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# FORMAL INDICATION, PHILOSOPHY, AND THEOLOGY: BONHOEFFER'S CRITIQUE OF HEIDEGGER

Brian Gregor

This paper examines Heidegger's account of the proper relation between philosophy and theology, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's critique thereof. Part I outlines Heidegger's proposal for this relationship in his lecture "Phenomenology and Theology," where he suggests that philosophy might aid theology by means of 'formal indication.' In that context Heidegger never articulates what formal indication is, so Part II expositis this obscure notion by looking at its treatment in Heidegger's early lecture courses, as well as its roots in Husserl. Part III presents Bonhoeffer's theological response, which challenges Heidegger's attempt to maintain a neutral ontology that remains unaffected by both sin and faith.

If we take his word for it, Heidegger's notion of formal indication (*formale Anzeige*) is good news for theology. The recent translation of Heidegger's lecture course "Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion," in volume 60 of the *Gesamtausgabe*, provides valuable resources for understanding what formal indication is, and extends an invitation to consider further Heidegger's delineation of the often ambiguous boundaries between philosophical thinking, religious faith, and theological inquiry. In the present paper I look at a number of Heidegger's lecture courses from the 1920s, as well as his programmatic statement in the 1927–28 lecture "Phenomenology and Theology," in which Heidegger rules out the possibility of Christian philosophy. Yet Heidegger also maintains that this negative pronouncement has ultimately positive implications for both Christian faith and theology, since it frees theology to focus on its proper task.

Heidegger suggests that formal indication can act as a methodological mediator between philosophy and theology, since it pertains to ontological structures, while preserving the integrity of particular ontic (i.e., theological) realizations of these structures. Some theologians, such as Heidegger's colleague Rudolf Bultmann, accept this delineation of disciplinary borders. But Dietrich Bonhoeffer challenges Heidegger on this point, since it proceeds with an ontological assumption that is highly problematic: namely, that autonomous human being (*Dasein*) can place itself into the truth about its own being. Bonhoeffer contends that *Dasein* cannot place itself into the truth about Being in general, because theology's claims, which derive from revelation, are not only ontic—they are also ontological, rendering Heidegger's fundamental ontology subject to revision. In this regard, Bonhoeffer's critique makes an important contribution to the



ongoing discussion of Heidegger's account of the relationship between philosophy and theology.

### I. Heidegger on Philosophy, Faith, and Theology

Heidegger opens his lecture "Phenomenology and Theology" by considering a common conception of the relationship between philosophy and theology, according to which knowledge and faith, reason and revelation, stand opposed. Heidegger proposes to proceed otherwise. In his view this relationship concerns the interaction between two sciences, each with distinct possibilities and guiding ideas. Heidegger bases his distinction on the ontological difference—the difference between the ontic and the ontological, i.e., between particular beings and the *being* of those beings. Corresponding to this difference are two types of sciences, with their own modes of discourse aiming at their own types of disclosure: On the one hand are ontic sciences, which concern a particular being or region of beings; on the other hand, ontology is the science of being *qua* being. Thus positive, ontic sciences seek to disclose beings, while ontology inquires into the being of those beings. For Heidegger, the ontological science is philosophy, which differs *absolutely* rather than relatively from all positive sciences—including theology.<sup>1</sup>

In what sense is theology a positive science? Heidegger outlines three defining features of positive sciences: First, every positive science inquires into a region of being that is already disclosed in a preliminary fashion, such that this region suggests a possible thematization. Second, this ontic region is given in a pre-theoretical manner. Scientific thematization does not encompass this pre-theoretical disclosure of beings, although the latter may remain implicit and unthematized within positive science. Third, this pre-scientific comportment to a region of beings is "already illuminated and guided by an understanding of being—even if it be nonconceptual."<sup>2</sup> As we know from *Being and Time*, this assumption is central to Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology. Dasein always already has a preliminary understanding of Being, which philosophy (as the ontological science) investigates. This assumption will also prove vital to Heidegger's conception of the relationship between philosophy and theology.

Granting this definition of positive science, what region of beings does theology thematize? According to Heidegger theology's theme is "*Christianity*," which refers to the experience of faith in everyday existence. This "way of existence . . . arises *not from* Dasein or spontaneously *through* Dasein," but rather through the revelation of Christ, the crucified God. The "existence struck by this revelation is revealed to itself in its forgetfulness of God," and in "being placed before God . . . existence is reoriented in and through the mercy of God grasped in faith."<sup>3</sup> Faithful existence is therefore the object of theology. Theology is not a science that produces speculative knowledge of God; it is not the science of "the all-inclusive relationship of God to man and of man to God"; it is not a psychology of religion.<sup>4</sup> Instead, theology is "the science of the action of God on human beings who act in faith."<sup>5</sup>

It is important that we understand Heidegger's distinction between faith and theology here, because while "faith does not need philosophy,

the *science* of faith as a *positive* science does."<sup>6</sup> Heidegger insists that faith does not need the insights of philosophy, going so far as to claim that faithful existence and philosophy are absolutely mortal enemies.<sup>7</sup> Philosophy cannot gain an upper hand over faith, because faith does not seek legitimacy in philosophy or any other 'faithless science.' These sciences 'shatter' when they run up against faith—provided, of course, that one assumes the perspective of faith. Therein lies the difficulty of mediating the rival claims of faith and philosophy: Faithful existence is impervious to external threats, but this imperviousness is no proof for those outside of faith.<sup>8</sup>

Despite this lack of independent philosophical legitimacy, however, Heidegger still desires to preserve the integrity of faith. Why? Is it because of Heidegger's reverence for religious faith? There is no denying that Heidegger holds a certain form of religiousness in high regard, but this reverence is not necessarily the motive for his claim that faith does not need philosophy. First and foremost, his motive is methodological. Faith is one manner of existence among others, and in the everydayness of lived experience it does not need philosophy. We might say the same regarding an athlete: Philosophy can inquire into athletic existence, but the athlete does not need philosophy to exist athletically. In short, 'faith' is neither an ontic nor an ontological science.

When we seek to articulate faith in creeds, statements, and doctrines, however, we enter the realm of theology as a positive science. And while "*theology itself is founded primarily by faith,*" the fact remains that as a positive science "its statements and procedures of proof formally derive from free operations of reason."<sup>9</sup> Consequently, while faith does not need philosophy, theology certainly does. This is not because theology should use philosophy to build itself up via speculative reason. Much to the contrary, this is precisely what Heidegger wants theology to avoid. Instead Heidegger envisions philosophy guiding theology away from speculation and back to its own proper region of inquiry. When it is faithful to its proper task, theology does not seek its content in philosophy, but instead permits "its concepts and conceptual schemes to be determined by the mode of being and the specific substantive content of *that* entity which it objectifies." In other words, theology must be faithful to lived religious experience instead of burdening itself with a philosophical programme.<sup>10</sup>

If theology needs philosophy, then, it is "only in regard to its scientific character, and even then only in a uniquely restricted, though basic way."<sup>11</sup> How? Recall Heidegger's earlier claim that a science's pre-thematic comportment to the given ontic region is "already illuminated and guided by an understanding of being."<sup>12</sup> This means that any region of being—anything that *is*, "discloses itself only on the grounds of a preliminary . . . , preconceptual understanding of what and how such a being is. Every ontic interpretation operates on the basis, at first and for the most part concealed, of an ontology."<sup>13</sup> Since philosophy is the only ontological science, it has the unique responsibility of providing a corrective to the positive ontic sciences and their basic concepts.<sup>14</sup> Philosophy must correct theology by *formally indicating* its proper region. In "Phenomenology and Theology," as with many of his texts through the 1920s, Heidegger employs the notion

of formal indication without explaining what it entails. In order to make sense of this suggestion, then, we must consider what Heidegger means by 'formal indication.'

## II. On Formal Indication

We find Heidegger's most explicit and extended discussion of formal indication in his WS 1920–21 lecture course, "Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion."<sup>15</sup> Heidegger opens the course with methodological reflections on the importance of attending to the phenomena of religious existence as they are concretely given.<sup>16</sup> The problem, as Heidegger outlines it, is to find a type of language that does not objectify lived experience. Philosophical discourse tends to take the particular, the historical and the personal and render them in static, calculable concepts.<sup>17</sup> Such is the allure of the theoretical. But our primordial engagement with the world is not theoretical, so when we assume a theoretical posture through philosophy or science, we generate concepts while losing touch with the phenomena as they are given in concrete lived experience. No doubt a degree of disengagement is necessary for philosophical reflection, just as we need concepts in order to proceed philosophically. But Heidegger's concern is to find a mode of philosophical thinking and writing that remains faithful to the singularity of concrete lived experience.

### a.) In What Sense Formal?

Heidegger presents formal indication as the proper method of phenomenological inquiry, since it is grounded in concrete existence and ultimately points back to enactment in the same concrete existence. But he is careful to distinguish his notion of 'formal' from the generality of Husserl's formalization, which prejudices phenomenological inquiry toward the theoretical.<sup>18</sup> Heidegger substantiates this claim in his reconfiguration of Husserl's distinction between empty intentions and fulfilling intuitions.<sup>19</sup> Husserl writes of two distinct acts that constitute meaning: An act that intends a meaningful object, and the intuitive act that fulfills that intention. For example, if my wife says "The picture on the wall is hanging askew," I have a meaning-intention, which remains empty until I look at the wall and perceive that the picture is indeed hanging askew—thereby achieving an intuitive fulfillment (in this case sensible) of my intention, with the intending and intuitive acts forming a unity.

Heidegger takes Husserl's distinction and alters it, distinguishing between three moments or "directions" of meaning. These three moments are not merely co-existing, separable parts of a phenomenon; rather, a phenomenon "is the totality of sense in these three directions." One can therefore consider a phenomenon in one of three ways: One can inquire into the original "what" of the experience, i.e., the content-sense (*Gehaltssinn*). One can also inquire into the original "how" of the experience, i.e., the relational-sense (*Bezugssinn*). Merold Westphal observes that this distinction between *Gehalt* and *Bezug* resembles (without replicating) Husserl's distinction, with the content-sense (*Gehalt*) approximating the intended meaning (the picture hanging askew) and the relational-sense (*Bezug*) approximating the mode of this intention (in this case, visual perception).<sup>20</sup> But what

should we make of the third moment of the phenomenon, which Heidegger calls the enactment-sense (*Vollzugssinn*)? According to Heidegger this second "how" concerns the concrete realization in which one accomplishes, brings about, or *enacts* the relational meaning (the first *how*).<sup>21</sup> As Westphal suggests, the difference between the relational *how* (*Bezugssinn*) and the enacted *how* (*Vollzugssinn*) recalls Husserl's distinction between empty intentions and fulfilling intuitions.<sup>22</sup> But for Husserl, fulfillment is a cognitive event, involving some mode of observation, recognition, remembrance, understanding, etc. By presuming that all phenomena are available to this sort of apprehension, Husserl prejudices phenomenology toward the theoretical and its objectifying use of concepts. Heidegger, on the other hand, is attuned to the elusiveness of phenomena—especially the type one encounters in the phenomenology of religious existence. Thus the enactment-sense is not simply a cognitive apprehension; rather, it requires an active response in one's concrete historical situation. The enactment-sense is a matter of action, such that it is not simply known—it must be *done*.<sup>23</sup>

Heidegger argues that Husserl's formal categories succumb to the prejudices of the theoretical because they leave the content-sense (*Gehaltssinn*) undetermined. This is precisely how the formal differs from the general; namely, general categories are inseparable from their content.<sup>24</sup> For instance, 'colour' is present or inherent in 'red,' just as 'red' is inherent within particular instances of redness. By contrast, purely formal categories like 'object' or 'property' lack all determinate content, and do not pertain to particular species. But here Heidegger poses a question: If formal categories do not derive from their content, on what basis do we develop purely formal categories? Heidegger claims that formalization is not motivated by the content of the object, but by the relation to the object. As he writes, "I must see away from the what-content [*Wasgehalt*] and attend only to the fact that the object is a given, attitudinally grasped one." In other words, formalization is not a matter of *what*, but *how*. Heidegger's objection, then, is that the *how* of Husserlian formalization is fundamentally theoretical.

But why does formalization fall prey to the theoretical? Since these formal-ontological categories leave the content-sense undetermined, one might expect that it remains free of all prejudices. After all, formalization can pertain to any content whatsoever. But Heidegger argues that it is precisely this indeterminacy of content that is to blame. When a philosopher approaches a phenomenon formally, the relation-sense (*Bezugssinn*) and the enactment-sense (*Vollzugssinn*) get skewed. Although it leaves the content-sense undetermined, the formal-ontological approach prescribes the nature of the relation-sense; that is, it prescribes "a theoretical relational meaning," while hiding "the enactment-character [*das Vollzugmäßige*]" and turning "one-sidedly to the content."<sup>25</sup> In other words, it gives priority to the objective concepts of the theoretical *how*, and proceeds to generate formal categories while ignoring the centrality of the enacted *how* in the phenomenon.

In Heidegger's view the prioritizing of the theoretical, objective, and formal is the majority voice throughout the history of philosophy. When faced with concrete, factual life philosophers have the tendency to take refuge in objectivity, which promises reliable and calculable insights regarding the

world. The task of formal indication is to “retrieve the phenomena” from this theoretical objectivity. Like Husserl’s formal-ontological categories, Heidegger’s formal indication still attends to the relational *how* (*Bezugssinn*) of the phenomenon, but it gives no preliminary determination to the relation. Instead, “its relational meaning is held in abeyance,”<sup>26</sup> which is crucial to preserving the freedom of the enactment-sense against the propensity to fall into the theoretical posture.<sup>27</sup> But unlike Husserl’s formal-ontological categories, formal indication preserves the openness of the enactment *how* (*Vollzugssinn*). This does not deny the need for the theoretical attitude altogether, but it does deny its primacy—especially in regions like religious life, where phenomena are not typically available to such an attitude. In sum, if we lack a proper appreciation for the enactment-sense of such phenomena, we cannot understand their meanings as they are given in the concreteness of historical existence. In order to clarify this notion of the ‘enactment-sense,’ however, we must consider what Heidegger means by ‘indication.’

*b.) In What Sense ‘Indicative’?*

Heidegger’s emphasis on enactment allows formal indication to avoid the objectifying tendencies of philosophical concepts, because it does not seek to capture or contain the enactment-sense; rather, it *indicates* the enactment-sense. Heidegger appropriates Husserl’s term “indication” (*Anzeige*) from Husserl’s discussion of “essentially occasional expressions” in Chapter 3 of *Logical Investigation I*.<sup>28</sup> At that point in the text Husserl has established his theory of meaning as an ideal entity, pure and distinct from the act that bestows meaning. The ideality of meaning appears tenable in some areas of inquiry and discourse (e.g., “an adequately expounded scientific theory”), where “objective expressions” present meanings that are the same in every context.<sup>29</sup> But what about expressions like “I am here,” or, “It is raining today”? By their very nature the meaning of these expressions depends on who speaks them, and at what time and place this speaking occurs.<sup>30</sup> (In this regard Husserl’s treatment of essentially occasional expressions resembles Reichenbach’s later analysis of token-reflexive expressions, whose truth-value depends on the circumstances of their utterance).

Husserl examines the word ‘I’: Its meaning can be ascertained “only from the living utterance and from the intuitive circumstances which surround it.” Personal pronouns like ‘I’ or ‘we’ serve as universal *semantic functions* that indicate particular people in particular contexts. But this semantic function does not immediately constitute the meaning of ‘I’ in this context. Instead, every use of the word ‘I’ is accompanied by an “I-presentation”, because the self-referentiality of the word ‘I’ involves a distinct self-awareness. The speaker’s use of the word is realized in the idea of his or her own personality. This “I-presentation” is unique to each person, but it allows us to understand another person’s use of the word ‘I’. When another speaker uses the word, it indicates the speaker’s ‘I-presentation,’ enabling the hearer to intuit the self-referentiality of the speaker. With the word ‘I,’ “an indicative function mediates, crying as it were, to the hearer ‘Your vis-à-vis intends himself.’”<sup>31</sup> The meaning of ‘I’ depends on which person says it, but its indicative function allows both parties to understand either possible meaning.

Husserl argues that in occasional expressions there are in fact two meanings "built upon one another" — the *indicating* meaning and the *indicated* meaning. The indicating meaning is the expression's general semantic function; 'I' indicates the specific 'I-presentation', which is only properly meaningful if the indicated meaning (a particular person) is present (in a particular context). The indicative function is "exercised *for* the other, singular presentation, and, by subsumption, makes the latter's object known as what is here and now meant."<sup>32</sup> In this regard the relation between *indicating* and *indicated* meanings is structurally similar to the relation between empty intentions and fulfilling intuitions,<sup>33</sup> since the indication is characterized by an "empty intelligibility" that must be "filled."<sup>34</sup>

Heidegger's notion of formal indication derives from this model of essentially occasional expressions. But whereas for Husserl the fulfillment of an indication comes in the intuition of an ideal meaning, for Heidegger an indication points to the *how*<sup>35</sup> of enactment. The phenomena in question involve meaningful actions rather than ideas alone. "An indicative definition includes the sense that concretion is not to be possessed there without further ado but that the concrete instead presents a task of its own kind and a peculiarly constituted task of actualization."<sup>36</sup> Formal indications do not indicate meanings to which we can merely give intellectual assent. Rather, they indicate possibilities for concrete transformation, pointing to ways of being in the world. But Dasein must actualize this transformation. Formal indications "can only ever address the challenge of such a transformation to us, but can never bring about this transformation themselves."<sup>37</sup> And it is in actualizing this transformation that Dasein *enacts* the meaning of a phenomenon. Formal indication is therefore not objectifying, because it directs us away from objective concepts, back to the transformation of our own concrete historical existence.

Despite Heidegger's emphasis on enactment, however, formal indication does not prescribe a particular truth or worldview.<sup>38</sup> If formal indication takes on a particular interpretation of existence, it prejudices one's phenomenological interpretations of existence. Yet while formal indication is not prescriptive, it is *indicative*, directing one's attention to the appropriate region of being. This is how philosophy serves theology. By formally indicating theology's proper region of inquiry, philosophy acts as a corrective. But philosophy does not direct theology; it *co-directs* theology by pointing it back to its proper areas of inquiry, while not dictating theology's ventures.<sup>39</sup> Philosophy does not demand that theology acknowledge this corrective; in fact, it cannot establish this role for itself *vis à vis* theology. This relation remains the prerogative of theology. Consequently, Heidegger's model might sound like good news for theology. Whether theology should accept this model is another question.

### III. Bonhoeffer's Theological Response

We have examined the relationship between philosophy and theology from Heidegger's philosophical perspective. We will now examine the transaction from theology's perspective. But the theological response to Heidegger's model has varied so widely that on this matter we cannot speak of theology as a united front, so we will focus specifically on



Dietrich Bonhoeffer's response. The convictions motivating Bonhoeffer's critique appear throughout his authorship, but the explicit critique of Heidegger appears most prominently in Bonhoeffer's *Act and Being*,<sup>40</sup> and his inaugural lecture entitled "Man [*sic*] in Contemporary Philosophy and Psychology."<sup>41</sup>

Bonhoeffer's criticisms start with the human being's attempt to understand "himself from his possibilities in reflection on himself . . . ."<sup>42</sup> But philosophy cannot proceed otherwise; apart from revelation, it has no other resources on which to draw. "Per se, a philosophy can concede no room for revelation unless it knows revelation and confesses itself to be Christian philosophy in full recognition that the place it wanted to usurp is already occupied by another—namely, by Christ."<sup>43</sup> Heidegger excludes this possibility completely, along with any notion of 'Christian philosophy'. By its very essence philosophy cannot make room for revelation. If it did, it would no longer be philosophy, since "there is no such thing as a Christian philosophy; that is an absolute 'square circle.'"<sup>44</sup> This is not to say that Christians cannot do phenomenology, philosophy, or ontology, but it does entail that they must do so *a-theistically*. *Qua* philosopher, the Christian does not know revelation.

Philosophy understands its *a-theism* as responsible methodology, but theology understands it as symptomatic of the *cor curvum in se*—the heart turned in on itself. Autonomous philosophical thought remains imprisoned within itself, which "is the true expression of man questioning himself *in statu corruptionis*."<sup>45</sup> Heidegger's existential analytic of Dasein is no different, because it begins and ends with Dasein. Of course, for Heidegger the analysis of Dasein is subordinate to the larger question of Being qua Being. Bonhoeffer recognizes that Heidegger's project in *Being and Time* is ontological<sup>46</sup> and not a melodramatic philosophical anthropology, as many mistakenly thought at the time.<sup>47</sup> But here is the problem: since Heidegger bases his fundamental ontology on the existential analytic of Dasein, everything depends on getting Dasein right. Yet if Bonhoeffer is correct, this is not possible in Heidegger's analysis of Dasein, because autonomous self-understanding does not belong to Dasein's possibilities.

Throughout his corpus Bonhoeffer offers an ongoing critique of the concept of possibility or potentiality as an immanent possession of the human being. His critique does not pertain to possibility in the broad sense—as, for instance, a trip to the cinema is a possibility for this evening. Nor does it deny potentiality in the broad sense, such as my young cousin's capacity to learn French. Rather, it concerns the human attempt to know the truth about oneself, to know the difference between good and evil, and to establish one's status before God. These efforts are a fundamental consequence of sin. Prior to the Fall, humankind existed in the image of God (*Imago Dei*), being for both God and the neighbor in an "original creatureliness and limitedness."<sup>48</sup> In this state God was the source of all human understanding, and in their relation to God human beings did not exist in possibilities, but in the *reality* of obedience.<sup>49</sup> After the Fall, humankind became 'like God' (*Sicut Deus*)—"knowing out of its own self about good and evil, in having no limit and acting out of its own resources, in its aseity, in its being alone."<sup>50</sup> Bonhoeffer's objection to the concept of possibility therefore concerns the human effort to understand

oneself via reflection on one's immanent possibilities, rather than "in the act of reference to God."<sup>51</sup>

But here another problem arises: According to Bonhoeffer, not only can Dasein not understand itself autonomously, it cannot even recognize its failure to do so. "It is never possible for a systematic metaphysics to know that 'one cannot give oneself truth,' for such knowledge would already signify a placing of oneself into truth."<sup>52</sup> One can only recognize this from the perspective of revelation,<sup>53</sup> and one cannot make room for revelation and thereby anticipate truth,<sup>54</sup> because thought "is as little able as good works to deliver the *cor curvum in se* from itself."<sup>55</sup> This concept of sin is definitive for understanding Dasein's being: ". . . it is not possibilities which are his nature, but that his nature is determined by 'Thou art under sin' or 'Thou art under grace'."<sup>56</sup> The problem is that these ontological determinations are only understandable through revelation.

Heidegger agrees with Bonhoeffer on this point, since he himself claims that "sin is manifest only in faith, and only the believer can factually exist as a sinner."<sup>57</sup> Like Bonhoeffer, Heidegger has read his Luther, whose *Lectures on Romans* proclaim: "*Sola fide credendum est nos esse peccatores*" ("By faith alone we know that we are sinners").<sup>58</sup> Only the believer can understand herself in these categories. Nevertheless, Heidegger maintains that ontology still has a role to play. In order to articulate sin theologically, the conceptual content of sin requires recourse to the ontological concept of *guilt*, which "is an original ontological determination of the existence of Dasein."<sup>59</sup> Although the source of the Christian concept of sin "is given only by faith," the theological concept of sin is nevertheless "a concept of existence," and as such it entails "pre-Christian content."<sup>60</sup>

Operative in this claim is Heidegger's distinction between the ontic and the ontological, which we noted earlier. Theology is an ontic science that pursues *existentiell* questions, i.e., questions regarding Dasein's own concerns and possibilities as a particular existing entity. Philosophy, as the ontological science, conducts an *existential* analytic regarding the structures that constitute Dasein's existence.<sup>61</sup> Regardless of the particular *existentiell* features of an existing individual, these particularities are constituted by fundamental *existential* structures. This is why Heidegger claims that theology can better formulate and understand the ontic notions of 'sin' if it understands the ontological structure of 'guilt.' But note that Heidegger also rejects the suggestion that sin can "be deduced rationally from the concept of guilt," or that sin is "simply built up upon the ontological concept of guilt."<sup>62</sup> Theology does not acquire its ontic content from ontology, since only faith knows about sin. That provision aside, the conceptual content of sin is nevertheless an ontic determination of the ontological structure of guilt.

If philosophy is supposed to offer guidance and correction to theology, one might wonder how philosophy acquires its ontological concepts. All philosophical concepts, Heidegger argues, are formally indicative,<sup>63</sup> and derive hermeneutically from phenomenological inquiry into lived experience. Thus they are not eidetic, universal forms.<sup>64</sup> They are provisional in nature, since they arise in the hermeneutical circle. We always enter this circle with our preliminary understanding—our 'forehavings'—of lived experience, which are "not something arbitrary and according to whim,"<sup>65</sup>

but instead “receive their concrete, factual, categorical determinateness from the respective direction of experience and of interpretation.” Formal indications are not prescriptive, and they supply no content. They simply point the way, and “give direction to the regard.”<sup>66</sup> They express Dasein “in advance and propel it forward: grasping Dasein and stirring it by way of their pointing.”<sup>67</sup> In moving through indication to enactment, the formal indication remains open to revision, thus advancing in a hermeneutical spiral, “modifying itself in a factual manner from out of the situation with respect to, on the basis of, and with a view to which hermeneutical questioning is operating in the particular case.”<sup>68</sup> Consequently, the relationship between philosophy and theology can be mutually beneficial: Ontology will be enriched by inquiring into the ontic experience of faithful Christian existence,<sup>69</sup> while theology will acquire ontological insights regarding the being of Dasein.<sup>70</sup>

According to Heidegger the ontological structures of Dasein pertain to all particular *existentiell* realities, including sin and faith. However radical the Christian notion of “rebirth” might be, the fact remains that “Dasein’s prefaithful, i.e., unbelieving existence is sublated [*aufgehoben*] therein.” The ontological structures of Dasein are not destroyed by the rebirth of faith, but instead are “raised up, kept, and preserved in the new creation.” In other words, “pre-Christian Dasein is existentially, ontologically included within faithful existence.”<sup>71</sup> One might be radically new on an *existentiell* level, but this does not alter the *existential* structures of one’s being *qua* Dasein. This is why philosophy can continue to play the role of co-director in relation to theology. Theological concepts continue to be determined ontologically “by a content that is pre-Christian and that can thus be grasped purely rationally. All theological concepts necessarily contain *that* understanding of being that is constitutive of human Dasein as such, insofar as it exists at all.”<sup>72</sup> As an existing human being, then, the Christian’s being is still ontologically constituted by the structures of Dasein.<sup>73</sup>

This fundamental ontological constitution also enables philosophy’s autonomous phenomenological inquiry into the human being. As Rudolf Bultmann proposes in his 1930 essay “The Historicity of Man and Faith,” philosophy and theology both question the human; the difference is that philosophy concerns “*the natural man*” whereas theology concerns “*the man of faith*.” “Natural” in this sense “is a purely formal ontological designation,” with no regard to questions of faith or unfaith; philosophical analysis only “exhibits the condition of the possibility that a man can comport himself faithfully or unfaithfully.”<sup>74</sup> Bultmann, whose theology is earnestly faithful to Heidegger’s model, vehemently opposes the suggestion that faithful existence might be “exempt from the ontological conditions of human existence.”<sup>75</sup> After asking whether theology might correct or amend the ontological analysis of Dasein, in order to supplant it with a competing ontology, Bultmann’s answer is an exclamatory “No!”<sup>76</sup>

Yet this is what Bonhoeffer proposes in his critique of Heidegger and Bultmann. In response to Bultmann’s claim that “believing Dasein is still Dasein in every instance,”<sup>77</sup> Bonhoeffer argues that revelation challenges any autonomous ontology of Dasein and its possibilities. In his words, “if revelation is essentially an event of God’s free activity, then it supercedes and challenges also the existential-ontological possibilities of Dasein.” The

event of revelation reveals that "Dasein is no longer essentially identical with itself on account of itself," and this event claims the exclusive right "to be the initiator of the unity of Dasein." In the contingent event of revelation, "the deepest root of philosophy, the one from which it derives its claims, it cut."<sup>78</sup> Dasein can no longer claim to understand itself through itself.

Heidegger and Bultmann will no doubt chafe at this suggestion, which seems to ignore their efforts to distinguish between *existential* structures and *existentiell* determinations. But Bonhoeffer does in fact recognize this distinction. What he rejects is the insistence that revelation must respect the ontological difference: "The letting go of the ontic by retreat into the ontological [unity of Dasein] is considered futile by revelation." Revelation goes *all the way down*. Granted, it is an *existentiell* event, but in this event "the existential structure of Dasein is touched and changed. There is no second mediator, not even the existential structure of Dasein." The ontological does not lie beyond the reach of revelation. "For revelation, the ontic-existentiell and ontological-existentiell structures coincide."<sup>79</sup> Pre-Christian existence does not differ from faithful existence solely on an ontic level. It also differs ontologically.

This coincides with Bonhoeffer's rejection of a neutral ontology based on the concept of 'creation.' In the state of sin, philosophical reflection cannot know what original creaturely being is. Nor can theology base ontological categories on the idea of creation without considering the fact that human being is either "being in 'Adam'" or "being in Christ." From the perspective of revelation, the realities of sin and grace determine Dasein's being.<sup>80</sup> Bonhoeffer rejects the "attempt to utilize the idea of creature in a fundamentally ontological fashion,"<sup>81</sup> arguing that "(t)he 'there' ['Da'] of human beings is not to be defined independently of the 'how' ['Wie']." Creaturely Dasein cannot be understood apart from 'how' it is, for it "only 'is' in Adam or in Christ, in unfaith or in faith, in Adamic humanity and in Christ's community." Given the reality of sin, the "concrete being-how-it-is [Wie-sein]" violates the created form of Da-sein and renders such distinctions as ontic/ontological, *existentiell/existential*, and there/how meaningless.<sup>82</sup> For this reason, "the idea of creation is unable to provide a basis for the ontological definition of the human being in Christ."<sup>83</sup> There is no neutral ontology that can serve both being in Adam and being in Christ.

One might respond, as Bultmann does, by acknowledging that revelation does not leave "profane existence" untouched—that revelation gives it "a definitive 'clarification'" that philosophy does not perceive.<sup>84</sup> But is this notion of 'clarification' sufficient? In Bonhoeffer's view faith is not merely a modification of ontic realities, but the deeper modification of ontological structures themselves. Dasein in Adam becomes Dasein in Christ. Of course, this is hardly satisfying in an autonomous analysis of Dasein, which will object to any "pseudo-theological attempt" that seeks to "interpret Christianity as an 'existential' of human existence."<sup>85</sup> Theology, Bultmann insists, should not presume to be ontology. Bultmann adds that philosophy will not object to the ontological *possibility* of faith, since it is already its responsibility to articulate the conditions of this possibility in Dasein.

With this claim we broach another decisive difference between Heidegger/Bultmann and Bonhoeffer. What we find are two different understandings of faith: According to the former view, faith is a possibility that

belongs to Dasein. It “is not a new quality that inheres in the believer, but rather a possibility of man that must constantly be laid ahold of anew because man only exists by constantly laying hold of his possibilities.”<sup>86</sup> Bonhoeffer, by contrast, argues that faith does not belong to Dasein as a possibility or ability, whether ontic or ontological. Karl Barth’s influence on Bonhoeffer is clear at this point, with the latter contending that “faith is not even an impossibility but a contingent happening of revelation in reality.”<sup>87</sup> The same holds for sin, which “also is no human possibility, not even of fallen humanity, nor is it an absolute possibility; it is an occurring reality.”<sup>88</sup> In and of itself, Dasein does not possess the possibility of faith. Hence Bonhoeffer’s objection that Heidegger’s ontology is one of “closed-in finitude”: It does not leave room for revelation as a contingent event, independent of Dasein’s possibilities. Yet this is what the faithful reception of revelation entails. “‘In faith’ people understand themselves as in the church of Christ in their new being, in an existential reality that was not included in their deepest potentiality.”<sup>89</sup> For this reason, the ontological structures of Dasein are subject to radical revision in light of revelation.

What might this revised ontology—the being of this new being—look like? Ontologically, ‘Being in Adam’ is marked by the fundamental solitude of the heart turned in on itself, estrangement from God and one’s neighbor, and internal division. Dasein’s present state is death—i.e., death as being unable to live, yet being forced to live from one’s own resources.<sup>90</sup> This claim contrasts sharply with Heidegger, for whom death is Dasein’s “*ownmost* potentiality-for-being”—a possibility that wrenches Dasein from the anonymous mass of the ‘they’ (*Das Man*) and provides the occasion for authentic being-towards-death. Such a relation to death is fundamentally non-relational—i.e., it separates and individualizes Dasein, because no one else can take Dasein’s place in death.<sup>91</sup> But according to Bonhoeffer, this model of authentic existence only perpetuates the solitude of Dasein *in statu corruptionis*. Dasein finds itself not by reflecting on its own possibilities, but in the reorienting relation to Christ.<sup>92</sup>

Through the crucified and risen one a new possibility breaks into Dasein’s closed world—the possibility of the future, which is for Dasein an impossibility. In Christ the human being is defined by “something outside,” something “‘yet to come.’” The human being is now defined by an eschatological possibility—by a future that enables one to live in the present. This is not the Heideggerian future of one’s own death, because that future belongs to Dasein’s own possibilities. Heidegger’s future is not a genuine future. “There is a genuine future only through Christ and the reality, created anew by Christ, of the neighbor and creation. Estranged from Christ, the world is enclosed in the I, which is to say, already in the past.”<sup>93</sup> In being defined by our present possibilities, we succumb to the past—viz., sin and death.<sup>94</sup>

An ontology of ‘Being in Christ’, then, must consider the way Christ overcomes the solitude of fallen Dasein, restoring relations and establishing Dasein’s being for God and the neighbor. This ontology will also be ecclesial in nature, because the church witnesses to this futurity: “The church of Christ witnesses to the end of all things. It lives from the end, it thinks from the end, it acts from the end, it proclaims its message from the end.”<sup>95</sup> The church—like the believer—does not proclaim its own resources. It never

grasps revelation as an immanent possession, but rather witnesses to the good news of the resurrection.<sup>96</sup>

Where does all of this leave philosophical ontology? Does it play any role in theological inquiry? Can theology successfully ignore philosophy? There are significant problems with making indifference one's strategy; when theology presumes to ignore philosophy, it usually remains dependent on philosophical insights—but unwittingly and thus uncritically.<sup>97</sup> Bonhoeffer recognizes this danger, and always maintains that theology cannot simply jettison philosophy.<sup>98</sup> Theological inquiry must begin with "a certain formal 'preunderstanding', on the basis of which alone questions—even if the wrong ones—can be raised, whose answer is then surrendered by revelation, together with a fundamental correction of the question."<sup>99</sup> In other words, theology takes place within the hermeneutical circle.

But if theology requires these preliminary forms of thought, should Bonhoeffer not recognize Heidegger's formal indication as a valuable tool? What, in the end, is the difference between Bonhoeffer and Heidegger on this point? In summary, we can point to the following: First, we noted Bonhoeffer's critique of Heidegger's autonomous philosophical analysis of Dasein. Dasein presumes to be capable of placing itself into the truth regarding its own being.<sup>100</sup> Even if Heidegger gives a nod to theology by acknowledging that one cannot do this on an *existentiell* level, Bonhoeffer locates this failure at the ontological level. Second, Bonhoeffer rejects the view that faith belongs to the ontological possibilities of Dasein, since this obscures the status of revelation as a contingent event. Thus formal indication cannot point the human being in the right direction, because it cannot anticipate faith as a human possibility. Heidegger shows great insight by identifying the importance of the enactment-sense in lived experience—something that is especially important regarding religious phenomena. But for Bonhoeffer, faith is not a possibility one can enact—least of all through the direction of autonomous philosophy. Third, Bonhoeffer rejects the claim of a neutral ontology of Dasein that remains constant through the experience of this revelation, in the transition from unfaith to faith. Ontologically, the human person is either Being in Adam, or Being in Christ. For this reason Bonhoeffer concludes that Heidegger's ontology, "despite its enormous expansion through the discovery of the existential sphere, remains unsuitable for theology."<sup>101</sup> Since Heidegger's method of formal indication assumes his ontology, for theology the good news of formal indication turns out to be a false hope.<sup>102</sup>

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#### NOTES

1. "Phenomenology and Theology," in Martin Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 40–41.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 43–44.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

6. Ibid., p. 50.
7. Ibid., p. 53.
8. Ibid., p. 49.
9. Ibid., p. 49.
10. Ibid., pp. 47–48.
11. Ibid., p. 50.
12. Ibid., p. 42.
13. Ibid., p. 50.
14. Ibid., p. 52.
15. My understanding of formal indication has benefited greatly from John van Buren's and Theodore Kisiel's explorations of these themes in the early Heidegger. In particular, see van Buren's *The Young Heidegger: Rumor of the Hidden King* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994), as well as Kisiel's *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993).
16. Martin Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), p. 44.
17. See John van Buren's "The Ethics of *Formale Anzeige*," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. LXIX, No. 2, p. 158.
18. *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, pp. 41, 43.
19. Merold Westphal, "Heidegger's 'Theologische' Jugendschriften," in *Overcoming Onto-theology: Toward a Postmodern Christian Faith* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2001), p. 35.
20. Westphal, p. 35.
21. *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 43.
22. Westphal, p. 35.
23. Ibid.
24. For Husserl's treatment of formalization, see *Investigation III* in Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, 2 Vols., trans. J. N. Findlay (New York: Routledge, 2001). Also see §13 of *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, trans. F. Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998).
25. *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 43.
26. In his lectures on Aristotle during the following year, Heidegger argues that formal indication has a prohibitive function, deterring and preventing. See *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), p. 105. This is not to diminish the referential character of formal indication, but to show its dual nature as both prohibitive and indicative.
27. *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, pp. 43–44.
28. See Chapter Three of Husserl's *Investigation I*.
29. *Logical Investigations I* §26, p. 218.
30. Ibid., I §24.
31. Ibid., I §26, p. 218–19.
32. Ibid.
33. See *The Young Heidegger*, pp. 329–30. We see this in Husserl's comments on the demonstratives such as 'this' and 'that,' which also function as essentially occasionally expressions. If someone says 'this,' he does not directly arouse in the hearer the idea of what he means, but in the first place the idea or belief that he means something lying within his intuitive or thought-horizon, something he wishes to point out to the hearer. In the concrete circumstances of speech, this thought is an adequate guide to what is really meant. 'This' read in isolation likewise lacks its proper meaning, and is understood only to the extent that it arouses the notion of its demonstrative function (which we call

its indicating meaning). In each case of normal use, its full, actual meaning can only grow out of the prominent presentation of the thing that it makes its object (*Logical Investigations I* §26, pp. 219–20). In addition to personal pronouns and demonstratives, “subject-bound” spatial and temporal determinations (e.g., ‘here’, ‘there’, ‘above’, ‘below’, ‘now’, ‘yesterday’, ‘tomorrow’, ‘later’, etc.) are also types of essentially occasional expressions. These words all serve the function of indicating a given situation, with their “genuine meaning” being constituted in the presentation of the particular place or time. The indicating meaning “acquires heightened intelligibility by subsumption under the conceptual indicating presentation of ‘here’” (ibid.).

34. Martin Heidegger, *Ontology—The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, trans. John van Buren (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), p. 62.

35. “We come to the phenomenon of existence only within a certain ‘how’ of experiencing it, and this ‘how’ is something that has to be achieved in a specific manner. It is precisely this ‘how’ of appropriation and, moreover, the ‘how’ of our *initial approach*, to the enactment of such appropriation that are decisive.” “Comments on Karl Jaspers’s *Psychology of Worldviews*,” in Martin Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, p. 30.

36. *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, p. 26.

37. Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 296.

38. “Comments on Karl Jaspers’s *Psychology of Worldviews*,” p. 9.

39. “Phenomenology and Theology,” p. 52.

40. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Act and Being: Transcendental Philosophy and Ontology in Systematic Theology*, trans. H. Martin Rumscheidt (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996).

41. “The Inaugural Lecture: Man in Contemporary Philosophy and Thought,” in *No Rusty Swords: Letters, Lectures, and Notes, 1928–1936*, trans. Edwin H. Robertson and John Bowden (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1965).

42. “Man in Contemporary Philosophy and Thought,” p. 60.

43. *Act and Being*, p. 79.

44. “Phenomenology and Theology,” p. 53.

45. “Man in Contemporary Philosophy and Thought,” p. 60.

46. *Act and Being*, p. 67.

47. Also see Hans-Richard Reuter’s *Afterword to Act and Being*, p. 167.

48. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall: A Theological Exposition of Genesis 1–3*, trans. Douglas Stephen Bax (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997), p. 113.

49. *Creation and Fall*, p. 109.

50. *Creation and Fall*, p. 113. Cf. Bonhoeffer’s *Ethics*, trans. Reinhard Krauss, Charles C. West, and Douglas W. Stott (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), p. 300.

51. “Man in Contemporary Philosophy and Thought,” p. 65.

52. *Act and Being*, p. 80.

53. “It is meaningful to argue that the attempt at an autonomous understanding of Dasein must fail *a priori* only when this is based on the premise that it is not possible for Dasein to place itself into the truth. But such a presupposition is not among the possibilities open to Dasein (hence not doctrine, experience, institution); rather, it is a contingent occurrence that binds us to itself. It is the genuine ‘from outside’ that gives us an understanding of Dasein, that makes it intelligible that this ‘from outside’ is what places us into truth. There is no room left in a philosophy of the possibilities of Dasein for the contingency of the occurrence of revelation in the cross and resurrection



in the Christian church. Otherwise it would not be genuine contingency, not revelation, not an occurrence originating with God for the atonement of *sinful* humanity [Menschheit]. Those who have been placed in the midst of such presuppositions must alone judge to be untruth Dasein's attempts to understand itself out of its own possibilities. But if it is an act of God that draws human beings into the occurrence of revelation, then it is not one among the possibilities of an autonomous philosophy of Dasein. This means that nothing can justify the presupposition save God—which is to say, the presupposition justifies itself" (*Act and Being*, p. 110).

54. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

56. "Man in Contemporary Theology and Thought," p. 66.

57. "Phenomenology and Theology," p. 51.

58. *Act and Being*, p. 136.

59. "Phenomenology and Theology," p. 51.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

61. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row, 1962), pp. 32–33.

62. "Phenomenology and Theology," p. 52.

63. *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p. 294.

64. *Ontology—The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, p. 62.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

66. *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, p. 105.

67. *Ontology—The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, p. 13.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

69. Rudolf Bultmann certainly has this expectation, arguing that ontology will become "all the more certain and complete the richer the ontic experience and, on the other hand, because every ontic experience (as an experience of man) has the ontological conditions of its possibility in the human structure and therefore can be understood as possible on the basis of this structure. Thus it is also possible that Heidegger's ontological analysis can be fructified by Kierkegaard's explicitly Christian understanding of man without Heidegger thereby becoming a theologian or Kierkegaard turning out to be a philosopher." Rudolf Bultmann, "The Historicity of Man and Faith," in *Existence and Faith: Shorter Writings of Rudolf Bultmann*, trans. Schubert M. Ogden (Cleveland, OH: The World Publishing Company, 1960), p. 101.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

71. "Phenomenology and Theology," p. 51.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

73. In his lecture course *History of the Concept of Time*, in the context of his discussion of fallenness, Heidegger makes the apparently modest claim that "(i)t is possible, perhaps necessary, that all of these structures will recur in a theological anthropology. I am in no position to judge how, since I understand nothing of such things. I am of course familiar with theology, but it is still quite a way from that to an understanding." Nonetheless, a few lines later he makes the following claim: "These structures can just as well determine the mode of being of a man or the idea of a humanity in the Kantian sense, whether one assumes with Luther that man is 'sodden' with sin, or that he is already in the *status gloriae*." *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 283. Cf. James K. A. Smith *The Fall of Interpretation: Philosophical Foundations for a Creational Hermeneutic* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), pp. 105–06.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

77. Note the alteration of translation, as in *Act and Being*. Whereas the original English translation of Bultmann's essay employs "man," the translators of *Act and Being* preserves Bultmann's use of 'Dasein' (*Act and Being* p. 78, n. 89). Cf. *Akt und Sein: Transzendentalphilosophie und Ontologie in der systematischen Theologie* (München: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1988): p. 71, n. 89.

78. *Act and Being*, p. 78, n. 89.

79. *Ibid.*

80. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

82. *Ibid.*, pp. 137–38.

83. *Ibid.*, pp. 152–53. This provides the basis for Bonhoeffer's argument against Erich Przywara's treatment of the *analogia entis*. See *Act and Being*, p. 75.

84. "The Historicity of Man and Faith," p. 101.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

87. Barth is one of the central figures in *Act and Being*, as an influence as well as a target of some of Bonhoeffer's criticisms.

88. *Act and Being*, p. 98, n.26.

89. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

90. *Creation and Fall*, pp. 90–91, 135, 142–43.

91. *Being and Time*, §53.

92. *Act and Being*, pp. 150–51.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

94. *Ibid.*, pp. 157–59.

95. *Creation and Fall*, p. 21.

96. One of Bonhoeffer's concerns in *Act and Being* is the ontological status of revelation. He is highly critical of theological attempt to capture revelation and render it static or manipulable. See pp. 110–11.

97. This is Bultmann's contention. Theology that does not consult philosophical ontology "is a mere fake," since "it is either uncritically dependent upon some older philosophical tradition or else itself engages in philosophical work—in which case the results are usually inferior enough!" "The Historicity of Man and Faith," p. 98.

98. As Hans-Richard Reuter points out in the *Afterword* to *Act and Being*, Bonhoeffer always maintained that theology cannot simply jettison philosophy altogether. Bonhoeffer insists on this because of his desire "to sustain the freedom of theology from philosophy in such a way that theology would not be left fixated negatively on philosophy and left to fall prey to it once again—but this time unawares." *Act and Being*, p. 163.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 153. In a paper that presents Karl Barth's "theology of crisis" to a seminar at Union Theological Seminary, Bonhoeffer writes: "In every theological statement we cannot but use certain general forms of thinking. Theology has those forms in common with philosophy." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Barcelona, Berlin, Amerika 1928–1931* (München: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1991), p. 440. Bonhoeffer concludes that "Barth sees that there is no Christian philosophy nor philosophical terminology at all. So he can say, it does not make very much difference what philosophy a theology has, but everything depends upon how strongly he keeps his eyes on the category of the word of God, on the fact of revelation, of justification by faith" (p. 445). This seems to be an accurate picture of Barth's view of philosophy; in the early 1940's Barth wrote that all thinking must follow the initiative of God's revelation. "Consequently in theology it will positively be necessary to refuse to accept any philosophical theory as a norm of theology. There is only one norm and it is: God who speaks. Not that we should not philosophize at all! We may—a little. There is choice irony on God's part which tells us: Since you have philosophy

in you, well, then, have it and do your best with it. On the condition, however, that when you have to make a decision between your philosophy and some requirement of the faith, you always make sure that the subject precedes and human thought follows. On the condition that your philosophy does not keep you from 'following.' Calvin and Luther were Platonists enough. Later on, in the seventeenth century, everybody became Aristotelian. However, that did not keep these theologians from being faithful. But in the eighteenth century, they took to philosophizing without mincing words, and theology was no longer referred primarily to its subject, to God's revelation, but to such and such philosophy. They did not follow any longer; they wanted to begin all by themselves." Karl Barth, *The Faith of the Church: A Commentary on the Apostle's Creed according to Calvin's Catechism*, ed. Jean-Louis Leuba, trans. Gabriel Vahanian (Cleveland, OH: The World Publishing Company, 1959), p. 33. Since Bonhoeffer's paper presents Barth's theology, while bracketing certain objections Bonhoeffer has toward this theology, we should not read this as Bonhoeffer's own conclusion. While Bonhoeffer agrees that revelation does not accommodate the terms and conditions of philosophy, he takes a more positive view of the role of philosophy and its contribution to theology than does Barth.

100. *Act and Being*, p. 79.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

102. I would like to express my gratitude to the Ernest Fortin Memorial Foundation for generously supporting work on this paper, as well as two anonymous referees for their helpful comments on earlier drafts.