The Essential Possibility of Phenomenology


The Text

Gathered together in this superbly edited and overall excellently translated volume are: Husserl's four drafts of his Encyclopaedia Britannica Article (hereafter, EB); Heidegger's notes and comments on the first two drafts; the pages that Heidegger contributed to the second draft; Heidegger's October 22, 1927, letter to Husserl about the second draft; the full draft of Christopher Salmon's condensation and loose translation of Husserl's final draft (which was further condensed by the editors of the EB); Husserl's "Amsterdam Lectures" (which he considered to be an "expanded version" of the EB article); Husserl's marginal remarks on Heidegger's Sein und Zeit and Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik (including the passages of Heidegger's texts that Husserl's remarks appear to be responding to); Heidegger's brief speech honoring Husserl at the combined celebration of his seventieth birthday and retirement from Freiburg University; Husserl's January 6, 1931, letter to Alexander Pfänder that remarks extensively upon his personal and philosophical relationship to Heidegger; and Husserl's lecture "Phenomenology and Anthropology" that—without naming Heidegger—takes sharp issue with the putative anthropologism and psychologism underlying the building up of phenomenological philosophy "entirely anew from out of human Dasein."

With the exception of Heidegger's contribution to the second draft of the EB article, Husserl's final draft of the EB article, and his lecture "Phenomenology and Anthropology," the contents of this volume appear here in English for the first time—excluding of course Salmon's text, which is here published in its entirety for the first time. The translations of the volume's previously published contents have been either updated and substantially revised or, in the case of Heidegger's contribution to the second draft of the EB article, completely redone. In addition to the translations and publication of new material, the volume includes several excellent introductions. Sheehan's General Introduction to the professional, philosophical, and personal relationship between
Husserl and Heidegger (1) charts the former's courtship of the latter on all three counts, (2) documents the close interweaving of all three dimensions of the relationship between the two that ensued for a number of years, and (3) highlights the role of the ill-fated collaboration in the writing of the *EB* article that hastened the total breakdown of any kind of relationship between these two giants of German philosophy and twentieth century phenomenology. Sheehan also provides a history of the redaction of the *EB* article with a thoroughness and critical scholarly apparatus that supersedes everything written thus far on the topic, resulting in what will no doubt remain the definitive *Redaktionsgeschichte* for the foreseeable future. Palmer's introductions to Husserl's "Amsterdam Lectures" and his marginal comments on *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* nicely situate the former in terms of its development of the themes of the *EB* article and the latter in terms of Husserl's discovery of Heidegger's distance from and critical posture towards his own philosophy.

In addition to making available in English these all important texts for understanding both the history and systematic development of phenomenology, the second—collaborative—draft of the *EB* article presented here (designated as Draft B) amounts to a "critical" edition of this text, since it has been edited (by Sheehan) to conform exactly to the original texts contributed by Husserl and Heidegger. As a result, Husserl's corrections to Heidegger's sections, which are printed in *Husserliana IX* as if they stemmed from Heidegger, have been removed from the text and are now given in the footnotes. Likewise, Husserl's revisions of his own text on the basis of Heidegger's comments now appear in the footnotes rather than in the body of the text as they do in *Husserliana IX*.

Συμφιλοσοφεῖν

By all accounts, Husserl's notion and praxis of "philosophizing together" placed great demands upon the one who was to assume the role of his philosophical "other." His well-known style of thinking with his pen resulted in over 40,000 pages of manuscripts, most of which were written in Gabelsberger stenography and which, in both Husserl's and his assistants' judgments, were unpublishable in their extant condition. (The arduous task of transcribing Husserl's manuscripts was for many years assumed by his wife, and then later on by his assistants, Edith Stein, Ludwig Landgrebe, and Eugen Fink.) Roman Ingarden reports how Husserl "repeatedly proposed to his various young friends the 'elaboration' and 'adjustement' (sic) of this or that bundle of manuscripts," a task that, given their undeveloped and fragmentary status, would surely require all the philosophical energies of its "adjuster." In addition, there was Husserl's belief, recorded by W. R. Boyce Gibson in 1928, that "there is no such thing as spiritual possession" and that he "gives all his students the full