

Research Article

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From the Visual to the Auditory in Heidegger's *Being and Time* and Augustine's *Confessions*

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Abstract: Studies about the influence of sound and ambient environments on understanding and the affects, prior to intentional acts of consciousness, are employed to rectify self-fragmentation exemplified in Heidegger and Augustine. Due to a visual bias that suppresses his auditory disposition in *Being and Time*, Heidegger gestures toward *Dasein*'s fulfillment in social-being yet also recoils from it. To ameliorate this impasse, his underdeveloped modification of existence is revisited by way of Augustine's attunement to rhetoricity during his conversion experience. As a result of embracing a shared ambient space, he brings care for others as oneself into the realm of "the with" and thereby verifies the significance of an auditory way of being-in-the-world to the formation of communities.

Keywords: phenomenology of the senses, sight, hearing, auditory disposition, conversion, rhetoricity, ambient environment

Introduction

Heidegger's account of *Mitsein* (being-with or social-being) of *Dasein* in *Being and Time* has been criticized for being both incomplete and implicated in his political situation.¹ There is yet another way in which to interpret his view of relationality that derives from ways of being-in-the-world and related modes of perception; a visual and auditory disposition toward beings. After *Being and Time*, his turn to language foregrounds listening yet he did not re-interpret the fundamental features of *Dasein* accordingly. This is undertaken by way of Augustine's conversion experience. Like *Dasein*, a visual bias divides him against himself. However, in contrast to Heidegger in *Being and Time*, Augustine's receptivity to the material effects of sound in an ambient environment is a catalyst for a recollection of, rather than projection toward, a primordial way of being-together. By returning to Heidegger and examining the role of sight and hearing in his philosophy during the 1920s and 1930s, a space is created in which to reconsider the role of hearing in the structure of existence as exemplified in Augustine's conversion experience.

Part 1, "Modes of Interpretation," develops the groundwork for analyzing the extent to which Heidegger's prioritization of sight disrupts his capacity to close the divide between *Dasein* and its own "social being." First, the argument that Heidegger's visual bias accounts for his incomplete understanding of *Mitsein* responds to the criticism that he himself is critical of the Western metaphysical tradition, and related prioritization of

¹ See Nancy, "The Being-With of Being-There;" and Derrida, "Heidegger's Ear."

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sight. While his turn to language in “On the Way to Language” (1959) signals a shift (or reversal) toward listening and speaking that he himself traces to *Being and Time*, he did not re-interpret the features of *Dasein* in *Being and Time* accordingly. This creates the possibility for a constructive contribution to Heidegger’s understanding of the meaning of existence by way of Augustine’s “auditory” conversion experience. Second, Part 1 distinguishes worlds of meaning disclosed to sight and hearing from one another as follows: A visual experience and interpretation of beings yields a “metaphysics of constant presence” in which the stabilization of phenomenon into forms is implicated. This stands in marked contrast to hearing in an auditory comportment toward beings that not only discerns common ground (where sight sharpens difference) but moreover, collapses the subject–object dichotomy in the course of being receptive to the ambient environment of rhetoricity as understood by Byron Hawk.² Finally, Heidegger’s visual bias in *Being and Time* is traced to his formative years studying phenomenology and Aristotle.

Part 2, “The Summons and Plato’s Doctrine,” examines the role of sight in determining Heidegger’s response to the call of conscience in *Being and Time* and interpretation of Plato’s Allegory of the Cave in “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth.” Insofar as seeing is oriented toward the future and forms, it accounts for Heidegger’s emphasis on projection toward the meaning of being and conflation of the call of conscience with a form seen. As a result of this conflation, he is inclined to avoid rather than respond responsibly to the call of conscience, which in turn explains why he is “always on the way toward understanding the meaning of being.” With respect to the Allegory of the Cave, although Heidegger is critical of Plato for having changed that which determines the essence of truth from *aletheia* (concealing–unconcealing) to a permanently present idea, an examination of his lecture on the Allegory suggests that his formally indicative method of interpretation privileges phenomenological seeing, which mirrors Plato’s “metaphysical vision.”

Part 3, “Phenomenological Seeing and Social Being,” argues that although Heidegger is aware of the fissure internal to human existence (*Dasein* and its social-being), he does not explicate how to ameliorate it with a modification of existence. This is investigated in dialogue with Lawrence Hatab and Taylor Carman who have posed the same question. However, their Heideggerian-inspired responses rely on psychology and, therefore, on the ontic sciences in contrast to which Heidegger defines philosophy. This criticism justifies turning to a phenomenology of the senses for purposes of explaining how an auditory disposition and that which it entails, rhetoricity, function to ground “being-with” although in terms defined by Augustine rather than Heidegger.

Part 4 “Augustine’s Receptivity to the Rhetorical,” argues that Augustine accomplishes that for which Heidegger longs yet does not achieve; namely, a self at one with its social-being in communion with others. Contra Heidegger’s belief that Augustine takes flight from the toil of historical existence by finding repose in a Greek timeless idea, Part 4 argues that Augustine undergoes a conversion experience that modifies “metaphysical seeing” typical of his Manichean worldview. As a Manichean, he had confused “God” with visible things and been divided against his own sociality; however, considering the voice that calls out to him from his bones (as he tells the reader), his projection toward self-destruction was not without hope. He heeds the voice within while in a garden whose ambient influence on his demeanor is enhanced by the sounds of children singing. The resulting vibrations and tones act on and thereby transform his mode of “being-in-the-world” from a visual to an auditory disposition, from suppression of “being-with” to its expression (in music). This argument is supported by (1) mapping Augustine onto Heidegger’s self-fragmentation, (2) reinterpreting Augustine’s conversion experience in the very terms of rhetoricity and ambient environment that Heidegger leaves out of account, and thereby (3) explaining how existence is modified in a way that reconciles *Dasein* with its social being and affirms a community of fellowship.

² Hawk explains, “Rhetoricity is the necessary condition of response as a function of being-in-the-world.” Rhetoricity is receptive to transformation of understanding by the material forces of sound in an ambient environment. He specifies that rhetoricity is a function of our “futurity,” but my analysis of Augustine’s conversion experience indicates that rhetoricity is a function of “recollection” of a prior way of being-in-the-world that, as Hawk says, is already there before our responses, actions, and choices. *Resounding the Rhetorical*, 187.

1 Modes of Interpretation

1.1 Heidegger's Criticism of Metaphysics

Attributing to Heidegger a visual bias does not seem to square with the facts. Jussi Backman explains:

Undoubtedly the most influential interpretations of Greek thought as a metaphysics of vision and visibility, and of the implicit understanding of being underlying this imagery, are those of Martin Heidegger, who develops his readings into a critical account of the foundations of the Western metaphysical tradition as a whole.³

According to Backman, Heidegger traces the conflation of idea (aspect, look, visible figure)⁴ with the meaning of being that is characteristic of Western metaphysics, to the ancient Greeks. In support of this claim, he highlights a lecture course in 1940 “European Nihilism” in which Heidegger characterizes the Greeks as a “visual people” who therefore, “experienced the being of beings as presence and constancy.”⁵ Indeed, Heidegger cites Augustine’s *Confessions* X.35 and relates that the Father of the Church, “noted the remarkable priority of ‘seeing’ in conjunction with his interpretation of *concupiscentia*.”⁶ Heidegger thus acknowledges that the eyes are prone to indulge carnal desires and curiosities of which “metaphysical seeing is a variation.”⁷ Clearly, he was aware of the role of modes of perception in shaping experience and interpretation. Hence, in contrast to the visual bias that underscores metaphysics, he turned his attention to *logos*, hearing, and speaking. They are pronounced in “On the Way to Language” (1959), which is replete with metaphors of listening. However, they are underdeveloped in *Being and Time*. Heidegger thus acknowledges that his turn toward language and “reversal” are prefigured in the division of *Being and Time* that he did not write.⁸ At the same time, after *Being and Time*, he did not return and reinterpret the features of *Dasein*, e.g., death and social-being, accordingly. As Jean-Luc Nancy says, “after *Being and Time* most of the motives of the ‘existential analytic’ disappear from Heidegger’s thinking [...]”⁹ This creates a creative space in which to place Augustine’s conversion experience, which maps onto Heidegger’s visual bias and an auditory disposition toward which he points.

1.2 Worlds Disclosed to Seeing and Hearing

Patrick Heelan writes, “I conclude that visual perception – and by analogy all perception – is hermeneutic as well as causal: it responds to structures in the flow of optical energy, but the character of its response is also hermeneutical, that is, it has the capacity to ‘read’ the appropriate structures in the World, and to form perceptual judgments of the world about which these ‘speak’.”¹⁰ Hearing is not merely sound waves striking the tympanum of the ear, seeing is not merely the impression of light waves on the retina of the eye. Modes of perception are also ways of being-in-the-world. Indeed, perceptions are formed by the worlds into which we are thrown and likewise reshape those worlds of meaning. They are as distinct from one another as oral,

³ Backman, “Towards a Genealogy of the Metaphysics of Sight,” 11.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 16.

⁶ BT 160; SZ 171. Unless indicated otherwise, I am using Stambaugh’s translation of *Being and Time*.

⁷ In this case, Plato’s ascent to the idea of the Good is construed on the same continuum as seeing with the eyes, which is discussed further in Part 2.

⁸ This issue is raised in “The Letter on Humanism” (1947) yet Heidegger explains that it is prefigured in the third division of *Being and Time*, “Time and Being,” that he did not write. “Preface,” xvi. See also *Being and Time*, section 34, “*Dasein* and Discourse (BT 150–156; SZ 161–7).”

⁹ Nancy, “The Being-With of Being-There,” 5.

¹⁰ Heelan, “Perception as a Hermeneutical Act,” 43.

literate, and digital civilizations. Since Heidegger's phenomenological-ontology moves between seeing and hearing, it is fitting to describe their characteristics and the worlds they disclose to us.

The senses of hearing and seeing are distinctly different from one another. Although sight is prone toward light that clarifies spatial relations and forms, colors, and contours, hearing is fitted for environments without light in which sounds prevail. When the source of light is extinguished, hearing becomes acute. In contrast to vision, which has an intentional directedness, frontal, and lateral, hearing is receptive to a sheer plurality of sounds in all directions. David Espinet relates that it is receptive to polyphonic landscapes of acoustic space.¹¹ In the words of Walter Ong, "vision objectifies, speech personalizes."¹² His insight introduces perhaps the most pertinent difference. On the one hand, to encompass the widest possible field, sight facilitates separation or distance between knower and object known. René Descartes' methodical doubt thus aims to divest the observer of personal relations with objects of knowledge for the sake of clarity of certainty. Coupled with the forward-facing direction of seeing (projection), this yields a proclivity for the predication and control of beings before they appear to us. This does not preclude focusing on details and analysis but rather ensures that the observer is inoculated against being moved emotionally by that which is scrutinized.

On the other hand, auditory cognition behooves total immersion in an environment of which the "observer" is always already a part and therefore collapses any pretense toward a firm and static standpoint allegedly distant from things. After remarking on the uncertainty of the spoken word Jacques Ellul writes, "I know that a kind of electric current is established between us; words penetrate him, and I have the feeling that he either reacts positively or else rejects what I have said. I can interpret his reaction, and then the relationship will rebound, accompanied by a rich halo of overtones."¹³ Ellul experienced clarity in understanding not through definitions and concepts but instead, through the "electric currents" of sound and feelings set in motion by voices and "body language." From participation in an environment, in which the auditory disposition toward beings is at home, as Don Ihde says, the "auditory dimension from the outset begins to display itself as a pervasive characteristic of bodily experience."¹⁴ The auditory dimension is a bodily experience because, as Murray Schafer says, "hearing and touch meet where the lower frequencies of audible sound pass over to tactile vibration (at about 20 hertz)."¹⁵ We feel notes in our stomach and feet, our bones themselves conduct sounds. Hawk elaborates and says that sound is not experienced through a single sense (hearing) but in addition is felt with the body and seen with the eyes (we see vibrations).¹⁶ He develops these indications of an embodied auditory disposition that is responsive to the material force of sound into the notion of "rhetoricity." After citing Diane Davis,¹⁷ he writes, "Rhetoricity is the necessary condition of response as a function of being-in-the-world – the capacity or ability to be affected and persuaded that is prior to language and subjectivity."¹⁸ Prior to language and acts of consciousness, we live in an ambient environment of interconnectivity and move in time to material changes in sound and vibration. "Rhetoricity" is an unavoidable pre-subjective and pre-objective relationship ("inessential solidarity") that exceeds individuals – in "rhetoricity," the subjectivity of the subject is completely displaced by "total immersion."

¹¹ Espinet, "In the Shadow of Light," 186. The "Toronto School" that traces its roots to Eric Havelock and Harold Innis in the 1930s was at the vanguard of studies into the transition from orality to literacy and digital communications and their effects on cognition and interpretation. For example, Ong, *Orality and Literacy*; and McLuhan, *Understanding Media*.

¹² Ihde, *Listening Voice*, 40. Quoting Walter Ong, Ihde writes, "Negatively, the tendency to take visual perception and visual imagination as paradigms results in an over-emphasis which may hide aspects crucial to the perceptions of other persons." *Ibid.*, 36.

¹³ Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 18.

¹⁴ Ihde, *Listening and Voice*, 45.

¹⁵ Schafer, *Soundscape*, 11.

¹⁶ Hawk, *Resounding the Rhetorical*, 2. Citing Ceraso, "(Re) Educating the Senses."

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 187. Citing Davis, *Inessential Solidarity*, 57, 107, 171.

¹⁸ Hawk, *Resounding the Rhetorical*, 187.

1.3 Heidegger's Visual Bias

Heidegger writes in 1923, "Companions in my search were the young Luther and the paragon Aristotle ... Kierkegaard gave impulses, and Husserl gave me my eyes."¹⁹ Referring to the same years, he reflects:

The clearer it became to me that the increasing familiarity with phenomenological seeing was fruitful for the interpretation of Aristotle's writings, the less I could separate myself from Aristotle and the other Greek thinkers. Of course, I could not immediately recognize the decisive consequences my renewed preoccupation with Aristotle would have.²⁰

After expressing perplexity about how to go about the method of phenomenology, Heidegger writes, "Husserl's teaching took place in a step-by-step training in phenomenological 'seeing' which at the same time demanded that one relinquish the untested use of philosophical knowledge ... I myself practiced phenomenological seeing, teaching and learning in Husserl's proximity after 1919."²¹ His training in this manner of seeing culminates in the "formal indication." The latter refers to a method with which he intends to achieve objectivity in a nonobjective way. Although sciences focus on variations in a scientific object (objectified presence) and thereby pass over the world and what it means "to be," Heidegger revives the latter with a formally indicative method or way of conceiving things. In this case, concepts are "formal" because they are derived from a prior way of existing in the world.²² He thus aims to steps behind theory, classifications, and "what-content," to their source in prescientific concrete historical existence. The "ordering" of his descriptions follows a phenomenological explication of relational meanings²³ and retains "objectivity" without resorting to a "bird's eye view." Heidegger was aware of the danger of slipping into the latter.²⁴ Nevertheless, his penchant for interpreting experience based on sight hampers his capacity to both respond to the call of conscience and understand what Plato said.

2 The Summons and Plato's Doctrine of Truth

2.1 Call of Conscience

As a result of unreflectively prioritizing sight in his phenomenological-ontology, Heidegger tends to confuse distinctly different worlds with one another by expecting the visual to take responsibility for an auditory comportment toward beings. For example, *Being and Time*, section 34 states that discourse (*Rede*) is the existential-ontological foundation of language and therefore equiprimordial with attunement and understanding.²⁵ Attunement of discourse gestures toward the receptivity of hearing in an auditory disposition toward beings, which surfaces in Heidegger's criticism of the everyday mode of being-in-the-world. According to him, we live in worlds corrupted by inauthentic speech that has been coopted by the pleasure/curiosity of the eyes.²⁶ For the sake of authenticity, it is crucial to project ourselves toward "non-Being" and respond to the

¹⁹ Van Buren, "Martin Heidegger, Martin Luther," 159.

²⁰ Brogan, "The Place of Aristotle in the Development of Heidegger's Phenomenology," 214.

²¹ Ihde, *Experimental Phenomenology*, 15. This applies no less to his magnum opus. Heidegger writes, "Dialogues with Husserl provided the immediate experience of the phenomenological method that prepared the concept of phenomenology explained in the Introduction to *Being and Time* (§7)." "Preface," x.

²² I am consulting Dahlstrom, "Heidegger's Method," 778–9.

²³ Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 40–4.

²⁴ Hence, Heidegger's claim that what he calls the "entanglement" of *Dasein* does not express any value judgment. BT 164; SZ 175–176. Dahlstrom relates that Heidegger was well-aware of the self-referential challenge that he is committed to objectivity. "Heidegger's Method," 778–9.

²⁵ BT, 150; SZ, 161. The meaning of being discloses itself in discourse (*Rede*) and language (*Sprache*) is linguistic. For detailed analysis, see Dahlstrom, "Heidegger's Ontological Analysis of Language."

²⁶ When *Dasein* "falls prey to" or "plunges" into and is absorbed or entangled by "being-with-one-another," human existence is guided by groundless floating nothingness of idle talk, curiosity (no where and everywhere) and ambiguity (also, nowhere and everywhere). I am combining Heidegger's terminology from BT 163–6; SZ 175–8.

call of conscience. He writes, “The call of conscience has the character of *summoning* Da-sein to its ownmost potentiality-of-being-a-self, by summoning it to its ownmost quality of being a lack.”²⁷ This hearkens to Paul in Corinthians, “For we walk by faith, not by sight (*eidos*).”²⁸ The prioritization of hearing and the word (incarnate) stand in marked contrast to the Greek primacy of sight.²⁹ And yet, Heidegger’s visual bias arguably mutes the summons. He disavows the “vulgar interpretation of conscience” and insists that “the call must call silently” although not in the stillest hour but rather, in a “jolt and abrupt arousal.”³⁰ The latter alludes to the possibility of embodiment however as Derrida says, and there is no sense of the flesh in *Being and Time*.³¹ In the final analysis, just as *Dasein* is estranged from the body, so too is it estranged from the emotions to which hearing is a channel. For this reason, the summons does not say anything.³² In other words, Heidegger is not existentially disposed to respond responsibly and therefore, rather than hear a definitive “love thy neighbour as thyself,” remains “open.”³³ Elizabeth Hirsh detects this deficiency when she points out the significance of discourse for historical existence is undeveloped by Heidegger.³⁴ It is “undeveloped” because he does not re-interpret the everyday way of being-in-the-world from the side of an auditory disposition that has responded to the call of being. Jacques Derrida echoes this assessment when he relates that the voice of the friend that *Dasein* carries within has a tonality “that one would call, in a language not very Heideggerian, affective.”³⁵

2.2 Heidegger’s Platonism

In his 1931/32 lectures, Heidegger is critical of Plato’s Allegory of the Cave for having anchored knowledge in the sense of sight and its light. “Metaphysical seeing” that purports to separate the knower from phenomenon reconstrued as objects is achieved through a graduated ascent from the cave to the light of the Good (metaphysics of constant presence). Thus, Heidegger considers Plato the founder of the Western tradition of metaphysics that culminates in Cartesianism and the technological enframing of humans and non-human beings.³⁶ However, insofar as Heidegger prioritizes phenomenological seeing in his very reading of Plato, he extracts structural generalizations from the dramatic and historical contexts and thereby participates in “metaphysical seeing.”

In “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth,”³⁷ Heidegger describes the stages by which the vision of the prisoners is reoriented from images to become assimilated to the light of “all knowing,” i.e., the light from which to see the visible forms themselves. He concludes Plato’s Allegory: “‘Unhiddenness’ now means: the unhidden always as what is accessible thanks to the idea’s ability to shine. But insofar as the access is necessarily carried out through ‘seeing,’ unhiddenness is yoked into a ‘relation’ with seeing, it becomes ‘relative’ to seeing.”³⁸ The idea

²⁷ BT 249; SZ 269.

²⁸ 2 Corinthians 5:7. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this reference.

²⁹ For a challenge to this characterization of Greek philosophy see Backman, “Towards a Genealogy of the Metaphysics of Sight.”

³⁰ BT 249, 251; SZ 270–1. Heidegger alludes to this result of this jolt when he refers to an “elevated mood” that “alleviates” the manifest burden of being. BT 127; SZ 133.

³¹ Derrida, *On Touching – Jean-Luc Nancy*, 233–8.

³² Stated concisely by Rosen, “If the voice of being is silent or pre-verbal, then the teaching of ontology has no significance for the ontic world of things.” *Nihilism*, 41.

³³ BT 153; SZ 163–164. Heidegger insists that the hearing that belongs to publicness must be stopped and “another kind of hearing that interprets that listening must be given by *Dasein* itself.” BT 250; SZ 271. However, this possibility and a related explanation for the modification of existence remains undeveloped on account of a “competing” concept of the self.

³⁴ Hirsch, “The Problem of Speech,” 175.

³⁵ Derrida, “Heidegger’s Ear,” 175. BT 152–3; SZ 163. In the second comma, I hear a long pause. He writes that Heidegger “refuses to determine *Befindlichkeit* as the place of affects or feelings, at least in the psychological sense of the term.” *Ibid.*, 172.

³⁶ Heidegger, “The Question Concerning Technology,” 20 and 27.

³⁷ Written in 1940, published in 1942 and based on lectures 1931/32.

³⁸ Heidegger, “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth,” 173.

of the Good is the power of visibility that,³⁹ “a light” to which sight is assimilated so as to reify beings and treat them independently of the processes in which they emerge. Heidegger thus considers Plato the founder of the Western metaphysical tradition. Is Heidegger’s thinking overly determined by a visual bias that similarly intensifies the light in which beings are unhidden? Does he interpret Plato from an attitudinal relation that is already “Platonic” as he understands it in “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth”? He called his own work a science.⁴⁰ As mentioned, formal indications produce structural generalities,⁴¹ which in turn incline Heidegger’s interpretations to bypass contingent particulars and contexts.⁴² He echoes the terms of this attitude when he concisely describes the gist of *Republic*, Book VII as follows: “Socrates presents the story, Glaucon shows his awakening astonishment.”⁴³ Rather than attend to Glaucon’s character, his relation to Socrates through Plato, and the relevance of Book VII to preceding and succeeding developments in the dialogue such as the system of virtues in Book IV,⁴⁴ Glaucon’s voice is muted as if he were the ignorant student and Socrates, the wise school master.⁴⁵ Along the same lines, despite his reticence toward classifications, Heidegger schematizes the ascent and descent in the Allegory into four stages.⁴⁶ It stands otherwise with Paul Friedländer. As if to question Heidegger’s determination that Socrates the school master instructs the ignorant Glaucon, Friedländer writes, “The average mind expects that the more intelligent person can answer every question put to him. So Glaucon keeps urging Socrates to reveal his own views (*dogmata*) about the Good (506a *et seq.*). But Plato uses Socratic ignorance (506a) to resist this pressure.”⁴⁷ This does not occur to Heidegger. His focus on that which is visible detracts from inquiring into both Socrates’ jocular play, wit, irony, and Glaucon’s comical exclamation at the height of the ascent, “Apollo! What divine transcendence!” (509c).⁴⁸ Heidegger seems as indifferent to the drama of Plato’s dialogues as Aristotle. Indeed, Stanley Rosen argues that he “assimilates Plato into an Aristotelian doctrine of being qua being”⁴⁹ and overlooks an important dimension of Plato’s philosophy that resonates with his own. However, the Good is compared by Plato to the sun that fosters the growth of a garden and thereby lets beings emerge of their own accord (*phusis*), in “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth” Heidegger bypasses this altogether.⁵⁰ Similarly, according to Friedländer, although the idea of the Good is sighted at the height of the ascent, it remains invisible (and beyond the limits of language).⁵¹ If the Good is invisible and beyond language, then does it not retain the character of pre-Socratic *aletheia* (revealing-concealing)?⁵² Perhaps Plato’s alleged metaphysics is as Heraclitean as Heidegger’s method of interpretation is Platonic in temperament.

39 Ibid., 174.

40 Friedländer, “Republic,” 114.

41 For this angle on “formal indication,” I am consulting Caputo, “Toward a Postmodern Theology of the Cross,” 205.

42 I am consulting Jonas, “The Nobility of Sight,” 135–56.

43 Heidegger, “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth,” 155.

44 Friedländer, “Republic,” 114.

45 I am referring to *The Ignorant School Master* by Joseph Jacotot cited by Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, 1.

46 Heidegger, “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth,” 168–71.

47 Friedländer, “Republic,” 114–5.

48 Heidegger’s philology has received the scrutiny of Paul Friedländer, Karl Löwith, Stanley Rosen, and Hans-Georg Gadamer precisely in matters of ignoring contexts for the sake of a creating a history of concepts.

49 Rosen, “Remarks on Heidegger’s Plato,” 179.

50 Plato, *Republic*, 509b.

51 Friedländer, “Republic,” 145.

52 Sheehan remarks that Heidegger likely used John Burnet’s translation of Plato’s *Republic* (Oxford University Press), which is noteworthy for understanding Heidegger’s attitude toward a text. Burnet falls within the English analytic tradition. “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth,” 373 Note 2.

2.3 Phenomenological Seeing and Social Being

Heidegger is unaware of his visual bias and hence of the extent to which his phenomenological ontology falls under the shadow of Plato's alleged metaphysical seeing. Given the characterization of the senses in Part 1, in which the affects are at stake, this yields predictable results for relations with others. He counterposes *Dasein* with its own social-being and therefore calls for a modification in existence so as to integrate them.⁵³ However, this possibility is derailed by his tendency to bypass the role of hearing in such a transformation. After having defined the dilemma and Heidegger's call for its resolution, the solutions of Lawrence Hatab and Taylor Carman are questioned for relying on "psychology" rather than an auditory way of being-in-the-world. Jacques Derrida shifts the analysis to "social-being" (friend within) and thereby brings to the fore precisely that which Heidegger requires to harmonize *Dasein* with itself.

On the one hand, Heidegger affirms a positive relation to "being-with" and by implication and affirms a community of human fellowship and solidarity. He states, "The they is an existential and belongs as a primordial phenomenon to the positive constitution of *Da-sein*"⁵⁴ and "The disclosedness of the *Mitda-sein* of others which belongs to being-with means that the understanding of others already lies in the understanding of being of *Da-sein* because its being is being-with."⁵⁵ For Heidegger, "being-with-one-another" (in a shared world) is always already there ontologically and therefore before individuation. "Being-with-one-another" is a crucial structure of *Dasein*. On the other hand, he does not affirm the ontological priority of a shared world (being-with-one-another) and instead, disavows it. He writes, "inauthenticity is a kind of being-in-the-world which is completely taken in by the world and the *Mitda-sein* of the others in the they." *Dasein* has fallen away from itself and become "prey to the world."⁵⁶ He continues and states that *Dasein* "plunges into groundless and nothingness of everyday."⁵⁷ This has been pointed out by both Daniel Dahlstrom and Taylor Carman. Dahlstrom writes, "Heidegger's account of the way the crowd colors the various shades of daily encounters is masterful, but, in the wake of that account, being in the work-world and the public arena appears hardly realizable by – if not patently inconsistent with – being who one authentically is."⁵⁸ Heidegger "colors" the crowd with such characteristics as idle chatter, curiosity, and ambiguity, which in turn seems inconsistent with "being who one authentically is."⁵⁹ Non-relational authenticity predominates in *Being and Time*. Carman is similarly critical. He points out that there is no notion of "selfhood in others" in Heidegger's thought, only "selfhood in oneself."⁶⁰ In support of their assessment, Heidegger specifies that being is undistorted insofar as *Dasein* is nonrelational.⁶¹ For him, an individuated existence is authentic, which implies that "the they" or "everyone" is but an impediment to an ontologically fundamental and primary mode of existence.

Carman and Dahlstrom wrestle with the crux of Heidegger's dilemma yet not in terms of a phenomenology of the senses. In this regard, although Heidegger is critical of Plato for grounding metaphysics in a "production-ontology," i.e., a looking toward the permanently present idea (whatness), Heidegger models his analysis of human facticity (thrownness) on the activity of the worker, rather than on the everyday activity of discussing matters of justice with friends. For him, philosophical reflection begins when the instrument in use breaks

⁵³ In *Being and Time*, *Stimmung* is poised to play a role in explaining in the turn toward relationality but is as underdeveloped as the body, senses, and feeling which Heidegger associates with the ontic sciences.

⁵⁴ BT 121; SZ, 129.

⁵⁵ BT 116; SZ, 123.

⁵⁶ BT, 164; SZ, 176.

⁵⁷ BT 167; SZ, 178.

⁵⁸ Dahlstrom, *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*, 280.

⁵⁹ BT Section 34.

⁶⁰ Carman then writes of Heidegger's refusal to assimilate the first to the second, or third person perspectives, "his account remains unsatisfying inasmuch as it tells us nothing about the hermeneutic conditions of bringing the two perspectives together in an overarching interpretation of human beings as selves. How is it possible, indeed is it possible, to come to understand myself as others understand me, [...]?" Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic*, 268–9.

⁶¹ BT, 258; SZ 280.

(ready-to-hand).⁶² However, despite this interruption in the activity of work, he does not attend to talk among workers and instead retains the future-directedness of the worker in his interpretation of *Dasein*. Franco Volpi writes:

The practical horizon of Heidegger's concept of understanding is also clearly visible in the determination of the knowing that accompanies and guides understanding. Understanding has the structure not only of a projection, but also of a knowing, a 'sight' that orients the projection.⁶³

According to Volpi, Heidegger's description of understanding as projective sight (*Sicht*) is modeled on Aristotle's notion of praxis in *Nicomachean Ethics* VI. The practical comportment to which he is referring consists of sight orienting the understanding toward the future, which is not incidental to, but rather integral to techne.⁶⁴ To the extent that understanding is prioritized by Heidegger in the erotic drive toward our ownmost-possibility-to-be, the possibility of a conversation with others that might disclose the limits of our knowledge and prejudgments is minimized and instead, a subject-centered perspective on beings is intensified, Volpi suggests, by ontologizing a human standpoint on beings using Aristotle's notion of praxis. In other words, it is not clear that by remaining within the purview of sight, indeed by exacerbating it with a drive of the self toward itself, that Heidegger ever transcends the work-world in which the existence of others as others is ignored.

The very discordance in *Being and Time* between *Dasein* and its social-being, between seeing and hearing attest to the problem. Heidegger's visual bias separates him from affirming his own social-being with the result that he is divided against himself. However, he is cognizant of the issue and thus acknowledges that a modification in existence is called for. He writes, "When *Dasein* thus brings itself back from the they, the they-self is modified in an existentiell manner so that it becomes authentic being-one's-self";⁶⁵ "Authentic being one's self is not based on an exceptional state of the subject, a state detached from the they, but is an existentiell modification of the they as an essential existential" and⁶⁶ "Authentic being-a-self shows itself to be an existentiell modification of the they which is to be defined existentially."⁶⁷ According to Heidegger, authentic being is not based on an exceptional state of the subject but instead, entails a modification of existence in which others are re-interpreted as a fundamental feature of *Dasein*.

In what does a modification of *Dasein* consists so as to fulfill the meaning of existence? Heidegger writes, "As the non-relational possibility, death individualizes, but only, as the possibility not-to-be-bypassed, in order to make Da-sein as being-with understand the potentialities-of-being of the others."⁶⁸ An encounter with our ownmost possibility for death, non-being, discloses the potentialities-of-being of the others. However, as Carman argues, the modification from being non-relational to being-relational is not developed by Heidegger.⁶⁹ It is merely alluded to and thus invites a creative rethinking of his philosophy.⁷⁰ He and

⁶² There is no awareness of the hammer when it is being used (*zuhanden* or "ready-to-hand"), but this changes when it breaks (*vorhanden* or "present-at-hand") BT 64–71; SZ 69–76.

⁶³ Volpi, "Being and Time," 207. Volpi asserts, praxis "forms the basis for characterizing the manner of being belonging to *Dasein*" (ibid., 202) and explains: "Against the metaphysical privilege of the present and presence, Heidegger advocates the priority of the future. Precisely because *Dasein* comports itself to itself in a practical sense by deciding about its being, this being that is at stake is in each case futural. For, as Aristotle teaches in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, deliberation (*bouleusis*) and decision (*prohairesis*) always have to do with something futural." Ibid., 204.

⁶⁴ Ellul writes: "A human being's sight commits him to technique. The visual image points out the totality of my possible life in a world where I am both master and subject. All techniques are based on visualization and involve visualization. If a phenomenon cannot be transformed into something visual, it cannot be the object of a technique." *Humiliation of the Word*, 11.

⁶⁵ BT 248; SZ 268.

⁶⁶ BT 122; SZ 130.

⁶⁷ BT 247; SZ 269.

⁶⁸ BT 244; SZ 264.

⁶⁹ Dahlstrom adds, "Nor, more concretely, does he indicate how the work-world (the world of concern) would be different if it took its bearings from being-with-others rather than vice versa." *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*, 281.

⁷⁰ Carman thus reports that authenticity, "does not consist simply in freeing oneself from all entanglements with the one, but rather in taking up a new distinctive relationship to social norms always already governing one's concrete possibilities."

Hatab have creatively rethought this space between non-relationality and the potential for relationality. According to Hatab, “attention to our finitude” opens us up to the suffering of others,⁷¹ i.e., compassion. In the midst of being overwhelmed by anxiety in the face of death, we identify with and feel for others and their circumstances. From this Hatab reasons that compassion, “is a basic ethical disposition (*Befindlichkeit*) or mood (*Stimmung*) that attunes us to the moral life in a way that mere knowledge, theories, or rules cannot.”⁷² He concludes, “compassion then, may be the deepest indication of *mitsein*.”⁷³ Carman agrees. He explains that “the principal flaw in Heidegger’s account of selfhood” is “that it neglects the hermeneutical conditions underlying one’s capacity to understanding oneself as another an exercise in empathy and imagination that is arguably essential to our mundane ethical self-understanding.”⁷⁴

Carman and Hatab put forward plausible ways in which to transform human existence so as to harmonize *Dasein* with its own social-being. However, for Heidegger, empathy is derived from a way of being-in-the-world and hence cannot be included in an existential analysis of *Dasein*. Empathy like “a psychology, sociology, and anthropology, and ethics, or a politics” is not a condition of *Dasein*’s existence.⁷⁵ Moreover, insofar as hearing and seeing denote different ways of being-in-the-world; nonrelational and relational, respectively, neither Hatab nor Carman is addressing the root of the problem; namely, a transformation in existence that is responsive to social-being. In this regard, Jacques Derrida sounds a unique tone.

Derrida focuses on the following passage from section 34 “Da-sein and Discourse: Language”: “Hearing even constitutes the primary and authentic openness of *Da-sein* for its ownmost possibility of being, as in hearing the voice of the friend whom every *Da-sein* carries with it.”⁷⁶ In contrast to Carman and Hatab, Derrida recognizes that without “hearing,” there is no friend and therefore, no *Dasein*.⁷⁷ The potentiality-for-being consists of the potential-to-be with others as oneself. And yet, as Derrida explains, *Dasein* carries the friend with it through its own voice and hence, “the friend itself” is obscured and does not say anything. The friend is merely “evoked” by *Dasein*.⁷⁸ There is then a sense in which *Dasein* is estranged from itself. Derrida develops this possibility when he reasons that *Kampf* (war) belongs to the structure of *Dasein* “as it throws itself by anticipation toward death.”⁷⁹ In other words, *Dasein* faces forward and fulfills its potential-to-be in death, which is to say, by sacrificing itself to the community. Derrida finds validation for these inferences in the phrases with which Heidegger concludes the passage quoted above (SZ 163): negative modes of not-hearing, of opposition, of defying, and of turning away.⁸⁰ For Derrida, these are intimations of war, struggle, tension, and conflict that culminates in sacrificial death. This conclusion is not incongruent with a phenomenology of the senses. As has been argued elsewhere,⁸¹ Heidegger’s visual bias inclines him to confuse that which is heard with a form seen in which case, he cannot but be at odds with himself and celebrate a life of continuous struggle that vacillates between life and death, being, and non-being.

In conclusion, due to the influence of metaphysical seeing on his phenomenological mode of perception and understanding, Heidegger does not modify *Dasein*’s existence through non-being and renders it receptive to others in an auditory disposition. Stephen Mulhall’s assessment of Heidegger follows:

Heidegger’s *Analytic*, 143. Carman supports this conclusion by citing the outset of section 35 where Heidegger writes, “The expression ‘idle talk’ is not to be used here in a pejorative sense.” *Ibid*.

⁷¹ Hatab, “Ethics and Finitude,” 415.

⁷² *Ibid*.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 414.

⁷⁴ Carman, *Heidegger’s Analytic*, 271.

⁷⁵ Derrida, “Heidegger’s Ear,” 74.

⁷⁶ BT 153; SZ 163.

⁷⁷ Derrida, “Heidegger’s Ear,” 173. *Das Hören konstituiert sogar die primäre und eigentliche Offenheit des Daseins für sein eigenes Seinkönnen* (SZ 163).

⁷⁸ Derrida, “Heidegger’s Ear,” 164.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 177.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 176.

⁸¹ Fuyarchuk, *The Inner Voice in Gadamer’s Hermeneutics*, 100–4.

But Heidegger does not just claim that falling is a general phenomenon – one to which any and every facet of human culture is always vulnerable. He also emphasizes that its ubiquity (and so the predominance of its effects in the philosophical tradition in particular) is not accidental. For if falling is internally related to *Dasein's* absorption in the 'they,' it must be just as much a part of *Dasein's* ontological structure as the they-self: falling is not a specific ontic state of *Dasein*, but 'a definite existential characteristic of *Dasein* itself'. (BT, 38: 220)⁸²

According to Mulhall, Heidegger's belief that "the they" are inauthentic is tantamount to saying that *Dasein* is ontologically inauthentic because *Dasein* is being-with. Mulhall believes Heidegger confirms this very interpretation when he writes, "the fundamental ontological characteristics of [*Dasein*] are existentially, facticity, and Being-fallen."⁸³ Since *Dasein* is completely fallen, only a completely transcendent God (for Mulhall) can save it from internal conflict. This is not viable for Heidegger who insisted that philosophy is "a-theistic."⁸⁴ Nevertheless, Dahlstrom explains that for Heidegger, Christian theology consists "not so much in making theoretical assertions as in formally signaling the revelation and the transformation of the believer its understanding entails."⁸⁵ The source of the transformation is neither "God" nor Kierkegaard's existential theology but rather in attunement and responsive receptivity to the ambient environment in which *Dasein* is always already immersed in an auditory disposition. This is clarified by way of Augustine's conversion experience.

3 Augustine's Receptivity to the Rhetorical

Not unlike his lectures on Plato 1930/31, during his winter 1920/21 lectures, Heidegger applies phenomenological seeing of the formal indication to Augustine's *Confessions*. He similarly reaches the wrong conclusions about the text; namely, that Augustine flees from existence into a Greek timeless idea. For example, Heidegger responds to Augustine's words "is not human life on earth a time of testing? Who would choose troubles and hardships?" with the assertion that Augustine is uncovering "a devilish split in experiencing itself."⁸⁶ In reply to Augustine's search for God, Heidegger comments that Greek philosophy "intrudes" and "breaks into" Augustine's path to the truth.⁸⁷ In other words, his visual bias inclines him to focus on stages, classifications, and related divisions rather than on the fluidity of a process and situation. He is clear that Augustine's thought is invaded by a Greek philosophical notion of truth that stands in marked contrast to the truth as a lumen existential.⁸⁸ Given the overall sense in which "the Christian theological tradition aimed to detach itself from the Greek primacy of sight and focused instead on hearing as the vehicle through which *logos* is received,"⁸⁹ Heidegger's assessment of Augustine is one sided.

An alternative reading of Augustine in the context of Heidegger's project is conveyed by Otto Pöggeler. He explains that Heidegger "opposes the conceptualization and metaphysical presuppositions which occur in the works of Augustine and other theologians; nonetheless, he can make the 'factual life-experience' of these theologians fruitful for his own work."⁹⁰ Accordingly, in keeping with Heidegger's own invitation to reconfigure his ontology if it does not get caught off from ontic experience,⁹¹ I turn to Augustine. He is an appropriate interlocutor for three reasons. First, his experimentation with the Manicheans maps onto Heidegger's prioritization of the power of sight and related division of the self against itself. Second, *Being and Time* was

⁸² Mulhall, *Heidegger and Being and Time*, 108. Mulhall is using the Macquarrie translation of *Being and Time*.

⁸³ BT 235; SZ 191. Mulhall is referring to Macquarrie's translation of *Being and Time*.

⁸⁴ Dahlstrom, "Heidegger's Method," 794.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 795.

⁸⁶ Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 154–5; PrL 209.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 142–3; PrL 194; 201.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 148–9; PrL 200–1.

⁸⁹ I am quoting verbatim an anonymous reviewer.

⁹⁰ This quotation is from de Paulo, "The Augustinian Constitution of Heidegger's *Being and Time*," 551.

⁹¹ Heidegger invites creative rethinking: "As long as the ontological concepts do not get cut off from ontic experience," he says that "there are possibilities of a more primordial existentiell understanding." BT 272; SZ 295.

modeled on *Confessions* X and XI, and third, Augustine completes a modification in existence from the visual to the auditory and, therefore, in the midst of being acted upon by “rhetoricity” that eluded Heidegger. In contrast to his disciplined eye, Augustine’s auditory disposition is receptive to rhetoricity whose ambient environment persuaded him to reconcile himself with his own social-being before he heard the words, “pick up and read.”

In *The Confessions*, Augustine struggles with the same problem and obstacles as Heidegger – the self’s journey toward itself. He is also prevented from fulfilling the quest by privileging sight in the acquisition of knowledge. His privileging of sight is, above all, true of the time he spent cavorting with the Manicheans in his twenties (who predisposed him to interpret things-in-themselves according to Aristotle’s *Categories*).⁹² Their arguments against Christianity and the existence of God incarnate were a direct application of epistemic seeing to the spirit of the letter.⁹³ For example, he explains that he bypassed that for which he truly longed that could unite himself with himself by identifying God with an external thing or object-seen. He believed that whatever “was not stretched out in space, or diffused or compacted or inflated or possessed of some such qualities, or at least capable of possessing them, I judged to be nothing at all.”⁹⁴ Perhaps recalling one of Mani’s arguments that had fooled him in his early twenties, he suggests that God must be of a certain size with limbs stretching far and wide.⁹⁵ Surely this is what it means to be infinite, he seems to have reasoned.

These confessions indicate that insofar as Augustine remained within the Manichean frame of mind, the more his pursuit of God was in vain. His dilemma is expressed in terms of self-fragmentation. By equating perfection with a universal and permanently present idea, Augustine created an opposition between it and his passions reconfigured as carnal desire. In other words, not unlike Plato as understood by Heidegger, the assimilation of seeing to Being as an idea creates a binary opposition in which the passions are reduced to acquisitive desire (for things). As Don Ihde says the eye catches movement, curiosity.⁹⁶ Augustine’s affective self or emotions were thereby suppressed. Being out of touch with his own well-being and that of others, his moral compass was ajar, and he chose destruction for its own sake, e.g., wasting food and sexual license.⁹⁷ Reflecting upon his time among the Manicheans in Rome, he states that thinking of God in terms of bodily size was a misapprehension, and “the chief and almost sole cause of the error I could not avoid.”⁹⁸

Augustine’s allegiance to Manicheism placed him at odds with both God and the “social-being.” Yet at the same time as he was estranged from God by thinking of him along the lines of something seen, Augustine wanted fellowship.⁹⁹ Not unlike Heidegger, he had an intimation of “being-with” within the meaning of his own existence. There was a “potentiality-of-being for others” for which he longed. Hence, he describes his regard for “the union of mind with mind” that befits, he tells us, friends, which is surely a union facilitated by conversation.¹⁰⁰ He also envisioned an ideal society formed of friendship and sincerity at Cassiciacum, where “the whole would belong to each of us”¹⁰¹ and keenly admired the solidarity of the faithful who defied the order of the Emperor Valentinian to surrender their Church to pagan rituals by finding “mutual comfort and

⁹² Augustine, *Confessions*, 71; IV.16.28. He relates that he was given a copy of Aristotle’s *Categories* when he was twenty. The *Categories*, being an investigation of the formal relations between a subject and a predicate, did not allow for making a qualitative distinction between them. As a result of making the *Categories* authoritative in matters of knowing, Augustine would have assumed that if the substance God is indistinguishable (ontologically) from the property of greatness, as the Christians claimed, then a great rock must be God (Ibid., 71; IV.16.28).

⁹³ Similarly, he recalls thinking that if God is infinite, there must be more of him in large than in small rocks (Ibid., 121–2; 7.2). He seems to have believed that the Christian notion of God was absurd on the following grounds: God is claimed by Christians to have been human, but how can this be since God does not have any hair or nails? (Ibid., 45; III.7.12).

⁹⁴ Ibid., 121; VII.2.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 45; III.7.12.

⁹⁶ Ihde, “The Auditory Dimension,” 24.

⁹⁷ Augustine, *Confessions*, 30; II.4.9.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 90; V.19.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 35; II.8.16.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 42; III.6.10. He comments, “Again, the friendship which draws human beings together in a tender bond is sweet to us because out of many minds it forges a unity” (Ibid., II.5.10).

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 117; VI.14.24.

encouragement in the liturgy through the practice of singing hymns, in which everyone fervently joined with voice and heart.”¹⁰² These are indications of a distinctly different orientation toward beings than that of a visual disposition and suggest that Augustine had intimations of his own conversion through the relationality of an auditory way of “being-in-the-world.”

The turn toward others (within him) as friends was triggered at the garden in Milan. The environment is not defined by work or the “ready-to-hand,” but rather, by free and easy wandering outside the “walls of the city,” i.e., in nature. The environment moves and affects him. Hawk’s description of the condition is apt to recall: “The ensemble of ambient capacities and forces generates attunement. Humans don’t decide to attune themselves to the world and aren’t simply attended by other humans. They are being ambiently attuned to their worlds through a constellation of forces, affordances, and practices at all times and fold back into that attunement through their activity.”¹⁰³ Augustine’s mood is transformed by the background silence to which he belongs. His mood is attuned by a “middle” of relations, interactions, and mixtures.¹⁰⁴ Within that environment, he hears the children sing “pick up and read.” These words are sung yet clearly, their music is not that of a well ordered or restless age.¹⁰⁵ Instead, the voices of children are pre-political and indistinguishable from “the sounds of nature” yet are neither “vulgar” nor stylized and instead evoke an emotional response in him. Augustine weeps. There are two aspects of this experience to consider: First, the experience itself and second, that which is experienced.¹⁰⁶ The experience of weeping is not evoked by the source, meaning or content of the song but by the sounds and vibrations that exceed the entities that emit them.¹⁰⁷ Michael Chion explains, “The emotional, physical and aesthetic value of a sound is linked not only to the causal explanation we attribute to it but also to its own qualities of timbre and texture, to its own personal vibration.”¹⁰⁸ Augustine is immersed in an ambient environment formed not only by the voices but in addition, by the acoustic spaces in which those voices resonate and vibrate – an aura into which his agency is dispersed and diffused.¹⁰⁹

With respect to that which is experienced, the children’s voices remind Augustine of his “social-being,” i.e., to a chronologically and ontologically prior shared world of his childhood. Reflecting on those years, he recalls that in contrast to Greek which although poetic he had learned by “compulsion,” i.e., based on alphabetic orderings and grammar, Latin was for him “alive.” He had learned it by heart from nurses whose gentle voices and care surely impressed upon him unconditional love. During this time, he was united with a medley of voices interacting with one another melodiously,¹¹⁰ a condition of being-with-one-another prior to intentional acts of consciousness. This state of mind-mood bubbles to the surface decades later around the age of thirty. The children whom he hears singing to him in the garden in Milan awaken him to the inner self he had forgotten while he had been imitating Hierius in Rome, Faustus, and the Mani Elect, and pursuing the good and the true in Homer’s epic poetry, Cicero’s *Hortensius*, astrology, Neo-Platonism, Manicheanism and mathematics. Hawk describes the conditions to which Augustine has been alerted: Humans “simply are this openness and exposure to others ... and respond to them tacitly as an obligation or a rhetorical imperative prior to any cognitive or discursive choice or action.”¹¹¹ In short, the children’s singing is a catalyst for Augustine’s introspective turn away from a multitude of things toward that dimension of himself he had been ignoring and suppressing: his emotional intelligence or attunement to “being-with.” Perhaps the children’s song he heard in the garden reminded him of those years when he was warmed by the tones and rhythms of voices to whose sonic vibration infants are so readily attuned. Indeed, these tones felt are a refrain throughout his journey toward God. After recalling the materialistic images, including the dichotomy between pure monad and

¹⁰² Ibid., 181; IX.7.15.

¹⁰³ Hawk, *Resounding the Rhetorical*, 189.

¹⁰⁴ I am consulting Nancy, “The Being-With of Being-There,” 4.

¹⁰⁵ Schafer, “The Soundscape,” 98.

¹⁰⁶ I am consulting Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 7.

¹⁰⁷ Goodman, “The Ontology of Vibrational Force,” 71.

¹⁰⁸ Chion, “The Three Listening Modes,” 51.

¹⁰⁹ I am applying terminology from Rickert, *Ambient Rhetoric*, 163.

¹¹⁰ Augustine, *Confessions*, 16–9; I.13.20–16.25.

¹¹¹ Hawk, *Resounding the Rhetorical*, 188.

irrational dyad, he remarks that they had “set up a din in the ears of my heart, ears which were straining to catch your inner melody.”¹¹² Augustine strained to catch this inner melody that he tells us called out to him from his bones, with his inner ear.¹¹³ He finally heard it in Milan, but it was a sound he had heard before. Perhaps the children’s “little ditty” reminded him of a childhood “jingle” of “one and one make two, two and two make four.”¹¹⁴ We have no way of knowing. But the fact that this jingle is about counting is significant, since it is precisely the pleasure he finds in the order of music that weaves harmony between his intellect and passions so as to render him a friend to himself, or so he suggests in *On Music*; the only work he wrote on the liberal arts around the time of his baptism.¹¹⁵

After his introspective turn at the garden in Milan when he recalled as an adult the euphonic harmony he shared with his caregivers, he found a similar sense of community while singing Ambrose’s hymns at the Church in Milan. Therein the distinction between his inner and outer ear, the internal self and other dissolved when he joined through song the communal body of Christ and became reconciled to his own social-being. He writes:

How loudly I cried out to you, my God, as I read the psalms of David, songs full of faith, outbursts of devotion with no room in them for the breath of pride!... How loudly I began to cry out to you in those psalms, how I was inflamed by them with love for you and fired to recite them to the whole world, were I able, as a remedy against human pride!... I felt bitterly angry with the Manichees, though my indignation was tinged with pity, because they knew nothing of this remedy in song and ranted against the very antidote that might have healed them.¹¹⁶

After being healed by song Augustine realized that the Manicheans were wounded, that their commitment to reason and writing was as strong as their rants “against the very antidote that might have healed them.” The tears he shed release him from epistemic sight-centeredness yet simultaneously overflow “in loving devotion” and, he says, make him better. He then refers to the solidarity of the faithful in Milan in defiance of the Emperor, mentioned above, and that it was an inspiration to all after which, “the practice was established of singing hymns and psalms in the manner customary in regions in the East... and in other parts of the world also many of your churches imitate the practice: indeed, nearly all of them.”¹¹⁷ Augustine is referring to a universal Church, united in liturgy, a communal body forged during a protest against an unjust imposition of power. He thereby suggests in what way he is healed. The ideal community for which he had longed is realized in the mysticism of liturgy.¹¹⁸

¹¹² Augustine, *Confessions* 71; IV.27.

¹¹³ He writes at the outset of Book VIII, “May I be flooded with love for you until my very bones cry out” (Ibid., 145; VIII.1.1), and in Book IX, “May my heart and tongue give praise to you, and all my bones cry out their question...” (Ibid., 170; IX.1.1).

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 17–8; I.13.22.

¹¹⁵ He seems to have written *On Music* as a corrective to his earlier book, *The Beautiful and Harmonious*, about which he writes: “I was about twenty-six or twenty-seven when I wrote those volumes. The materialistic images on which I was speculating set up a din in the ears of my heart, ears which were straining to catch your inner melody, O gentle truth (Ibid., 71; IV.15.27).” At that time, he explains that he had thought that beauty was a quality that explained why something was adapted to something else, a property of things that explained their unity or harmony (Ibid., 67; IV.13.20).

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 175–176; IX.8. Also, “I could not get enough of the wonderful sweetness that filled me as I meditated upon your deep design for the salvation of the human race. How copiously I wept at your hymns and canticles, how intensely was I moved by the lovely harmonies of your singing Church! Those voices flooded my ears, and the truth was distilled into my heart until it overflowed in loving devotion; my tears ran down, and I was the better for them” (Ibid., 180; IX.6.14). See also Ibid., 230; X.33.50. Weiss writes, “Augustine’s description of the *jubilus*, the lengthy *melisma* on the last syllable of the word *Alleluia* sung before the Gospel reading at Mass, which sometimes goes on for as many as thirty or forty notes. Far from merely ‘decorative’ embellishment, the *jubilus* was the most mystically meaningful part of the chant for Augustine” Weiss and Taruskin, *Music in the Western World*, 30.

¹¹⁷ Augustine, *Confessions* 181; IX.7.15.

¹¹⁸ Ignatius writes in the *Letter to Magnesians*: “Be then all in conformity with God, and respect one another, and let no one regard a neighbour according to the flesh, but in everything love one another in Jesus Christ. Let there be nothing in you which can divide you, but be united with the bishop and with those who preside over you as an example and lesson of immortality.” Coakley and Sterk, *Readings in World Christian History*, 4. Basil writes, “Besides, if all we who are united in the one hope of our calling are one body with Christ as our Head, we are also members, one of another. If we are not joined together by union in the Holy Spirit in the

4 Conclusion: How is *Mitdasein* Possible?

Heidegger argued that Augustine is responsible for the Hellenization of Christianity because he equates God with a timeless idea counterposed to the world of change.¹¹⁹ His assessment is not credible. In contrast to sight which tends to confuse forms seen with the meaning of being and thereby insist on an ontological difference and separation between kinds of existence, e.g., self and others, humans and animals, hearing is “proximally” not only near to the source of sound but moreover, receptive and therefore, responsive to the vibrations of an inessential solidarity of being-with-one-another. Augustine felt the call in the fiber of his bones. The sounds in the songs sung by the children he heard in the garden evoked in him an orientation toward others for which he had been longing but from which he was also estranged for reasons exemplified in Heidegger’s closure toward the effects of acoustic ecology on his state of mind. However, Heidegger’s seeing inclines toward concepts of self and others that cannot but be divisive, in the relationality of the living language those divisions disappear.¹²⁰ Hence, while questioning the alleged primacy of sight in Greek philosophy, Backman explains that in Heraclitus “*logos* is also the fundamental unity of discursive meaning: in their interdependency, all opposed terms inextricably belong together and intertwine with their opposites in a differential interplay.”¹²¹ Heidegger’s focus on *logos* as that which makes manifest and shows (*phanesthai*),¹²² suppressed his ear to hear harmony or unity in difference. Having become captivated by the passage to “social-being,”¹²³ Augustine did not expect to be jolted in an abrupt arousal from his visual disposition, yet he anticipated it when he recalled learning how to speak during his childhood. He felt the call of conscience to care for others as oneself before he knew it.

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harmony of one body, but each of us should choose to live in solitude, we would not serve the common good in ministry according to God’s good pleasure but would be satisfying our own passion for self-gratification” (ibid., 146).

119 Heidegger recapitulates Aristotle’s criticism of Plato in his criticism of Augustine in his lecture “Augustine and Neo-Platonism” and thus unreflectively repeats Aristotle’s physicalist bias or assumption that Plato’s ideas are Pythagorean idealized numbers in which case there would be a physical separation between the ideas and the sensible world, but this is not Plato’s position, as Gadamer counters with reference to the *arithmos* paradigm or doctrine of the one and many in Plato’s dialogues. See “Plato’s Unwritten Dialectic,” 124–55.

120 In other words, as Jonas says, seeing has given us both an enduring present and the contrast between unchanging and change realms. Inwood, “The Use and Abuse of Vision,” 165 citing Jonas, “The Nobility of Sight,” 328. Importantly, he mentions contrast. Ellul explains the connotations, “The famous principle of non-contradiction is based on a visual experience of the world, just as the principle of identity is. ... Declaring that two opinions cannot both be true, when one denies what the other affirms, has to do with vision which involves instantaneousness. ... Consequently, what is visual cannot be dialectical.” The principle of non-contradiction depends on reducing phenomena to forms whose boundaries are mutually exclusive of one another. Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 11. Heidegger’s thinking in a dialectical anti-thesis is also suggested by Gadamer who mentions in this regard projection and thrownness, authenticity, and inauthenticity. *The Gadamer Reader*, 348–9.

121 Backman, “Towards a Genealogy of the Metaphysics of Sight,” 23.

122 Heidegger, “Preface,” x.

123 I am referring to Nancy who asks the question posed in this conclusion. “The Being-With of Being-There,” 4.

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