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The first three elements of the hermeneutic situation in Martin Heidegger

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Abstract

The present study opens an analysis of the fundamental elements of the hermeneutic situation in Martin Heidegger. The prerequisites, the partners and the hermeneutic relationship are evaluated as cardinal aspects of the hermeneutic situation. The prerequisites represent the initial consciousness of the presuppositions that establish the relationship between the partners. There are three prerequisites: prior-possession, prior-view and prior-conception. The partners are conscious beings engaged on the path of language in a relationship to a thing (object, something). The relationship that connects the partners through the prerequisites is the hermeneutic relationship.

Keywords: Heidegger, hermeneutic situation, prerequisites, partners, hermeneutic relationship

1. Prerequisites

"Interpretation, Gadamer shows, starts with preliminary notions that are replaced by more adequate ones: it is precisely this constantly renewed projection that constitutes the dynamic of meaning of understanding and interpretation that is the process described by Heidegger" (Gadamer, 2001, p. 205). We can derive two ideas from this. First, a salutary one, that the prerequisites are, for Heidegger, preliminary notions. Then, a second, darker one, that the prerequisites operate in everything that means understanding, and not only in the most restrictive of the derivatives of primordial understanding, interpretation.

In order to remain outside uncontrolled influences, the understanding of things must ensure its autonomy from the context and from the anticipatory prerequisite. The first desiderata, which is independence from the situational context, is achieved by repressing practice and gradually suspending the significance from the surrounding world. The second is accomplished by developing the preliminary structure of cognitive sensing activities. This trilateral of priors is: prior-possession ("something previously had"), prior-view, which opens, in the direction of a certain explicability ("something previously seen"), prior-conception ("something previously conceived" – what was taken in prior-possession is decided for a certain way of conception) (Heidegger, 2003, p. 207).

Within the hermeneutic situation, the prior must be clarified first of all, as the basis for obtaining the consciousness of the presuppositions. Even elaborated, neither the presuppositions nor the priors are abolished. Their realization means awareness, not annulment. Therefore, both understanding and explication will have the structure of prior. The structure of the latter comes from that of the former, developed in a structure of "as" (Heidegger, 2003, p. 207). For actualization, the activity of noticing needs: prior-possession, prior-view and prior-conception. The activity of noticing meanings is always based on a prior-view that cuts out the aspect considered in prior knowledge in view of a determined possibility of explication. Knowledge, sight, noticing designate the

structural moments of the anticipation of meaning with the function of ultimate term. These conditions of possibility are in a relationship of progressive concretization. Preliminary knowledge, preliminary sight and preliminary noticing structure the object towards which the project is oriented, that is, the constitutive anticipation of meaning. Prior-possession, prior-view and prior-conception structure the concept of understanding and are in no way limited to the sphere of explication. Prior-possession refers to the ultimate term which is meaning, to the reporting regarding sets of meanings, the premise of any situation. It constitutes the basic anticipation of meaning. Pre-possession, as an expression of the principle value of experience, and pre-view, as an expression of the dependence of sets of meanings on realization, cannot be materialized without conception. "Through pre-view, the possibility of binding to a situation is made available to the fundamental anticipation of meaning, and therefore to prior knowledge" (Hufnagel, 1981, p. 45). The reality that constitutes pre-view as one or another of the domains of meaning - in the supreme condition of significance - is dependent on the placement of Dasein in a certain situation. In the concept of pre-view, moments of determination on the part of concrete subjectivity, the autonomy of concrete subjectivity, and the autonomy of the value proper to sets of meanings coincide. Pre-conception refers to the anticipated conceptuality that allows me and at the same time prohibits me from accessing regions of being.

Prior-possession, prior-view and prior-conception are the founding moments of explanatory understanding, the orientation being given by various anticipations. The orientation aimed at by prior-view constitutes the foundation for the possibility of expression. Through orientation, the work anticipated in indication is given the determination of articulation. Conceptuality should not be identified with language, it is situated before articulation by means of language. Language is the form of manifestation of conceptuality. Prior-conception also means the principled relation to language, respectively the dependence of the possibility of structuring on the concept.

Heidegger provided a completely correct phenomenological description when in the alleged "reading" of what is "present" he discovered the prestructure of understanding. He also gave an example to demonstrate that a task results from this. In *Being and Time*, he concretized in the case of the question concerning being the general statement that he transforms into a hermeneutical problem.

In order to explain the hermeneutical situation of the question of being in terms of prior possession, prior sight, and prior conception, he critically examined his question to metaphysics at key turning points in the history of metaphysics. He did what historical-hermeneutical consciousness demands in every case. An understanding guided by methodological consciousness must strive not to simply realize its anticipations, but to become aware of them itself, in order to control them and thus to gain the correct understanding from the work. This is what Heidegger has in mind when he claims that in the elaboration of prior possession, prior sight, and prior conception the scientific theme is secured from the things themselves. Once the anticipatory interpretative option is brought to light, the object of the interrogation, the thing, is brought into the prior possession of its original existentiality, and this prior gaze is what draws into the circuit of analysis the formation of an adequate existential conceptual apparatus. Any prior is a prior to the thing, to the object, to something.

The prior, on the other hand, represents a component of the instance of legitimation, assurance and foundation in the situation, the second, being the definitive one, is the impersonal "se".

2. Partners

The presupposition of the hermeneutic situation will start, like any other, "from a world-less self", which will then be provided with "an object as well as a relationship" (Heidegger, 2003, p. 419). In the absence of any world, inner or outer, there can be neither self nor anything. Before being a man of a world, that is, a partner in a hermeneutic situation, "man is man in the capacity in which he is the one who speaks" (Heidegger, 1976, p. 13). The capacity to speak signals being, marking it as a human being and grounding it in speech. The world in the situation is a world attentive to its own position.

The awareness of the situation comes from the fact that, on the position, in the trenches, the partners are, above all, "speech next to speech" (Heidegger, 1976, p. 228). The partners come together on the road to language, but they are even, thinking, in speech. Having come, they have already arrived. As such, the road to language becomes an inevitable but useless road. The situation that surrounds them in the fact of language is decisive and unfortunately, as Heidegger masterfully says, "the road to language is even impossible insofar as we are where we should be going" (Heidegger, 1976, p. 228). Having barely left home, one towards the other, they are on the other side at home, for language is the house of being, the shelter of being and the abode of the essence of man. Before they realize that they have left, they have already returned. The impression of circularity is overwhelming. To be a partner means to be engaged on the path of language in a relationship towards a thing (object, something) initially irrepressibly common only through language.

3. The hermeneutic relationship

“Man is in a hermeneutic relationship” with others (Heidegger, 1976, p. 117). At the basis of any relationship is the prior community of being a speaking being. “The predominant thing in the relationship of the human being with duplication, Heidegger shows, is consequently speech. Speech gives voice to the hermeneutic relationship” (Heidegger, 1976, p. 115). It follows that speech is the fundamental feature in the hermeneutic relationship of the human being.

4. Conclusion

Martin Heidegger conceives the hermeneutic situation as a construction founded on language. Its primary elements are the prerequisites, the partners and the hermeneutic relationship. The secondary elements will be analyzed in a later study. We specify from now on that among these are: work, language, discourse as address, listening, understanding, explication and the hermeneutic circle.

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