The Presence of Husserl's Theory of Wholes and Parts in Heidegger's Phenomenology

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The aim of Twentieth century phenomenology is to provide a non-psychologistic interpretation of subjectivity. Husserl agrees with Frege, so does Heidegger,¹ to adopt psychologism is to give up truth. But this should not prevent us from investigating the subjective aspect of knowledge. On the contrary, Husserl thinks that an appropriate rejection of psychologism must be able to show how objective truths—ideas—are correlated to and grounded in subjective intuitions without thereby reducing them to psychological phenomena. Obviously this calls for an interpretation of subjectivity that makes a sharp distinction between the subjective perspective and the psychological sphere.

Several themes are operative in this venture but in the third of his *Logical Investigations*,² "On the Theory of Wholes and Parts," Husserl introduces a distinction that stands out as essential to the phenomenological project. In distinguishing between wholes and parts, and between different kinds of parts, Husserl provides a formal structure that is effective in the peculiar approach to philosophical problems that is distinctive for phenomenology. In his *Husserlian Meditations*³ and in several articles, R. Sokolowski has shown the importance of this theory by pointing out how it is operative in all major themes in Husserl's phenomenology.

In this article I shall expand it to also include Heidegger's thinking and argue that Husserl's theory of wholes and parts plays an essential
role in the phenomenological project Heidegger carries out in *Being and Time*. In this regard I would like to submit three thesis. First, not only does Heidegger use the terminology of the theory of wholes and parts, but he uses it in accordance with the conventions Husserl establishes in the Third Investigation. Second, Heidegger makes use of this theory when he discusses the structural makeup of Dasein—which is, in fact, the epicenter of the fundamental-ontological project as this is carried out in *BT*. Third, the importance of the theory of wholes and parts for the *Daseinsanalytik* can be attributed to the fact that this theory plays a decisive role in Heidegger's approach to the *Seinsfrage* in *BT*.

However, our aim will be not merely to discuss a technical issue, but rather, through the discussion of this issue, to indicate the fundamental objective of phenomenology and to investigate to what extent Heidegger is a part of this tradition. It is commonly argued that although Heidegger started out as a phenomenologist and took as his point of departure what in the lecture *The History of the Concept of Time* he refers to as the fundamental discoveries of phenomenology—intentionality, categorial intuition, and the original sense of the a priori—his overall project was entirely different from that of Husserl's. My claim is that by taking over these fundamental discoveries from Husserl he helps himself to more of Husserl than one might take notice of through a first reading of his texts. He also takes over the formal structure operative in these discoveries, and by doing so, he ensures a structural isomorphism between his project and Husserl's. However, it could be argued that although Heidegger uses the terminology of wholes and parts, by no means does this imply such an isomorphism. It is one thing to show that Heidegger takes over a distinction from Husserl, another to claim that by this he becomes a Husserlian. But, as we shall see, the way the theory of wholes and parts is applied in *BT* seems to substantiate that the formal structure of Husserl's phenomenology is at work in Heidegger's thinking.

However, Heidegger himself displays a total silence when it comes to this influence. Indeed, there is only one explicit reference to the very distinction in *BT* and that takes place in a footnote in which nothing is said about its importance for his own thinking. People familiar with Heidegger all know that Heidegger is reticent at laying bare the sources of his influence in *BT*. Important Husserlian themes, for instance, in general are put off with a footnote. Intentionality is mentioned once, in a footnote on page 414; categorial intuition is mentioned once, in parentheses in a footnote on page 261; and Husserl's notion of the a priori is mentioned once, in a footnote on page 75. But the same