

LUKÁCS AS A PRECURSOR OF 20TH CENTURY EXISTENTIALISM

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It has been with considerable pleasure that I have accepted the invitation of the organizers of this conference to be dedicated to the theme of "Hungarian Contributions to Scholarship." It is an honor for me to address the participants of this conference, and to speak about, or contribute a modest piece to, the "Hungarian Contributions to Scholarship" in the field of philosophy.

Is "Scholarship" something solid and eternal, to which the different nations have at different times added smaller or larger pieces of contribution? The more or less Platonizing perspective, which this way of putting things suggests, seems nowadays – in an age characterized and indeed invaded by the postmodern – to be more problematic than ever. However, be it as it may, we do not need to raise questions of such enormous import. One way to avoid putting such questions may be to understand the title of this conference as attempting to assess the extent to which Hungarian contributions at different times have come close to, or were equal to, or were moving pretty much in the vicinity of, the foremost level that a given discipline had reached at a given time. In the field of philosophy, Martin Heidegger who has had a long lasting impact on a number of disciplines, is nowadays widely acknowledged to be one of the most outstanding thinkers of our century. It is not insignificant then to realize that some interpreters have discovered, and argued for, parallels between his thought and that of György Lukács. The turn that Heidegger carried out right after World War One – a turn also called the hermeneutic turn,¹ paralleling, or even outweighing, the significance of the well-known "linguistic turn" – proved in several important respects to have a durable impact for decades to come. After World War Two the movement he initiated had come to be called Existentialism – and although this term was firmly rejected by Heidegger himself as an inappropriate characterization of his own thought, and it has become outdated for quite some time, the movement under the name of hermeneutics or hermeneutic philosophy remained influential up to our own days.²

It was Lucien Goldmann – a philosopher of Rumanian origin, who lived and published most of his significant life-work in France – who first presented the surprising and provocative thesis that there is a strict correlation between the

philosophical development of Lukács and Heidegger. Goldmann's remarks, contained in the appendix of his book on Kant, (a book first published in 1945) amounted to two points: first, Lukács' collection of essays, *Soul and Form*, may be regarded as the foundation of modern Existentialism, insofar as it anticipates, and to a certain extent even elaborates, Heidegger's later concepts of *Eigentlichkeit* and *Uneigentlichkeit*; second, the whole of *Being and Time* is a hidden, and perhaps unconscious, polemic with Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness* – a book considered by Goldmann as radically overcoming its author's earlier Existentialism.³ Unfortunately Goldmann did not live to elaborate the subject in detail. His posthumously published book contains no more than an introduction and a collection of lecture notes taken and edited by students.⁴ In this work he focuses almost exclusively on the second point, while neglecting the first. The question is then still open today. My thesis is that Goldmann's observations are fairly justified. Moreover, books by Lukács and Heidegger, published after Goldmann's death in 1970, seem to me to bring to light further evidence in favor of his thesis, making it at the same time more complex and revealing new dimensions of it.

In what follows I propose to address and develop in some detail the first of Goldmann's two points. In doing so, I wish finally to assess it against the background of the change of intellectual and philosophical climate that characterized the first decades of our century in Germany and Austria-Hungary.

One of the central claims that occur in Heidegger's *Being and Time* is that traditional philosophy, in its description of man, operated with totally inadequate concepts, such as "ego cogito," "subject," "spirit," "person," "res cogitans," "consciousness in general." These are domains which on the one hand "remain uninterrogated as to their Being," and on the other tend to describe a "fantastically idealized subject," failing to capture nothing less than the "apriori of the merely 'real' subject, Dasein."⁵ By contrast Heidegger's existential analytic proposes to explore those very dimensions that remained hidden in the classical tradition, and that can eventually also account for the admission of these fictitious subjects. In sheer opposition to that of every other thing, the being of humans, *Dasein*, is characterized for Heidegger by the fundamental fact that it is always their own. Humans can however – and they often do – exist in such a way that their being is not their own. It is these two central modes of being that Heidegger calls authenticity and inauthenticity. Man always lives originally in an inauthentic way and can attain authenticity only in *Sein zum Tode* [*Being-towards-death*] and *Entschlossenheit* [*resoluteness*]. The concept of authentic existence is often explained by interpreters very rudely as some kind of an aristocratic detachment from, and a scornful contempt of, everyday life – an interpretation which a closer reading of the relevant texts dismisses as wholly unfounded. Authenticity, insofar as it derives from inauthenticity, remains for ever bound to it; it is, as it were, blocked at half way. Authenticity, if I may use a paradox definition, is but the constant

transition, or passage, from the inauthentic existence to the authentic. Authenticity is not a kind of independent and self-autonomous realm opposed to inauthenticity. To put it roughly, authenticity consists in setting consciously a limit to one's manifold possibilities, a limitation seen from now on against the background of one's ultimate possibility, that is, death. Once taken the resolution is capable of transforming one's life into a *whole* and lending it *selfhood* [*Ganzheit, Selbstheit*]. The structure of authenticity contains then in Heidegger the mutually related elements of the whole, or totality, and selfhood. Being-towards-death is the primary answer to the question of the whole and the resolution to that of selfhood.⁷ The interrelatedness of the same structural elements in the concept of authenticity, and sometimes even the same terms, occur in the early work of Lukács.

The search for authentic existence, for selfhood, is the central theme of the most important essay in Lukács' *Soul and Form*, entitled "The Metaphysics of Tragedy." "The deepest longing of human existence is [...] the longing of man for selfhood [*Selbstheit*],"⁸ writes Lukács here and finds that only tragical heroes can reach it. "In ordinary life," we can read further, "we experience ourselves [*erleben wir uns*] only peripherally"; "our life has no real necessity here"; "in life nothing is unambiguous."⁹ The point of reaching one's own personality coincides, curiously enough, with a sort of de-personalization consisting in getting rid of, and leaving behind, the confused variety of psychological motives and properties so characteristic of people in everyday life. The abundance as well as the domination of individual habits, customs, inclinations, and their determining role in human relations of modern life, are seen by Lukács as a sign of decadence, dispersion, alienation. The realm of what he calls "psychology," or "empirical psychology," and its reflection in art, impressionism, is one of chaos, which makes it almost impossible for people to communicate among themselves. In this aversion for psychology, Lukács's attitude shows apparent parallels with the anti-psychologism of many contemporary thinkers, such as Husserl and Wittgenstein,¹⁰ and also with Heidegger whose central thesis was that psychology can by no means claim to be a leading science in the examination of human beings.¹¹

The concept that serves Lukács' effort to show the transition from inauthentic existence to selfhood, as well as to differentiate between the two modes of living, is that of limit [*Grenze*]. Since inauthentic existence knows of no limits, it is small wonder that the moment in which the tragic hero finds himself, his own personality, is identical with his becoming conscious of his own unsurmountable limits. "The experiencing of the limit [*Das Erleben der Grenze*] is the awakening of the soul to consciousness, to self-consciousness."¹² It is the limit that gives the hero selfhood, and the limit in itself, Lukács says significantly, is death. The limit however, explains Lukács, should not be conceived as merely external. It is "only outwardly a limiting and possibility-destroying principle. For the awakened soul it is the recognition of that which is truly its own."¹³ The limit is seen to be external

only from the point of view of inauthentic man, for whom real existence, freedom, is equivalent with “being liberated from all bonds [...] from every strong interior bond.”¹⁴ Becoming conscious of the limit is gaining a new and definite knowledge. In everyday life, however, “people hate and fear the unambiguous.”¹⁵ – Apart from the apparent similarities with Heidegger’s later analyses, here we also come upon an identity in terminology. For one of the concepts applied by Heidegger in his description of inauthentic existence, of *das Man*, is *Zweideutigkeit*.¹⁶

The word “Grenze” rarely occurs in Heidegger, and when it does, it has different connotations. There is another concept, however, that bears much the same methodological function and is elaborated in great detail: namely *finitude*. By way of illustration let me quote just two examples: “Once one has grasped the finitude of one’s existence, it snatches one back from the endless multiplicity of possibilities which offer themselves as closest to one—those of comfortableness, shirking, and taking things lightly – and brings Dasein into the simplicity of its *fate* [Schicksal].” “Only authentic temporality, which is at the same time finite, makes possible something like fate [...]”¹⁷ It should also be noted that the concept of “Schicksal” is also found in Lukács’s essay “The Metaphysics of Tragedy” and is reserved, just as in Heidegger, for the authentic way of existence. A further parallel is that both Lukács and Heidegger connect in their analyses authenticity and guilt.¹⁸

The Lukácsian characterization of everyday life shows considerable resemblance to Heidegger’s analyses of *Alltäglichkeit* and *das Man*. There is an important difference, however, between the vivid and pictorial style of the Lukácsian essays and the highly compressed phenomenological language of Heidegger. Describing *Alltäglichkeit*, Lukács does not stick to a single term; he uses expressions such as “gewöhnliches Leben” [ordinary life], “wirkliches Leben,” or just “Leben.” In a subsequent work, however, generally known as the *Heidelberg Aesthetics*, written during World War One but published only posthumously in 1974, we can find a rigorously philosophical – I should say the first properly philosophical – analysis of *Alltäglichkeit* fixed terminologically as *Erlebnismwirklichkeit*. The description of the subject of *Erlebnismwirklichkeit*, named also “*der ganze Mensch*,” within the framework of a Neokantian-Husserlian philosophical perspective may be regarded as a mediating link between his earlier essays and Heidegger’s subsequent analysis of *Alltäglichkeit*.

What is characteristic of “*ganze Mensch*,” we can read here, is that the “expansion of his subjectivity knows of no obstacle and no limits”; “he is as subject, on the one hand, without any objective bond whatsoever [...], on the other, he is at the mercy of the objects of his lived experiences [Erlebnisse]: he is only in so far as he has some lived experience with regard to an object. This ambiguity of unlimited arbitrariness and bondage without norm,” Lukács concludes, “makes the subject amorphous and nebulous.”¹⁹ “*Schrankenlose Willkür*” [un-

limited arbitrariness] and “*normenlose Gebundenheit*” [bondage without norm] are two opposed and yet closely connected poles of everyday existence in which, as he wrote earlier, everything is always possible because nothing is ever fulfilled and inversely, nothing is ever fulfilled because everything is, and remains, always possible.²⁰ And the adjectives “*gestaltlos*” and “*verschwimmend*” remind us of the world of *das Man*, characterized by the fact that “everyone is the other, and no one is himself.”²¹

In another collection of essays, *Aesthetic Culture*, Lukács writes that complete freedom is the most terrible bondage, the most cruel enslavement, because one is at the mercy of what the ever changing instants happen to offer him.²² The dissolution of everything organic, or, as he wrote, of “every strong interior bond,” is the manifestation of freedom in the world of inauthentic existence. These are phenomena to which Heidegger applies terms like “*Bodenlosigkeit*” [groundlessness] and “*Zerstreuung*” [dispersion].²³ Every kind of stability has disappeared from life, Lukács complains, and then it is no mere accident that authentic existence should by contrast reveal stability. Heidegger also lays great emphasis on the stability of the self; and in his analysis of authenticity, of “*vorlaufende Entschlossenheit*,” he arrives at uniting the structural elements of “*Selbstheit*,” “*Ständigkeit*,” and “*Selbstständigkeit*.” In one of his typical and revealing neologisms he opposes “*Selbstständigkeit*” to the “*Unselbstständigkeit*” of *das Man* and the “*Beharrlichkeit*” of things.²⁴ Stability as an element is contained in the Lukácsian concept of “*Grenze*” too. “[The soul] exists because it is limited; it is only because and insofar as it is limited,” he writes in “The Metaphysics of Tragedy,” and in his dialogue on *Sterne* one of the protagonists says: “we must never forget that there are limits within us which are not drawn by our own weakness or cowardice or lack of sensibility [...] but by life itself. By our own life. [...] We feel that our life lies only within these limits, and whatever is outside them is mere sickness and dissolution. Anarchy is death. That is why I hate it and fight against it. In the name of life. In the name of the richness of life.”²⁵

The repugnance against the idea of man becoming God, the idea of the infinite, the Absolute – an almost indispensable requisite of classical philosophy – is an ever recurring theme in the texts of both thinkers. Humans, Lukács and Heidegger suggest, in order to be able to live and act *qua* humans should be finite and limited and ought also to accept their finitude and limits in making them the conditions of their activity. “It is only for an abstractly absolute idea of man that everything human is possible,” Lukács remarks significantly, suggesting that those ideas contribute only to make man more and more rootless. The idea of divine existence, when referred to man, becomes contradictory, he claims in quoting approvingly Paul Ernst: “Can I still want when there is nothing that I cannot do [Kann ich noch wollen, wenn ich alles kann]?” He then proceeds to ask: “Can a god live?”²⁶ meaning of course not the mere conceivability of divine life but this: could man, if he were unlimited, still live; that is to say, have aims

and realize them? Does not perfection make every active existence impossible? And the answer, clearly suggested but not provided by Lukács himself, may be given by Wittgenstein's words: "Not only is there no guarantee of the temporal immortality of the human soul," he writes, "[...] but, in any case, this assumption completely fails to accomplish the purpose for which it has always been intended. Or is some riddle solved by my surviving for ever? Is not this eternal life as much of a riddle as our present life?"²⁷ I think it is needless to dwell upon the central role which "*Grenze*" and other similar concepts play both in the *Tractatus* and in his later work, or upon Wittgenstein's constant refusal of the idea of man's unlimited autonomy.²⁸ In the above formulation Wittgenstein plainly turns the fundamental question upside down. And also Heidegger thinks that the question primarily to be answered is not why man is finite and not infinite, or whether and how he can ever attain to the infinite. The question to be asked is, rather, why, under what conditions man, who is originally and definitely finite, comes to ask the question concerning the infinite and whether, to put it bluntly, the form of life it suggests, the constant pursuit of the infinite, leads him selfhood or not.²⁹

That is the new starting point of philosophy in the first decades of the 20th century, a point of departure that may both transcend and comprehend in itself the perspective of classical philosophy: overcome its restrictions and still not totally break with it. The question concerning the Absolute need not be wholly dispensed with, as if it were a mere historical relic; nor for that matter has it to be embraced uncritically as a necessary and self-evident question philosophies of all times should ask. It may be preserved, but in any case the occasional shifts of meaning, which it may have undergone from an age to another, are to be taken into account. Seen in this light, I think it would be too much to say that the attack launched against the Absolute should imply a radical break with it: it means rather an abandonment of its old concept and the elaboration of a new one. For not only is the concept of finite authentic existence a rival of that of the Absolute, but is, for this very reason, a new concept of it.

What is the reason, we might ask finally, that these significant thinkers launched an attack against *that* idea of the Absolute – an idea that eventually cast the previous century under its spell? The obvious answer would be to say that the reason is that the hopes and expectations connected to it had not, or had only partly, come true. But I think it would also be true, or perhaps truer, to say that the change of the intellectual atmosphere in Austria-Hungary and in Germany at the beginning of our century is due to the fact that those ideas *did* come true and in doing so, they revealed their internal contradictions and turned finally into their respective opposites. The idea of total freedom e.g., when put into practice, turned out to be a world of inauthenticity, mediocrity, an ever growing mechanization of life, a world of *das Man* – the very opposite of what was contained in the idea. It is the diagnosis of this fact, the elaboration of concepts for its comprehension, as well as of a philosophical perspective for a new under-

standing of the humans and their world that these thinkers accomplished – a perspective which was itself to be subject to various transformations in their subsequent philosophical thought.³⁰

Notes

1. See, e. g., David C. Hoy: "Heidegger and the Hermeneutic Turn," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Ch. Guignon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 170–194. I may also refer to my paper "Heidegger's Postwar Turn: The Emergence of the Hermeneutic Viewpoint of His Philosophy and the Idea of 'Destruktion' on the Way to *Being and Time*," in *Phenomenology and Beyond: Selected Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*, vol. 21, eds. John D. Caputo and Lenore Langsdorf (*Philosophy Today*, vol. 40, n. 1, Spring 1996), 9–35.
2. In Otto Pöggeler's characterization "that which is called Existentialism has resumed motives from life philosophy and linked itself with phenomenological philosophy"; thereby, however, "it attained its prominent form not by taking 'private' limit situations as its point of departure, for in it the question was asked about how philosophy and technology shape our world, or what kind of meaning the arts and the human sciences have in a world dominated by technology, etc. If this philosophy attempts to understand as well as interpret the way in which we come across that which is in the particular spheres of our world in different ways, and if it thereby tries to draw upon the history of philosophy, that is to say, its own history, then one is entitled to speak about a 'hermeneutic' philosophy, rather than about 'Existentialism', or about existential ontology and phenomenology." O. Pöggeler, "Hermeneutische Philosophie," in *Heidegger und die hermeneutische Philosophie* (Freiburg/München: Alber, 1983), 251f.: ["das, was als Existenzialismus angesprochen wird, [hat] Motive der Lebensphilosophie fortgeführt und sich mit der phänomenologischen Philosophie verbunden", wodurch "es seine maßgebliche Prägung nicht durch den Ausgang von 'privaten' Grenzsituationen erhielt, da in ihm ja gerade gefragt wurde, wie Wissenschaft und Technik unsere Welt gestalten, welchen Sinn die Kunst und die Geisteswissenschaften in einer vorwiegend technisch geprägten Welt haben, usf. Wenn dieses Philosophieren zu verstehen und auszulegen versucht, wie uns in den einzelnen Sphären unserer Welt das, was ist, in unterschiedlicher Weise begegnet, und wenn es dabei die Geschichte der Philosophie, also die Geschichte seiner selbst, gegenwärtig zu halten sucht, dann kann man eher als von 'Existenzialismus' oder auch von existenzialer Ontologie und Phänomenologie von einer 'hermeneutischen' Philosophie sprechen."] See recently Jean Grondin, *Der Sinn für Hermeneutik* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1994), XII: "[In contemporary philosophy] hermeneutics has, in fact, taken the place of phenomenology and existential philosophy as the main forms of the so-called continental philosophy; by doing so, it has at the same time also entered upon their inheritance." ["Faktisch hat die Hermeneutik die Phänomenologie und die Existenzphilosophie als die Hauptform der sog. kontinentalen Philosophie abgelöst, aber zugleich auch deren Erbe angetreten."]. More in detail, see J. Grondin, *Sources of Hermeneutics* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995), 1ff. – See also Gunter Scholtz: "Was ist und seit

- wann gibt es 'hermeneutische Philosophie'?" *Dilthey-Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Geschichte der Geisteswissenschaften*, 8 (1992–93): 93–119.
3. See L. Goldmann, *Mensch, Gemeinschaft und Welt in der Philosophie Immanuel Kants. Studien zur Geschichte der Dialektik* (Zürich/New York: Europa Verlag, 1945), 241ff. In the French edition of the book *La communauté humaine et l'univers chez Kant* (Paris: Presses Universitaire de France, 1948), Goldmann omitted this appendix.
 4. L. Goldmann, *Lukács et Heidegger, Fragments posthumes établis et présentés par Youssef Ishaghpour* (Paris: Denoël/Gonthier, 1973); English translation: *Lukács and Heidegger: Towards a New Philosophy* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977).
 5. M. Heidegger *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 43f., 125f., 272.
 6. See, e.g., *ibid.*, 168, 224, 344f.
 7. For a more detailed discussion of the reciprocal connection of these two elements in Heidegger's concept of authenticity, see my paper "Eigentlichkeit, Gewissen und Schuld in Heideggers 'Sein und Zeit': Eine Interpretation mit Ausblicken auf seinen späteren Denkweg," *Man and World*, 23 (1990): 35–62, esp. 36f.
 8. G. Lukács, *Soul and Form*, trans. Anna Bostock (London: The Merlin Press, 1974), 162. (First German edition: *Die Seele und die Formen* (Berlin: Egon Fleischel, 1911); first Hungarian edition: *A lélek és a formák. Kísérletek* (Budapest: Franklin, 1910).
 9. G. Lukács, *Soul and Form*, 157, 40. (Here and subsequently I have sometimes slightly modified the translations.)
 10. See, e.g., L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, 5.641; E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, vol. 1, esp. §§ 17ff.
 11. See, e.g., *Being and Time*, § 10.
 12. *Soul and Form*, 161.
 13. *Ibid.*, 162.
 14. *Ibid.*, 173 ["von allem, was stark und von innen bindet"].
 15. *Ibid.*, 153.
 16. Cf. *Being and Time*, § 37.
 17. *Ibid.*, 435, 437.
 18. See *Soul and Form*, 165: "Through guilt, man says 'Yes' to everything that has happened to him; by feeling it to be his own action and his own guilt, he conquers it [...];" on Heidegger, see my paper quoted above in note 7, 44ff.
 19. G. Lukács, *Heidelberger Ästhetik (1916–1918)*, Lukács, *Werke*, vol. 17, eds. Gy. Márkus and F. Benseler (Darmstadt und Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1974), 34: "die Ausdehnung seiner Subjektivitätändliche Gebundenheit [...] ist, andererseits jedoch vollständig den Objekten seiner Erlebnisse ausgeliefert ist: er ist nur insofern als er an einem Objekt [...] etwas erlebt [...] Diese Doppelseitigkeit der schrankenlosen Willkür und der normenlosen Gebundenheit macht das Subjekt von sich aus [...] gestaltlos und verschwimmend [...]."
 20. See *Soul and Form*, 153.
 21. *Being and Time*, 165.
 22. G. Lukács, "Eszttétikai kultúra," in Lukács, *Ifjúkori művek (1902–1918)*, ed. Á. Timár (Budapest: Magvető, 1977), 425; first edition in Lukács, *Eszttétikai kultúra* (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1913).
 23. See *Being and Time*, 43, 223, 441f.

24. *Ibid.*, § 64: 364ff., especially 369f.
25. *Soul and Form*, 128f.
26. *Ibid.*, 161, 162.
27. L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* 6.4312.
28. See, e.g., his Preface to the *Tractatus* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1922, 27), further *ibid.*, 5.6, 5.61. For a detailed discussion of Wittgenstein's conservative *Weltanschauung*, see Ch. Nyíri's paper, "Wittgenstein's Later Work in Relation to Conservatism," in *Wittgenstein and His Times*, ed. B. McGuinness Oxford: Blackwell, 1982, 44–68.
29. On the non-originality of infinite time and its derivation from finite time, see *Being and Time*, § 65 (esp. 378ff.), and § 81 (esp. 476f.).
30. Lukács, for example, was to adopt later the standpoint of a Hegelian-Marxian philosophy of history which Goldmann claimed was an overcoming of his early "Existentialism"; still later, he retracted this and ambiguously subscribed to a more or less orthodox viewpoint of *Diamat*. For a discussion of the second of Goldmann's two points, as well as for comparisons between Lukács and Heidegger against the background of their philosophical paths and their political engagements, see my papers, "Heidegger und Lukács. Überlegungen zu L. Goldmanns Untersuchungen aus der Sicht der heutigen Forschung," *Mesotes. Zeitschrift für philosophischen Ost-West-Dialog*, 1/1 (1991), 25–38; "Heidegger und Lukács. Eine Hundertjahresbilanz" in *Wege und Irrwege des neueren Umganges mit Heideggers Werk. Ein deutsch-ungarisches Symposium*, ed. I. M. Fehér (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1991), 43–70; and "Fakten und Apriori in der neueren Beschäftigung mit Heideggers politischem Engagement," in *Zur philosophischen Aktualität Heideggers*, eds. D. Papenfuß and O. Pöggeler, vol 1, *Philosophie und Politik* (Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 1991), 380–408. For comparisons between Lukács and Heidegger in the context of the history of philosophy, I may refer to my papers "Lask, Lukács, Heidegger: The Problem of Irrationality and the Theory of Categories," in *Martin Heidegger. Critical Assessments*, ed. C. Macann (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1992), vol. 2, 373–405; and "Parallelen zwischen Heideggers und Lukács' Schelling-Interpretation," (in *Philosophie der Subjektivität? Zur Bestimmung des neuzeitlichen Philosophierens*), eds. H. M. Baumgartner and W. G. Jacobs (Stuttgart – Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1993), vol. 2, 391–402.

Given the specific purposes of this paper, it may be in order to make two further points. First, it should not be ignored that there are several important differences between Lukács' and Heidegger's position, which could not be discussed here. The major one is perhaps that authentic existence in Heidegger, contrary to the understanding the young Lukács has of it, as well as to the way the old Lukács viewed Heidegger's position in his late work (mainly in *The Destruction of Reason*), does not have a necessarily tragic character. This point was given much prominence by Jan Patočka, who claimed that Heidegger's "analysis of Being-towards-death is discussed by Lukács in a superficial manner; it is, however, obvious." He went on to argue, "that Lukács goes on understanding it in terms of his own 'Metaphysics of Tragedy'. [...] He overlooks totally the fact that Heideggerian Dasein and its authentic existence do not necessarily have tragic character, that it is not so much in factual death, as in taking over the responsibility, and in opening up the situation in a responsible way, that Dasein reaches an unavoidable height of its existence." Patočka also added—and this is a further difference between Lukács and Heidegger—that "there is here [in Heidegger] no question about leaving the social and his-

torical domains, rather inversely: it is very much a question of opening oneself radically, or keeping oneself open, for them. In such a way Lukács has, in his interpretation of Heidegger's philosophy, fallen a victim to his own Existentialist beginnings, which he had failed to think over coherently. Heidegger's main intention, that of breaking up the concept of the closed subjectivity, is thus wholly overlooked." (Jan Patočka, "Heidegger vom anderen Ufer," in *Durchblicke: Martin Heidegger zum 80. Geburtstag* (Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 1970), 394–411; quote on 402: "Die Analyse des Seins zum Tode bei Heidegger wird nur flüchtig berührt, es ist aber offenbar, daß Lukács sie noch immer von seiner 'Metaphysik der Tragödie' aus versteht. [...] Es entgeht ihm vollständig, daß das Dasein Heideggers und seine eigentliche Existenz gerade *keinen* notwendig tragischen Charakter haben, daß sie im faktischen Tode keine unumgängliche Aufgipfelung besitzen, sondern in der Verantwortung und dem verantwortlichen Erschließen der Situation [...]. [...] es sich hier nicht um das Verlassen der Sozialität und der Geschichte handelt, sondern im Gegenteil um eine ursprüngliche Aufgeschlossenheit, Offenheit für sie. So ist Lukács bei seiner Interpretation der Heideggerschen Philosophie zum Opfer seiner eigenen, philosophisch nicht zu Ende gedachten existentialistischen Anfänge geworden. Die Grundabsicht Heideggers, die geschlossene Subjektivität aufzubrechen, wird dadurch aus den Augen verloren."

The second point is related to a further connection between Lukács and Heidegger that emerged recently and may be seen to have some relevance precisely in anticipating certain main features of contemporary hermeneutic philosophy (see notes and above). Following a suggestion of Lucien Goldmann's, Gadamer has recently claimed that certain passages of Lukács' Heidelberg manuscripts, possibly under the impact of Emil Lask's anti-idealistic turn and his reception of American pragmatism, show the influence of the latter (even with regard to terminology) and come close to Heidegger's analysis of the enviroing world in *Being and Time*. See H.-G. Gadamer, "Erinnerungen an Heideggers Anfänge," in *Dilthey-Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Geschichte der Geisteswissenschaften*, 4 (1986/87): 24. Following up on Gadamer's hints we see that Lukács does in fact characterize what he calls *Erlebniswirklichkeit* as a 'world of pragmatism,' and if we search for Heideggerian parallels or anticipations, the following passage might prove useful: "Das 'Denken' der Erlebniswirklichkeit ist [...] nichts anderes, als der Versuch, sich der Wirklichkeit der dem handelnden 'ganzen Menschen' gegenüberstehenden, hemmenden oder fördernden Gebilde zu bemächtigen" (Lukács, *Heidelberger Ästhetik*, 29, 31). The "'Denken' der Erlebniswirklichkeit," so characterized (and not terminologically emphasized), shows obvious parallels to Heidegger's *Umsicht*, namely in so far as "der gebrauchend-hantierende Umgang ist [...] nicht blind, er hat seine eigene Sichtart, die das Hantieren führt und ihm seine spezifische Sicherheit verleiht [...] die *Umsicht*." *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1979), 69; or *Being and Time*, 98: "when we deal with [things] by using them and manipulating them, this activity is not a blind one; it has its own kind of sight, by which our manipulation is guided [...]. [It] is *circumspection*." What the "'Denken' der Erlebniswirklichkeit" and "Umsicht" have in common is characteristically that neither of them is the application of already existing theoretical knowledge; Lukács, *Heidelberger Ästhetik*, 31: "Ein kontemplatives 'Denken' ist auf dem Niveau der Erlebniswirklichkeit per definitionem unmöglich, denn durch den Akt des simpelsten Meinens ist die Erlebniswirklichkeit aufgehoben. [...] Daneben bleibt aber

zweifellos die Tatsache bestehen, dass aus der Erlebnistotalität des 'ganzen Menschen' das Denken doch nicht ausgeschaltet werden kann."

And Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 69 (*Being and Time*, 99): "Das 'praktische' Verhalten ist nicht 'atheoretisch' im Sinne der Sichtlosigkeit, und sein Unterschied gegen das theoretische Verhalten liegt nicht nur darin, daß hier betrachtet und dort gehandelt wird, und daß das Handeln, um nicht blind zu bleiben, theoretisches Erkennes anwendet." [*'Practical' behaviour is not 'atheoretical' in the sense of sightlessness. The way it differs from theoretical behaviour does not lie simply in the fact that in theoretical behaviour one observes, while in practical behaviour one acts, and that action must employ theoretical cognition if it is not remain blind...*]