Martin Heidegger’s Encounter Methodology: Kant

By
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Abstract
Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) has written a signification amount about other philosophers. There are over 100 volumes in a collection of his writings. His reading of other philosophers does not follow the traditional lines of presenting philosophical arguments. But rather, he uses the phenomenological and hermeneutical methodology, which is tied to his de-constructing and critique of metaphysics. Heidegger has a fresh and often times unusual reading of philosophers and poets. Heidegger reading of I. Kant is the paradigm of his kind of interpretation, where Heidegger admits to his “allegation of violence” to the text of his Kant interpretation. What is the methodology of a dialogue between thinkers? What is the meta-dialogue? Heidegger points us toward the path of thinking.

Introduction
There are no innocence readings of philosophers (Alfred Denker). Getting a philosopher “right” is to be left to philology – not philosophers (Heidegger). If we are to call ourselves philosophers then we have to engage in a critical debate with other philosophers. Philosophers who think they can do an ahistorical reading of philosophers are wrong with their basic assumption. Nietzsche taught us this and the time for metaphysical “eternal” readings of so called philosophical “problems” or “truths” is over. Historical relativism is our basic position after the end of metaphysics. We are finite humans in a finite world, and in a given historical epoch. There are no objective readings of philosophers that are worthy of being called philosophy. Thinking has its own task with us and we must listen and hear this call to philosophizing.

Metahistories of Philosophers

If we are to read philosophers then we need to develop a metahistory of philosophy. Our presuppositions and assumptions on the course of history of philosophy are part of our historical context. Heidegger wrote, “…all philosophy from first to last merely unfolds its presupposition.” (HHPS, et. 36). We construct an understanding based on our presuppositions and derive via rhetoric an essay that tells a story about the direction of the history of philosophy. What is a metahistory?
Metahistories of philosophy follow the course and direction of the history of philosophy. If there is a dynamic principle at work in the development of the history of philosophy, then a Metahistory of philosophy seeks to understand these major trends and inner determinations (necessities) at work. Is there a purpose and reasons for why the history of philosophy has developed? If there is no purpose and inner necessity, then where do we stand in history?

We need a philosophical context of a metahistory of philosophy in order to read philosophers. Hegel saw the history of philosophy starting with the most abstract and then final coming to the end point with Hegel as the most real and actualization of the absolute Spirit knowing itself.

On the other hand, Nietzsche reading sees the history philosophy as an error. Nietzsche poses the question if “perhaps sick thinkers are more numerous in the history of philosophy?” (The Gay Science: la gaya scienza, 1886, Preface, section 2, et. p. 34). Nietzsche’s remarks are often tormented and murky and they make it difficult to understand, so straight forward explanations are not easy. His virulence and caustic quality makes his thinking and philosophy complicated to elucidate. Nietzsche’s Metahistory of philosophy was ripened and put into a single page by Nietzsche in September 1888. HOW THE "TRUE WORLD" FINALLY BECAME A FABLE. The History of an Error. (Section 4 from Nietzsche’s Twilight of Idols or How to Philosophize with a Hammer. Just like Hegel, Nietzsche metahistory ends with Nietzsche own position (INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA).

Martin Heidegger sees the history of philosophy as the history of forgetting, the "oblivion of Being" (Seinsvergessenheit). This hiddenness is the "self" concealment of Being itself. In other words, Heidegger reads the metahistory of philosophy in a complete reversal from Hegel. The early Greek philosophers had it right and were open to Being – Hegel and finally Nietzsche were caught up in the abstraction of Being. They see Being as empty and abstract. Hegel in the Science of Logic and for Nietzsche it is Twilight of Idols.

As an example, I will use Kant’s metahistory of philosophy as an example, since I expect there are more Kantian among us than Hegelians, Nietzscheans, or Heideggerians. Of course who can resist an examination of Kant?

**Kant's Metahistory of philosophy**

**Heidegger said:**
“Kant's Critique of Pure Reason is among those philosophical works which, as long as there is philosophy on this earth at all, daily become inexhaustible anew. It is one of those works that have already pronounced judgment over every future attempt to "overcome" them by only passing them by.” (What is a thing, p. 61, 1935-36).
Let us begin by looking at the final section of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (*CPR*) (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*). The section is called, “The Transcendental Doctrine of Method. Fourth Chapter. The History of pure reason.” (*CPR*, A852/B800 to A855/B883). Kant starts of by talking about “place that is left open in his system and must be filled in the future.” It is interesting to note the same kind of issue Kant talked about in his last unpublished work, the *Opus postumum* (written 1796-1804). This was collection of writings that Kant was working on very late life and did not finalized or publish. Sometime Kant talks about a ‘transition’, then a ‘gap’, a ‘pain like that of Tantalus’, and then the “unpaid bill of my uncompleted system’ (Letter Christian Garve, September 21, 1798). This is in regard to the “Transition from metaphysical foundations of natural science to physics.” This heading appears early in the *Opus postumum* (et. p. 10, AK 21:373).

So, where is the other part of which Kant had promised, “must be filled in the future” (*CPR*, A852/B880) in the *Critique of Pure Reason*? Namely, the complete history of pure reason or a comprehensive history of philosophy. Kant never did work out a detailed history of philosophy or a history of pure reason. In fact, where Kant left holes or gaps in his philosophical system, then philosophers have rushed in to complete the Kantian project. The neo-Kantians, Friedrich Adolf Trendelenburg (1802-1872) and Wilhelm Windelband (1848-1915) are some examples of philosophers who have developed a history of philosophy along neo-Kantians lines.

Now back to Kant’s outline of pure reason in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Kant starts by giving a ‘cursory outline’ of the ‘chief revolutions’ in metaphysics (*CPR*, A855/B881). There are three issues in this small section.

1) “With regard to the object of all of our rational cognitions”.
Kant said we have the sensual philosophers (Epicurus, 342-270 BC) and the intellectual philosophers (Plato, 427-348 BC).

2) “With regard to the origin of pure cognitions of reason” (*Vernunftkenntnisse*). Kant said we have the empiricist (Aristotle 384-322 BC, John Locke 1632-1704) and noologists (Plato, Leibniz 1646-1716).

3) “With regard to method”. (In Ansehung der Methode).
Kant said we have the naturalistic (Democritus 460-370 BC) and the scientific methodology. The scientific leads to either the dogmatism (Christian Wolff (1679-1754) or skepticism (David Hume (1711-1776). In this same section, Kant concludes that the “critical path alone is still open” (*CPR*, A855/B883). This is very last page of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Note: Kant in this
section does not say “Wissenschaft,” but rather, “szientifische” methodology (szientifischen Methode). Why does he use this word?

This refers back to the Preface of the Critique of Pure Reason, where Kant says, “It is treatise on the method” (CPR, Bxxii). Kant sees himself within the history of metaphysics working on a subsection under ‘method’ and then ‘scientific’. The location within metaphysics for the Kantian ‘critical path’ is under the direction of method, and then scientific headings.

Kant begins the Critique of Pure Reason with the image of the “battlefield of these endless controversies is called metaphysics” (CPR, Avii). He then tells us a little story of about how in the beginning metaphysics started with “administration of the dogmatists, her rule was despotic” (CPR, Aix). These battles continue and almost come to end with the famous John Locke (1632-1704), but “fell back into the same old worm-eaten dogmatism” (CPR, Ax). Thus, the text of the Critique of Pure Reason begins with the history of philosophy and then the final section is called the history of pure reason (Die Geschichte der reinen Vernunft). Within this beginning and ending is this treatise on the method of the “metaphysics of metaphysics”, namely, the Critique of Pure Reason (Letter To Marcus Herz, May 11, 1781, Correspondence, et. p. 181). So, Kant is situating himself within his own history of pure reason, that is, within his own Metahistory of philosophy.

Kant says at the beginning of the chapter on the history of pure reason:

I will content myself with casting a cursory glance from a merely transcendental point of view, namely that of the nature of pure reason, on the whole of its labors hitherto, which presents to my view edifices, to be sure, but only in ruins. (CPR, A852/B880). (Beginning of chapter, Die Geschichte der reinen Vernunft).

There are two important matters here.

1) Kant is going to look at the history of pure reason, that is, the history of philosophy from a special point of view, namely, the “transcendental point of view”. Or, in other words, from Kant’s own point of view. This is a Metahistory of Philosophy from the transcendental point of view (transzendentalen Gesichtspunkte). The uniquely Kantian position.

2) The past is in “ruins” (Ruinen). Note this point very well. This is crucial point and consistent conclusion for Kant.

Kant often uses these analogies and images of building a house. The second division of the Critique of Pure Reason is called “Transcendental doctrine of
method”. He talks of the building edifices, building materials, height, strength, erection of a sturdy dwelling, etc (CPR, A707/B735). Thus, when we come to the last chapter of the section and Kant said that there are ‘only ruins,’ then keeping with this analogy from Kant’s view there is nothing to really ‘build-on’ from history of philosophy. Therefore, I understand Kant’s own position (from the ‘transcendental point of view’) that the history of philosophy is not helpful or important, it is in ‘ruins’. I understand Kant is saying that Kant’s own transcendental or critical idealism is not based on the history of philosophy and it totally unique to Kant. In other words, Kant has to begin his building from the ground-up or from the essential foundations. There is nothing to build-on, only a little dirt to begin the building. Therefore, sticking with this image, for Kant, the ground is reason.

Kant wanted to develop his own metaphysical system, but somewhere he got trapped writing the Critique of Pure Reason. He said in a letter that it would take him three months (1772) to finish his work. In reality, it took him another nine years before the Critique of Pure Reason (1781) was published. Here we start to see why. All Kant sees is ‘ruins’ everywhere. He does not have any building materials to even begin to build a sturdy dwelling (namely, a metaphysical system, a system of science).

Kant is doing a propaedeutic. Kant is just getting the ground ready for the building process or Kant in another publication he calls it a prolegomena. Now, this is not the science or a doctrine or in terms of the image – this is not the sturdy dwelling, but rather, a propaedeutic, that is, laying out the foundational project (think of Heidegger’s Kant and Problem of Metaphysics). Kant said in an early part of the Critique of Pure Reason, “...we can regard a science of the mere estimation of pure reason, of its sources and boundaries, as the propaedeutic to the system of pure reason. Such a thing would not be a doctrine, but must be called only a critique of pure reason...” (CPR, A11).

From the ruins there are no blocks to build a metaphysical system (synistemi, systema). In other words, this is neither a Wissenschaft nor scientifische system. This points to why Kant had to do a “critique” before getting to the real knowledge of metaphysics. From this point of view the critique of pure reason project is not metaphysics, but rather a “critique” of reason, which needs to be done before the science of a metaphysical system. That is why Kant called the Critique a “metaphysics of metaphysics” in a letter. The fundamental foundation, the background, the primary ground, before doing the project of metaphysical systems. But for Kant this is not some kind of special physics in the Aristotelian sense, but rather the critique of pure reason.

A Hegelian aside. Hegel completed the metaphysical system in the Science of Logic. Hegel used the Phenomenology of Spirit, where Hegel said, ‘...the detailed history of the education of consciousness itself to the standpoint of Science.’ So
the history of the education of consciousness is for Hegel the starting point, but
the goal is to get to the standpoint of *Science of the Logic* (**substantia infinita**) –
which is then has the philosophy of nature (**res extensa**) and the philosophy of
spirit (**res cogitans**) to complete the Hegelian System of Science (System der
Wissenschaft).

SECTION: *What Real Progress has Metaphysics Made in Germany Since the
Time of Leibniz and Wolff?*

Kant wrote this work in 1793. The German title is: *Welches sind die wirklichen
Fortschritte, die Metaphysik seit Leibnizens und Wolffs Zeiten in Deutschland
gemacht hat?* This was about the same time he was working on *Religion within
the Bounds of Unaided (blossen) Reason*. This work (*Progress*) by Kant was
edited by Friedrich Rink (the manuscripts have subsequently been lost) and
published shortly after Kant’s death in April 1804. Kant’s work was in a response
to prize question announced by the Royal Academy of Sciences (Berlin, January
24, 1788). Kant in the end did not submit his manuscript. Nevertheless, we have
with this work another attempt by Kant to look at the past in philosophy and we
then might see if another facet of Kant’s Metahistory of philosophy comes
forward into the light.

Kant at the beginning of the Introduction gives us a picture of his view of
metaphysics. Kant said,

> But this science is metaphysics, and that completely changes matters. This
is a boundless sea in which **progress** leaves no trace and on whose
horizon there is no visible destination that allows one to perceive how near
one has come to it. (et. p. 51).

There is no trace of anything good left, namely, no progress. The boundless sea is
without a history and without even a horizon to navigate the ship. Kant is lost at
sea. The sea is the history of metaphysics or at the very least, just the lost sea of
metaphysics in general. Kant abruptly, then drops an interesting remark;
“Ontology has made little progress since Aristotle’s time” (et. p. 53). (Perhaps
Martin Heidegger would agree with him. He told a group of students to read
Aristotle first for 15 years, before reading Nietzsche).

Kant then goes on to talk about the three steps taken by metaphysics.

> Thus, philosophy has gone through three stages in regard to metaphysics.
The first was the stage of dogmatism, the second skepticism, and third the
criticism of pure reason. (et p. 61).

This sounds again like Gottfried Wilhelm Freiherr Von Leibniz (1646-1716) and
Wolff (Wolff’s follower, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714-1762), Kant used
his *Metaphysics* (1757) in his lectures), Hume, and then Kant. When Kant thinks of skepticism, I think in this context it must be Hume. Although already in December of 1792, in a letter to Jacob Sigismund Beck, Kant mentions the assumed name of Aenesidemus (real name is: Gottlob Ernst Schulze, 1761-1833) where “an even wider skepticism has been advanced” (*Correspondence*, et. p. 445). The complete title of the book was *Aenesidemus oder über die Fundamente der von Herrn Professor Reinhold in Jena gelieferten Elementar-Philosophie*, 1792. In Germany, Schulze’s name during this time became synonymous with skepticism. Kant might also be thinking of the early Greek skeptics. For example, Kant mentions in a different context, “Pyrrho among others was a great Skeptic” (*Lectures on Metaphysics*, et. p. 305). Plus, on the same page he says, “Sextus Empiricus, who brought all doubts together” (*Lectures on Metaphysics*, et. p. 305). Thus, Kant was well acquainted with skepticism from a variety of sources in the complete history of philosophy.

How did Kant see these three stages in metaphysics?

Kant said,

This temporal order is based on the nature of the human capacity for knowledge. When the first two had been gone through, metaphysics was in such a state that for many generations it swung from unbounded trust in reason in itself to boundless mistrust and then back again. (*Progress*, et p. 61).

So, Kant is saying in this remark that Metahistory is based on “human capacity (Erkenntnisvermogens). Then Kant describes a process of trust (Vertrauen) or not trusts in reason. But clearly the movement and motion within history is a ‘swinging’ (schwankend, vacillation, wavering) back and forth between the two opposites of ‘unbounded’ and ‘boundless’ trust in reason. Thus, at this point Metahistory of philosophy is the swinging between trust and not trust in reason. Kant can see himself in this process as being for the trust in reason. In other words, Kant is on the side of rationalism. The Kantian Metahistory of philosophy is a process between reason (*ratio*) and reasonlessness (note: this is not irrationalism, we must wait 100 years before this becomes an issue).

Perhaps Kant saw Schulze’s contemporary skepticism as just part of the process. However, at the time, Karl Leonhard Reinhold’s (1758-1823) widespread popularization of Kant’s philosophy was underway and then Schulze devastating critique of Reinhold’s Kantianism as an infinite regress obviously upset Kant’s agenda. Even Hegel had to come to terms with contemporary skepticism in his essay “On the Relationship of Skepticism to Philosophy, Exposition of its Different Modifications and Comparison of the Latest Form with the Ancient One,” (1802) (*Kritisches Journal der Philosophie*) which is a critical discuss and
review of Schulze's work. In this way Kant’s Metahistory of philosophy could take into account the contemporary philosophical schools of his time.

Section: Lectures on Logic

The Blomberg Logic

Kant learned a great deal about the history of philosophy from the work of Johann Formey (1711-1797), Kurzgesfassete Historie der Philosophie von Herrn Formey, Berlin, 1763, (Abridged History of Philosophy). Kant wrote Formey a letter in June 28, 1763 (Correspondence, et. p. 69-70) and often had people send Formey copies of Kant’s works (Correspondence, et. p. 88). Formey was the permanent secretary of the Berlin Royal Academy of Sciences, he was a Wolffian, and wrote over 600 books and 20,000 letters. It is not clear where Kant came up with the critical remarks about Greek philosophers, since he read Plato and Aristotle in Greek. Perhaps it was Formey’s views, for example, Kant remarked, “Plato was very rhetorical, and obscure, and in such way that he often did not understand himself. (Lectures on Logic, et. p. 23). About Aristotle, Kant said, “Aristotle developed a blind trust in himself, and he harmed philosophia more than he helped it.” (Lecture on Logic, et. p. 23). Is this Kant or could this be Formey view of the history of philosophy?

Kant is of course talking through the lecture notes of his students. In this case, the Blomberg Logic was based on Kant’s lectures of the early 1770s. Kant in one part of his lectures talks about the ancient philosophers as being either skeptical or dogmatists. This is a familiar refrain from Kant. However, he does go on to says,

Carteius, Malebranche, Leibniz, and Wolffus, the last whom, through his industry, produced a systema of philosophy, were in recent times the ones who improved philosophy, and were its true fathers. All of the efforts of our philosophy are 1) dogmatic, 2) critical. Among critical philosophers Locke deserves priority. (Lectures on Logic, et. p. 24).

Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason was reviewed 1782 by J.G.H. Feder (1740-1820). In this review Kant was portrayed as just restating Bishop George Berkeley’s (1685-1753) Idealism and Kant responded is the second edition of the Critique of Pure Reason (2nd edition, 1787). However, in this passage we note two things of interest: a) Kant refers to more recent philosophers as the ‘true fathers’ of philosophy, b) again Locke seems to be praised for his importance. Kant often has critical remarks about Berkeley, for example, calling him a “dogmatic idealism” (CRP, B274). Kant discusses this whole issue with Berkeley in his “Refutation of Idealism” (CRP, B274-287).

In the Dohna-Wundlacken Logic (1792), Kant said, “Dogmatism and skepticism are opposed to one another” (Lectures on Logic, et. p. 745). He then goes and
states his position, “Criticism is the middle way between dogmatism and skepticism, the principle of a rightful trust in one’s use of reason” (*Lectures on Logic*, et. p. 480).

This shows Kant working and thinking through his relation to earlier philosophers and the history of philosophy. Although it does not give us anymore direct insight into Kant’s Metahistory of philosophy, it does show his thoughtful dialogue with past philosophers.

Section: *Lectures on Metaphysics*

Kant’s point of view on the history of metaphysics can be summarized by one of his remarks, “The whole of metaphysics is nothing other than a chain of built-up and overthrown systems.” (*Lectures on Metaphysics*, et. p. 134). This passage points again to Kant’s remarks about the history of philosophy being in ruins. Another passage says, “Up to now in metaphysics we still have not had anything satisfactory, for all systems can be shaken.’ (*Lectures on Metaphysics*, et. p. 127).

Kant said that Hume “aroused me from a dogmatic slumber” (*Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, 1783). However, in the lectures notes called *Metaphysik Mrongovius* (1782-1783) we have an interesting and perhaps a more candid remark about Hume from almost the same year. Kant said,

Something similar to a critique of pure reason was found with David Hume, but he sank into the wildest and most inconsolable speculation over this, and that happened easily because he did not study reason completely, but rather only this or that concept. An investigation of practices (*facti*), how we arrive at cognition, where from experience or though pure reason. Locke accomplished much here…” (*Lectures on Metaphysics*, et. p. 137).

An interesting point, again we have the praise of the empiricist Locke and rather critical and almost cynical remarks about Hume. Kant is saying rather decisively that Hume’s philosophy looked at “only this or that concept”. This is Kant’s position on the overall consequence of Hume’s philosophical skepticism to Kant’s project of transcendental and critical idealism (“my transcendental, or, better, critical idealism” (*Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, 1783). Kant’s critical idealism leads away from Humean skepticism. Kant does have unbounded trust in reason and the pervasiveness of these criticism of Hume suggest strongly that Kant’s rationalism was the essential foundation of his project.

Kant’s transcendental philosophy (idealism) can be seen as providing the ontology of rationalism (*Lectures on Metaphysics*, et. p. 307). Kant said that “Transcendental philosophy is also called ontology, and it is the product of the
critique of pure reason." (Lectures on Metaphysics, et. p. 421). The concept of "critique" means an outline (Vorriss) of pure reason. A critique looks at the sources and boundaries (Quellen und Grenzen) (CPR, A11), at the architectonic, at the sources of pure reason and hence, a “critique” is the method but reason is the content. Reason and rationalism is the touchstone of the Kantian project.

**Conclusion on Kant’s Metahistory of Philosophy**

A final note on one of Kant’s genuine and interesting position.

How should it be possible to learn philosophy anyway? Every philosophical thinker builds is own work, so to be speak, on someone’s else’s ruins, but no work has ever come to be that was to be lasting in all its parts. Hence, one cannot learn philosophy, then, just because it is not yet given. But even granted that there a philosophy actually at hand, no one who learned it would be able to say he was a philosopher, for subjectively his cognitions of it would always be only historical. (Lectures on Logic, et. p. 538).

Again we have the metaphor of philosophers among the ‘ruins’. The junky remains of systems. The metaphysical systems are broken down blocks and ruins, which give us nothing to built on. But then Kant sinks in his final conclusion. Every system is only ‘historical’, even Kant’s system only gives us another part of the boundless sea. A philosopher must build his own system even though it is some how on parts of ‘ruins’. We can learn Kant’s system, but that does not mean we are philosophers. In the middle of this remark by Kant, we see the function of the “But even granted”, so he might granted you can have a philosophical system, but in fact, this does you no good, since you have this system only ‘subjectively’ and ‘historically’. Crucial philosophical point for Kant.

Kant does see a course and development to the history of philosophy. Kant has a Metahistory of philosophy that can be seen through an analysis of his works. However, Kant did not develop his thinking in any systematically or comprehensive way. This topic is still left open in the Kantian system, however, we can try to fill the gap by an assessment of Kant’s writings, but the purists may insist on a more philological reading. Back to Kant’s project.

To summarize Kant’s Metahistory of Philosophy:

1) From the transcendental point of view, there many edifices, but only ruins remain. Hence the need for Kant’s critical idealism.

2) Metaphysics as philosophy is a boundless sea and progress has left no trace.
3) Metaphysics as philosophy has been a swinging back forth between trust in reason and mistrust in reason.

4) This history of philosophy or Metahistory of philosophy is made of overthrown system and all philosophical systems are shaken and broken.

5) Philosophical systems can only be known ‘subjectively’ and ‘historically’ unless you create your own system.

Kant says in a Letter To L. H. Jakob

I wish you would try to compose a short system of metaphysics for the time being; I do not have the time to propose a plan for it just now. The ontology part of it would begin (without the introduction of any critical ideas) with the concepts of space and time, only insofar as these (as pure intuitions) are the foundation of all experiences”. (September 11, 1787, Correspondence E.T. p. 125).

Philosophers should follow Kant’s suggestion – compose a system.

Heidegger’s Encounter Methodology: Kant

Heidegger has a fresh way of reading and thinking 'with' other philosophers and poets. He is not interested in just what they said, but what they wanted to say but could not say, where they got stuck, and how Heidegger then tries to get them unstuck. This is where Heidegger wants to have a dialogue. Heidegger is alive to the hermeneutics of the text. Part of the methodology he used in Being and Time (1927) was hermeneutics, and he is responsible for rekindling this methodology in the twentieth century. In the methodological section of Being and Time he says, "Phenomenology of human existence (Da-sein) is hermeneutics in the original signification of that word." Hermeneutics of philosopher’s texts is a part of his methodology.

For example, Heidegger approvingly quotes F.W. J. Schelling (1775-1854): "If you want to honor a philosopher, you must catch him where he had not yet gone forth to the consequences, in his fundamental thought; (in the thought) from which he takes his point in departure" (Of Human Freedom. 1809. E.T. p.9). Heidegger says, "The 'doctrine' of a thinker is that which is left unsaid in what he says." In another article Heidegger says, "We show respect for a thinker only when we think. This demands that we think everything essential that is thought in his thought." ("The Word of Nietzsche," p. 99). Heidegger wants to think everything that a philosopher thought, but in his own way and in his own time in history.
To be exact, Heidegger's reading of Kant is a radical interpretation. This reading has more to do with Heidegger becoming clear on his Metahistory of metaphysics than with understanding Kant's own project. Heidegger says, "Discovering 'Kant in himself' is to be left to Kant philology" (Kant and the problem of metaphysics, ET p.175). Heidegger says in his work on Hegel the following about his own Kant interpretation: "Kant - - people refuse to see the problem and speak rather of my arbitrarily reading my own views into Kant" (Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit, ET p147). Perhaps what we can read in Kant and Heidegger is only what we already know - shades of Nietzsche.

In the Preface to the Second Edition (June 1950) to Kant and problem of Metaphysics, Heidegger says, "Readers have taken constant offense at the violence of my interpretations. Their allegation of violence can indeed be supported by this text." (Kant and problem of Metaphysics. E.T. xx)

And then Heidegger goes on to talk about "thoughtful dialogue between thinkers" and "In a dialogue the possibility of going astray is more threatening, the shortcomings are more frequent." (Kant and problem of Metaphysics, E.T. xx). So he sees this problem himself. But I think that is part of the difference between Heidegger's encounters with other thinkers in a dialogue and the presentation of philosophical positions, which tries to be philosophy. Heidegger is not making claims and counterclaims. He is not looking for proofs. Aristotle says in Book IV of the Metaphysics (1006a), "For it is uneducated not to have an eye for when it is necessary to look for a proof, and when this is not necessary."

Although Heidegger learned a lot from Kant and in Being and Time he is full of praise for Kant, nevertheless, in the later Heidegger - Heidegger must place Kant back into traditional metaphysics. At a later stage in Heidegger thinking, his Metahistorical approach takes over and Kant rejoins history as a metaphysician. Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics was for Heidegger the first book length analysis of a philosopher like Kant and one who was very close to his thinking at the time. So, he is still working out his destructuring methodology. Heidegger at this time is working through the destruction of metaphysics, and he has the task of reducing and overcoming metaphysics. Although in 1929 he was not very clear about how his destruction project would work out and what the entire outline would look like when it was finished, this became clear for Heidegger in 1930s.

This was an important part of Being and Time that did not get published in 1927, and in fact most of Heidegger later works deals with the history of ontology. But it all started in Being and Time. For example, Heidegger wrote in the section on the Task of a Destructuring of the History of Ontology. (Being and Time, Introduction II, E.T. p. 17). "The destructuring of the history
of ontology essentially belongs to the formulation of the question of Being and is possible solely within such a formulation." (E.T. p. 20).

One of his lectures during this time (1927) Heidegger has a concise statement about the importance of the destruction and has remarks about his phenomenological method as well.

These three basic components of phenomenological method - reduction, construction, destruction - belong together in their content and must receive grounding in their mutual pertinence. Construction in philosophy is necessarily destruction, that is to say, a de-constructing of traditional concepts carried out in a historical recursion to the tradition. And this not a negation of the tradition or a condemnation of it as worthless; quite the reverse, it signifies precisely a positive appropriation of tradition." (Basic Problems in Phenomenology, E.T. p.23).

This notes the methodology and intentions but not the content or the results of the process. The later Heidegger had the results of the appropriation of the philosophical tradition. This became his history of Being as metaphysics.

Charles Sherover states:

"It is thus irrelevant to object that Kant is being approached from a new context, subjected to possibly strange criteria or that novel implications are seen in what he had worked out. The task of a retrieve is not to chronicle the past but to wrest out of it a deeper comprehension of our present situation and the possibilities for development it yet offers. The real question is whether significant philosophic insights emerge, or new directions for philosophic development are brought forth, from such an encounter between two thinkers." (Heidegger, Kant and Time, pp. 12-13.)

So, at least for Heidegger he will go where Kant takes the philosopher Heidegger. In other words, Heidegger is not considering what others think and how close or true he is to the real Kant. This is a no-holds-barred free-for-all in the domain of thinking, to wrest out new understandings, to push new possibilities.

Finally let us look back to what Kant himself thought:

Critique of Pure Reason (CPR), paragraph - A314.

"I note only that when we compare the thoughts that an author expresses about a subject, in ordinary speech as well as in writings, it
is not at all unusual to find that we understand him even better than he understood himself, since he may not have determined his concept sufficiently and hence sometimes spoke, or even thought, contrary to his own intention.

“Ich merke nur an, daß es gar nichts Ungewöhnliches sei, sowohl im gemeinen Gespräche, als in Schriften, durch die Vergleichung der Gedanken, welche ein Verfasser über seinen Gegenstand äußert, ihn sogar besser zu verstehen, als er sich selbst verstand, indem er seinen Begriff nicht genugsam bestimmte, und dadurch bisweilen seiner eigenen Absicht entgegen redete, oder auch dachte.”

Therefore, to give Kant the last word on the Heideggerian methodology of a dialogue between thinkers -- Heidegger can try to understand Kant better than he understood himself and still be Kantian. Kant has understood the problem of how to dialogue with other thinkers. Nevertheless, Kant is still usurped by the Heideggerian questioning; it is Heidegger's matter for thought first, and Kant is somewhere in the background.

**Conclusion**

Heidegger said:
“Kantbook, an attempt to question what had not been said, instead of writing in a fixed way about what Kant said. What has been said is insufficient, what has not been said is filled with riches.” (*Kant and the problem of Metaphysics*, E.T. p.175).

Kant opens up philosophical questions. Heidegger wants to follow in similar way. Not by following Hegel’s lead by doing a metaphysical system (telling a story of the world), but rather, by a critical debate about the foundations. Kant and Heidegger must question even this. Heidegger wants us to follow Kant as a kindred spirit and be engaged with Kant about the matter for thinking. We are not getting Kant “right”, but rather, we are getting the task for thinking “right”.

Heidegger encounter methodology is to “the things themselves” (Hegel, 1807) or “to the thing itself” (Husserl, 1911). On one hand, Heidegger is doing the “reduction, construction, destruction” project with the history of philosophy (ontology, metaphysics); but then on the other hand, Heidegger wants to go directly to the primary matters/issues themselves. Here you can think of the analytic of humans (Da-sein), his analysis of moods, etc. This all follows out of his main project outlined in *Being and Time* (1927).
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