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Escape from the Constraint of Theological Correlation: Martin Heidegger's 1924 Presentation on Luther[2]

Abstract.

In this essay, I examine a less familiar document: the text of Martin Heidegger's 1924 lecture on Martin Luther, delivered as part of the seminars held by Rudolf Bultmann. This lecture, I argue, makes the theological or, to be more precise, Lutheran roots of Heidegger's philosophical motivations in the years during which he was doing the preparatory work for *Being and Time* clear. The analysis demonstrates that Luther had a decisive influence on Heidegger's concept of man. Heidegger praises the theological radicalism of Luther's concept of man, but he seeks at the same time to free his own concept from this theological framework. Thus, in this respect, he is even more radical than Luther. While Luther is bound by the correlational constraint presented in the analysis between God and man, Heidegger's philosophizing at first follows Luther's radical thinking about concrete man but then removes this concrete man from the correlational constraint.

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The study argues that the document in question shows that, as a result, Heidegger does not arrive at a residual concept of man (or, in other words, his philosophy is not a decapitated theology) but at a radically new concept of man.

Keywords: Heidegger, Luther, Dasein, theological correlation, decapitated theology

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Martin Heidegger was strongly influenced by theological impulses during the preparatory work for *Being and Time*. Exploring these inspirations is exciting in itself. A more nuanced grasp of Heidegger's theological promptings and sources not only contributes to a more thorough understanding of his philosophy in *Being and Time* and its subsequent developments but also uncovers several misunderstandings, i.e. sets real philosophical interests in motion. Here, however, it is not my intention to draw up a theological motif that had a decisive influence on Heidegger's developing philosophy. Rather, I aim to capture how theological inspiration itself works in this philosophy, as I consider this question more engaging than the issue of theological motifs in philosophy. Ultimately, my question is the following: *how* do theological motifs enter Heidegger's philosophy? For this, I have chosen a text that is neither simple nor obvious, namely the 1924 student notes about Heidegger's two-part presentation on Luther for the seminars held by Rudolf Bultmann. First, I present what is known about this text. I then consider why it is perhaps not the most obvious source to turn to in this discussion.

Peculiarities of the Presentation

The text, edited by Bernd Jaspert, was first published in 1996 among the minutes of Bultmann's seminars on the New Testament.[3] Another volume, published in 2009, also in the German original and containing the correspondence between Bultmann and Heidegger, uses the text edited by Jaspert as its source for the minutes of the seminar.[4]

[3] JASPERT, Bernd (ed.) (1996): *Sachgemäße Exegese. Die Protokolle aus Rudolf Bultmanns Neutestamentlichen Seminaren 1921–1951*. Elwert, Marburg. 28–33.

[4] BULTMANN, Rudolf – HEIDEGGER, Martin (2009): Briefwechsel 1925–1975. Großmann, Andreas –Landmesser, Christof (eds.). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck. 263–271. [hereafter LR].

The text contains several excerpts in Latin, since Luther's most important writings were written in Latin, but these German editions do not provide translations of the passages in Latin. The presentation or, more precisely, the presentations were first published in English in 2007 in a collection of Heidegger's early, shorter writings and documents that had not been published in the complete edition but which then were published to make Heidegger's philosophical journey to *Being and Time* clearer.[5] This English-language publication has the advantage that it also provides translations of the Latin excerpts, which allows the reader to approach the source as if it had been written in a single language.

Heidegger held the two-part presentation on Luther's concept of sin on 14 and 21 February 1924, i.e. shortly after he had arrived in Marburg. Almost immediately, Heidegger and Bultmann formed a friendship that would prove lifelong. The seminar for which the presentation was given was held by Bultmann for theology students. According to its title, it dealt with the ethics of Paul the Apostle. It provides the backdrop for Heidegger's reflections on Luther's concept of sin.

The transcript of the presentation does not record a coherent train of thought. Rather, it could be said to contain draft versions of several ideas that form something of a kaleidoscope-like pattern. Both the transcript of the first part of the presentation held on 14 February and the transcript of the second part held a week later begin with a brief, comprehensive discussion of Heidegger's considerations. They then move to the texts he has chosen by Luther. In the first part, Heidegger focuses on three texts from the early works of Luther. The first one is the so-called *Bernhardi Disputation* (1516), which Heidegger refers to as "Quaestio de viribus", after its first words.[6] The second one is the

[5] KISIEL, Theodore J. – SHEEHAN, Thomas (eds.) ([2]2009): *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of His Early Occasional Writings, 1910–1927, The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy. Vol. IX.* (revised edition). Routledge, London. 185–191. [hereafter LP].

[6] LUTHER, Martin (1883–2009): *Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe [Weimarer Ausgabe]*. 1–73. Böhlau, Weimar (hereafter WA and vol. no 1. 145–151). Quaestio de viribus et voluntate hominis sine gratia disputata / Disputationsfrage über die Kräfte und den Willen des Menschen ohne Gnade (1516), Übersetzung: Wilfried Härle, in: LUTHER, Martin (2006): *Lateinisch-Deutsche Studienausgabe Band 1. Der Mensch vor Gott*. Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, Leipzig (hereafter LDStA 1). 1–17.

Disputation against Scholastic Theology (1517),[7] and the third one is the *Heidelberg Disputation* (1518).[8] In the second part of his presentation, Heidegger moves on to Luther's late thinking and, not surprisingly, uses Luther's extensive 1544 commentary on Genesis as the basis for his analysis of Luther's concept of sin.[9] It is noteworthy that in his presentation Heidegger does not deal with *On the Bondage of the Will*,[10] which is Luther's only systematic treatise and has an anthropological focus.

The work with the text mirrored in the transcripts raises several problems. Namely, Heidegger quotes a great deal from Luther, sometimes verbatim but sometimes not. In addition, he often inserts his own thoughts and comments into the citations, whether quoting Luther's texts verbatim or only offering his paraphrased interpretations of their contents. Moreover, there is the problem of the use of two languages, to which I referred earlier, i.e. in the minutes Heidegger does not refer to Luther in German but in Latin. If we add to all this the fact that the document in question consists of transcripts of notes taken by a student, it becomes clear why this document is perhaps more problematic than one might have hoped.

Nonetheless, if in the following we succeed in untangling the web of Luther's texts to some extent, then it will hopefully become clear that this text is in fact ideal as a source from the point of view of the question we have asked because Heidegger's philosophical interests appear indirectly in the course of his discussions of Luther. In other words, his purpose is not to explain, examine, or dwell on these interests, and thus the internal driving forces of his philosophy, the movements of theological motifs, and the changes that occur through these movements can be revealed more directly.

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7 WA 1, 224–8. Disputatio contra scholasticam theologiam/Disputation gegen die scholastische Theologie (1517), Übersetzung: Wilfried Härle, in LDStA 1, 19–33.

8 WA 1, 353–374. Disputatio Heidelbergae habita / Heidelberger Diputation (1518), Übersetzung: Wilfried Härle, in LDStA 1, 35–69.

9 WA 42–44.

10 Martin Luther: *De servo arbitrio 1525*, WA 18, 600–787. In English: *Luther's Works. American Edition.* (hereafter LW). Vol. 33. *Career of the Reformer III*. Philip S. Watson – Benjamin Drewery (trans.), Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1972.

The Human Being Considered as a Sinful Being

Heidegger's central claim in the presentation is that for Luther, sin is not an ethical category, i.e. not a concrete characteristic of a simple act or acts, but the character of the human being in general. According to Luther, Heidegger argues, human nature is corrupt (*corrupta*).[11] Thus, Heidegger adds to the Genesis presentation, "the being of man as such is itself sin",[12] man is not merely sinful, and sin does not denote one of his characteristics; he became sin itself in his being as the consequence of original sin. Based on this, Heidegger contends, "with Luther, sin becomes a concept encompassing existence".[13] However, the context of this concept of existence in this place is theological. Even at the beginning of his presentation, Heidegger makes this clear when formulating the question "what does 'sin' mean when humanity's relation to God is discussed as a theological problem?"[14] From a theological aspect, thus, sin can become an existential concept for Luther because it means that man has lost his original state of being disposed before God (*Gestelltsein vor Gott*) as a result of original sin. In other words, sin disrupts man's relation to God, and he thus not only moves away from God but also moves out of the space of his presence, into a new state of being.[15] Heidegger clearly shows the significance or, rather, the reason for this interpretation of sin by Luther. He places the stake of the concept of sin at the centre of his interpretation. He begins the entire presentation with this before proceeding to highlight some of Luther's thoughts, and as he formulates his ideas, he states this in advance as a summary. According to Heidegger's understanding of Luther's concept of sin, original sin and redemption are proportional to each other: the less radically we understand sin, the more we devalue redemption, and conversely, the more radically we understand sin, the more we value redemption.[16]

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[11] LP 188; LR 267.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] LP 185; LR 264.

[15] See Heidegger's Genesis interpretation after Luther: "They [Adam and Eve] thus lose their original being before God" (LP 189; LR 269). As a consequence, sin can be defined as the loss of being.

[16] "The idea of redemption also depends upon how original sin and the Fall are considered." LP 185; LR 264.

The primary problem for our investigation, as I will highlight in the following, appears already in this first, let us call it introductory part. In the foreground of Heidegger's interest is the concept of man's being. The same question marks the main direction of Luther's interest as well. However, for Luther, the concept of the sinful human being is inseparable from the question of his redemption. In the introductory part of his presentation, Heidegger expresses this from a theological perspective, too: how we see sin defines how we conceive of redemption. Therefore, in this context, the question of sin (and man's being) cannot be separated from the problem of redemption. Precisely because of the intention to understand redemption correctly, it can be said, as Heidegger points out, "the *corruptio* of man's being can never be grasped radically enough."[17] He also states this as the central idea in the 1516 discussion: "*Corruptio amplificanda est*", or "corruption is something to be amplified".[18] In what follows, I will investigate how Luther's concept of man's being, which is itself sin, appears in this interdependent relationship in Heidegger's reading.

Dependence and Horror

In exploring Luther's early thinking, Heidegger proceeds chronologically. He refers to the Bernhardi Disputation of 1516 first, without highlighting certain passages. Incidentally, this early disputation was not written by Luther. It was composed by Bartholomaeus Bernhardi, who was working under Luther's guidance, hence its name.[19] The foundation of Bernhardi's summary, which is suitable for debate in this thesis-like form, was Luther's series of exegetical lectures on the Epistle to the Romans from 1515-16, in which Luther formulated theological insights that later served as the cornerstone of the Reformation.[20] In his interpretation of Bernhardi's Disputation, Heidegger focuses on the effect (*affectus*) of sin, meaning here original sin. He says that in these theses, Luther concentrates on "the way in which the human being is disposed (*Gestelltsein*)

[17] LP 186; LR 264. Judith Wolfe briefly discusses this lecture in her book and highlights this idea (WOLFE, Judith (2014): *Heidegger and Theology*. Bloomsbury, London. 68–9).

[18] LP 265; LR 186.

[19] Luther writes about this in his letter to Johannes Lang (no 26) in WA.B 1, 64–9.

[20] Cf. Wilfried HÄRLE, Einleitung, in LDStA 1., XII–XIII.

toward things, its being-displaced and horrified (*Entsetztsein*) by things, which comes from its clinging to them."[21] This interpretation clearly shows that Heidegger approaches Luther from the perspective of his own evolving philosophy, which he would then formulate in *Being and Time*. He dwells on certain thoughts only because they are in dialogue with his own philosophy from the outset.[22] For Heidegger, the decisive factor in Luther's thinking is man's relation to the world or, more precisely, the relation to the world that has changed radically as a result of original sin. After all, if man has suffered the loss of being (as I called it earlier) as a result of original sin, then, naturally, this affects his relation to the world. Heidegger focuses on what Luther says about this changed relation. Two momentums seem interesting to me in Heidegger's interpretation: one is man's clinging to things, and the other is the horror he feels towards them. Heidegger argues that in this new state of being man is horrified by things because he is dependent on them. Luther, obviously, does not talk about this in this way. Nevertheless, we find a clear source of this Heideggerian thought in the Bernhardi Disputation and the Luther texts discussed below. According to Härle,[23] the central theme of the Bernhardi Disputation is Romans 8:20, i.e. the relationship between man and the world after original sin. According to the first comment to the first thesis, man also nullified (*nichtig macht*) all the creatures alongside him, which were originally good (see 1Moses). The foundation of this statement is Romans 8:20: "For the creature was made subject to vanity,[24] not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope."[25] The passage continues: "Quo manifeste patet, quod sine vitio suo et extrinsece fiat mala,

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[21] LP 186; LR 264–5.

[22] This is certainly the reason why the *Heidelberg Disputation* and its highly influential theological views are only referred to here instead of being an integral part of the lecture, even though Heidegger himself defines these theses as presenting Luther's early concept of sin the most clearly (LP 187–8; LR 266).

[23] HÄRLE, Einleitung, in LDStA 1., XIII.

[24] "*τῇ γὰρ ματαιότητι ἡ κτίσις ὑπετάγη, οὐχ ἑκοῦσα ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα, ἐφ' ἐλπίδι*." For *ματαιότης*, the expression *vanity* is used here. However, it was translated as *futility* by ESV, Luther translates it as V*ergänglichkeit*, and the Vulgata translates it as *vanitas*; the meaning of the verb form is in the range of renders useless, empties, and annihilates, which is why the 2009 German translation of disputation uses *nichtig machen*.

[25] LDStA 1, 2–3 (Biblical quotation from the KJV Standard).

vana, noxia, quod opinione et erronea aestimatione, seu amore et fruitione perversa, reputatur altius ab homine, quam est in veritate. Sic si foenum in cibum hominis praesumeretur, dignius haberetur, quam est."[26]

It is worth comparing this idea from the Bernhardi Disputation with its source, the lecture on the Epistle to the Romans, since Luther's point of view emerges more clearly in the latter. Heidegger must have been well acquainted with these lectures by Luther, even if he does not refer to them in his presentation. He referred to this exegesis in his outline for the mysticism lectures that he prepared for the winter semester of the 1919–20 academic year.[27] It is worth examining the source of the idea from the commentary to the Epistle to the Romans:

> Therefore the creation becomes vain, evil, and harmful from outside itself, and not by its own fault, namely, because it is perverted and regarded as better than it really is by the erroneous thinking and estimation or love and enjoyment of man, while at the same time man, who has the capacity to lay hold on God and be satisfied with only God alone, as far as the mind and the spirit are concerned, is presumptuous enough to think that he has this peace and sufficiency in these created things. It is to this vanity (that is to a perverted enjoyment) that the creation is subjected, just as grass in itself is a good thing and not worthless, necessary and useful for animals, but worthless and useless for human consumption; yet if it were used for human food it would be given a higher dignity than belongs to it by nature. […] Every man who is born of Adam and lives without the Holy Spirit does this.[28]

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[26] LDStA 1, 2–5. "From this is resulted obviously that [the created world] became vain, evil, and harmful (*schlecht, nichtig und schädlich*) not by its own fault but from outside itself, because man valued it as more than it in reality is by his opinion and erroneous judgement or by his perverse love and devotion (*Hingabe*). Just as grass, presented as human food, would have higher respect than it really has" (trans. by the author).

[27] HEIDEGGER, Martin (1995): Die Philosophischen Grundlagen der mittelalterlichen Mystik. In: *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens*. Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann (GA 60). 301–337. 308. Cf. KISIEL, Theodore (1995): *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*. Berkeley – Los Angeles (California), University of California Press. 76–7.

[28] LUTHER, Martin (1972b): *Lectures on Romans*. LW. Vol. 25. Jacob A. O. Preus (trans.). Saint Louis (Missouri), Concordia Publishing House. 362–363.

The focus of Heidegger's interpretation of Luther becomes visible to us from this passage. One finds here not only the notion that in the new state of being man values the world and its belongings more than they are actually worth but also the idea that he seems to believe that the satisfaction that comes only from God can be found in these overvalued things, and he therefore clings to them instead of clinging to God. Heidegger is able to connect this idea of dependence, which clearly emerges here, with the idea of horror toward things, which does not appear here, because he reconstructs this connection with other Luther texts in mind. One need merely think of Luther's late interpretation of original sin from 1544, which Heidegger refers to at length in this presentation. When Heidegger analyses this in the second part of the presentation, he highlights that, since sin is "a mode of the being of humans" (*Weise des Seins des Menschen*), it is determined by the effect of movement (*Bewegtheit*), i.e. sin pulls man deeper and deeper down, as sin is not a static condition. According to Heidegger's interpretation of Luther, by turning away from God, man "is being put into the world" (*in die Welt gestellt ist*).[29] Here, this being put into the world is a consequence of the loss of being disposed before God. It is a characteristic of the loss of the original being, and thus a characteristic of the new, sinful being. Heidegger lists the consequences (in Latin) of the dynamics of sin: first of all, "fear (*pavor*), hatred, and flight from God"[30] (responses which, I must add, are clearly outlined in Genesis as consequences of original sin; see first and foremost the encounter of God and man immediately after the Fall), which are then followed by despair (*desperatio*) and impenitence (the inability to repent).[31] In the list of the consequences of sin in the presentation, the most poignant description is the following: "They are frightened by God even in *the slightest rustling of leaves*,[32] because they are shaken and disturbed in their very being."[33] They flee God,

[29] LP 188; LR 266.

[30] LP 189; LR 267.

[31] LP 190; LR 268.

[32] I could not find the unambiguous origin of this picture. Probably it goes back to Gen 3:8: "And they [Adam and Eve] heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden" (KJV). The Lord's walking can cause the motion of the fallen leaves, and upon hearing this slight rustling, man can be frightened and hide himself.

[33] LP 190; LR 269 [Italics mine].

Heidegger contends in his reconstruction of Luther's thoughts, and their intellect proves (again, he uses a Latin term here) to be depraved (*intellectum depravatum*). "They flee", he writes, using a mix of Latin and German, "because they do not see that sin itself means the total separation from God, so that there is no need to add any further flight".[34] The ultimate stage of sin, Heidegger contends as he brings his discussion of the consequences to a close, is the accusation brought against God when the creatures transfer their guilt to the Creator to excuse themselves. Disobedience thus becomes contempt for the Creator. However, Heidegger's reconstruction of Luther's ideas does not end here. The final word of the Genesis commentary is grace, that is, the completeness of grace can be seen precisely in this contempt for God.

Thus, on the one hand, along with the text by Luther to which Heidegger refers, we have found some sources on which Heidegger presumably drew when formulating his understanding of the basic characteristic of the human being in the world, according to which, as he emphasizes, man depends on the things of the world and is therefore afraid. These motifs are reflected in *Being and Time* in the phenomena of *Being-in-the-World* (*in-der-Welt-sein*) and *anxiety* (*Angst*).[35] The latter text by the late Luther could also serve as a reference point for how original sin, which Heidegger, drawing on Luther, describes as a kind of altered state of being, determines the sinful being of a concrete man. In *Being and Time*, this is defined as sinful being, now in an ontological sense,[36] and in this way of characterization, Luther's radical concept of sin is clearly reflected in Heidegger's interpretation of it.

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[34] Ibid.

[35] HEIDEGGER, Martin (1996): *Being and Time, A Translation of Sein und Zeit*. Joan Stambaugh (trans.). New York, State University of New York Press. 49–55, 172–178 (hereafter BT). In this latter extract, Heidegger also refers to Luther's Genesis commentary, a reference that cannot be found in this English edition but in the German one: HEIDEGGER, Martin (1977): *Sein und Zeit*. Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann. (GA 2). 252–253.

[36] BT 258–272.

The Necessary Correlation

At the beginning of this discussion, I noted that I do not intend to present the pattern of the sources of the main concepts of *Being and Time* in Luther's texts or in Heidegger's interpretation of Luther. However, it is undeniable that the document analysed here reveals that Luther's radical theology had a much stronger impact on *Being and Time* than one might think at first. In connection with this presentation, we now address the question of Heidegger's approach unfolding here, namely *how* theological patterns appear in philosophical thinking, as this problem is even more interesting than the patterns themselves. From this point of view, we will be able to see the significance of the question discussed above about man's altered relation to the world and the relevance of this to the question to which we now move on.

In his presentation of Luther's 1544 lecture on Genesis, Heidegger's concluded that when, in the enumeration of the consequences of the original sin, due to the dynamics of sin, man reached the lowest conceivable point, which in the given context meant that he had fallen as far from God as possible, i.e. he had become his enemy, grace appeared, which heralded the restoration of man's relation to God. From this point of departure, I trace the movement of theological motifs in Heidegger's philosophy. For now, let us stay with the Genesis lectures.[37] Heidegger begins the second part of his Luther presentation with the contention that there are fundamental differences between the varying concepts of the so-called original righteousness (*justitia originalis*) of man. With this as his point of departure, Heidegger returns to the image of man before the original sin because, as we shall soon see, it is from this state that the differences in the interpretations of sin can be derived. Heidegger contrasts Luther's concept with scholasticism in an obvious and familiar way. While scholasticism, he says, considered man's original righteousness as a kind of ornament, Luther saw it as man's nature. From this, according to Heidegger, it follows that the scholastic concept of sin is not radical either. Rather, it is superficial. If righteousness were not the nature of man in the first place, then, obviously, sin, which represents the loss of it, is not either. Sin is not the new, altered nature of man. To decide the question,

[37] LP 188–91; LR 267–270.

Heidegger highlights a methodological principle of Luther that strongly resembles the call of phenomenology ("Back to the things themselves!"), namely that Luther refers to experience (*experientia*) when discussing the question: (in Latin) "Let us shun those ravings […] and instead follow experience!"[38] After the reference, Heidegger adds, "experience teaches us about these calamities".[39] And experience shows that (here Heidegger mixes German and Latin), "*Die natura hominis ist corrupta*", i.e. "the being of man as such is itself sin",[40] which we discussed above. The crucial point for us in the train of thought comes now, when Heidegger, interpreting Luther, emphasizes, "but we recognize the enormity of this loss only when, from a correlative consideration, we see God as God. For only then do we understand what *aversio Dei* means."[41] In the present context, therefore, the only possible way to understand sinful being is what Heidegger calls a correlative consideration (*korrelative Betrachtung*).[42] This method is necessary for the theological context since we intend to access one phenomenon that is in a correlative relationship with another one, which makes it impossible to understand one without the other, and in this relationship, the two phenomena which we seek to understand constantly direct the questioner to each other. At this point, however, it is not interesting for Heidegger whether God can be known. Heidegger is only concerned with the fact that the theological understanding of sin necessarily implies an understanding of God. We encountered this interdependent relationship earlier in the introductory part of the presentation, where we talked about the relationship between sin and redemption, and we argued that the understanding of these two cannot be separated from each other. Only if I perceive sin in its radicality do I perceive redemption in its radicality as well. On the other hand, if – in my interpretation of sin – sin is only superficial to human nature, then redemption is lost. We also discover this mutual interdependence in the conclusion of the 1544 Genesis lecture. We reach the ever-deepening levels of the consequences of sin, but, at the end of it, it is not complete loss but grace that awaits us. The inevitable opposite of sin, therefore, is what Heidegger, drawing on Luther, sometimes calls grace, sometimes redemption, and sometimes God.

[38] LP 189; LR 267.
[39] LP 189; LR 268.
[40] LP 188; LR 267.
[41] LP 189; LR 267.
[42] Ibid.

Escape from the Constraint of Correlation

Heidegger – and here we clearly move away from Luther's theological approach – considers this necessary correlational connection the limitation of theology when talking about man, i.e. in his own philosophy, he wishes to escape from this correlational constraint, as I would call it. This is expressed in the presentation as follows. At the beginning of the presentation, in his introduction to the early Luther, Heidegger speaks of sin as if it meant a specific relation to the world that is being disposed towards it (*Gestelltsein zur Welt*), as already discussed. He then summarizes what he sees as the task of every theology: "The basic requirement of every theology is, consequently, to interpret man's being in the world in such a way that the human can depart from this state of being and come to God."[43] In this presentation, Heidegger, therefore, outlines what he sees as the limitations of theology. The aim of theology, which must interpret the human being in the world, is pregiven. If it does not presuppose the horizon of the redemptive and restoring God, then the human being in the world, i.e. the sinful being, cannot be approached either. I consider it crucial to highlight this theological characteristic, the correlation between the world comprehended in this way and God, in Heidegger's presentation, because it shows that, in his own philosophy, Heidegger does not simply place the human that is freed from God at the centre of his analysis since he himself emphasizes that in theology we talk about a correlational relationship, which means that neither of these phenomena in this interdependent relationship can be removed from this relationship without losing its specific characters, which can only be witnessed in the interdependence presented above at some points.

Compared to theology, Heidegger naturally has the freedom in his philosophy to interpret the human being independently from God. In doing so, however, since he has removed man from his correlation with God, the character of the human being also changes radically. Heidegger also articulates the difference between these two ways of understanding man's being. From the Disputation Luther wrote against scholastic theology (1517), Heidegger singles out four theses: 17(18), 25, 30(32), and 37(39).

[43] LP 186; LR 265.

17(18) describes the final stage of the effect of sin presented earlier, i.e. when man turns against God. 25 focuses on the subject of suffering. In the absence of an explanation, it is far from self-evident why Heidegger highlights this thesis. In theses 30(32) and 37(39), in Heidegger's interpretation, Luther also emphasizes the radicality of sin. We cannot discuss all these theses in detail here. I will only highlight one excerpt from 30(32) since here we find the answer to the question of what the difference between the human being in relation to and without God is. The thesis reads as follows, "On the part of man, however, nothing precedes grace except indisposition and even rebellion against grace."[44] Heidegger then adds, "the possibility of its existence does not reside in the human being." (*"Die Möglichkeit seiner Existenz liegt nicht in ihm."*)[45] This insight outlines the essence of the human being as understood in relation to God: for this human being to arrive at its own possibility, it must reach beyond itself – and, obviously, beyond its world – past everything because its own being can only be achieved from there. This entails what we previously described as the limitation of theology from the aspect of philosophy, that is, in this approach, this human being can only be conceived as someone who can be redeemed. From the aspect of the human being, this means that being disposed towards the world, even though in this Lutheran context this means the loss of being disposed before God, man is not left alone in the world because it is precisely in the loss of being disposed before God that God finds him. The possibility of his existence does not reside in him, but, in the context of theology, whether this possibility is a real one is not a question. On the other hand, the image of man, this time, the philosophical image, that rejects the relation to God, sees man in the world in such a way that it does not assume anything beyond (not even there in brackets!), i.e. it also undertakes the change of character of this human being: in this way, he must contain his own possibility, if it exists. If he has a goal, he cannot place it beyond himself, the goal can only be revealed in his own world. If he hears a voice, it can only be his own (see Heidegger's analysis of conscience in *Being and Time*) or the voice of the world

[44] LUTHER, Martin (1989): Disputation against scholastic theology. In: Lull, Timothy F. (ed.): *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*. Minneapolis, Fortress Press. 14. Heidegger refers to this thesis like this: "On man's part, nothing but the revolt against grace can pre-empt grace itself" (LP 187; LR 266).

[45] Ibid.

(see the noise of idle talk in the abovementioned work), etc. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger's philosophy is a radical philosophy of infinity, which means he tries to understand man's being in the world in all respects in such a way that he does not presume anything beyond. Only the world and only man exist, because this philosophy is only interested in the analysis of the concrete man, i.e. *Dasein*, how this man exists based solely on himself.[46] At the same time, Heidegger's escape from the theological determinations highlighted in his presentation does not mean that he wants to be free of all theological inspiration or traces of it. Rather, he merely wants to enforce infinity in his thinking radically. This is the framework that defines the space of his philosophy. However, it seems that he greatly relies on theology's radical vision of infinity in the way that it outlines the relation of man being disposed towards the world to the world and to things. We partially saw this earlier when we analysed the human being disposed towards the world. Nevertheless, these motifs do not remain the same outside the scope of theology either. They become radicalized as well. This is one of the most important implications of this presentation; in addition to the fact that the movement from theology to philosophy in the analysis of the human being can be witnessed, it also shows that Heidegger wants to deepen further the theological radicalism so admired in Luther, i.e. to further radicalize it with a philosophical speech about the human being disposed towards the world.[47]

[46] Cf. with the methodological consideration that appeared in the 1924 lecture on the concept of time, which Heidegger also held for theology students: "If the philosopher asks about time, then he has resolved *to understand time in terms of time*." HEIDEGGER, Martin (1992): *The Concept of Time – Der Begriff der Zeit.* William McNeill (trans.). New Jersey, Wiley-Blackwell. 1–2.

[47] However, in the theological reading, the radicality of Heidegger's concept of man is actually a step backward from the radicality that stems exclusively from the correlative relation, i.e. this philosophical approach, from this viewpoint, loses sight of finitude itself by renouncing the correlative relation.

Heidegger's Assignment for His Philosophy

Compared to theology, this separate philosophical task appears in the presentation, at the end of Luther's texts, as a kind of summary. This detail crowns what has been discussed so far because here, Heidegger makes room for his own philosophy in the given context and at the same time designates his own task. Therefore, Luther's concept is, Heidegger summarizes, the exact opposite of that of scholasticism: "he understands sin as a fundamental antithesis to faith".[48] "In theological terms this means [and the following part is in quotation marks] faith can be understood only when sin is understood, and sin is understood only by way of a correct understanding of the very being of the human being."[49] According to this, faith and sin are in the correlational relationship presented earlier. However, the idea of "the very being of the human being", included in the speech about "the correct understanding of the human being", cannot be understood in this context as a synonym for sin. Rather, it opens up the possibility to the interpretation that this task – the correct understanding of the human being – is awaiting philosophy, precisely because this understanding is outside the domains that are in a correlational relationship with each other, not within them.

Here, the task of Heidegger's philosophy is defined: to understand the human being itself, beyond theological correlativity. This definition also says that this kind of understanding of man's being is essential to an understanding of the theological correlational relationship between sin and faith. Little is mentioned about this philosophical programme in the presentation since, as I noted at the beginning of this train of thought, this presentation reflects Heidegger's philosophical motivations indirectly. Nevertheless, this latter momentum is intriguing precisely because it presents Heidegger's evolving philosophy as one that interprets itself to have a foundational function in relation to theology. I believe that this latter intention, namely to lay the foundation of theology, is more original in Heidegger's philosophy than the intention to establish sciences in general. And if this is the case, then it is conceivable that Heidegger's philosophy's activist feature, which later intensified, has its roots in the connection of this philosophy to theology.[50]

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[48] LP 190–1; LR 270.

[49] LP 191; LR 270.

[50] Cf. BJÖRK, Mårten – SVENUNGSSON, Jayne (eds.) (2017): *Heidegger's Black Notebooks and the Future of Theology*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Escape from Authority

The presentation ends with a strange quote from Kierkegaard instead of Luther.[51] The purpose of this quote is to shed light at least from one side on what has been said so far. We only find a reference in quotation marks at the end of this part, before which Heidegger only reconstructs Kierkegaard's thoughts.[52] Heidegger talks about the relationship between Protestantism and Catholicism following Kierkegaard. This approach is not surprising as such, as he previously contrasted Luther's interpretation of sin with the generally accepted interpretation of scholasticism, where he also mentioned the question of the contrasts between Catholicism and Protestantism for the students. There, Heidegger contrasted authority and experience (*experientia*), and, drawing on this distinction, he derived the difference between the scholastic interpretation and Luther's interpretation of sin and man.[53] If, Heidegger says, in matters of faith the Church is the authority, then this can only be because it is a "divine institution" (*göttliche Stiftung*),[54] and, consequently, this can be and has to be justified rationally. That is, man cannot have lost his being disposed before God (*Gestelltsein vor Gott*) even in his post-sin state, i.e. he can know God even after original sin. Luther's approach is not bound by any authority, and therefore he can insist on experience. To me, it seems unusual that here Heidegger derives the rational-direct possibility of knowing God from the question of authority. This in turn means, if we push Heidegger's idea further, that without the constraint of authority, focusing only on experience, the possibility of knowing God takes on a completely different character. For Heidegger, however, it is certainly not the most decisive aspect of this proposition, which is rather that the inquiry, in this case that of man's being, can only reach the radicality of experience if it can become free of all authority. Heidegger sees Luther as one such free inquirer, as is

[51] KIERKEGAARD, Søren (1852): *Tagebuch*. II. 284–286. Cites LP 191; LR 270. See: HONG, Howard V. – HONG, Edna H. (eds. & trans.) (1975): *Seven Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*. Vol. 3. Bloomington, Indiana University Press. 669–672.

[52] LP 191; LR 270–271.

[53] LP 188; LR 267–268.

[54] Ibid.

clear from his introduction to *The Hermeneutics of Facticity* in 1923[55] and as related to his own philosophical aspirations. Nonetheless, this presentation clearly shows how Heidegger's philosophy turns away from Luther's theological radicalism (which cannot free itself from the correlation in examining the human being) and towards philosophical radicalism (which, on the other hand, is free from this correlation), which, according to Heidegger, is so much more radical than any theological inquiry that it can also serve as a foundation for it.

The presupposition of Catholicism, Heidegger remarks, quoting Kierkegaard at the end of his presentation, is "that we human beings are all really scoundrels". In contrast, "the Principle of Protestantism has a special presupposition: a human being who sits there (*dasitzen*) in mortal anxiety—in fear and trembling and great spiritual trial."[56] From this man sitting there in mortal fear, the protagonist of *Being and Time*, the *Dasein*[57] is formed, who, however, has nothing but his own self and his given world to come to his aid. This sitting there in mortal fear without the possibility of a divine existence means a radically different *Dasein*. God is not there, not even in brackets. Otherwise, we would not have exceeded the correlation. This is the undertaking of the philosophy of *Being and Time*, as seen from Heidegger's presentation on Luther.

[55] HEIDEGGER, Martin (1988): *Ontologie. Hermeneutik der Faktizität.* Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann. (GA 63). 5.

[56] LP 191; LR 271.

[57] The word *dasitzen* in this Kierkegaard quotation clearly refers to the same direction as Heidegger's use of *Dasein*. The prefix *da* 'here', 'there' has an essential role in both cases.

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