as such only on the condition that the one made *subject* has been “put on the spot,” turned back upon himself or herself and given no escape. Exposedness to the others allows me to grasp a world of objects present to me, beyond the mere milieu of life in which sensing is part and parcel of the immediate unfolding of a behavior totally caught up in itself. Of course, objects in the world are made manifest in their presence—as well as the subject in his or her own self-presence, as we’ve long since discovered—only in conjunction with their just having-been and their being to-come. But these other orientations of temporalization (self-retaining and self-protaining), which are, by necessity, interrelated with and inextricable from

³⁹⁹ On “waiting” as much as “acting” as a decision, see, for instance, *SZ*: p. 347 (300).

one another, will in turn be examined in light of the subjection or exposedness of the subject later on in this chapter.

For its own part, in any event, inauthentic self-maintaining has thus been traced back—and in relation to the subject's presence-to-self, -others, and -objects or beings within the world—to its unconditional condition in the exposedness to the others that stirs or inspires it, brought by the other who reveals himself or herself as such: i.e., traced back to the ethical relation and the trace that this subjection leaves. The authentic mode of self-maintaining must be addressed next, so that the phenomenon in its unity can be seen in light of the ethical or its unconditional condition.

§ 39

In §25 of this study, we saw that an *authentically* self-maintained subject becomes distanced from his or her own being-in-the-world, or more precisely, from the discourse into which his or her being has become embedded, so as to be put back into question instead. To be caught up in the “now,” we saw, is having to choose on the basis of that assumed ultimate can-be towards-which the subject *is* only obliviously; conversely, to be at a sort of distance from “one's” world, or summoned by the call of conscience, is a subject's having to choose, himself or herself, for his or her own being (i.e., this ultimate can-be itself). Heidegger insists that the “call,” here—the call of conscience, which summons—cannot be thought of as coming from without the subject or the being that is in-the-world; he thus concludes that the caller cannot be other than the subject him- or herself, or that it is a sort of “retrieval” by his or her own being itself.

Despite this insistence, however—Heidegger explicitly argues that in order to account for the call of conscience, we “need not resort to powers with a character other than that of the

being-there”⁴⁰⁰—he nevertheless must admit, when speaking of those “demands that apply to the existing being-with, regarding the others,” that “it remains undecided how such demands arise.”⁴⁰¹ And yet: this is the very issue in question itself. There can be no doubt, of course, that these demands, when examined, show themselves as merely “ontic,” i.e., as contingent facts; and when they go unsatisfied they can occasion guilt in the strictly mundane sense. The call of conscience “transcends” all such demands, as it were, since insofar as so called or summoned, the subject has to determine that for-the-sake-of-which he or she is to be *at all*, which is to say, has to seek out that which in any given case will serve as the very condition of any concrete demand or obligation. And yet in the clarification of the call of conscience, we cannot ignore the issue of how a being comes to be such that it has to conform itself to concrete demands or obligations in the first place, which is to say, how it comes to pass that the being must be for-the-sake-of this or that *at all*. As we saw earlier, it could even be that the genesis of any particular norm or standard is to be found in the call of conscience, insofar as something like a seeking-after something like a ground of normativity (that for-the-sake-of-which I am) appears necessary for the “creation” of any concrete norm; but this can in no way account for the fact that the one made subject is obligated to account for him- or herself, and to conform his or her own being to norms or standards, in the first place. Levinas is thus able to write of the “bad conscience or timidity” or the subject “accused without culpability and responsible for its very presence,” claiming that this is that

in reference to which—in memory of which—the self that already puts itself forward and affirms itself, or confirms itself, in the world and in being, remains ambiguous enough—or enigmatic enough—to recognize itself, in Pascal’s terms, as being hateful in the very manifestation of its emphatic identity[...]. A questioning of the affirmation and confirmation of being, which is found even in the famous— and easily rhetorical—quest for the “meaning of life,” as if the *I* in-

⁴⁰⁰ SZ: p. 323 (278).

⁴⁰¹ SZ: p. 328 (282).

the-world which has already assumed meaning on the basis of the vital, psychic, or social purposes were reverting to its bad conscience.⁴⁰²

The call of conscience cannot be understood outside of this, as anything other than a reversion to the very exposedness of a being turned against itself and delivered without in responsibility, or subjected by the approach of another.

The uncanniness of the call of conscience, then, which summons me as if coming from another who at once would be only myself, finds its unconditional condition in the trace of the other in me, in my exposedness before the others or the inspiration, the ψυχή, in my soul. The “voice” of conscience sounds only in a reversion to this trace, or in its reverberation; the self’s own power to sound this call and return to itself comes from without, from the other. How else could its sounding alienate me? How else could its reverberation, which puts the moment of living most profoundly towards the issue of that which it is to-be, put the moment to this as if despite itself? “‘I am an other,’ but this is not the alienation Rimbaud refers to,”⁴⁰³ Levinas writes: to be struck by the strangeness of my own being and to need to choose for it bears witness to its subjection to questioning and deliverance up to responsibility, to my having been made subject in relation to the others.

And yet not despite, but rather, because of this, the call of conscience summoning me is at once a reversion to my *freedom*. We see at once that, if there is any sense in claiming that I am not wholly bound to my instinctual drivenness, and further, that I myself am “more” than my role in society—and there is always some sense in claiming just this—then it can only be in this: that in being faced down by another, who approaches me and reveals himself or herself as such, my own being becomes subjected to interrogation and I become bound to answer for it, which alone gives me the “room” or the distance from myself that can allow me to conduct myself otherwise.

⁴⁰² “Nonintentional Consciousness” in *EN*: p. 129.

⁴⁰³ *OB*: p. 118.

Freedom comes from the other. I am certainly doomed to freedom, as Sartre rightly noted; but it is the other who, by turning me against myself, gives it to me. Precisely by binding me to his or her plight, or rather, to the plight of all the others, the other *makes me* free: which is to say, *despite myself*.

To be called to conscience is reversion back to the trace of the other in me. But at once, it is reversion to the primordial reduction of this trace—precisely to the turning of concern for all the others into the freedom of my own being-at-issue, to self-concern in the sense of the question of what I am to-be, and to the self-maintaining of the streaming conscious life. Inspiration from without turns into my choosing for “myself” what I am to-be and, on this horizon, choosing of “my” everyday choices. But in this choosing, the other comes to appear only on the horizon of our world, and my obligation for all the others comes to be assumed or uncritically accepted on this basis: which leads Levinas to write that “it is still out of my responsibility that my salvation has meaning, despite the danger in which it puts this responsibility, which it may encompass and swallow up.”⁴⁰⁴ Even in authentic choosing, I choose only what I will thereafter uncritically accept. Thus, although Levinas writes that “freedom in the human ego is also, if one may say so, the advent of humility,” this is at one, and in conflict, with its “proud priority” or “sovereignty.”⁴⁰⁵

In *both* its authentic and inauthentic modes, then—and in fact, in the essential *unity* of these two modes, where the insurmountable tensions we discovered in the last chapter of this work have their beginnings—self-maintaining must be traced back to the other’s trace, in which it has always found its inspiration. The same must thus be said of self-retaining and self-protaining also, to which it is essentially connected—although the precise manner in which we

⁴⁰⁴ *OB*: p. 161. See fn #360.

⁴⁰⁵ “Nonintentional Consciousness” in *EN*: p. 129.

can call the other's trace or the exposedness of the subjected one the condition (or better, unconditional condition) of the self-retaining and -protruding of subjectivity will be at issue in the next two sections of this chapter. Before moving on to these analyses, however, we ought to take note of something that has, perhaps, only now become totally clear: namely, that the impetus of the present study—in which I have certainly tried to bring the “non-phenomenologist” over to the phenomenological method of analysis, in order to come face-to-face with the force of the demonstrations it makes possible and to see the general confusion over all matters having to do with consciousness (specifically in regards to the subject's essential sociality) dispelled by its essential clarifications—has, nonetheless, been more than all else to bring both the Husserlian and the Heideggerian phenomenologist over to recognize the cogency of the Levinasian move. That the very thrust of *both* Husserl's and Heidegger's work entails this move, i.e., entails recognition of the other's approach and subjection of the one who will be subject as the very condition of subjectivity itself: the whole of Levinas' corpus, I think, is devoted to the demonstration of this. This presupposes, rather than disputes, the Husserlian analyses that find the self-presence of the subject to be at one with time-consciousness at its most primordial; and yet it also presupposes (again, rather than disputing) that the self-temporalization of subjectivity is, as Heidegger has shown, at one with the taking on of roles within a shared, social world, which always involves something like a choosing in relation to a possibility of life taken as a whole or streaming totality, whether this possibility has been taken over in self-oblivion or not. It is only as such that we can both make sense of the claim that subjectivity always refers to an originary, or perhaps pre-originary, exposure to the others, as well as recognize the claim's force.

Here we can also see how the Levinasian move both wins for the phenomenological method what is arguably its most profound demonstration, but also, in its enigmatic way, exceeds the limits of this method. The analysis of sensible life, taken in its own regard, already brought us to phenomenology's limit, as we have seen, though it nonetheless remains phenomenological, since of course, sentient experiencing does come to be self-temporalized or to find its "place" within the self-tending life as the coming of the selfsame (and even though it can at once exhibit a sort of resistance to this, this in its turn is given, constituted or "made sense of"). Conversely, ethical subjection or exposure to and by the other, which calls the being of the subjected one into question and makes him or her have to answer for this, *never* comes to be temporalized as does experiencing, never comes to be temporalized *at all*, since consciousness, which is spurred by the recurrent trace left by this encounter, unfolds itself only as the reduction of this trace. It was in this sense that we were able to discover subjectivity as a sort of detour. But then, the analysis of the other's trace or the subject's subjectedness, which must trace subjectivity beyond itself in the direction of its unconditional condition, can no longer be phenomenological, even if the phenomenological clarification of subjectivity itself precisely demands this analysis. Levinas's thought thus operates on the limits of phenomenology, on the one hand, and what he calls "metaphysics," on the other—and here and there, falls wholly into the latter. For this reason, we could perhaps call his thinking, which occupies this exceptional position, a "post-phenomenological" thinking. Or better (and only in part because this term has been made use of already by a thinking that moves beyond phenomenology proper in a much different sense⁴⁰⁶), we could call his thinking "*pre-phenomenological*," since it concerns itself with a condition, the "pre-original," prior to all that can concern phenomenology *per se*—except,

⁴⁰⁶ See: Don Ihde, *Postphenomenology; Essays in the postmodern context* (Evanston, Northwestern University Press); 1993.

of course, for the apparent absurdity of the term, given Levinas's historical posterity to Husserl and Heidegger and so, to the first great findings of the phenomenological tradition. Neither "post-" nor "pre-" phenomenology seems fitting, then. Perhaps, were we bold enough to be able do so, might we have to call Levinas's thinking "*anti*-phenomenological," in the same sense in which the Dadaists were once able to call their own work "anti-art?"

In any event, I should move the study at hand towards completion by now tracing the self-retaining and -protaining of primordial temporalization back to the trace of the other. We've seen that exposedness to the others calls into question the being of the subjected one and delivers him or her up to answer for it. Might an analysis of these two interrelated and in fact, inextricable aspects of the subjected one's exposedness lead me to the stirring of both the past-wise and the futural orientations of self-tending that I seek?

“On the hither side of all will,” Levinas writes, we find exposedness, or the “bad conscience” that the other brings me. “The interiority of the mental is perhaps originally this,” he goes on: “not in the world, but in question.”⁴⁰⁷ To be exposed before the other is to be put to the question, under interrogation; but thrown back on myself in being thrown into question, the questionability or interrogatedness of exposure is irrecusable. Unable to avoid it, subjectivity stirs.

What can we make of this absolute “inability,” or of the irrecusability of the question? Levinas writes that “one approaches the other perhaps in contingency, but henceforth one is not free to move away from him. The assumption of the suffering and the fault of another nowise goes beyond the passivity: it is a passion.”⁴⁰⁸ “This contraction,” he elaborates elsewhere, “is not an impossibility to forget oneself, to detach oneself from oneself, in the concern for oneself. It is a recurrence to oneself out of an irrecusable exigency of the other, a duty overflowing my being, a duty becoming a debt and an extreme passivity.”⁴⁰⁹ An irrecusability, which is at once a passion—the passion, we might say, of ethical love—is an absolute passion or affection by the other, “a passivity more passive than all passivity,”⁴¹⁰ as Levinas will often put the matter. It is surely a passion: we are no longer dealing with the immediacy of sensible life, disinhibited behavior unfolding itself self-satiatedly—which would be better called, albeit equivocally, the

⁴⁰⁷ “Nonintentional Consciousness” in *EN*: p. 129.

⁴⁰⁸ *OB*: p. 128.

⁴⁰⁹ *OB*: p. 109.

⁴¹⁰ See, for instance, *OB*: p. 14.

“finite *freedom*” of sentience⁴¹¹—but rather, with something that “happens to *me*.” Even the failures of self-satiation each come to pass as just one more spur, so to speak, in the unfolding of behavior; and yet affection by the other, through which sensibility is brought to its limits—and in a sense, beyond them—does not spur behavior at all: it cuts it short, arrests it, in the very same stroke that it demands that, under accusation, all the others be taken into account. Strictly speaking, then, the other’s approach is the first affect that ever befalls me, the first passion or “thing that happens” to a self. And yet as a passion, it is not simply one passion among others: for as the condition of all the passions of subjectivity (of *Befindlichkeit*, that is), it is, in relation to these, an *absolute* passion or passivity. The other passions of the subject necessarily all have something of activity, in that they are already “on the way”—and not only since they mark a life having been given a direction already, or already sent to its “end” or basic goals, but also, since in the same stroke they “frame” the choosing that projects itself from out of this throwness. Not so, though, for ethical love: an affection or passion that can only be conceived of as pure arrest in a questioning, dedicated and delivered up to the others but not yet to anything like a concrete goal or ideal of life:

Does not the self take on itself, through its very impossibility to evade its own identity[...]? The undeclinability of the ego is the irremissibility of the accusation, from which it can no longer take a distance, which it cannot evade. This impossibility of taking any distance and of slipping away from the Good is a firmness more firm and more profound than that of the will, which is still a tergiversation.⁴¹²

It is in this sense that the living of the subjected one, exposed to and by the other, becomes rooted to itself and cannot get out, “too tight in its skin,”⁴¹³ as Levinas writes; or that the one

⁴¹¹ See, for instance, OB: p.123. But on the notion of finite freedom in the being of the organism, see, for instance: Hans Jonas, “Biological Foundations of Individuality” in *Philosophical Essays: from ancient creed to technological man* (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall); 1973: p. 195-196.

⁴¹² OB: p. 112.

⁴¹³ OB: p. 116.

made subject becomes inescapably “backed up against itself”⁴¹⁴—as a violence, in question. But insofar as it has been faced with this accusation or placed into question, the selfsame living has to expiate for itself, which is to say, is taken from itself or is “in itself already outside of itself,”⁴¹⁵ as Levinas will continue, and “to the extent of substituting oneself for all that pushes one into this null-place.”⁴¹⁶ This sense in which the exposedness of the subjected living, as its having become “too tight in its skin,” immediately signifies as its having been *expulsed* “outside of itself,” delivered up to answer for itself, will be our theme for Section 15, below; in this “expulsion”⁴¹⁷ we will discover the inspiration for the very futural orientation of self-tending temporalization. Before this, however, we must bring to analysis the *irrecusability* of exposedness itself as *questionability*, or as the “irremissibility of the accusation” of a being “backed up against itself,” to which this “expulsion” or having-to-answer and expiate is inextricably connected. In irrecusability, we discover the stirrings of all *past-wise* self-orientation.

§ 41

How does the irrecusability of questioning, or the essential questionability of the subjected one’s own being, deliver each moment of living of the one made subject to its own having-been, to the “finding of ‘oneself’” of affectivity (i.e., *Befindlichkeit*) and the assumption of the being “one” has been, hand-in-hand with those projects by which the subject has been determining him- or herself? We should note, before all else, that in the same way that we discover something like an excess of the other over and above the theme in which he or she is given, we find something like an excess of “ethical love” or affection by the other over and

⁴¹⁴ *OB*: p. 112, 104.

⁴¹⁵ *OB*: p. 104.

⁴¹⁶ *OB*: p. 116.

⁴¹⁷ For instance, see *OB*: p. 124.

above, and irreducible to, any possible affection in the sense of an affect or “emotion” in which the subject can find him- or herself. The questionability of the subjected one is irrecusable or inescapable precisely insofar as it is always “more past” than any past retained or remembered, stirring in a past “that has never been present,”⁴¹⁸ as Levinas repeatedly insists:

it is through its ambivalence which always remains an enigma that infinity or the transcendent does not let itself be assembled. Removing itself from every memorable present, a past that was never present, it leaves a trace of its impossible incarnation and its inordinateness in my proximity with the neighbor, where I state, in the autonomy of the voice of conscience, a responsibility, which could not have begun in me, for freedom, which is not my freedom. The fleeting trace effacing itself and reappearing is like a question mark put before the scintillation of the ambiguity: an infinite responsibility of the one for the other[...].⁴¹⁹

“In it,” Levinas writes, “I could not arise soon enough to be there on time.”⁴²⁰

Why must we insist that ethical affection stirs in something like “a past that has never been present,” so that I could never “arise soon enough to be on time?” What sense can there be in speaking this way? Every affect is a way in which the subject finds himself or herself. But to find “oneself” is, as we’ve seen, to always take over or assume “one’s” own having-been, which is always to say, “one’s” having-been self-projected. The subject has always already involved himself or herself in various projects, on the horizon of some ultimate can-be likewise assumed. It is as if the freedom of the subject is thus behind everything, as it were, as if nothing comes to me that I did not give to myself (the sense in which all “passions” of the self, again, have something of activity in them). Nothing changes when we turn to that tradition into which I have come to be placed; for though it preceded me, no doubt, I nevertheless assumed it and have taken it up, and within limits can always take it up otherwise. Even when the past of the subject slips into a sort of immemorability, having “fused” into the vagueness of “one’s” deep past at what

⁴¹⁸ *OB*: p. 144.

⁴¹⁹ *OB*: p. 161.

⁴²⁰ *OB*: p. 162.

Husserl calls the “null” of retention or its “point without differences,” it remains retained in this very vagueness, “my” past living which has brought me to this day (and thus, remains recallable, which furthermore always allows for a greater or lesser clarification of it).⁴²¹ At the least it can simply be recalled as that which is difficult to recall, a living in which I threw myself forward or projected myself all the same. This is implied by the fact that every moment of my past living *qua* subject has been present to me: but the same cannot be said of the affection or approach by which I have become exposed to all the others. The approach of the other stirred me before I ever *was*, that is, so that I could come to take responsibility for my being in the first place, so that there could *be* this “I” which watches over its own being. Before every assumption and self-projection of what is thereby *my* own being, I have been rooted to this being by the other so as to have to answer for it.

It is for precisely this reason that Levinas writes that:

This passivity is that of an attachment that has already been made, as something irreversibly past, prior to all memory and all recall. It was made in an irrecoverable time which the present, represented in recall, does not equal, in a time of birth or creation, of which nature or creation retains a trace, unconvertible into a memory. Recurrence is more past than any rememberable past, any past convertible into a present.⁴²²

To find myself is to take over my being already “for” something, having-been projected upon that possibility of my being for-the-sake-of-which I am. Affectivity is just this. But affectivity thus finds its unconditional condition in the other’s trace, which, always prior, can only then haunt my every “emotion,” not only closer to me than my own being but, as a questionability of my being that I am unable to avoid, also “older” than it, or insofar as this being is “my own.”

But how, then, does the irrecusibility of the interrogation into which the other places me, which must itself condition affectivity, thereby stir the latter, or bring the self-tending subject to

⁴²¹ L: p. 227. Husserl also calls this the “distant sphere” or the “one nil” in *AP*: p. 226. See also *PT*: p. 169-174.

⁴²² *OB*: p. 104-105.

“find” him- or herself, to take over or assume his or her own having-been? In the first place: because assumption or taking over of a tradition (in whatever manner) *answers*, precisely, for the subject’s questionability. In this regard, we will need to recall that the realm of affectivity always pertains to that which I (or rather the subject more generally) have concretely “contracted,” usually taken over in the mode of mere assumption. I find myself “on the way,” and so, enabled or barred on this way in some manner by recent turn of events, by what has come to show itself. Initially and for the most part, as we’ve seen, the trajectory of my doings has been taken over from others; I have always already conformed myself. The matter of conformity cannot be clarified in full until we look at the promise of subjectivity in light of something like an *unlimited* promise, or what we can call the absolute significance of exposedness, which we will do in Section 15, where the issue of futurity in its pre-original sense is taken up. Here, we must simply recognize that the conformity of the subject, and more generally, that the being “on the way” in which the subject always finds him- or herself, has already answered to the exposure of the living moment which makes it a questionability before the others. Were it not for this questionability, “prior,” as a pure passion, to every modification of affectivity or “*Befindlichkeit*,” there would be no answer or response given, and so, nothing like an ideal to hold fast to: and therefore, nothing like affectivity, which manifests for me just how well I am measuring up. Levinas thus remarks, in regard to the findings of that “admirable phenomenological analysis of affectivity, of *Befindlichkeit* proposed by *Sein und Zeit*,” that we discover:

a reflexive structure expressing itself by a verb in the pronominal form, in which emotion is always an emotion *of* something that is moving, but also an emotion *for* oneself; in which emotion consists in *being* moved—in being afraid *because of* something, glad *because of* something, sorrowful *because of* something, but

also *being glad for oneself, being sorrowful for oneself*, etc.[...].⁴²³ A double intentionality of the *because of* and the *for*, and thus, a return to the self[...].

And yet, he immediately continues:

In the naturalness of being-in-respect-to-that-being-itself, in relation to which all things—even the person—seem to take on meaning, the essential nature of being is put in question. A reversal based on the face of the other, in which, at the very heart of the phenomenon, in its light itself, a surplus of significance signifies what may be designated as glory. It demands me, claims me, assigns me[...]. Does not this summons[...] designate me, in the face of the other, as responsible without any possible escape, and thus as the unique, the chosen one?⁴²⁴

All things—objects in the world, and the subject who is encountering them—“take on meaning,” are apprehended or made manifest, on the basis of the precise way in which the subject *is* with respect to his or her own being, or put otherwise, on the basis of the basic orientation (the for-the-sake-of-which or ultimate can-be) of his or her self-tending temporalization. But this can be so only because the subject has been called to account for his or her own being, made questionable.

For this reason, we must insist that, before anything like a concrete failure to measure up—guilt in the mundane or everyday sense—something like a failing or lack, a fault in being, has been exposed by the other, a fault which this exposure itself opens up or hollows out: “the infinite passion of responsibility,” Levinas claims, “puts the being in itself in deficit.”⁴²⁵ The exposed moment becomes singled out, torn up from out of its living, and in being “put on the spot,” falls into itself, plunges inexorably into its own vanity, made questionable and—inextricable from this—to answer for itself before the others, inspired to expiation. Here is a lack before all lacks which nonetheless cannot be reduced to the existential notion of “guilt,” and to which, in fact, the latter must be brought back: the primordial opening of a “not” in being,

⁴²³ “From the One to the Other: Transcendence and Time” in *EN*: p. 146.

⁴²⁴ “From the One to the Other: Transcendence and Time” in *EN*: p. 147.

⁴²⁵ Thus, he continues, “making it susceptible of being treated as a negative quantity.” *OB*: p. 113.

censure of my self-absorbed being or driven behavior, “clipping of my wings”—except that this “negation,” this condemnation or denunciation which strikes me in exposedness like a wound of love, is so far from being injurious to my selfhood, that in the glory of the other’s approach, it lifts me to the possibility of redemption. If there is any purely philosophical sense at all in the Christian notion of original sin,⁴²⁶ it must be this: to have erred, missed the mark, before there was an I “there” to miss it. The being of the subjected one first gets delivered up, so that it can and must be at issue for the self-collecting subject, only insofar as it gets delivered up in this way—as an unjustified violence for which *I* must answer, an essential transgression before the others, at fault in self-absorption: it is this very deliverance, to my faultiness and failure, that first brings out the being that I myself am and have to be.

Secondly and furthermore: we must insist that, were it not for this questionability, to which the subjected one becomes subjected in the exposure that the other will bring, the having-been of the one made subject (which he or she self-retains and is affected by, again, in finding himself or herself furthered or hindered “on the way”) could never come to be retained at all. I have to be what I was, which is to say, I retain it, simply because I cannot let it go. But it is unrelinquishable, I *cannot* let it go, precisely insofar as, struck by my being as an unjustified violence, it is that for which I must answer: that which would otherwise simply lapse without a trace, were the “here-and-now” of sensible living—in its total self-captivation—left to its own devices. Again: I have been rooted to this being by the other so as to have to answer for it. Answerability thereby subtends self-retaining, and *as such*, affectivity or *Befindlichkeit* as the concrete way in which “one” finds “oneself.”

⁴²⁶ Shorn, no doubt, of the ridiculousness of a puritanical sexual morality—although under a certain interpretation, this reference to eroticism no doubt bears an evocative symbolic value.

In connection with this, we must see now that “emotions” in the *strict* sense, as the affects of a subject, thus require the possibility of behavior’s interruption—something we might have been able to recognize earlier, in fact, in my analysis of the phenomenon of “willing.” This is because a given disinhibition, for its own part, simply unfolds itself into behavior, “right through” what we could thematize as the “readying of the body” and into its outward expression, so that it is only when the unfolding of sensible life is in question or “under watch,” as it were, that it makes any sense at all to speak of a possible break in this. But a “readied” behavior which can nonetheless be resisted: this is just to say, an “emotion.”⁴²⁷ Why must this be so? An affect or “emotion” necessarily involves something like a judgment, we’ve seen—i.e., “how am I doing?”—and yet this cannot be, in the first place, anything reflective, nor can it be shorn of its connection to something like a “bodily state” (an issue that I raised earlier, but was unable to answer before my analysis of sensibility). However, the “bodily state” that we always associate with an “emotion” is just this: a “readied” state that nonetheless does not by necessity lead straight into such-and-such a behavior, precisely since it is retained as “one’s” (my own) “being-on-the-way” in the freedom of the subject’s self-tending temporalization. Otherwise, the body in its “readiness” is, once more, already the body *behaving*; correlatively, there is, for an animal without choice in the strict sense (for a non-conscious sentient being, that is—which, nonetheless, as we’ve already discovered, is, in the “finite freedom” of organismic autopoiesis or

⁴²⁷ Contra Martha Nussbaum’s claim—in *Upheavals of Thought; the intelligence of emotions* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press); 1993—and also that of Jesse Prinz (see: fn #150). To say that the behavior can be resisted, of course, does not necessarily mean that, providing “one” tries to resist, this resistance must be *successful*. “One” can always resist and fail. But a readied behavior that cannot even be resisted is one that has not been temporalized or brought into the streaming conscious life, a totally impulsive behavior of which “one” is perhaps only conscious after the fact: to call this an emotion is only to equivocate—which is why I have preferred the term affect over the term emotion in this study, only ever using the latter in scare quotes when it is a phenomenon of conscious life (specifically, when a modification of *Befindlichkeit*) that has been at issue. I would be fine using “emotion,” *sans* scare quotes, as a term specific to “bodily states,” the physiological readying of behavior-complexes, etc. Of course if we use the term in this sense, then we cannot call the phenomenon Nussbaum writes of “emotion” (ignoring the inadequacies of her account of it, which requires nothing of “bodily states” at all).

self-organization, certainly nothing like an automaton) no essential difference between the “readying” and the “release,” or put otherwise, between the “bodily state” which we are apt to call an “*emotional state*” and the fully realized *behavior*.⁴²⁸ Affectivity thus presupposes the questionability of the subjected one’s own being. No doubt in everyday affectivity, this questionability gets “levelled down,” so that the affect answers, as it were, to a quite concrete question: one which pertains to how this being is “going” (“how’s it going?,” we say), or put otherwise, how it has come to appear, with regard to *some specific measure*, i.e., in light of the ends it has been “for” insofar as it has sought out their realization. In Section 15 of this work, we’ll see that the question of the subjected one’s being, pre-originally found a violence to the others in its self-absorbed unfolding, is only ever brought down to some measure—and is *necessarily* given its measure, in fact—by means of the promise that comes to be given as a response to it. A full investigation of affects (as earlier indicated) thus requires that the self-protaining of a subject (as well as his or her self-maintaining) be taken into account along with the subject’s self-retaining, although it is once more the latter that is most essential in this regard. Of course, an investigation of this sort far exceeds the bounds of the present study.

Affection by the other, in any event, thus subtends self-retaining and the finding of “oneself” of *Befindlichkeit*; and so, with this, the “affective force” that objects exhibit also. The “affective force” of an object is inextricable from “emotion,” insofar as the latter is intentional,

⁴²⁸ See, again, *PS*, and fn #349 and #350. But “emotion,” insofar as this is a *conscious* phenomenon, precisely refers to the distinction between being moved to act and actually doing so, and so, to the possibility of interruption and reorientation, to being at odds with “oneself” or acting contrary to “one’s” own “desires;” it is, again, to find myself “on the way,” hindered or furthered on my “path,” and in its inauthentic mode, calls for correction when what is being realized runs counter to what I have been “for,” whether the issue involves how things show themselves to me, or how I find myself dealing with them. Even an “emotion” like joy must go beyond the sensing or “bodily” state of the “here-and-now,” since entirely different sorts of “emotions” or modes of affectivity are produced, depending on the “context” in which a satiation comes to pass—while the satiation, taken on its own, is just this: a satiation, and not an affect or “emotion” on its own, except when this term is used in a totally equivocal sense. That the satiation can show up, in something like joy, as a “good” one, means at the same time that one can always show up, in something like shame, as a “bad” satiation.

which is to say, a conscious phenomenon; thus, things can show up as affecting the subject in this way or that—again, in regard to those “projects” in conformity to which the subject has been projecting him- or herself—only because, as we saw earlier, the subject assumes or takes over his or her having-been, and thus, as we’ve *just* seen, only insofar as the one made subject has been exposed and affected by the other’s approach, called into question. But objects, furthermore, are apprehended as to their “affective force” only insofar as their appearance is “pressing,” which as we saw earlier in the Chapter, must be traced back to exposure; what their coming to appear “means” in relation to that for-the-sake-of-which I have-been obviously cannot be disassociated from this coming to appear itself, which cannot be reduced to the disinhibiting “impact” that a being can bring, but precisely presupposes that this has been called into question, stalled or held firm under the other’s gaze. Finally: the “affective force” of things is at one with their retention, or the appearance of a thing as that which has been present in undergoing some change or rest, so that in this presentation and given the “direction” of the change or non-change of the being that shows up, the perceived being at once comes to be apprehended in regard to what its appearance bodes for me. The retention of the object, we saw earlier, goes back to the self-retaining of the subject, who “keeps hold” of his or her having-been self-tendingly, but as we’ve just seen, this self-retaining, or a subject’s taking over of his or her having-been projecting, goes back itself to the interrogatedness of exposure: the subjected one, “backed up against” him- or herself,” pinned to his or her own being in its questionability.

Affects, in the everyday sense, must thus be traced back in their full unity as phenomena to that affection, coming from the other, which exposes the subjected one and brings him or her to the essential questionability, in relation to all the others, of his or her own being: that is to say, to the irrecusability of the question. But what of angst, or the apparently self-transparent

manifestation of the subject's own having-been, which is retained precisely as thrown or only obliviously self-projected? Can we clarify the sense in which it must be traced back to the other's affection, also, so that the phenomenon of self-retaining can be understood, in the unity of its two essential modes, in light of the affection that stirs it?

§ 42

Angst is a fundamental "attunement" or affect insofar as, ridden by it, the subject takes over his or her having-been without merely assuming it in the usual self-oblivion—which is just to say, takes over his or her having-been precisely as that which is usually "oblivious" and merely assumed. We've already seen, provisionally (in §35), just how angst finds its original stirrings in ethical exposedness, affection of the one made subject by the other. Finding that "one" has been working only obliviously towards that for-the-sake-of-which "one" is, the subject becomes struck by the questionability of this and, if the affect is not to be pushed off, is given to seek for a stable foundation for his or her own self-projection, which is just to say, justification for his or her own being. But the questionability of "one's" own being, we saw, comes precisely from the other, from the ethical relation or the approach and self-revelation of the other as such. What has yet to be clarified in full, however, is the precise way in which the subject's own being comes to be self-retained *as* having-been only obliviously—which is precisely the affect of angst—in light of the relation this bears to the other's original, or pre-original, affection of that being. Here, just as in the tracing back of *inauthentic* self-retaining and affectivity that I carried out above, we will see in further clarity a sort of primordial "negation" of being, belonging to exposedness: a "negation" which is inextricably connected to something like an "affirmation" of the other (which later on, i.e., in my tracing back of the *futural*, we will come to understand in detail also). "All the *negative* attributes," Levinas writes—"attributes" which Levinas elsewhere

calls “a *deficit* in being” (or “a passivity or patience[...] not offering itself to memory” and “in this sense undeclinable,” “which prevents it from splitting, separating itself from itself”)⁴²⁹— “become *positive* in responsibility, a response answering to a non-thematizable provocation.”⁴³⁰

How, precisely, does the subject made angst-ridden subject come to take over his or her having-been *as* a self-oblivious having-been, as “my” having been only “obliviously” self-projecting? In angst, the irrecusibility of the question of one’s being is, as it were, felt full force, so that the affect itself points back to a more primordial affection still:

the irremissibility and, in the etymological sense of the term, the anguish of this in-itself of the oneself[...] is not the existential “being-for-death,” but the constriction of an “entry inwards,” or the “hither side” of all extension. It is not a flight into the void, but a movement into fullness, the anguish of contraction and breakup. This describes the relation in which a subject is immolated without fleeing itself, without entering into ecstasy, without taking a distance from itself, in which it is pursued into itself, to the hither side of rest in itself, of its coincidence with itself[...], which one can, to be sure, call negativity (but a negativity antecedent to discourse[...]), this recurrence by contraction, [which] is the self.⁴³¹

The subjected one, exposed and “put on the spot” by the other, gets placed under accusation, we’ve seen: “backed up against oneself” such that the one made subject must always keep hold of his or her own being as that for which he or she has to answer, so that the very being of the subject *qua* subject will then be to make of this being an issue. In the everyday as *affect*, again, this questionability or interrogatedness of the subject’s being survives, but only in “reduced” form—in a trace of a trace, we can say—as the question “how am I doing; how is it with my own being?,” to which each “*Befindlichkeit*,” in its own way, answers. In the authentic affect of angst, however, this questionability is able to re-erupt in something like its original or pre-original form; and yet at the same time, angst also exhibits the necessity of this very “dulling” or

⁴²⁹ *OB*: p. 107.

⁴³⁰ *OB*: p. 12.

⁴³¹ *OB*: p. 108.

reduction of questionability, i.e., the attenuation of the question down to a form in which it is liveable, as it were, or down to a determinate question whose assumption prefigures the response to be given by the acting subject's particular manner of being-in-the-world. This necessity is determinative for everyday affection, but precisely dissimulated by it; only angst shows for us, that is, how the question of "my" being before the others takes hold of me precisely in such a way that, by retaining myself, I can let the question go or reclaim myself from its total openness, and precisely so that, holding me to itself in merely attenuated or concrete form, the question can come to effect any reformation in my being at all. This is why, in angst, the question is always given as one which is "too big for me," as it were.

How, then, the eruption of such a question? It is as "pressed back" into my own being that exposure to and by the other affects me, or the subjected one more generally; self-retaining, we've seen, presupposes just this. To be "pressed back" into myself or held to the vanity of my own self-absorbed being, by which exposure to and by the other affects me, is to be held to a total interrogation of this being, to questionability before all the others: this, again, constitutes no affect of *consciousness*; rather, consciousness itself unfolds itself as the trace of this affection, of the exposedness of being *qua* its questionability (and at once, inextricable from this—as we will see below in my analysis of pre-original futurity—of exposedness *qua* its unlimited responsibility for the others.). Everyday affects constitute themselves in the reduction of the other's affection, just like self-maintaining, and its being-with, constitutes itself in the reduction of the other's proximity, which affects, and of the exposedness of the subjected one. But then: just as the call of conscience bears witness to that irreducible tension in which the reduction of the other's alterity, down to my being-with the others, is made necessary, angst bears witness to the same, insofar as it makes necessary the reduction of the subjected one's *questionability* (to

which the other's alterity subjects me in exposure). In the call of conscience or authentic self-maintaining, we saw, exposedness to every other is transformed into freedom, and in this way, is effaced in its very realization; the self-revelation of the other and the obligatedness into which I am thereby placed becomes only the other's manifestation and my concrete obligation to him or her on the horizon of our world. In like fashion, angst *both* bears witness at once to the questionability of the being of the one made subject—is *both* reversion back to the trace of the other *qua* interrogatedness (or the “negative side” of exposedness: the subjected one “backed up against” him- or herself)—but *also*, as constitutive of something like a hunger for meaning, is a need to be done with the question right away. What angst gives to be understood, that is—or when it is understood in light of ethical exposedness—is that the exposedness to all the others and irrecusable questionability of the subjected one's own being before every other is at once the subject's having to be done with the question—and done with always too much haste, as we've seen already—which, as will be ultimately demonstrated in the next section of this work, is “my” having to answer for myself by making a promise of my own being.

Before this ultimate demonstration, however, the irreducible tension or dilemma to which angst bears witness must be described for itself. In large part, this has been accomplished already in this work: questionability before all the others must be posed in concrete form, on the horizon of an assumed for-the-sake-of-which (usually taken over in conformity), if it is to be liveable and thus, have its effect; but questionability before all the others is subjection of this assumption in turn to questioning. In angst, this tension weighs upon me. It weighs upon me in the same way that that of my exposedness does in the call of conscience, in which the angst-ridden subject is (authentically) self-maintained; in this way, or so burdened, I find myself having been projecting only obliviously—which precisely comes to pass as re-eruption of the interrogatedness of my

being. The irrecusability of the question coming from the others thus comes to pass at once as my having to free myself from it (what Levinas will call a “refutation of skepticism” which is coupled to angst or skepticism in a “periodic return”⁴³²), to get out from under it precisely in the offering of my response. It is in the interstices of this that angst takes hold of me or that I angstily retain myself; the tension of my having to take a stand or give my answer, and yet with always too much haste, “as though the danger of error arose from an imposture,” Levinas writes, or “as though the silence were but the modality of an utterance.”⁴³³

This brings us to the end of the second section of the present Chapter. It has of course been my aim in this to clarify the condition of self-temporalization, and so, to bring my demonstration to a culmination. What have we learned so far, or been able to clarify, in this regard? In exposedness to the other, we’ve seen—inspired in the one made subject by the subjection the other’s approach brings “me,” decentering “my” being—all the others are made to weigh upon me in proximity, calling me out “prior” to the discourse by which each other appears to me as this or that person, to whom I am committed (and because of this, sometimes opposed) in this or that concrete way. On the basis of this discourse, I maintain myself in this or that role, am present to objects apprehended or encountered within the world, and choose, which is to say, comport myself towards these objects: although in the tension that persists, getting caught between the pre-original revelation of the otherness of the other in exposure—putting me on the spot, commanding me— and the concept I give the other though the determinate form of my response—which, always subject to accusation in turn, refuses complacent being-with and thus continues to give to me freedom from my being—conscience can call me back to myself. But as we began to see in this Section, exposedness, or this trace of the other marking out the one made

⁴³² *OB*: p. 167.

⁴³³ *TI*: p. 91.

subject, has its “negative” and “positive” moment. “Negatively,” the subjected one becomes “backed up against” him- or herself—a passion or passivity before all passion or passivity, the wounding of ethical love—and so, held to his or her own being as the faultiness of self-absorption, made questionable or given to an irrecusable interrogatedness. Along with this, however, or “at once,” is my having to answer for myself or for my own being, the “positive” moment of of exposedness, which is deliverance to- and for-the-other, my response or the giving of promises: questionable, I cannot let myself go, I keep hold of how I am measuring up, and so, retain myself, find myself being furthered or hindered “on the way” precisely *vis-à-vis* the promise I am for the others. It is only as such that the concrete affects of the subject, his or her affectivity or “*Befindlichkeit*,” are constituted, and with this, the “affective force” of objects encountered. But along with this, angst becomes an ever present possibility, for the promise I make of myself, which is to ostensibly “equilibrate” or balance my unconditional responsibility for each one of the others or “compare incomparables,” is at once subject to the questionability of my being to which it would answer or respond.

The “positive moment” of exposedness must now be clarified—it is here that the total questionability of the being of the subjected one, questionable before every other in turn, becomes reduced to a concrete promise, and yet continues to haunt as a trace of unconditional responsibility, or something like an absolute or *limitless* promise. To clarify this will then be to clarify the idea of the infinite in its fullness (to the extent such a thing is possible, that is: which as we’ve seen, can be done only through something like a “*via negativa*”); with this clarification, the trace of the other—idea of infinity or recurrence of exposedness—will at last be made comprehensible to us as an unconditional, irrecusable, and limitless responsibility: as goodness in its *absolute* signification.

The idea of the Infinite is, as Descartes discovered, an idea of perfection. No doubt Descartes was never able to grasp that this mark, left in the creation of the subjected one, remains as trace of the *other*—and so, was never able to conceive of this mark as trace of the production of infinity, or the ethical relation—rather than as trace of an ostensibly infinite *being*. Nonetheless, his analysis of this mark was insightful enough to be able to focus itself upon the notion of *perfection*: and as soon as we inquire into the condition of the subject's self-presence—and thus, of the subjectivity of the subject itself, his or her very being *qua* subject—we, too, are brought to recognize something like an absolute idea to which, though unmeasurable, the subject must nonetheless always measure up. The subject, whose being is essentially at-issue, is always acquainted with his or her own being in this having to measure up, in this ethical responsibility, which the other brings by subjecting the one made subject to it in his or her approach. And before all else—before any responsibility concretely contracted, on the horizon of “one's” world—ethical responsibility is a having to live under the sign of the perfect, of absolute goodness.

How can it be that, brought to responsibility or having to answer for his or her own being, the subjected one is given to measure up to something like an immeasurable ideal or rather, command? How does the immeasurability of responsibility bear upon the being of the one made subject? The exposedness of the one made subject by the other has, we have seen, a sort of “negative moment.” Insofar as the other puts the one made subject “on the spot” by subjecting his or her being to exposedness before all the others, decentering it or humbling it in its vanity, the subjected one gets made irrecusably questionable before every other in turn, subject to a total

interrogatedness which strikes the subject before anything he or she can have assumed. But the interrogatedness of the being of the subjected one, as, again, the “negative moment” of this exposedness, has its “*positive*” signification: the questionability of the subjected one’s being affects him or her as a having to answer, which is to say, as *responsibility* before the others, having to do right by their lights or in the eyes of each one. In this way, the other’s otherness, which exposing me, puts me on the spot and, as such, pins me back on my own being (the wounding of ethical love), at once serves as “a departure which lets me accomplish a movement toward a neighbor,” as Levinas writes: “the positive element of this departure[...] is my responsibility for the others. Or, one may say, it is the fact that the others show themselves in their face.”⁴³⁴ In everyday activity, of course, the responsibility of the subject is always limited in some way: we have seen that it takes the form of a sort of promise given, to be like “this,” guides that towards-which the subject works—i.e., that for-the-sake-of-which he or she ultimately *is*. This, furthermore, “shapes” what the other is or can be for *me* (being-with), and what things are for us in our shared dwelling-together, insofar as I keep on assuming my “tradition,” which in the first place, promising myself, I have conformingly projected forth. However: conformity or the assumption of an ultimate can-be, which is responsibility becoming limited, presupposes responsibility *without limits*, presupposes an absolute or unlimited promise given to the others. This is the notion of perfection, of absolute goodness, implicit in the idea of infinity or the trace of the other left in the other’s subjection of the one made subject.

What can we make of this responsibility without limits? We must provide a provisional description of it, before we can hope to understand just how the self-projection of subjectivity *presupposes* it: and thus, how unlimited responsibility serves as condition of the futural

⁴³⁴ *OB*: p. 13.

orientation of all self-tending temporalization. An absolute promise stirs in the heart of subjectivity, stirs subjectivity itself. In what sense can we understand this?

This idea is easily misunderstood. To see in this a promise with any sort of “content” at all, in fact, would be a character mistake; rather, before all giving of promises and all concrete self-projection, subjectivity *itself* is given as a promise to the other. To be as *subject*, as a being whose being is at issue, and to never slip back into the obscurity and total self-absorption of purely sensible life, which unfolds “as if it occupied the center of being and were its source:” this is a promise given *before* all promises, and as the very condition, we will see, of the concrete giving of promises or the self-projection of subjectivity—or the deliverance of a one subjected who, called out and summoned forth by the gaze of the other, cannot abandon the call or election, a one who refuses to abandon the other and retreat back into the complacency of the immediate where he or she cannot be reached. To be “for” anything, a position “one” takes in discourse, presupposes this, again: presupposes the subjected one “flushed out without being able to slip away,”⁴³⁵ called into question by the other so as to be given to answer for his or her own being, which is to say, struck by “my” faultiness in vain self-absorption (the “negative element” of exposure) which is (“positively”) recognition of the otherness of the other. It presupposes what Levinas calls the “sincerity”⁴³⁶ of the subjected one who gives, “in the giving of signs,” precisely “a sign of this giving of signs.”⁴³⁷ “Sincerity would then be[...] a sign I make to another of this giving of signs,” Levinas writes, “the pure transparency of an admission, the recognition of a debt.”⁴³⁸

⁴³⁵ *OB*: p. 143.

⁴³⁶ *OB*: p. 143.

⁴³⁷ *OB*: p. 15.

⁴³⁸ *OB*: p. 143.

An absolute promise can be nothing but this: a deliverance over to discourse before any taking of a position or a turning to answer before the other before any answer has been given; responding, but before anything like the formulation of the response. It must be part and parcel of the exposure of the subjected one, since this *affects* as a subjection to questioning coming from the other, which places the being of the one made subject under interrogation so that the one made subject must *respond* or *answer* for his or her own being. Prior to all willing and deciding by the subject, he or she would be given over to sincerity or to give an absolute promise, to “a responsibility, which could not have begun in me,” as we have seen. As yet, I have claimed, we precisely must trace the *self-projection* of the subject—projection ultimately upon something like an ultimate can-be or that for-the-sake-of-which the subject in any given case *is*—back to an absolute promise understood in precisely this sense. How, then, is this to be done? Why must we insist that the self-projection of the subject, and thus, that his or her self-tending temporalization—or subjectivity—*per se*, presupposes an absolute promise made to the others, the subjected one given without limits to answer for his or her own being?

§ 44

Levinas, again, uses the term “sincerity” to describe a sort of promise given before all promises, a “giving of signs of this giving of signs.”⁴³⁹ But how does an absolute promise, inextricable from exposure by the other as such and its affection, give way to the giving of some promise, or to conformity and self-projection upon this or that basic possibility of the subject’s being, a concrete way of “doing right by” the others? Why *must* self-projection presuppose an absolute promise, my having to “do right by,” *without limit, all* the others, or put otherwise, my having to answer without end, irrecusably and unconditionally, for my own being, to never slip

⁴³⁹ *OB*: p. 15.

back into the obscurity of sensible life as if I had at long last answered for myself and were done with the question once and for all?

We've already seen that to speak of an absolute promise can only be to speak of the sincerity to which the one exposed by the other and called into question would be given precisely in having to answer, i.e., it can only be to speak of a one unable to slip away into the complacency of his or her own being. But the futurity of the future is given in this promise: the subject is open to that which is to be determined, *I* am given to that which I am to-be—I “have to be” it⁴⁴⁰—precisely insofar as I must answer for myself, on pain of my own being's being a violence to the other or imposing upon the other suffering or death. It is “there” for me given that the other—who can never be “there” for me as such and precisely affects me by exposing me to the judgment of this non-apparition⁴⁴¹—calls me out to take into account precisely what can never be “there” for me: and so, held open for this judgment, to concern myself with the way in which my being will unfold itself, with that which I am to-be. It is in this sense that subjectivity *itself* is a promise, and I “have” a future. We might recall Kant's “fact of pure reason” in this regard, and his assertion that, so far as the satiation of the drives of a life are concerned, nothing can be better suited than instinct, or, as we would need to say, the absorbedly disinhibited behavior. This is not simply because of the especially fine-tuned nature of the apt drive-behavior complex to produce, in its unfolding self-satiation, the self-preservation of the animal, in whose securement further satiation is no doubt to be found (something of which Kant was well aware, although, Pre-Darwin, he had no good hypothesis to account for it), but because the intrusion of

⁴⁴⁰ And even, again, if my concern for what I am to-be or my having-to determine it only takes the rather nongenuine form of a wanting to be “indifferent” to what will come.

⁴⁴¹ The other, whose own experiencing as such can never be anything for me, and precisely as such, becomes everything for me in the other's affection.

something like reason already to some extent ruins the pleasure it might, here and there, help a living being attain (or the one subject to subjectivity, at least):

Now in a being that has reason and a will, if the proper end of nature were its *preservation*, its *welfare*, in a word its *happiness*, then nature would have hit upon a very bad arrangement in selecting the reason of the creature to carry out this purpose. For all the actions that the creature has to perform for this purpose, and the whole rule of its conduct, would be marked out for it far more accurately by instinct, and that end would have thereby been attained much more surely than it ever can be by reason[...]. And in fact, we find that the more a cultivated reason purposely occupies itself with the enjoyment of life and with happiness, so much the further does one get away from true satisfaction; and from this there arises in many, and indeed in those who have experimented most with this use of reason, if only they are candid enough to admit it, a certain degree of *misology*, that is, hatred of reason; for, after calculating all the advantages they draw[...] they find that they have in fact only brought more trouble upon themselves instead of gaining in happiness; and because of this they finally envy rather than despise the more common run of people, who are closer to the guidance of mere natural instinct and do not allow their reason much influence on their behavior.⁴⁴²

It isn't *simply* that "reason," or more precisely, that self-projection of the selfsame streaming, allows for the occasional burdening of pleasure by worries or concerns of all sorts—whether they are those of prudence, or morality, or perhaps an "existential" nature, is of no huge relevance here—although, of course, such concerns surely must attenuate the intensity of a pleasure in some way, and to a greater or lesser extent, whenever they do come to burden an enjoyment *even as it* unfolds itself, apprehensively directing the mind as it were towards other issues. And yet over and above this, the very fact that the unfolding satiation is opened up to the possibility of such burdening *at all* or *in the first place*—that it is lived on the horizon of the selfsame streaming life, temporalized in the self-tending of subjectivity—*already* serves to ruin the pleasure to an extent or to diminish it on some level. To stand at once outside the pleasure in its very unfolding, to live it on the horizon of the selfsame life of which it is but a moment insofar as "I" have to determine what "I" am to-be, is *itself* the very irreducibility of this attenuation or

⁴⁴² Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press); 1997: p. 8-9.

diminishment. Contentment is spoiled the moment I can no longer simply “be here now.” Thus, we find here in the futurity of the future a sort of sincerity, a promise to which the subjected one is given before all giving of promises: but to get given to this promise, we can now see, is to get exposed by the other, so as to be put under accusation or made questionable before every other in turn and, as such, to be given to respond for one’s being. It is to be given to something like a sacrifice made to and for the others, a sacrifice made before all making of sacrifices, albeit—and here we perhaps approach the mystery of all mysteries—one that we may always say has been “suffered gladly,” for to get subjected to all the wounds of love in this way is, itself, to gladly suffer another. Openness to the future is precisely given as this sincerity or absolute promise given to the other: a promise to be *subject*.

In “saying,” this being given to respond, but before a response has been given, the one made subject is given to the future, given to have to determine that which he or she is to-be. But this is to be given, precisely, to the indefiniteness of the future, which is to say, the “*open-endedness*” of its limit, which is the only way I can be given to the future at all: and I am open to my future in the indefiniteness of its limits precisely insofar as it is before every other *in turn* that I get made so responsible, i.e., precisely insofar as I have to answer before and to do right in the eyes of *all* the others, every other *as such*. Put otherwise: it is precisely the *universality* of unconditional exposure to the other, which as we’ve seen, affects me by subjecting me to my *irrecusable* questionability, that gives me to have to determine what I am to-be in the strict sense: which is to say, gives me to what I am to-be, so long as I am to-be. Were I simply able to answer for myself and be done with it, in the case of some limited responsibility before this or that specific other that would purportedly exhaust the significance of the summons, I could act now in light of this and henceforth be returned to immediacy, the total obscurity of the sensible

“here-and-now.” But this is never how it is for the one made subject. Exposedness is thus *recurrence*; the watchfulness of the *I* is cast forward to every future moment of my being so long as a future moment is to come, precisely because I have to answer for my being without end. To get exposed and shown up in my vanity, humbled in my behaving as though I were the whole of being, cannot but issue in the giving of an absolute promise—given to this absolute inability to slip away back into obscurity—and as such, in the recurrence of exposedness, the restlessness of a being delivered to the others or “put in question by the alterity of the other” and as such, made ever watchful over his or her being, ever restless until death comes finally to give him or her rest at long last. For the givenness of the future of the one made subject is marked by “a pre-original not resting on oneself,” as Levinas puts it: “the restlessness of someone persecuted—Where to be? How to be?”⁴⁴³

To be subject means: being never again afforded the luxury of simply being what “one” is.

It is precisely, then, in this “never again”—which is to say, sincerity as absolute inability to slip away—that we find the openness of the subject out onto a future without end. As such, the subject can give himself or herself in a *promise*: and in fact, *must* do so. The questionability of the being of the subjected one must limit itself, as we’ve seen; having to answer for myself, I precisely must answer *in concreto*. Thus, we discovered: the play of conformity and redemption, of a promise given and self-projection upon the ultimate possibility for my being that I assume, taken over from the others. It is for this reason that to answer for myself, in discourse with the others and in taking over the usual standards, is precisely to self-project: it is precisely a promise, since, given to promise, absolutely, that I will never slip away and back into the obscurity of sentient being or the vanity of my immediacy, the standards I take over, by which I would take

⁴⁴³ *OB*: p. 75.

the others into account and redeem myself, are taken over precisely as that by which I will orient myself “from here on out.” With an eye to these standards I watch over myself; by their lights. In fact they are taken over precisely so as to give myself the light into which I will keep this very being (i.e., my own), which I am unable to allow to slip back into obscurity. Having to answer for myself before all the others, then, I am projected upon that for-the-sake-of-which I am, and usually only in the oblivion of an assumption or conformity, so that each of my moments is oriented, and so that I can go to work living a life in which, without giving it much thought, the others are taken into account in some concrete fashion.

Inauthentic self-projection, as orientation of the “now” or the “current” moment of a streaming life by means of a determination of that which it is to-be, that for which “I” strive, is thus clarified in its ultimate essence. We have seen already why this must take the form of a self-oblivion. In the very same stroke, however, we can clarify why self-projection, as openness out onto that which “I” am to-be, is openness onto *possibilities*, which are made manifest always in light of that onto which I ultimately self-project, my basic “can-be.” For in the self-questioning to which I am given by the other’s affection, which gives me to offer myself in response, I am precisely given to the contingency of my being, as if in exile from simple immediacy or the complacency of my being what I am. The absolute promise I make of myself is not yet to have seized upon one possibility in response; rather, as a refusal to slip back into complacency, it *opens me* for possibility, for choice or the assumption of an orientation. At once, also, it opens for me the contingency of every self-protained moment of my living, which is to be judged in relation to that upon which I project myself, my assumed orientation. Were I to remain in immediacy, we could not speak of a contingency of what I am to-be, or certainly not one that would be given, since what I am to-be would remain out of question. But in question, I am given

to answer for my being before the others, since this is no longer a “given.” It is only as such that an entity can be given its own being at all; an entity that has to take over this being so as to keep it in accord with the others—a being that must conform, even though this conformity itself can never be placed beyond question.

In the same stroke, the significance of *things* is likewise made manifest. Having to be what I am to-be—which cannot be allowed to slip back into obscurity for fear of doing violence to the others—each of my “towards-which”, on the horizon of that for-the-sake-of-which I am, is manifest for me. But every *in-order-to*, the “promise” of an object, is given *in light of* a towards-which, as we have seen, or on the horizon of a self-protained moment of living which is for its own part made manifest in light of that for-the-sake-of-which I am, and thus, in light of the promise I have made of my being, my assumed orientation. Furthermore, the significance of an object presupposes its being grasped on the horizon of its *possibilities*, which is to say, presupposes the self-giving of the being, constitution of objective sense or the manifestation of a being as extant; but the possibilities of a being show up only given the possibilities of the subject, which are again “there” for me initially and the most part in light of the promise I have made of myself, only via the “relative contingencies” of a being which has contrived, as it were, to keep its radical contingency hidden from itself. It is for this reason that the perceptual protaining of a being will initially and for the most part give it in its significance; it is only in authenticity, and specifically authentic self-protaining (which will be traced back, for its own part, to the giving of an absolute promise in the final section of this chapter), that a being will show up “shorn” of its significance—albeit, only *as so* “shorn,” which is to say, precisely on the horizon of its *needing* to be made significant. Finally, the significance of an object must be traced back to the absolute promise of exposedness or ethical subjection in that the “promise” of

an object involves it in a *shared world*. But we've seen that the subject stands in a shared world precisely through exposure, and the questionability of his or her being which conditions itself in the conforming assumption of an orientation or ultimate can-be placing the one made subject in concrete discourse with the others. For all these reasons, Levinas sometimes the absolute promise of exposedness, or what he often calls "Saying" with its sincerity, "Significance," with a capital "S." It serves as the unconditional condition of the significance of things, insofar as it serves as the unconditional condition of the self-projection of everyday being-in-the-world.

We have thus been able to trace back inauthentic self-protection to exposedness and the absolute promise or sincerity in which, affected by the other as a being called into question, exposure issues; what, then, of *authentic* self-protaining? Can being-unto-death and the open self-projection of the subject's being upon ultimate possibilities for his or her own being—and with it, self-tending temporalization, or the subjectivity of the subject, as a *whole*—be traced back to the ethical relation, or the other's approach and subjection of the one thereby made subject? In what way does authentic self-protaining presuppose exposedness, as the trace of this approach?

§ 45

Authentic self-projection, as we saw in §26, must take the form of a being unto death. As such, it temporalizes itself in conjunction with the *Befindlichkeit* of angst, and the discourse of conscience—which is to say, with the subject's finding himself or herself having-been only *obliviously*, and being thereby made *distant* from the usual discourse in which he or she is self-maintained. For the subject to be unto death, in conjunction with this, is to have open the ultimate possibility of his or her own being, the essential can-be upon which he or she is self-projected or that for-the-sake-of-which the subject *is*, as precisely what, here, has to be chosen. It

is, we saw, for the subject to be projected upon his or her “whole-can-be” (*Ganzseinkönnen*). How, then, does such self-projection presuppose the absolute promise of exposedness, which the subjected one, called out by the other’s approach and affected with questionability, is given to give or make of his or her own being, a being for which he or she precisely must answer? Why is being unto death a possibility only for a one ethically subjected? In the first place, we should note that the absolute promise of exposedness (as something like the restlessness, again, of a one who must answer without condition to every other without end) gives the subject to the future indefinitely or without limit. This would seem to be in marked contrast with being unto death, in which, of course, the authentically self-projected subject is precisely given *to* a limit, to death as the impossibility of possibility. Of course, this “impossibility” is given precisely in accordance with an indefiniteness, in regards to when it is to come to pass—but all the same, it is given as an unsurpassable limit.⁴⁴⁴ Nonetheless: to find a contradiction in this would be to fall prey to an equivocation. There is no doubt a sort of tension exhibited here—which, we will see in just a moment, is the “futural side” of the tension or opposition internal to our subjectedness to responsibility, which opposes, but never simply opposes, the idea of the infinite or its unconditional responsibility and the conditional responsibility of subjectivity for which it calls—but there is no contradiction in the strict sense.

To describe the tension at hand is to trace back being unto death or authentic self-projection to the absolute promise of exposedness. But this tension is essentially tied to those which are exhibited in authentic self-maintaining or the call of conscience, and authentic-self-retaining or angst. It is the same tension, in three inextricable aspects, just as angst, being unto death, and conscience are “sides” of the same “phenomenon” also, one also thrice articulated. What, then, have we seen of this tension already: a sort of irreducible dilemma that follows from

⁴⁴⁴ Heidegger calls it “*überholbare*”—literally un-overtakeable; see, for instance, *SZ*: p. 294 (250).

exposedness as absolute, irrecusable, and unconditional responsibility? The call of conscience exhibits *at once* a being denuded of the usual discourse—which for its part dissimulates every other as such, the other as one to whom I am exposed and must answer without condition—but *also*, exhibits precisely a being having to “have” discourse, to take his or her place within the world, in which “incomparables” are “compared.” It is exposure to the other that always puts the subjected one in this position, insofar as it always “requires too much” of me, requires unconditional response before every other in turn. Angst, for its part, exhibits *at once* a being whose being is through and through a question mark—whose being has been placed irrecusably under accusation precisely in exposedness to all the others—but *also*, a being that must recuse itself from this questionability precisely by limiting it, a being that has to get out of angst and return, whether genuinely or not, to “meaning.” And what of being unto death? Authentic self-protaining exhibits a being having to give itself in response—always in relation to the others or *vis-à-vis* those who, “putting me on the spot” affect me with the questionability of my own very being and give me to respond for it—but also, *at once*, exhibits a being having to answer for the whole of its being, for what *I* am ultimately to-be: a being, *me*, having to give an answer for myself, once and for all as it were, by seizing upon that which I can keep to and so, that by which I am to find redemption. Being unto death moves, in a fumbling way perhaps, but always with a bit of desperation, towards that which might redeem me, or which might discharge my responsibility before the others. It thus unfolds itself as a search for the Absolute.

What does it mean to say that being unto death unfolds itself as search for the Absolute? This is just to say that it is captivation with that which every religion or ideology ultimately means to offer: justification in the ultimate sense—that which allows me, so long as I hold fast to it, to know I am “in the right.” The “meaning of life”—which I seek out so long as my own being

is authentically an issue for me and as such, so long as I am given to myself in my mortality or the radical contingency of my being—is precisely that which is constituted as the telos of such a search, which redeems me by allowing me to pay off my debts in full, to finally and at long last discharge my responsibility. “What is the meaning of it all” finally means, where does the *I*, which has to watch over its own being, at long last find rest, some way to repose or to return in “good conscience” to contentment? In inauthenticity, such a thing is merely assumed; but being unto death, this becomes a passion—in fact, it appears to be all that really matters. And yet in *either* event: partaking in the (purported) Absolute, authentically or not, my responsibility for the others finally comes back merely to concern over the issue of my own being, or to myself and my time on earth. Of course in redemption, or in any of the modifications of subjectivity’s for-the-sake-of (and perhaps to the extent of something like its level of genuineness?) we do see something that is in alignment, in a manner of speaking, with the absolute promise of exposedness, in that in some way, the one made subject comes to answer for himself or herself in the concrete promise that justifies, and thereby, takes the others into account after a fashion. But at once, responsibility for the others comes to be defaced in that with this, the subject is able now to avert his or her eyes before the one who will come again to place him or her under an accusative gaze. Or at least: if the subject is now able to look upon the other in “good conscience,” it is with eyes clouded by dogma, once more shielded from exposure.⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴⁵ In religion, search for the Absolute comes to something of a discovery: which means, to a stop. In metaphysics (in the traditional, not Levinasian, sense) the search rather becomes radicalized, so that it survives as a search still, and survives today ostensibly outside of the metaphysics, and despite the pretension of having done away with the latter, in the “metaphysics” of the typical practicing scientist, who perhaps finds absolution in coming to be a “knower”— coming to know “the mind of God” as Stephen Hawking has written—or that being through which the universe apparently comes to know itself. But all such modifications of absolution are simply beside the point, so far as ethics, and with it the ultimate signification of philosophy, are concerned. Or rather, they sum up only what ethics has been able to be *up to this point*, i.e., its own dissimulation.

So much for the Absolute. But here, the irreducible dilemma of subjectivity and responsibility comes to clarity. For on the one hand, we see that the trace of alterity or the exposedness of the subjected one, stirring subjectivity in him or her, continues to haunt his or her being in the persistence of questionability and as a responsibility to submit to further accusation, to answer for “my” being all the more. And yet on the other hand, we find here, in the concretization of the answer, not just a tension that puts subjectivity into motion once more, so to speak—and were this all to say of the matter, the tension could never be called a dilemma—for in its renewal, which is to say, in the furthering of the response or the additional turn of the wheel as it were, there is always, as we’ve discovered, the possibility of simply becoming all the more dogmatic, all the more secure in “one’s” being from the other’s gaze and exposure. Thus: the need for vigilance, for ever more vigilance or even for something like an “absolute” vigilance, if such a thing were possible—for “the subject is the more responsible the more it answers,” as Levinas writes: “born in the beginninglessness of an anarchy and in the endlessness of obligation, gloriously augmenting as though infinity came to pass in it.”⁴⁴⁶ But then, authentic self-projecting has been traced back to its unconditional condition, and with it, self-temporalization as a whole.

We can now sum up what has been discovered.

It became apparent at the beginning of this study that consciousness of things requires consciousness of time, which, we discovered, is most primordially pre-reflective consciousness of *self*: the moment of living is opened to time by being opened out onto that which it is to-be and that which it has-been. But this temporalizing self-consciousness, we saw, cannot be consciousness in any usual sense, the giving of an object; rather, it involves the self-projection of a subject onto that which is to be determined in the determination of what he or she is to-be,

⁴⁴⁶ *OB*: p. 139-140.

which takes over or assumes his or her having-been so as to give a “thrown” direction for self-projection and which, as such, is self-maintaining in a world, choosing. This can unfold itself, in any given case, either inauthentically—where that for-the-sake-of-which the subject is, upon which he or she is ultimately self-projected, is not itself at issue—or authentically—where it is.

The subject’s self-tending temporalization, which comes to orient each moment of his or her living, thus came to be described; but in order to understand its condition, we then had to investigate the moment of living prior to or without any temporalization: sentient life lived in its immediacy. Here, we saw nothing like the being-at-issue of subjectivity—of a being responsible for what it is to-be—but only absorption in the “here-and-now” of life, in the unfolding of self-satiating behavior which always suffices to itself. For a moment of living to come out of the obscurity of its immediacy and into the light of the self-temporalization that is to orient it, requires that, somehow on the level of the sensible itself, immediacy be disturbed, mediated, while nevertheless remaining riveted to itself. But the humbling of life, brought by the other’s approach, we saw, can bring about just this. In the heart of a moment of living: that very life itself pinned to the vanity of its self-absorbed being, its being as if it were the only one, and so, given to answer for itself or for its being before all the others.

In order to demonstrate that it is in fact exposure, or humbling by the other, that serves as the unconditional condition of subjectivity, I began by clarifying self-temporalization, taken in its unity, in *respect* of this. Here we saw that, as soon as we understand self-temporalization in light of its ethical stirring or exposedness, the fact both that self-projection gives its for-the-sake-of-which as something that has to itself be chosen for, *as well as* that self-tending nonetheless “tends” towards its inauthentic mode, in which it hides this from itself, become explicable. Exposure to the other subjects the one made subject to a responsibility in excess of the self-

responsibility of subjectivity or self-temporalization, responsibility for what I am to-be; it subjects the subjected one an “unliveable demand,” as it were, that at once requires that the ultimate can-be of self-projection remain in question, but also that it—as an answer given to the others or a sort of promise made of my being—be made concrete or lived out: that there be a response, that the subjected one concretely account for himself or herself, but yet do so before every other in turn and without lapse. An irreducible predicament (which is ultimately exhibited in authenticity, where unconditional responsibility both bears upon the subject and is dissimulated or defaced), it calls forth the “hedonic,” we saw: enthusiasm, so that the angst-ridden subject, summoned to conscientious being unto death (authentic self-temporalization in each of its three “ekstasies”), can escape this so as to concretely realize or live out a response to the others by his or her being-in-the-world; and the moment of respite, so that the inauthentically self-temporalized subject, “oblivious” or “lost in the moment,” can be given back to the reformed behavior in which his or her response is to issue.

After provisionally clarifying self-temporalization taken in its unity *vis-à-vis* exposure to the other, I turned to remove the provisional nature of my demonstration by clarifying the way in which ethical exposure, as unconditional condition of self-tending temporalization, stirs it in each of its three temporal orientations or “ekstases.” Self-maintaining, which is always a being-with others, presupposes the proximity of the other, in excess of the other’s manifestation on the horizon of a shared world or our discourse, since the subjected one is only given to discourse insofar as the other has been revealed—a revelation which is subjection to responsibility before the other, not in the conditioned sense of the subject’s being-with, but in the unconditional sense of the exposedness of the subjected one, who has been offered up, humbled, before every other as such. But this revelation, as a humbling, affects the subjected one precisely as the calling into

question of his or her own being: self-retaining, which is always a matter of how the subject “finds” him- or herself, presupposes this affection, or the wounding of ethical love, since the concrete question to which any “*Befindlichkeit*” answers presupposes the questionability to which the subjected one has been subjected by the other, so that the being who will be subject can find himself or herself at all, and also, since it is only insofar as this being, which has always gone on in total ignorance of the violence it can be, has been called into question that the subjected one must keep hold of it: this being that would otherwise pass itself by without in the least troubling itself. Finally, the exposedness of the subjected one, affected by his or her questionability in the eyes of all the others, is a being delivered up to responsibility, having-to-answer for *my* being: self-projecting, which is always the orientation of my being or of the moment of living by that which I am to-be or that for-the-sake-of-which the subject in any given case *is*, presupposes this deliverance—as an absolute promise before all giving of promises or a response given before the concrete giving of a response in the sense of the subject’s concrete being-in-the-world—since the concrete promise of subjectivity, that for-the-sake-of-which the subject is, itself requires that the subject go on self-projecting, which is to say, go on being subject—which in itself is already the sacrifice of immediacy for the sake of all the others—and further, since it is only in the questionability of the subjected one’s own being, which has to be answered for before the others, that its contingency—that I can be otherwise and have to be determined—is given; and finally, since the subject is given to determine what he or she is to-be, in the open-endedness of the limit of this, only insofar as he or she is given to answer *without end*, having to answer before every other as other in turn, and so, is always borne up by the restlessness of a promise that knows no bounds. Levinas:

Proximity, suppression of the distance that consciousness of ... involves, opens the distance of a diachrony *without a common present*, where difference is the *past*

*that cannot be caught up with, an unimaginable future, the non-representable status of the neighbor behind which I am late and obsessed by the neighbor. This difference is my non-indifference to the other[...].The obligation aroused by the proximity of the neighbor is not to the measure of the images he gives me; it concerns me before or otherwise. Such is the sense of the non-phenomenality of the face.*⁴⁴⁷

This allows us to understand the sense in which we can call the trace of the other “infinite,” or use a term such as this to describe the exposedness of the subjected one which stirs him or her to self-tending temporalization, to the very subjectivity of the subject. This trace, left by the other’s humbling approach, is all the *unconditionality* of responsibility: responsibility before every other, as such, irrespective of all else. It is at once the *irremissibility* of responsibility: I cannot get away from it, this questionability that defines me; answering further only places me more in question. And finally, it is the limitlessness of responsibility, of an *absolute* promise: an idea of perfection, promise to answer before the other without end and before every other in turn, to never again slip into the obscurity or security of a being returned to the simple contentment of its immediacy, which would at long last take itself, without question, to be in the right. The other makes me free, determining myself, by making me responsible, but only by binding me to his or her plight, and to the plight of all the others: by binding me to infinite responsibility.

In responsibility for the other for life and death, the adjectives unconditional, undeclinable, absolute take on meaning. They serve to qualify freedom, but wear away the substrate, from which the free act arises in essence. In the accusative form, which is a modification of no nominative form, in which I approach the neighbor for whom, without having wished it, I have to answer, the irreplaceable one is brought out (*s’accuse*).⁴⁴⁸

That is: I am given to myself, to my present, my past, and my future, by being given to all the others without condition, to a questionability I can never rid myself of, and to a promise that always demands more of me.

⁴⁴⁷ OB: p. 89 [my emphasis].

⁴⁴⁸ OB: p. 124.

With this, the demonstration of my thesis has come to its close. By working through the relevant analyses, we have been able to understand the precise sense in which subjectivity implies temporality, and temporality implies ethical obligation. And yet as I stated in the Introduction, this study was not to constitute a merely theoretical exercise; it has in fact always possessed a sort of “practical” side to it, for by bringing subjectivity to clarity, along with all the irreducible dilemmas that characterize it and in fact, animate it, we perhaps find ourselves just a little better equipped to navigate them—assuming, again, that such a thing can be done, or done better. And in this light, might it not be at least a little significant to note that the study now coming to its conclusion—which has *in a sense* seized upon the “absolute” also: albeit, only in the sense of the absolute promise of exposedness or ethical responsibility—has been able to seize upon this or recognize it only as the refusal of all Absolutes? As if something of questioning itself might serve as our response? As if we might find something of a dwelling place in our own self-exile, in the troubling of immediacy to which the other’s approach subjects us and so, delivers us up ethically to all the others? As if an absolute promise might be realized, become concrete? But can we even say that such a thing is possible—a total radicalization of the ethical—and if so, on what level and to what extent?

These questions exceed the boundaries of the present inquiry. But it is with them, I think, that philosophy itself comes to its truest vocation, as the search for a life that is good.

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