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# The De-theologization of Religiosity: Heidegger's Sin

## Introduction

This essay essentially constitutes a sidestep that I nevertheless felt compelled to take while trying to keep my focus in the preparations relating to a larger project. Inspired by Ryan Coyne's work *Heidegger's Confessions*, however, the term "de-theologization" started to gain more and more ground in my reading of Heidegger – but with a particular spin. As Coyne discusses, the argument for Heidegger's de-theologizing tendency seems to be too simplistic in light of many of his texts, including his lecture on "The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics." In this 1957 text, Heidegger<sup>1</sup> asks about "the Being of beings" that he acknowledges to be "thought of in advance as the grounding ground." While exposing "the essential origin of the onto-theological structure of all metaphysics"<sup>2</sup> by way of a necessary *Rückfrage*, Heidegger thereby reiterates his position from that expressed in the 1929 inaugural lecture "What is Metaphysics?" In short, thinking back and "asking back" about the conditions of pursuing the question of Being, Heidegger<sup>3</sup> argues that "the fundamental character" of all possible

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Heidegger, "The Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics", in: Martin Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, transl. Joan Stambaugh (New York, Evanston, London: Harper & Row, 1969), 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, 59.

metaphysics “is onto-theo-logic.” This admission, Coyne argues, constitutes Heidegger’s “confession” regarding the need for the theological that, nevertheless, unfolds as de-theologizing metaphysics; besides theology, metaphysics also relies on ontology.

This discussion provides a complementary framing for my own pursuit that specifically approaches Heidegger’s de-theologizing tendency from a particular vantage point: in reference to his phenomenology of sin. As the theme could be understood in a variety of ways, a brief introductory clarification may be warranted here. I am hopeful that it should be reasonably clear that in terms of “Heidegger’s sin” I am not thinking about the *Schwarze Hefte* or his association with Nazism, his ruthless abandonment of his mentor Edmund Husserl, or about the affair and relationship that he, as a husband and a father of two sons, initiated at the age of 35 with his 18 year old student. Nor am I thinking about his words about the poetic last god that he considered as perceivably blasphemous because of his “piety of thinking.”<sup>4</sup> Instead, I am wondering about the use of this particular theological concept in *Being and Time*, despite the handful of direct references to, for example, sin, Augustine, or Luther in that work: *Sünde* is mentioned three times, Augustine – six times, and Luther – twice. My specific interest is tied in with the notion that Heidegger regards Augustine and Luther as key developers of early phenomenology and hermeneutics.<sup>5</sup> The question this essay pursues, in other words, is focused on Heidegger’s continued use of theological resources relating to the notion of “sin,” albeit in a modified or, somehow, de-theologized manner, while pursuing his early phenomenology.

There already exists a robust body of scholarship that comments on the larger issue. The aim of this paper is not to extend this particular discussion, and if it does so, it will only be done indirectly and incidentally. In terms of providing a framing, however, a few brief remarks may be allowed here; for a broader review of Heidegger’s developing and tensional stance with regard to theology and religion, one can recommend an essay on this topic by Jeffrey Andrew Barash.<sup>6</sup> In terms of the broader theme, it is hard not to agree, for example, with Judith Wolfe’s 2013 thesis that Heidegger’s early work presented a distinct

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<sup>4</sup> James G. Hart, John C. Maraldo, “Translators’ Commentary”, in: *The Piety of Thinking: Essays by Martin Heidegger*, ed. James G. Hart and John C. Maraldo (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), 104–107.

<sup>5</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, transl. John van Buren (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), 9–11.

<sup>6</sup> Jeffrey Andrew Barash, “Theology and the Historicity of Faith in the Perspective of the Young Martin Heidegger”, transl. Isabel Taylor, in: *A Companion to Heidegger’s Phenomenology of Religious Life*, ed. Sean J. McGrath and Andrzej Wierciński (Amsterdam and New York: Brill-Rodopi, 2010).

theological horizon that, in turn, provided a conceptual platform for the further development of phenomenology in *Being and Time*. In light of what we have already discussed above, I have nevertheless also found it warranted to at times deviate from what Wolfe has proposed to be the case. My specific reservation concerns another point Wolfe makes, namely, that *Being and Time* epitomized Heidegger's "a-theistic philosophical method" as well as his "a-theistic phenomenological account of human existence."<sup>7</sup> In spite of having given an elaborate clarification in a note, in her text she insists on the use of "a-theistic" in ways that remain not fully clear. John Macquarrie makes this point succinctly: "I doubt if at any point it would be *necessary* to interpret Heidegger as an atheist, though he clearly rejects the common view that God 'exists' in the way that finite entities exist. In this he seems to be saying just what St. Thomas Aquinas said."<sup>8</sup> As a modest response to Wolfe's claim I will therefore note that, first of all, her basic thesis does not need such expansion concerning Heidegger's alleged "a-theism." Secondly, even if this idea of Heidegger's a-theism would be approved, it should only be thought of in the sense that Heidegger's appropriation of theological concepts in *Being and Time* is religiously non-committed but not necessarily anti-religious. As indicated by Andrzej Wierciński, the "a-theism" also Wolfe discusses should rather be understood as a professional stance that leaves room for a personal outlook that may be more variegated and also tensional.<sup>9</sup>

As Wolfe also states in her work, Heidegger wanted to free himself from all "concern and apprehension that only talk glibly about religiosity."<sup>10</sup> The possibility remains to read this in a variety of ways, taking Heidegger's certain oscillation around the issue into account. Even though the question of facticity would undoubtedly be in Heidegger's interests, and adopting a theistic manner of approach would not, therefore, be philosophically helpful, this does not necessarily result in a personal anti-religious stance as Wierciński reminds us in his recent work. On the other hand, the fact that Heidegger attended Mass when visiting Meßkirch, prayed the liturgical 'Night Prayer' with the

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<sup>7</sup> Wolfe Judith, *Heidegger's Eschatology: Theological Horizons in Martin Heidegger's Early Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1, 66.

<sup>8</sup> John Macquarrie, "Preface", in: *The Influence of Augustine on Heidegger: The Emergence of an Augustinian Phenomenology*, ed. Craig de Paulo (Lewinston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), v-vi.

<sup>9</sup> Andrzej Wierciński, *Existential Hermeneutics: Understanding as the Mode of Being in the World* (Zürich: LIT Verlag, 2019), 244–251.

<sup>10</sup> Wolfe, *Heidegger's Eschatology: Theological Horizons in Martin Heidegger's Early Work*, 82.

monks in Beuron, used holy water, bended the knee, and so on,<sup>11</sup> does not necessarily result in theologically or religiously unreserved philosophical work – for those interested in this line of approach, Holger Zaborowski's (2010) biographical notes add to this perspective in Heidegger's life. That in the context of her analysis Wolfe seems rather closely to follow Luther scholar Edmund Schlink's assertion that "Heidegger's existential analysis of human Dasein is a radical secularization of Luther's anthropology"<sup>12</sup> is most certainly a possible thesis to pursue, but it nevertheless risks sounding slightly one-sided. Even though I would be inclined to argue in the same direction, I am cautioned by Matthias Fritsch's note that stresses the very point about the perceivable oscillation in Heidegger's philosophical work:

*Sein und Zeit* seeks to specify structural characteristics of human existence, and in so doing, employs Christian notions, whether those of Paul, Augustine, Eckhart, Luther, Pascal, or Kierkegaard, not in the religious sense, but as formal indicators. Still, as I will suggest, references to these sources may allow us to ask questions about the success and desirability of the "secularizing" translation, if that is what it is.<sup>13</sup>

The reservation that Fritsch makes is not unwarranted whereas it has been supported by other scholars addressing the issue. To cite but one example, in his own text Coyne not only provides a concise analysis of Heidegger's usages of "theology," "religion," and "religiosity"<sup>14</sup> but also reminds us that Heidegger stayed at the Benedictine Archabbey in Beuron, Germany, for short retreats throughout the 1920s.

More importantly than just in the form of an insufficient response to the wider scholarly discussion regarding Heidegger's ultimate religious standing, however, this essay argues – from its specific vantage point of sin – that Heidegger continued, beyond his early years in Freiburg and Marburg, to import theological insights into his own work. Besides scholars such as James G. Hart and John C. Maraldo,<sup>15</sup> followed by

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<sup>11</sup> Wierciński, *Existential Hermeneutics: Understanding as the Mode of Being in the World*, 234.

<sup>12</sup> Wolfe, *Heidegger's Eschatology: Theological Horizons in Martin Heidegger's Early Work*, 66, 79, 82.

<sup>13</sup> Fritsch Matthias, "Cura et Casus: Heidegger and Augustine on the Care of the Self", in: *The Influence of Augustine on Heidegger: The Emergence of an Augustinian Phenomenology*, ed. Craig de Paulo (Lewinston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 102–103.

<sup>14</sup> Ryan Coyne, *Heidegger's Confessions: The Remains of Saint Augustine in Being and Time and Beyond* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 5–10, 50–52.

<sup>15</sup> James G. Hart, John C. Maraldo, "Translators' Commentary", 108–112.

Theodore Kisiel,<sup>16</sup> Matthias Fritsch,<sup>17</sup> Daniel Dahlstrom,<sup>18</sup> Ryan Coyne,<sup>19</sup> and Andrzej Wierciński,<sup>20</sup> this proposal of the continued importance of theology in Heidegger's work is affirmed by Heidegger's comments of it in *Being and Time* that carry, as Macquarrie states, "an unresolved ambiguity"<sup>21</sup> that should not be overlooked or simplified. In this paper, I will specifically follow Dahlstrom's firm conclusion that "the overall structure of the analyses in *Being and Time* is taking shape in the early Augustine lectures."<sup>22</sup> As Dahlstrom puts it,

Heidegger's reformation of phenomenology is motivated and shaped in no small degree by a change in focus from an intentionality defined by cognition to an existence defined by religious experience. So there is some reason to consider "the radical concern for oneself before God" one of the silent presuppositions of the reformed phenomenological analysis of existence in *Being and Time*.<sup>23</sup>

Following Dahlstrom's insight while unearthing Heidegger's phenomenology of sin, this paper will focus on a selection of Heidegger's analyses of sin from his 1920-21 lecture course on the phenomenology of religion up to his 1927 lecture on "Phenomenology and Theology" as an exploration to the thought that finds an expression in *Being and Time*.

## "Sin" in Heidegger's 1920–1921 Lectures

The starting point for this exploration into Heidegger's early phenomenology of sin is a personal text that has a reflective, somewhat excusing, and to some extent a confessional tone. In spite of later being known as a philosopher with a problematic and ambiguous relation to his Catholic

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<sup>16</sup> Theodore Kisiel, "Situating Augustine in Salvation History, Philosophy's History, and Heidegger's History", in: *The Influence of Augustine on Heidegger: The Emergence of an Augustinian Phenomenology*, ed. Craig de Paulo (Lewinston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 79.

<sup>17</sup> Fritsch, "Cura et Casus: Heidegger and Augustine on the Care of the Self", 102.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel Dahlstrom, "The Phenomenological Reformation in Heidegger's Early Augustine Lectures", in: *The Influence of Augustine on Heidegger: The Emergence of an Augustinian Phenomenology*, ed. Craig de Paulo (Lewinston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 215–219.

<sup>19</sup> Ryan Coyne, *Heidegger's Confessions: The Remains of Saint Augustine in Being and Time and Beyond* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 3.

<sup>20</sup> Wierciński, *Existential Hermeneutics: Understanding as the Mode of Being in the World*, 255–256.

<sup>21</sup> Macquarrie, "Preface", 5.

<sup>22</sup> Dahlstrom, "The Phenomenological Reformation in Heidegger's Early Augustine Lectures", 217.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, 219.

upbringing and thoroughly Catholic education, early Heidegger never completely dismissed his ties with religious thought. His breaking away from the “system of Catholicism”<sup>24</sup> – announced in his letter to Engelbert Krebs in January 1919, his wedding priest and a family friend – may have resulted from a kind of intellectual conversion to a non-denominational and non-devotional stance inspired by the Protestant and, in particular, Lutheran thought. In Dahlstrom’s words, this was “Heidegger’s reformation”<sup>25</sup> that, I think, has to be understood in a dual sense; a re-formation of his outlook not necessarily in terms of a switch from a Catholic to a Protestant perspective whereas it should be thought of as a switch from an implicit to explicitly religiously unaffiliated phenomenology. The preceding two-year struggle “for a basic clarification of his philosophical position” and the realization that he has “an inner call to philosophy and [...] a call to the eternal vocation of the inner man”<sup>26</sup> does not, nevertheless, have to mean that Heidegger would have perceived either religion or theology as utterly irrelevant at that point. Besides mentioning that he understands Christianity and metaphysics “in a new sense” and thereby not as “unacceptable,”<sup>27</sup> the letter also refers to Heidegger’s ongoing research project in the phenomenology of religion that he was about to lecture in the following years.

As Theodore Kisiel has explained, Heidegger worked between 1916 and 1919 on specific themes that tied his interests directly in with theology: “The top two notes in a group of notes bundled together under the title ‘Phenomenology of Religious Consciousness/Life’ bear the titles ‘Augustinus (*Erkenntnis-Glaube*) and ‘*das christliche Erlebnis*’.”<sup>28</sup> In the winter semester 1920–1921, Heidegger lectured the “Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion” at the University of Freiburg. As for what follows, it is worthwhile to note that the theme of sin is continually present throughout the lecture course, most notably in sections from 13 to 16. Yet, I feel compelled to add that these sections analyze *tentatio*, or life-tribulation, as an explication of what Heidegger continued to call factual life, and what he early on took as his point of departure in terms of his analysis of Dasein. In short, “the concept of factual life experience is

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<sup>24</sup> Martin Heidegger, “Letter to Engelbert Krebs on His Philosophical Conversion”, in: *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of His Early Occasional Writings, 1910–1927*, ed. Theodore Kisiel and Thomas Sheehan (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 96.

<sup>25</sup> Dahlstrom, “The Phenomenological Reformation in Heidegger’s Early Augustine Lectures”, 188.

<sup>26</sup> Heidegger, “Letter to Engelbert Krebs on His Philosophical Conversion”, 96.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>28</sup> Kisiel, “Situating Augustine in Salvation History, Philosophy’s History, and Heidegger’s History”, 54, 64–65.

fundamental."<sup>29</sup> The point that I would like to stress in this context is that the constant insecurity of factual life – because it “worlds” and signifies – is also a necessary characteristic of what Heidegger calls Christian life; “there is no security for Christian life.”<sup>30</sup> Faith gives certainty, but the knowledge of the resurrection of Christ ties faith in with questions about salvation, or the “‘questionable’ in the experiential directions” that Heidegger explains as troublesome concern (*cura/Bekümmern*) “in experiencing and having myself.”<sup>31</sup> Sin, which is “just as much a mystery as faith,” is therefore indeed “already at work” in human existence as *Dasein*.<sup>32</sup> In sum, Heidegger’s analysis of factual life could be rendered in terms of sin that is the human condition of “giving-in” or “getting-lost,” whereas faith – the counterpole of existential uncertainty – is “not-giving-in” and “overcoming.”<sup>33</sup> As it comes to understanding *Dasein*, sin thereby claims preference over faith.

Kisiel’s analysis is helpful at this point in spite of its own occasional enthusiasm; he goes as far as arguing that *Bekümmern* was Heidegger’s main interest in the summer semester 1921 lecture course. Even though this might be a too strong way to put it, we cannot neglect Kisiel’s observation that “Heidegger glosses Book Ten of the *Confessions* around the central theme of distressed ‘concern’ (*Bekümmern, cura*) over one’s own life as the fundamental drive of human life. [...] Heidegger’s glosses of Augustine are deliberately designed to make *cura* central to his interpretation of the *Confessions*, in which the term appears only incidentally.”<sup>34</sup> The main point here is that, along with Kisiel, I cannot but think §42 and §64 of *Being and Time* that respectively discuss *cura*, care (*Sorge*) and selfhood – Heidegger himself admits that the Augustinian anthropology (*cura*) directed his analytic of *Dasein* as care.<sup>35</sup> For his part, Kisiel is therefore adamant that Heidegger appropriates Augustine’s thought in *Being and Time*: “I submit that Augustine, whom Kierkegaard never really read, is at least as important, if not more important, for Heidegger’s understanding of the structure of this prime phenomenon [of *Angst* that reveals care].”<sup>36</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, transl. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 7.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, 73.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, 184.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, 81.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, 194.

<sup>34</sup> Kisiel, “Situating Augustine in Salvation History, Philosophy’s History, and Heidegger’s History”, 76, 78–79.

<sup>35</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, xiv, 185, 292–293, 405.

<sup>36</sup> Kisiel, “Situating Augustine in Salvation History, Philosophy’s History, and Heidegger’s History”, 70.

Here, though, we again come to the point concerning Heidegger's peculiar de-theologization. To counter potential expectations that he would approach the phenomenon of Christian life as something extraordinary, Heidegger explains that "the factual life experience of the Christians is historically determined insofar as it always begins with the proclamation. [...] The significances of life remain, but a new comportment arises. [...] Christian religiosity lives temporality."<sup>37</sup> In other words, Christian facticity is not anything exceptional or special. What makes it a Christian life experience is the significance given to the self-world and the surrounding world through its enactment as not indifferent (*adiaphora*) but somehow godly; Christian life is a God-attitude or view of the world in a manner that still finds itself factual or bound. For this reason, I am not in agreement with Wolfe's conclusion that in the 1920s Heidegger developed a "sense of a constitutive and absolute *rift* between God and man which perpetuates affliction or anxiety as the proper mood both of human existence and of theological enquiry."<sup>38</sup> Heidegger, according to my reading, maintains that human being – theologically explored – can only be understood as in relation to the notion of God (*viz.* sin can only be understood in connection with the notion of faith or its lack thereof). For her part, Wolfe discusses this in the context of Heidegger's 1924 lecture on Luther and sin, but states that Heidegger comes to a "startling conclusion"<sup>39</sup> concerning the necessary relation between faith and sin; I consider Heidegger's insistence on this relation far less surprising. According to Heidegger's reading of Luther, sin is "*aversio Dei*."<sup>40</sup> Put differently, the "place of sins in Christian life" is faith; sin is a kind of lack in faith in the sense of turning away from God – or God-forgetfulness – and this paucity relates to being bound to meaning, historicity, and temporality: "The Christian does not step out of this world."<sup>41</sup> In other words, sin is abundantly present as facticity.

For early Heidegger, the value of exploring sin as the fundamental anguish or tribulation comes from the phenomenological task of grasping factual life experience in its historicity and worldliness. The factual life experience can also be explored through theology that, according to early Heidegger, is an "exemplary formation"<sup>42</sup> of factual life just like philosophy. The Augustinian thought, for example, continued to have

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<sup>37</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 83.

<sup>38</sup> Wolfe, *Heidegger's Eschatology: Theological Horizons in Martin Heidegger's Early Work*, 67.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, 79.

<sup>40</sup> Martin Heidegger, "The Problem of Sin in Luther", in: *Supplements: From the Earliest Essays to Being and Time and Beyond*, transl., ed. John van Buren (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2002), 108.

<sup>41</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 70, 85.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, 125.



some importance in the Catholicism of Heidegger's own time – and, as it comes to Protestantism, “Augustine remained the most widely esteemed Father of the Church.”<sup>43</sup> Heidegger's estimation of the theological reason for this influence is much telling; the Augustinian tradition celebrates “a certain conception of the doctrine of sins and of grace.”<sup>44</sup> His analysis of Augustine's *Confessions* in the 1921 summer semester lectures reveals, therefore, that life is “deformed,” that it is “no cakewalk (*Spaziergang*),” or that there is an unavoidable “falling apart of life.”<sup>45</sup> In the language of §38 of *Being and Time*, “as factual being-in-the-world, Dasein, falling prey, has already fallen *away from itself*; [...] it has fallen prey to the *world* which itself belongs to its being.”<sup>46</sup> Dasein's falling prey (*Verfallenheit*) and thrownness (*Geworfenheit*) is to live in factual ambiguity, and this is why, already for early Heidegger, the foundational conflict or unrest of life equates with concern; “the enactment of experience is always insecure about itself.”<sup>47</sup> Even Augustine, “who lives in such saintliness, and on such a level of enactment, is necessarily a burden to himself.”<sup>48</sup> Augustine's confession, as it is well known, was his fundamental human restlessness – *inquietum est cor nostrum* – that he found himself unable to transcend; this is the very burden Heidegger identified as factual and worldly tribulation.

Even though it is nothing of extreme novelty value, I should at this point mention that the idea of tribulation also finds its appropriation in *Being and Time*. As Heidegger's readers know, in his preparatory remarks to the analytic of Dasein (§9) Heidegger approvingly refers to Augustine's personal estimation that he “labored within himself” and that he was to himself “a land of trouble and inordinate sweat.”<sup>49</sup> What I would like to emphasize in relation to this observation is that this description also holds true, according to Heidegger, in terms of the ontological analysis of Dasein's authenticity. In short, Heidegger approves of Augustine's summing up the foundational conflict of factual life as *tentatio* or a burdening “existential sense of enactment, a How of experiencing” – because “temptation *lurks* precisely in what belongs to my facticity, what is with me and in which I am.”<sup>50</sup> It is therefore not too expedient to claim that Augustine's depiction of his own fundamental sinfulness is a *Vorbild* for Dasein's task of authenticity.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibidem, 115.

<sup>44</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>45</sup> Ibidem, 151–152.

<sup>46</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, transl. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1996), 164.

<sup>47</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 154.

<sup>48</sup> Ibidem, 152.

<sup>49</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 41.

<sup>50</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 186, 189.

To push even deeper into exposing the early phenomenology of sin, Heidegger's reading of Augustine's proto-phenomenology includes further explication in terms of the task of authenticity amid the pressures of inauthenticity; these explications revolve around the issue of "flesh" as the dwelling place of human existence. It is noteworthy that the discussion is extended, albeit cursorily, in the 1923 summer semester lecture course whereas it is, somewhat surprisingly, only touched upon in §12 or §23 of *Being and Time*.<sup>51</sup> According to Heidegger of 1921, however, *concupiscentia carnis* or the desire of the flesh is the primary form of tribulation. As Oskar Becker's notes clarify, "the real *tentatio*" is "the *tentatio tribulationis*," which means "that the human being becomes a question to himself."<sup>52</sup> In Heidegger's own words, this basic "direction in itself, directions of concrete, factual experience, of the full self-facticity of life"<sup>53</sup> is furthermore accompanied with the desire of the eyes (*concupiscentia oculorum*), and secular ambition (*ambitio saeculi*). The key for unlocking the phenomenological significance of this basic experience of the flesh is that Augustine presents these "in the fundamental posture of the *confessio*; that is, he confesses how temptations grow on him through these phenomena and in this posture, and how he relates, or tries to relate, to them."<sup>54</sup> Flesh, Heidegger defines, is "a tendency of life."<sup>55</sup> In opposition to *pneuma*, or living in spirit, it is "the complex of enactment of authentic facticity in surrounding-worldly life."<sup>56</sup> Flesh, in other words, "is the original sphere of all affects not motivated from God."<sup>57</sup> Life is not intact, but in a constant pulling to one direction or another – a tearing apart – because of flesh.

In this sense flesh also relates to the obviously sinful Antichrist that deceives the faithful by bringing them "into the wrong fundamental posture toward the Parousia, *confusing the obstinate waiting, letting oneself fall*."<sup>58</sup> Sin takes place as the unrighteousness of false concerns that bring about a wrongful tendency or conviction about the world. Negatively defined, flesh is not to stand "in fundamental comportment to

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<sup>51</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, 22–23; Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 97–102. – Jean Greish's seminal analysis 'Le problème de la chair' explains the problematics that results from this intentional omission. Jean Greish, "Le problème de la chair: Un 'ratage' de *Sein und Zeit*", in: *Dimensions de l'exister*, ed. Ghislaine Floviral (Louvain et Paris: Éditions Peeters, 1994), 154–177.

<sup>52</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 206. Cf. Heidegger, *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, 22–23.

<sup>53</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 189.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, 156–157.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, 88.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, 69.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*, 110.

God."<sup>59</sup> Flesh, therefore, should not be interpreted as mere carnality whereas it stands for Dasein's experience of facticity from within; Augustine himself explains that "it is not the uncleanness of the meat which I fear but the uncleanness of my lust."<sup>60</sup> As it comes to St. Augustine, Heidegger insightfully observes that the desires of the flesh continued to haunt the saint, according to his own description, in spite of e.g. having chosen abstinence over marriage. In short, one cannot get rid of oneself and of one's deeply rooted desires and lusts for pleasure (*voluptas*) that, I should point out, is not to be understood as mere feeling of delight or enjoyment but as the pleasing state of being gratified (in our facticity and worldliness) – in our restlessness we lust for infinite gratification. For this reason alone, a person remains alien to his or her own self: "the next moment can make me fall, and expose me as someone entirely different."<sup>61</sup> Dasein is to be in a constant fall.

Even though the desire of the eyes (*concupiscentia oculorum*) follows this same tendency, it only differs from the desire of the flesh in that it finds pleasure not "in the flesh" but "through the flesh" as curiosity.<sup>62</sup> In his own reading of this analysis, Dahlstrom insists that this *curiositas* was later treated in *Being and Time*, "fittingly translated in the German as *Neugier*, 'lusting after the new'."<sup>63</sup> For his part, Heidegger describes it as the appetite of experiencing or knowing – it is in use when referring to something as present-at-hand. As also §36 of *Being and Time* explains while revisiting "the pleasure of the eyes," the "seeing" Heidegger analyzes means, therefore, not only "looking at" something, but also "considering, bringing to one's cognizing givenness, letting something become an object for oneself as the object of mere taking-cognizance-of."<sup>64</sup> In turn, secular ambition (*ambitio saeculi*), or the third elemental form of *tentatio*, contrasts with the previous ones in that the self becomes its own ambition or the root of significance – Heidegger interprets "secularity" in terms of factual experience that is now based on getting delight in self-significance: "at issue is the self-validation in factual experiencing" (Heidegger 2004, 170). The other two forms of *tentatio* build essentially on object-relations, whereas in secular ambition "one's own world" – that Heidegger explains as "the world of one's own acting and

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<sup>59</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>60</sup> Ibidem, 160.

<sup>61</sup> Ibidem, 161.

<sup>62</sup> Ibidem, 166.

<sup>63</sup> Dahlstrom, "The Phenomenological Reformation in Heidegger's Early Augustine Lectures", 197–198.

<sup>64</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 168; Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 160.

achieving, the self-world"<sup>65</sup> – gains importance over Dasein's authenticity by setting aside the notion of factual experience.

As in sinful self-aggrandizement, the self, therefore, plays itself out of itself when pushing "itself into the foreground; it emphasizes itself."<sup>66</sup> Heidegger's observation is that this boastful attempt at re-placing the self amounts to "a miserable life," and to "shameful arrogance" that are maintained by a misguided and praise-seeking sense of self-importance (*amor laudis*) that opens a self-enacted fall or a dissipation into the nothingness of the vain self.<sup>67</sup> Quite remarkably, Heidegger terms this fall the "possibility of the most groundless dive," or the self-acted pulling life down, as "what is really satanic in temptation."<sup>68</sup> To deepen this point – getting us at the brink of conflating Dasein with the "satanic" temptation of thoroughly embraced inauthenticity – with just one comment, in Heidegger's reading of Augustine he acknowledges the idea that sin "is a lower measure of reality" up to a point where it equates with death, but emphasizes that the "decisive conception" of sin is the self-enacted turn away from the merciful God to the wrath of God – whatever this God as a "You" or a "Thou" may be.<sup>69</sup> To sum up this turn to the self (*incurvatus in se*), therefore, Heidegger's<sup>70</sup> rather Kierkegaardian stance is that "the category of sin is the category of individuality." Put differently, because of the very need to be a self (*Dasein*), the fundamental character of life "on earth" is that it is "really nothing but a constant tribulation," or "all trial without intermission."<sup>71</sup> According to early Heidegger, human life is an earthly and sinful struggle.

## "Sin" in the 1924 and 1927 Lectures

While continuing to explore Heidegger's notion of sin, we will now make a move away from Augustine to Luther to whom Heidegger frequently refers in his 1920–1921 lectures. A tentative analysis has recently been provided of the potential connection between Luther's theology of sin and Heidegger's phenomenology of being-guilty.<sup>72</sup> In what follows Heidegger's analyses on Luther's theology will be examined more

<sup>65</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 171.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*, 171.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, 171, 173, 178.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*, 180.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*, 214–215.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*, 199.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibidem*, 152, 154.

<sup>72</sup> See: Yu-Yuan Hung, "Heidegger's understanding of the relation between his ontological concept of 'being-guilty' and Luther's theological concept of 'sin'", *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 81, 2 (2020): 128–131.

in depth. In and of itself, the wider question concerning the relation between the two is not uncharted territory or even a novelty in Heidegger scholarship.<sup>73</sup> Scholars such as Jaspers, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Schlink early on maintained that Heidegger had thoroughly been inspired and influenced by Martin Luther's thought; he referred to "the spirit of Luther" at the outset of his 1923 summer semester lecture course while defending "all open questioning not frightened in advance by possible consequences."<sup>74</sup> This widely perceived apprenticeship holds true especially in terms of Luther's anthropology in general, and his understanding of sin in particular. Writing as much against the Aristotelian tendencies of scholastic theology as against its "sophistic" manner of exposition, Luther placed the question of sin at the epicenter of his thought – Heidegger stresses this in 1924. For Luther, the radical gift of grace and faith that are solely given in the redeeming work of Christ (*sola gratia, per fidem, propter Christum*) are needed because of the fallen human condition. To briefly explain, Luther's anthropology ties in directly with the notion of an experienced life and therefore it also presents itself as a protophenomenological and existential analysis. For a better understanding what this means, it may be enough to mention that in 1522 Luther referred to himself – at the height of Reformation – as *armer stinkender Madensack* or "a poor stinking bag of worms."<sup>75</sup> Unlike any rationalizing explanation that distances the ineradicable human experience of the evil and restless desire within, Luther understood sin not as a scholarly question in the field of theological anthropology but as a personal and practical question of why and how a human being can be saved from the perils of his or her sinful nature, that is, from the inescapable death already present at the birth of each human being.

Heidegger found this personalistic and anti-metaphysical understanding of faith appealing as his note indicates in the 1918–1919 outline for a lecture course on the philosophical foundations of medieval mysticism: "In Luther an *original* form of religiosity – one that is also not

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<sup>73</sup> Dr. Jussi Backman has rightfully recommended these scholarly resources for further discussion on the issue: John Van Buren's commentaries on Heidegger and Luther, particularly in his *The Young Heidegger* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994) and his article "Martin Heidegger, Martin Luther", in: *Reading Heidegger from the Start*, ed. Kiesel and van Buren (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1994), as well as Christian Sommer, *Heidegger, Aristote, Luther* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2005) illuminate the issue of the relation between the two German thinkers, one theologian and the other philosopher. Thomas Sheehan, "Heidegger's 'Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion,' 1920–21", *The Personalist* 60, 3 (1979): 312–324 also makes important points about Heidegger and Luther.

<sup>74</sup> Heidegger, *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, 1. Cf. Wolfe, *Heidegger's Eschatology: Theological Horizons in Martin Heidegger's Early Work*, 77–79.

<sup>75</sup> WA 8, 685.

found in the mystics – breaks out. The ‘holding-to-be-true’ of Catholic faith is founded entirely otherwise than the *fiducia* of the reformers.”<sup>76</sup> Heidegger’s frequent references to Luther reveal that it is also these thoughts that Heidegger reflects and extends in his 1920–1921 lectures on the phenomenology of religious life. The generally approving remarks do not mean, however, that Heidegger would have been uncritical about Luther’s thought or uncaring about its limitations. When interpreting the letter of St. Paul to the Galatians, for example, Heidegger observes that the letter “was significant for the young Luther; along with the letter to the Romans, it became a dogmatic fundament.”<sup>77</sup> Paying attention to the fact that Luther’s commentary on the Galatians would be readily available, Heidegger states, however, that “yet we must free ourselves from Luther’s standpoint,” because “Luther sees Paul from out of Augustine.”<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, according to Oskar Becker’s 1920–21 lecture notes, Heidegger deplored the tendency to dogmatize Luther’s thought: “in his earliest works, Luther opened up a new understanding of primordial Christianity. Later on, he himself fell victim to the burden of tradition: then, the beginning of Protestant scholasticism sets in.”<sup>79</sup> I take these critical comments as indicators that Luther’s thought may serve a peculiar purpose for Heidegger, but it does not have to restrict Heidegger’s own thinking that most manifestly also goes beyond Luther’s appealing radicality.

In spite of his critical remarks regarding Luther’s thought, Becker’s notes reveal that Heidegger esteemed Luther’s *Heidelberg Disputation* (1518) in particular as a potential way to describe the existentiell mode of Dasein. Heidegger himself<sup>80</sup> confirms this appreciation of “the young Luther,” for example, in his 1923 summer semester lecture course. Heidegger’s particular interest concerns Luther’s distinction between the proto-phenomenological “theology of the cross” that explores “how things are,” and the ontically attuned as well as metaphysically aesthetizing “theology of glory.”<sup>81</sup> The claim that this essay put forward is that the thought is echoed in Heidegger’s clarification of the phenomenological maxim “to the things themselves!” in §7 of *Being and Time*. Interestingly enough, Heidegger had already repeated this point in his 1924 lecture “The Problem of Sin in Luther” that he held in Marburg.<sup>82</sup> In the heart of Heidegger’s 1924 discussion, however, is his reading of Luther

<sup>76</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 236.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibidem*, 47.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*, 213, 255.

<sup>80</sup> Heidegger, *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, 1, 4, 82.

<sup>81</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 213.

<sup>82</sup> Heidegger, “The Problem of Sin”, 107. Wolfe reports that this lecture was for Bultmann’s New Testament seminar. Wolfe, *Heidegger’s Eschatology*, 78.

as a theologian of sin: "The more one fails to recognize the radicalness of sin, the more redemption is made little of, and the more God's becoming man in the Incarnation loses its necessity. The fundamental tendency in Luther is found in this manner: the *corruptio* of the human being can never be grasped radically enough."<sup>83</sup> Heidegger's rather plausible stance is that Luther's whole work is founded in this distinct theological question – ultimately concerned about salvation – that only becomes understandable in the context of his anthropology of ontologically pernicious sinfulness.

Being a careful scholar, Heidegger backs up his discussion of radical sinfulness by revisiting Luther's 1516 and 1517 texts that explain the anthropological attunement of his thought; sin is primarily not about particular acts that should be avoided or renounced whereas it concerns human being. Heidegger's citation of Luther's thesis 30 – one of the original 1517 theses – is much telling in this regard: "On the part of human being nothing precedes grace except rebellion against grace; the possibility of the existence of grace does not lie in him."<sup>84</sup> For Heidegger, the overall interpretation is that Luther focuses on "the mode of man's being-placed in relation to things, to the being-displaced and being-horrified by them that arises from his clinging to them."<sup>85</sup> A human being, or Dasein, faces horror and despair because of his or her "very particular kind of being-placed in relation to the world."<sup>86</sup> This worldliness is so thorough that the only way to overcome it, or to make way for God, is to embrace it to the point where human being is comprehended "as a persisting in the world that affords not glories but adversities."<sup>87</sup> In other words, the world and the human worldliness must be shown as tribulations that, without God, offer no consolation. Hence, "corruption must be amplified," just as, according to Heidegger, Luther does in the *Heidelberg Disputation*: "The human being as such is itself sin."<sup>88</sup> In sum, Dasein lives as falling prey.

Bearing again a noticeable similarity not only to §38 of *Being and Time* but also to §40 that analyzes *Angst* as Dasein's fundamental attunement – and to an included note that brings *Angst* together with fear in reference to the theologies of Augustine, Luther, and Kierkegaard – Heidegger sums up his reading with the thought that the human standing is being-turned-away-from-God (*aversio Dei*), or the experienced factual reality of sin that results in fear, flight, hatred, despair, and impenitence;

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<sup>83</sup> Heidegger, "The Problem of Sin in Luther", 106. Cf. Heidegger, *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, 86.

<sup>84</sup> Heidegger, "The Problem of Sin in Luther", 107.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibidem*, 106.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*, 106, 108.

in a word, “mortal anxiety.”<sup>89</sup> Heidegger’s firm and unsurprising conclusion is, therefore, that “in Luther, sin is a concept of existence.”<sup>90</sup> A relating reservation in *Being and Time* – that Heidegger’s existential interpretation does not make statements “about the ‘corruption of human nature’ or ‘whether human being is ‘drowned in sin’ – merely announces that the existential structure Heidegger was set to analyze is ontologically ‘prior’ to such existentiell assertions.”<sup>91</sup>

Given this description of the underlying theological resources in Heidegger’s early analyses of the fundamental ontology of Dasein, it is furthermore no small matter that in §29 of *Being and Time* Heidegger refers to Augustine and Pascal as proto-phenomenologists who steered the problematics of affects to the direction of interestedness and attunement. A scholarly point may be warranted here as an extension to the comment just made. Even though also claiming that Heidegger ended up inverting Luther’s argument, Wolfe discusses the relationship between faith and sin, and argues that “for Paul, Augustine, Luther, and Kierkegaard, this experience [of one’s own finitude as limitedness and burden] is associated with the conviction of our own depravity, and should lead the believer to a humble and trusting turn toward God in expectation of his help.”<sup>92</sup> It is in this sense that Heidegger also argues that sin is “prior to faith, which can be understood only by contrast to sin,” as Wolfe summarizes.<sup>93</sup> In Heidegger’s own words, if theological anthropology is “conceptually comprehensible,” it too may “speak about Dasein as being-in-the-world” in its fallenness.<sup>94</sup>

In order to move ahead in our reading of Heidegger, however, I will now leave Heidegger’s Luther lectures behind and briefly address his later lecture that dealt with the very question of the potential phenomenological contributions that theology could offer. An intertextual note will keep us moving; Heidegger’s 1924 conclusions are clearly present in his 1927 lecture on “Phenomenology and Theology” that, unsurprisingly, also uses a language resembling that of *Being and Time*. Most importantly, Heidegger continues to maintain that sin is “a phenomenon of existence.”<sup>95</sup> Shifting the angle of his analysis, however, Heidegger

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<sup>89</sup> Ibidem, 110. Heidegger quotes Kierkegaard’s 1852 notebook. About Kierkegaard’s influence on Heidegger, see Wolfe’s concise discussion. Wolfe, *Heidegger’s Eschatology*, 84–89.

<sup>90</sup> Heidegger, “The Problem of Sin in Luther”, 108.

<sup>91</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 168.

<sup>92</sup> Wolfe, *Heidegger’s Eschatology*, 81.

<sup>93</sup> Ibidem, 80.

<sup>94</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 168.

<sup>95</sup> Heidegger, “Phenomenology and Theology”, in: *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, transl. James G. Hart and John C. Maraldo (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 51.



states that the concept of sin “calls for a return to the concept of guilt” that, in turn, is “an original ontological determination of the existence of Dasein.”<sup>96</sup> Grasping the original gravity of guilt, Heidegger reasons, thereby also reveals the grave depths of sin as a regional explication of human reality. Again, using a language virtually identical with a note in §62 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger argues that this does not mean that the meaning or the reality of sin could be deduced from guilt, however, but rather that the concept of sin serves as a concept of existence only in the light of an orientation that is brought forth by Dasein's guilt. In other words, Heidegger stresses the point that a phenomenological analysis does not substitute faith – philosophy is in an opposition to religiosity – but only makes its existential contents more accessible for a philosophical discussion by being “formally indicative” of this contents that regionally pertains to human reality.<sup>97</sup>

## Heidegger's Appropriation of Theology in *Being and Time*

The latest remarks bring us finally to *Being and Time*. My sense is that the preceding discussion – which has already clarified that Heidegger's early phenomenology of sin results in a deeper understanding of Dasein's fundamental ontology – warrants us to consider some conclusions. Most importantly, a survey of Heidegger's texts reveals that his phenomenology of sin amounts to acknowledging that with its regional capacity “sin” exposes a specific ontological determination of Dasein in its being-in-the-world as fallenness.<sup>98</sup> But let us approach further concluding remarks from the wider scholarly angle. First, based on our reading of Heidegger's texts, I would like to offer a reservation to Ryan Coyne's stance that views Heidegger's work from 1921 until the publication of *Being and Time* from the angle of his interest in Aristotle. Heidegger may indeed have been “a Greek” but not completely so as also Coyne acknowledges: “the 1923–1928 Marburg courses contain extensive discussion of medieval Christian texts [...] If the regress to Aristotle was undoubtedly the new focal point of Heidegger's historical research, the results obtained by it were necessarily marked by his early commentaries

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<sup>96</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>97</sup> Ibidem, 52.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Dermot Moran, “Choosing a Hero: Heidegger's Conception of Authentic Life in Relation to Early Christianity”, in: *A Companion to Heidegger's Phenomenology of Religious Life*, ed. Sean J. McGrath and Andrzej Wierciński (Amsterdam and New York: Brill-Rodopi, 2010), 358, 369–370.

on biblical and Augustinian sources."<sup>99</sup> Second, there is a point about Heidegger's stance concerning theology and the related register of religiously attuned expression. It is obviously evident that for Heidegger "the term 'phenomenology' differs in meaning from such expressions as 'theology' and the like," and that "theological anthropology" represents "traditional anthropology" that covers up or "misleads the basic question of the being of Dasein."<sup>100</sup> Heidegger's conviction in *Being and Time* is, nevertheless, that theology also serves – among other positive sciences that are "capable of a crisis in its basic concepts" (meaning their ontic inquiries or "historically transmitted ontologies") – as a regional ontology in its search "for a more original interpretation of human being's being toward God, prescribed by the meaning of faith itself and remaining within it."<sup>101</sup> Even though Heidegger guards the realm of thinking by consistently reminding his readers about the distinction between thought and faith, these are not therefore wholly separable. In his later words, "within faithfulness one still thinks, of course; but thinking as such no longer has a task."<sup>102</sup> Piety is thoughtful, but a philosopher is, rather obviously, primarily and keenly interested in the piety of thinking. It would, for these reasons, be a mistake to label the Heidegger of *Being and Time* – as later explained by the Heidegger of 1950 essay "Nietzsche's Word" – as a mere post-Nietzschean atheist whereas his stance is more variegated and it can be valorized in different ways.<sup>103</sup>

We thereby close the discussion by arriving again at the issue of "de-theologization" or *Enttheologisierung*. As Hart and Maraldo argued, "the reason Heidegger is not addressed by theology is that it has become wed to metaphysics, which is ill-suited for speaking of religious themes."<sup>104</sup> In Heidegger's own words: "[Academic] theology is slowly beginning to understand again Luther's insight that its system of dogma rests on a 'foundation' that does not stem from a questioning in which faith is primary and whose conceptual apparatus is not only insufficient for the range of problems in theology but rather covers them up and distorts them."<sup>105</sup> Put differently, Heidegger maintained that theology is science that approaches the being-question from within its respective and ad-

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<sup>99</sup> Coyne, *Heidegger's Confessions: The Remains of Saint Augustine in Being and Time and Beyond*, 87–88.

<sup>100</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 30, 45–46.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibidem*, 8, 24.

<sup>102</sup> Heidegger, "Conversation with Martin Heidegger; recorded by Hermann Noack", in: *The Piety of Thinking*, ed. James G. Hart, John C. Maraldo (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), 64.

<sup>103</sup> Coyne offers a commendable reading of Heidegger on Nietzsche. Coyne, *Heidegger's Confessions*, 205–240.

<sup>104</sup> Hart, Maraldo, "Translators' Commentary", 99.

<sup>105</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 8.

mitedly objectifying framework. I hope that my pairing of Heidegger's early texts with *Being and Time* suggests that even such a dogmatizing application of theological register in explicating the human condition, however, is not completely without *some* value for Heidegger as also expressed in the 1957 lecture on the onto-*theo*-logical constitution of metaphysics. But as it comes to the specific originary ground of a "Christian experience" that is then covered up with such metaphysical conceptual apparatus, Heidegger contends that the issue takes on a more severe and challenging path. This relates to "the mystery-character of revelation" as he puts it in a 1953 conversation.<sup>106</sup> The ways between philosophy and faith-based theological explication therefore ultimately part as there remains an ineradicable distinction between the two. As in Bultmann's *Entmythologisierung*, philosophy is therefore de-theologizing in the sense that it does not allow for itself to think mythologically or to embrace the mystery of revelation as its ground – even dogmatic theology does that as it, to the point of doing clinically so, accepts revelation as its axiomatic ground. Philosophy remains in the realm of thinking beyond which it is not designed to step, whereas it "can only question" that is its "piety of thinking"<sup>107</sup> – revelation and faith see no need for this questioning and for what can be described as the questionable (*das eigentlich "Frag-würdige"*).

In terms of taking use of all resources of thinking into account, however, the issue opens up again differently and more positively. Here we tie back in with Heidegger's phenomenology of sin that extends beyond the explicit use of the theological concept. It should not be forgotten that, for example, the whole of division two of *Being and Time* focuses on the temporality of *Dasein* by opening up with a prolonged view to its "being-toward-death" in its fallen everydayness (*Verfallenheit*); Fritsch,<sup>108</sup> among others, claims there to be a strong connection with Augustine's theological anthropology as it comes to this aspect of Heidegger's phenomenology of *Dasein*. To add a further clarifying note regarding *Sein zum Tode*, as drawn from dogmatizing theological parlance, Heidegger openly acknowledges his debt to theology in a footnote: "the anthropology developed in Christian theology – from Paul to Calvin's *meditatio future vite* – has always already viewed death together with its interpretation of 'life'."<sup>109</sup> Scholars have, quite naturally, valorized this note

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<sup>106</sup> Heidegger, "Conversation with Martin Heidegger; recorded by Hermann Noack", 65. Dr. Jussi Backman deserves credit for pointing out the undeniable importance of this text to me.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibidem*, 66.

<sup>108</sup> Fritsch, "Cura et Casus: Heidegger and Augustine on the Care of the Self", 101–102.

<sup>109</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 408.

in a variety of ways. Wolfe, for example, discusses “being-toward-death” as a plausible German translation of Luther’s term “*cursus ad mortem*.” In my reading, however, Heidegger’s alleged suspension of “Luther’s aetiology of that condition, namely that human life tends towards death because it is infected with sin, and that Christ’s conquest of sin and death proleptically overcame this predicament” was far less definitive than proposed.<sup>110</sup> To reiterate the key point of the entire analysis pursued in this essay, Heidegger’s fundamental ontology of Dasein is deeply and openly indebted to the theologians’ proto-phenomenology of sin, including that of Luther.

One final comment may perhaps be allowed. As it comes to the notion of Dasein’s temporality we have just addressed, Heidegger also holds – giving a subtle nod to theological discourse – that in this basic temporal mode of human being conscience calls us to understand the appeal of authenticity, and that it also invokes the sense of guilt because of not having lived authentically. It is certainly true that Heidegger kept clear distance from the theological notions of conscience (*das Gewissen*) and guilt (*das Schuldigsein*). Still, in terms of conscience, for example, Heidegger warned in §59 against elevating its ontological analysis “over the everyday understanding of conscience and passing over the anthropological, psychological, and theological theories of conscience based on it.”<sup>111</sup> These may be “vulgar interpretations,” but as such they are – at the bare minimum – instructive indications of the need to begin asking again the question of being. This reading is confirmed by §81 on within-timeness (*Innerzeitigkeit*); Heidegger admitted that “the interpretation of Dasein as temporality does not lie beyond the horizon of the vulgar concept of time”<sup>112</sup> such as presented, for example, by Augustine in his *Confessions*.

As it then comes to guilt, it is true that Heidegger required in a note in §62 that Dasein’s *Schuldigsein* has to “be distinguished from the *status corruptionis* as it is understood by theology.”<sup>113</sup> Faith, through which the notion of *status* is understandable, has “its own attestation” that already in principle remains foreign to philosophical questioning.<sup>114</sup> Heidegger’s remark, however, is to be understood as a clarification that “the existential analysis of being-guilty does not prove anything *for* or *against* the possibility of sin.”<sup>115</sup> It can be fully agreed with Heidegger that faith – or

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<sup>110</sup> Wolfe, *Heidegger’s Eschatology: Theological Horizons in Martin Heidegger’s Early Work*, 72.

<sup>111</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 267.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibidem*, 391.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibidem*, 410.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibidem*, 411.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibidem*.

the non-faith of sinful existence – is not the same as the phenomenology of Dasein, but such a vantage point is still not without *some* meaning. Here Heidegger's de-theologizing appropriation pertaining to sin, or his phenomenology of sin, may be said to blossom forth. "Sin" may ultimately remain foreign to philosophy, but it is also not wholly unthinkable. We thereby finally come to face the issue of thinking about the unthinkable or that of ineffability or untranslatability. The last, albeit only a circumstantial, clue of the far more complex reality than mere simple atheistic "de-theologization" is that Heidegger's exploration of the meaning imbedded in religion and religiosity in return inspired theologians, struggling with this issue, such as Bultmann and Tillich.<sup>116</sup> Both of these theologians, though, faced similar charges as Heidegger. Acknowledging or, perhaps, confessing the sinfulness that both philosophy and theology operate under the conditions of language may nevertheless lead us to think that they all were more than willing to admit that – in terms of the human necessity to always in some ways de-theologize – they most certainly were, as also we are, guilty as charged.

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<sup>116</sup> Cf. Richard James Severson, *Time, Death, and Eternity: Reflecting on Augustine's Confessions in Light of Heidegger's Being and Time* (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 1995), 112–122.

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## Summary

It is hard not to agree with the thesis that Heidegger's early work presented a distinct theological horizon that, in turn, provided a platform for the further development of phenomenology in *Being and Time*. In order to bring this existing discussion and widely shared scholarly conviction of Heidegger's "de-theologization" of religiosity into contact with dogmatically expressed theological anthropology, the essay will explore Heidegger's understanding of sin as expressed in his pre-*Kehre* texts. This essay will, therefore, focus on a selection of Heidegger's analyses of "sin" from his 1920–1921 lecture course on the phenomenology of religion up to his 1927 lecture on "Phenomenology and Theology" as an exploration to the thought that finds its expression in *Being and Time*. Hence, this essay argues from its specific vantage point in a secondary fashion that Heidegger continued, beyond his early years in Freiburg and Marburg, to import theological insights into his own work. This proposal of the continued importance of theology in Heidegger's work, albeit in a modified or in some ways de-theologized manner, is affirmed by Heidegger's comments of it in *Being and Time*.

**Keywords:** Heidegger, Augustine, Luther, facticity, sin