

## Transformation of Hermeneutics in Heidegger's *Black Notebooks*

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**Abstract:** The *Black Notebooks*, posthumous manuscripts by philosopher Martin Heidegger, are difficult to connect due to their fragmented character. There are also no new concepts to be found as in his previously published works. However, these notebooks contain a unique sphere of thought on the concept of Being that is separate from Heidegger's other writings and lectures. The *Black Notebooks* can be seen as the final "instructions and notes" for all the other Heidegger's collected works and form a closely linked chain of thought. In the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger presents a new framework of thought prepared for further reflection on his own works and for a radical confrontation with them. They contain the transformation of the concept of hermeneutics, through self-criticism, the deepening of Being-historical thinking, and the retroactive consideration of the event of Thinking. This transformation of hermeneutics in the *Black Notebooks* allows for a deeper understanding of Heidegger's thought as a whole and opens various possibilities of a future time-space in which we will re-live.

**Keywords:** hermeneutics, being, history, interpretation

**H**ow should we read the *Black Notebooks*? These posthumous manuscripts consist of fragments that are extremely difficult to connect, partly due to Heidegger's rejection of systematics in his later years. Furthermore, the new concepts found in previously published works are scarce in the *Black Notebooks*, and there are many circular descriptions of Being. From this perspective, it may seem almost impossible to discern a coherent thought within the *Black Notebooks*.

But this view is misguided. If we attentively follow the descriptions in the *Black Notebooks*, we can see that they contain a unique sphere of thought on Being that is distinct from Heidegger's other writings and lectures. Heidegger positioned the *Black Notebooks* at the end of the fourth section of

his collected works, with the intention that they should be published last. The title “Instructions and Notes” (*Hinweise und Aufzeichnungen*) suggests that this fourth section serves as “Instructions and Notes” for the first through third sections. While the fourth section also includes notes on published works, seminars, and letters, the *Black Notebooks* can be considered the final “instructions and notes” for these as well.

However, the “Instructions and Notes” are not simply “notes” on the earlier volumes. For example, although fragments such as *Contributions to Philosophy* (*Beiträge zur Philosophie*) and *Mindfulness* (*Besinnung*) contain many references to the *Black Notebooks*, the *Black Notebooks* themselves have almost no references to these works.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, *Contributions* and the *Black Notebooks* are not entirely unrelated to them and there are often overlapping descriptions. This suggests that the *Black Notebooks* developed an independent way of thinking that maintains a connection to the other volumes. Additionally, the *Black Notebooks* contain numerous references to other fragments within the same volumes, and Heidegger created an index of key concepts at the end of each notebook.<sup>2</sup> This shows that the fragments of the *Black Notebooks* themselves form a closely linked chain of thought. The *Black Notebooks*, the final and most profound part of the collected works, present a new framework of thought that Heidegger prepared for further reflection on his own thought as a whole and for a radical confrontation with it.

If we divide Heidegger's thought into three periods based on keywords—“meaning, truth, and place”<sup>3</sup>—the corresponding frameworks of his thought are “Phenomenological Hermeneutics” as a fundamental ontology, “Being-historical Thinking,” and “Thinking.” According to these frameworks, the *Black Notebooks* are an attempt to begin from Phenomenological Hermeneutics and, while running parallel to Being-historical thinking, to move forward to Thinking itself. Moreover, in moving

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. István M. Fehér, “Hermeneutische Notizen zu Martin Heideggers Schwarzen Heften und zum Neudenken seines Denkwegs,” in *Jenseits von Polemik und Apologie. Die “Schwarzen Hefte” in der Diskussion* (Heidegger-Jahrbuch Band 12), ed. by Alfred Denker und Holger Zaborowski (Freiburg/München: Karl Alber, 2020), 64-65. See below for important references to the *Black Notebooks* in other published works. Rosa Maria Marafioti, “Die Seinsfrage und die Schwarzen Hefte. Zu einer Ortsbestimmung der jüdenbezogenen Textstellen,” in *Auslegungen: Von Parmenides bis zu den Schwarzen Heften* (Martin-Heidegger-Gesellschaft Schriftenreihe Band 11), ed. by Harald Seubert und Klaus Neugebauer (Freiburg/München: Karl Alber, 2017), 120, Anm. 10.

<sup>2</sup> In contrast, according to von Herrmann, “a general instruction” was given by Heidegger that “each volume of the complete works should not have any index, including an index of persons or matters” (Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 1: *Frühe Schriften* (1912–1916), ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1978), 443).

<sup>3</sup> Martin Heidegger, “Vier Seminare,” in *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 15: *Seminare* (1951–1973), ed. by Curd Ochwadt (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1978), 344.

from Being-historical thinking to Thinking, the *Black Notebooks* also attempt to deconstruct and critically examine the genesis of his own Thinking, returning to the starting point of Phenomenological Hermeneutics, from a Being-historical perspective. In this transition of his thought, the focus of our investigation is the status of hermeneutics.

As is widely known, Heidegger abandoned the term “hermeneutics” after *Being and Time*, only to return to it later and critically examine it in his “A Dialogue on Language (Aus einem Gespräch von der Sprache)” in 1953/54.<sup>4</sup> However, hermeneutics was not entirely absent during this period. On the contrary, in the *Black Notebooks*, a radical transformation of hermeneutics was undertaken in order to dismantle Phenomenological Hermeneutics, to deepen the Being-historical thinking hermeneutically, and to retroactively and critically consider the hermeneutic event of Thinking.

In this article, I will examine the transformation of hermeneutics mainly in the *Black Notebooks* and other related fragments, focusing specifically on the three primary phases of this development. By examining the three phases of the *Black Notebooks*, the destruction of Phenomenological Hermeneutics through hermeneutics of self-criticism (I), the hermeneutic deepening of Being-historical thinking (II), and the critical retracing to the hermeneutic event of Thinking (III), I will reveal a unique hermeneutic sphere of thought in the *Black Notebooks*. The aim of this article is not to investigate the *Black Notebooks* as a systematic hermeneutics, but to describe the trajectory of hermeneutic transformation in them.

### **Destruction of Phenomenological Hermeneutics: Hermeneutics of Self-Criticism**

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger identifies “the methodological meaning of phenomenological description” with “interpretation (*Auslegung*)” and states that “philosophy is a universal hermeneutic ontology, starting from hermeneutics of Dasein.”<sup>5</sup> This phenomenological hermeneutics interprets the Being of Dasein, thereby tells Dasein itself the meaning of its Being.

However, by the time the writing of the *Black Notebooks* began, in the autumn of 1931, this initial plan for *Being and Time* had already run into a deadlock. In *Ponderings II*, Heidegger writes, “*Being and Time I* is a very imperfect attempt to enter into the temporality of Dasein in order to ask the

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<sup>4</sup> Martin Heidegger, “Aus einem Gespräch von der Sprache (1953/54). Zwischen einem Japaner und einem Fragende,” in *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 12: *Unterwegs zur Sprache (1950–1959)*, ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1985), 79–146.

<sup>5</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 2: *Sein und Zeit (1927)*, ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977), 50–51.

question of Being for the first time since Parmenides.”<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the question of Being is not simply abandoned. While Heidegger expresses his own dissatisfaction with his writings of the 1920s, including *Being and Time*, and the lack of understanding from those around him, he remains determined to explore the question of Being more thoroughly. “The question of Being. There is no other option except to write this book and only this book *again and again*. At the risk of remaining a *homo unius libri* [“person of one book”].”<sup>7</sup> While abandoning the second volume of *Being and Time*, the *Black Notebooks* are attempting repetition (*Wiederholung*) of the entire program toward its own goal, the question of Being. This is indeed a self-criticism of *Being and Time*, and at the same time, a self-interpretation. Therefore, the early *Black Notebooks* can be characterized as *hermeneutics as self-criticism of phenomenological hermeneutics*.

In the fragment from around 1932, three points are mentioned as the causes that prevented him from moving toward his initial goal, the question of Being.

*Being and Time* on its way—not in its goal and task—did not become master of three ambient “temptations”:

1. the “ground-laying” attitude of neo-Kantianism (cf. p. 113);
  2. the “existentiell” —Kierkegaard—Dilthey;
  3. “scientificity” —phenomenology (cf. p. 73, 133).
- Thence also the “idea of destruction” determined (cf. pp. 128-129).<sup>8</sup>

Heidegger also states that these three temptations were triggered by “an inner deterioration of philosophizing” and “a forgetting of the basic question.”<sup>9</sup> In other words, *Being and Time* succumbed to these three temptations as the historical trend of its time and was forced to fail because of forgetting the question of Being. It is important to note that Heidegger was

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<sup>6</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 94: *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931-1938)*, ed. by Peter Trawny (Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 2014), 9.

<sup>7</sup> Heidegger, GA 94: *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931-1938)*, 22.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 75. Here, the first “neo-Kantianism” refers to the position that takes Kant’s metaphysics as the foundation of natural science, and is considered to be an attempt to found the “ontological genesis of science” by “the mathematical project of nature itself” in *Being and Time* (Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 3: *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (1929), ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1991), 274-275; Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 2: *Sein und Zeit* (1927), 479). The second “existentialism” may also refer to Kierkegaard’s “anxiety” and Dilthey’s ontology of “life” (Cf. Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 2: *Sein und Zeit* (1927), 252-253, Anm. 3, 235, Anm. 6, 331, Anm. 2).

<sup>9</sup> Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 94: *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931-1938)*, 75.

aware of this problem. Because it is believed that the failure of *Being and Time* was determined when he introduced these three temptations.<sup>10</sup>

Especially regarding phenomenology, Heidegger recognizes its achievement in reviving the “intuition” of ancient philosophy but criticizes that this intuition remains subordinated to the scientific forms of the nineteenth century.

The phenomenologists (Husserl and Scheler) did manage this one achievement: they awakened the immediate perception turned toward the things themselves (intuition - essence). In other words, they awakened something of the attitude characteristic of antiquity. But rootlessly and in subjection to the nineteenth century, that is, within its schemata and “problems.”<sup>11</sup>

This scientific view of the nineteenth century sought to secure its own legitimacy through “the understanding of being (ἔστιν, presence) that had long been self-evident.”<sup>12</sup> Thus, phenomenology has subordinated itself to this nineteenth-century scientific attitude too and has made being as presence self-evident. And *Being and Time*, which introduced this phenomenology, also brought in the being as presence, failed to ask the question of Being.

### **Hermeneutic deepening of Being-historical thinking: Hermeneutics of Mask as Transition**

How about hermeneutics? In the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger rarely uses the term hermeneutics, but he frequently refers to interpretation (*Auslegung*). In the early *Black Notebooks*, he outlines two directions of interpretation in order to return to the beginnings of ancient philosophy and at the same time to maintain the stance of philosophizing in the present age.

... on the one hand, the interpretation of the ancients, as if what mattered was nothing else than to let them alone come into words (beginning and history of the question of Being), and then the attitude of the most broadly and

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Jean Grondin, “The Critique and Rethinking of *Being and Time* in the First *Black Notebooks*,” in *Reading Heidegger’s Black Notebooks 1931-1941*, ed. by Ingo Farin and Jeff Malpas (Cambridge/London: MIT Press, 2016), 101.

<sup>11</sup> Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 94: *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931-1938)*, 50.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

deeply interpretive questioning out of the ground of Dasein—as if at issue was nothing other than to help “Being” to a bursting forth in actual work and in a first solitude (overcoming of the question of Being).<sup>13</sup>

Here we can see the prototype of the later distinction between the first and other beginning. In this context, the first interpretation is the interpretation of the “leading question” as a confrontation with traditional metaphysical thought in the first beginning. The second interpretation, on the other hand, is the interpretation of the “grounding question” that goes beyond hermeneutics of Dasein and reexamines the basis of Dasein's existence from “a bursting forth” - the event (*Ereignis*) of Being - in the other beginning.

In a fragment of 1936 from *Ponderings IV*, while the distinction between the first and second interpretations is still not clear, the transition from traditional forms of historical research to metaphysics is described as follows.

The *transition* from the proceeding of research to the preceding as metaphysics; the *transition* from ground laying (operating back behind) to the beginning. The transition as changeover: the preparation, the attempts, the preconstruction—all that is indicated in the lecture courses from 1927 to 1936, even though never - intentionally never—communicated directly. The mask of “historical” interpretations.<sup>14</sup>

Heidegger sees the transition from traditional historical research with ground-laying to a metaphysics that returns to the beginning, as a changeover. And the transition as a changeover is carried out in the previous lectures as “the masks.” The mask here is not merely a metaphor but expresses the unique performative character of Heidegger's own interpretation. Therefore, it can be called *hermeneutics of mask*. This hermeneutics of mask is an attempt to investigate his own latent thought of Being behind the mask, while “masking” his historical interpretations of traditional metaphysical thoughts.

In the *Black Notebooks*, this hermeneutics of mask is considered in two more phases in terms of content. One is exclusively an interpretation of past thought. This interpretation is carried out to speak of the latent thought which

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

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is left unspoken in the leaps of thinking made by past philosophers in their thought. Heidegger writes: "Every essential thinker always *thinks* about a decisive leap more originally than he *speaks* of it; and in *that* thinking he must be grasped and *his* unsaid must be said (cf. p. 66). Therefore, interpretation is required."<sup>15</sup> This first hermeneutic phase, which is like the "violence" (*Gewalt*) of "interpretation" as found in the "Kantbook," can be seen as the basic inheritance of hermeneutics of Dasein.<sup>16</sup>

The other, which is the essence of hermeneutics of mask, is the interpretive dimension that is intentionally hidden in Heidegger's own various lectures. Before the preceding passage, Heidegger states, "Start with something small and yet consider what is great." It further goes on to say.

My lecture courses, which belong to this that is small, are *all*, and indeed *intentionally*, still only a superficiality and mostly even a concealment; this holds as well of those courses which express themselves about themselves and their task. How should and could it be said pedagogically what the genuine volition desires?<sup>17</sup>

Heidegger clearly separates the pedagogical intent of his lectures from the question of Being, and keeps the interpretation of the question of Being secret. Therefore, it can be said that hermeneutics of mask, following the thoughts of philosophers of the past, tries to double the interpretation of its own thought in terms of the exoteric and the esoteric, and furthermore, to interpret his own thought in terms of the esoteric.

But even with this doubling of interpretations, why did Heidegger have to esotericize his own transitional interpretive thinking behind hermeneutics of mask? In *Being and Time*, he stated that "being-with-one-another" (*Miteinandersein*) is governed by the "ambiguity" of public preconceived interpretation and that "under the mask of mutuality, hostility is at work."<sup>18</sup> Indeed, in the *Black Notebooks*, while regarding not only the mass media and politically oriented philosophies and disciplines, but also public discourse in general as a part of machination (*Machenschaft*), Heidegger

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 3: *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (1929), 202. However, it should be noted that Heidegger was already uncomfortable with his own attempt in "Kantbook" in March 1932. "(Today (March, 1932) I am in all clarity at a place from which my entire previous literary output (*Being and Time*, "What is Metaphysics?," "Kantbook," and "On the Essence of Ground" I and II) has become alien to me" (Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 94: *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931-1938)*, 19-20).

<sup>17</sup> Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 94: *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931-1938)*, 257-258.

<sup>18</sup> Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 2: *Sein und Zeit* (1927), 232.

criticizes them thoroughly and repeatedly without mercy—one might even express it as “sour.”<sup>19</sup> Should we then assume that Heidegger's esoteric hermeneutics of mask was also mainly intended to preserve the “hostility” toward such machination?<sup>20</sup>

But it must be said that Heidegger's real aim is not so much to stay on the public level and raise “hostility” as to open the sphere of transition between the two beginnings, to criticize machination and see the essence of it. In his 1934/35 lectures, *Hölderlin's Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”* (*Hölderlins Hymnen »Germanien« und »Der Rhein«*), Heidegger, following Hölderlin, positions Dionysus as an “in-between-being” between God and man, and insists the “mask” is a “symbol” of the “fundamental linkage between being and non-being (presence and non-presence)” of Dionysus.<sup>21</sup> The aim of hermeneutics of mask is, first and foremost, to open the sphere for the transition between being and non-being, the present and the non-present, and the first beginning and other beginning. In this deepening of his own latent thought and opening of the sphere of transition, the “mask” as a boundary between the exoteric and the esoteric, becomes a place of struggle between Being-historical-thinking and machination.

### **Critical retracing to the hermeneutic event of Thinking: Destruction of Formal Indication**

In the process of deepening his Being-historical thinking and confronting machination, Heidegger gained the reversal insight that machination is not merely an enemy opposed to himself, but rather a sign of the “abandonment of being” by Being itself, making the question of machination unquestionable.<sup>22</sup> In *Being and Time*, the ambiguity of pre-conceived public interpretation was also held to have its origin in “thrownness (*Geworfenheit*),” which is independent of the intentions of

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<sup>19</sup> Richard Polt, “Inception, Downfall, and the Broken World: Heidegger Above the Sea of Fog,” in: *Heidegger's Black Notebooks: Responses to Anti-Semitism*, ed. by Andrew J. Mitchell and Peter Trawny (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 76.

<sup>20</sup> Some—if not all—of the so-called “anti-Semitic” statements in the *Black Notebooks* can be thought of as such a “hostility” toward machination, twisted and overlapping with a kind of German autochthonism or nationalism on an existentiell level. See my article, *Mythos of ontology*, in *La revue de la pensée d'aujourd'hui*, 46(3), 2018, 63-76 [in Japanese].

<sup>21</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 39: *Hölderlins Hymnen “Germanien” und “Der Rhein”* (Winter semester 1934/35), ed. by Susanne Ziegler (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1980), 188-190.

<sup>22</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 65: *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* (1936–1938), ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1989), 119, 123; Heidegger, GA 94: *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931-1938)*, 383-384, 405.



individual Dasein.<sup>23</sup> This point, however, also applies to the thought of *Being and Time* itself, which relies on public “temptations” of traditional metaphysics. If Heidegger is to be thorough in his thought of Being, he must confront machination of metaphysical thinking that unintentionally lurks even in his own thinking and repeat the critical retrogression to expose it. In this sense, the criticism of machination is a meta-self-criticism that goes beyond even self-criticism. In the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger gradually criticizes the “interpretation” that involves intentional and technical thinking of traditional metaphysics in order to grasp beings in beingness.<sup>24</sup> Correspondingly, the “mask” is also turned into an expression of machination that obstructs the thought of Being.<sup>25</sup>

But this thoroughness of self-criticism must now be transformed into the inadequacy of even self-criticism itself. In *Ponderings XIII* of the *Black Notebook* in 1939-41, Heidegger writes that “No self-interpretation attains what is first said, because in the latter alone does the unsaid vibrate.”<sup>26</sup> For Heidegger, repeatedly taking off the masks that lurk behind the masks means a more thoroughgoing thought of Being according to its vibration, against machination.<sup>27</sup> This sphere of vibration of Being deepens and extends Heidegger’s hermeneutical thought far beyond traditional metaphysics. In *On Inception (Über den Anfang)*, the 70th volume of the collected works, established in 1941, hermeneutics of mask is divided into three interpretations, based on the division between the first and other beginnings.

The interpretation of the history of Being is threefold in its essence:

1. the interpretation of the history of Being (of the first beginning and its history, which reveals itself as metaphysics, whereby metaphysics is history in itself, namely the sequence of decision of the truth of Being in its beingness).

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<sup>23</sup> Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 2: *Sein und Zeit* (1927), 232.

<sup>24</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 95: *Überlegungen VII-XI (Schwarze Hefte 1938-39)*, ed. by Peter Trawny (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2014), 14, 22, 29, 49, 126.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 283, 330, 435.

<sup>26</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 96: *Überlegungen XII-XV (Schwarze Hefte 1939-1941)*, ed. by Peter Trawny (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2014), 78.

<sup>27</sup> When these considerations are on the background, it becomes understandable that in *What Is Called Thinking (Was Heisst Denken)*, Heidegger critically and in multiple meanings discusses the human being as the persona, “the mask of being” with Nietzsche’s “Last Man” in mind. “Persona means the actor’s mask through which his dramatic tale is sounded. Since man is the percipient who perceives what is, we can think of him as the persona, the mask, of Being” (Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 8: *Was heisst Denken? (1951-1952)*, ed. by Paola-Ludovika Coriando (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann), 2002, 65).

2. The interpretation of Being as history, *as* beginning. The saying of the coming-in-between (Dazwischenkunft); the word of the event.

3. the interpretation in the unity of the two previous ways. The interpretation in the transition from the first into the other beginning. The historicity of this transition is determined by Hölderlin's word. The preparatory interpretation "of" poets.

The threefoldness of the interpretation arises from the unity of the simple saying of the word of Being.

What is accomplished by one way of interpretation also belongs to each of the other two.<sup>28</sup>

The first is an interpretation of metaphysical history in which the Being-historical interpretation does not intervene. The second is a Being-historical interpretation to which a higher reflection on the first beginning is added. The third is the interpretation that unifies the first and second interpretations and is carried out in the transition between the first and second beginning, with the interpretation of Hölderlin's poem as the guide.<sup>29</sup> This third interpretation is the practice of hermeneutics of mask, in which one repeatedly unmask oneself. But this hermeneutics of mask is also *hermeneutics of transition*, in which one throws oneself into the equivocation or poly-meaning of the poem, thereby opening a realm of thought in which one can simply name Being. These three interpretations are one and the same, but at the root, they are motivated by the "discomfort" arising from the "tremor" or "vibration" between the first and second beginning.<sup>30</sup>

With this hermeneutic sphere of transition, Heidegger's thought of Being opens the thought of more than what is said, the thought of the unsaid. "Whoever does not have the power and the will to concede to thinkers essentially more than they themselves have expressed and could express should never attempt an interpretation of them; for otherwise the result is only an erudite degradation."<sup>31</sup> This hermeneutics of transition to the unspeakable tries not only to uncover the essence of the history of

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<sup>28</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 70: *Über den Anfang* (1941), ed. by Paola-Ludovika Coriando (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2005), 149.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Dean Komel, Zur "Hermeneutik der Überlegung" in den Schwarzen Heften, in *Jenseits von Polemik und Apologie*, 41.

<sup>30</sup> Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 70: *Über den Anfang* (1941), 148.

<sup>31</sup> Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 96: *Überlegungen XII-XV (Schwarze Hefte 1939–1941)*, 91-92.

metaphysics derived from the first beginning, but also to “unmask” Heidegger's own “unsaid” thinking retroactively.<sup>32</sup>

In terms of this “unsaid” thinking, let us consider the late Heidegger's critical retracing of hermeneutics. Heidegger's hermeneutical method of formal indication, which was developed by the early Heidegger and extensively employed in *Being and Time*, was ostensibly no longer used after *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics (Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik)* in 1929/30.<sup>33</sup> Heidegger, however, continued to reexamine the hermeneutic concept of formal indication. In *Additions and Thought Splinters (Ergänzungen und Denksplitter)*, the 91st volume of the collected works, in the 1930/31 fragment, Heidegger characterized the indication as a projection (*Entwurf*), stating that it does not give an “essence” but “only a direction in the sphere of essence.”<sup>34</sup> Indication points to being and provides only a direction in its meaning, but does not reveal anything about it. In his fragment entitled “discoursing instruction (formal indication),” Heidegger quotes “neither says nor hides” from Heraclitus' Fragment 93.<sup>35</sup> “Neither says,” because it “inquires only into *Being* and does not target beings or shining,” and “nor hides,” because it “still *indicates* beings or shining.”<sup>36</sup> It is worth noting that “beings” are indeed indicated but “Being” is indicated as “unspeakable.” Another noteworthy point is that while early Heidegger drew on Husserl, Dilthey, and Aristotle for the formal indication method, here this inspiration is traced back to Heraclitus. This historical going back to the Pre-Socratic philosophers, such as Heraclitus, provides the starting point for hermeneutics of transition beyond Phenomenological Hermeneutics, as we have seen above.

*Ponderings IX* of the 1938/39 *Black Notebook* contains a fragment from the 1950s/60s, in which Heraclitus is mentioned as a “3H” alongside Hegel

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<sup>32</sup> In his book “Hermeneutics of Mask,” Megumi Sakabe also once stated that in order to “form a truly transformative subject of reality in Japan,” it is necessary to “repeatedly return to and inhabit the reality of the historical thickness of poetic language, and to exercise critical consciousness to the utmost limit, and to release thought into the space of the infinite multiplicity of metaphors that disappear in silence, or into the space of infinite layers of the masks of the world, which never reaches its true face, no matter how far it goes.” Sakabe's insight is remarkably close to Heidegger's attempt. See Megumi Sakabe, *Hermeneutics of Mask* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1975), 155 [in Japanese].

<sup>33</sup> See my book, *Hermeneutik des Seins: Struktur, Kehre und Wiederholung von Martin Heideggers Sein und Zeit*, Hosei University Press, 2012, Chapter 1-3 [in Japanese].

<sup>34</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 91: *Ergänzungen und Denksplitter*, ed. by Mark Michalski (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2022), 138.

<sup>35</sup> “The Lord whose ist the oracle at Delphoi neither says nor hides his meaning, but shows it by a sign(ὁ ἄναξ οὐ τὸ μαντεῖόν ἐστι τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς, οὔτε λέγει οὔτε κρύπτει ἀλλὰ σημαίνει.)” in *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker. Erster Band*, übersetzt und ed. by Hermann Diels und Walther Kranz (Berlin: Weidmann, 1960), 172, Nr. 93.

<sup>36</sup> Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 91: *Ergänzungen und Denksplitter*, 185.

and Hölderlin, and “turning his gaze” on “events” (*Ereignis*) is “toward a thought that responds—toward the refusal to say (*Entsagen*), which is (*in multiple senses*) refrained from (*protecting*).”<sup>37</sup> Thus Heraclitus and the poet Hölderlin, who is the guide of the transitional interpretation, respond to “the same” in the “unspeakable thing” as formal indication. In *Additions and Thought Splinters* in the fragment entitled “Refusal-to-say (*Ent-sagen*) and ‘formal indication’,” “formal indication (*Being and Time*)” is “saying and indicating (*Sage und Zeige*).”<sup>38</sup> And there, furthermore, Heidegger states that “The *Indication*—a preliminary letting gaze of the unity of the same here and there—*indicating*.”<sup>39</sup>

At first glance, it seems that Heidegger superimposes formal indication on the event of *Beying* as the unspeakable, which is the goal of the interpretation. But this is not the end of the story. Furthermore, in *Preliminarity (Vorläufiges)* I of his *Black Notebooks*, written in his last years, 1963-1970, he doubts that the “formal indication” is “still a residue of Platonism” insofar as it aims at “universal valid and timeless in-itself.”<sup>40</sup> What should be distinguished from formal indication is the “owing and pre-thinking” (*Verdanken und Vor-denken*) that quietly pervades the “refusal to say.”<sup>41</sup> This “owing and pre-thinking” means Thinking, that is, meditating and foreseeing what has yet to be said, giving thanks to the philosophers who have gone before us.

## Conclusion

We have seen the process of Heidegger’s transformation of hermeneutics in the *Black Notebooks*. By moving from Being-historical thinking to Thinking itself, Heidegger attempts to deconstruct his starting point of Phenomenological Hermeneutics and critically examine the genesis of his own Thinking. Interpretation should not require the intention and technique of interpreter, as they are already governed by the thinking of traditional metaphysics. What is required in interpretation is the question itself to be interpreted. In his transformation from hermeneutics of self-criticism to hermeneutics of mask and to hermeneutics of transition, Heidegger finds in the question of Being hermeneutical insights that respond to the event of *Beying*. To discard the intention and technique for interpretation means to take a critical distance not only from traditional

<sup>37</sup> Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 95: *Überlegungen VII-XI (Schwarze Hefte 1938-39)*, 266.

<sup>38</sup> Heidegger, GA 91: *Ergänzungen und Denksplitter*, 647.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 648.

<sup>40</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 102: *Vorläufiges I-IV (Schwarze Hefte 1963-1970)*, ed. by Peter Trawny (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2022), 59.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

metaphysical thinking in order to see through machination at work there, but also from one's own interpretation that unwittingly involves the intention and technique in order to respond to what is being questioned.

This art of interpretation, attempted in the *Black Notebooks* as the transformation of hermeneutics, can be considered as the "step back (*Schritt zurück*)."<sup>42</sup> Unlike "step forward (*Fortschritt*)" in metaphysical thinking, the step back creates a unique and original sphere of hermeneutical thinking. In *Remarks (Anmerkungen)* II of the *Black Notebooks*, written between 1942-46, Heidegger states that "the pre-liminary in the step back brings a different art of foresight and carefulness of thinking with oneself."<sup>43</sup> The step back is a hermeneutically solitary task, yet it is not without companions, because "the preliminary in the step back is first and foremost to experience the fate in which thinking has become philosophy."<sup>44</sup> Companions in the step back are the unspoken philosophical thoughts of our predecessors, even as critical objects, and the unspeakable things in the words of the poets as guides. Thanks to them, we can create a new and different kind of hermeneutical thinking according to the vibration of Thinking itself that comes from the event of *Beying*. This hermeneutical thinking, however, is by no means a floating fantasy. According to *Remarks* III in 1946/47, the step back had already been taken by entering into "being-in-the-world."<sup>45</sup> The step back is the hermeneutic thinking that seeks to know how to re-inhabit this world and history. In this sense, "owing and pre-thinking" is a hermeneutical attitude appropriate to interpreting the history of *Beying* and preparing to create new and multiple thoughts of *Beying* for living in our world again. In this way, the transformation of hermeneutics in the *Black Notebooks* opens various possibilities of a future time-space in which we will re-live.

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Brief über den Humanismus* (1946), in *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 9: *Wegmarken (1919–1961)*, ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2004), 343; Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 6.2: *Nietzsche II (1939–1946)*, ed. by Brigitte Schillbach (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1997), 203, 333-353; Martin Heidegger, "Die onto-theo-logische Verfassung der Metaphysik" (1957), in *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 11: *Identität und Differenz (1955–1957)*, ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2006), 50-78.

<sup>43</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* Bd. 97: *Anmerkungen I-V (Schwarze Hefte 1942–1948)*, ed. by Peter Trawny (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2015), 163.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

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