

# **The Strategy of Transgression in the Phenomenology of Ontological Anarchy**

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In this article, John Krummel elaborates a non-metaphysical phenomenology which is simultaneously a way of thinking and a way of “being without why.” Taking as his starting points the vocabulary of Martin Heidegger, and Reiner Schurmann’s anarchistic interpretation of Heidegger, Krummel seeks to reveal the relationships between temporality, language and being which constitute the finitude of what we are and whatever we may claim as the universal or eternal grounds of anything that is.

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A critique is usually based on some posited construct, which serves as a foundation for replacing another construct, against which it is directed. But can critique be directed against the very assumption of a need to erect foundations? And if so, what are we left with? The possibility of such a critique has become more and more explicit since the last century, especially with the emergence of phenomenology. In this paper, I will explore the possibilities of a post-metaphysical phenomenology which refuses to posit anything beyond the phenomena confronting us, a phenomenology which attempts to make explicit Heidegger’s “rhythms” constituting what and how we are.

For this purpose, I will rely primarily on the vocabulary of Martin Heidegger himself, as well as Reiner Schurmann’s “anarchistic” interpretation of Heidegger. A non-metaphysical phenomenology would not claim any a-temporality or universality, as they are phenomenologically unjustifiable from our perspective of a singular horizon of mortality. A “non-meta-physical” phenomenology (if one takes *physis* to be the coming and going of phenomena) would “listen” to the inter-constitutive web of “rhythmic” relations between temporality, language and being, composing the finitude of what and how we are and what we may claim as the ground of anything that is. Rather than revealing any eternal ground, this shows Heidegger’s constitution of our being to be an indeterminate process of “*existence*” through a horizon of time and within a web of discursivity. Confronted with this temporal and discursive contingency, we are enabled to hold an attitude of critique against Heidegger’s vanity of such absolutizing claims. With a constant questioning of the constituents of our own being, and a refusal to set up any normative standards, an abyss is revealed behind the absolutizing claims concerning our various essential constituents. In turn, this releases us from the grip of norms and absolutes into alternative possibilities by perpetually making room for their realization. It is a strategy of constant transgression upon all claims to the absolute.

In order to explore this possibility, in addition to Heidegger’s ontological phenomenology of temporality and Schurmann’s “radical phenomenology,” I will appropriate Michel Foucault’s notions of an “archaeology of knowledge” and “genealogy of power,” Meister Eckhart’s notions of “being without why,” Nietzsche’s “will to power” and “eternal recurrence,” and Bataille’s notions of time and anarchy. I hope to be able to show that such a phenomenology as a hermeneutic of our being would simultaneously be a way of thinking and a way of being without “why”—both a thinking which faces being to make it explicit and an explicitation of the anarchic process, which is thus the appropriation of Heidegger’s ontological process of anarchy.

A look at the relationships between language and time, discursivity and temporality, may unfold what and how we are, how the world exists, and how our knowledge of the world and ourselves is constituted. For example, Foucault's archaeology of knowledge analyzes discursivities in their formation and his genealogy of power looks at the relations of truth and power lying behind discursive formations as they fluctuate. Together they show us that the notion of "man" is a posit of the social sciences with their hidden practices and forms of social control determining a space of knowledge, which in turn determines our being as an object to be examined among empirical things while claiming for it its autonomy (Foucault 1966/1970:xxiii). The modern selfconscious subject is thus shown to be fabricated through a web of "discursive formations and extra-discursive power effects" (Schurmann 1986:294–95) which is nonetheless temporal and "ever-shifting." As such, we are marked out within a period of time and disciplined to be responsible personalities, subordinate to normalization.

In an early essay, Heidegger considered philosophical inquiry to be an explication of "factual life" in which is to be found the source making available the different ways of being, branched out through movements of concern, each expressing a determinate interpretedness (Heidegger 1922/1992:361–62). In *Being And Time*, this facticity of our being is called *Dasein* ("being-there")—our human mode of being for which the relationship to being is its being, determining this relationship through its concerns. However, this determination alters with time as a fluctuating discursivity while absorbing us within a network of concerns by which we can evade our inevitable condition. This inevitability, which also conditions the discursivities determining us, is temporality. Heidegger saw time as our inescapable "own-most" (*eigen*) condition to which we are awoken from the everyday-life when confronted with death. Since time is what ultimately constitutes our being, he considered his project of confronting this facticity an "ontology." And if phenomena are our only genuine access to being, as is the case for a phenomenologist like Heidegger, only as phenomenology is ontology possible. His fundamental ontology<sup>1</sup> thus takes as its theme our own mode of being as determined in time, to view the phenomenon of our own confrontation with being which in turn constitutes our Way of being, to make explicit our process of being—the indeterminate temporality from birth to death, constituting our being according to the manifold ways we understand ourselves. Through such an explication of how the difference between the indeterminacy of being and its determining modes is carried out through us and our interpretations, Heidegger wanted to look at the constituting process of our being. But this view depends upon listening to the comings and goings of phenomena beyond their seizure in linguistic constructs.

Bataille exclaimed that all being is tied to language, according to whose terms its modes of appearance are determined (Bataille 1985:173). In constituting the world, language captures us within a web of intricate relations, a discursive network which works to preserve its current

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<sup>1</sup> "Ontology" is the study of being. Its combination with "phenomenology," which observes and describes the phenomena we are confronted with, without positing anything "metaphysical" above and ruling them, and with "hermeneutics," as the study of how we interpret and understand ourselves, would entail the study of being through the phenomena given to us in our ways of interpreting and understanding. Early on, Heidegger considered his project of confronting this facticity a phenomenology and a hermeneutic, as well as an ontology. See Heidegger, 1922/1992:368. However, these are titles which he later either abandoned or came to emphasize less. Instead, in his attempt to overcome what he saw as the inherent metaphysical nature of philosophy itself, he came to call his thinking, simply, "thinking."

economy<sup>2</sup> based upon a set of assumptions concealing its underlying fluidity and temporality. Bataille says that with universalizing demands, this movement works towards the realization of an inherent totality for the production of stable wholes, a movement of universalizing demands “escalating from the constitution of a city to the composition of the universality of the human race” (ibid:175). However, an instability can also be heard echoing through the assumed wholes masking an entangled labyrinth in which we are inserted as “particles” (ibid: 174–5). Such “wholes” are the work of linguistic posits aiming to legitimate facticity from above, veiling it with the supro-factual. As if heeding this, Heidegger eliminates such linguistically posited grounds, in favor of their wordless underground. This is the groundlessness of time and difference, described by Schurmann as a “play of difference” irreducibly differentiating itself through “a manifold of finite arrangements of phenomena, in ever new topological multiplicities” (1978:365). This is also reminiscent of Nietzsche’s “complex forms of relative life-duration within the flux of becoming” (1901/1967:#715). Foucault expresses this phenomenal flux as a “history of truths” formed by intersecting strategies of power and discourse displacing each other as we occupy the shifting spaces for self-constitution. Even when taken as an absolute law, a phenomenon can legislate only within its period of duration, regardless of its claims to a-temporal’rty. What Schurmann calls “radical phenomenology” listens to this temporal coming-into-presence and going-out-into-absence to show how each “eternal law” is but a phenomenal presence contingent on time which established it in the first place and may topple it for other possibilities. In the act of pointing this out, it would be a critique setting free “the potential of transgression” (1984:361–98).

A phenomenology which looks at these relationships of discursivity and temporality would serve to hasten the toppling of absolutes by showing their contingency. Likewise, Foucault’s genealogy reveals the extra-discursive forces of power with which cognitive claims are caught up. His analyses detect how knowledge and power meet through “fetishes artificially endowed with ultimacy” (Schurmann 1986:305) to constitute us as subjected subjects. This discrediting of normative holds which constitutively crystallize our being, enables us to question the reigning order or any knowledge-regime seeking to impose its rule upon us. Refusing to take positions, such a phenomenology would be a questioning which releases us from borders posited to hold us within unstable limits. An example would be the early Heidegger’s call to loosen the discursive grip of a “hardened tradition.” To dismantle the grip, his phenomenology embarks on a process of questioning concepts traditionally assumed to be grounding principles, “deconstructing” them to their sources which are shown to be temporal, thematically bringing in the “problematic of temporality.” Thus together with an archaeology of knowledge and a genealogy of power, a phenomenology of temporality which liquefies solidifying names into the flow of time, exposing them as epochal and already withering away, may open a space in which previously subjugated or excluded forms of knowledge and ways of being can come into play, allowing the discursive field to pluralize beyond the grip of sameness.

What is revealed behind the loosened hold of absolutes once their solidify has been discredited? Beneath the grounding surface, lies a groundless underground, the rush of the blinding light of night multiplying difference, exhausting the visibility of any graspable identity. Here, there is no *arche* or *principium*. Instead, as Schurmann contends, the ground for our, being and doing is shown to be an-archic: an economy of inter-relations fluctuating without! reasons and princi-

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<sup>2</sup> “Economy” in the Webster’s Dictionary is: “the interaction of the parts or functions of any organized system” (The New Webster’s Dictionary of the English Language. New York: Lexicon Publishing, 1990).

ples.<sup>3</sup> With the destruction of eternities veiling life's phenomenal facticity towards death, being is shown to be the indeterminate differing of singulars, as they come and go, constituting identities through temporal and spatial difference. Thus while Heidegger's analytic of death reveals the phenomenological illegitimacy of claims to eternity, language naming things with universals is also shown to be limited, but according to what? The change of time. In his excellent analysis of Heidegger, Schurmann explains how the claim of what used to appear as a first principle, under the unfolding of phenomenological difference, shows itself to be contingent on time differentiating itself into disparate, multiple, and mobile force-relations, a manifold of shifting grounds which displace each others' pretensions to eternity with no subsistence to overcome their plurality. For Heidegger of his later period, being proves to be the event of this temporal difference, the "epochal presencing" through which finite constellations of truth assemble and disassemble into ever-changing arrangements, the groundlessness designated "anarchy" by Schurmann from which grounds and archai spring forth (see Schurmann 1978:367). For the retrieval of the beginnings of such a phenomenology of anarchy, one may look past Heidegger and Foucault to Meister Eckhart and Nietzsche.

Nietzsche wrote that the world is "midnight," and absolutes, such as "good and evil," are but "intervening shadows and damp depressions and drifting clouds" (1883/1954:165). This "midnight" is a "flux of becoming" within which configurations of forces strive for preservation and enhancement. In a flowing sea "eternally changing and recurring," waves of these forces play through continuous self-creation and self-destruction. From out of this a-moral "will to power," spring forth laws of a "spiritual world" subjectifying us with moral guilt. But for Nietzsche, such subjection is based upon a history of lies floating on a deep sea of indeterminacy, a history which includes the legislations of Kant's "thinking I" concealing its indeterminable givenness with determinations. But this "chaos and anarchy" (Schurmann 1984:374) are no longer to be covered up with morals or categories. Thus according to Heidegger, Nietzsche's "philosophizing with a hammer" means to tap things with a hammer to hear the hollow sound echoing from beyond the surface (see Heidegger 1961/1979:06), a questioning which penetrates through the solid stance into the abyss where forces dance without reason.

This dance was expressed in a versification of Meister Eckhart by Angelus Silesius: "The rose is without why, it flowers because it flowers."<sup>4</sup> Heidegger quoted this verse to show how things ultimately have no foundation, neither archaic nor teleological. But with no solid ground, the dance can also be dreadful. As waves of foundations tumble, we become filled with dread, desiring protective wall# for stability amidst the dispersing multitude, for we cannot bear to endure the "blinding flash" of the night of insufficient reasons into which we are thrown (see Bataille 1985:174-75). In the erection of wall, however, we ourselves become violated prisoners for the furtherance of giving reasons with greater solidity. In this sense, the metaphysics of grounds problematized by Heidegger, is related to the social and ideological givenness of constellational truths confining us with discipline, problematized by Foucault (Schurmann 1986:297). But as Lyotard contends, the more an absolute attempts to assure its grip, the more its vanity is revealed,

<sup>3</sup> See Schurmann 1978:364-67. Arche here is taken to mean the first principle or cause, as the origin of a thing, which dominates its movement or process of being. Since there is no determinate arche at the underground of all grounds, the true a priori here is anarchy.

<sup>4</sup> Angelus Silesius, *Der Cheruhnische Wandersmann*, p.35 quoted numerous times in Heidegger 1957/1991. Heidegger's use of the German mystical poet Silesius' versification of Eckhart is well analyzed in Schurmann 1973, and in Caputo 1986.

exhausting its hold (Lyotard 1983/1988:138–40, 172). In the age of the expanding hegemony of a New Wor(l)d Order, with its rallying word of “democracy,” this is our anxiety faced with the impossibility of postulating standards. Schürmann calls this impossibility the “tragic condition of being” (1993:79).

It is Heidegger’s contention that Nietzsche wanted to place weight upon this condition with a new “revaluation of values” based on a will to power (Heidegger 1961/1979:66). But for Heidegger, this re-positing of values is still metaphysics, this time explicitly based on power and strength instead of “good and evil.” This eventually exhausts the possibility of values as well as willing itself, enabling Heidegger to take Nietzsche’s critique beyond willing. If we accept the phenomenological insight of Nietzsche’s “eternal recurrence,” what echoes through the striving for power is the recurrence of temporal differentiations releasing beings into their own. Thus in contrast to any willful positing of nouns, violence against the determining hold of absolutes is to be undertaken by letting-be this “recurrence,” the indeterminacy of being as a verb, a co-responding to temporality as it differentiates itself to let beings emerge and perish. To understand this, Heidegger calls for an attitude of living without “why” borrowed from Eckhart who said “Man, in the most hidden ground of his being, truly is only when in his own way he is like the rose—without why” (in Schürmann 1978:362). When the letting-be of the temporalizing fluidity of multiplicities loosens the hold of a network of “whys” striving to universalize and eternalize a center, solid borders and bordering solids are allowed to slide, enabling us to think together being and time. This opens what Foucault calls an “experimental inquiry” (1984:50), making transgression possible. Rather than demanding a “why” at all costs, this inquiry relinquishes the monopolizing control of truth-claims. This critique would thus not assume grounds to stop the flow of time, level it to a time of measure, or normalize difference into a grid of sameness, all serving to bind us through the use of names. But in the name of what? Rather, it is a verb transgressing nouns claiming the presence to face the absence they conceal.

Such letting releases us to confront our own essence as the temporalizing process of “ec-sistence”<sup>5</sup> (“transcendence”) in an abyss without supports. We are shown to be fluidly constituted through fluctuating temporal delimitations which are never absolute. As the culmination of each condition entails further conditions, new absolutes are continuously posited and de-posed one after the other. But a critical thoughtfulness relinquishes the vanity of attempting to overcome their displacements once and for all. Instead of immobilizing being on a “fictitious mainstay” with a knowing or willing, we are encouraged to let ourselves be carried by what Schürmann calls an “ecstatic transport” (1982/1990:249–50). Nietzsche pointed to this process of ecstasis by which we go out beyond an identity and into the manifold of possibilities, in a consciousness of difference for enhancement. However, in Heidegger’s opinion, even the will to power is not possible without the will-less releasement enabling one to eo-sist or trans-gress, differing through heterogeneities. Difference cannot be willfully conquered, but only let be. And this points to our being as a temporality of differing constructs as they presence and absence. Like Heidegger’s “ecstatic temporality,” Bataille also spoke of the essence of our being as “ecstatic time,” in which time is not locked in permanent forms and successions of that which can be grasped as a permanence (the now-presence). By turning towards this “original temporality,” Bataille claims that we enter into “concrete existence” to see things in the light of chance. By letting the ec-sistence

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<sup>5</sup> Ec-sistence, from Heidegger’s relating of “existence” (German *Existenz*) to “ecstasis” (Greek *ekstasis*) German *Extase*) with the root meaning of “standing outside,” which later came to be applied to states of mind called “ecstatic.”

of our being be in its concrete unfolding of possibilities, this thinking does what being itself as temporality, difference, and releasement, does.

Therefore, a critique which is to release us from domination would, be phenomenologically founded upon listening to being itself, however indeterminate being may be. Our being, revealed without supports, enables us to transcend and transgress through the manifold of appearing and disappearing solids, each floating with claims of finality on the surface of a deep and turbulent sea. Here, our essence is revealed to be a variable occupying fluctuating spaces opened and closed by the transient borders of epistemic arrangements, analyzed by Foucault as the discursive effects of temporal technologies of power. The explication of this makes possible the appropriation of the flux of difference for the transgression of defining limits shown to be indefinitely unfolding everywhere without limit. This is the voice of indeterminacy concealed behind the determining word of the absolute; it speaks in what Foucault describes as the plentiful void where borders appear and disappear in “ecstatic movement,” where language “discovers its being in the crossing of its limits” (1977:4448).

In this re-crossing of limits, our own nature is shown to be fluid, continuously reestablishing itself. In recognition of this, Nietzsche’s Zarathustra says, “through a hundred souls I have already passed on my way, and through a hundred cradles and birth pangs...my destiny...” But for Nietzsche, this transgressive flux was the will imposing determinations—later shown by Heidegger to be contingent upon will’s releasement, echoing Nietzsche’s own notion of “eternal recurrence.” Within such a flux, the ‘I’ is indeed a singular improbability. This irreducible singularity, called *Dasein* by Heidegger, exists as in each case “mine,” comporting itself towards its horizontal possibility in the openness of being’s “there” (*da*) founded upon temporality (1927/1962:330, 42). What Heidegger calls “ecstatic temporality” is what clears this space of the “there” defining what and how we are, regulating our temporal possibilities (ibid:351; 1975/1988:268, 299). As the very process of one’s “being-in-the-world out-beyond itself,” it is the movement of transcending through temporality, stepping-over each limiting presence to erect further limits. While “transgression” in Foucault is the destruction of given knowledge-power configurations to open further spaces for alternative self-constitution, “transcendence” in Heidegger is the very process of “being-there” through temporality, consisting in an openness to the unfolding of modes of being. For Heidegger, the “self,” as irreducibly singular and indeterminately temporal, is founded upon this “transcendence” as the “ecstatic horizontal constitution of temporality,” the “transcendental horizon” of being’s disclosure,<sup>6</sup> to which we are awoken with “tragic sobriety” on the thin line constituting our presence in the night when and where God is absent. And at this boundary of death, we laugh ecstatically.

This laughter is impelled by the explication of what is already implicit as our being, the fluid releasement of multiple possibilities in the flux of time. Rather than the serious attempt to place and replace utopic positions, liberation would be this laugh in the face of utopian claims, to face instead the process of being and time, releasing us from every appearance that would unify multiplicity, universalize singularity, eternalize temporality, or freeze fluidity with artifi-

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<sup>6</sup> See Heidegger 1975/1988:300, 302; 1927/1962:38.9. One should also keep in mind that Heidegger’s use of the term “transcendence,” comparable to the term ‘*eosistence*,’ which is how I am using it in this paper, is different from how it is commonly used as popularized by Kant and other ‘transcendental’ philosophers who employ it to designate the position of that which ‘transcends’ or is beyond/above the changing world of contingencies. For Heidegger, it is not a static position above the ‘world,’ but rather the movement of *eosistence* through the world of a dynamic flux. While for Kant, the ‘transcendental’ is *a priori* to the world, for Heidegger, “transcendence” is being-in-the-world.

cial supports. Showing being to be this movement of transgression-transcendence, the ontological inquiry yields the strategy of a perpetual critique, deconstructing every universal, to reveal differences, to open possibilities.<sup>7</sup>

Facing one's singular temporal eosisfence makes explicit the ecstatic temporality underlying any historical coming-to-be of a mode of being or presence ruling a specific timeperiod.<sup>8</sup> The appropriation of transgressiontranscendence makes explicit the moment of indeterminacy from which springs forth a determinate mode of being in the temporalizing movement of presencing lying behind every presence.<sup>9</sup> This disperses one's own being into the plurality of unfolding possibilities to reveal being itself to be this very movement: *Gelassenheit*<sup>10</sup> as the "releasement" of which both Heidegger and Eckhart spoke. When differences are thus released from submission to a "prior reduction of categories," what is seen is the plurality of events ceaselessly recurring in a dispersed multiplicity. Foucault calls this, the "recurrence of difference" through which there is being in virtue of "splintering and repetition...in a throw of the dice" (1977:169–70,185,189,192,194). For Bataille, it is the eruption into being for our thinking, which "strangely loses its way" as an "extreme complexity displaced little by little to become a labyrinth" (1985:173). This labyrinth is the necessary backdrop upon which a universal can be posited to "illuminate the night for an instant," only to reveal the nothing beneath one's feet (ibid 175). But the same milestone used for limiting the turbulence with the mask of God, also marks God's death in a storm displacing one's foothold. When grounds shift, instead of a principle to stand on, we are thrown into a storm of anarchy releasing the manifold of archai and principles.

The explicit self-showing of anarchy and the appropriation of its process by letting it be, loosens the hold of principles, specifically the language of representational objectivity in this century penetrating into the nether regions of the unconscious. As many theorists have suggested, from the beginnings of modernity we have become increasingly compartmentalized, as objectified subjects and subjected objects, within a grid of technological instrumentality. What Foucault calls the disciplinary society, instituted by an economy of power, is an instance of this.

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<sup>7</sup> But is this 'releasement' (and/or 'anarchy') not in itself a universal? The answer is "no." While universals seek to determine singulars as particulars, constituting them as participating examples, releasement respects the disparity of singular elements as irreducible to any universal measure or norm. While universals seek to measure the different with sameness and thus to normalize difference, releasement lets difference be, allowing difference and disparity to flourish. To understand this, one must recognize the difference between singulars and particulars: while particulars are always subsumed under the sameness of a universal, singulars can be truly disparate and irreducibly different.

<sup>8</sup> The phenomenology of our temporary reveals the ontological character of what Heidegger calls 'original time' as a horizon of openness—the 'ecstasie-horizonal temporality' making the constitution of our being possible. See Heidegger 1975/1988:267.

<sup>9</sup> 'Presencing' means the movement of "being" as a verb from out of which 'a being' as a noun—an entity or essence—can come to be present according to a "presence" ('essence') as a mode of presencing. Universal concepts and Platonic ideas in this sense are 'presences' by which things present are categorized as particular examples. But regardless of their claims to eternity, they are contingent on the reciprocal pull between presencing and observing back into absence. Schürmann has explained these three senses of being in his various writings on Heidegger, presencing (or "letting presence" as being: *Sein*, *wesen*, *Anwesen lassen*), presence (as beingness, mode of being, or "essence": *Seiendheit*, *Wesen*, *Anwesen*, *entia* . *ousia*) and the present (as entity or (a) being: *Seiende*, *Anwesende*, *ens*, *on*). See Schürmann 1978:358; and his book on Heidegger. As this "spnnging-iorth", presencing is also described by Heidegger in his later writings, as the "saying" of being, the primordial "language" upon which human language with the rules of grammar is founded.

<sup>10</sup> In everyday German, *Gelassenheit* means "calmness" or "composure." But Heidegger, as well as Eckhart (in medieval German) relates this word to the verb *lassen*, "which means 'letting' or 'allowing.'" As such, *Gelassenheit* is taken as the movement of letting-be or releasement



On a larger scale, it is the technological economy of being which Heidegger calls *Gestell* (or “en-framing”). In Heidegger’s analysis, at the beginning of modernity, with Descartes’ notion of the ego cogito, being became molded in accordance with a psychology of a selfconscious ego asserting itself as subject in its representation of the object. Things become forcefully established in advance according to categories of knowledge, reduced to calculation, and determined as objects (see Schurmann 1993:79). But the lack of immediate presence in re-presentation, forced this mode of thinking to go out into the regions of the escaping other, which leaves a trace of absence, in an attempt to justify its existence by forcing its sameness upon it. While projecting the fantasy of autonomy, we have sacrificed ourselves for this purpose of rendering ourselves “free” from worldly contingency to conform to what is taken to be our universal essence. The abyss permeating the manifold of phenomena with difference, including our own being, has been sealed over by this expansion of universal totality in a violent colonization outwards and inwards, for a reductive inclusion and a silencing exclusion of being. The result for Heidegger is the “planetary imperialism of technologically organized man” (1977:152), sped up through mathematical calculation and measurement, entrapping us through what are analyzed by Foucault as techniques of observation, regulation, surveillance, etc. (Foucault 1969/1972:220). We have become ordered for the purpose of further ordering, preserved in what Heidegger calls a “standing-reserve” for the perpetuation of a vast network of processes directed towards getting everything under control.

Through this deployment, competing ideologies brought into proximity are forced into conflict, and simultaneously we are also forced into a struggle with nature for its resources of energy. With the fall of “communism,” this uniformity has come to extend its rallying cry under certain keywords like “democracy,” to colonize other places and spaces for its New World Order. But with the culmination of an exhaustive expansion, at the summit of universality, all existence “explodes and decomposes with violence” (Bataille 1985:175). The same technological efficiency extending its Western discourse with everincreasing speed over the globe, simultaneously spreads it thin in its struggle with the manifold of others, to the point where the hollow abyss can be heard through the delicate mask of false absolutes. The same technology extending its hegemony and engulfing phenomena into a universalized center, has also made it easier for us to venture into the widest orbit where the instability of borders is heightened at the “last frontier” (see Heidegger 1971:126, 141). This duplicity is like the two sides of a sword’s edge, on which we are precariously balanced.<sup>11</sup> On the one side, there is the speedy efficiency of technology transforming objectivity into instrumentality for its perpetuation, entrapping us within its bureaucracy of truth. But on the other side, there is the explicit playing of limits fluctuating at its peripheries. At this critical juncture when we are carried to the “widest orbit,” we are granted a phenomenological gaze from the differing periphery back into the objectifying center. Thus when universality through its expansion is rendered incapable of supporting its posits, a transgressive releasement from the hold of technology into its fluidity of time, appears as a possible avenue. Uncovering the illusion of eternity enduring over time and of universality equalizing difference, it is on this avenue of critique that the already rotting structures are tom to the underground of temporal difference. Bataille described this turbulence as an “...amorous ecstasy (which] tears from God his naive mask...in the crash of time...time released from all bonds...” (Bataille 1985:134). in the history of

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<sup>11</sup> As a thin line this sharp edge splits us in half between knower and known, subject and object, the unconscious and conscious the transcendental T and its empirical experience and cognition of itself.

our struggle against time for the grasp of eternity—"God"—time in its eventful occurrence thus inevitably wins against its temporal children.

This anarchic temporality is what has been there all along as the underlying groundlessness grounding all presence which linger for awhile, the fluid undertow beneath surface patterns of solid'ity. From here, eo-sisfence pulls us towards constant disintegration against uniting constructs which hold us dead still with other-worldly claims. For Schürmann, this would be the transgressive thread presupposed by every legislative event, pulling the resulting norm to dissolution (Schürmann 1984:363). Language, while holding the tendency to solidify the temporality of being into rigid presence conforming to the daims of nouns, also entails this transgressive thread of moving borders of discuraivity within which the present comes and goes as names change accordingly. This is the an-archic difference of temporality and discuraivity: chaos at the heart of order, temporality at the heart of permanence, dispersal at the heart of consolidation, transgression at the heart of legislation, abyss at the heart of ground, discuraivity at the heart of truth, singularity and disparity at the heart of universality, difference at the heart of sameness, anarchy at the heart of law. And for Schürmann, the affirmation of this would be "tragic insight."

This "tragic insight" which listens to the rhythm of time, releases one beyond the measure of sameness to leave room for the manifold of differing alternatives. As such, it is a strategy for resisting totalitarian tendencies. With the exhaustion of absolutes in our times, what is uncovered as their ground making their transitionally fluid but a-rational breaks and folds possible, is their very groundlessness: anarchy as the possibility of our epoch, dancing through the irreducible plurality of disparates. Against the enframing of technological power-structures constituting us as enstatic objects and instruments, radical phenomenology stays sober to these shifts, to listen to the emerging undertow. The result would be the space of anarchic presenting made explicit, a space where possibilities are released in their temporality and eventhood, perpetually unleashing new "realities."<sup>12</sup> Practically speaking, what is yielded is an attitude of resistance against universalizing modes potentially totalitarian, and tolerance towards different ways of being as irreducible. With a weary mistrust over forced attempts at reconciliation, and indeed without the felt need to do so, we would be free to affirm multiplicities and difference. And by letting the modes of differentiations play in their transience, the reversal of power away from the seriousness of a monopolizing truth-regime is made possible. To quote Nietzsche: "is not everything in flux now? Have not ail railings and bridges fallen into the water?" (1883/1954:201). So what lies beyond the railings and bridges? Heidegger answers: "Releasement towards things and openness to the mystery..." (1959/1966:55), the mysterious absence of "why." This is the ultimate difference, but an "ultimate" which is indeterminate—the horror of dark night which one can nonetheless affirm as bright light.<sup>13</sup>

My attempt in this paper was to explore the possibility of an ontology faithful to the phenomena confronting us while liberating us from artificial constructs posited in an attempt to control them. Instead of positing principles claiming a-temporality or universality, such an ontology would reveal for us the constitutive relationships between time, language and being. These relationships constitute the finitude of our being as well as the contingency of any claim to an

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<sup>12</sup> As Schürmann says (1973:273), presenting is founded upon the event as its sole temporal condition. This phenomenology thus overthrows the crystallizing appearance of rigidity by subverting it while making possible on explicit appropriation on our part of its radical mutability. See also Schürmann 1978:367.

<sup>13</sup> In an excerpt from the final chapter of his posthumous book *Broken Hegemonies* Schumann says, "it is possible to love differing ultimate. This...would be expanding the limits of the imagination" (1993:88).

absolute. Instead of uncovering any eternal ground of determination, this shows our being to be an indeterminate process of ec-sistence as determined through a horizon of temporality constituting temporal webs of discursivity. This look at temporality and discursivity would also be a critique, serving to unclothe the vanity behind absolutizing claims. In the resulting transgression of truth-regimes, our being is thus released beyond the hold of such claims, into alternative possibilities. But as a releasement, this violation of each truth-claim (as universal and eternal) is accomplished only with a “non-violent” letting-be of the very finitude of phenomena, limited and temporal. Through this, we come to explicitly face our own “essence” as a singular and temporal horizon within which phenomena come and go, and through which Heidegger is ecstatically constituted and re-constituted: an indeterminate flux of finitizing but fluctuating borders making up the horizon of time into which our temporality is released. With no a-temporal constructs to tie us down to a universal and absolute way of being, our being thus shows itself to be indeterminately fluid but irreducibly singular. By listening to this flux, we can question every claim to an absolute as potentially freezing the fluidity of being, gripping us with its empty word. Radical phenomenology therefore would allow us to hear this emptiness of the word closing its grip upon us—an emptiness through which the fluctuations of temporal difference echo and liquefy beyond the hold of any absolute, eternal or universal. This would release us into our own releasement as a way of thinking corresponding to the way of being without “why,” to hear the sounds of anarchy echoing through the interconstitutive rhythmic relationships of being, language, and time.

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Author's note: My very first published article as a graduate student in 1995 in a peer-reviewed journal (PoMo Magazine) that no longer exists. I elaborate a non-metaphysical phenomenology that is at the same time a way of thinking and a way of being "without why." My starting point is Reiner Schürmann's anarchistic interpretation of Heidegger. It was my first (somewhat sophmoric) attempt to develop a kind of ontology.

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