

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
53RD ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE HEIDEGGER CIRCLE

NAZARETH COLLEGE | ROCHESTER, NY | MAY 16 - 19, 2019

CONFERENCE THEME:

F R E E D O M



Proceedings of the 53rd Annual Meeting
of the Heidegger Circle

Nazareth College
Rochester, NY
May 16-19, 2019

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53rd Annual Heidegger Conference
Nazareth College
Conference Program

Thursday, May 16th in the Medaille Formal Lounge

Shuttles Leave from the Woodcliff Hotel at 12:45PM and 1:15PM.

**1:30-3:00 Informal Discussion about Publishing on Heidegger
in the Medaille Dining Room. (Coffee and Cookies)**

Additional Shuttles Leave from the Woodcliff Hotel at 2:15PM and 2:45PM.

3:10-3:30: Opening Remarks

3:30-5:00 Extensions and Interpretations

Moderator, Alex Bertland, Niagara University

Matthew Clemons, Stony Brook University

“Reading the First Epistle of John with the Method of Formal Indication”

Jill Drouillard, Richland College

“(Re)productive Tensions: Aletheiac Revealing in Morisot’s ‘Cradle’ and ‘Wet Nurse’”

Karl von der Luft, St. John’s College, Santa Fe

“Heidegger, Caesar, and the Violent Disclosure of Being in the Roman Context”

5:00-6:00 Freedom in *Being and Time*

Moderator: Brandon Absher, D’Youville College

Andrea Conque, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“‘*Volo, ut sis*:’ Freedom as Co-Disclosure in Heidegger’s *Being and Time*”

Guy Elgat, Northwestern University

“Heidegger’s Reversal of Reasoning: Guilt and Freedom in *Being and Time*”

6:00-7:00 Check-In to Dorms

Thursday Evening, May 16th

7:00 to 9:00: Reception in the Lobby of the Glazer Performing Arts Center (near parking Lot A)
on the Nazareth College campus.

Shuttles Return to the Woodcliff Hotel at 9:00PM and 9:30PM.

Friday, May 17th in the Medaille Formal Lounge

Shuttles Leave from the Woodcliff Hotel at 8:00AM and 8:30AM.

8:30-9:00 Coffee, Tea, Bagels, and Muffins

9:00-10:00 Heidegger, Freedom, and Metaphysics

Moderator: Rex Gilliland, Southern Connecticut State University

Greg Fried, Boston College

“Seeing Double: Plato and Heidegger through the Lens of Frederick Douglass”

Taylor Carman, Barnard College

“Heidegger’s Disavowal of Metaphysics”

10:00-11:00 On *Lethe* and Nothingness

Moderator: Ian Tan Xing Long, University of Warwick

Richard Colledge, Australian Catholic University

“Heidegger on the Nothing and Anaximander’s ἄπειρον: The Lethic Character of Being”

Elena Bartolini, University of Milano-Bicocca

“Heidegger on No-thing and the Principle of Non-contradiction: Onto-logical Consequences on Dasein’s Thrownness and its Freedom”

11:00-11:15 Coffee Break

11:15-12:15 On Reading and Meaning

Moderator: Jake Reeder, Marist College

John Krummel, Hobart and William Smith Colleges

“Lask, Heidegger, and Nishida: From Meaning as Object to Horizon and Place”

Rodrigo Therezo, University of Freiburg

“Free to Read Otherwise: Heidegger Deciphering Hölderlin”

12:15-1:15 Lunch (Cabaret in the Shults Center)

1:15-2:45 Concerning Heidegger and Disability Studies: On Embodiment and Freedom

Moderator: Corey McCall, Elmira College

Christine Wieseler, University of Kentucky

“Heideggerian Ontology, Relational Autonomy, and Disability”

Jen Scuro, College of New Rochelle

“The Worlding of the World through Prosthesis”

Devonya Havis, Canisius College

“Race and Disability as Technologies: Effects and Tactical Refusals”

2:45-3:45 Panel Presentation: Is Heidegger a Phenomenologist?

Moderator: Larry Berger, New School for Social Research

Michael Sigris, George Washington University

Michael Steinman, Stevens Institute of Technology

3:45-4:00 Coffee Break

4:00-5:00 Approaches to Trauma

Moderator: Bradley Kaye, Niagara University

Lillith Don, George Washington University

“The Multi-Dimensionality of Being-in-the-world: A Phenomenology of Identity”

Reg Lilly, Skidmore College

“...a motherless child.’ Heidegger's Abject Bodies”

5:00-6:30 William J. Richardson’s Reading of Heidegger

Moderator: Scott M. Campbell, Nazareth College

Babette Babich, Fordham University

“William J. Richardson, S.J. and the Spelling of Marilyn Monroe: On Truth, Science, and the ‘Unfolding of Man’ in Heidegger and Lacan”

Richard Capobianco, Stonehill College

“Bill, Facticity, and Eternity”

Shuttles Return to the Woodcliff Hotel at 7:00PM (if you want to have dinner at the Woodcliff) and then again at 10:30PM from the Schoen Place Parking Lot Next to the Coal Tower Restaurant.

Saturday, May 18th in the Medaille Formal Lounge

Shuttles Leave from the Woodcliff Hotel at 8:00AM and 8:30AM.

8:30-9:00 Coffee, Tea, Bagels, and Muffins

9:00-10:00 Readings of Aristotle

Moderator: John T. Edelman, Nazareth College

Lucas Fain, Boston University

“The Presuppositions of *Being and Time*: Heidegger’s Interpretation of Aristotle in the Summer Course of 1924”

Sean Kirkland, DePaul University

[Oral Presentation] “The Destruction of Three Aristotelian Concepts: *Ousia*, *Zôon Logon Echon*, and *Dunamis*”

10:00-11:00 Freedom after *Being and Time* I: Ontologies

Moderator: Joshua Dawson, Loyola Marymount University

Stefan Schmidt, University of Wuppertal

“Thinking Transcendence: Heidegger’s Ontological Concept of Freedom”

Jim Bahoh, Marquette University

“Alienation and Freedom in Heidegger’s *Beiträge*”

11:00-11:15 Coffee Break

11:15-12:45 Book Panel: *Heidegger's Gods: An Ecofeminist Perspective* (Rowman and Littlefield)

Moderator: Matthew J. Kruger-Ross, West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Commentator: Trish Glazebrook, Washington State University

Commentator: West Gurley, Sam Houston State University

Respondent: Susanne Dawn Claxton, Southern New Hampshire University

12:45-2:15 Lunch and Business Meeting, Medaille Formal Lounge
(Catered Lunch for Business Meeting Attendees)

2:15-3:45 Heidegger in the 1930's: Three Recent Books

Moderator: Krzysztof Ziarek, University at Buffalo

Richard Polt, Xavier University

Time and Trauma: Thinking Through Heidegger in the Thirties (Rowman & Littlefield)

Adam Knowles, Drexel University

Heidegger's Fascist Affinities: A Politics of Silence (Stanford University Press)

Daniela Vallega-Neu, University of Oregon

Heidegger's Poietic Writings: From Contributions to The Event (Indiana University Press)

3:45-4:00 Coffee Break

4:00-5:00 On "The Origin of the Work of Art"

Moderator: Paul Bruno, Framingham State University

Will McNeill, DePaul University

"Tracing the Rift: Heidegger, Hölderlin, and 'The Origin of the Work of Art'"

Khafiz Kerimov, DePaul University

"'Thatness,' Freedom, and Possibility in *Being and Time* and 'The Origin of the Work of Art'"

5:00-6:30 Panel Presentation: Heidegger and Nietzsche

Moderator: Alex Eustice-Corwin, University of Rochester

John Rose, Goucher College

Julia Goesser Assaiante, Trinity College

S. Montgomery Ewgen, Trinity College

Murungi, Towson University

BANQUET: 7:00-10:00, Erie Grill at the Del Monte Lodge (15 minute walk from the Nazareth College campus). Shuttles Return to the Woodcliff Hotel from the Del Monte Lodge at 10:00PM and 10:30PM.

Sunday, May 19th in the Medaille Formal Lounge

Shuttles Leave from the Woodcliff Hotel at 8:00AM and 8:30AM.

8:30-9:00 Coffee, Tea, Bagels, and Muffins

9:00-10:30 Teaching Panel: “The Question Concerning Technology”

Moderator: Chris Merwin, Emory University

Bob Scharf, University of New Hampshire

Silvia Benso, Rochester Institute of Technology

Roisin Lally, Gonzaga University

Kevin Aho, Florida Gulf Coast University

10:30-10:45 Coffee Break

10:45-11:45 Freedom after *Being and Time II*: Time & Possibility

Moderator: Brian Schroeder, Rochester Institute of Technology

Renxiang Liu, McGill University

“The Fateful Releasement into World-Time: On the Temporality of Freedom in Heidegger, 1927-1937”

Hans Pedersen, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

“Heidegger, Freedom, and Alternate Possibilities”

11:45-12:45 Sartre, Kant, and Idealism

Moderator: Adrian Arellano, Nazareth College

Justin Remhof, Old Dominion University

“Sartre’s Challenge to Idealism in Heidegger”

Morganna Lambeth, Purdue University

“A Tale of Two Faculties: Heidegger’s Method of Interpreting Kant”

Nazareth College Shuttles will leave for the Rochester Airport at 1:00PM.

We would like to acknowledge the following at Nazareth College for their support of this event: The Philosophy Department, the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Hickey Center for Interfaith Studies and Dialogue.

Reading the First Epistle of John with the Method of Formal Indication

Matthew Clemons
Stony Brook University

ABSTRACT

This presentation has two tasks. First, following Heidegger's presentation of the method of formal indication in his 1920-21 lectures on the Pauline Epistles, I draw out two possible meanings for the method. On the one hand, formal indication could be a hermeneutic tool, a use of the *how* indicated in language to guide one in understanding the original relation in experience *as* original relation (enacted). On the other hand, formal indication could be the enacting of the original relation *myself*, in other words, appropriating the original relation in my own life as something to be enacted *by me*. The second task of the presentation is to read the First Epistle of John in the context of formal indication and these two possibilities, highlighting the affinities between the Epistle and the early Heidegger's method and ultimately arguing that the dialogical imperative in John presents its necessary foil.

This essay is divided into two parts. In the first, I draw out two possibilities for the meaning of formal indication that arise from Heidegger's development of the method in the 1920-21 lectures on selected Pauline Epistles (now published as *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*). In the second, I consider this account alongside the First Epistle of John. As regards the former part, my account will be primarily exegetical; As regards the latter, I take the religious influence as a point of departure to read the First Epistle of John in the context of formal indication, highlighting affinities between the Epistle and the early Heidegger's method and ultimately arguing that the dialogical imperative in John presents its necessary foil.

In a longer version of this paper I trace Heidegger's presentation of formal indication through the contrast he develops between the objects and methods of philosophy and science. For the sake of brevity, it suffices to say that all sciences share a formal similarity in that they work within an objectively determined material-complex from which their respective methods are easily determinable.¹ Philosophy, on the other hand, is structurally different than the sciences because of the peculiar way it arises from factual life. Factual life can refer either to *what* is experienced (the content) or *how* the content is experienced (the comportment, the manner, or the relation). The

¹ The specific domain of the history of literature, for example, would be the relevant field of entities, delimited perhaps by being of a certain type (poetry, novel, literary essay), by employing a certain technique, or by having a certain purpose (entertainment, aesthetic insight, or pleasure, etc.). The method might be to study the texts, to categorize them into different genres based on prevalent features, to place them in relation to one another (as for example, belonging to different historical epochs, writers, etc.). Following Heidegger, we could expect that chemistry and biology proceed formally in the same way.

peculiar task of philosophy is to thematize the *how* of experience.² Thematizing the *how* counteracts the natural tendencies of both science and factual life, in both of which the *how* is not co-experienced/thematized with the content of experience (*PRL*, 9). Heidegger refers to this tendency in factual life to be absorbed in the *what* of experience to the exclusion of questioning the *how* as “the ‘attitudinal, falling, relationally indifferent, self-sufficient concern for significance’” (*PRL*, 11) and elsewhere as “ruinance”.³

Philosophy is not immune to the tendency to “fall into significance”. It creeps in as the temptation to treat the *how* as a *what* rather than a *how*.⁴ It is possible, for example, to take up the *how* of lived experience as an objective act-content, situated among and related to other act-contents.⁵ In this case, philosophy is dealing with the *how*, but not as it is in the original relation to content. The method of philosophy, which turns out to be formal indication, must be such that it allows for the thematizing of the *how* of experience without turning it into a *what* content.

In the lectures on the Pauline Epistles, Heidegger introduces formal indication as, “the methodical use of a sense that becomes a guiding one” (*PRL*, 38). He then gives “three directions of sense”: [1] the *what* (content), [2] the *how* (relation), and [3] the *how* in which the original relation [2] is enacted (*PRL*, 43). Because philosophy has neither to do with the *what* of experience nor with the *how* as *what* content to be had, the only possible direction of sense is the third, namely ‘the *how* in which the original relation is enacted.’ Substituting the relevant direction of sense, formal indication is the ‘methodical use of the *how* in which the original relation is enacted as a guiding direction of sense’. This suggests two related but different possibilities to me. First, formal indication could be a hermeneutic tool, a use of the *how* indicated in language to guide one in understanding the original relation in experience *as* original relation (enacted). I do not necessarily

² Both Ryan Streeter and Matt Burch give the example of *Jemeinigkeit* in *BT*. Streeter and Burch agree that, in Burch’s words, this is only “accessible from the first-person perspective,” meaning that it could only be evidenced by the experienter (2011, 9).

³ C.f. Part III, Section II in *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*.

⁴ The proposition that “the Being of any such entity [to be analyzed] is in each case mine [*je meines*]” (*BT*, 67, 42) in *BT* could never be affirmed as if it were an object, and yet pointing *Jemeinigkeit* out as a feature of experience invites that.

⁵ Philosophy sometimes does exactly that, characterizing itself as being of the highest objects (we might supply Being, substance, essence, categories etc. *as* objects). Here, philosophy tries to put itself on the same footing as science. In his *Kriegsnotseminar*, Heidegger offers an example of how this might happen for ontology. “Starting from what is here experienced, I proceed to theorize: it is brown; brown is a color; color is a genuine sense datum; a sense datum is the result of physical or physiological processes; the primary cause is physical; this cause objectively is a determinable number of ether-waves; ether is made up of simple elements; linking these are simple laws; the elements are ultimate; *the elements are something in general* (*KNS*, 95).

have to enact the original relation, I just need to understand it *as* enacted. On this account, formal indication can be said either to be a commitment to interpret content as enacted or to the content's forcing me to interpret it as enacted. For the remainder of the essay, I will refer to this as the hermeneutic possibility. Second, formal indication could be the enacting of the original relation *myself*, in other words, appropriating the original relation in my own life as something to be enacted *by me*. On this account, deciding to enact the original relation is primarily left to the individual, although the content might call for it. For the remainder of this essay, I will refer to this as the enacted possibility.

As for which of the two possibilities Heidegger means, this is also ambiguous. In some places, by formal indication, Heidegger seems to mean the enacted possibility.⁶ The goal is that my original fulfillment comes into its own in taking up the indicated *how*. Heidegger confirms this indirectly when he writes that the only way to the meaning of the original relation, which is imperfectly indicated, is by "exhausting and fulfilling...following the indication" (PIA, 26). In other places, it seems that Heidegger leans towards the hermeneutic possibility. For example, Heidegger's investigation of the Pauline Epistles focuses on understanding the "fundamental posture" (PRL, 50-1) or "situation" of Paul, which "belongs to *understanding* in the manner of enactment" (PRL, 63).⁷ This suggests that formal indication means reading so as to understand Paul as enacting.

These two possibilities are also present in the scholarship. The debate around formal indication has taken the form, paraphrasing Matthew Burch, of whether formal indication is on the

⁶ In *PIA*, he breaks it down according to each word. "'Formal' refers to a way of 'approach' toward actualizing the maturation of an original fulfillment of what was indicated" (PIA, 27). That which is indicated, what Heidegger calls the "definitory content" of formal indication is the "'how' of a genuine encounter, determination, constitution, formation" (PIA, 27). Putting this together, then, formal indication is a 'way of approach toward actualizing the maturation of an original fulfillment of the *how* of a genuine encounter, determination, constitution, formation'. This supports the claim Heidegger leans towards the second of the two possibilities above, that I must enact the *how* myself. To this point, notice that phrase "actualizing the *maturation* of an *original* fulfillment of what was indicated." What is being actualized is neither the original relation, nor even an original fulfillment of an original relation, which would imply that the fulfillment and the original relation are identical after what is to be fulfilled is fulfilled. Rather, what is being actualized is the *maturation*, a coming into one's own. It must be a maturation because, at very least, the historical situation, is different. Several scholars seem to read Heidegger this way as well. John Van Buren, for instance, says that formal indication is a method in the sense of the Greek *methodos*, a way and, that the indicators must be actualized in a way that is "'fitting to the situation' in which one finds oneself" (1995, 165), in other words, in a unique way.

⁷ My emphasis. A clear example of this is when Heidegger writes of Paul's indictment of Satan in the first letter to the Thessalonians that, instead of speculations on the existence of Satan, "one must understand how the devil stands in and affects Paul's life" (PRL, 69). What is decisive is to understand *how* Paul's life is affected, which, combined with other components of the letter enables "an understanding of Paul's distress" (PRL, 69). Here, the focus is explicitly on understanding the enactment.

one hand indicative of a rejection of Husserlian phenomenology that foreshadows Heidegger's later work on the *Ereignis* of Being, which would be the enacted possibility, or on the other hand the product of an existential fine-tuning of earlier phenomenology that demonstrates Heidegger's commitment to making transcendental meaning structures manifest, which would be the hermeneutic possibility.⁸ Instead of having to decide for one or the other, we might follow Daniel Dahlstrom, whose identification of "two principal, overlapping functions" of formal indication roughly aligns with mine. Following Heidegger, he calls these the referring-prohibiting function and the reversing-transforming function (1994, 782-3). These line up, respectively, with the hermeneutic and enacted possibilities. Formal indication guides in its referring-prohibiting function by binding one in the way in which one approaches some content and in doing so prohibits one from making dogmatic assertions about it. Formal indication guides in its reversing-transforming function by reversing one's tendency to take content as present-at-hand and with that transforms the philosopher.⁹

That completes the first part of the essay. Now I turn to the second: reading the First Epistle of John in the context of formal indication. In a longer version of this paper, I give a more thorough explanation for choosing a religious text and *this* religious text in particular in the context of formal indication, which for reasons of length is confined to a footnote.¹⁰ Most significantly, I choose the

⁸ Although he mentions others, Burch takes Theodore Kisiel to be representative of the former position, and Steven Crowell of the latter. Burch refers readers to Kisiel's *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time* (1993) and to Crowell's *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning* (2001). He also mentions a debate at the 2008 Western APA conference on the issue. On the first interpretation, formal indication is a pre-reflective *phronesis* that "exhorts us to transform ourselves" in accord with our historical situation such that we are "drawn more completely into the 'Event [Ereignis] of Being'" (2011, 3). This corresponds, more or less, to the possibility that formal indication means appropriating the original relation in my own life by enacting it. Burch sides against this interpretation in favor of the latter, which considers formal indication as the product of an existential fine-tuning of the phenomenological method. On this reading, formal indication refers to the method by which the pre-thematic existential categories (the *Existentials* in *Being and Time*) are given as needing to be evidenced and the individual appropriation by which each is fulfilled (2011, 10). This corresponds, roughly, to the possibility that formal indication is a way of understanding the original relation in experience *as* original relation. One of the advantages of this interpretation, according to Burch, is that it can answer the question as to how phenomenology (philosophy, in the case of *PRL*) arises out of factual life. It is a fine-tuning of phenomenology in that it is capable of indicating the existential motivations of the phenomenological reduction, namely that *Dasein* seeks to clarify its pre-thematic being because of its own self-concern (2011, 7-8).

⁹ The transformation occurs because "one cannot thematize what is initially unthematic without putting oneself into question and, equivalently, one's comportment and world" (1994, 787). Dahlstrom calls the first the phenomenological function because it is an "appropriation of the Husserlian *epochē*" and the second the theological function (1994, 783).

¹⁰ One reason why reading the First Epistle of John in the context of formal indication is suggested to me is simply because of the relevance that the Christian tradition has for Heidegger's formulation of the method. Indeed, many have noted the influence of religious thinker. Van Buren, for instance, points out the important influences of Kierkegaard, Luther, Paul, Schleiermacher, and Meister Eckhart. He writes that Heidegger, being "preoccupied

First Epistle because, on the one hand, it exemplifies the two possibilities of formal indication and, on the other, the strong emphasis on the essentiality of the dialogical relation in John's writings have something important to contribute to the discussion.

At the outset, my reading of the First Epistle of John will deal primarily with the hermeneutic possibility and its corresponding referring-prohibiting function. Here, formal indication could refer either to a commitment to interpret content as enacted or to the content's forcing me to take it up in that way. I argue that the First Epistle of John serves as a formal indicator in the latter sense. I'll illustrate this by pointing to and describing one prevalent feature of the text, namely the relationship between the content and its presentation.

Any reader of the First Epistle of John can't fail to note the enigmatic writing style. One of the strange aspects of that style is that it constantly turns over on itself. John seems to be always on the verge of saying what is decisive, but he continuously shifts topic, thereby deferring

precisely with the 'methodological problem' of finding a type of non-objectifying language" sought a "language that would express the attitude of Eckhartian surrender and letting-be (*Gelassenheit*); Schleiermacher's free sociality; the wakefulness of Pauline, Lutheran, and Kierkegaardian kairology" (1995, 157) which he eventually came to call "*formale Anzeige*" (1995, 158). Dahlstrom points out the structural similarities between philosophy and theology, writing that "the relation of Christian theology to its faith is that of philosophizing to existence" (1994, 791) as Heidegger himself understands them. "Heidegger understands belief as 'a manner of existing' that is developed from and by what becomes revealed in it and with it, namely, what is believed: the crucified God. If 'belief' is replaced with 'existence,' 'revealed' with 'disclosed,' and the 'believed' with 'temporality,' then it becomes clear just how closely this account of belief mirrors the structure that lies at the bottom of the analysis of *Dasein* in *Sein und Zeit*" (1994, 791).

Another reason why reading the First Epistle of John in the context of formal indication seems fruitful has to do with the way in which Heidegger engages Paul in *PRL*. Heidegger's goal in his interpretation is to locate the phenomena of religious life within experience. This is contrary to what he determines to be the trend for philosophies of religion contemporaneous with him, namely to determine religion "not according to religion itself, but according to a particular concept of philosophy, and indeed a scientific one" (*PRL*, 20). Because religion must be located within factual life and not in a specific material domain (psychology, epistemology, etc.), the situation of religion comes very close to philosophy. This is not something that escaped the very religious thinkers who influence Heidegger. Note the resemblance that this conception of religion and philosophy bears to features of Kierkegaard's (Johannes Climacus') *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*. That the objective truth of Christianity can be only approximated at best; that what is decisive is the relation to the truth which objectivity obscures; that subjectivity as truth means an individual's appropriating the truth; that the means to achieve subjectivity is indirect communication; these resemble in turn philosophy's not having to do with the *what* of experience, philosophy's instead having to do with the *how* which is obscured in the proposition, the enactment bringing a maturation of an original fulfillment, and the objective indeterminacy of formal indication (C.f. Part 2, Section 2 of *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*).

Concerning my choosing the First Epistle of John, one of the reasons I have selected this particular document is because of the similarity that aspects of the Epistle bear to the two functions of formal indication. First, it is similar to the hermeneutic/referral-prohibiting function in the way that the content of the Epistle forces me to take it up and, second it is similar to the enacted/reversing-transforming function in its commandments to love and believe. I will develop these two points in the course of the exegesis itself. Pointing out the similarities could be philosophically or exegetically helpful for a several reasons. It could, for example, help to clarify or supplement Heidegger's account of formal indication with a specific example; it could also contribute to understanding the influence of religious sources on Heidegger's work during the period of formal indication.

fulfillment of determinate meaning and blending themes together to make a unified, but periphrastic whole. Towards the beginning of the second chapter, John begins: “Now by this we may be sure that we know him, if we obey his commandments” (1 John 2:3). The first clause of this sentence indicates to the reader to pay attention as the very thing that we needed to be told is about to be said. The second clause, however, only partially fulfills the expectation. We will be sure that we know if we obey his commandments, yet we are not told what these commandments are. Instead, John digresses into a cautionary note about disobedience. Rather than immediately returning to the commandments, John employs the same phrase structure with which he began thereby slightly shifting the topic: “By this we may be sure that we are in him: whoever says, “I abide in him,” ought to walk just as he walked” (1 John 2:6). In verse 7, John returns to the commandment, although not in any decisive way:

Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word that you have heard. Yet I am writing you a new commandment that is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining (1 John 2:7-11).

The commandment is not new, but is old, but actually is new. Here, John asserts something, qualifies it, then immediately changes the assertion to say the opposite, after which he turns in a new direction, namely towards truth. But the commandment is true in such a way that we would not normally think to attribute to a commandment. His stating, explaining, reversing, regrouping, and turning elsewhere constantly happens in the Epistle. The phrase “from the beginning” points to the intro of the Epistle where what has been heard from the beginning is the eternal life of the Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:1-4). Yet several verses later, John declares that what has been heard from the beginning is “that we should love one another” (1 John 3:11). This is not a simple contradiction or equivocation. Several of these themes are brought together when he writes: “And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them” (1 John 3:23-24).

This feature of the text forces the reader to take it up as enacted. I’ll qualify this by saying that it does so in a negative way. It is not that the style as I’ve presented it thus far, forces one to take it up as enacted so much as it fends off any attempt to approach the content as extractible into clear concepts to situate among other concepts in an attempt to create a material-complex out of

the Epistle. The content is not presented in a way that would allow for that. There are ‘contradictions’: We are of God (1 John 5:19) and so do not sin (1 John 5:18). But we deceive ourselves if we say that we do not sin (1 John 1:8). There are circular explanations. If we ask how we should know that we know God, we are sent in a circle. We know because we obey the commandment, which is to love, which we do because God first loved us (1 John 4:10), which we know because it was revealed in his Son (1 John 4:9). We know because we love because we know. John weaves together the disparate themes—knowing, abiding, old and new commandments, light/darkness, what has been heard from the beginning, belief, etc.—not in a linear-deductive but in a circular and self-referential way. This dynamism fends off any attempt to theorize one’s way into a material-complex, as in Heidegger’s characterization of the sciences, and thus functions like a formal indicator.

Still, just because the content cannot form a material-complex, to what extent does John mean to compel me to understand some relation at all, much less as enacted? To this point, I note that much of what he says turns us back to some sort of indeterminate action: we should test the spirits (1 John 5:6), or more obviously, we should “love one another” (1 John 3:11). Moreover, we should do this “not in word or speech, but in truth and action” (1 John 3:18). If he were to give some delineation of what should be done, then the *what* would be the focus. This would not have been out of the ordinary for a Jewish audience. If he had simply meant that we should conform our actions to the Decalogue, for instance that we should not murder, which is a restriction on the *content* of action, his exhortation to obey the commandments would have been familiar.¹¹ But John does not say what exactly should be done, only that something should be done *somehow*, namely lovingly. Instead, of prohibiting murder, he says something much more radical: Those who do not love are murderers (1 John 3:15). His point is not to condemn us all as murderers in the spirit of a moralism but to redirect us towards the *relation*, namely love, to others.

It is worth noting that this speaks to Christianity’s general relation to the Law. For one, Jesus constantly scolds the Pharisees and Sadducees for their hair-splitting legalism (Matthew 12; Matthew 22; Matthew 23). Further, the Sermon on the Mount can be read as a shifting the focus

¹¹ This is not to say that the Decalogue is exclusively or even primarily concerned with outward obedience in the content of one’s actions rather than with the relation implied therein. To this effect, Martin Buber, for example, writes in an essay entitled “The Ten Commandments” included in *Israel and the World* that the “Ten Commandments are not part of an impersonal codex governing an association of men. They are uttered by an *I* and addressed to a *Thou*. They begin with the *I* and every one of them addresses the *Thou* in person” (1997, 85).

of the Law from external behavior to internal comportment.¹² For Paul, the Law does not mean ‘sin’ and ‘death’ (Romans 8:3) merely because of our inability to conform ourselves to its precepts. Rather, in the Law, sin *reveals itself as already there*, using the Law “in order that sin might be shown to be sin” (Romans 7:13). To put this in the language of formal indication, in our attempting to enact the Law, which is the content, sin, which in this case would be a relation, is revealed to us.¹³ If the point is not that we conform externally to the Law, then something else must be called for. In line with the spirit of John, Paul also says that the Law is fulfilled in the commandment to love one’s neighbor (Galatians 5:14; Romans 13:10).¹⁴

The commandment, however, to love one’s neighbor is not objectively determinable. For one, it calls for different things in different circumstances, as indirectly pointed out by Martin Buber when he says that the love that Jesus has for his apostles is the same as that which he has for the possessed (*I&T*, 14-15). Besides the commandment to love, there is relatively little regulative or normative content in the First Epistle of John. There is one notable exception, namely that one must believe in Jesus (1 John 3:23) and that those who deny him are liars (1 John 2:22), and so on. Contrary to what might be immediately assumed, what this actually means is perplexing. It cannot be that what is decisive for belief is merely a public assertion about this or that. Beyond such legalism and historicism not being at all in the spirit of John, he constantly warns us that we should not trust those who say but do not do (1 John 2:3-4). In this rebuke, we find that mere saying is subordinated to action. As for belief, it is often if not always coupled with action, even in John’s formulation of the commandment: “And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us” (1 John 3:23).

Yet we are not only told that we should love, or act, but also that we should believe in a particular, historical person. Exploring this with the enacted possibility of formal indication in

¹² Jesus says, for example, “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment” (Matthew 5:21-22). Here, the focus shifts away from the murder, the external action, to the anger, the internal comportment involved in such an action.

¹³ I find there to be many misinterpretations in the history of Christianity that can be traced back to missing this insight. For instance, Pelagius is famous for asserting that God’s commanding us implies the ability to obey it and that through obeying the commandment we too can become righteous. This is all argued against Augustine’s doctrine of original sin and his emphasis on the necessity of divine grace. But if the Law is there to reveal to us some condition, sin, that was *already* there, then Pelagius completely misses the point.

¹⁴ This is the reason why John can claim that the commandment is both old and new, namely because the fulfillment of the Law is love.

mind can be fruitful. At the center of the New Testament is the proclamation of the fulfillment of the law, not just in the commandment to love, but also in a person, namely Jesus (Luke 22:37). If the Law is to be what regulates action, it is a bit absurd that the Law should be fulfilled in a person. One can conform one's external action to follow precepts and commandments, but how one follows a person in such a legal manner is not so clear. We might take this as a clue that something else is required in conforming to the Law. Consider the exhortation at the beginning of several of the gospels that one should respond properly to the arrival of Jesus (Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:15). To respond properly is to repent, the Greek word for which is *metanoia*. I am not the first to point out that *metanoia* (beyond/after-mind) has etymological connotations of a change of mind. Compare also the related Latin term *conversion*, which signifies a turning around. Moreover, what is called for in the *metanoia* is a renunciation of one's former life and a following, or in Christian vernacular, a taking up of one's cross (Matthew 16:24; Luke 9:23). Thus the Law, which has been fulfilled in a person, calls for the following of that person, which entails a renunciation of a previous way of being and a change of mind. This renunciation-change of mind bears a similar structure to the reversing-transforming function of the enacted possibility of formal indication. They are also similar in that, like formal indication to 'take up one's cross', as Dietrich Bonhoeffer has pointed out, contains no common, determinate objective content.¹⁵ To return to the Epistle, in the two imperatives to "love one another" and "believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ," not only the former, but also the latter amounts to action. In both cases, there is no entirely objective content, and so it could be that even the commandment to believe is something that must be enacted. The enactment here would be to repent, or to 'take up one's cross' and follow.

Above, I stated that my primary reason for choosing the First Epistle of John is because of its strong emphasis on the essentiality of the dialogical relation. Having dealt with the First Epistle, I can clarify that with the essentiality of the dialogical relation, I mean the perpetual exhortation to love one's neighbor and its relation to knowledge and love of God. In the method of formal indication, however, I find relatively no essential role for others. There is, to be sure, some ethical relation to others implied in formal indication, but only one of non-interference.¹⁶ The closest I

¹⁵ In his early work *The Cost of Discipleship*, Bonhoeffer writes, "And what does the text inform us about the content of discipleship? Follow me, run along behind me! That is all. To follow in his steps is something which is void of all content. It gives us no intelligible programme for a way of life, no goal or ideal to strive after... Again it is no universal law. Rather is it the exact opposite of all legality" (1995, 58).

¹⁶ In his article that takes up the implicit ethics of formal indication, Van Buren makes a strong case for some ethical consequences of the method. Briefly, he argues that the import is that because what is formally indicated must be

might come to others is to say that, given that I would not want another to interfere to the detriment of my own enactment, I will help others fend off the same. Still, the enactment is totally singular and individual. Non-interference is ultimately ‘hands-off.’ Further, this dimension is merely a *consequence* of formal indication rather than *constitutive* of the method itself. For Heidegger, the dialogical aspect of formal indication follows as a consequence because it is up to each individual to enact their own unique relation and it is not constitutive because the other’s enactment has nothing to do with my own taking up of the original relation. This is not so in the First Epistle of John, where knowledge of God, which we might call the essential relation being enacted, is ultimately tied-up with and dependent on loving one’s neighbor. In contrast to Heidegger, the relation of love of one’s neighbor is not a consequence of the essential relation, but constitutive of it. One believes, knows, and loves God because of and through love of neighbor (1 John 3:14).

Beyond the similarity that features of the Epistle bear to the functions of formal indication, then, it presents a significant modification in its emphasis on love of neighbor. Why is this important? It is possible to understand existential philosophy and phenomenology as having developed in two related, but ultimately different directions: the monological and the dialogical.¹⁷ What I am calling the monological emphasizes the individual and her individual responsibility over and against others for taking the meaning of her singular existence upon herself.¹⁸ In contrast to this, what I am calling the dialogical stresses that the meaning of an individual life is found in and through the essential relation and encounter with others and the world. Both the monological and dialogical are similar in their emphasis on the necessity of taking up one’s existence, but they differ on what is decisive.¹⁹

differently enacted by each individual according to their position, historical circumstances, etc., no individual can impose a specific objective determination on another. Paraphrasing Heidegger, Van Buren writes, “formal indication here attempts precisely to avoid ‘imposing a *specific* worldview’ on ‘the Other,’ however, it strives for ‘the highest measure of non-interference in personal decision making...’” (1995, 168). This is an extremely important point and one that those adhering to specific religious traditions, in the case most relevant for this essay, would do well to heed.

¹⁷ I take these terms from Buber’s “What is Man” from the collection *Between Man and Man*.

¹⁸ For Kierkegaard, for example, in contrast to the crowd who is untruth, “the awareness of being a single individual with eternal responsibility before God is the one thing needful” (2009, 137).

¹⁹ I do not mean to imply that, by using the terms monological and dialogical, we can exhaustively interpret and classify what is called existential philosophy or phenomenology, or even that we should. For one, it is possible to find both the monological and dialogical in one thinker. For another, to reduce thinkers to these categories would be ultimately detrimental to understanding their thought. It is better to think of the monological and dialogical as tendencies rather than determinate labels. Finally, I should add that, although Kierkegaard and Buber are both theists, one need not be either overtly or at all in order to express one or both of these tendencies.

As this relates to Heidegger, my hunch is that he tends if not wholly towards the monological, then at least decisively towards it. Since I have already appealed to his work a couple of times in this essay, I turn once more to Martin Buber to gesture at what I have in mind. In his essay “What is Man,” Buber takes up Heidegger’s notion of what he calls original guilt” (*Schuld*), by which he means ontological rather than ontic guilt, as exemplary of Heidegger’s “monism.” Buber stresses that, in Heidegger, original guilt is *radically individual*: “Existence is guilty through not fulfilling *itself*, through remaining in the so-called “generally human”, in “one” (*das Man*), and not bringing *its own self*, the man’s self, into being” (2002, 196).²⁰ Any guilt “in respect to another” is merely an everyday, or ontic, instance of guilt.²¹ For reasons stated above, the monological tendency also spills over into formal indication.

If it can be said that Heidegger tends towards the monological, the First Epistle of John is decisively dialogical. That I take Heidegger and John to display, respectively, the two different tendencies implies that I take there to be something important to the dialogical that is not found in Heidegger’s account. One way of pointing towards what is missing in the monological would be to consider the way in which Heidegger’s own philosophy and personal life are influenced by this conception. Still, this would be no criticism of the monological as such. Instead, something more is called for. As Buber writes, “Man can become whole not in virtue of a relation to himself but only in virtue of a relation to another self” (2002, 199). This is more because, like John, it affirms the *necessity* of relation to another for the meaning, or wholeness, of myself. To put this in the language of formal indication, there is no enactment of the original relation without an essential relation to others. Without that relation, I can only have the illusion of meaning. I quote Buber at length,

The man of ‘real’ existence in Heidegger’s sense, the man of ‘self-being’, who in Heidegger’s view is the goal of life, is not the man who really lives with man, but the man who can no longer really live with man, the man who now knows a real life only in communication with himself. But that is only a semblance of real life, an exalted and unblessed game of the spirit (2002, 199).

²⁰ My emphasis.

²¹ It is true, however, that *Mitsein* as ontologically constitutive of the mode of being that is *Dasein* seems to go against the charge that Heidegger remains, for the most part, monological. However, in the end, I am not sure that we end up with a situation fundamentally different with regard to others than we do in formal indication. Buber, for one, notices that being-with-others is essential to *Dasein* for Heidegger, but asserts that the relation that one has is one of mere non-essential solicitude. C.f. Buber (2002) pages 200-201.

Choosing the First Epistle of John ultimately points to more work than I can achieve in the course of this essay. It points towards the necessity of relation in what's called the enactment of the original relation in formal indication. At the risk of falling into ambiguity and mere assertion, I have tried to point towards what that sort of work would entail, but I reserve its doing for the future.

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**(Re)productive Tensions:
Aletheiac Revealing in Morisot's "Cradle" and "Wet Nurse"**

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ABSTRACT

Martin Heidegger's *Origin of the Work of Art* moves beyond an aesthetic reading of the artwork that focuses on questions of judgment towards a hermeneutical understanding of art as a realm where truth happens. Such a truth presents itself as an aletheiac unfolding of the strife between Earth and World, a tension revelatory of our historical situation. To better understand this truth, Heidegger turns to a painting of Van Gogh's shoes, providing an account of the artwork that moves beyond the "thingly" character of the shoes to its "equipmental being". That he attributes Van Gogh's shoes to a peasant woman is telling in that her being female points to a gendered relation between woman and Earth.¹ However, in only focusing on the equipmental being of her shoes and her labor in the fields, a historical truth about the tension between her labor of reproduction and production, a strain inherent in the Earth/World dynamic becomes eclipsed. This tension is felt as a reckoning of, not only one's finitude, but of one's natality. Heidegger looks to Van Gogh's shoes and analyzes how toils in the field set up a world; however, as Gaston Bachelard notes, "Before he is 'cast into the world,' as claimed by certain hasty metaphysicians, man is laid in the cradle of the house."² To explore our natal origin that begins in the cradle and stretches along to our death, this paper presents a hermeneutical reading of two works of art, Berthe Morisot's "Cradle" and "Wet Nurse", suggesting that in seeking an origin of the work of art and the tension that resides there, an understanding of reproduction (and its relation to production) should complement Heidegger's treatment of the artwork.

Preliminary remarks and questions for discussion:

Heidegger asserts, "The origin of the work of art- that is, the origin of both the creators and preservers, which is to say of a people's historical existence- is art."³ The preserving of art does not just happen through museum curating and upkeep, but through the act of reproduction, not just through reproduction in the sense that Walter Benjamin⁴ explores, that is, not just in terms of copies and mass distribution, but in terms of bodily procreation, as a preserving of historicity, and

¹ It is in this essay that "Earth" as a complement to an already much discussed "World" is first mentioned. David Krell speculates that the *Ursprung* of Heidegger's notion of the "earth" may be found in the Homeric hymn "To Earth, Mother of All". A line from this poem reads, "Lady, you have power to give mortal men life".

² Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas, Boston: Beacon Press, 1964, p.7. It should be noted that the second chapter of Anne O'Byrne's *Natality and Finitude* begins with this quote of Bachelard.

³ Heidegger, Martin. "The Origin of the Work of Art" in *Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell, San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1977, p. 202.

⁴ Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" in *Illuminations*, New York: Schocken Books, 1969.

as a preserving of the Earth/ World tension. That the reproduction of material bodies must continue in order for such bodies to preserve art is irrefutable; yet, this paper hopes to demonstrate that it is our dealing with having been reproduced and also, in turn, (re)producing that creates the condition for the artwork. The creation of the artwork is a way for us to deal with our finite and natal condition, and the truth that is set up in the artwork reflects how a certain historical period reckons with such.

According to Heidegger, each era is characterized by a certain mode of how it reveals beings, which is, at the same time, a concealing of another way of being. Each mode seems to appear from out of nowhere, because it is based on a certain forgetting [*Seinsvergessenheit*]. Our modern era is characterized by a mode of *Gestell*, a technological/ instrumental way of thinking that approaches the world as an amalgam of resources.⁵ It is important to mention this particular mode of revealing, because it will certainly influence the way we approach the origin of the artwork.

Though I agree with Babette Babich's⁶ remark that Meyer Schapiro⁷ misses the hermeneutical task at work in Heidegger's essay (for it doesn't really matter who the shoes belong to), I think Schapiro's criticism that Heidegger projects his own ideas onto the image of the artwork is worth re-examining. On the one hand, how could he not? We are always already thrown into a certain historical material condition.⁸ Art, and our interpretation of it, represents such historical contingency. We cannot experience the temple, such as it was in Ancient Greece, but can only see the ruins from our own modern mentality. That Heidegger chooses an artwork that romanticizes peasant living and a woman's labor in the field, demonstrates his own reckoning with the industrial revolution, an era that he sees threatening the life that Van Gogh's shoes represent. Heidegger

⁵ Heidegger, Martin. "The Question Concerning Technology" in *Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell, San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1977.

⁶ Babich, Babette. "The Work of Art and the Museum: Heidegger, Schapiro, Gadamer" in *Words in Blood, Like Flowers: Philosophy and Poetry, Music and Eros in Hölderlin, Nietzsche, and Heidegger*, New York: SUNY Press, 2006.

⁷ Schapiro, Meyer. "The Still Life as Personal Object- A Note on Heidegger and van Gogh" in *The Reach of Mind*, Berlin: Springer, 1968.

⁸ Of Heidegger's historical material condition, Anders notes, "He grew up a Provincial- not surrounded by 'modern life', social problems, industrialization. His first 'Bildungswelt' was Christianity and Greek-Christian ontology- while his contemporaries were moving in the most diverse planes of secularization, in a world articulated by technique and natural science." Anders, Guenther. "On the Pseudo-Concreteness of Heidegger's Philosophy" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 8, No.3, 1948, p.357

does, as Schapiro states, project “his own social outlook with its heavy pathos of the primordial and earthy.”⁹

Heidegger explores truth as *alethea*, as a revealing and concealing. Whenever something presences, something likewise remains absent. In order to better illustrate the dual working of truth and the Earth/World strife inherent in the artwork, I’d like to explore two works of art by a female contemporary of Van Gogh, Berthe Morisot. A reading of her “Cradle” and “Wet Nurse” may perhaps reveal some eclipsed historical truths about the tension between the reproduction and production of labor.

Questions for discussion:

- How does the tension between reproduction and production unfold in the Earth/World relation?

“Upon the earth and in it, historical man grounds his dwelling in the world. In setting up a world, the work sets forth the earth (OA, 172)”

- How may we think our natal origin as being laid in the cradle before being cast in the world?

Morisot’s “Cradle”:

In the work of art “The Cradle”, a mother mirrors the position of her baby’s arm, suggesting a certain moment of “self-sameness”. Does the mother/child relation upset the self/other relation and represent a “both/and” (a moment perhaps prior to world)? Levinas questions Heidegger’s privileging of an individualized Being-towards-death as leading to authentic moments of vision [*Augenblick*], yet he references the father/son relation as exemplary of relational authenticity.¹⁰ Is the mother too immanent to transcend? How may we think such relational authenticity in terms of our natal origin (being-towards-birth?¹¹), beginning in the cradle? How may this “first world” arise as the “sheltering agent”? Heidegger asserts,

⁹ Schapiro, Meyer. *Ibid* p. 138

¹⁰ Levinas, Emmanuel. *Totalité et infini: essai sur extériorité*, Paris: Livre de poche, 1990.

¹¹ I say “being-towards-birth” even though we tend to think of our birth as an event in the past, because as Anne O’Byrne points out in *Natality and Finitude* our natal newness is continuously an issue for us, something that we take up time and time again as we reckon with what has been passed down to us.

The Greeks early called this emerging and rising in itself and in all things *physis*. It illuminates also that on which and in which man bases his dwelling. We call this ground the earth (...) In the things that arise, earth occurs essentially as the sheltering agent (OA 168).

The mother in “The Cradle” watches over her child and throws one of her arms over the cradle in a protective gesture. Does our refusal to recognize ourselves as “physical-cultural beings, situated within the “world-earth-home,” perpetuate the nihilism of Western being (Bigwood)? In a chapter titled “Mother doesn’t Matter” Carol Bigwood quotes H el ene Cixous,

As soon as the question of ontology raises its head, as soon as one asks oneself ‘what is it?’, as soon as there is intended meaning. Intention: desire, authority-examine them and you are led right back...to the father. It is even possible not to notice that there is no place whatsoever for woman in the calculations. Ultimately the world of ‘being’ can function while precluding the mother.¹²

It appears that ontology bypasses the cradle and begins in a world where the natal aspect of our being is neglected. Or, when mothers are thought in terms of the home, they are, as Iris Marion Young and Luce Irigaray note, representative of a nostalgic longing to return to the original maternal home; or, home comes to symbolize a place of confinement (Penelope sitting by the hearth as her man roams the earth).¹³

Mother doesn’t matter. In an Aristotelian philosophical tradition¹⁴ where women are the passive matter on which male artists work, carnal reproduction and maternal matter as participating in the process of *physis*, a coming-into-being, is eclipsed by an already present Earth.

What would an ontology where mothers matter look like? In describing the truth of the artwork, in describing what the shoes *really are*, Heidegger asserts,

In the shoes vibrates the silent call of the earth, its quiet gift of the ripening grain and its unexplained self-refusal in the fallow desolation of the wintry field. This equipment is pervaded by uncomplaining worry as to the certainty of bread, the wordless joy of having once more withstood want, the trembling before the impending childbed and shivering at the surrounding menace of death. This

¹² Bigwood, Carol. “Mother Doesn’t Matter” in *Earth Muse: Feminism, Nature, and Art*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993, p.152.

¹³ Young, Iris Marion. “House and Home: Feminist Variations on a Theme” in *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger*, edited by Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington, University Park: Penn State Univ. Press, 2001.

¹⁴ Aristote. *De la g n ration des animaux*, ed. et trad. par P. Louis, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1961.

equipment belongs to the *earth*, and it is protected in the *world* of the peasant woman (OA 159-160).

Heidegger's description leaves us with an image of a woman tirelessly working in the fields to provide sustenance for her children. Death threatens her progeny without such productive labor. Yet, we could read more into such an image by acknowledging that a child's first sustenance is not from the earth in the fields, but from the mother herself.

Morisot's "Wet Nurse":

This brings us to a reading of Morisot's second painting the "Wet Nurse", a work that reveals (through concealment/unconcealment) a truth about the relation between *techne* and *phusis*.

Bigwood states,

A central way of distinguishing between *techne* and *phusis* is that the motion involved in the creation of a cultural product comes from the outside, whereas the coming-to-be of a natural being comes from the inside.¹⁵

This ontological distinction collapses in the era of *Gestell* where "phusis is no longer understood as the most original mode of bringing-forth but rather, as a kind of *techne*, as a producing of raw materials.¹⁶" Entities, even human entities, can only appear as products to be manufactured from raw materials. Heidegger laments the danger of technology that views human beings as resources that figure among the standing reserve and poetically speaks to us to let nature be [*Gelassenheit*]. Yet, as the "Wet Nurse" demonstrates, the relation between *techne* and *phusis* is more ambivalent for the woman who is, in a sense, free from such a collapse in distinction.

As Caroline Woods notes,

This painting could easily be mistaken as a Madonna and Child, updated and secularized, as the other prominent female impressionist, Mary Cassatt, was doing. Morisot's rendition is different in that the woman holding the child is actually not her mother, but a *seconde mère*, or a wet nurse. She is feeding the child for wages, not out of maternal obligation.¹⁷

¹⁵ Bigwood, Carol. "Deconstructing the Culture/Nature Dichotomy" in *Earth Muse, op. cit.*, p. 145.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p.149.

¹⁷ Woods, Caroline. "The Female Avant-Garde: Challenging Ideas of Gender in Morisot's Wet Nurse and Valadon's The Blue Room" in *Art Journal* 1(5), 2017.

The child being nourished by the wet nurse is actually Morisot's daughter, and without the substitution of a *seconde mère*, performing her reproductive labor, Morisot would not be able to produce works of art. Wet nursing was a large-scale industry in France, one that allowed women to perform work outside of maternal labor. As Woods demonstrates, the tension felt by Morisot watching another woman feed her child is apparent in the artwork, as chaotic brushstrokes seem to erase the identity of the wet nurse. The wet nurse should be *her*. The equipmental being of the wet nurse blurs the distinction between *techne* and *phusis*, and reveals a truth about a woman's reckoning with reproductive and productive labor.

Of course, such a reading presupposes that we know that the infant portrayed in the painting belongs to Morisot, and without knowing the title of the artwork ("Wet Nurse"), we may not receive the message that a maternal substitution is taking place at all. This goes back to Shapiro's argument and Babich's counterargument about whether who the shoes belong to matter at all (at least for Heidegger's project). Yet, whereas the question of Van Gogh's shoes may be a matter of the city dweller vs. the rural farmer, entangled with the labor of production, the question of the wet nurse is one of reproductive labor, as the *seconde mère* fills the shoes of the "first mother".

Wet nursing is not the industry it once was, but without the production of artificial milk many women would not be able to move so freely in the public sphere. The "Wet Nurse" speaks the truth about the tension that women as physical-cultural beings may experience in the earth-world-home. While certain artificial technologies seem culturally alienating, many have been historically liberating for women, permitting Penelope to leave the confines of her hearth.¹⁸

¹⁸ The subject matter of Morisot's paintings further reveals her confinement to the private realm, as she was unable to paint in public unchaperoned.

Heidegger, Caesar, and the Violent Disclosure of Being in the Roman Context

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Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς ...
Heraclitus

ABSTRACT

Heidegger's critical reading of Rome foregrounds the assumptions of Roman metaphysics as they come to light in language. I contend in this paper that this critique is problematized by Heidegger's own account of the violent reciprocity of being and Dasein in the 1935 *Introduction to Metaphysics*. In unduly emphasizing the properly "philosophic" activity of Rome, Heidegger seems to pass over what is definitive for Rome with respect to being. Roman Dasein is essentially political, and its political activity correctly understood is no less disclosive of being than is philosophy. This activity occurs most profoundly in the person and work of Julius Caesar. In order to read in Caesar the radical consummation of Roman political violence, we will look to the portrait provided by the Greco-Roman Plutarch. Plutarch's *Life of Caesar* will provide particularly fecund soil for our Heideggerian analysis insofar as it connects the nature and problematic of Caesar's self-appointed task with the violence of being and the tragic uncanniness of human greatness. Caesar will be shown to stand in the extreme possibility of Roman Dasein as one who turns finally and definitively against Rome itself.

I. Introduction

Heidegger is well-known for his original, if tendentious, interpretations of select Greek thinkers and poets, which portray his pervasive preoccupation with what he terms "Greek Dasein."¹ Perhaps the most penetrating and controversial of these interpretations is found in the 1935 lecture course *Introduction to Metaphysics* (hereafter IM), in which his close readings of Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Sophocles ground his own account of the violence of being as such. This deference to the Greek historical moment only makes more notable Heidegger's derogation of Rome, which he sees as little more than an obfuscatory incident in the history of being.

I contend in this paper that Heidegger's reading of Rome is problematized by his own account of the reciprocity of being and Dasein in IM. The truth of being is displayed in the Roman context not in philosophy, but in a primordial political violence, which annihilates the natural feeling of the heart for the sake of the Roman State.

This activity occurs most profoundly in the person and work of Julius Caesar. In order to read in Caesar the radical consummation of Roman political violence, we will look to the portrait

¹ In what follows, 'GA' stands for Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1975—), and 'AC' for Plutarchus, *Alexander et Caesar*, ed. K. Ziegler (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1994).

provided by the Greco-Roman Plutarch. Plutarch's *Life of Caesar* will provide particularly fecund soil for our Heideggerian analysis insofar as it connects the nature and problematic of Caesar's self-appointed task with the violence of being and the tragic uncanniness of human greatness. Our exegesis of Plutarch will show Caesar to stand in the extreme possibility of Roman Dasein as one who turns finally and definitively against Rome itself.

II. Heidegger's Critique of Roman Philosophy

Heidegger's critical reading of Rome foregrounds the assumptions of Roman metaphysics as they come to light in language. The substance of this critique is already well-developed in 1925, when he intimates that the "traditional definition of man" as *animal rationale* is not primary in its content.² Later, in the *Letter on "Humanism"*, Heidegger confirms that *animal rationale* "is not simply the Latin translation of the Greek *zōon logon echon*, but rather a metaphysical interpretation of it."³ In other words, the definition does not simply receive the original sense of *logos* any more than *veritas* receives the original sense of truth achieved in *alētheia*.⁴ It rather obscures the *logos*, which Heidegger glosses in *IM* as the very violence-doing in which Dasein first comes to itself,⁵ by interpreting it as *ratio* in the derivative sense of calculative rationality.

This oft-proffered example of linguistic appropriation is indicative of what Heidegger takes to be the general failure of Roman philosophy to encounter being originally. In the *Letter on "Humanism"*, this failure is grounded explicitly in the Roman anthropology of *humanitas*, and the ontology implicit in this anthropology.⁶

Rationality in this derivative sense is the fundament of the classical virtue which Roman humanism embraces. This virtue is reducible to the principle of moderation, which on the ontological level privileges *harmonia* rather than *polemos*, reconciliation rather than confrontation. The human being in its being is at peace with being, and the wills of the human

² GA 20: 174; *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 125.

³ GA 9: 153-154; "Letter on 'Humanism'," in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 245-246.

⁴ For a statement on the fundamentally violent nature of this sense, indicated structurally by the alpha privative, cf. Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 19th ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2006), 222; *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 265. *Here human knowing as unconcealing is always a "wresting," a "snatching," and a "robbery."*

⁵ GA 40: 129; *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 188.

⁶ GA 9: 152/244.

being may be at peace with each other. Such a humanism attempts in a calculative way to root the human being in a familiar environment in which each of its wills is accounted for. This amounts to the manufacturing of a home for Dasein, a place in which it may rest in seeming comfort.

Heidegger's critique of Latinate philosophy is profound and necessary, especially insofar as it puts into question medieval and modern receptions of Greek antiquity as the situation of original philosophizing. Yet, in the light of Heidegger's own reading of the Greeks in IM, this critique may be problematically reductionist. In unduly emphasizing the properly "philosophic" activity of Rome, Heidegger seems to pass over what is definitive for Rome with respect to being. Roman Dasein is essentially political, and its political activity correctly understood is no less disclosive of being than is philosophy.

III. The Violence of Being in *Introduction to Metaphysics*

Despite its clear prioritization of what is Greek, Heidegger's 1935 reading of the first choral ode of *Antigone* provides the strongest basis for a re-interpretation of the disclosure of being in the Roman context. Here, Heidegger purports to uncover the "authentic Greek definition of humanity" as the *deinotaton* of the *deinon*, the uncanniest of the uncanny.⁷ The superlative uncanniness of the human being is grounded first of all in the interpretation of the Greek *phusis*, what emerges and abides in prevailing, as being itself. The human is that being which in its very being steps out against *phusis* in creative violence. In this activity, not only is the human being revealed as fundamentally violent, but being as such is wrested from concealment insofar as the human being through its activity enters into prevalence.

Essential human activity is thus an originary *technē*, creative-disclosive making in which the human being violently asserts itself against the prevalence of being as such.⁸ Such *technē* is inclusive not only of philosophizing, but also of poeticizing, religious founding, and state creation. In each of these modes of world-relation, Dasein casts itself out of the home in which it finds itself situated, and breaks the bonds with which it finds itself bound. Dasein is thus doubly *deinon*, firstly in its violence-doing, and secondly in the concomitant uncanniness into which it

⁷ GA 40: 116/168-169.

⁸ For a recent analysis of the implications of this account of human activity for a tragic anthropology in Heidegger, with particular reference to his second reading of *Antigone*, cf. Scott M. Campbell, "The Catastrophic Essence of the Human Being in Heidegger's Readings of *Antigone*," *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual* 7 (2017): 84–102.

casts itself. The political activity of Dasein must thus be understood as essentially human, if in it Dasein breaks out of the canny against the overwhelming.

The valorization of violence in IM has met with extensive criticism, not least because of Heidegger's formal connection to National Socialism in the 1930s. Clare Geiman, for example, critiques the very sense of human knowing as *technē*.⁹ On her account, the creative (that is, violent) aspect of *technē* is intractably tarnished by the possibility of its expression in the mode of totalitarian politics. Geiman argues further, and convincingly, that by his second reading of *Antigone* in the 1942 lecture course on Hölderlin, Heidegger's notion of thinking has already moved beyond *technē* to a kind of non-violent *poiēsis*.¹⁰

While I do not wish to discount the possibility of an alternative to *technē*, I do want to suggest the provisional superiority of thinking *technē* or *poiēsis* in a creative (and therefore violent) way. This superiority is based on the power of such a sense in grounding in a phenomenologically probable manner the relationship of authenticity, inauthenticity, and fallenness that Heidegger details in *Being and Time*. We might work this out somewhat as follows.

(1) Dasein first finds itself as Dasein in violent *technē*, asserting some *technēma* against the sway of *phusis* and the propriety of *dikē*. (2) Dasein cannot help but now ground itself in this *technēma* as the source of its "identity" as Dasein, over and against being in general. (3) In the very act of so grounding itself, however, Dasein cedes power to the *technēma*, which now makes its own claim on Dasein, and asserts itself in its own prevalence. The work of Dasein is thus subsumed in the general prevailing of *phusis*, and by remaining in the same place Dasein falls away from itself. (4) In order to find itself anew Dasein must turn against itself in a violent way. (5) The task of Dasein, if it is to remain authentically itself, is thus continually to overcome itself. To win itself, Dasein must ever embrace its own death.

⁹ Clare Pearson Geiman, "Heidegger's *Antigones*," in *A Companion to Heidegger's Introduction to Metaphysics*, ed. Richard Polt and Gregory Fried (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 161-82.

¹⁰ Richard Capobianco tracks this development in Heidegger's thinking from a slightly different angle, with respect to the question of Dasein's primordial comportment toward being. He distinguishes between a.) the account of IM, in which Dasein must throw itself out of the canny in order to dis-cover being, b.) the more nuanced account of GA 53, in which Dasein must be at home in homelessness, and c.) the account of the Memorial Address, in which Heidegger seems to advocate for an unconditioned centering in the home. The question at issue is whether Dasein is a tragedy simply, or whether it must merely pass through tragic periods as a necessary consequence of its facticity. I wish to suggest in this paper that Dasein *is most* (i.e. is most authentically) when it is a tragedy. Cf. Richard Capobianco, "The Turn Toward Home," in Richard Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2010), 52-69.

Whether or not we opt for this sense, we mistake the primary sense of the political if we understand it firstly in terms of the politics of nations, cities, or individuals. While the political may very well take this form ontically, it is more foundationally the very activity of Dasein's self-relation. The *polis*, Heidegger states, is nothing other than the site of human being qua historical being, the *Da* of *Da-sein* itself.¹¹ The *polis* as this site refers to the location and situation in which any coming-to-be for Dasein occurs. Politics is thus existentially-ontologically a confrontation of factions in the very soul of the human being. In this confrontation, we can both gain and lose ourselves. In the victory of that faction for which Dasein resolutely decides, it cuts itself off from those factions against which it in the same act does violence. Every act of self-making is thus simultaneously an act of self-destruction.

IV. Rethinking Rome in its Essential Violence

It is on the basis of this anthropology and this notion of primordial politics that we can reinterpret the meaning of Rome in regard to its political activity. The peculiar violence of Rome's political *technē* is directed against its own heart. Out of this violence the Roman State as *technēma* emerges in its unique significance. This interpretation of the meaning of Rome is not cut from whole cloth, but is based on its own self-interpretation as we find it in such Latin authors as Livy and Virgil.

Consider, for example, the material details of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Aeneas flees a sacked Troy, a home to which he is ever tempted to look back as the wife of Lot looked back at Sodom. Aeneas is burdened, and the *Aeneid* is the poetic account of the overcoming of this burden. Literally, his burden is no one other than Anchises, the father whom he carries on his back. Figuratively, his burden is the very weight of his heart's affection, which holds him under its sway. To found Rome, and find himself, is to break out from under this sway. Thus his wife and father must die, and Troy as the hearth must be thrown by Aeneas into the sort of past which does not prevail over the present. The construction of Rome for Virgil is thus tantamount to the destruction of the home.

Livy confirms this conception of Rome in his own histories, which are littered with instances of familial incest, rape, and murder. These instances of family violence are not incidental to the Roman project, but essential to it from beginning to end. Hence the first

¹¹ GA 40: 117/170.

founding of Romulus is defined by the famous fratricide of Remus. Likewise, the re-founding of Lucius Junius Brutus is defined by that consul's execution of his two sons for treason against the nascent Republic. This execution purports to be the triumph of the impartiality of Roman law, which becomes a definitive principle for the Roman people. Yet this principle is itself a nomotic construction that Roman Dasein posits in opposition to *phusis*, insofar as *phusis* comes to light in the prevailing of natural feeling.¹²

These writers, in prose and poetry respectively, each purport to give a primal history of Roman origin. This primal history, which we might after Heidegger call mythology,¹³ need not be judged by the standards of any science of history. Scientific history emerges only out of a prior self-interpretation (*muthos*), and only on the basis of such an interpretation can we regard ourselves as scientific-historical beings in the first place. It is then immaterial whether we demonstrate that particular instances of familial violence occurred "in fact" according to the factual criteria of some historical method. We are concerned instead with the facts determinative of Roman self-conception, and these facts show themselves in her literature itself.

What is definitive for Rome in this literature is violence against heart and hearth. Roman Dasein recognizes the heart as the site of *polemos*, the place where *phusis* as the prevailing proximally and for the most part brings itself to bear upon human being. The creative-destructive work of Rome emerges out of this recognition, and the spirit of Rome is born out of the violent annihilation of all natural ties.

V. The Birth of Caesar Out of Rome

Into this context, Caesar is thrown. Plutarch's portrait of Caesar gives us a man who single-mindedly pursues *hēgemonia*, political power in the Roman context. He is not shackled by attachments to parents, children, wives, or lovers. Neither greed, nor lust, nor any kind of wretched contentment grip his mind. The death of his daughter does not move Caesar, except as a matter of political moment. Cleopatra, a clever and amusing woman, is only his plaything. She

¹² This sense of Rome is captured powerfully in Jacques-Louis David's 1789 painting, *Les lecteurs rapportent à Brutus les corps de ses fils*. As his sons are brought to him, Brutus sits in darkness, stony-faced. The light falls on his clenched feet, which reveal the effort with which he controls himself. His act does not simply do violence to his sons (whom he executes), nor to his wife and daughters (who wail in the corner at the death of their loved ones). The ground of this double-violence is his own violation of himself.

¹³ GA 40: 119/173.

cannot possess him in the manner she later possesses Anthony. All everyday affections, for this Roman *par excellence*, have been sublimated into Rome itself.

Yet Caesar is not satisfied with the achievement of power, but must find that task most worthy of his achievement. Plutarch tells the story of a battle with a certain tribe, in which Caesar nearly meets defeat. Thereafter, these barbarians show a dagger hanging in their temple, which they claim was taken from Caesar.¹⁴ While the conqueror's friends advise him to remove it, he instead consecrates it as something holy. This mysterious reverence is a reverence for the overwhelming. Caesar sees that his own power is determined by the power against which he sets himself. Hence he seeks the sway, and is intent on breaking against it.

What Caesar seeks is revealed more fully when Plutarch tells us that Caesar wept. Caesar does not weep when he puts away the wife of his youth. Nor does he weep when he hears news of the death of his daughter and namesake. Rather, when he reads a history of Alexander the Great, he sits in silent thought, and then bursts into tears.¹⁵ Here, the knowledge of his own nature brings itself home as acute anxiety. One marvels at the feats of gods, but one is not endangered by this marveling. Alexander's accomplishment threatens to destroy Caesar because Caesar sees no difference between himself and a god. Thus, previously, he laughed at kidnappers who demanded twenty talents of him, and offered to give them fifty.¹⁶ Thus, now, he weeps with the tears of a man who seeks the prevalence of power as such.

Despite his single-mindedness, Caesar has not yet overcome attachment qua attachment. On the basis of our earlier account of *technē*, we might conclude that the paradox of the human work is that in its very achievement it becomes the means by which we fall away from ourselves. Thus Rome necessarily becomes for Roman Dasein that which obstructs and obscures the original Roman impulse. So it is for Caesar, for all he has accomplished he has accomplished as the child of Rome. In her institutions, with her armies, and at her teat, he has achieved what he has achieved. Rome shows itself to Caesar as the very condition of the possibility of his way of being hitherto. It is on this basis that Plutarch identifies Rome as the *mother* of Caesar. As mother, Rome prevails over Caesar as his heart. This heart, rising in his throat, asserts itself against him.

¹⁴ AC: 26.7.

¹⁵ AC: 11.5.

¹⁶ AC: 2.1.

VI. The Consummation of Roman Violence in Caesar's Work

Caesar's essential insight is his recognition of the heart as the primary site of confrontation, and Rome as the substance of his heart. On this basis, he chooses his uncanny work. Plutarch's discernment of Caesar culminates in his description of the critical moment of this work, a moment well-worn in the public consciousness: the crossing of the Rubicon. This river separates the commander from Rome as the door of the marriage chamber separates the boy from his mother. Crossing the Rubicon is forbidden to the Roman son and soldier inasmuch as it violates the integrity and sovereignty of the Roman State. For Caesar to make this crossing would be consummate ingratitude – and therefore consummate self-mutilation.

On the night preceding the river-crossing, Plutarch recounts the prophetic dream of Caesar, in which he lies with his own mother.¹⁷ Rome thus presents itself to her son as the only thing which may not be violated. Against this final “may not,” the *technēma* of Roman *technē*, Caesar violently and decisively turns as one might turn in an act of incestuous rape. Returning from his warfare against the world, Caesar turns toward the flesh of his own flesh, the site of origin, the home itself. This act makes war on all propriety (*dikē*), and turns against what presents itself as most overwhelming. With himself, the site of the overwhelming, Caesar has been in eternal competition.¹⁸ With this destructive work, he has lighted upon his supreme warfare.

In the river crossing, Caesar brings Rome to his bosom, and takes her in an unnatural way. Prior to this crossing, on the near bank of his destiny, calculation (*logismos*) comes upon Caesar as he draws close to what Plutarch calls the *deinon*, the uncanniness of his task itself.¹⁹ Here he is cast into doubt and wavers much in his mind. This wavering demonstrates the significance of the war he wages, for his warfare is the incestuous violation of his ground. The moment on the bank is thus one of fundamental resolution, in which Caesar violently steps out against Rome. The *logismos* of Caesar is not finally an arithmetical counting or calculation, in which he weighs option against option. It is rather an instance of *legein* as primordial violence-doing²⁰, in which Caesar comes to his essential being as *deinotaton*.

¹⁷ AC: 32.9

¹⁸ AC: 58.4-5.

¹⁹ AC: 32.5.

²⁰ Cf. GA 40: 129/187-188.

The problematic of this decision is foreshadowed by Plutarch in the beginning of the *Life*. Caesar's political ambition initially required his flight from the city. There, as a fugitive from his soil, he moved from house to house, and could settle nowhere.²¹ This seed of homelessness comes to fruit in the realization of Caesar's essential accomplishment, in which he destroys the very possibility of being-at-home. The violence of Caesar's *legein* is directed against the hearth itself. With this deed, he casts himself into the un-canny.

Plutarch cuts this uncanniness in relief with his account of the portentous circumstances surrounding Caesar's death. He first throws us to a scene in which Caesar lies in bed with one of his wives, as any loving husband might. Suddenly, all the windows and doors of his home fly open. Caesar is not only startled by the noise, but by the light which suddenly illuminates himself and his surroundings.²² This home without fastenings is no home. This house without security is deprived of its homeliness. In overcoming Rome, Caesar has deprived himself of a place to live. Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests. Caesar, by virtue of this work, can have no place to lay his head.

Plutarch again tells us how Caesar prepares a sacrificial animal for some holy event.²³ As he sacrifices, the chest cavity is empty, for the heart of the victim has failed to show itself. This monster (*teras*) is rightly thought by the on-lookers to be uncanny (*deinon*). In this parable, Caesar is not only the priest, but also the victim. He himself is the heartless one, the uncanny monster. On the altar of his heroic-tragic greatness, he sees fit to sacrifice all natural feeling. To seduce the mother is not merely to subjugate her or destroy her. He has salted his fields, but still must plough them. He has slept with his mother, but still sees her face.

In this work, Caesar fulfills the fundamental Roman impulse. This fulfillment is a consummation, for in it Caesar has not replaced Rome with any *thing*. He has found that which is most potent, his own heart, and seeks to empty it of all content. Roman Dasein in general makes war on the heart, and yet produces a concrete work out of this warfare. In violating Rome, and yet remaining in the Roman context, Caesar holds himself out into a kind of nothing. In overcoming Rome, Caesar has overcome himself and brought himself to an abyss. No task can compare with this final task, this last route through beings to being.

²¹ AC: 1.5-6.

²² AC: 63.8.

²³ AC: 63.4.

VII. Conclusion

In this use we make of Plutarch, we do not limit ourselves by the horizon of his own criticism. For Plutarch, the problematic of Caesar's task is the problematic of his greatness. In overcoming Rome his mother, he overcomes himself. In overcoming himself, he loses himself and must embrace his own destruction. Caesar is then for Plutarch a tragedy and a sign of warning.

Based on Heidegger's account in IM, we must say that Caesar is a sign indeed, but one that points to being. As a tragedy, he is one who, as Oedipus in that "seer's word"²⁴ of Hölderlin, "has an eye too many perhaps."²⁵ With this eye, he sees being as a burden, but a burden he is intent on bearing. The work of Caesar is a happening of uncanniness, in which he makes himself homeless with violence. Such a happening of uncanniness, Heidegger states, is a happening of un-concealment, a fundamental event of the truth of being.²⁶

In showing himself a monster, Caesar shows himself as *deinotaton*. His monstrosity is thus nothing other than the distinction of Dasein itself. As he violates the mother and breaks against the heart, Caesar breaks against being as such. Only in this violent confrontation is being revealed as the fittingness which overwhelms in its prevailing. Caesar here has the fortitude to gain himself by putting himself to death. Thus, we might say, is humanity ever justified – not by faith, not by theory, but by savage resolution.

²⁴ GA 40: 81/117.

²⁵ "In Lovely Blueness...", in Friedrich Hölderlin, *Poems and Fragments*, trans. Michael Hamburger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 603.

²⁶ GA 40: 127/186.

“Volo, ut sis:” Freedom As Co-Disclosure in Heidegger’s *Being and Time*

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ABSTRACT

Martin Heidegger’s concern for the notion of freedom is evident in his masterwork, *Being and Time (SZ)*. As presented in *SZ*, care becomes the locus for a robust discussion of freedom, here defined as the ‘letting-be’ of others who are co-present, but with the addition of authentic solicitude. As Dasein is a being defined by care, we turn to Heidegger’s translation of a line from Augustine as our guide: “Volo, ut sis” – I want you to be what you are. For the Heidegger of *SZ*, authentic solicitude is that which allows us to be free for our ownmost possibilities – and to free others for theirs.

Citing Augustine in a 1925 letter to Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger writes: “Amo means volo, ut sis...I love you – I want to you to be what you are.” Herein, I would like to explore this desire for another being to ‘be what they are,’ this *volo, ut sis*. If we understand authentic solicitude as presented in *SZ* as a kind of caring, one that leads others to take up possibilities of their own, an enterprise guided by caring love for others, by a desire to assist others in becoming what it is possible for them to be: to be what they are, then this is surely indicative of Heidegger’s sense of freedom in *SZ*. Here, co-being is thus a ‘letting-be’ of others who are co-present.

The concept of freedom has a long history in the annals of political philosophy, yet it has less often been discussed as it relates to the Heideggerian corpus. The notions of negative, positive, and even postmodern freedom have all been found insufficient for an account of Heideggerian freedom; the preference has been granted to ‘disclosive freedom,’ ‘freedom as revelation’ or ‘primordial freedom.’¹ Of the highest import is the idea of freedom as what Dasein

¹ See Leslie-Paul Thiele’s “Heidegger on Freedom: Political, not Metaphysical.” *American Political Science Review*, 88, no. 2 (1994): 278-291; Craig M. Nichols’ “Primordial Freedom: The Authentic Truth of Dasein in Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. In: Thinking Fundamentals, IWM Junior Visiting Fellows Conference, Vol. 9, Vienna 2000; Fred R. Dallmayr’s “Ontology of Freedom: Heidegger and Political Philosophy,” *Political Theory* Vol. 12, No. 2 (May 1984): 204-234; and Lawrence Vogel’s *The Fragile We*. It is Thiele who distinguishes between the three types of liberty (two of which he borrows from Isaiah Berlin, including the postmodern (borrowed from Michel Foucault). Thiele understands Heidegger’s freedom as “disclosive freedom’ which “entails the formation of dynamic worldly relationships, relationships all the more dynamic because they are no longer constrained by the limitations of a subject/object dichotomy” (284). Nichol’s term is “freedom as revelation,” something that is revealed to Dasein, particularly in the moment of its rupture with *das Man*, in which it begins to understand a disclosure of itself.

possesses as a being that is its possibilities; “Dasein’s authentic potentiality for being.”² The kind of freedom we find in *SZ* cannot be a freedom *from* or a freedom *to*. It cannot even be a freedom *in*. Instead, it must be a freedom *for possibilities*, for the revelation of the choices that are made when heeding the silent call of conscience. For to whom and from whom does the call go out? It goes out from Dasein to itself and frees it to be itself in the most authentic manner.

True freedom, in this context, is a release from the clamour of *das Man*, from the power structures it creates. Though it seems odd, this liberation also marks the moment of the overcoming of subjectivism. The result is self-determined determination, yes, but defined negatively – as refusing to be defined by others and choosing the possibility of being defined by one’s own relationship to Being (mineness, *Jemeinigkeit*). Here, overcoming *das Man* represents the liberty to pursue other, myriad, possibilities, not merely one’s own subjective interests, and to exist in a state of nearness to Being.³

The phrase ‘free will’ cannot even reach the kind of freedom authentic Dasein possesses. More than this, it is grounded in care, considerateness and toleration – not only projecting inward to Dasein itself, but also outward toward Others. In resoluteness, without reservation of any kind, Dasein chooses to care, which was always part of its constitution, and that care expands into a kind of ontological responsibility.

It is care, in *SZ*, that is the vessel by which Dasein is able to reach an authentic relationship with other Dasein. This is accomplished, in one way, when Dasein are able to share the bond of common interest that, in turn, ‘stirs’ the Dasein of others. In other terms, when people share a common goal, they care for one another in a deep sense. Indeed they are freed by one another to develop a richer understanding of themselves. Heidegger makes this point clear:

A being-with-one-another which arises [*entspringt*] from one’s doing the same thing as someone else, not only keeps for the most part within the outer limits, but enters the mode of distance and reserve. The Being-with-one-another of those who are hired for the same affair often thrives only on mistrust. On the other hand, when they devote themselves to the same affair in common, their doing so is determined by the manner in which their Dasein, each in its own way, has been taken hold of. They thus become *authentically* bound together, and this makes possible the kind

² Nichols, “Primordial Freedom.”

³ Heidegger often uses this language of choice. See GA 2, Division I: LL 7, 12, 21, 42, 188, 194 and Division II: 264, 268.

of objectivity [*die rechte Sachlichkeit*], which frees the Other in his freedom for himself (GA 2:26;L 122).⁴

In *SZ*, Dasein represents being-there as a state – one that is reached as beings question their existence. Here, “care as care for freedom is the care of knowing and being-able-to-know about the essence of all beings (GA 2:26; L 122).

The problem of modernity can, for Heidegger, be traced to its root cause – a focus on subjectivity that leaves individual persons alienated and without authentic community – lost in *das Man*. There is a loss of embedded-ness in the world here that is troubling. If human beings are indeed nomadic subjects, wandering the earth, without a home to speak of, then what becomes of the commonalities that make communities possible?

We see all of these considerations touched upon in *SZ*. For, it is there that the ‘world’ in which humans co-exist seems to them to be permanent, and fixed as well as inauthentic or authentic. Yet this is not how Heidegger characterizes them in the end – Heidegger maintains, contrariwise, that the world is malleable and impermanent. One has only been deceived, according to this train of thought, when one views the world as static and unchangeable. To overcome the modern homelessness or alienation that beings in the world experience, they must reach ‘authenticity’ through ‘freedom towards death.’ As Heidegger puts it:

*Anticipation reveals to Dasein its lostness in the they-self, and brings it face to face with the possibility of being itself, primarily unsupported by concerned solicitude, but of being itself, rather, in an impassioned **freedom toward death** which is free of the illusions of the ‘they,’ and which is factual, certain of itself, and anxious (GA 2: 53; L 266).*

Heidegger’s meaning is clear: it is through care for others that Dasein reaches an authentic relationship *with* others who are also Dasein. This occurs especially when they, for example, share bonds of interest:

when [beings] devote themselves to the same affair in common, their doing so is determined by the manner in which their Dasein, each in its own way, has been taken hold of. They thus become *authentically* bound together, and this makes

⁴ There has been some debate over whether the use of the term ‘authentic’ is appropriately translated in this passage or whether another word ought to have been used. In the original German, however, the term is of course *eigentliche*, which could be translated as ‘actual’ or ‘authentically.’ Here, it is taken as ‘authentically.’ Interestingly, others have translated *Eigentlichkeit* as ‘ownedness’ (see John Haugeland’s translation) due to the root of the word – ‘*eigen*,’ meaning ‘own.’

possible the right kind of objectivity [*die rechte Sachlichkeit*], which frees the Other in his freedom for himself (GA 2: 26; L 122).

Authentic *Mitdasein*, unlike *Mitsein*, seems to be inherently free in character as presented in *SZ*. In §26, Heidegger distinguishes between the two by way of offering this explanation:

Being-in is *Being-with* Others [*Das In-Sein ist Mitsein mit Anderen*]. Their Being-in-themselves within-the-world is *Dasein-with* [*Das innerweltliche Ansichsein dieser ist Mitdasein*]. . . Yet one must not fail to notice that we use the term ‘Dasein-with’ to designate that Being for which the Others who are [*die seienden Anderen*] are freed within-the-world. This Dasein-with of Others is disclosed within-the-world for a Dasein, and so too for those who are Daseins with us [*die Mitdaseienden*] only because Dasein in itself is essentially Being-with (GA 2: 26; L 122).

Yet, if beings are individuated, what ties them together in the world in which they live? It cannot merely be the fact that they exist ‘alongside’ one another. This would mean that being-with would remain in the category of being inauthentic, even between Dasein. How, then, does a being reach the state of authentic Dasein, fleeing *das Man*?

Heidegger contends that this is accomplished, in the main, through *Care* (*Sorge*). It is this freedom, this stirring of one’s own Dasein, that one finds in other Dasein. When people work in common, care for one another, and exhibit authentic care toward one another, they free one another, also, to have a deeper understanding of themselves as Dasein. This ontic phenomenon causes Dasein, as it were, to come full circle. The ontological, existential analysis informs the existentiell, ontic existence of Dasein. A common purpose becomes that which offers beings an authentic relation with others, around a particular Dasein. Care, in *SZ*, is analyzed existentially, used as a hermeneutic for Dasein to comprehend care and then to put it into action in the existentiell world. It is, thus, the care structures of being-with and toward others that is the locus of authentic possibilities and freedom in *SZ*.

If authenticity offers a glimpse into how one may live in a shared world and the idea of *Mitdasein* points to how one may authentically live in that same world, then *authentic solicitude* may serve as the foundation or lynchpin for making conjectures about freedom.⁵ *Sorge* is, of

⁵ For more on this topic and related, see François Raffoul’s work on *The Origins of Responsibility*. Indiana University Press Series in Continental Thought, 2010 and a previous version of this work in *Heidegger and Practical Philosophy*, SUNY Series in Continental Philosophy, 2010; K.M Stroh’s 2015 “Intersubjectivity of Dasein in Heidegger’s ‘Being and Time’”: How Authenticity is a Return to Community, *Human Studies* 38(2), pp. 243-259;

course, treated in varying and diverse ways in *SZ*.⁶ It has already been noted that Dasein's existence occurs in a with-world; what comes next is to determine the actual structures of *Sorge*. To be sure, Dasein has a multitude of what might be called 'concerns.' When Heidegger uses the term *Besorgen*, a kind of concern for what is at hand is denoted. Thus, caring for others can, much like all else in *SZ*, be either inauthentic or authentic. As a fallen being, thrown into the world, Dasein 'cares about' its own existence; existence matters to Dasein. This is because Dasein is always already being-in-the-world, is 'ahead' of itself. In other words, Dasein exists in a complete network of meaning – Dasein is care (*Sorge*), but also has concerns (*Besorgen*). What matters to Dasein is not only the ready-to-hand in the world, but also a 'caring for' (*Fürsorgen*) others. Authentic Dasein has, as part of its very composition, care. Yet, in *SZ*, Heidegger moves beyond the ordinary meaning of care as simply part of Dasein's existence. Instead, he further delineates between simple care, caring for, and solicitude. Heidegger begins his discussion of care in *Being and Time* in Division I by describing it as Dasein's "existential meaning" (GA 2: Part I; L 41). From the outset, he distinguishes care – which is the existential or ontological hermeneutic used to interpret care – from concern (*Besorgen*) – which is the ontic, or existentiell, version of the term. He writes:

In contrast to these colloquial ontical significations, the expression 'concern' will be used in this investigation as an ontological term for an *existentiale*, and will designate the Being of a possible way of Being-in-the-world. This term has been chosen, not because Dasein happens to be proximally and to a large extent 'practical' and economic, but because the Being of Dasein itself is to be made visible as *care*. This expression too is to be taken as an ontological structural concept...it has nothing to do with 'tribulation,' 'melancholy,' or the 'cares of life,' though ontically one can come across these in every Dasein. These – like their opposites, 'gaiety,' and 'freedom from care' – are ontically possible only because Dasein, when understood *ontologically*, is care. Because Being-in-the-world belongs essentially to Dasein, its Being towards the world [*Sein zur Welt*] is essentially concern (GA 2: 12; L 57).

Frank Schalow's "At the Crossroads of Freedom: Ethics Without Values" in *A Companion to Heidegger's 'Introduction to Metaphysics'*, Yale University Press, 2001; Joanna Hodge's 2002 "Ethics and Time: Levinas between Kant and Husserl" *Diacritics* 32(3/4, Ethics), pp. 107-134 and 1992 "Nietzsche, Heidegger, Europe: Five Remarks" *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 3(NIETZSCHE/HEIDEGGER), pp. 45-66; lastly, Fred Dallmayr's 2015 *Freedom and Solidarity: Toward New Beginnings*, University Press of Kentucky to mention a few.

⁶ Briefly, the literal translations are as such: *Sorge* suggests a kind of anxiety or worry about something; *Sorgen Für* means to take care of something or provide for something; *das Besorgen* denotes concern, as in concerning oneself with something. See *SZ* (GA 2) LL 41, 57, 121f, 126, 131, 171-174, 180-230, 231, 233, 235f, 246, 249, 251f, 254, 259, 265, 270, 274-280 (§ 57), 284-289, 298, 300, 310-333, 334f, 337, 344, 346, 353f, 359, 364, 367, 372, 374, 376, 382, 385, 390, 397, 406, 411f, 419, 424, 436.

The ontic meaning of care, then, is characterized by the ontological sense of the word. Dasein, as a being in the world, experiences care (and thus concern) for others in the world as part of its singular existence, its way of going about Being-in-the-world. Care for others is only ontically possible because it can be described ontologically. This description should also make clear the way in which concern is ontically possible only in care. Concern becomes the ontic, yet authentic way in which Dasein experiences care.

Furthermore, Heidegger does not wish for care, or its third form (other than care and concern) – solicitude (*Fürsorge*)⁷ to be misunderstood in everyday, ontic ways. Averting the contrary, he offers:

In contrast to this [leaping-in], there is also the possibility of a kind of solicitude which does not so much leap in for the Other as *leap ahead* of him [*ihm vorausspringt*] in his existentiell potentiality-for-Being, not in order to take away his ‘care,’ but rather to give it back to him authentically as such for the first time. This kind of solicitude pertains essentially to authentic care – that is, to the existence of the Other, not to a ‘*what*’ with which he is concerned; it helps the Other to become transparent to himself *in* his care and to become *free* for it (GA 2:26; L 122).

Yet, these are not “pieces belonging to some composite, one of which might sometimes be missing; but there is woven together in them a primordial context which makes up the totality of the structural whole [of Dasein] which we are seeking” (GA 2: 41; L 41). Here, and above, Heidegger seems to assert both that Dasein is essentially care *and* so is Being-in-the-world. In fact, he argues that “Care, as a primordial structural totality, lies ‘before’ [*vor*] every factual ‘attitude’ and ‘situation’ of Dasein, and it does so existentially and *á priori*; this means that it always lies *in* them” (GA 2: 41; L 193).

Thus, the structure of Being outlined in *SZ* contains an ontic expression of Dasein that reveals itself in selfhood and freedom. It also contains an ontic expression of *Mitdasein* that recognizes a community of self-knowing Dasein that are concerned, not only with their own

⁷ As Macquarrie and Robinson note (p. 157, footnote, *BT*), this term has no equivalent in English. Joan Stambaugh (see revised 2001 translation of *BT*) translates it more literally, as ‘caring for,’ but ‘solicitude’ seems to capture more essentially Heidegger’s original intent and usage. In contemporary English, ‘solicitude’ preserves the notion that someone is cared *for* while also capturing its double meaning as an anxious kind of worry, unease, or apprehension. Meaning, ‘solicitude’ conjures up ‘attentive’ caring or earnest attention. It should also be noted that this ‘apprehension’ has something to do with anxiety (*Angst*) and fear (*Furcht*) as attunements in this sense.

Being, but also about other beings, specifically other Dasein. In that world, structured ontologically as it is by the ground of care, the inauthentic nature of *das Man*, the being-with that is merely something to tolerate, the manner in which human beings treat others as mere objects of destiny – all this gives way to the possibility for an authentic community of free Dasein, all of which are seeking an authentic existence in the world. If Dasein is already thrown, inauthentic, and dealing with others in a deficient mode, this need not remain the case. To be sure, Heidegger has already addressed this subject – Dasein may have an authentic Dasein-with with others and this is dependent upon care being an essential characteristic of Dasein.

In *SZ*, there is yet a further distinction made between concern (*Besorgen*) and solicitude (*Fürsorge*):

Because Being-in-the-world is essentially care, Being-alongside the ready-to-hand could be taken in our previous analyses as *concern* and Being with the Dasein-with of others as we encounter it within the world could be taken as *solicitude* (GA 2: 41;L 193).

Accordingly, if being-in-the-world is essentially care, then being-together-with is ‘taking care of.’ It is then the term authentic ‘solicitude’ that Heidegger uses when speaking of the being-with that is the relationship between Dasein and others. Adding to this, just as care is not an isolated expression of concern for oneself (GA 2:41; L 193),⁸ so, too, authentic care and concern for the Other is not a kind of not a kind of ‘leaping in’ for another (*Einspringen*), but a ‘leaping ahead’ (*Vorausspringen*) of the other in solicitude. This is also part of authentic being-with. As a being that exists in the world, Dasein is always the being that is ahead-of-itself in this regard; it is always the being that exists within the context of the structure of care. These ontological structures, it is important to note, are prior to any factual attitude or position; they are ontological priorities to ontic possibilities.

Perhaps the most useful way to continue this analysis of care is to analyze the ‘Myth of Care’ found in *Being and Time*, a strikingly poetic moment in the text and the clearest description of what Heidegger actually means by care:

Once when ‘Care’ was crossing a river, she saw some clay; she thoughtfully took up a piece and began to shape it. While she was meditating on what she had made, Jupiter came by. ‘Care’ asked him to give it spirit, and this he gladly granted. But when she wanted her name to be bestowed upon it, he forbade this, and demanded that it be given his name instead. While ‘Care’ and Jupiter were disputing, Earth

⁸ “So neither does ‘care’ stand primarily and exclusively for an isolated attitude of the ‘I’ toward itself.”

arose and desired that her own name be conferred on the creature, since she had furnished it with part of her body. They asked Saturn to be their arbiter, and he made the following decision, which seemed a just one: ‘Since you, Jupiter, have given its spirit, you shall receive that spirit at its death; and since you, Earth, have given its body, you shall receive its body. But since ‘Care’ first shaped this creature, she shall possess it as long as it lives. And because there is now a dispute among you as to its name, let it be called ‘*homo*’, for it is made out of *humus* (earth) (GA2:42; LL 197-198).⁹

Heidegger’s use of this Roman myth is central to an understanding of care. In it, *Cura* (Care, Concern) is the figure that creates human kind out of pliable clay from the river she happens to cross. She (lest it be forgotten that *Cura* is a goddess, not a god)¹⁰ then asks the King of the gods, *Jovis* (Jupiter) to endow humankind with a spirit, with *geist*. Though he agrees, he also expresses a desire for humanity to bear his name, to be given credit for his part in its creation. Yet, no sooner does *Cura* refuse to allow *Jovis* to give his name to what she initially crafted, but *Tellus* (Earth/ ‘Mother Earth’) appears and insists that, because humankind has been crafted out of clay, of earth, of her body, that it bear her name instead. Significantly, it is not the King of the gods who arbitrates, and finally resolves, their dispute, but *Saturnum* (Saturn), the God of Time. He decides that each of these three shall have their own particular purview over humanity – *Jovis* will receive its soul upon its death, *Tellus* will have its body. However, it is *Cura* who will remain in possession of humanity throughout its life, its existence, its being-there. Therefore, it seems that Heidegger has gone to great lengths to explicate just how important care¹¹ is to beings in the world – she rules them, but they do not have her name. Rather, as from the earth, they are given, not the name of *Tellus*, but the word for what their substance is, for where they dwell. “Man’s *perfectio* – his transformation into that which he can be in Being-free for his ownmost possibilities (projection) – is ‘accomplished’” Heidegger writes, “by ‘care.’”

But with equal primordially ‘care’ determines what is basically specific in this entity, according to which it has been surrendered to the world of its concern

⁹ In a footnote on Macquarrie Robinson, 243, Heidegger explains that he has taken this myth “from K. Burdach’s article, ‘*Faust und die Sorge*.’ The translation is from Burdach.” Division I, Chapter Six, footnote v. Note: The poem was originally written by Galus Julius Hyginus (64 B.C. – AD 17), poem 220 of *Fabulae*. It is, as far as can be known, the only time that *Cura* is personified in Roman mythology.

¹⁰ It is certain that this fact no doubt serves at times to upend Christian mythology (specifically that of the creation myth wherein humankind is created from clay as well, but in the image of a male god and not by a woman – or, technically TWO women).

¹¹ It should be noted that the use of this myth also serves to show the entire complex matrix of Dasein in SZ. Time, Earth, and Care all have their place in the life – and death – of Dasein.

(thrownness). In the ‘double meaning’ of care, what we have in view is a *single* basic state in its essentially two-fold structure of thrown projection (GA 2: 42; L 199).

Heidegger chooses to focus on what he terms the ‘double meaning’ of care in the above myth, which had already been pointed out by K. Burdach, that “calls attention to a double meaning of the term *cura* according to which it signifies not only ‘anxious exertion’ but also ‘carefulness’ and ‘devotedness’ [‘*Sorgfalt*,’ ‘*Hingabe*’]” (GA 2: 42; L 199).

Heidegger does not mention care again until Division II, where he connects it to temporality and to death. There, the coming to be of care is found in the ‘call of conscience’ where “*conscience manifests itself as the call of care*; the caller is Dasein, which, in its thrownness (in its Being-already-in), is anxious about its potentiality-for-Being” (GA 2: 57; L 57). There are three separate ways, according to Heidegger, to look at the care that is the Being of Dasein: “It comprises in itself facticity (thrownness), existence (projection), and falling” (GA 2: 57; L 57). Yet, this should not be taken to mean that care only exists in the ‘fallen’ world of *das Man*. Sociality, authentic sociality, also comes into play. Heidegger writes:

Thrown into its ‘there,’ every Dasein has been factically submitted to a definitive ‘world’ – its ‘world. At the same time, those factual projections which are closest to it, have been guided by its concerned *lostness* in the ‘they.’ To this lostness, one’s own Dasein can appeal, and this appeal can be understood in the way of resoluteness. But in that case this *authentic* disclosedness modifies with equal primordially both the way in which the ‘world’ is discovered (and this is founded upon this disclosedness) and the way in which the Dasein-with [*Mitdasein*] of Others is disclosed. The ‘world’ which is ready-to-hand does not become another one ‘in its content,’ nor does the circle of Others get exchanged for a new one; but both one’s Being towards the ready-to-hand understandingly and concernedly, and one’s solicitous Being with Others, are now given a definitive character in terms of their ownmost potentiality-for-Being-their-selves (GA 2: 42; L 199).

Care, then, becomes not only an essential structural component of Dasein, but also what allows for the “*authentic potentiality-for-being-a-whole*.” Being-with could, up until now, have been seen as an indifferent mode of existing with others. However, when the concepts of care and concern are taken into account, a different sort of being-with takes shape and reveals itself. What care does for Dasein is to allow it to *choose* to ignore these deficient modes and relationships and to act consciously against the indifference of *das Man*. Thus, care and knowledge of one’s own Dasein occurs first and then genuine concern for Others. What is left is the potential for a community of self-knowing Dasein who have chosen their care and knowledge

of self and Others *freely* through the myriad possibilities that are open to Dasein. While simply ‘caring’ for Others seems to fall short, authentic care and concern are a ‘calling’ that Dasein answers.

For Heidegger, inauthentic solicitude is just this – a ‘leaping-in’ for the Other, a relationship in which “the Other can become one who is dominated and dependent, even if this domination is a tacit one and remains hidden from him.” As has been shown, in *SZ*, solicitude may also be a ‘leaping ahead’ of the Other, however. Thus, authentic solicitude is meant to indicate the humanity of human beings and to free them for themselves and for their care. As Heidegger writes, “solicitude is guided by *considerateness* and *forbearance*. Like solicitude, these can range through their respective deficient and indifferent modes up to the point of *inconsiderateness* or the perfunctoriness for which indifference leads the way” (GA 2: 26; LL 122-123). Though Heidegger offers no concrete examples of solicitude, Hayim Gordon offers this:

The educational relationship that Fyodor Dostoyevsky describes in *The Brothers Karamazov*, between Father Zosima, the elder, and Alyosha Karamazov, is an example of solicitude in which Dasein leaps ahead of the Other...Father Zosima relates with wisdom to Alyosha’s potentiality-for-being, carefully and lovingly instructing him what to do so that he can live what Heidegger would call an authentic life of care. Alyosha responds with deep love and strict obedience to Father Zosima’s solicitude.¹²

Solicitude, then, is a very specific kind of caring, one that leads others to take up possibilities of their own; it is not a selfish or self-serving enterprise, but one that seems to be guided by caring love for others, by a desire to assist others in becoming what it is possible for them to be.

Yet, care also has a distinctly temporal meaning in the second division of *SZ* (GA 2: 65). Dasein’s existence is not a singularity, but a unity; and care is presented as the fundamental structure that underlies human existence. Furthermore, if care is to exist, Heidegger contends, then temporality must be the *á priori* transcendental condition for it. Dasein may only become open to its possibilities in the context of temporality. The Dasein of the present must begin to understand that its cultural-historical milieu defines it in such a way that it hinders and constrains

¹² Hayim Gordon (2001). *The Heidegger-Buber Controversy: The Status of the I-Thou*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 17. In Dostoyevsky’s *The Brother’s Karamazov*, Father Zosima’s special relationship with Alyosha (Alexi Karamazov is one of great influence. Instead of directly interfering in Alyosha’s life, Zosima seems to desire that Alyosha ‘be himself.’

Being. In other words, without understanding time as a unity between traditional understandings of the past (what has already passed), the present (that which is occurring), and the future (that which will come to pass) instead of a linear progression of the aforementioned, then Dasein may never achieve authenticity. More clearly, without comprehending time as a unity and not as a progression, Dasein will never come to pursue its ownmost possibilities, but will continue to pursue the limited and constraining possibilities posited by *das Man* – *and remain unfree*.

Heidegger's Reversal of Reasoning: Guilt and Freedom in *Being and Time*

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Introduction

In this paper I examine Heidegger's analysis of Being-guilty in *Being and Time* (BT, Division II, Chapter II, especially §58)¹ on the background of a tradition in philosophical thought that goes back at least to Kant in his *Religion with the Boundaries of Mere Reason*. In this tradition, among whom, in addition to Kant, we can also count Schelling and Schopenhauer, the argument is made in various forms that for moral guilt for our actions to be possible we must be guilty in some fundamental or ontological sense, and that, moreover and crucially, we must have *freely* taken this latter guilt upon ourselves. Moral guilt for our actions is thus only possible if we are *free* on some transcendental level: were we not free in this latter sense we could not be guilty for our essential guilt and (consequently) for our actions. This line of argument is open to a serious criticism, explicitly raised (for example) by Nietzsche. According to this criticism, guilt for our actions presupposes in the final analysis the logically repugnant idea of *causa sui*. It thus follows – so this criticism continues – that moral guilt for our actions is unjustified.

In this paper I examine to what extent Heidegger remains within what I refer to as “the Kantian tradition” and to what extent he moves beyond it and is thus able to address the Nietzschean criticism. Specifically, I argue that Heidegger, on the one hand, retains an important element from the tradition in his concept of Being-guilty (*Schuldigsein*), the idea, namely, that for guilt for our actions to be possible we must be guilty in some deep, ontological sense; on the other hand, Heidegger rejects the idea that for us to be guilty in this essential sense we have to be free in the specific sense of *causa sui*. In fact, I show that Heidegger reverses the traditional argument: whereas in the latter case guilt (ontic or ontological) necessarily implies our being *causa sui*, for Heidegger our *not* being *causa sui* implies our Being-guilty.

I first turn to briefly summarize the Kantian tradition and introduce Nietzsche's criticism. In the second part I turn my focus to Heidegger's analysis of Being-guilty in *Being and Time*. Before I get started, however, I wish to make more explicit the conceptual distinction I relied on

¹ In my references to *Being and Time* I use the English version's pagination.

above and will make use of in the following, the distinction, namely, between fundamental or ontological guilt and empirical or ontic moral guilt.

First, **ontological guilt**: by this I mean the idea according to which we are guilty by nature; we are sinful or morally corrupt or deficient in some sense in our essence or very being. Second, we have **ontic guilt**, which an agent incurs by being responsible for a specific immoral action. It thus does not make up our very being but is contingent upon what we do. Ontic guilt, furthermore, can be *experienced* by the guilty subject. Here I have in mind the self-laceration we typically experience when we become aware of our having done something wrong, specifically morally wrong. This is just a rough distinction and I leave many aspects of it undetermined. It should suffice, however, for what follows.

1. The Kantian Tradition and the Nietzschean Critique

In this section I will *very* briefly summarize arguments in Kant and Schopenhauer to the effect that our ontic guilt necessarily presupposes a free act by means of which we burden ourselves with ontological guilty. I will start with Kant and then turn to Schopenhauer.

Broadly speaking, in his *Religion* Kant attempts to determine to what extent and which of the basic tenets of Christian orthodoxy can be seen to be supported by purely rational considerations and thus fall within what Kant calls the ‘pure rational system of religion’ (6:12). One of these tenets is the Christian idea of original sin, which Kant refers to as ‘radical evil in human nature’ (6:19) – an evil that is not contingent but rather ‘applies to [man] considered in his species’ (6:32). In other words, what Kant is referring to here is a variant on the idea of ontological guilt: a guilt that we carry qua human beings insofar as we possess a ‘corrupt propensity [Hang]’ (6:32) to evil; a propensity which lies ‘in human nature’ (6:37). Kant makes it clear that he does indeed think that such a propensity is real and adds that ‘according to the cognition we have of the human being through experience, he cannot be judged otherwise’ (6:32).

What this propensity to evil consists in Kant explains (6: 36-37) as the subordination of the moral law to the principle of self-love in the determination of the fundamental maxim of action that an individual settles on. Rather than first asking herself whether a course of action is morally required or permissible and then following suit without concern for her own personal interests, an individual in whom this propensity to evil has taken root has made it her practical policy to be such that she first determine whether the action is conformable with her own self-interests, and only if

the answer is positive should she then turn to examine whether it is also morally permissible or required.

Importantly, by calling it “natural” Kant means to say that this propensity ‘belongs to the human being universally’ (6:29), but not in the sense that the nature of the human being is to blame for it (6:21), for this would ‘stand in direct contradiction to the predicates morally good or morally evil if [nature is] taken to mean (as it usually does) the opposite of the ground of actions [arising] from freedom’ (6:21). Rather this propensity to evil ‘must be capable of being imputed to the subject as itself guilty of it [als selbst verschuldet ihm muß zugerechnet werden können]’ (6:35). Indeed, Kant holds that this ‘innate guilt [angeborene Schuld]’ (6:38) is ‘deliberate guilt [vorsätzliche Schuld]’ (ibid.). Thus, in order for the human being to be guilty by “nature”, the human being must be considered morally responsible for the fundamental maxim, for this original sin, and it cannot ‘lie in any object determining the power of choice through inclination, and not in any natural impulses, but only in a rule that the power of choice [Willkür] itself produces for the exercise of its freedom’ (6:21). In other words, the human being is considered by Kant to be guilty – morally responsible – for his or her being guilty. Our particular actions lack moral worth at best or are downright wrong, and we are ontically guilty for them because we are guilty for our basic “corrupt nature”, for our fundamental guilt. And we are guilty for this fundamental guilt because we *freely* choose our fundamental maxim to be this way by means of an ‘intelligible deed’ (6:31). As Kant puts it, ‘The disposition [Gesinnung], i.e. the first subjective ground of the adoption of the maxims... must be adopted through the free power of choice, for otherwise it could not be imputed’ (6:25). We freely determine ourselves to be governed by this ultimate practical policy, for otherwise we could be held morally responsible and be guilty neither for our “nature” nor for our resultant actions.

But there is at least one worry here: to account for the free adoption of the propensity one would have ‘to adduce still another maxim into which the disposition would have to be incorporated, and this maxim must in turn have its ground’ (6:25) leading to an infinite regress. To avoid this we would have to invoke the idea of a ‘characteristic of the power of choice that pertains to it by nature (even though the disposition is in fact grounded in freedom)’ (ibid.). It is hard to see what Kant is trying to claim here, but it seems he is suggesting that we would have to think of ourselves as already determined in our nature in some morally significant way (for otherwise the question why we choose one moral disposition rather than another would arise again,

leading to the infinite regress), and yet as *freely* choosing our moral disposition on the basis of this nature (otherwise our disposition would not be imputable to us). In other words, we would have to posit the human being as *causa sui* – as a cause of him or herself – where the human being freely chooses his or her own moral being on the basis of his or her own moral being (“nature”).

Let me quickly turn to Schopenhauer. Following Kant, Schopenhauer holds that while in the realm of phenomena all our actions are strictly determined so that everything a person does is necessary, it is at the level of his intelligible or noumenal character, or *esse*, that a person’s freedom lies. But this freedom, Schopenhauer holds, ‘proclaims itself alone through *responsibility*’ (*On the Basis of Morality* p.195). And since ‘we are conscious of *freedom* only through the medium of *responsibility*, the former must also lie where the latter is to be found, and hence in the *esse* (what we are)’ (ibid., p.113). But how is freedom to be found in our *esse*? Schopenhauer replies that it is in the thought that one ‘could have been a different man’ (ibid., p.112) – the fundamental or deep and underlying content of the feeling of ontic guilt – that one recognize one’s freedom. Schopenhauer explains:

It is true that the reproaches of conscience primarily and ostensibly concern what we *have done*, but really and ultimately what we *are*, for our deeds alone afford us conclusive evidence of what we are, since they are related to our character as the symptoms to a disease. Thus guilt and merit must also lie in this *esse*, in what we *are*. (ibid., p.195)

In other words, we can be guilty for our actions only because we are guilty for who we are. And we are guilty for who we are, for our character, because our freedom lies in our *esse*, that is, because we freely choose our being: we are *causa sui*. It thus turns out that, like in Kant, ontic guilt requires for its possibility the human being as *causa sui*: **if we are ontically guilty, then we are *causa sui*.**

As is well known, Nietzsche criticizes (libertarian) free will and responsibility precisely on the basis of his rejection of the idea of *causa sui* which he takes to be ‘fundamentally absurd’ (*Beyond Good and Evil* 15). As he puts it in section 21:

The *causa sui* is the best self-contradiction that has been conceived so far, it is a sort of rape and perversion of logic; but the extravagant pride of man has managed to entangle itself profoundly and frightfully with just this nonsense. The desire for “freedom of the will” in the superlative metaphysical sense, which still holds sway, unfortunately, in the minds of the half-educated; the desire to bear the entire and ultimate responsibility for one’s actions oneself, and to absolve God, the world, ancestors, chance, and society involves nothing less than to be precisely this *causa*

sui and, with more than Münchhausen's audacity, to pull oneself up into existence by the hair, out of the swamps of nothingness.

The idea of *causa sui* involves a self-contradiction, for it requires that one exist prior to existing (Atwell, p.47). But if, as we saw, the idea of *causa sui* makes ontic guilt possible, the 'absurdity' of this idea implies that no one is genuinely guilty for their actions. As I will now turn to show, Heidegger in his discussion of guilt in BT, can be read as avoiding this criticism of the Kantian tradition by reversing its reasoning. Instead of holding that ontic guilt implies our being *causa sui*, Heidegger holds that we are ontologically guilty, and can thus be ontically guilty, precisely **because we are not *causa sui***. Let me explain what I mean. I will first have to summarize some of Heidegger's arguments in BT II.2.

2. Heidegger's Reversal of Reasoning in *Being and Time*

That Heidegger was familiar with Kant's, Schopenhauer's, and Nietzsche's conceptions of conscience and guilt is clear (see BT, II.2. fn. vi). It is thus safe to assume that he was also familiar with Nietzsche's criticism of these earlier conceptions of guilt – specifically with Nietzsche's criticism of the problematic notion of *causa sui*. It is therefore legitimate and potentially productive to try and read Heidegger's analysis of conscience and guilt in BT as involving (among other things) an attempt to answer Nietzsche's criticism.

In BT II 2 Heidegger provides an 'ontologically adequate Interpretation of the conscience' (319) with the aim of establishing whether, in the call of conscience, 'an authentic potentiality-for-Being of Dasein' is 'attested' (312). This is important for it constitutes part of Heidegger's attempt to bring Dasein's Being-a-whole into grasp so as to attain a more ontologically secure ground on which he can further investigate the temporal character of Care, and, ultimately, the meaning of Being.

Let me quickly summarize the main elements of Heidegger's discussion. Heidegger first provides an existential-ontological analysis of conscience that relates the conscience to the 'most universal structures of state-of-mind, understanding, discourse and falling' that make up the '*Being of the "there" as disclosedness*' (315). Accordingly, Heidegger's phenomenological findings are that in conscience Dasein calls its *own Self* (317) in its lostness in the 'They' into which it has fallen (322) and that this calling – though it strictly speaking says nothing (318) – is a 'mode of discourse' (316). Moreover, in the call, Dasein, as caller, '*finds itself in the very depth of its*

uncanniness' (321) and '[u]ncanniness reveals itself authentically in the basic state-of-mind of anxiety' (321). Finally, the call, though it 'does not report events' and 'calls without uttering anything' (322) gives Dasein something to understand, namely, that Dasein is "Guilty" (e.g. 325) – it calls Dasein *to* its ownmost Being-guilty which 'remains closed off from the they-self' (334). This shows, Heidegger claims, that 'The call of conscience...has its ontological possibility in the fact that Dasein, in the very basis of its Being, is care' (323).

But how should we understand this primordial Being-guilty? How can we distinguish it from the ordinary, everyday, understanding of "Guilty!"? Heidegger analyses the ordinary significations of Being-guilty and claims they involve two basic components that come together in the following formal conception of the everyday conception of guilt: "Being-the basis for a lack of something in the Dasein of an Other, and in such a manner that this very Being-the-basis determines itself as 'lacking in some way' in terms of that for which it is the basis" (328). And Heidegger immediately clarifies: 'This kind of lacking is a failure to satisfy some requirement which applies to one's existent Being with Others' (*ibid.*).

Heidegger, however, explains that this definition cannot be ontologically satisfactory for at least a couple of reasons. First, it makes reference to the Dasein of Others, but this element, which has to do with our 'concernful Being with Others' (*ibid.*), characterizes the 'ordinary phenomenon of "guilt"' (*ibid.*) where Dasein is concerned with 'reckoning up claims and balancing them off' (*ibid.*) and therefore cannot guide us towards an understanding of the *primordial* sense of Being-guilty that belongs to Dasein. Consequently, the reference to Others must '*drop out*' (*ibid.*). Second, the definition includes elements that cannot properly apply to Dasein; specifically, 'here too "guilt" is still necessarily defined as a *lack* – when something which ought to be and which **can be** is missing. To be missing, however, means not-Being-present-at-hand.' (328). But since Dasein's Being is not that of the present-at-hand, the formal everyday definition of Being-guilty cannot possibly apply to it.²

² At least two concerns arise here. First, the insistence on eliminating from the existential Interpretation of Being-guilty any reference to Others seems under-motivated. As we know, Dasein is essentially Being-with as Being-in-the-world (e.g. section 26), so it stands to reason that Dasein's Being-guilty will have some *essential* reference to the Dasein of Others. In response Heidegger can say that since the call of conscience is in the state-of-mind of anxiety, Dasein as Being-guilty is uncanny, that is, *unheimlich*, which means that it is not-at-home in its world and thus *not* with Others – Dasein in anxiety is *individuated* (see, e.g. 232). The question will then arise precisely with respect to this characterization of the call of conscience: on the basis of what does Heidegger claim that it involves anxiety? What are the phenomenological findings in support of this claim? Secondly – though I think this is of less consequence – it is not clear why the lack which is involved in the formal concept of the everyday notion of Being-guilty should be understood in terms of the being of the present-at-hand. Specifically, when one owes something to another and is thus

Nevertheless, Heidegger claims that Being-guilty in the primordial sense *does* retain something of the character of the “not” (329) that is involved in the formal definition of the everyday conception of guilt, and adds that, like the latter, the primordial sense also includes the idea of “Being-the-basis for” (ibid.). He therefore reaches the following formal existential idea of the “Guilty!”: ‘Being-the-basis for a Being which has been defined by a ‘not’ – that is to say...*Being-the-basis of a nullity*’ (329). After some clarification, Heidegger reaches a fuller definition Dasein’s Being-guilty: “Being the basis of a nullity (and this Being-the-basis is itself null)” (331), or, more compactly: “the null *Being-the-basis of a nullity*” (353). How to understand these two “nullities”?

Let’s start with the nullity of which Dasein is the basis. Heidegger explains this by saying:

[W]hat we have here is rather something existentially constitutive for the structure of the Being of projection. The nullity we have in mind belongs to Dasein’s Being-free for its existentiell possibilities. Freedom, however, *is* only in the choice of **one** possibility – that is, in tolerating one’s not having chosen the others and one’s not being able to choose them (331).

It is worth reflecting on the concept of freedom Heidegger makes use of here. Importantly, the concept does not presuppose the notion of leeway freedom, current in contemporary analyses of libertarian free will. According to this latter notion, free will implies the ability to have done otherwise – a notion of freedom threatened by determinism which, moreover, is typically seen as a condition for moral responsibility and consequently for moral guilt. In contrast, Heidegger’s notion of freedom, as *very* briefly explained here, does not affirm or deny the truth of leeway freedom. It is thus *leaner* and metaphysically noncommittal: freedom ‘*is only* in the choice of one possibility’ (bold mine), which Heidegger glosses as “tolerating” the fact that one did not choose differently and could not have chosen more than one possibility. To be free, it seems, is to be constituted existentially by the proverbial *Qual der Wahl*.

How does this absence of leeway freedom from Heidegger’s concept of freedom affect his analysis of guilt? As we saw above, for Kant and Schopenhauer, being guilty for one’s actions does not presupposes leeway freedom in the ontic sense (where causality and thus unfreedom reign); it is rather on the ontological level that freedom in the sense of *causa sui* must be found if

responsible for a “lack” in that other person, this lack cannot be understood as substance in the Aristotelian or Cartesian sense, it cannot be understood merely in terms of its physical properties, nor can it be understood in a manner which is absolutely extricated from the world and its normativity-laden involvements. Yet these are three central ways of understanding the present-at-hand (cf. Golob, pp.16-17).

guilt for one's actions is to be attributable. Ontological guilt is a condition of possibility for ontic guilt. To what extent is Heidegger in agreement with this line of thought? To answer this question we will have to look at the second "not" or "nullity", namely, at the "null Being-a-basis".

How to understand the claim that Dasein is a null basis? Heidegger claims that 'being a basis...[is] existing as thrown (330).³ This means, first, that we should understand being a basis in relation to the concept of thrownness. Heidegger glosses Dasein's thrownness as 'it [having] been brought into its "there", but *not* of its own accord' (329). The "there", in turn, is constituted by a state-of-mind, understanding, and discourse (171-172). Differently put, to be thrown, to be a basis, means precisely *not* be in control over the various factors that make up the being of the "there" but rather, as he puts it, to be in such a way that 'Dasein constantly lags behind its possibilities' (330). Heidegger claims earlier in BT: "'thrownness" is meant to suggest the *facticity of its being delivered over* [Überantwortung]' (174). Dasein is thus not responsible – *verantworten* – for its Being, but is rather, passively, *überantworten* – delivered over to itself, and thus lacks ultimate responsibility for what and who it is. It lags behind itself in the sense that it is always trying to catch up with itself, always already ahead of itself (279), projecting itself in various ways but in a manner that does not fully originate from itself. We thus arrive at the idea that "'Being-a-basis" means *never* to have power over one's ownmost Being from the ground up. This "*not*" belongs to the existential meaning of "thrownness" (330) – 'Dasein is not itself the basis of its Being' (330). What all of this means, I want to suggest, is precisely **that Dasein is not causa sui**:⁴ it does not create itself from the ground up but is rather always already thrown into a 'there' that is not of its own making, but that, nevertheless, 'as existing, it must take over' (ibid.).⁵ This rules out the

³ In his "Conscience and Reason", Steven Crowell mentions several ways that have been suggested by interpreters for how to understand this "basis" or "ground" (Crowell, p.56), but given that Heidegger clearly glosses 'being a basis' as 'existing as thrown' (BT, 330), I cannot share the interpreters' uncertainty. Why then use the language of "ground" or "basis" instead of talking directly about "thrownness"? I believe the answer is twofold. First, Heidegger, by using the concept of "basis", preserves continuity with his definition of the everyday conception of guilt which also employs the notion of basis. Second, the notion is useful to underscore precisely how Dasein is *not* its own doing, that is, can never *ground* itself, or, on my reading, cannot be *causa sui*. See below for this.

⁴ Lee Braver explains this primordial guilt as follows: 'We did not decide to be born, or where or when or as what, *nor did we enact our own creation*' (Braver, p.86, my italics). In the italicized part Braver seems to express the same view I articulate here where Being-guilty precisely means not being *causa sui*. Braver however continues as follows: 'we are, before our first breath, beneficiaries of people and events that we had no part in even though we owe our very existence to them. This inescapable indebtedness is the "not" or nullity that lies at the very basis of our being anything at all' (ibid.). This exegesis is problematic because it turns ontological guilt into ontic guilt where Dasein is conceived as indebted to others. However, as we saw, Heidegger stresses how the primordial sense of Being-guilty makes no reference to Others (BT, 328) and is not concerned with the ontic balancing of debts (ibid.).

⁵ Crowell construes Heidegger's claim about how Dasein taking over being a ground existentially as the idea that 'factic grounds [i.e. the 'there'] become subject to a choice for which I am accountable; they are thereby taken up into

Kantian and Schopenhauerian notion that we are ontically guilty because we are responsible or guilty for who we are, that is, for our ontological guilt. To be responsible in this latter sense necessarily presupposes the rejection of our thrownness; it thus necessarily presupposes a thoroughly flawed understanding of the Being that we are, according to Heidegger.⁶ This is because for Heidegger, unlike Kant and Schopenhauer, we are not guilty for our fundamental guilt – we are *delivered over* to it.

Does this then mean that for Heidegger we cannot be ontically guilty, i.e., guilty for our specific misdeeds? Not at all. While Heidegger rejects the idea that we are *causa sui*, he nevertheless maintains that we are ontologically, essentially Being-guilty and that this is precisely what makes ontic guilt possible. He thus shares with Kant and Schopenhauer the idea that we are guilty as such and, moreover, he shares with them the idea that it is this guilt that makes our ontic guilt possible. In other words, he agrees with them that our essential guilt is a transcendental condition for our ontic guilt in its various forms, moral and otherwise. Thus, Heidegger claims that ‘*Being-guilty does not first result from an indebtedness [Verschuldung], but that, on the contrary, indebtedness becomes possible only ‘on the basis’ of a primordial Being-guilty*’ (329). And again:

Not only can entities whose Being is care load themselves with factual guilt, but they *are* guilty in the very basis of their Being; and this Being-guilty is what provides, above all, the ontological condition for Dasein’s ability to come to **owe** anything in factually existing...[and for] the possibility of the ‘morally’ good and for that of the ‘morally’ evil (332).

We can thus see that for Heidegger Being-guilty, that is, *not* being *causa sui*, is a condition for ontic guilt.

Let me emphasize an important point before concluding. What Heidegger wishes to maintain with his concept of primordial guilt is not that we are essentially guilty and in addition

the normative space of reasons’ (Crowell, p.57). In contrast to Crowell, I don’t believe that taking over being-a-basis refers to an additional action Dasein can choose to take and for which it can thereby make itself answerable (Crowell, p.59): rather, every Dasein, as Heidegger puts it, ‘*has to take over Being-a-basis*’ (BT, 331, italics mine). In other words, this is not a matter of choice but a matter of the Being of Dasein: every Dasein *is* its Basis even though it has not erected it itself, to so speak.

⁶ A second, related problem with the “Kantian tradition” is this. The Kantian and Schopenhauerian subjects, in creating themselves, appeal to certain norms or values on the basis of which they create themselves as good or evil. But this assumes that the Self, in abstraction from the World, that is, the noumenal Self, has access to such norms and values. But this goes against Heidegger’s view that all normativity is to be found in the World into which Dasein is thrown. Dasein in abstraction from the World is *anxious* in its uncanniness or homelessness and cannot appeal to any norms to find its way about. (See Golob, e.g. pp. 230-31).

just happen to not be *causa sui*; rather the claim is stronger: we are guilty in our Being precisely *because* we are not *causa sui*. Differently put, our guilt consists precisely in that we never have power over ourselves “from the ground up” and always “lag behind” our possibilities. Were we, *per impossibile*, fully of our own making we would still not be fundamentally guilty even if we did freely load ourselves with moral corruption. All that this would indicate is the necessity of explaining how something like this is possible for us, which would lead at the end of the day, according to Heidegger’s analysis, to *his* notion of fundamental guilt, the condition of possibility for every guilt that we can come to burden ourselves with.

3. Conclusion

If my analysis here is correct, then it indeed follows that in Heidegger’s analysis of Being-guilty a reversal of reasoning takes place: while for the traditional view, ontic guilt presupposes ontological guilt which in turn presupposes our being *causa sui*, for Heidegger, it is our *not* being *causa sui*, which implies our Being-guilty which, in turn, makes possible our ontic guilt. Importantly, Heidegger thus *agrees* with Nietzsche that we are not *causa sui*, but still holds that we are ontologically guilty and thus can become ontically guilty. Heidegger, like Nietzsche, disagrees with Kant that we exist on some noumenal level, but, unlike Nietzsche, does not think that this entails that we are not guilty either ontologically or ontically. If the reversal of reasoning I have here presented is successful, Heidegger can claim to have avoided a serious objection against the notion of ontic guilt: guilt is still attributable to us even if we are not *causa sui*.

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Seeing Double: Plato and Heidegger through the Lens of Frederick Douglass

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“After that almost inspired announcement of equal rights contained in the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson has left us nothing more worthy of his profound mind than his saying that error may be safely tolerated where truth is left free to combat it.”

– Frederick Douglass, “The Proclamation and a Negro Army,” March 1863¹

In Rochester

The Heidegger Circle convenes this year in Rochester, New York, and it is fitting that we honor one of the city’s most illustrious citizens, the great orator, abolitionist and feminist, Frederick Douglass, who lived twenty-five years of his life here. Douglass counts among the pantheon of greatest Americans, because he served heroically as something every community requires from time to time – as a visionary *re-founder* of the body politic. I want to take that word, *visionary*, and the larger metaphoric of seeing, very seriously, and sometimes quite literally, in this paper. From 1847-51, Douglass published his anti-slavery paper from Rochester. The title of that paper was *The North Star*, named for the polestar whose light would guide escaped slaves northwards along the Underground Railway and other pathways on the route to freedom. Light, seeing, vision and image were critical to the rhetoric of Douglass in his political activity in writing and speeches, and given that Douglass was, by design, the most photographed person of the nineteenth century, it is all the more fitting that we are here in Rochester, home to the George Eastman House, a museum dedicated to the art of drawing with light.

¹ Frederick Douglass, “The Proclamation and a Negro Army,” *The Portable Frederick Douglass*, ed. John Stouffer and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (New York: Penguin Books, 2016), 310. The “Proclamation” of the title is the Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Lincoln on January 1, 1863.

Heidegger and Plato: The Metaphorics of Seeing

First, though, I must explain what this has to do with Heidegger, and for that, we must turn to Plato. I will necessarily need to paint with a very broad brush here, as the goal of this panel is discussion.

Anyone at all familiar with Plato knows that his metaphysics and epistemology, if not his ethical and political thought as well, are inextricably bound up with the metaphors of light, vision, seeing, and things both seen and unseen. There is the divided line, with the sun's light as the source of intelligibility in the physical world, itself serving as image of the idea of the good as the source of meaning for intelligibility as such. Most famously, there is the Allegory of the Cave, with the emergence from the prison in the darkness of ignorance to freedom in the light of knowledge. And of course, there is the core vocabulary of Plato's thinking, the words *idea* and *eidos*, whose shared etymological root meanings are the past-perfect of the act of seeing: They designate that-which-has-been-seen, what has been glimpsed in a moment-of-vision by the mind's eye, the form that gives shape to the bounded meaning of something as distinctly *not* something else, and thereby grants the world its navigable intelligibility as a *cosmos*, a beautiful whole, shining in its articulated unity. It is the *idea* of a perfected political community, existing apart from the messy reality of actual politics, that Socrates extols as the North Star for the philosopher's understanding of a just life and freedom from the cave-bound opinions and norms that bind us.

My own work on Heidegger has often focused on the political meaning of his critique of Platonism and idea-ism, if I may put it that way, as a driving factor in his account of the history Being as a history of a long decline, reaching its ending in a crisis of nihilism on a planetary scale, a crisis that he believed might be confronted as a way though to another inception of history through National Socialism. What interests me in confronting Plato and Heidegger is to resolve their dispute in Plato's favor while nevertheless taking seriously Heidegger's critique of him and integrating that critique into an understanding of the Platonic project. The metaphorics of light and seeing is crucial to Heidegger's own *Auseinandersetzung*² with Plato as the font of metaphysics and, by extension, of the crisis of modernity. Three emblematic quotes for this unity of Heidegger's metaphysical and political critique are these:

The word *idea, eidos*, 'idea,' comes to the fore as the definitive and prevailing word for Being (*physis*). Since then, the interpretation of Being as *idea* rules over all Western thinking, throughout the history of its changes up to today." (*Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935), 200/137)

² As I have argued, beginning with *Heidegger's Polemos: From Being to Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), this word, *Auseinandersetzung* (confrontation), is pre-eminent among the German terms Heidegger employs to render the Greek *polemos* as a name for the dynamo for the event of Being; others include *Kampf* (struggle or combat), *Krieg* (war), and *Streit* (strife).

[Plato's] *idea* constitutes the Being of beings. But here, *idea* and *eidos* are used in an extended sense, meaning not only what we can see with our physical eyes, but everything that can be apprehended. (IM, 202/138)

If we talk of the doctrine of ideas, then we are displacing the fundamental question [of truth] into the framework of ideas. If one interprets ideas as representations and thoughts that contain a value, a norm, a law, a rule, such that ideas then become conceived of as norms, then the one subject to these norms is the human being—not the historical human being, but rather the human being in general, the human being in itself, or humanity. Here, the conception of the human being is one of a *rational being in general*. In the Enlightenment and in liberalism, this conception achieves a definite form. Here all of the powers against which we must struggle today have their root. Opposed to this conception are the *finitude, temporality, and historicity* of human beings. (*Being and Truth* (1933), 129)

I have discussed these passages, and others like them, extensively elsewhere,³ so here I will simply underline that for Heidegger, Platonism – or idea-ism – has been catastrophic in the history of Being. The *idea*, taken as the fullest meaning of Being, as itself the idea of *what is*, “treats Being as a Nothing”; it posits Being as a function of a realm of the eternal ideas and of a Good that transcend time and human situatedness. By construing Being as yet another being, albeit a supreme one in the form of the idea, the West is reduced to an idolatrous hankering after the mastery of beings in the light on some totem theoretical possession of this supreme-Being as thing: “Merely to chase after beings in the midst of the oblivion of Being—that is nihilism” (IM, 226/155). The metaphysical is the political, in modernity, because the same notion of the transcendent idea as universal substrate for intelligible reality filters into a notion of universal, timeless norms – what we now call “human rights,” for example – that most properly govern human existence without regard to the finitude that permeates Dasein understood as temporal relation to a Being that does not transcend the historical existence of both individual and community. In this sense, “Liberalism” is both metaphysical and political, for Heidegger, in the unity of idea-ism as the defining feature of Western metaphysics.

Heidegger, of course, does not systematically expunge all metaphors of light and seeing from his thought. The *Lichtung*, the lit-up and en-lightening openness, is an enduring word for him as a way of elucidating the *Da*, the illumined situatedness of meaning within which and without which we could not *be* as temporal, historical Da-sein. In *Being and Time*, he analyzes the understanding in terms of *einer umsichtigen Vorsicht*, the circum-spective fore-sight that enables us to navigate our environs as a meaningful world (e.g., SZ, 80) — which is another way of explicating the *Lichtung*. As hermeneutical, Dasein is both *sited* and *sighted*: to have a locus in place, in world, in history and community means being able to take in the meaning of one's context as some kind of at least provisionally integrated and com-

³ For an overview, see “A Letter to Emmanuel Faye,” *Philosophy Today* 55:3 (Fall 2011), 219-252.

prehensible whole: “Having a fore-sight of Being must mean seeing it with respect to the unity of the possible structural elements belonging to it” (SZ, 232: “Die Vor-sicht auf das Sein muß dieses vielmehr hinsichtlich der Einheit der zugehörigen und möglichen Strukturmomente treffen”). Of all the senses, seeing is most akin to this comprehensive gathering-up and taking-in the *Umgebung*, a comprehensive and meaningfully interwoven whole of the environing world as given to us, and this is why its metaphors have been so powerful, from Plato to Heidegger, as a way of articulating the brute and apriori *intelligibility* of the whole world. Touching, hearing, tasting, and smelling may pick out with great precision salient structural elements (*Strukturmomente*) within the whole, but not the simultaneous interwovenness of things surrounding us. What Heidegger denies about seeing, against Plato, is that this cognitive vision grants insight into a transcendent, a-temporal reality in the form of the ideas. We see this most prominently in the *Augenblick*, itself a correlate of the Greek *eidos* and *idea*. But as the moment of vision, the blink of the eye, it takes in the radically situated meaningfulness of finite Dasein, not the transcendent ideas of a timeless, otherworldly Nowhere.

Ideas: Through the Lens of Douglass

In turning now to Douglass, I want to flesh out a Platonic rejoinder to Heidegger. Douglass helps us, or at least me, in my own finite situatedness as an American, to address both the ideal represented in the American Founding and the very real and enduring reality of the most historical refutation of that ideal in slavery and racism. What I have argued elsewhere, if only provisionally, is that Heidegger misses several key elements of Plato’s metaphors of vision.⁴ One is that the metaphors of the *idea* is not metaphysical in the crude form that that he attributes to Plato; he presents the ideas as a hypothesis (*Republic*), a necessary heuristic (*Phaedo*) for making sense of the sheer given that the world itself – makes sense, is intelligible. Another is that the idea is pivotal to making sense of the phenomenological experience of ethical life as such. A third is that Plato decidedly does *not* ignore the finitude and temporality of the human being. It is the second, the ethical role of the idea, that Douglass most effectively addresses, both literally and figuratively.

Born around 1818 (he never knew his own birthday – so much for natality), Douglass began life in slavery. He literally fought his way to a self-conception of his own inherent freedom in a brawl with his overseer Covey, and then realized that freedom by successfully running away, after several years of planning and preparation, including learning how to read and write without formal instruction. He

⁴ For what follows, see G. Fried, “Back to the Cave: A Platonic Rejoinder to Heidegger,” in *Heidegger and the Greeks*, Drew Hyland and John P. Manoussakis, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), “Retrieving *phronêsis*: Heidegger on the Essence of Politics,” *Continental Philosophy Review* 47:3 (September 2014), and “Heidegger, politics and us: Towards a polemical ethics,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 39:9 (November 2013), 863-75.

published his autobiography in 1845 and very quickly became an internationally celebrated writer, speaker and political advocate for both the abolition of slavery and the rights of women. During the Civil War, he successfully advocated with President Lincoln to allow African-Americans to form their own regiments and fight, and his own son served in the famous 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. What interests me in particular, though, is how Douglass conceived his struggle against slavery, because he does so in such a robustly Platonic way, and quite literally through images.⁵ Frederick Douglass extraordinary in many ways, but one detail in particular may be particularly surprising: He was the most photographed person in all of the 19th century, beginning in the 1840s and then on to his death in 1895 (see Figure 1).⁶



Figure 1. Three portraits of Frederick Douglass: anonymous photographer, daguerreotype, c. 1845; anonymous photographer, carte-de-visite, c. late 1860s; Warren, carte-de-visite, c. 1880. Collection of Greg French.

This was by design. For Douglass, photography was one of the most important discoveries of the era, and he saw in it a weapon in the fight against slavery. In 1849, he explained the negative side of the problem: “Negroes can never have impartial portraits at the hands of white artists. It seems to us next to impossible for white men to take likenesses of black men, without most grossly exaggerating their distinctive features. And the reason is obvious. Artists, like all other white persons, have adopted a theory

⁵ Useful theoretical discussions of Douglass and photography can be found in *Pictures and Power: Imaging and Imagining, Frederick Douglass, 1818-2018*, Celeste-Marie Bernier and Bill E. Lawson, eds. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018).

⁶ For a comprehensive treatment of Douglass’s history with photography, see John Stauffer et al., eds., *Picturing Frederick Douglass: An Illustrated Biography of the Nineteenth Century’s Most Photographed American* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015).

respecting the distinctive features of Negro physiognomy... This theory impressed strongly upon the mind of an artist exercises a powerful influence over his pencil, and very naturally leads him to distort and exaggerate those peculiarities, even when they scarcely exist in the original” (see Fig. 2).⁷

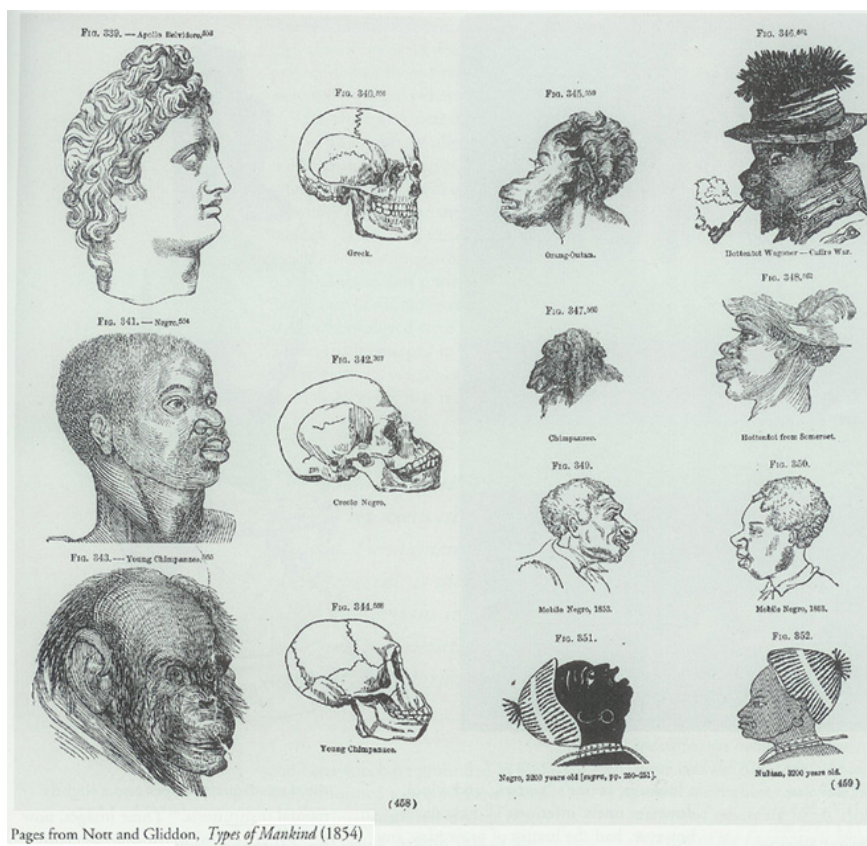


Figure 2. Illustration from J. C. Nott et al., *Types of Mankind* (1854); Wikicommons. This matches a drawing of the bust of the Apollo Belvidere with a Greek (“Caucasian”) skull and people of African descent with various chimpanzees and orangutans.

A bigoted way of *seeing* the Other, both literally and figuratively, precedes and distorts the representation of that Other through any art mediated by human agency. In the first half of the 1860s, Douglass gave a series of lectures on photography, entitled either “Pictures” or “Pictures and Progress.” In these, he proclaims that “The great discoverer of modern times, to whom coming generations will award special homage, will be Daguerre.” It was Louis Daguerre who publicly announced and made available to the world in 1839 the first practical method of photography.

While Daguerre was French, his invention exploded in America like nowhere else. Morse himself had observed Daguerre’s first demonstrations in Paris in 1839 and sent back rhapsodic descriptions as well as instructions to America, where soon hundreds and then thousands of Daguerreians took up the art as studio portraitists for a nation hungry to see and be seen. Douglass continues in the same passage: “[Samuel] Morse [the inventor of the telegraph] has brought the ends of the earth together and Daguerre

⁷ Douglass, *The North Star* (April 7, 1849).

has a made it a picture gallery. We have pictures, true pictures, of every object which can interest us.” While it may strike us now as naïve, Douglass’s claim that photography could provide us with “true pictures” was a common one at the time,⁸ and a feature of the extraordinary wonder that so many felt at the advent of the photograph, because it was thought that the objective hand of the sun, not the distorting hand of a human being, was now able to draw the world as it is (Fig. 3).

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In style of execution and picturesque effect — in boldness of character and beauty of expression — in variety of size and delicacy of lights and shadows, we shall aim at the highest perfection possible.

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Figure 3. Newspaper advertisement for the studio of Southworth and Hawes, Boston, late 1840s; public domain.

For Douglass, the photograph offered the prospect of counteracting the racist depictions, both subtle and coarse, of African-Americans, providing them with both accurate representation *by* others and the opportunity for authentic self-presentation, regardless of caste or status, *to* others. Hence Douglass continues: “Men of all conditions and classes can now see themselves as others see them, and they will be seen by those [who] shall come after them. What was once the special and exclusive luxury of the rich

⁸ For a discussion, see G. Fried, “True Pictures: Frederick Douglass on the Promise of Photography,” *Mirror of Race* (2014), mirrorofrace.org, web.

and great is now the privilege of all. The humblest servant girl may now possess a picture of herself such as the wealth of kings could not purchase fifty years ago” (see Fig. 4).⁹



Figure 4. Anonymous photographer: anonymous subject (housemaid), tintype, c. 1860s; collection of the author.

By uniting Daguerre, the inventor of photography, and Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, as the avatars of “modern times,” Douglass anticipates the instantaneity of the internet, which unites data with image. This is the flip-side of Heidegger’s condemnation of modern media technology (, in which he sees such instantaneity not as a triumph but as the nihilistic erasure of the time and space of historical Dasein:

When the farthest corner of the globe has been conquered technically and can be exploited economically; when any incident you like, in any place you like, at any time you like, becomes accessible as fast as you like; when you can simultaneously “experience” an assassination attempt against a king in France and a symphony concert in Tokyo; when time is nothing but speed, instantaneity, and simultaneity, and time as history has vanished from all Dasein of all peoples; when a boxer counts as the great man of a people; when the tallies of millions at mass meetings are a triumph; then, yes then, there still looms like a specter over all this uproar the question: what for?—where to?—and what then? (GA 40: 41/41-42; see also GA 96: 265-66)

⁹ Frederick Douglass, “Pictures and Progress,” in *The Portable Frederick Douglass*, ed. John Stouffer and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (New York: Penguin Books, 2016), 349-50. Cited as P&P in what follows.

Against this, Douglass underlines another facet of how “pictures” can promote “progress”: if information is rapidly transmissible, in the forms of communication to convey facts and images to move the imagination, then gross injustice in one place may not escape exposure to and condemnation by the whole world. This was true of the impact of the televised assaults on civil rights protesters in the 1960s, for example, but it is exactly the problem that Heidegger discerns in the ubiquity and universality of the *eidos* as image.

Douglass goes further than this, though, and links, even if not intentionally, the modernity of photography with the ancient roots of philosophy. “Man,” he declares, “is the only picture-making animal in the world. He alone of all the inhabitants of the earth has the capacity and passion for pictures” (P&P, 352). This cannot help but recall Aristotle’s claim that the human being is the *zōon logon echon*, generally translated as “the animal possessing reason – or speech,” but which we know Heidegger takes rather differently, through his interpretation of the *logos* as *gathering*, and only derivatively as *reason*. Douglass’s pronouncement naturally also recalls Aristotle’s other characterization of the human as the *zōon politikon*, the socio-political animal, the animal that is political *because* it has speech and reason to articulate, discuss, and act upon *ideas* of justice. Yet Douglass’s evocation of us as the *picture-making* animal, a *zōon eidōlopoiêtikon*, adds another dimension. While recognizing the importance of reason and its “Godlike” ability, Douglass argues that *imagination*, the picture-making power, is in fact superior to reason, and in fact the more godlike of the two: “This sublime, prophetic, and all-creative power of the human soul — proving its kinship with the eternal sources of life and creation — is the peculiar possession and glory of man” (P&P, 352). That is because while reason may allow to make sense of the world as it is, the picture-making faculty allows us to depict it as it isn’t, but may be. In short, the picture-making power of this *zōon eidōlopoiêtikon*, is the *imagination*, which partakes more fully in divine by in making present what-is-not in what-is.

Douglass then puts this in terms that are to my mind the most succinct and evocative example of an intuitive Platonism ever made: “Poets, prophets, and reformers are all picture-makers, and this ability is the secret of their power and achievements: they see what ought to be by the reflection of what is, and endeavor to remove the contradiction” (P&P, 357). At one end of Plato’s divided line, as we know, is *eikasia*, imagination, corresponding to images, shadows, reflections, and depictions. Although Socrates, in his portrayal, does not tell us the orientation of the line, it is usually shown vertically, with imagination and images at the bottom, as if the lowliest and most suspect domain. And yet, the divided line, the allegory of the cave, indeed all of Plato’s dialogues, and perhaps the idea of the idea itself — are nothing if not *images* or works of the imagination, which is absolutely not to denigrate them. Quite the opposite. Douglass simply makes palpable Platonism at its best: that picture-making, image-making, *idea*-making –

and subsequently *idea-realization* – is what makes us most fully human, and brings us closest to the divine. This is not a merely *aesthetic* observation by Douglass, except perhaps in the sense that for Kant, too, the aesthetic experience of beauty is a necessary correlate and existential pedagogue to the experience of moral obligation. Rather, for Douglass, our imagination’s most significant role is a poetic-poietic and prophetic one of *re-envisioning* and *re-forming* the world in the light of a projected idea, an image of a future that could-be, one that, as Derrida would put it, is to-come. Douglass calls us all to that role of re-formation as the fulfillment of our humanity.

The Ethics of Seeing

Focus, though, on Douglass’s point that these re-formers “see what ought to be by the reflection of what is, and endeavor to remove the contradiction.” We cannot dwell much here on his very important language of *reflection*, but it delineates a mode of thought that re-forms the world, an imagery that recalls the literally reflective surface of a daguerreotype portrait, which captures the face of both viewer and viewed. Reflection evokes a mode of discursive thinking unfolding as a dialogue between world (“what is”) and idea (“what ought to be”); the impetus of this reflective movement is twofold: a recognition of a “contradiction” between the ideal and the actual, and an “endeavor to remove the difference.” What Douglass touches on here is the role of *polemos*, or confrontation, in ethical life as lived phenomenon. This confrontation has these two moments, contradiction and endeavor, one demanding insight, the other demanding courage. This is the heart of the Socratic insight about ideas as inherent to ethical life. In the *Republic*, Socrates explains that when the soul discerns some opposition or contradiction (*enantiōma*) in things either seen or unseen, the soul (translating *loosely* but *faithfully*) “would be compelled to recognize its being stumped and to seek a way out [*aporein kai zetein*], setting in motion the reflective drive for insight [ἔννοιαν] within itself” (424e: ἀναγκάζοιτ’ ἂν ἐν αὐτῷ ψυχῇ ἀπορεῖν καὶ ζητεῖν, κινούσα ἐν ἑαυτῇ τὴν ἔννοιαν). The philosophical endeavor to seek (*zetein*) for in-sight (*noîēsis*) is aroused whenever the otherwise *seemingly* integrated whole of a meaningful world is seen as out of joint somehow, in a detail however small. The soul can refuse to seek out of a kind of epistemic-existential-moral cowardice and bury itself in an unseeing unauthenticity, or it can engage in the struggle of discernment. A phenomenological feature of ethical life, for both Socrates and Douglass, is that this seeking cannot be set in motion (*kinousa*) as this struggle, or what Douglass calls “endeavor,” without the projected hypothesis of the idea of what ought to be in confrontation with what is. The phenomenon of ethical life as such would not be meaningful or possible if opposition of ideal and real were not a constitutive feature of that life.

In Douglass’s own ethical life, the defining context is the context of slavery in America and the struggle against it. Douglass was of course well aware, as were many, of the fundamental contradiction

between a nation founded on the idea of a putatively eternal truth that “all men are created equal” and the very this-worldly historical fact of slavery and racism, a contradiction that he brought to bear in his brilliant speech of 1852, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” I will return to this overarching contradiction later, but for the moment, I want to call attention to the contradictions, so minutely observed in his autobiographical *Narrative*, that impelled his personal drive for insight. In the *Narrative*, Douglass describes moments of *enantiôma*, contradiction, when the otherwise iron-clad whole of the world of slavery ruptured and broke open for him. While there is not space to do a close reading of each here, they include episodes such as hearing the clashing beauty and wild agony of slaves’ songs (24); the “revelation” of the relationship of reading to freedom and illiteracy to slavery in the “bitter opposition” of his master to his learning to read (37); the contrast of his slavery with the free future of the white boys of Baltimore, whom he cherished because they helped teach his letters (40-41); his discovery of the meaning of the word “abolition”; 42-43 the ignominious process of the valuation of slaves along with the rest of the property for sale at the liquidation of a plantation (45); the “turning-pointy in my career as a slave” in his pitched brawl (which Douglass both won and survived) with the overseer Edward Covey (63), who had been tasked with “breaking” Douglass in to slavery (53) – all these instances of polemical opposition, contradiction, and outright conflict, both with the world’s meaning and with others, led Douglass to *see* with a double vision the world of slave and the world of free. The contradictions forced open his *imagination* to *depict* an alternative, to find the means of his escape, and to *endeavor* and then *actually* to “remove the contradiction” of his situation. Such episodes mirror the ones that Socrates describes in the Cave: a sudden awareness of a contradiction in things that, by nature (*phusei*) can compel (*anagkazoito*) a prisoner to insight into their condition and to the painful realization of liberation (515c). But only because of the idea, the image, the imagination, could Douglass transcend his conceptually bounded and literally bonded situation.

To return to the larger historical world-context: soon after escaping slavery, Douglass realized that his *personal* endeavor for freedom required a corresponding *political* endeavor to “remove the contradiction” between the Founding idea and the historical reality of America. Struggle as intense as this this *concusses*. The shock of it leave us seeing double: the what-is side-by-side with the what-ought-to-be, the ideal of freedom and the reality of slavery. A half-century later, in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), W. E. B. Du Bois described another kind of double-vision, one imposed upon African-Americans rather than freely taken up, which he called “double consciousness”:

[T]he Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world, — a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-

consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife — this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He wouldn't bleach his Negro blood in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face.¹⁰

Here too is “this strife,” the *polemos* of a double-vision, of inhabiting hermeneutically two worlds at once, at home in neither. The difference is that for Du Bois, at least here, it is not clear what the ideal world would even be: the double-vision provides no clear *ought*, only dislocation and disorientation for the oppressed who are constantly forced to inhabit and see two seemingly incompatible worlds. For Du Bois, this double-consciousness is a way of seeing indigenous only to the oppressed who are marked and excluded by race; the oppressor has the luxury of mono-vision, of inhabiting a world uncomplicated by this contradiction.

Douglass refuses to accept this dichotomy and to be forced, against his will, to inhabit two worlds, even if he lived in them both and sees them very clearly. His Fourth of July speech, his *Narrative*, and the full body of his work as writer, publisher and politician (in the larger sense) testify to his vehement conviction that he must lead both black and white America to see the same united and present reality in order to bring about and share a future that ought to be. Indeed the Fourth of July speech is a vehement effort to drag a white audience into seeing with his double-vision. In this context, I would hazard to differ with Du Bois and suggest that white America has labored under its own form of double-consciousness as double-vision. For this, I will turn to four examples from photography, the medium Douglass put so much faith for articulating the brute givens of the world to challenge how we see. Each is a thoroughly vernacular image, virtually anonymous, but all the more evocative of the everyday world at issue for that.

The first is a portrait of two young men, probably photographed in a Union army camp, as what President Lincoln and the army referred to by the legal term “contrabands of war” (see Fig. 5).

¹⁰ W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, in *Writings* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1986), 364-65.



Figure 5. Anonymous photographer: anonymous subject (contrabands), carte-de-visite, c. 1861-65; collection of Greg French.

Very soon after the outbreak of armed hostilities, enslaved persons in the Confederacy began escaping by making their ways to the Union lines and surrendering themselves there, as what we today would call refugees. Rather than return them to the enemy, Congress took the lead from the commander of Fort Monroe in Virginia, Major General Benjamin Butler, who had refused to return three slaves to their owner, and in August 1861 passed the first of several Confiscation Acts (Fig. 6).

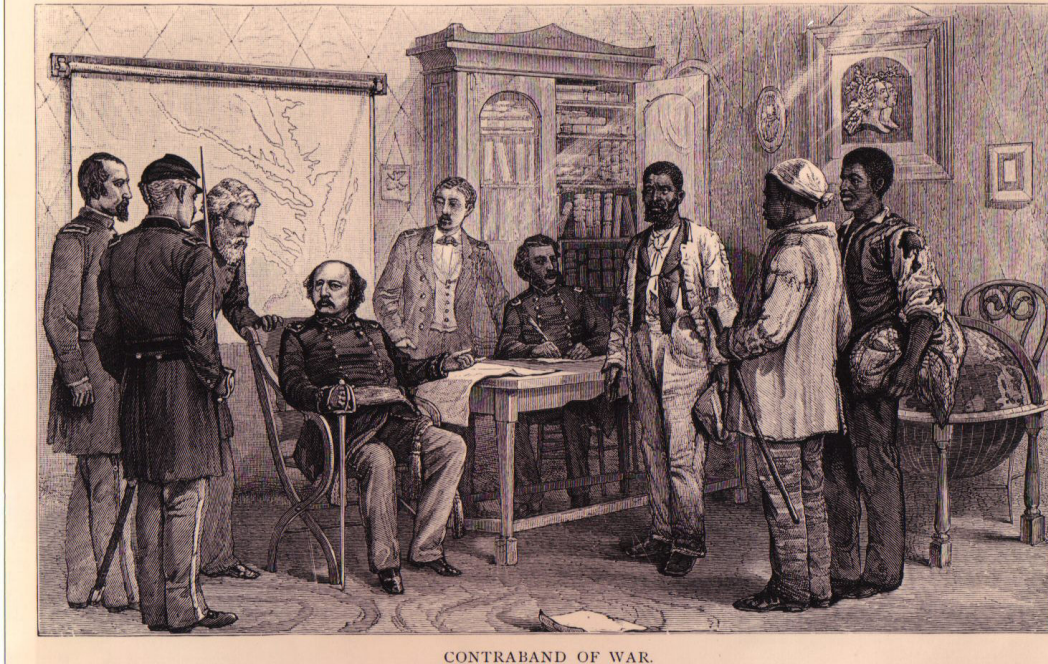


Figure 6. Anonymous artist: "Contraband of War" (Gen. Butler with Frank Baker, James Townsend, and Sheppard Mallory, engraving, c. 1861, New York Public Library Digital Collections.

The move was a savvy political one: If the Confederacy was determined to define slaves as chattel property, then Congress determined to designate them as *contrabands*, that is, as *things* (I use the word advisedly) valuable to the enemy's war effort and therefore subject to confiscation (Fig. 7).



Figure 7. Anonymous photographer: Officers of the 2nd Rhode Island Volunteer Infantry (Capt. B. S. Brown, Lt. Fry, Lt. John P. Shaw) and Contrabands, Camp Brentwood, D.C., July 1861, stereoview; collection of Greg French.

The floodgates opened after this prolegomenon to the Emancipation Proclamation, and tens of thousands of runaways found their way to the Union lines, working in the military camps as laborers – many later serving in the so-called colored regiments that Douglass advocated and finally convinced Lincoln to authorize (Fig. 8).¹¹



Figure 8. Anonymous photographer: Sergeant Andrew Jackson Smith, 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, Camp Meigs, Readville, Massachusetts, carte-de-visite, 1863-65; Special Collections Department, State Library of Massachusetts.

An anonymous itinerant photographer, one who made a living taking portraits of soldiers they would send home, probably took the portrait of these men in their rags. The format was known as the *carte-de-visite*, after the ubiquitous visiting cards of the era, because of their size. These were among the very first *reproducible* photographs: taken on glass, the photographer could make nearly infinite prints on paper. The *carte-de-visite* exploded in popularity during the Civil War, because could easily send these small, paper-on-card images home to friends and family; this one was probably sold by the photographer to soldiers in camp, as a kind of rough-and-ready photo-journalism and souvenir.

We can deduce this from what a soldier (and from the context, we can safely assume a soldier) wrote on the card, still visible in faint pencil. On the front, as a caption to the image, he (again, we can safely assume a “he”) wrote, “All men are created equal” and almost certainly sent it home in a three-cent letter to a friend or family (Fig. 9).

¹¹ For a discussion, see Erina Duganne, “Black Civil War Portraiture in Context,” *Mirror of Race* (2012), mirrorofrace.org, web.



Figure 9. Enlargement of pencil caption to Figure 5.

In the context of the Civil War, this would seem a paradigmatic declaration of how many, we would like to believe, understood the historical meaning of the conflict. This was certainly Lincoln's understanding, when he declared, in the Gettysburg Address (1863), that "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure" — and, in his Second Inaugural speech (1864), that "These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war." This is a vision of the American experiment according to its ideal of human equality, unrealized at its Founding, but encompassing, *as* idea the *ideal* of racial equality — and, I would add, with Douglass, gender quality, *and* (this time without Douglass) equality of sexual orientation and gender identification, ideals only now being realized. The implied ellipsis at the end of the soldier's quotation from the Declaration of Independence, appears as a graphic representation of this unrealized ideal, an ideal visibly thrown into stark relief by the atrocious condition of the runaways' clothes.

But now turn the card over. There, the soldier has written this for his loved-ones at home (Fig. 10):

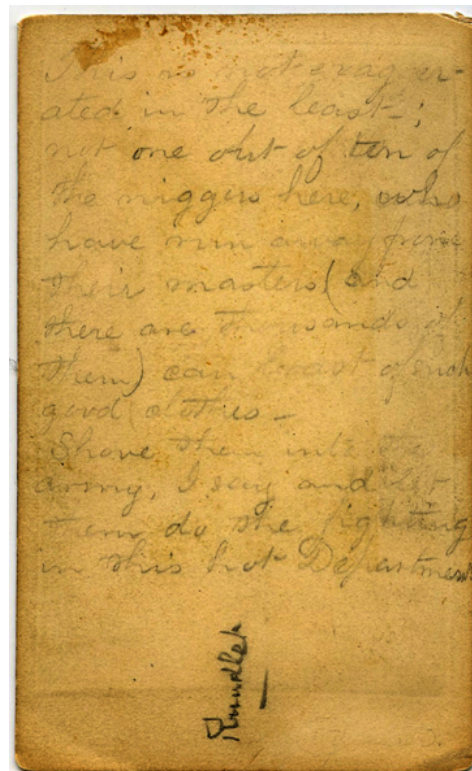


Figure 10. Reverse of Figure 5; transcription below.

This is not exaggerated in the least —: not one out of ten of the niggers here, who have run away from their masters (and there are thousands of them) can boast of such good clothes. Shove them into the army, I say, and let them do the fighting in this hot Department.

There is so much to say about this reversal, both of the image and of the idea. As an integral feature of this object, this reversal in a single, Janus-face historical artifact, serves as an encapsulation and distillation of the American double-vision and an insight into the double-consciousness of *white* America. Up front, on the surface of the image, is the proclamation of the ideal, the “face” that the American experiment has wanted to present to the world. But the flip-side of the image exposes the ideal as a mask, as it reveals the underside of the white American self-understanding. It presents the declaration about “All men” as hollow ideal, even a ruse, as cover for what philosopher Charles Mills has called the *Racial Contract* among whites to rule as a *Herrenfolk*, with equality applying only to themselves. The implied ellipsis that ends the quote from the front of the card *continues* onto the back: “...Not one out of ten...”: turning from face to reverse, the *seeming* idealism of an equality unrealized devolves into a sarcastically ironical depiction of the former slaves as hardly human, as demonstrated by the writer’s use of the most dehumanizing slur available to him. And yet, I cannot refrain from pointing out some mitigating elements. The writer seems to judge the contrabands by *their* surface, their ragged clothing, which leaves at least the potential for seeing beyond that surface. That potential is demonstrated the writer’s suggestion that the Union “Shove them into the army, I say, and let them do the fighting in this hot Department.” Granted, the language is brutal and callous “shove them” and “let them do the fighting.” By “this hot Department,” the writer uses military jargon to refer to war zones in the conflict — he seems to be stationed in an active and dangerous one, probably in the eastern theater, where the contrabands were most numerous. This is probably also before Lincoln decided to allow black to form their own regiments, because there was great debate about whether this should be done, and the writer declares his position on the issue: “I say.” The substance of that debate was not merely about whether blacks *could* serve effectively, but whether they *should*, as bearing arms and fighting was a marker of manhood, honor, and readiness for the responsibilities of citizenship, all badges of a presumptive equality that many did not want to pin on blacks. This is exactly why Douglass sought the right for both freemen and former slaves to serve, and the grudging willingness of the writer to — as it were — *let* blacks serve, even in the brutal terms of *shoving* them into the army, which deprives them of agency, would constitute a partial victory in molding white consciousness while also cultivating black autonomy and agency by making it possible for them to serve. Douglass’s intent was realized by storming of Fort Wagner by the 54th in July of 1863, which resulted in tragic defeat and the death of Robert Gould Shaw, the Colonel of the regiment, along with many soldiers,

but it demonstrated to the nation that black soldiers could and would fight courageously and valiantly, resulting in the creation of additional black regiments (Fig. 11).



Figure 11: Augustus Saint-Gaudens: *Memorial to Robert Gould Shaw and the Massachusetts Fifty-Fourth Regiment*, 1884, installed 1897 on the Boston Common, Massachusetts; Wikicommons.

Of course, the dynamics of this double-vision about ideal, reality, and the imperfect but progressive realization of the ideal hardly seem on the mind of the writer, who is still self-evidently mired in the white double-conscious about ideal and reality. The intractability of that double-consciousness has another brutal depiction in another strand of portraiture: images of whites in blackface. Such images are very rare before 1860 (I have not encountered a single one in 25 years of working with early American photography), but below is an example from around the Civil War (Fig. 12).



Figure 12. Hathaway (Massachusetts): anonymous subject (man in blackface), tintype, 1860s; collection of the author.

After the revelations of the blackface yearbook photos of Virginia Governor Ralph Northam, I hardly need point out its enduring and destructive power. Blackface has its roots in the minstrel show, which emerged as a wildly popular form of low-brow white entertainment in the 1830s (Fig. 13).



Figure 13. Anonymous photographers: anonymous subjects (men in blackface; college theatrical group in blackface), tintype, 1880s, and albumen print, 1890s; collection of the author.

The usual interpretations of minstrelsy emphasize its role in the social construction of whiteness: By depicting blacks as boorish, foolish, laughable, incompetent, and so on, whites, especially working-class and middle-class whites, could define themselves in term of a whiteness as the antonym of this sub-humanity. It is not an historical accident, in my view, that minstrelsy emerged in the 1830s. This was the period following the rise of Jacksonian democracy, which empowered a certain strain of populism against the founding era's more elitist schema of social and political leadership. But that populism had made an instinctive decision to define itself as a *white* democratic empowerment, and so it had to have a way of making *affectively* definitive that bringing blacks into the fold of this democratization of American society would be ludicrous. Furthermore, this was the era of the rise of mass immigration from European regions unfamiliar with American cultural habits, especially Ireland and Germany. These populations had to be educated in the ways of whiteness to uphold the color line, because otherwise, they might be the natural allies of blacks. Also, after the Missouri Compromise of 1819, the nation's first generation hope and expectation that accommodating slavery was a necessary evil to form the nation, and that it would gradually die out, had largely died out, replaced by the 1830s by the Calhoun camp's assertion of slavery as a positive good, at one extreme, and the Garrison camp's abolitionist militancy and conviction that the Constitution and Union constituted a pact with the devil to be renounced, at the other. The color line hardened to fit with a general consensus in favor of white supremacy, with or without slavery, and that unwritten racial contract had to be inscribed in the minds and affective instincts of the white population

through the demeaning public rituals and symbols, such as minstrelsy. The minstrel show was not something performed just by professional entertainers; it became a parlor pastime and a trope of amateur theatricals in colleges and communities.

But while all of this is undoubtedly true, there is more to minstrelsy than a purely negative and demeaning ritual to demarcate the race line. The key, I think, is the *embodiment* entailed in blackface. While blackface is literally on the surface, it is also like a carnival mask that permits the wearer to inhabit a persona otherwise forbidden by or outside of the prevailing social norms. Note the expression on the face of the man in the portrait: he is doing something rarely seen in early photographs — *smiling*, and not just smiling: *grinning*, and grinning with an open mouth, as if in mid-laughter. Virtually all early portraits are somber and serious, modeled after painted portraiture, which was a very serious business indeed. The “snap-shot” did not exist, and informal portraits were exceptionally rare. One came to the photographer’s studio to present oneself to the world as sober, self-possessed, and dignified. This was the self-conception of whiteness. We see something rather different in the blackface image: happiness, enjoyment, and an expression caught, as it were, living in the moment, not in some abstract, formal eternity. This is the double-vision and double-consciousness to blackface: on the one hand, it holds blackness at a distance as something distinctly Other; yet on the other hand, *being in* blackface is also to inhabit the projection of blackness and to *enjoy* it in a bodily way. After all, minstrelsy would hardly have lasted as a form of entertainment if it were not in some sense *fun*.

So, while blackface minstrelsy may have served a strategy of white self-definition in contrast to blackness on its literal sur-face, beneath that surface it implicates something else. Of course, the depiction of blacks as grotesquely ludicrous, childlike, and happy-go-lucky serves to deny them the presumption of the seriousness and aptitude necessary for fully adult personhood and citizenship in the body politic, blackface is not merely an external depiction in an image; it involves both an internalization and an expression in the one who takes on the “face” and embodies the persona. This suggests the freeing of a possibility for being that is otherwise repressed. There might also be a kind of reluctant admiration – and we see this in the late form of minstrelsy performed by Al Jolson, star of the early blockbusting blackface talkie-musical, *The Jazz Singer* (1927). While hard to believe now, if one sees an image of his stage persona (Fig. 14), Jolson insisted that his blackface was a *tribute*, not a denigration, and he saw himself as bridging black and Jewish suffering and determination in song. It is not original now to observe that later white appropriations of black music — jazz by a Glenn Miller, rock-and-roll by an Elvis Presley, or rap by a Vanilla Ice — is a blackface performance without blackface, but what these demonstrate is a version of something *implicit* in the white double-consciousness of early minstrelsy made *explicit* and thereby altered in these modern forms. Cultural appropriation can be grotesque and demeaning, such as when suburban white kids adopt the manners and styles performed in gangsta rap, and it can be cruelly

thoughtless or blatantly unjust when the black precursors to wildly successful white ones are ignored or uncompensated.

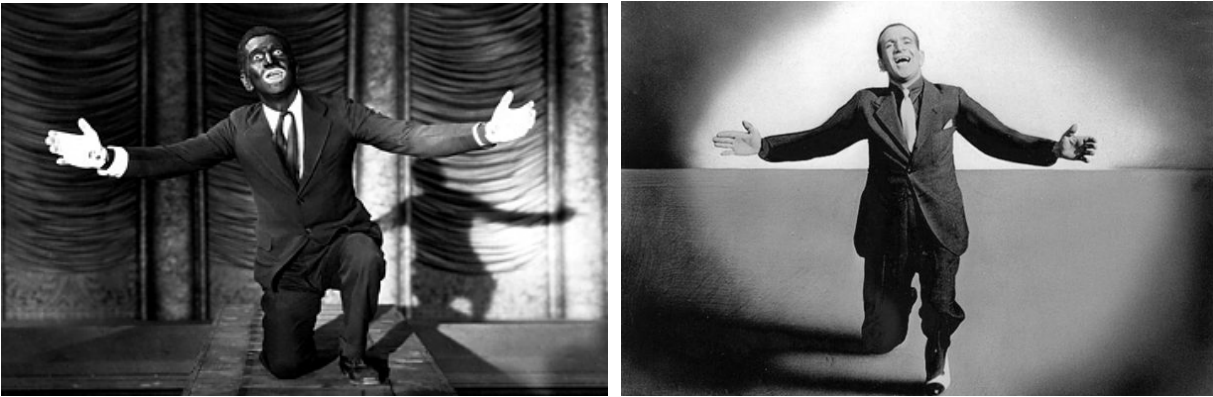


Figure 14. H. Al Jolson, in and out of blackface, 1920s; public domain.

But unless we want complete inter-cultural disinterest, there must be some way to engage and appropriate that entails respect and admiration. Such a cultural dialogue can, at its best, bring both black and white double-vision into focus in a shared vision that may progressively overcome the divide of the color line.

But two more images illustrate the difficulty of overcoming white double-consciousness. The first is a portrait of a girl. She sits before a mirror, a symbol again for reflection as well as for double-vision (Fig. 15). The caption tells us that she is “Rebecca, A Slave Girl from New Orleans”:



Figure 15, Charles Paxson: “Rebecca, Slave Girl from New Orleans,” carte-de-visite, 1863; collection of Greg French.

She is Rebecca Huger, and research has shown that the photographer was Charles Paxson, who made a series of such portraits of former slaves, in skin tones from dark to light, in 1863 (Fig. 16).



Figure 16. Charles Paxson: examples from the Emancipated Slaves series, “White and Black Slaves” (left), “Emancipated Slaves” (middle), “Our Protection” (right), albumen print and cartes-de-visite, 1863, collections of Greg French (l. and m.) and the author (r.)

In that year, New Orleans had fallen to the Union, and once again, thousands of slaves found liberation behind Union lines. In the North, freedmen associations mobilized to provide relief and education, generally in basic literacy, to these refugees. As one of the earliest forms of photographic propaganda, these were mass-produced and sold for funding as well as to bolster support for an unexpectedly grueling war that was now costing hundreds of thousands of lives. Rebecca *looks* white, and indeed one of the photos in the series is entitled “Black and White Slaves” from New Orleans. Here we have a rare case where an image of the period seeks to provoke reflection to break through white double-consciousness by exposing white double-vision. Rebecca is simultaneously black and white, as were tens of thousands of slaves who, by successive generation of sexual exploitation of slaves by masters, overseers and others, had been born with phenotypic white features, but who remained slave and black by the double law of American race-based slavery: the one drop rule, which defined as black anyone with any black ancestry, and *partus sequitur ventrem*, literally, “status follows the womb” — the legal rule that that defined a child’s status as a slave by whether the mother was enslaved at the time of birth. But while the photograph treads a liminal realm by asking the viewer to see whiteness in enslaved blackness, it nevertheless seeks to elicit white Northern sympathy for the child *because* she seems white. While this strategy threatens the color line, it does so by allowing the white viewers to remain comfortably on the white side of the line, because it does not invite them to see *themselves* in persons who would typically register as black.

The second image depicts even more starkly the pathology of white seeing. The photo is bizarre, showing a young, apparently white woman, with decidedly un-Victorian hair and immodest clothing. She is identified on the back as “Zublia Aggolia, Circassian Lady” (Fig. 17):



Figure 17. Moore Brothers: “Zublia Aggiola, Circassian Lady,” carte-de-visite, face and reverse, c. 1870; collection of the author.

That is a stage name, however, and “Circassian Lady” is an assumed identity, one that was *performed*, both in the carnival context and in Judith Butler’s conceptual sense. She is an example of a racial “type” intentionally created by P. T. Barnum, the great American fabulist and opportunist, always ready to exploit an audience’s hankering to see the unexpected or outlandish. In the eighteenth century, Johann Blumenbach (1740-1852) had largely invented what became the standard typology of racial “colors,” dubbing the original human and white race as “Caucasians,” based on his surmise that the people of the Caucasus were the monogenetic ur-humans (Fig. 18).

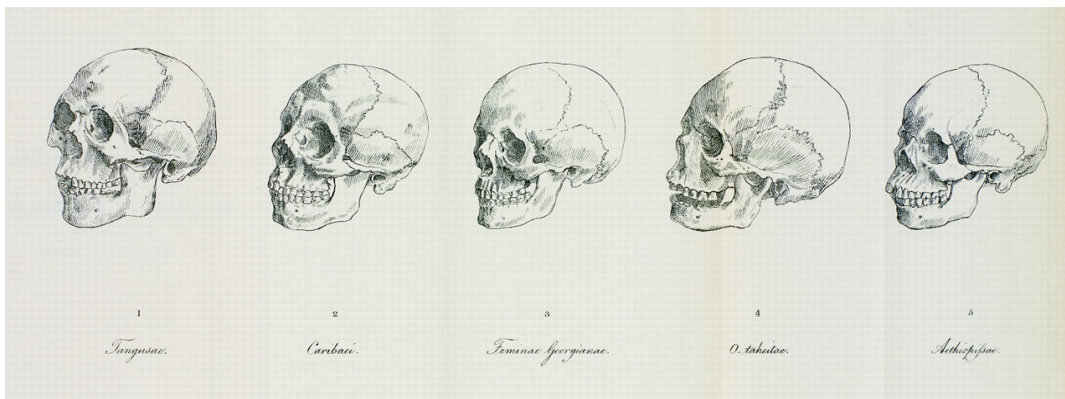


Figure 18. Illustration from Johan Blumenbach, *On the Natural Varieties of Mankind* (1775), Wikicommons; the central figure is labeled “Feminae Gorgianae,” the skull of a Georgian (European), or “Caucasian” woman.

Because Americans are still frequently declared “Caucasian” or the like based on classifications established over two centuries ago, we forget that the “Caucasian” is no less a concocted fantasy than the

“Aryan” – although no German need now identify themselves as *that* on some official document, although Americans are still catalogued this way in official documents and in the media (see Fig. 19).

STATE OF HAWAII		CERTIFICATE OF LIVE BIRTH		DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH	
		FILE NUMBER 151		61 10641	
1a. Child's First Name (Type or print)		1b. Middle Name		1c. Last Name	
BARACK		HUSSEIN		OBAMA, II	
2. Sex	3. This Birth	4. If Twin or Triplet, Was Child Born	5a. Birth Date	Month	Day Year
Male	Single <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Twin <input type="checkbox"/> Triplet <input type="checkbox"/>	1st <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd <input type="checkbox"/>	August	4	1961
6a. Place of Birth: City, Town or Rural Location			6b. Island		
Honolulu			Oahu		
6c. Name of Hospital or Institution (If not in hospital or institution, give street address)			6d. Is Place of Birth Inside City or Town Limits?		
Kapiolani Maternity & Gynecological Hospital			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
7a. Usual Residence of Mother: City, Town or Rural Location		7b. Island		7c. County and State or Foreign Country	
Honolulu		Oahu		Honolulu, Hawaii	
7d. Street Address			7e. Is Residence Inside City or Town Limits?		
6085 Kalaniana'ole Highway			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
7f. Mother's Mailing Address			7g. Is Residence on a Farm or Plantation?		
			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
8. Full Name of Father		9. Race of Father			
BARACK HUSSEIN OBAMA		African			
10. Age of Father	11. Birthplace (Island, State or Foreign Country)	12a. Usual Occupation		12b. Kind of Business or Industry	
25	Kenya, East Africa	Student		University	
13. Full Maiden Name of Mother		14. Race of Mother			
STANLEY ANN DUNHAM		Caucasian			
15. Age of Mother	16. Birthplace (Island, State or Foreign Country)	17a. Type of Occupation Outside Home During Pregnancy		17b. Date Last Worked	
18	Wichita, Kansas	None			
18a. Signature of Parent or Other Informant		Parent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		18b. Date of Signature	
Stanley Dunham Obama				8-7-61	
19a. Signature of Attendant		M.D. <input type="checkbox"/> D.O. <input type="checkbox"/> Midwife <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		19b. Date of Signature	
David A. Simula				8-8-61	
20. Date Accepted by Local Reg.		21. Signature of Local Registrar		22. Date Accepted by Reg. General	
AUG - 8 1961		U. K. Lee		AUG - 8 1961	
23. Evidence for Delayed Filing or Alteration					

APR 25 2011

I CERTIFY THIS IS A TRUE COPY OR
ABSTRACT OF THE RECORD ON FILE IN
THE HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Alvin T. Onaka Ph.D.
STATE REGISTRAR

Figure 19. Birth certificate of Barack Obama, with “Race of Mother” identified as “Caucasian” (1961); public domain.

Of the Caucasians, Blumenbach deemed that the people of Circassia were the most beautiful, the purest, and the closest to the ur-white human original. By the early nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire had overrun the Caucasus, and soon an orientalist fantasy arose in Europe that the purest of the pure and the whitest of the white women were being sold into sexual slavery in the Ottoman harems. Barnum heard this legend and sent an agent with \$10,000 in gold to buy two Circassian women from the auction block in Istanbul. When that effort failed, not to be thwarted, he turned to hokum: he took an American woman, gave her a beer shampoo to frizz her hair, dressed her up in outlandish and provocative clothing, named her “Zaluma Agra,” The Star of the East, and put her on display in the freak show of his American Museum (Fig. 20).



Figure 20. E. & H. T. Anthony: “Zalumba Agra,” carte-de-visite, face and reverse, 1864-66; collection of the author.

This was during the Civil War. So popular was the “Circassian Lady” that she became a stock personality in countless freak shows across the country for the next half century, alongside the giants and bearded ladies and little people (Fig. 21). What is so extraordinary about the now-forgotten Circassian Ladies is their literally freakish whiteness. The carnival barkers invited white patrons to feast their eyes by gawping at — by Victorian standards — scantily-clad women who were putatively whiter than they, but who had faced the fate that they knew the African slaves in America endured: sexual slavery.



Figure 21. Anonymous photographer: personalities of Barnum’s Museum, carte-de-visite, face and reverse, 1864-66; collection of Greg French.

Barnum's uncanny instinct zeroed in on this resonance by giving these women hair that, for the white American viewer, would remind them precisely of *black* hair. The result is a reversal and perversion of blackface: an invisible-but-visible mask of *whiteface* on a *white* person in whom the white viewer could see the wildness and degraded sexuality they imputed to black women, but as the sublimated identity of the purest white woman. As a form of double-vision and double-consciousness, what could be more telling as a symbol of repression and self-doubt than this? Yet, Barnum's placing the Circassian Lady in a freakshow ensured that the experience would remain prurient and liminal, one providing entertainment, of course, but also ultimately obstructing genuine reflection on the arbitrariness of the color line by allowing such reflection to be dismissed at the show's exit precisely *as* freakish and outlandish, like mermaids and mindreading, two other occult fascinations of the nineteenth century (Fig. 22).



Figure 22. The Feejee Mermaid, exhibited by P. T. Barnum, 1840s; Peabody Museum, Harvard University and Wikicommons; Obermüller and Kern: "Miss Millie La Mar, Mind Reader," cabinet card, c. 1890s; collection of the author. La Mar's albinism fed into the mystique of ur- or even ultra-whiteness, a whiteness so white as to conduct freakish occult powers.

Visionary Re-vision

To bring this back full circle to Douglass, Plato and Heidegger: Nothing prevents us, now, from taking up the possibilities of seeing that have been unfulfilled, ignored, suppressed, or passed over. Douglass was mistaken, of course, in his optimistic belief that photography would impress the objective reality of the dignity of the Other upon anyone's apprehension, thereby eroding both black and white double-consciousness and prejudice. Long before the age of Photoshop undermined the claim of photography to objectivity, white popular culture adapted the medium to reinforce the crudest racial

stereotypes. Compare the stereoviews below — images intended to impart an even fuller “experience” of virtual reality (Fig. 23). Each deploys a form of reflection and self-awareness, but one passive, the other with agency; one impoverished, the other luxurious; one demeaning, the other playful but empowering.



Figure 23. Keystone View Company, “Little Black Me” (1904), C. L. Wasson, “Playing at Portraiture” (1903), stereoview cards; collection of the author. By unfocusing and crossing your eyes, then bringing them back to focus, you may see these in 3-D.

Nevertheless, the power of Douglass’s conception lies not in his expectations of photography as a technology but in his philosophical *articulation* and in his personal and political *enactment* of a visionary

Platonism. That visionary Platonism is a re-vision of the American experiment — not in the invidious sense of a reactionary revisionism that attempts to obstruct chance by calling evoking an illusory past, but rather in the sense of seeing that sees through the flawed present to a future grounded in a clear-sighted critique of the present in the light of a concomitant critique of that past that nonetheless frees up the positive possibilities passed over but still contained in it. Douglass's re-vision therefore incorporates something of Heidegger's *Destruktion* of the tradition, because he is willing to do violence to the received meaning of the tradition in order to open up possibilities inherent to but repressed within it.

Douglass then enacts a *deconstruction* of what-is and has-been in service of its *re-construction* as a future that ought-to-be. But while *Destruktion* and *Abbau* are characteristic of Heidegger's hermeneutic approach to the tradition, Douglass's reconstructive revision depends precisely on his conception of the human being as the picture-making animal. That conception involves a Platonic understanding of the *imagination* as what most fully defines what it means to be human, because, as the making and the projection and the implementation of images, the imagination enacts the idea as such as the engine for life as engaged in both thinking and is praxis. Douglass actively realizes what the idea projects, whether in his brawl with the overseer Covey to enact his personal freedom or in his political work to allow blacks to fight for their freedom as part of the Union army. The example of Douglass illustrates that idea-ism must take on the challenge of historical existence as finite, but that it cannot do without the imaginary projection of ideas that beckon us to transcend the situated given, yet without abandoning in favor of an otherworldly nowhere.

Contemporary psychological research on implicit bias indicates that when acculturated in racist or racist society, people of all colors imbibe prejudicial modes of seeing.¹² This fits with Heidegger's understanding of fore-sight carries forward the thrown understandings of the past that inevitably impinge upon our understanding as historical beings. But this field also suggests that in becoming cognizant of the role of implicit bias and in actively recognizing it in its operations, we can work to impede it and rectify it, even if never entirely extirpating it.¹³ Once again, we can bring to bear what-ought-to-be in revisioning what-is, but this demands *imagination* in determining the idea of what ought to be. For that reason, Douglass was not wrong to advocate the photograph as this battleground for the idea, because *phenomenologically*, there is no doubt that the overwhelming experience of human beings with the photograph is that it does confront us with what is, and that impression can itself be the engine for reflection. One reason, for example, that photographs from the past can have such power is that they may

¹² For a brief introduction to work on implicit bias and its meaning, see the FAQ to *Project Implicit*: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/faqs.html> (accessed March 17, 2019).

¹³ See Patricia G. Devine et al., "Long-term reduction in implicit race bias: A prejudice habit-breaking intervention," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 48 (2012) 1267–1278.

concuss us with the impact of image on imagination. That impact may be disorienting, as can any experience of radical contradiction that Douglass and Plato describe, and it may lead to the experience of seeing double. Against Du Bois, but with Douglass, perhaps it is better to say that double-vision and double-conscious is a feature, not a bug, of the human condition, if lived properly, as the Socratic examined life. That is because, as finite beings, none of us have a truly final hold on a vision of the world, and so learning to see double is learning to see Otherwise. But without the idea-ism of the picture making animal's recuperative and creative imagination, we cannot bring to what ought-be into confrontation with what-is when seeing Otherwise. Only by facing up to the shock of that confrontation can we enter into a dialogue between the false idols of delusional imaginings about the world and the opportunities available to an imaginative re-vision of the world. The image at its best has the power to bring on that conflict within the imagination.

Heidegger's Disavowal of Metaphysics

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ABSTRACT

Until the mid-1930s, Heidegger used the word “metaphysics” with no pejorative implication; it simply meant *philosophy*. By about 1936, however, he began using the word to refer not to philosophy as a whole, but to a dominant tradition beginning with Plato and ending with Nietzsche. Metaphysics, he would now say, does not just happen to fail to address the question of being, but occludes it, concealing it and rendering it unaskable, virtually incomprehensible. Heidegger's disavowal of the word “metaphysics” was in part a rhetorical response to Carnap, but it also marked the beginning of his substantive critique of “representational” or “calculative” thinking. Representational thinking aspires to comprehend entities *as such* and *as a whole* in their being. But the horizon or background against which such comprehension takes place cannot itself occupy a place in the totality of entities, so the metaphysical aspiration is forlorn. Heidegger's later thought aims at an “overcoming of metaphysics” – not in Carnap's sense, but rather to think not just the *meaning* of being, which is to say being understood as the being *of entities*, but the *truth* of being, that is, the way in which being *as such* manifests itself. Confusion about this change of direction in Heidegger's later thinking has been generated in part by his own disingenuous attempts to rewrite the history of his own early philosophy in order to make it appear more consistent with his later critique of metaphysical thinking.

There has been extensive scholarly debate surrounding Heidegger's self-described “turn” (*Kehre*) from the phenomenology of *Being and Time* (1927) to his later work, and broad disagreement about exactly what the turn was and when it occurred. On some accounts, it had already taken place by 1930, at which point Heidegger no longer believed that fundamental ontology opened the way to a general consideration of the meaning of being as such. According to Heidegger himself, by contrast, the turn was not a change in his own philosophical views at all, but an impersonal event of some larger significance in the history of thought. Accounts of the shift from the “early” to the “later” Heidegger have as a result never fully managed to disentangle two quite distinct issues: his abandonment of the project announced and commenced in *Being and Time* on the one hand, and his critique of *metaphysics* on the other.

Whereas Heidegger says very little explicitly about his abandonment of the project of fundamental ontology, probably around 1930, his disavowal of metaphysics in the late '30s is explicit and well documented. Prior to 1936, Heidegger used the word freely with no pejorative or even critical connotation. The first sentence of *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1929), for example, credits Kant with “placing the problem of metaphysics before us as a fundamental

ontology,” which he in turn defines as “the metaphysics of human existence, required for metaphysics to be made possible.”¹ Similarly, his famous 1929 inaugural lecture “What Is Metaphysics?” addresses that question not by examining and discussing metaphysics at arm’s length, as it were, but by “tak[ing] up a particular metaphysical question,” thereby “let[ting] ourselves be transposed directly into metaphysics.”² Heidegger’s lectures of 1929–30 are entitled *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, metaphysics being, he explains at the outset, “the central discipline in the whole of philosophy.”³ As late as 1935, in the lecture course later published as *Introduction to Metaphysics*, far from excluding the Presocratics at one end of the tradition and himself at the other, he says again, “*Metaphysics* is the name of the definitive center and core of all philosophy.”⁴

By 1936, however, he began using the word very differently, to refer not to the entire history of Western philosophy, but to a dominant tradition within that history, beginning with Plato and ending with Nietzsche. Metaphysics, he would now say, does not just happen to fail to arrive at the question of being, but systematically suppresses it, concealing it and rendering it unaskable, indeed virtually incomprehensible. Why the change?

Heidegger’s disavowal of the word “metaphysics” was at least in part a rhetorical response to Rudolf Carnap’s 1931 essay, “Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language,” which ridiculed the “question of being” (*Seinsfrage*) as a prime example of nonsense in violation of the rules of logical syntax. Heidegger insisted, on the contrary, that Vienna Circle positivists like Carnap were the real metaphysicians, for it was they who had reduced the question of being to mere gibberish by arbitrarily restricting meaning to the formal constraints of logic and mathematics on the one hand, and to the material constraints of empirical inquiry on the other. In redefining the term “metaphysics” in this way, Heidegger was also beginning to distance himself from Nietzsche and Nietzsche’s doctrines of will to power and eternal recurrence, in effect retreating from the charged blend of political and philosophical rhetoric with

¹ *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 5th ed., R. Taft, trans. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 1.

² “What Is Metaphysics?” D. F. Krell, trans. *Pathmarks*, W. McNeill, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 82.

³ *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, W. McNeill and N. Walker, trans. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 1.

⁴ *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 2nd ed., G. Fried and R. Polt, trans. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 19 [13] (translation modified).

which he had been supporting the Nazi regime, not only during his year as rector of Freiburg University in 1933–34, but for several years thereafter (just how long is not entirely clear).

What, then, did Heidegger think metaphysics was? A first, crude approximation is to say that metaphysics was, for him, knowledge of entities (*das Seiende*) as a whole, as opposed to being (*Sein*). But that is not quite right, for two reasons. First, for Heidegger *until 1936*, metaphysics, precisely by being knowledge of entities *as a whole*, is thereby – implicitly or explicitly, directly or indirectly – knowledge of entities as such, *as* entities, which is to say, *in their being*. An understanding of the totality of entities presupposes an understanding of being. Absent an understanding of being, there can be no understanding of entities, let alone entities as such and as a whole. In raising the question of being explicitly, then, Heidegger did not take himself to be introducing an altogether new question into a tradition lacking it entirely. Instead, he saw himself as uncovering a question that lay dormant in Western philosophy, reminding it, as it were, of the question that had defined it all along, since its inception, but that it had forgotten, at least since Plato. As we have seen, as late as 1935 Heidegger was presenting the question of being as belonging to and as motivated by the tradition, indeed as the culmination and fulfillment of that tradition, so he was perfectly happy to call his own thinking, and likewise that of the Presocratics, “metaphysics.”

The second reason it’s not correct to say simply that metaphysics is, for Heidegger, the knowledge of entities as a whole to the exclusion of being is that *after 1936* Heidegger himself began to doubt, as he had not done previously, the intelligibility of the very idea of a knowledge of entities as a whole. Or so I shall argue. By the time of the *Beiträge* (1936–38), that is, metaphysics is, for Heidegger, not so much knowledge of the totality of entities as the deeply misconceived and forlorn aspiration to such knowledge. There is, he came to believe, something incoherent in the very notion of a knowledge of entities as a whole, so that metaphysics according to his earlier conception of it must be strictly speaking impossible. Of course, metaphysics, now understood as the misbegotten *effort* to know the totality of entities as such, is still possible – just as it’s possible to *try* to pull yourself up by your bootstraps. According this new conception, metaphysics is not a kind of knowledge at all, but a style of thinking, a way of understanding the totality of entities as conforming or corresponding to a kind of cognition or attitude – for Plato, intuitive apprehension of forms; for Descartes, rational certainty; for

Nietzsche, perspectival will to power – that grasps those entities fully, adequately, as such and as a whole.

Specifying the precise difference between Heidegger's views before and after 1936, however, is no simple task. For one thing, it is not obvious that in the 1920s and early '30s he accepted as possible what I believe he came to reject as incoherent in the late '30s and thereafter. What he certainly accepted before 1936, and perhaps afterwards too, was the very idea of a totality of entities as such. Indeed, the one thing we can evidently mostly safely say about the sum total of occurrent entities is precisely that it *is*.⁵ Further, Heidegger seems to have supposed that human understanding can grasp such a totality – not, to be sure, by possessing complete knowledge of it, but simply by apprehending it in a primitive kind of thought. At a minimum, that is, we have an understanding – and moreover an affective apprehension – of entities as such and as a whole simply by grasping the (admittedly vague) concept *everything*. Moreover, not only is the very idea of a totality of entities intelligible, but Heidegger also seems to have believed that there *is* such a totality, at least understood as a sum total of “occurrent” (*vorhanden*) objects, as opposed to human beings and “available” (*zuhanden*) cultural artifacts, whose being is constituted by our understanding of them. That is, Heidegger held not only that there *is* a totality of occurrent entities, but that, unlike Kantian things in themselves, those entities have a determinate causal structure in space and time, a structure that is the way it is independently of us and our ways of making sense of it.

That last claim is what I have elsewhere called Heidegger's *ontic realism*.⁶ Ontic realism is more robust than Kant's “empirical realism,” which he offers as a corollary to his transcendental idealism, but it is not as ambitious as other forms of metaphysical realism, for it concerns only the ontological status of occurrent *entities*, not any actual or possible description or *theory* of them. Heidegger never supposed, that is, that there could be, even in principle – even, as it were, in the mind of God – a complete knowledge of everything. Unlike Kantian things in themselves, the reality about which Heidegger was an ontic realist is not an object correlative to omniscience, a notion Heidegger (rightly) rejected as incoherent. Put slightly more technically, I think

⁵ Consider, by contrast, Markus Gabriel, who denies that there can be any such thing as a totality of entities. See his *Fields of Sense: A New Realist Ontology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015) and *Why the World Does Not Exist*, G. S. Moss, trans. (Cambridge: Polity, 2015). For a critical review of *Fields of Sense*, see my “Gabriel's Metaphysics of Sense,” *The Harvard Review of Philosophy*, vol. 23 (2016): 53–9.

⁶ See my *Heidegger's Analytic: Interpretation, Discourse, and Authenticity in “Being and Time”* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), chapter 4.

Heidegger never believed in the existence of what are sometimes called *facts* (or *propositions*), such that the totality of entities must include a subtotality of facts (or propositions) that might then be the object (or content) of a complete knowledge of everything. So, even if Heidegger later became even more hostile to the notion of a complete knowledge or description of the totality of entities (even merely *qua* *occurrent*), that by itself does not constitute a sharp break from his earlier view.

Neither is it obvious that Heidegger ever gave up the idea that *there is* a totality of entities. If the metaphysical pursuit of knowledge of that totality is incoherent, it is not because the very idea of a such a totality is incoherent. What Heidegger came to regard as incoherent, I believe, was rather the idea of a *knowledge* of entities as such as a whole, that is, *as* entities. For such a knowledge would have to include a knowledge of knowledge itself standing in relation to that totality, as understanding it *as such*, and consequently as involving – indeed, resting on – a prior, more fundamental understanding of *being*. A genuine knowledge of entities as such as a whole, that is, must necessarily include in itself a further understanding of *being*. That was precisely what Heidegger claimed for his own philosophical project in *Being and Time* and immediately thereafter – namely, a continuation and radicalization of metaphysics, proceeding from what he called “traditional ontology” toward his own *fundamental ontology*, which would spell out the conditions of the intelligibility of our understanding of entities as a whole, culminating in a fully general account of the meaning of being. Like the logical positivists, Heidegger came to believe that modern science had superseded and absorbed, precisely by attaining an objective knowledge of nature in its pure occurrentness – but, crucially, *without* also grasping the *being* of occurrent nature as such. Thus in his 1964 lecture “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking,” Heidegger notes the *de facto* “development (*Ausfaltung*) of philosophy into the independent sciences,” and even the “dissolution (*Auflösung*) of philosophy into the technologized sciences.” What the sciences cannot do is grasp being – hence Heidegger’s famously provocative, if potentially misleading, quip that “The sciences don’t *think*.”⁷

The change in Heidegger’s conception of metaphysics was both terminological and substantive. Terminologically, the word “metaphysics” took on a different meaning in his

⁷*What Is Called Thinking?* J. Glenn Gray, trans. (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 8. What Heidegger meant by this emerges more clearly much later in the text when he says, “Science does not think in the sense in which thinkers think” (134).

vocabulary before and after (roughly) 1936. Before then, it appeared in the titles of many of his lectures and books, and it just meant *philosophy*. As he says in *Introduction to Metaphysics* of 1935, “*Metaphysics* is the name of the definitive center and core of all philosophy” (EM 13). Afterwards, it referred just to that segment of the tradition that began with Plato and ended with Nietzsche, *excluding* the Presocratics at the beginning and Heidegger himself at the end.

Substantively, Heidegger came to see his own project as more radically discontinuous with the philosophical tradition. Specifically, he drew a sharper distinction between his own thinking and metaphysics in the second, narrower sense of the word. Whereas earlier he had understood Western philosophy as a whole, including the Presocratics, as having failed to make the question of being explicit and thematic, he came to regard the peculiar style of thinking that began with Plato and ended with Nietzsche as systematically incapable of even acknowledging, let alone addressing, the question.

One telltale text is the *Introduction to Metaphysics* – or rather, the published edition of 1953, which in addition to the original 1935 lecture course includes several supposedly clarificatory insertions.⁸ The longest, near the beginning of the book, is a (rather muddled) excursus explaining the original lecture’s characterization of metaphysics, which Heidegger now says was sketchy and misleading – but, he insists, *deliberately* so!

The lecture course begins with what Heidegger calls “the first of all questions” (EM 1). The question “first in rank for us as the broadest, the deepest, and finally the most originary question” (EM 2) is, *Why is there something rather than nothing?* This is not the same as the even deeper question concerning the meaning of being, but it presupposes it and, if we follow Heidegger, leads back to it. A few pages later he therefore says, “So, it turns out, the question, *Why are there entities at all instead of nothing?* forces (*zwingt*) us to the prior question, *What about being* (Wie steht es um das Sein)?” (EM 25). Notice that that assertion – that the question concerning entities as a whole *forces* us on to the question of being – flatly contradicts Heidegger’s later critique of metaphysics, according to which (as we have seen) “the light of being ... no longer comes within the range of metaphysical thinking” (*Wegmarken*, 195).

⁸ The most famous among them is his attempt to explain away the obviously jingoistic reference to “the inner truth and greatness” of National Socialism as a supposedly dispassionate comment on the growth of modern technology (EM 152).

For its part, Heidegger says in 1935, “The question we have identified as first in rank – *Why are there entities at all instead of nothing?* – is the fundamental question of metaphysics” (EM 13). The question of being as such, however, has *never* been asked explicitly: “In the treatise *Being and Time* the question concerning the meaning of being is posed and developed specifically *as a question* for the first time in the history of philosophy” (EM 64). Still, what Heidegger is doing in the 1935 lectures is introducing his students to philosophy as he himself understands it and practices it. As he says, “*Metaphysics* is the name of the definitive center and core of all philosophy” (EM 13).

This is the point at which Heidegger inserts a rather convoluted addendum in 1953. “For this introduction,” he writes, “we have *intentionally* presented all this in a cursory and thus basically ambiguous way” (EM 13, emphasis added). Heidegger is certainly right that ambiguities have crept into the lecture. A few pages earlier, for example, he had said, “Φύσις is being (*Sein*) itself, by virtue of which entities first become and remain observable” (EM 11). On the very next page, however, he says, “Entities (*das Seiende*) as such and as a whole the Greeks call φύσις” (EM 12). So, is φύσις being or entities? Considering that the ontological difference between being and entities is virtually the cornerstone of Heidegger’s entire philosophy, this is an astonishing inconsistency. And it raises further questions. For example, when the Presocratics said φύσις, what did Heidegger think were they thinking? Being or merely entities? And were they thinking “metaphysically”? Or, as Heidegger would later maintain, did metaphysics begin only with Plato? This degree of equivocation, it seems to me, is unaccountable absent a fundamental shift in Heidegger’s understanding of metaphysics, including (but limited to) the meaning of the word “metaphysics,” not long after the 1935 lectures. By the time he writes the 1953 addendum, at any rate, Heidegger is acutely aware of the ambiguity and attempts to explain it away:

According to our elucidation of *phusis*, it means the being of entities. If the question is *peri phuseôs*, about the being of entities, then the discussion of *phusis*, “physics” in the ancient sense, is already beyond *ta phusika*, beyond entities and is concerned with being. “Physics” determines the essence and the history of metaphysics from the inception onward. (EM 14)

In Aquinas, in Hegel, in Nietzsche, he continues, “metaphysics steadfastly remains ‘physics.’ The question concerning being as such, however, is of a different essence and a different provenance” (EM 14).

This is no minor refinement. Here, in 1953, in stark contrast to the 1935 lecture, Heidegger draws a categorical distinction between the question of being that was alive in, indeed at the very heart of, the metaphysical tradition (the question of the being *of entities*), and a different question of being that was not (the question of being *as such*). In 1953, that is, Heidegger presents himself retrospectively as asking a question that falls outside of metaphysics altogether. Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Hegel, and Nietzsche had all been doing “physics” in the ancient sense, that is, thinking the totality of entities – albeit, entities *in their being*. Heidegger is now not just carrying that tradition forward by making the question already inherent in it clearer and more explicit; he is asking a different question altogether, a question metaphysical thinking *does not* and indeed *cannot* ask.

“To be sure,” he continues, “within the purview of metaphysics, and if one continues to think in its manner, one can regard the question concerning being as such merely as a mechanical repetition of the question concerning entities as such” (*EM* 14). But this is a mistake, in which “the question of being as such is misconstrued as coinciding with the question concerning entities as such” (*EM* 14).

Heidegger then adds, “The ‘introduction to metaphysics’ attempted here keeps in view this confused state of the ‘question of being’” (*EM* 14). What is the “confused state of the question,” which Heidegger says the lecture course “keeps in view”? Considering its fundamental importance to him, it seems inconceivable that Heidegger himself would lose sight of the ontological difference between being and entities altogether. The confusion must instead have to do with what precise relation obtains between being and entities. Metaphysics, he says, in 1929 and in 1935, is concerned with *entities as such and as a whole*, or entities *in their being*, or even, as he sometimes allows, *the being of entities*. That is, it thinks the essential relation between entities and their being. Posing the fundamental question of metaphysics, the question concerning *entities as such and as a whole* opens up, leads to – indeed “forces” (*zwingt*) us on to – the question that is, as it were, just waiting to be asked, namely, *What about being?* Or, as he puts it in *Being and Time*, what is the meaning of being?

Within a few years of the 1935 lectures, however, Heidegger insists that metaphysics does not – indeed *cannot* – pose the question of being. Metaphysics is not a path or a bridge from the question concerning entities to the question of being, but an obstacle, a blind spot, an eclipse of the question. The way he puts this in 1953 is to say that although, as he had said before,

metaphysics thinks *entities in their being*, or even *the being of entities*, what it does not and cannot think is “being *as such*” (EM 15).

In the 1953 addendum Heidegger makes it sound as if the 1935 lectures were merely reflecting a confusion inherent in the tradition. What has in fact happened is that he himself has in the meantime abandoned the concept of metaphysics on which the lectures were based, distinguished his own question more sharply from that of the tradition, and relegated metaphysics to a narrower domain in which it thinks entities (or perhaps “entities in their being”), but *cannot* think being (or perhaps “being as such”). In 1935 Heidegger very clearly credited the entire philosophical tradition – not just as far back as Plato, but *including* the Presocratics – with asking about *entities as such and as a whole*, which is to say, entities *in their being*. This is why in 1935 he was able to slide so easily back and forth between saying on one page that φύσις means “being itself” (EM 11) and on the very next page that it means “entities as such and as a whole” (EM 12).

Within just a few years of the 1935 lectures, that ambiguity had become intolerable, since it left no room for Heidegger to distinguish himself so categorically from the tradition, as he now very much wanted to do. Rather than owning up to the change, however, Heidegger instead maintained that his own question of being, even in *Being and Time*, had been nonmetaphysical from the outset.

Heidegger on the Nothing and Anaximander's ἄπειρον: The Lethic Character of Being

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ABSTRACT

If Martin Heidegger is a thinker of Being par excellence, he is also one of the west's key thinkers concerning the nothing. This paper has two main aims. The first is to highlight the continuity of the way in which Heidegger develops the theme of the nothing, in its close kinship with Being, throughout the long arc of his thought: from *Sein und Zeit* (1927) and his summer 1928 lecture course on Leibniz, through his famous treatment in the inaugural lecture "*Was ist Metaphysik?*" (1929), his subsequent "*Nachwort*" (1943) and "*Einleitung*" (1949) to that work, to his extended letter to Ernst Jünger, published as "*Zur Seinsfrage*" (1955). However, the second aim of the paper is to bring this extensive thematic thread into close association with Heidegger's reading of Anaximander, especially his summer 1932 and winter 1941 lecture courses. What emerges is a striking account of the nothing as the *Seinsvergessenheit*, but also as the "the unlimited" origin of all beings in their "stepping forth" into appearance, and that to which they return. Thus, τὸ ἄπειρον effectively becomes for Heidegger another name for the nothing, or Being in its lethic or "hidden essence": i.e., the hyperbolic or abyssal excess that is the ἀρχή of the appearance of beings. I conclude with some brief reflections on the sense in which Heidegger considers the vocation of "courageously" and "thankfully" thinking this nothing as perhaps the fullest expression of human freedom.

KEYWORDS

Martin Heidegger – The Nothing – Being – Anaximander – *Aperion*

This paper is concerned with the continuity and the surprising breadth of the theme of the nothing and the lethic in Heideggerian thought, in its close kinship with Being itself, seen also through the lens of his reading of the Anaximander fragments. The focus is twofold. First, I explore something of the itinerary of this rich thread, from its early development in *Sein und Zeit* and the Leibniz course, via its famous thematisation in the inaugural address of 1929, through a series of later texts that extend the account in the direction of the *Seinsvergessenheit*. But second, if such texts reinforce the sense in which the nothing belongs at the very centre of Heidegger's mature thinking on the *Seinsfrage*, I suggest that it is his reading of Anaximander, especially the shorter of the two fragments, that provides a key missing piece for an understanding of what is at stake in this seminal strand of Heideggerian thought. For as Heidegger moves Being/Beyng strikingly into the orbit of τὸ ἄπειρον in these readings, the nothing emerges as a name for the hyperbolic excess that is the ἀρχή of the appearance of beings. In this way, the motif of withdrawing/granting that is ubiquitous in Heidegger's later writings is seen to encapsulate the

core of Heidegger's thinking of both the alethic unfolding of the world, and the lethic granting that makes it possible.

1. Foreshadowings: Negativity in the Early Heidegger

From the perspective of early Heideggerian thought, the 'lethic character of Being' is an odd phrase. Insofar as it is focused on providing an analytic of Dasein in its Being-in-the-world, *Sein und Zeit*, for example, develops a strongly dis-closive or alethiological account of Being in which the focus is predominantly on "the worldhood of the world" (GA2: 111/114 ff).

Understanding is the "disclosedness of the 'for-the-sake-of-which'". Significance [*Bedeutsamkeit*] is "that on the basis of which the world is disclosed as such" (GA2: 190/182). If philosophy in general "takes its departure from the hermeneutic of Dasein", then philosophy just is "universal phenomenological ontology" (GA2: 51/62). Seen in this light, the lethic is simply what has not – or not *yet* – been un-covered in the lighting process by which understanding brings beings within the scope of significance and circumspection (*Umsicht*).

The near conflation here of Being, via Dasein, with the happening of disclosure/ ἀλήθεια is understandable in the context of the strategy of the existential analytic in its main phase. Yet even here there are haunting indications – foreshadowings – of the abyssal context within which the possibility of disclosive understanding is set, and which punctures holes in any sense of Being just as the closed circuit of alternating closure and disclosure. In this way, a larger set of concerns is suggested that come to centre stage only in subsequent work, and indeed will come to define Heidegger's larger project. In passing, I allude to three such foreshadowings from the period of the late 1920s.

In *Sein und Zeit*, the nothing is encountered in the midst of the analysis of conscience (§58) and Dasein's debt/guilt (*Schuld*). Accordingly, Dasein "is something that has been thrown; it has been brought into its 'there', but not of its own accord"(GA2: 377/329-30), and it is therefore "defined by a 'not' [*ein Nicht*] – that is to say, '*Being-the-basis of a nullity [einer Nichtigkeit]*'" (GA2: 378/331). Implicated in the web of this primordial nullity is not simply *inauthentic* Dasein in its falling, but all possible modes of Dasein's existence. All projective understanding is thrown and thus null by definition. The "primordial totality of Dasein's structural whole" – 'care' itself – is "permeated with nullity through and through" (GA2: 378/331).

This account of Dasein's nullity needs to be read in the context of the earlier account of anxiety (§40), which is presented specifically as a breach in the whole structure of "disclosedness of the 'for-the-sake-of-which'" that otherwise dominates the analysis of Dasein in Division I. "That in the face of which one has anxiety", Heidegger insists, is nothing other than "Being-in-the-world as such" (GA2: 247/230). "That in the face of which one is anxious is completely indefinite": there is *nothing* (no-thing) about which Dasein is anxious; its anxiety is rooted simply in its condition *as* Being-in-the-world. "Here the totality of involvements", be they *zuhanden* or *vorhanden* projections "discovered within-the-world, is, as such, of no consequence; it collapses into itself; the world has the character of completely lacking significance" (GA2: 247/231).

It is instructive to relate both this and the 1929 accounts of anxiety to the discussion of world-entry [*Welteingang*] in Heidegger's summer 1928 lecture course on Leibniz. Insofar as Dasein is Being-in-the-world, its existence brings with it the entry of *vorhanden* beings into the world. But in entering the world, *vorhandenen* are unchanged, since "the world itself [is] nothing" (GA26: 252/195). What, Heidegger asks, is to be made of this nothingness of the world? Here Heidegger confronts a knotty problem concerning the nothingness of Being that is to return in various guises in the decades to come. "The world: a nothing, no being [*kein Seiendes*] – and yet something; nothing of beings – but being [*Sein*]". Presumably with tacit reference to Kant's table of nothing in the first *Kritik*,¹ Heidegger is clear that "the world is not nothing in the sense of '*nihil negativum*'. While there is nothing that it is, it *is* in a sense something, since it is responsible for Dasein's transcendence. "It is nothing that is yet something that is there [*es gibt*]. The 'there is [*es*]' which is this not-a-being is ... the self-temporalizing temporality ... [the] ecstatic unity" of the horizon of the world (GA26: 252/195). It is in virtue of this radical making-possible of transcendence that Heidegger dubs this primordial kind of nothing, the "*nihil originarium*": a nothing that as "the *origio* of transcendence is temporality itself", and thus what fundamentally makes possible world-entry. The nothing is that which allows beings to be manifest, to come forth and to be encountered in their worldly significance (GA26: 272/210).

¹ Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 383 (A292/B347).

2. “The Clear Light of the Nothing”: The Inaugural Address

Heidegger’s inaugural address in July 1929 can be read both as a continuation of this developing theme as well as the beginning of a shift, indeed a *turning*, towards a new perspective on the problem of the nothing. With provocative reference to the ontic fixation of the sciences, Heidegger insists that the shift from an adverbial modality (“*nicht*”) to the nominative form (“*das Nichts*”) is nonsense only if it is to be understood ontically – as a being. To the contrary, an *ontological* sense of the nothing will recognise that the logical meanings of ‘not’ and ‘negation’ [*Verneinung*] are founded on a more original sense of the nothing to which anxiety gives unique access.

Heidegger’s account of the “uncanny” moment (the *Augenblick*?) of anxiety involves an intricate kinetics and a complex series of turnings. First, there is the “receding [*Wegrücken*]” or “slipping way [*Entgleiten*]” of “beings as a whole” (GA9: 112/89; 114/90). Second, the anxious individual’s experience of “hovering [*schweben*]”, of being “[left] hanging [*läßt uns schweben*]”, involves a “slip[ping] away [*entgleiten*] from ourselves” (GA9: 112/88). Third, anxiety involves “a shrinking back before ... [*ein Zurückweichen vor*]” (GA9: 114/90) in which there can be no grasping [*erfassen*] or understanding of the experience. Fourth, the nothing itself is named as “essentially repelling”, a repulsion [*Abweisung*] that is a pointing or gesturing away [*Verweisen*]. Beings are “in retreat as a whole” (GA9: 114/90). But finally, even “in this very receding”, repulsion and retreating, “things turn toward us” (GA9: 112/88).

It is in this “turning towards us”, even in the midst of all the retreating, that the core import of the address emerges. For in this “clear light of the nothing”, there is a dis-closure, an astonishingly paradoxical moment of ἀ-λήθεια that reveals the lethic countenance (the λήθη) of Being. The ‘nothing’ discloses “the retreating whole of beings [*Seiende im Ganzen*] ... in their full but heretofore concealed strangeness as the pure other [*das schlechthin andere*]” (GA9: 114/90). In this most “originary attunement [*Stimmung*]” of anxiety (GA9: 111-112/100-101), Dasein comes face to face with beings in their utter lack of worldly significance. In a striking departure from the dominant approach to ontological primacy developed in *Sein und Zeit*,² they are disclosed as

² In fact, as Joseph Fell pointed out some time ago, Heidegger always had “more than one notion of primacy”, and thus there should be no conflation between “what is ‘first and for the most part’ with what is ‘fundamental’ or ‘primordial’” (Joseph Fell, “The Familiar and the Strange: On the Limits of *Praxis* in the Early Heidegger”. In

“beings as such” outside of the context of the meaning-granting structures of worlding, which in the existential analytic had been largely inseparable from *Sein* itself.

In his reformulation of the old maxim “*ex nihilo nihil fit*” as “*ex nihilo omne ens qua ens fit*” (GA9: 120/95),³ Heidegger maintains that “the nothing makes possible the manifestness of beings as such”. It is not simply “the counterconcept of beings”, but that which “originally belongs to their essential unfolding” (GA9: 115/91). But if this ‘nothing’ is not to be understood as a mere ‘*nihil negativum*’, it can only be understood as the no-*thing*-ness of beings in their fundamental givenness ‘prior’ to any possibility of their being ‘taken-as’. This event of anxiety is thus an intense experience of the stripping of beings of their worldliness through which is revealed the primordial negativity of Being. But what this then makes possible is a new appreciation of beings *in their worldliness* precisely through the momentary experience of their emptiness outside this contexture. The experience of the *negativity* of Being therefore paradoxically heightens a sense of the *positivity* and fecundity of Being. The world is not an unremarkable fixture that is to be taken for granted. It is the gift of lethic Being; a mysterious granting that calls for original thinking. As Heidegger says elsewhere: “At bottom, the ordinary [*Geheure*] is not ordinary; it is extraordinary [*un-geheuer*]” (GA5: 41/31).⁴

Heidegger: A Critical Reader, edited by Hubert L. Dreyfus and Harrison Hall, 66-67. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992.). And here in the inaugural address, Heidegger seems to grant a different kind of primacy to this unique “traumatic” form of attunement through which beings are manifested in uncanny isolation from, or anterior to, their being wrapped within the meaningful wholeness of the world. (On this “more primordial phenomenon”, see Richard Polt, “Traumatic Ontology,” in *Being Shaken: Ontology and the Event*, ed. Michael Marder and Santiago Zabala. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, 33).

³ “From nothing, nothing comes” to “From nothing, all beings as beings come to be.”

⁴ The inaugural address emerges from, and continues in interesting ways, existing lines of thought concerning the nothing, but it also announces a significant new moment in Heidegger’s path of thought, and in some ways the seams do not entirely match up. For example, in his summer 1928 course, it is the world that is understood as the primordial generative nothing (the “*nihil originarium*”) that makes Dasein’s transcendence – its ecstatic temporality – possible. Accordingly, “world-entry” happens “only insofar as Dasein exists”, which means its happens “insofar as Being-in-the-world” happens (GA26: 251/195). It is by entering into the nothing of world that beings *become* meaningful. In the inaugural address, however, the nothing arises out of the *failure* of world-entry and the dissipation and collapse of the “totality of involvements” that ordinarily defines Dasein’s existence. It is the failure of world-entry in the moment of anxiety, that makes possible the unveiling of the nothing. However, on the other hand, the inaugural address continues the theme of Dasein’s own nullity that was examined in *Sein und Zeit*, for here this very nullity is presented as the condition of possibility for worlding: “Only in the nothing of Dasein do beings as a whole ... in a finite way ... come to themselves [*zu sich selbst*]” (GA9: 120/95). It is thrown into a world that lights up beings in their significance, but this event of lighting up is a gift from a dark and abyssal source.

3. *Chiaroscuro: The Originary Kinship of Being and Nothing in the Seinsvergessenheit*

What emerges from all this is a complex intertwining of Being, world, Dasein and the nothing. Light and dark intermingle. Positivity and negativity are moments that must both be spoken in any thinking of Being/Beyng in its fullness; as a way of designating such “luminous hiding”.⁵ It is therefore unsurprising that in numerous places across the *Gesamtausgabe* Heidegger’s thinking of the originary kinship of Being and the nothing comes close to identification, if never without some level of qualification.⁶ It is in and through the very thinking of ἀλήθεια that Heidegger comes to dwell ever more intensely on the impossibly mysterious thought of λήθη: the closure that is dis-closed in the flow of the world. Yet this notion of the nothing as abyssal Being/Beyng has its roots in the inaugural lecture itself. The motif of an overabundance that withdraws itself in granting presencing within the meaningful whole of world, is palpable there, even if it is not yet as developed as it will become.⁷

In the 1943 *Nachwort* to the inaugural lecture, Heidegger speaks of the nothing (i.e., “the other of beings”), as “the veil [*Schleier*] of Being” (GA9: 312/238). Here the nothing is associated with the lethic ‘covered-overness’ of Being that nonetheless, in privileged moments, pushes back

⁵ Bill Richardson alludes to this in his comment that “it is by reason precisely of this “luminous hiding” that Being is designated as *Beon*” (Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2003, 565), or as later translators have rendered Heidegger’s *Sein*, ‘Beyng’. More generally, however, Richardson championed the idea that any overall appreciation of Heideggerian thought needs to do full justice to both the ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ dimensions of Being: “Being as the process of non-concealment is that which permits beings to become non-concealed (positivity), although the process is so permeated by ‘not’ that Being itself remains concealed (negativity). To think Being in its truth, then, is to think it in terms of both positivity and negativity at once. In the simplest of terms: Heidegger’s whole effort is to interrogate the positive-negative process of ἀλήθεια, insofar as it gives rise to metaphysics. (Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, 9.)

⁶ In his 1949 Introduction to the inaugural lecture, for example, Heidegger remarks that in the context of his discussion, the nothing should be “understood as Being itself” (“How does it come about that beings take precedence everywhere and lay claim to every ‘is,’ while that which is not a being – namely, the Nothing thus understood as Being itself – remains forgotten?” (GA9: 382/290). A few years later in “*Zur Seinsfrage*”, he states that the nothing “is equoriginally [*gleichursprünglich*] the Same as Being” (GA9: 421/318), and that “the essence of the nothing belongs to Being” (GA9: 414/313). One constant is his fascination with Hegel’s identification of “pure Being and pure Nothing” (GA9: 120/94. See also GA3: 226/158-59), which he largely confirms even if he utterly disagrees with Hegel about the *reason* for their sameness. Nonetheless, it is out of his *Auseinanderzersetzung* with Hegel on this matter, that Heidegger gives voice to the nature of their intricate kinship. In his 1942-43 lectures on Hegel’s concept of negativity, for example, there is much focus on the togetherness of abyssal Beyng and the Nothing: “The nothing as the a-byss, beyng itself ... from out of its truth”. (GA68: 37/29); “The a-byss: *beyng*. *Beyng as a-byss*—both the nothing and the ground (GA68: 48/38).

⁷ In this sense, a key moment in the inaugural lecture is Heidegger’s comment that “[i]n the Being of beings the nihilation of the nothing occurs” (GA9: 115/91). Of course, this is not the (an)nihilation of the nothing, but the nothing’s generative withdrawal that grants beings. In so doing, the nothing “reveals itself as belonging to the Being of beings” (GA9: 120/94).

against its “oblivion”. The nothing *is* the *Seinsvergessenheit* itself, but in a double sense. On one hand, it is that which has been forgotten through the constant focus (in metaphysics, the sciences and in the everyday) on beings. But on the other hand, *Seinsvergessenheit* alludes to the originary sense of Being as that which withdraws behind beings and in so doing allows itself, as itself, to be covered over; to enter into oblivion or nihilation.⁸

One of Heidegger’s most sustained meditations on this theme of oblivion or nihilation occurs in his letter to Jünger, published as “*Zur Seinsfrage*”. As with the inaugural lecture, the kinetics of receding and turning loom large here. There is an essential “turning [*Zuwendung* – to turn to]” and a “turning away or withdrawal [*Abwendung*]” of Being that is the context of all thought, for “Being resides within the turning” (GA9: 407-408/307-08). But in a new development, the essence of Being as self-concealment, as the nothing of its oblivion, is dramatically presented through the technique of the erasure of Being (~~Being~~). Being is posited, only to be simultaneously withdrawn, nihilated. The ‘traumatic’ nature of this erasure, this presentation of the presence of an absence, hits home when one reflects on the role played by the verb ‘to be’ within any linguistically mediated interpretation of the world. Without the ‘is’, there is only darkness. Heidegger’s technique of inserting Being, only to then cross it out, creates not only a silence, but a deafening silence. As per the inaugural address, *the world falls silent*. That which is ordinarily taken for granted is now conspicuously thrust to centre stage precisely *through* its dramatic removal. The oblivion or nihilation of Being is enacted on the page before us. No longer can the lethic character of Being be forgotten or taken for granted in its routineness. In this moment, the covered-overness of Being is revealed *in* its very covered-overness. “In the clear light of the nothing”, Being – in its oblivion – is manifest.

⁸ In his 1946 essay on the Anaximander fragment, Heidegger highlights this twofoldness: “The oblivion of being [*Seinsvergessenheit*] is oblivion to the difference between being and the being. But oblivion to the difference is by no means the result of a forgetfulness [*Vergeßlichkeit*] of thinking. Oblivion of being belongs to that essence of being [*Seins*] which it itself conceals [*verhüllte* – or veils] (GA5: 364/275). The same point is made in the letter to Jünger. The oblivion, he writes, “does not simply *befall* the essence of being [*Seins*], as something apparently separate from the latter. It belongs to the issue of being itself [*Sache des Seins selbst*].” (GA9: 415/314). Further, these two senses are held together in one of Heidegger’s late seminars, in which the oblivion of Being is linked directly to Being’s primordial giving (*Es gibt*): “In the beginning of Western thinking, Being is thought, but not the ‘It gives [*Es gibt*]’ as such. The latter withdraws [*entzieht*] in favor of the gift which It gives. That gift is thought and conceptualized from then on exclusively as Being with regard to beings” (GA14: 12/8).

The graphic play of the erasure technique intensifies this kinetic sense of turning, absencing and presencing. As Being is crossed out, it withdraws back into the page, even if the dramatic nature of its cancellation draws the eye. But what thus comes forth into the foreground is nothing other than beings themselves. The crossing out is not a merely negative gesture that prevents the reification of Being. Certainly, it is that. But in a more positive way, the erasure is a generative granting of beings within the contexture of the world, for it points “toward the four regions of the fourfold and their being gathered in the locale of this crossing through” (GA9: 411/310-11). To think this generative withdrawal is to think Being’s primordial giving: *Es gibt* (GA14: 12/8).⁹

4. Turnings of Light and Shadow: Lethic Being as ἀρχή and ἄπειρον

In what follows I suggest that one especially vivid mode of Heidegger’s “seeking ... the as yet unrevealed essence ... of ~~Being~~, [that] shelters untapped treasures” (GA9: 415/314), is his repeated reading of the extant reputed fragmentary sayings of Anaximander. But further, I submit that it is his largely neglected readings of the shorter of these fragments in his 1932 and 1941 lecture courses – and less so the longer fragment on which Heidegger almost exclusively focuses in the 1946 *Holzwege* essay¹⁰ and in the recently published lecture Heidegger is presumed to have composed in 1942¹¹ – that provides the most compelling set of insights into what is at stake in the kinetics of the presencing-sheltering motif. “Ἀρχὴ τῶν ὄντων τὸ ἄπειρον”, declares Anaximander in this “other saying”: the beginning/ ground of beings is the limitless.

In his summer 1932 course, Heidegger explores at length the themes of γένεσις (the “stepping forth” of beings into presence) and φθορὰν (the “receding” or disappearing of beings). His analysis of what is afoot in both movements is characterised by the complex interplay of a series

⁹ It is worth noting in passing, however, Heidegger’s strange remark that “like ~~Being~~, nothing, would have to be written – and this means thought – in the same way”. (GA9: 411/311). This is an obscure comment. The graphic erasure of Being serves to ensure that Being (*Sein*) is absolutely distinguished from beings (*Seiendes*), and in this way is affirmed in its sameness with nothing. But nothing could not be written in the same way (i.e., ~~Nothing~~), for such a double nihilation/ negation would defeat the purpose of the erasure technique in the first place.

¹⁰ Heidegger briefly alludes to the shorter fragment at GA5: 368/278.

¹¹ This lecture (GA78), published in 2010, also bears the title *Der Spruch des Anaximander*.

of concepts, metaphors and motifs, by which lethic Being, the nothing, emerges in its Anaximanderian guise.

Accordingly, Heidegger characterises the “stepping forth” of beings as the granting of determinacy or concretion. Emergence involves “the bestowal of compliance and correspondence [*Fug und Entsprechung*]” (GA35: 22/18). To be a being is to be some being *in particular*; to have specificity, distinctiveness. It is also to be in a constellated relationship with other beings: to be *that* being and not *this* one. This stepping forth or emergence is also an “entering into contour [*Umriß*]”. Insofar as the beings *are*, they enact a “persistence in contours [*Bestehen auf der Umrisenheit*]”, and as such, contour is “the integrating-gathering power [*fügende-sammelnde Kraft*] and inner substantiality [*inneres Gewicht*] of things” (GA35: 24/20). To enter into compliance with contours is also to “enter into the limits [*Grenzen, πέρας*] of the contour”, for “[s]et out in its contours, standing out in them, the being ‘is’”. It stands there for a while in its “inner delineation” (GA35: 28/23).¹²

Concomitantly, φθορὰν (the “receding” or disappearing of beings) means to lose or return the particularity that makes it the being that it is. Φθορὰν is to step back – or more precisely, to be drawn back “necessarily” (Anaximander’s “κατὰ τὸ χρεών”) – out of its contours, and to return to contourlessness [*Umrißlosigkeit*]. The being ceases compliance with its contours; it is no longer in correspondence with other beings, standing out as what it is, relative to others. It is to no longer enact limitation (πέρας), the concretion that makes it a specific being, and as such, it is to return to the ἄ-πειρον: the unlimited (*Grenzenlosigkeit*) that is its abyssal ground (ἀρχή).

In this Anaximanderian vision of the stepping forth and withdrawing, appearing and disappearing, of beings, Heidegger sees an incipient understanding of the dynamism of Being that contrasts with the later ontological stagnation that focused only on ὄν ἢ ὄν. For Anaximander, says Heidegger, there is instead “a reciprocal relation in arrival and departure”,

¹² While Heidegger does not spell this out explicitly, there is a strong implication latent in this talk of what traditional metaphysics had been driving at through the notions of εἶδος or *essentia* in their instantiation in the being; or of the being as οὐσία or *res*. Of course, he will also want to say that these traditional concepts are calcified renderings of the richer and more dynamic early Greek sense of the being; one that failed to ask the more originary questions about the place of such stepping forth within the context of the *Es gibt* as such.

and it is in this sense that he can say that “the whence and whither of appearing are the same” (GA35: 9/8).

Almost a decade later (winter 1941), Heidegger returned to Anaximander, clarifying and extending his reading. Here he is especially keen to emphasise not only the unity of the cycle of the stepping forth and receding of beings, but also the utter unsurpassability of the ἀρχή that pervades this whole:

To be sure, ἀρχή is that from which something emerges, but ... [it] is not the beginning left behind in a progression. The ἀρχή releases emergence and what emerges, such that what is released is first retained in the ἀρχή as enjoinedment [*Verfügung*]. The ἀρχή is an enjoining egress [*verfügende Ausgang*]. (GA51: 108/93)

The ἄπειρον, as ἀρχή, is not simply the ‘beginning’ and the ‘end’. Rather it *is* the enjoinedment: it is the egress itself, the path of the outflow, but also of the return. In their being released, beings remain always enjoined to their source. As the never “left behind”, it prevails over the entire cycle between emerging [*Hervorgang*] and evading [*Entgängen*]. As such, the ἀρχή is the “between [*Zwischen*]”; it is the “transition [*Übergang*]” itself. As utterly pervasive, the ἀρχή is never surpassed. It is the whole “domain [*Bereiches*]” (GA51: 108-09/93-94), by which things emerge into presence, persist a while as present, and then recede back into the ἄπειρον.¹³ Further, the appearance of beings, but also their disappearance, is made possible by time (Anaximander’s “κατὰ τὴν τοῦ χρόνου τάξιν”), for “the *office and essence* of time is to *let beings appear and disappear*” (GA35: 20/16). Thus, time [*Zeit*] shares in the pervasiveness of the ἀρχή, by its implication in the whole “domain”.

Heidegger glosses the ἄπειρον as the “repelling [*Verwehrung*]” or “refusal [*Absage*]” of limit, a designation that recalls the nature of the nothing, as described in the inaugural lecture. But he is also clear that his reading of ἄπειρον needs to be distinguished from the mere *lack* of limit, the ontic idea of infinite time or space, or of ‘endlessness’ in the sense of empty indeterminateness. Instead, the grammatically privative ‘α’ prefix, this ‘not’, “has in no way the character of something ‘negative.’” (GA51: 111-12/96). For paradoxically, the ‘not’ makes possible an unbounded richness. Thus, ἄπειρον is also the “*Über-fluß*”, the excessive “superabundance”

¹³ There is nothing ‘kenotic’ about Heidegger’s account of the superabundance of Being. Being does not ‘empty itself’ into beings; it is rather the bottomless fount of all stepping forth into appearance. Heidegger’s Anaximander thinks ἄπειρον and not κενος. He is much closer to Plotinus than Paul.

(GA35: 29/24) or “overfullness [*Überfülle*]” (GA35: 219/171) that is the ἀρχή of all things.¹⁴ To recall Heidegger’s terminology from 1928, it might be suggested that the ἄπειρον is the “*nihil originarium*”; it is the nothing that is the “*origio*” (the ἀρχή) of all beings in their limited presencing within the world.

The symbol of light/dark, day/night, ἀ-λήθεια/ λήθη also plays out prominently in Heidegger’s account.¹⁵ The “stepping forth” of the being is understood as its “*com[ing] into the light of day*” (GA35: 24/20), and to recede is to move back into the darkness, the ἄπειρον. The beings that emerge into the light of appearance in their intelligible forms granted by their contours, come forth from out of the radiant darkness of the ἀρχή. And it is that also to which they return when the uncovering light of the privative α- of ἀ-λήθεια is dimmed in the return of λήθη.¹⁶

Of course, Heidegger is clear that this dark unlimited ground of all beings, this superabundant no-thing, is to be understood as Being itself. The abyssal nothing “yawn[s] open if we think deeply into Anaximander’s pronouncement” (GA35: 27/22). Yet this “ἀρχή pertains to being [*Sein*], and indeed so essentially that as ἀρχή it constitutes being itself [*das Sein selbst ausmacht*]” (GA51: 110/94).¹⁷ As early as 1932, then, we see the fruits of an extraordinary

¹⁴ Of course, Heidegger does not miss the opportunity here to point out the parallel between ἄπειρον and ἀ-λήθεια in their mutually and paradoxically privative renderings. “[W]hen we think more inceptively into the inception, the question arises: Is there not an even more incipient relationship between the privative essence of being as ἄπειρον and the privative essence of truth as ἀ-λήθεια? Does not an essential unity of being and truth, still uninvestigated, announce itself here? (GA51: 112/96).

¹⁵ See: “For while the day shows itself, the light—brightness—appears; and precisely this appearing light first lets appear all other beings . . . As the day recedes, giving way to the night, it in a certain way takes the appearing things along with it and cedes sovereignty to the night which conceals everything” (GA35: 23-24/19). Or more strikingly still: “When day gives way to night and darkness falls over things, then contours and delineated colors disappear, the limits of things become indistinct and fade away, things lose their substantiality and individuality—everything is concealed in the gaping void (χάος) of darkness. Disappearance is accordingly a stepping-back out of the possession of contours into contourlessness.” (GA35: 25/20)

¹⁶ Without pushing the analogy too far, it is almost impossible to miss the echoes here of Plato’s famous analogy of the sun in the Πολιτεία. Viz: The sun is “the one whose light causes our sight to see in the best way and the visible things to be seen”. For sight (understanding) is not the sun. Nor is it the eye. It is rather “the cause of sight”, for the eye “receives from the sun the power it has, just like an influx from an overflowing treasury”. Returning to Heidegger, the world worlds, we might say (and thus the light of understanding is possible for human Dasein), only insofar as beings come forward in the light of Being. But this light (ἀ-λήθεια) is the gift of the dark ἀρχή (λήθη).

¹⁷ Especially In *Grundbegriffe*, Heidegger is insistent on this point. “So the repelling of limit within presencing shows itself to be the enjoinder of the authentic being of beings” (GA51: 115/98). “This enjoinder as repelling is being itself” (GA51: 115-16/99). “For somehow being is what presences, and both the names ἀρχή and ἄπειρον name exactly this” (GA51: 116/99). “The inception is the essence of presencing as enjoinder of the presencing of what presences in each case: being itself. The fragment of Anaximander says being” (GA51: 117/100-101).

development in Heideggerian thought according to which what was a relatively minor thread in the existential analytic comes to full bloom:

We must now no longer be content with the introductory characterization according to which Being is appearance. That is not wrong but is insufficient; the essence of Being is to be understood on the basis of the ἄπειρον. (GA35: 31/25)

The characterisation of Being as appearance is insufficient because it focuses only on Being in its positive sense, and fails to think through what makes this positivity possible: the dark unlimited nothingness of Being. By 1941 Heidegger is even more insistent on this point: “*Being itself 'is' concealment [Das Sein selbst 'ist' Verbergung]*” (GA51: 60/51), for “Being everywhere turns out to be the non-ground [*Ab-grund*]” (GA51: 63/53).¹⁸

In the 1946 Anaximander essay in *Holzwege*, Heidegger repeats the line, mantra like: “By revealing itself in beings, Being withdraws” (GA5: 337/253-54). This leads him to describe the *Seinsvergessenheit* as “the ἐποχή of Being” (GA5: 337/254). Of course, insofar as Being shows itself at all beyond this ἐποχή, it is only ever in the Being of *beings*. It is not simply that Being withdraws (nihilating itself, rendering us ‘oblivious’ to it), but that it simultaneously also darkly reveals itself in the very beings whose presencing it grants.¹⁹

5. Conclusion: Thinking the Dark Luminosity of the Nothing

What is the most appropriate *Stimmung* in the face of such thinking about this unlimited ἀρχή in its dark luminosity? In places Heidegger emphasises the inevitability of a strong sense of uncanniness, even horror: the nothing that “overwhelms” and “oppresses” Dasein, inducing “wonder” at the “total strangeness of beings”, as he put it in 1929. He even quotes Hölderlin’s

¹⁸ Further, “Being is not only self-concealing, but is silent” (GA51: 64/54); it is the “essential fullness [*Wesensfülle*]” that is also “like the fleeting shadow of a cloud floating over the land of beings, without ... leaving behind any trace” (GA51: 70/58).

¹⁹ Perhaps Heidegger’s clearest statement of this paradox comes in the closing lines of his 1938 essay, *Die Zeit des Weltbildes*, also published in *Holzwege*: “Everyday opinion sees in the shadow merely the absence of light, if not its complete denial. But, in truth, the shadow is the manifest, though impenetrable, testimony of hidden illumination. Conceiving of the shadow this way, we experience the incalculable as that which escapes representation, yet is manifest in beings and points to the hidden Being [*Sein*] ... Conceived from out of metaphysics ... the hidden essence of Being [*verborgene Wesen des Seins*], the refusal [*Verweigerung*], reveals itself first of all as the absolute non-being [*Nicht-Seiende*], as the nothing. But the nothing, as the nothing of beings, is the keenest opponent of mere negating. The nothing is never nothing, and neither is it a something in the sense of an object; it is Being itself” (GA5: 112-13/85).

expression of the oppressiveness of the nothing, which “assail[s]” us, “yawn[ing] around us like an abyss” (GA51: 74/62). The nothingness of Being is such a threat because humans live and thrive within the light of ἀλήθεια.

Yet Heidegger nonetheless calls for a “readiness for anxiety”: the “courage” to listen to “the voice of Being” through which the horror of the nothing is transformed into an attunement that is appropriate to the experience of “the wonder of all wonders: *that beings are* ... For close by essential anxiety as the horror of the abyss, dwells awe” (GA9: 307/234). There is a renewed sense of the freedom of thinking here that overcomes the oppression of the horror of the abyss.

When all is said and done, Heidegger’s many reflections on lethic Being says very little of a positive nature about Being as such, in its intimate self-seclusion. But when he does, there is an invariably rhapsodic tone that emphasises overflowing richness. Long ago, Bill Richardson captured this sense perfectly:

As for Being ‘itself’, the λήθη that is mystery, what is to be said of it now? It is Wealth, Treasure, a hidden Fullness. It is the inexhaustible Wellspring – ineffable! – the Simple, the All, the Only, the One. Beyond this, we dare not say anything about Being ‘itself’ at all ; we must simply leave it without name.²⁰

Of such ‘Holy’ superabundant richness, Heidegger points to what he sees as the kinship between essential thinking and thanking (*Denken/ Danken*). A striking ‘piety’ is evident in his vision of the human vocation – perhaps the fullest expression of human freedom – to courageously and thankfully think the lethic over-full nothingness of Being:

In sacrifice there occurs [*ereignet sich*] the concealed thanks that alone pays homage to the grace that being has bestowed upon the human essence in thinking (GA9: 310/236).

²⁰ Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, 640.

Heidegger on No-thing and the Principle of Non-contradiction: Onto-logical Consequences on *Dasein*'s Thrownness and its Freedom

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ABSTRACT

Heidegger's 1929 lecture on Nothing is usually considered as a critique of logic and, more generally, of the sciences that mainly rely on it. However, it can also be interpreted as a strong attempt to overcome Western metaphysics, i.e., the metaphysics of *Anwesenheit*, as well as a specific interpretation of the principle of non-contradiction on which this metaphysical perspective is grounded. In this new particular philosophical framework proposed by Heidegger, *Dasein*'s thrownness finds its proper space — the space of *Dasein*'s freedom. In my paper, I will argue that Heidegger's proposal, more than just a critique of logic, is a call to re-think some fundamental topics of philosophy and, above all, is a call to be attentive to what *is*. Surprisingly, this fundamental attention is also the element that discloses *Dasein*'s thrownness, making possible its freedom. This latter, then, assumes in Heidegger's thought a very different character from its usual understanding: it is not recognised as a completely absolute possibility of action, i.e., untied from constraints, but rather an attuned response to Being.

Key words: Heidegger, Aristotle, Ontology, Principle of Non-Contradiction, Thrownness.

Restraint is the basic disposition of the relation to Being[...].

Only one who throws himself into the all-consuming fire of the questioning has the right to say more of the basic disposition than its allusive name. Yet once he has wrested for himself this right, he will not employ it but will keep silent.

M. Heidegger¹

¹ See Rojcewicz, Richard, Schuwer André, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected "Problems" of "Logic,"* Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994, pp. 3 - 4: "The task of this brief preliminary interpretation of the essence of philosophy will simply be to attune our questioning attitude to the right basic disposition or, to put it more prudently, to allow this basic disposition a first resonance. But, then, philosophy, the most rigorous work of abstract thought, and—disposition? Can these two really go together, philosophy and disposition? To be sure; for precisely when, and because, philosophy is the most rigorous thinking in the pure dispassion, it originates from and remains within a very high disposition. Pure dispassion is not nothing, certainly not the absence of disposition, and not the sheer coldness of the stark concept. On the contrary, the pure dispassion of thought is at the bottom only the most rigorous maintenance of the highest disposition, the one open to the uniquely uncanny fact: that there are beings, rather than not. If we had to say something immediately about this basic disposition of philosophy, i.e., of future philosophy, we might call it «restraint» [Verhaltenheit]. [...] Restraint is the basic disposition of the relation to Being, and in it the concealment of the essence of Being becomes what is most worthy of questioning. Only one who throws himself into the all-consuming fire of the questioning has the right to say more of the basic disposition than its allusive name. Yet once he has wrested for himself this right, he will not employ it but will keep silent. For all the more reason, the basic disposition should never become an object of mere talk, for example in the popular and rash claim that what we are now teaching is a philosophy of restraint" (translator's emphasis); Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 45, Grundfragen der*

In 1929, on the occasion of his return to Freiburg, having assumed Husserl's position, Heidegger held a public lecture in which the main topic he examined was 'Nothing' [*das Nichts*]. And it was precisely during this lecture that he expressed some statements regarding logic which were considered to be a strong critique of it and of other scientific disciplines mainly relying on logical reasoning. In effect, in articulating the main differences among the academic subjects, Heidegger notices that science never addresses *das Nichts*, i.e., the Nothing, preferring to focus only on *Seiende*, beings. He claims:

Science wants to know nothing about the nothing. But even so it is certain that when science tries to express its own proper essence it calls upon the nothing for help. It has recourse to what it rejects.²

Science, in so far as it is concerned with things, that is to say with objects, is not willing to investigate Nothing. However, it is precisely this No-thing that is the condition for things to come to appearance, to present themselves. Nothing is what³ lets things be. Therefore science finds itself in the curious position of having recourse to something not only unconsidered, but to something

Philosophie. Ausgewählte »Probleme« der »Logik,« Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1984, pp. 1 - 2: "Diese kurze Vordeutung auf das Wesen der Philosophie hat lediglich die Aufgabe, unsere fragende Haltung auf die rechte Grundstimmung abzustimmen oder, vorsichtiger gesprochen, diese Grundstimmung zu einem ersten Anklang zu bringen. Doch: Philosophie, die strengste denkerische Arbeit des Begriffes, und — Stimmung? Wie geht beides zusammen, Philosophie und Stimmung? Allerdings; denn gerade wenn und weil die Philosophie das härteste Denken aus der reinsten Nüchternheit bleibt, entspringt sie aus und verweilt sie in ihrer höchsten Stimmung. Reine Nüchternheit ist ja nicht nichts, gar nicht das Fehlen der Stimmung, auch nicht die bloße Kälte des starren Begriffes, sondern die reine Nüchternheit des Denkens ist im Grunde nur das strengste Ansichhalten der höchsten Stimmung, jener nämlich, die sich geöffnet hat den ihnen einzigen Ugeheuren: daß Seiendes ist und nicht vielmehr nicht ist. Diese Grundstimmung der Philosophie, d. h. der künftigen Philosophie, nennen wir, wenn davon überhaupt unmittelbar etwas gesagt werden darf: die *Verhaltenheit*. [...] Die *Verhaltenheit* ist die Grundstimmung des Bezuges zum Seyn, in welchem Bezug die Verborgenheit des Wesen des Seyns das Fragwürdigste wird. Nur wer sich in das verzehrende Feuer des Fragens nach diesem Fragwürdigsten stürzt, hat ein Recht, von dieser Grundstimmung mehr als nur dies hinweisende Wort zu sagen. Wenn er dieses Recht errungen hat, wird er es nicht gebrauchen, sondern schweigen. Niemals aber darf die angezeigte Grundstimmung der Gegenstand eines Geredes werden, etwa nach jener beliebten und schnellfertigen Art, die jetzt feststellt, hier werde eine Philosophie der *Verhaltenheit* gelehrt" [author's emphasis].

I would linger and emphasize the common root of the word *Verhaltenheit*, employed by Heidegger in this context, and the word *Verhältnis*, often used by Heidegger while speaking about the relation Being is. Both these terms entail a staying together, being together. Put differently: a gathering.

² McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 84; In German, Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2004³, p. 106: "Die Wissenschaft will vom Nichts nichts wissen. aber ebenso gewiß bleibt bestehen: dort, wo sie ihr eigenes Wesen auszusprechen versucht, ruft sie das Nichts zu Hilfe. Was sie verwirft, nimmt sie in Anspruch."

³ I am aware of the impossibility to properly address Being or Nothing with the term "what," actually this is the exact point of my proposal. However, given the limits of language, in the following pages it will be sometimes necessary to do so.

that it seems to reject and that, moreover, is actually the initial source of its very essence. So, if not the scientist, who is going to seek this Nothing? It is, Heidegger argues, the aim of the philosopher, since Being, the philosopher's concern, is *not* a being, namely *Nicht-Seiende*. In Heidegger's words:

“For the nothing is the negation of the totality of beings; it is nonbeing pure and simple.”⁴

What is this “nonbeing pure and simple”? How can it be the origin of beings? Being is No-thing, so it cannot be the object of investigation for science, whose attention is devoted to a deep analysis of things and their components — science's search for the atomic particles of the matter, for instance. Rather, Nothing is the principal issue of research for philosophy, which listens and pays attention to what is *in-between*, what *co-involves*, said differently, philosophy focuses on the source of what gives meaning to beings. Continuing his reasoning, Heidegger states that, differently from common opinion, Nothing can not be considered as the “indeterminate opposite” to Being, but, instead, it represents the “belonging to the being of beings.”⁵ Nothing is not in opposition to Being, i.e., it is not the opposite of a presence [*Anwesenheit*]. On the contrary, it “belongs” to the being of beings itself, namely it is something among things but not determinable as *a* thing. Affirming this, Heidegger clearly claims that Nothing is part of Being itself. In his attentive study about this specific topic, Thomas Fay tries to explain Heidegger's perspective by claiming that the German thinker, in order “to forestall any possible confusion of Being with the beings with which science is concerned, [he] will speak of this Being which is not-a-being as the Nothing (*das Nichts*).”⁶ Heidegger, then, employing a term completely extraneous to sciences, wants to clarify what, according to his perspective, is Being. Heidegger's proposal is an attempt of pure philosophizing, which should not be confused with mere logical reasoning. Or, at least, not for how logic is usually intended.

Therefore, in Fay's opinion, Heidegger articulated this entire argument about *Nichts* with the purpose to support his main thesis about the ontological difference and so to avoid the possible

⁴ McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., p. 85: “The nothing does not remain the indeterminate opposite of beings but unveils itself as belonging to the being of beings”; in German, Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., pp. 107 - 108: “Denn das Nicht ist die Verneinung der Allheit des Seienden, das schlechthin Nicht-Seiende.”

⁵ *Ibi*, p. 94. In German, Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 120: “Das Nichts bleibt nicht das Gegenüber für das Seiende, sondern es enthüllt sich als zugehörig zum Sein des Seienden.”

⁶ Fay, Thomas A., *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977, p. 2.

confusion between Being and beings. Speaking of Nothing instead of Being is not but a stratagem with which Heidegger addresses science, presenting his ontological position, using this term that science might refuse but that, at the same time, he shows to be etymologically related to what science is mainly concerned with, namely things. Pointing out one of the possible consequences of such assumptions, Fay adds:

[...] one might reasonably object, is it not a manifest piece of nonsense and a blatant violation of all of the rules of logic to attempt to treat of «the Nothing,» since the very attempt to treat of it must somehow presuppose that it *is*? (EM pp. 4 e 10) It would seem that the principle of contradiction, which is the cornerstone of logic, is at stake here, and indeed logic itself (WM, p. 28)⁷.

Fay, through his brilliant insight, connects Heidegger's reasoning on Nothing with one of the most important themes in philosophy, especially in logic: the principle of non-contradiction. This principle, described by Aristotle in the fourth book of his *Metaphysics*, claims that:

It is not possible for the same thing at the same time both to belong and not belong to the same thing in the same respect.⁸

Formulated in this fashion, the principle of non-contradiction is usually conceived as the essential element for any assertion or assumption, it is to say, as the fundamental law of logic: it cannot be said that A and non A coexist. Hence, every sentence would be a determination suitable for judgement and, once verified its truth, universally valid, where “universally” means independently by its temporal disposition. The principle of non-contradiction has, in this reading, an epistemic nature that aims to grasp into sentences the absolute *εἶδος* of a thing so to achieve a solid knowledge of this latter. Therefore, this interpretation of the principle of non-contradiction supports a perspective that Heidegger would call “metaphysical,” i.e., focused on beings, on their *Anwesenheit*, and then not attentive to Being itself. Science grounds its knowledge on entities that, from a logical point of view, are perfectly described by the principle of non-contradiction — things disconnected from everything else. However, is this the only way in which we shall consider these lines? In other words, is the principle of non-contradiction only understandable according to an epistemological account? Or, maybe, as for example Claudia Baracchi suggests, does this principle

⁷ *Ibidem* (author's emphasis).

⁸ Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Santa Fe: Green Lion Press, 1999, p. 59 (1005b19 - 21). Sachs adds, in a footnote, what follows, *ibidem*: “The axioms about which this chapter speaks are sometimes called «laws of thought.» This formulation already makes it clear that Aristotle considers them principles that govern being rather than thinking.”

have something to say about ontology, namely about Being? In other words: has this principle only a prescriptive relevance or rather a descriptive one? Baracchi states:

[...] it is essential to observe that the various formulations of the so called principle of non-contradiction inevitably, and with great insistence, include the spatio-temporal specification: A cannot be and not be *at the same time and in the same respect*. The Aristotelian formulations never avoid this constrain [*vincolo*]. It is only because of the suppression of these spatio-temporal parameters that the principle becomes prescriptive and restrictive: the abstract assertion of the impossibility of A and non A.⁹

As a consequence, considered in its complete formulation, “the principle is simply *descriptive*.”¹⁰ In this sense, Baracchi continues, Aristotle’s axiom is not a prohibition of contradiction, but rather it confirms and explains the nature of becoming.¹¹ In other words,

[f]ar from prohibiting contradiction, the principle shows that there is no contradiction in the spatio-temporal flow of being and not being [...].¹²

The principle of non-contradiction, then, is about the “phenomenal determinacy,”¹³ a determinacy of discernment and of sense,¹⁴ “of *Being as becoming*.”¹⁵

In the aforementioned quote, Fay sees a connection through which Heidegger, even though not explicitly, wants to lead us, considering a different interpretation of the fundamental, unavoidable, basic starting point not only for every kind of knowledge but for each possible sentence. What if these lines, instead of describing the laws of our thought, were of course about *λόγος*, but not only our own *λόγος*, rather the *λόγος* of things, the *Λόγος* of what is? What if, instead of a sterile critique of logic, Heidegger suggests us to see a different interpretation of the principle of non-contradiction? And, moreover, what are the consequences for *Dasein*’s condition in such a perspective? In the lessons dedicated to Heraclitus collected under the title *Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, Heidegger states:

Λέγειν properly means the laying-down and laying-before which gathers itself and others.¹⁶

⁹ Baracchi, Claudia, “Rizomi Greci. Antichi Tracciati, Sentieri Geo-Psichici, Vie di Terra e di Cielo tra Oriente e Occidente,” in Piero Coppo and Stefania Consigliere (eds.) *Rizomi Greci*, Paderno Dugnano: Edizioni colibri, 2014, p. 156 (my translation, author’s emphasis).

¹⁰ *Ibidem* (my translation, author’s emphasis).

¹¹ *Ibi*, p. 158 (my translation).

¹² *Ibidem* (my translation).

¹³ *Ibidem* (my translation).

¹⁴ *Ibidem* (my translation).

¹⁵ *Ibidem* (my translation, author’s emphasis).

¹⁶ Krell, David F., Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, New York: Harper and Row Editions, 1984, p. 60.

Hence, if *λόγος*, whose root has to be traced to the verb *λέγειν*, etymologically recalls a “laying-before” that “gathers itself and others,” the principle that drives our understanding of it can not be only fixed on one of these aspects, rather it should speak the *meaningful relation* that presents itself within a spatio-temporal disposition. Moreover, the same principle describes how what is *is* and presents itself, displayed within a meaningful horizon that gathers all beings and yet is not a being, not a thing.

It is No-thing.

Given the attention that science specifically dedicates to things, and only to them, that is to say to objects considered by themselves, the consequent modality of scientific knowledge shall be based on a certain interpretation of the principle of non-contradiction. This latter, then, turns out to be the logical counterpart of the metaphysics of science, or, more precisely, of the metaphysics of science that reads this principle according to a prescriptive indication. In fact, both of them appear to share the same object of interest: things, that is, beings. Consequently any other attempt to propose a philosophical investigation about Nothing, that is to say, about what allows things to be, would overcome logic, or, more precisely, logic for how it has been conceived in the history of Western metaphysics. Further, Heidegger is fully aware of this. In other words, Heidegger knows, and this is actually one of his main concerns in his work, that Western metaphysics arises when the identification between being's presence and Being is assumed and not questioned. In this philosophical and logical framework, any problem about Nothing is simply considered nonsense. Hence, it is not even taken into consideration.

Critically engaging with science means critically engage with logic, and, even more precisely, with certain interpretations of the principle of non-contradiction. Here, I see the Heideggerian project revealing its most radical, and at the same time its most original, philosophical aspect: instead of following a common tendency in philosophy, a trend initiated in Modernity, Heidegger proposes a new path. Philosophy has looked at science as an attainable model, not only because of the way scientific knowledge expresses itself in a clear and distinct language, but also because of the evident success of such an approach. Philosophy ceased to be philosophy and, instead, seemed to transform itself due to its desire to be more like science. This in turn lead philosophy to become less attentive to the multiple shades of reality, to its constant becoming, and more directed toward a productive transformation of it. No longer an observance,

a *listening*,¹⁷ to the various connections among the multiple aspects of reality and their intersections, philosophy became an increasingly laboured analysis that, by continuing to subdivide every object of interest and to look for the smallest fundamental element, missed the vital breath of the ungraspable source. We must credit Heidegger with bringing forth arguments to motivate philosophy as that love for wisdom that does not mean meticulously knowing each aspect of each thing, but rather being able to pay attention to nothing, to letting everything be, and being able to draw our attention to that.

Although it may appear naive, this is to be the task of philosophy, according to Heidegger's thought. And I would add that such a seemingly simple task is nonetheless not unsophisticated at all, since it invites us to constantly pay attention to *what* surrounds us and to *how* those elements we address as reality gather together and change, while, however, some aspects seem to remain constant. How could such attentive awareness be described as effortless, when it is the very struggle of the human condition that demonstrably requires it? Is it not rigor that is demanded for a permanent standing, between earth and sky, among others?¹⁸

Furthermore, Heidegger's account on Nothing demonstrates to have important consequences for *Dasein*'s being-in-the-world. *Dasein*'s situated and contextualized condition, i.e., its thrownness,¹⁹ describes the way in which *Dasein* stands within what *is*. This entails that *Dasein*'s projectuality cannot avoid the continuous attentiveness to the becoming of Being. Said differently, Heidegger's account on logic and on Nothing expresses, even if in an implicit way, a necessary posture²⁰ of *Dasein*, whose free agency unfolds between the already existing setting and the togetherness with other *Daseins*. All these aspects are what contributes to build the meaningful world we live in. Here, in fact, in *Dasein*'s being-in-the-world with others, the conceptuality, it is

¹⁷ Cfr. Assaiante, Julia Goesser, Montgomery, Shane Ewegen, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Heraclitus. The Inception of Occidental Thinking and Logic: Heraclitus's Doctrine of the Logos*, London - New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.

¹⁸ Cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, *Amicizia*, Milano: Ugo Mursia Editore, 2016, pp. 131 - 132.

¹⁹ Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, Oxford: Blackwell Publisher Ltd, 1962, p. 174 and following: "This characteristic of *Dasein*'s Being —this 'that it is'—is veiled in its «whence» and «whither», yet disclosed in itself all the more unveiledly; we call it the «thrownness» of this entity into its «there»; indeed, it is thrown in such a way that, as Being-in-the-world, it is «there». The expression «thrownness» is meant to suggest the *facticity of its being delivered over.*" [author's emphasis].

²⁰ For a better understanding of the use of this term, see Claudia Baracchi's works.

to say the theoretical expression of meaning that gives an interpretative framework and drives its agency, arises.²¹ In his 1924 summer course, Heidegger states:

The conceptuality meant in the basic concepts is a concretely giving basic experience, not a theoretical grasping of the matter. That which is experience is addressed to something. What is thus experienced and posited in this regard becomes explicit and becomes vital in the address.²²

If conceptuality, possible given that the human being is defined as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον,²³ is “a concretely giving basic experience,” it means that conceptuality orientates and influences *Dasein*’s life. In the meantime, because of the same definition, *Dasein* is able to articulate concepts that “become vital” with and because of its interaction with others, i.e., the community that emerges around a shared language.²⁴ Sharing a language is more than just a common feature: sharing a language is sharing a world of significance. Moreover, at this stage of Heidegger’s thought, the accent of this significance is attributed to *Dasein* itself, it is to say to the being-there of the human being recognised in a particular, unique relation with Being. As a consequence, *Dasein*’s freedom acts in the narrow but rich space of a given meaningfully orientated horizon where *Dasein* can significantly contribute to enrich its surrounding community, its surrounding world. In order to move in such a context in the most appropriate, or even better, *attuned* way, it is fundamental for *Dasein* to be aware of all the components that contribute in this creative task.²⁵ In effect, that in which *Dasein* finds itself, seems to be a very well articulated hermeneutical circle.

²¹ Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009, pp. 14-15.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ This definition is provided by Aristotle in *Politics*, see Rackham, Harris, (trans.) *Aristotle. Politics*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1944², p. 8: “ἐκ τούτων οὖν φανερόν ὅτι τῶν φύσει ἢ πόλις ἐστὶ, καὶ ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῷον” (1253a2 - 4).

²⁴ Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 16: “The expressed «lies fixed,» is a *κείμενον*. The *κείμενα ὀνόματα*, precisely as *κείμενα*, as «fixed,» are available to others; they are *κοινά*, they belong to each. When a word is expressed, it no longer belongs to me, and thus language is something that belongs to everyone; specifically, in such a way that a fundamental possibility of life itself is vitally given in precisely this common possession. Often the expressed is still only spoken — consumed in mere words without an explicit relationship to the matters spoken about. Therein lies an intelligibility that is common to all. In growing into a language, I grow into an intelligibility of the world, of language, that I have from out of myself insofar as I live in language. A common intelligibility is given, which has a peculiar character of averageness. It no longer has the character of belonging to an individual. It is worn out, used, used up. Everything expressed harbors the possibility of being used up, of being shoved into the common intelligibility.”

²⁵ For a more detailed and articulated analysis of the topic, especially in Heidegger’s later works, see Vallega-Neu, Daniela, *Heidegger’s Poietic Writings: From Contributions to Philosophy to The Event*, Indiana University Press, 2018.

Considering again Heidegger's reading of logic, so to deepen the understanding of his ontological position, in the 1929 lecture initially addressed he proceeds with the following words:

[...] the Nothing is the origin of negation, not vice versa. If the power of the intellect in the field of inquiry into nothing and into being is thus shattered, then the destiny of the reign of «logic» in philosophy is thereby decided. The idea of «logic» itself disintegrates in the turbulence of a more originary questioning.²⁶

Given its crucial ontological role, it is the case that Nothing is the very starting point for negation rather than the contrary. But Nothing cannot be investigated by a logic that calls itself scientific, due to its exclusive attention to things. As a consequence, following these premises, a logic so conceived cannot inform philosophy. Fay highlights that in this passage the world “logic” is presented between quotation marks, suggesting that Heidegger considers the term in a particular sense,²⁷ that is to say that Heidegger addresses his criticism to a certain way of considering logic in its unquestioned supremacy — this logic based on an epistemic and prescriptive interpretation of the principle of non-contradiction. In Heidegger's opinion, it is time to raise a “more primordial questioning” regarding logic, because consequently what follows is an urgent questioning of Being. Further, it is the case that in this new way logic would not “exhaust all of the possibility of thought.”²⁸ Fay, commenting on Heidegger's claim, attests:

By the very fact that the rules of logic preclude even the possibility of a meaningful questioning about the Nothing, logic's fate has been decided.²⁹

²⁶ McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., p. 92; in German, Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 117: “[...] das Nichts ist der Ursprung der Verneinung, nicht umgekehrt. Wenn so die Macht des Verstandes im Felde der Fragen nach dem Nichts und dem Sein gebrochen wird, dann entscheidet sich damit auch das Schicksal der Herrschaft der »Logik« innerhalb der Philosophie. Die Idee der »Logik« selbst löst sich auf im Wirbel eines ursprünglicheren Fragens”.. Here Fay's translation of the same passage, Fay, Thomas A., “Heidegger and Formalization,” in *Phenomenology and the Formal Sciences*, T. M. Seebohm, D. Føllesdal and J. N. Mohanty (eds.), Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media B.V., 1991, p. 11 and Fay, Thomas A., Heidegger, *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, cit., p. 2: “[...] the Nothing is the source of negation and not the other way around. If this breaks the might of understanding in the field of questioning into the Nothing and Being, then the fate of the dominance of «logic» in philosophy is also decided. The very idea of «logic» disintegrates in the whirl of a more primordial questioning”.

²⁷ Fay, Thomas A., “Heidegger and Formalization,” cit., p. 11: “Logic, one should be careful to note, is placed in quotation marks in the text, and so is used in a special sense. The «idea of logic» which is «dissolved» by a more original manner of questioning is to be understood as a reductionist logician which totally dominates all philosophic thinking.”

²⁸ *Ibi*, p. 12.

²⁹ Fay, Thomas A., Heidegger, *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, cit., p. 3.

Once again, if logic considers any potential question about nothing futile, its destiny will consequently derive from this. Hence, even the way in which *Dasein*'s freedom is considerate changes.

With this analysis of the strict connection between logic and Being that Heidegger considers, it is now possible to read through the lines of the 1929 lesson and to try to deduce a different reading of them, thanks to a different interpretation of the principle of non-contradiction as well. Moreover, we are able to see what consequences are entailed for *Dasein*'s condition. Here, Heidegger is not referring to logic in order to show its unsuitability compared to philosophy, but rather to point out its limits and, above all, to (re)direct logic to its ontological source. Indeed, if we consider Being in its nothingness and, following the reasoning that Heidegger is proposing in this context, if we recognize that science is concerned only with things, then it is possible to see that the basic criteria for logic should not be the application of formal rules or an epistemological consideration of the principle of non-contradiction. Rather, this basic criteria is revealed to be Nothing, No-thing, namely Being — that which displays and (un)conceals itself through meaningful relations. Nothing, that which is incomprehensible for logic, is its principle. Nothing, which is impossible to fully express and can only be mentioned in sentences, is the starting point for any sentence. Nothing happens, Nothing *is* — and this is the onto-logical root for *any* thing. Here, *Dasein*'s freedom finds its sense.

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Lask, Heidegger, and Nishida: From Meaning as Object to Horizon and Place

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It has been said that Emil Lask (1875-1915) of the Southwest School of Neo-Kantianism forms a bridge from Kant to phenomenology. This is apparent when one notices Husserl's influence on him and in turn his profound influence upon the young Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). Taking the significance of Laskian ideas for Nishida Kitarō (西田幾多郎) (1870-1945) as he was groping for a way to overcome Kantian dualism, one could argue as well that Lask provides the bridge from Kant to Kyoto School philosophy. Heidegger and Nishida, each independently, took Lask's anti-subjectivist deconstruction of Neo-Kantian dualism in parallel but distinct directions, deepening Lask's conception of a pre-theoretical, pre-thematic, pre-judicative object-paradigm (*gegenständliches Urbild*) and the difference and relationship within that paradigm between category and material. While appreciating Lask's anti-subjectivism in his response to the charge of psychologism directed at transcendental philosophy, each moved in a distinct direction beyond Lask's object-centrism. In the case of Heidegger, Lask's sense of lived meaning (*Sinn*) and "validity" (*Geltung*) is deepened to signify the phenomenological "horizon" (*Horizont*) that he explicates in his 1927 *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*) in terms of the temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) of human existence, providing the meaning of beings. In the case of Nishida, he assimilates the Laskian notion of a pre-judicatively lived and experienced category to his notion of a pre-objective "predicate" (*jutsugo* 述語) in his 1926 essay, *Basho* ("Place"), deepened in significance as indicative of a "place" (*basho* 場所) wherein beings, objects, or grammatical subjects are situated. For Nishida, place in its deepest sense is the place of nothing (*mu no basho* 無の場所); for Heidegger time as horizon is the sense or meaning of being (*Sinn des Seins*). Both notions indicate a pre-theoretical and lived sense of meaning or truth. Both also come to identify that lived meaning or network of meanings with the "world" (*Welt, sekai* 世界) as the contextual ground for the emergence of objects or beings in general. Here I seek to bring Heidegger and Nishida into dialogue and look at their possible convergences and divergences via Emil Lask as a common source of influence and catalyst for the development of their distinctive thinking.

Emil Lask:

Emil Lask (1875-1915) may have been the most original member of the Baden/Southwest School of Neo-Kantianism. He left two major works articulating his unique philosophical logic:¹ *Die Logik der Philosophie und die Kategorienlehre* (*The Logic of Philosophy and the Doctrine of the Categories*) (1911) and *Die Lehre vom Urteil* (*The Doctrine of Judgment*) (1912).

Lask attempted to ground transcendental logic in a realm of transcendental validity independent of the cognizing subject. He criticized Kant for leaving out of his logical investigations the conditions for transcendental critique itself, the conditions for knowing the conditions of knowledge. Lask proposed that the categories themselves are cognized as valid forms.² The object of philosophical knowledge as such is intelligibility which logically precedes things. For categories to be objects of knowledge, they themselves must have categories—categories of categories or forms of forms. Inheriting the terminology of Hermann Lotze, Lask discusses these logical conditions in terms of validity (*Geltung*), often using its verbal form of *being-valid* (or “the valid,” *Gelten*, *Geltendes*). What are valid are forms that pertain to their material, whereby their content has meaning.

Validity entails a transcendental realm where categories of meaning, sense, value, and so on belong³ independently of our judicative acts. The valid category as form must always refer to that which is *beyond* itself, requiring fulfillment in its material,⁴ as valid *pertaining to...* (*Hingelten*). Form requires its material but the material content is clothed (*umkleidet*),

¹ He regarded these as provisional. He did, however, begin to provide a more comprehensive treatment of his problematic in his late lectures and draft, *Zum System der Logik* (*Towards a System of Logic*) which comprises the third volume of his *Gesammelte Schriften* (*Collected Works*). See Karl Schulmann & Barry Smith, “Two Idealisms: Lask and Heidegger,” *Kant-Studien* 85, nr. 4 (1993), 448-66, 452; and Frederick Beiser, “Emil Lask and Kantianism,” *The Philosophical Forum* (2008), 283-95, 284. In the following, while I consulted the available translations along with the originals for works by Lask and Heidegger, and sometimes the translations for Nishida’s works, the translations given here are my own or modified.

² On this and the following, see Emil Lask’s “Announcement” of *The Logic of Philosophy and the Doctrine of Categories* (1910), trans. Arun Iyer, in *The Neo-Kantian Reader*, ed. Sebastian Luft (London: Routledge, 2015), 399-400.

³ GSII 26. References to Emil Lask’s two major works, *Die Logik der Philosophie und die Kategorienlehre* and *Die Lehre vom Urteil* are taken from Emil Lask, *Sämtliche Werke Zweiter Band* (Jena: Dietrich Scheglmann Reprintverlag, 2003). However pagination is from the older *Gesammelte Schriften Band II* (Tübingen, 1923) which in *Sämtliche Werke* appear in square brackets and is here identified as GSII.

⁴ GSII 32, 33, 63.

encompassed (*umgriffen*) by the form giving it meaningfulness (*Sinn*):⁵ “Form is indicative of matter and matter stands *in* form.”⁶ Alone, however, the material is unintelligible, alogical,⁷ logically impenetrable,⁸ brute facticity that limits reason, conception, cognition.⁹ As the logical wraps or clothes the alogical, they interpenetrate in primal relationship (*Urverhältnis*).¹⁰ He describes the material’s engagement by logical form in terms of “involvement” (*Bewandtnis*) that contextualizes the particular material in relation to other material.

Parallel to this, Lask, espouses two fundamental domains of objects: what *are valid* (*Geltende*) and what *are* (*Seiende*), the valid and beings. The valid are non-sensible but intelligible objects that need not exist.¹¹ On the other hand, a being is a spatio-temporal object that exists and can be sensed, but in itself not valid (*Nicht-Geltende*).¹² They belong to distinct categories: the domain category (*Gebietskategorie*) of being to which non-valid beings belong and the domain category of the valid to which valid categories belong. But *both* domain categories are valid. The domain category of being is *valid* as the logical form for beings.¹³ So being is not a being, it cannot *be*.¹⁴ This means there is a category of categories, a form of forms, allowing a category falling under another category as matter to become an object of knowledge. The category of the valid is the all-encompassing category of categories, “theoretical primal form” (*theoretische Urform*),¹⁵ while the category of being is one of those valid categories. In turn the domain categories become

⁵ GSII 34, 74, 75.

⁶ GSII 330.

⁷ GSII 36.

⁸ GSII 77.

⁹ GSII 58, 61, 65.

¹⁰ GSII 78, 394.

¹¹ GSII 6, 7.

¹² The distinction goes back to Lotze’s famous statement about the valid that “it is valid without having to exist” (*es gilt, ohne sein zu müssen*). E.g., see his *Logik* §316.

¹³ GSII 119.

¹⁴ GSII 31, 46, 47, 57.

¹⁵ GSII 72.

differentiated into more particular forms through “meaning-differentiation” (*Bedeutungsdifferenzierung*) by specific material. At the bottom end of the spectrum is primal matter (*Urmaterial*).¹⁶ Between primal matter and primal form are thus levels or tiers (*Stockwerke*) of form/matter unities.

Matter is given in our lived experience (*Erleben*) prior to judgment. We handle objects—not only beings but valid content—without thematizing them and as such they are “logically naked.”¹⁷ Lask describes this in terms of *Hingabe*—absorption or immersion—whereby we are “given-over” (*hingegen*) to the form, meaning, value.¹⁸ Absorbed within categories, we live through them as in contexts¹⁹ and so “live in truth” (*Leben in der Wahrheit*).²⁰ Truth as such, pre-cognitively experienced, is “non-artificial originary meaning” in contrast to cognized truth which is an artificially reproduced (*nachbildend*) meaning.²¹ The object as this a priori foundation is the paradigmatic meaning in contrast to the meaning constructed in judgments. A judgment in affirming or denying²² may or may not be correct vis-à-vis its object-paradigm (*gegenständliches Urbild*). Judgment therefore always implies a “fall” from the “lost paradise” of lived originary truth.²³ The realm of cognitive judgment then is a field of oppositions that can hit (*treffen*) or miss (*verfehlen*) its object while the transcendent realm of lived meanings is oppositionless

¹⁶ GSII 50.

¹⁷ GSII 74; Emil Lask, *Gesammelte Schriften* [*Collected Writings*] vol. 3, ed. Eugen Herrigel (Tübingen: Mohr, 1924), 110. This work is here identified as GSIII. On this see Theodore Kisiel, *Heidegger's Way of Thought: Critical and Interpretative Signposts* (NYC: Continuum, 2002), 105; and *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being & Time* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 27.

¹⁸ GSII 56, 85, 129, 132, 191, 196, 204, 205.

¹⁹ Kisiel compares Lask's understanding of the category that is lived with the context: “I live in the category as in a context.” Kisiel, *Heidegger's Way of Thought*, 103.

²⁰ GSII 86-87, 124-25, 191, 192.

²¹ Niels Guelberg *Taishō no ronri kara basho no ronri e: Emīru Rasuku to Nishida Kitarō* (「対象の論理から場所の論理へ—エミール・ラスクと西田幾多郎」; “From Object Logic to the Logic of Place: Emil Lask and Nishida Kitarō”) in *Bashoron no shujusō: Nishida tetsugaku o chūshin to shite* (『場所論の種々相—西田哲学を中心として』; *Various Forms of the Theory of Place: Focussing on Nishidian Philosophy*), ed. Kawanami Akira (Tokyo: Hokuju shuppan, 1997), 130-53, 143-44.

²² GSII 298.

²³ GSII 426.

(*gegensatzlos*) or trans-oppositional (*übergegensätzlich*).²⁴ Lask's underscoring of the transcendent-transcendental objectivity of meaning served as a clue for both Heidegger and Nishida but both found Lask's object-centrism to be insufficient.²⁵

Martin Heidegger:

We see the impact of Laskian concepts in Heidegger's works from his student days up to *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*). Rickert, his dissertation supervisor noted that Heidegger is "very much obligated to Lask's writings for his philosophical orientation as well as his philosophical terminology..."²⁶ As a student Heidegger reviewed Lask's *Logic of Philosophy* in a 1912 article, *Neuere Forschungen über Logik* ("Recent Research in Logic").²⁷ In his 1913-14 dissertation, *Die Lehre vom Urteil im Psychologismus* (*The Doctrine of Judgment in Psychologism*), Heidegger

²⁴ GSII 294, 297, 298, 387, 389ff.

²⁵ What is interesting is that in his latest and posthumous work, *Zur System der Philosophie* (*Towards a System of Philosophy*) (GSIII), which was never quite completed, Lask explains the act of judging and cognition as itself set in motion by the will to dominate and control. The will as such is an expression of life (*Leben*) or lived experience (*Erleben*), which ordinarily is pretheoretical and prejudicative. Prethematic life thus is already meaningful, filled with value (*Wert*) in our compartments or relations (GSIII 232). Life here seems to provide the framework for understanding his earlier doctrines of the categories and of judgment and how they relate. The theorizing or judging act on the other hand is life momentarily pausing, repressing itself, breaking up that experientially given pre-judicative holistic unity of meaningful being, object with valid content. It is life's suspension of its interaction with things for the sake of contemplation. Theory as this contemplation is just one way in which life expresses itself. By theorizing life mediates itself even while this very unfolding occurs through immediate lived experience itself (GSIII 219). Theory and the scientific way of viewing the world, including philosophy as "the most remote from life" (GSIII 286), are thus results of a "castrated and *blasé* sort of knowing" as opposed to absorption (*Hingabe*) (GSIII 240). And the Cartesian thinking substance is an abstraction constituted out of life through its self-abstention, a "fall out from the fullness of life" (GSIII 232). In that regard life is the ultimate pre-given horizon for both theoretical-cognitive and pre-theoretical practical experience. It seems to designate the process of interaction involving the subject and the world. (On this see Karl Schuhmann and Barry Smith, "Two Idealisms: Lask and Husserl," *Kant-Studien* 83. Jahrg. (1993), 448-66, 465.) His premature end however prevented Lask from working out this possible solution to how the semantic dualism between object and judgment is bridged. What is interesting is that both Heidegger and Nishida, in working out their own distinct philosophies, started with a similar sort of life-philosophy without having read—or so it seems—this posthumous work of Lask.

²⁶ Appendix IV of Thomas Sheehan, "Heidegger's *Lehrejahre*," John Sallis, G. Moneta, & J. Taminiaux, eds., *The Collegium Phaenomenologicum: The First Ten Years*, Phaenomenologica Vol. 105 (Dordrecht/Boston: Kluwer, 1988/1994), 118. See also Theodore Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger's *Being & Time**, 25; and Kisiel, "Heidegger—Lask—Fichte" in *Heidegger, German Idealism & Neo-Kantianism*, ed. Tom Rockmore (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2000), 239-70, 248.

²⁷ GA1 17-43. Heidegger, "Neure Forschungen über Logik" in *Literarische Rundschau für das katholische Deutschland*, 10 (October 1912), 465-72; 11 (November 1912), 517-24; 12 (December 1912), 565-70. It appears in GA1 and in Theodore Kisiel & Thomas Sheehan, eds., *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of His Early Occasional Writings, 1910-1927* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 31-44, as "Recent Research in Logic." Here GA1 identifies Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe Band 1: Frühe Schriften* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1978).

turns to Lotze's conception—but following Lask's reading—of validity (*Geltung*) and discovery of “that decisive expression in the treasury of our German language” that “beside an ‘it is [*das ist*],’ there is an ‘it holds [*das gilt; it is valid*]’”;²⁸ and that logical forms as “forms of reality” (*Wirklichkeitsform*) are not but are valid.²⁹

In his 1915-16 habilitation, *Die Kategorien- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus* (*Duns Scotus' Doctrine of Categories and Meaning*), he repeats Lask's call for a “philosophical logic,” stating that “[l]ogic itself requires categories of its own. There must be a logic of logic.”³⁰ He appropriates Lask's notion of being as a category,³¹ to examine the issue of being in general (*ens commune*) in medieval Scholasticism, stating that “[i]t is the function of form to give an object its being.”³² He appropriates here Lask's understanding that validity signifies the “involvement” (*Bewandtnis*) of material.³³ He links Lask's reflexive categories of identity and difference³⁴ to the medieval transcendental category of *unum* (one).³⁵ In the simplest tautology of *ens est* the verb *being* as categorial form is the subject-matter's involvement,³⁶ “even if it is only a matter of being identical with itself and different from something else.”³⁷ Being something (*Etwas-sein*) is the

²⁸ GA1 170.

²⁹ GA1 170.

³⁰ GA1 288.

³¹ GSII 46.

³² GA1 325. Heidegger explains later that what he accomplished in the habilitation work is an “onto-logic” (*Onto-Logik*) (GA1 55) of the categories of being that are timeless and ideal and whereby judgment gains access to real being, grounded in the absolute being of God. See John Van Buren, “Editor's Introduction” in Heidegger, *Supplements: From the Earliest Essays to Being and Time and Beyond*, ed. John Van Buren (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2002), 1-15, 5-6.

³³ GA1 318, 381.

³⁴ GSII 137ff.

³⁵ GA1 215-16, 218, 224, 230f, 381.

³⁶ GA1 387.

³⁷ GA1 381.

“primal involvement” (*Urbewandtnis*) of anything that *is*.³⁸ Form determines the nexus of meanings and thereby the environing world (*Umwelt*).³⁹

Heidegger, however, was not completely satisfied with Lask’s logic. It was “simply not possible to compare judgment-meaning with the real object” as Lask’s logic seemed to require, since one knows about real objects only through cognition, judgment.⁴⁰ Heidegger thus felt the need to go beyond Lask’s object-centric logic⁴¹ to consider “subjective logic”:⁴² “[f]orms are... the objective expression of the different *ways* in which consciousness is *intentionally* drawn to what is objective,”⁴³ the way the object is given.⁴⁴ Husserl’s intentionality proved useful but in turn Heidegger balances intentionality with Lask’s doctrine of material “differentiation of meaning.”⁴⁵ Combining Lask and Husserl, Heidegger calls for a “higher unity”⁴⁶ between transcendental realism and transcendental idealism. Recognizing the unity of ideal being and historical actuality leads transcendental logic to the recognition of the living “historical spirit.”⁴⁷ History as the arena of “value-formation”⁴⁸ is the “meaning-determining element for the problem of categories.”⁴⁹

In the 1919 course *Die Idee der Philosophie und das Weltanschauungsproblem* (“The Idea of Philosophy and the Problem of Worldviews”). Heidegger takes the a priori primal something (*Ur-etwas*) in the realm of lived meaning, to be the sheer intentional *movement* that is the

³⁸ GA1 346.

³⁹ GA1 255.

⁴⁰ GA1 273.

⁴¹ GA1 404.

⁴² GA1 404.

⁴³ GA1 319.

⁴⁴ GA1 316.

⁴⁵ GSII 58ff, 63, 102, 169; GA1 288, 313, 317, 319, 402.

⁴⁶ GA1 404.n.3.

⁴⁷ GA1 407.

⁴⁸ GA1 410.

⁴⁹ GA1 408.

comporting relation (*Verhalten*) of “out-toward....” and whose sense is a “worlding.” History as matter in material determination “motivates” the giving of norms or values. The givenness of matter and the giving of forms are dynamically united, whereby “being-valid is a phenomenon... presupposing not only intersubjectivity, but historical consciousness in general,”⁵⁰ which can only be expressed in the impersonal “it is valid” (*es gilt*). Lotzean non-being is thus de-objectified in the anonymous event of pre-thematic life. Inspired by Lask’s formulation of the reflexive category, *Es-Geben* (“being-there,” literally “it-gives”),⁵¹ Heidegger formulates his own idiosyncratic phrases to express the true locus of experience in the dynamism of the “it” that “worlds”: “es gilt, es soll, er wertet—es gibt—es weltet, es er-eignet sich” (“it is valid, it should, it values—it gives/there is—it worlds, it en-owns/a-propriates”).⁵²

In *Being and Time* of 1927 Heidegger develops the ambiguity of being in Lask, taking its inner distinction as the ontological difference (*ontologische Differenz*). He conceives the being of beings as the contextual space of intelligibility articulated in our interpretive understanding.⁵³ Its structure is categorial like the valid, but occurs with our being-(t)here (*Dasein*).⁵⁴ Meaning as the material’s involvement thus becomes manifest under the light of our projects.⁵⁵ Beings are discovered as belonging to a network of involvements or relevance, related to the environing world as the contextual horizon wherein one is (t)here (*da*) encountering beings at-hand.⁵⁶ Heidegger thus refers to Lask’s notion of *Hingabe* in connection to the care-structure of being-(t)here.⁵⁷ The result is a deepened sense of subjectivity as “ek-static thrown project”⁵⁸ that grounds both

⁵⁰ GA56/57 51. GA 56/57 identifies Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe Band 56/57: Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1987). The English translation appears as Heidegger, *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, trans. Ted Sadler (London: Continuum, 2008).

⁵¹ GSII 130, 142, 162ff.

⁵² Kisiel, *Heidegger’s Way of Thought*, 127 referring to GA56/57 46, 73, 75.

⁵³ SZ identifies Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1993). I also consulted the English translation by Joan Stambaugh: Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (NYC: SUNY Press, 1996).

⁵⁴ SZ 151.

⁵⁵ SZ 83-87.

⁵⁶ SZ 85, 86.

⁵⁷ SZ 199.

⁵⁸ Steven Crowell, “Emil Lask: Aletheiology as Ontology,” *Kant-Studien* 87 (Jahrgang Heft 1) (1996), 87.

Husserlian intentionality and the emergence of Laskian object-paradigms. This radicalizes Lask's *Urverhältnis* of *Bewandtnis* and *Hingabe* through the situatedness of our projects, the facticity of our being-in-the-world thrown into existence as finite, contingent, facing death.⁵⁹ It was around this time that on the other side of the globe, a Japanese thinker was appropriating Lask's concepts to develop his own version of "originary logic," a "logic of place."

Nishida Kitarō:

In Nishida's 1920s works Lask serves as a catalyst for the genesis of his ideas. The breakthrough to his "logic of place," came in his 1926 essay, *Basho* (「場所」 "Place").⁶⁰ References to Lask first appear here, where we find more references than in any other work.⁶¹ Lask's name is also conspicuous in *Torinokosaretaru ishiki no mondai* (「取り残されたる意識の問題」 "The Issue of Consciousness, Remaining") of the same year.⁶² Further references appear in the 1930 *Ippansha no jikakuteki taiki* (『一般者の自覚的体系』 *The System of Universals in Self-Realization*) and in *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai* (『哲学の根本問題』 *Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*) of 1933-34.

In contrast to Aristotle's definition of substance as "that which becomes the subject and not the predicate," Nishida⁶³ defines consciousness logically as "that which becomes the predicate but not the subject." While the subject is grammatically determinate, the predicate can be broadened in its universality to an indeterminate "nothing" (*mu* 無), encompassing determinate

⁵⁹ SZ 263

⁶⁰ Published in *Tetsugaku kenkyū* (『哲学研究』 *Research in Philosophy*), nr. 123 (June 1926).

⁶¹ Guelberg, 132.

⁶² Published in *Tokunohakushi kanrekikinen tetsugaku ronbunshū* (『得能博士還暦記念哲学論文集』; *Philosophical Essays in Commemoration of the Sixtieth Birthday of Dr. Tokuno*) (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1927). An English translation of this essay is available as "The Unsolved Issue of Consciousness," trans. John W.M. Krummel, *Philosophy East and West* 62(1), 44-59.

⁶³ As he writes in his June 1926 letter to his student, Mutai Risaku (務台理作) who was studying in Germany at the time.

beings (*yū* 有).⁶⁴ Nishida asserts: “the true a priori would have to be that which constitutes its own content within itself. Thus we may conceive, as in Lask, a domain category (*Gebietskategorie*) beyond constitutive form. To see universal concepts determined in the object realm of our cognition is due to this place determining itself.”⁶⁵ A few years later he asserts that Lask’s “domain” (*Gebiet*) is founded upon such determination that is a self-determination.⁶⁶ The domain category of the valid, as the primal form (*Urform*), the form of forms, corresponds in Nishida to the intelligible world (*eichiteki sekai* 叡智の世界),⁶⁷ wherein we live in interpersonal connections with others⁶⁸ in the concrete situatedness of the place of true nothing.⁶⁹ As in Lask’s domain category of the valid, the intelligible world for Nishida is precognitively experienced⁷⁰ for validity and values are found in the concrete situatedness of our lived experience,⁷¹ providing the guiding horizon for acts of consciousness,⁷² and for “the emotive interpenetration between mutually intuiting persons.”⁷³ Nishida understands this “alogical lived experience” as a kind of *place* (*basho*) that is *peri*-logical (*hōronriteki* 包論理的),⁷⁴ enveloping its articulations in judgment.

⁶⁴ See Nishida Kitarō, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* (『西田幾多郎全集』; *Collected Works of Nishida Kitarō*) vol. 18 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1978-80), 303-304. Nishida’s *Collected Works* in general will be identified by Z followed by the volume number and then followed by pagination.

⁶⁵ Nishida Kitarō, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* (*Collected Works of Nishida Kitarō*) vol. 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2003), 426-27. This work will be identified as Z3.

⁶⁶ Nishida Kitarō, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* (*Collected Works of Nishida Kitarō*) vol. 4 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2003), 191. This work will be identified as Z4.

⁶⁷ Z3 432.

⁶⁸ Z3 485-86.

⁶⁹ Z3 432.

⁷⁰ Z3 418.

⁷¹ Z3 481. Almost all the Japanese commentators on the Lask-Nishida connection seems to have missed this sense in Lask of prethematically given valid forms—values and meanings—in which we are precognitively absorbed and through which we live and experience the world.

⁷² Z3 432.

⁷³ Z3 485-86.

⁷⁴ Z3 418. I use the neologism “*peri*-logical” to translate what Nishida calls *hōronriteki*. The Japanese *hō* (包) with its verb form *tsutsumu* (包む) has the sense of “envelop,” “embrace,” “wrap,” “comprehend,” “include.” The neologism seems appropriate since the Greek prefix *peri* (περί) has the spatial senses of “around,” “about,” “round about,” “surrounding,” as well as the verbal sense of “enclosing” or “wrapping.” With verbs it can mean “concerning”

And in the same way that Lask's domain category *as itself* valid therefore *is not*, the universal place embracing the intelligible world and all beings for Nishida is nothing (*mu*).

Nishida repeatedly refers to Lask's transcendent "trans-oppositional" (*chōtairitsuteki* 超対立的) or "oppositionless object" (*tairitsunaki taishō* 対立なき対象). With Lask's object-paradigm in mind he explicates it as the object for how we *ought* to think (*tōiteki shii no taishō* 当為的思惟の対象).⁷⁵ But in experiencing it we are beyond the field of consciousness that establishes oppositional content.⁷⁶ Thus "the place that establishes the opposition of form and matter and the place that establishes the opposition of true and false must be distinct."⁷⁷ The former refers to the world of lived experience and the latter refers to the field of consciousness. So he asks, "What kind of a thing is Lask's oppositionless object that utterly transcends acts?"⁷⁸ and responds that "even this object must be implaced somewhere."⁷⁹ In "The Issue of Consciousness, Remaining," he states that when consciousness conceived as a place of nothing becomes an absolute nothing, "what is implaced there is the oppositionless object."⁸⁰ But once cognized and judged, its experience is abstracted and dichotomized into subject/object, predicate/subject.

Nishida thus provisionally accepts Lask's logical objectivism while grounding its object-centrism upon the deeper standpoint of place. He looks to the placial character of self-realization as the self-determination of that which precedes and exceeds both subject and object of cognition, whereby knowing is the self-formation of the formless. Akin to Lask's transcendent sphere, the originary sphere for Nishida is not yet divided by oppositions. But whereas Lask understands this

or "about." In this aspect it reminds us of the *Hingeltung* or *Hingelten* aspect of form in Lask. And it also corresponds to Lask's use of the prefix *um-*. Hence "lived experience" as "peri-logical" is a kind of *place*. If by *hōronri* Nishida means what he will come to call "logic of the predicate," *peri-logic* seems the best translation for *hōronri*.

⁷⁵ Z3 424-25.

⁷⁶ Z3 424, 425; Nishida Kitarō, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* (*Collected Works of Nishida Kitarō*) vol. 7 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2003), 223. This work will be identified as Z7.

⁷⁷ Z3 418.

⁷⁸ Z3 422.

⁷⁹ Z3 422.

⁸⁰ Z7 223.

in terms of an “object,” Nishida takes it as a “place.” On that basis, “...to cognize is none other than for experience to form itself within itself.... [and] the so-called subject/object opposition is realized... in what endlessly mirrors itself within itself, that which contains endless beings by itself becoming nothing.” He adds: “It is a place that we can neither say is identical nor that it is different, neither that it is being nor nothing, a place that cannot be determined by so-called logical forms but instead permits the establishment of logical forms.”⁸¹ Thus the “true form of forms must be a place of forms.”⁸²

He pursues the form of forms in the direction of the knower as “something like a place.”⁸³ But thereby “consciousness of the oppositionless object does not mean that consciousness transcends itself but that consciousness deeply enters into itself. One speaks of this as transcendence only because one is seeing this simply as a relationship of objects without deeply thinking of the essence of consciousness itself.”⁸⁴ We might characterize this rather as a “transcendence” into the deeper pre-epistemic place that envelops our lived experience, a descent into that presubjective place. But in suggesting the primal interfusion of being and meaning in lived experience, Lask had provided a clue for Nishida. Lask’s interfusion of form and matter for Nishida is the self-formation of true nothing. Nishida thus sought to bridge the dualistic gap by taking the divide as the self-articulation of the self-determining nothing. Hylo-morphism thus collapses into the *self-forming* formlessness of place, the *event* of reality-*cum*-experience.

Conclusion:

Heidegger and Nishida found in Lask a clue to surmounting dualism while recognizing the limits of his logical objectivism. Both were led to trans-descend subjectivity to look at its prethematic engagement with the world. It led Heidegger to man’s finite being-(t)here as being-in-the-world. And for Nishida it led to man’s implacement within a self-forming formlessness. Both associate this enviroing un/ground with the lived intelligible world of meaning.

⁸¹ Z3 418-19.

⁸² Z3 419.

⁸³ Z3 421.

⁸⁴ Z3 473.

One of the more important developments of Heidegger resulting from his appropriation of Lask is the ontological difference. But there is an analogous development in Nishida. For Lask being (*Sein*) as a domain category *is valid but is not a being (Seiendes)*. Heidegger understands being (*Sein*) in terms of meaning (*Sinn*) and associates this with temporality as the horizon that finitizes our being-in-the-world. Nishida associates Laskian validity qua intelligible world (*eichiteki sekai*) with place (*basho*) wherein beings arise and disappear. And just as in Lask the valid *is not* as opposed to beings that *are*, in Nishida that place is ultimately a nothing (*mu*) in distinction from beings (*yū*). For Heidegger also being *is not* and hence is a *nothing (Nichts)*. For Lask the enveloping is the valid as form and the enveloped is its material. For Heidegger, the enveloping as horizon is the meaning or being of beings; and for Nishida, the enveloping as place is the nothing backgrounding the foregrounded beings. For all three what envelops beings *is not—not a being*.

And if form is the material's involvement (*Bewandtnis*), it implies the context, which both Heidegger and Nishida understood in terms of the environing world. Things make sense only within a network of significance. Otherwise they are impenetrable, meaningless, empty.⁸⁵ In Heidegger involvement as constitutive of the meaning of handy things ultimately points to the contextualizing horizon toward which one is thrown. In Nishida the constitution of objects by the predicate ultimately points to the intelligible world as place. Both also assume Lask's notion of absorption (*Hingabe*) and of living "in truth," whereby we are immersed, prior to judgment or cognition, in that already meaningful world.

The hylomorphic collapse in that lived *wherein* is another consequence of their radicalization of Lask's deconstruction of Neo-Kantianism. Heidegger transmutes the interfusion of form and matter into the projection and thrownness of being-(t)here for the sake of a hermeneutics of meaning. Nishida collapses the hylomorphic duality into the self-forming formlessness of the place of nothing.

Lask helped Heidegger to make the transition from Neo-Kantianism to his own distinct hermeneutical phenomenology. Analogously Lask helped Nishida think through Kantian

⁸⁵ What Nishida's student, Nishitani Keiji (西谷啓治) in his *Shūkyō to wa nanika* (『宗教とは何か』; *What is Religion?* published in English as *Religion and Nothingness*), appropriating the Mahāyāna Buddhist notion of the emptiness (*kū* 空) and suchness (*shin'nyo* 真如) of things, called the double exposure of being/nothing meaning/meaninglessness, is thus reminiscent of Lask's explication of form as the involvement of its otherwise impenetrable and irrational material.

problematics to develop his own philosophy of place. He spurred both thinkers beyond Kantian dichotomies but also beyond his own object-centered logic towards the lived realm of meaning as the true a priori preceding objects.

Free to Read Otherwise: Heidegger Deciphering Hölderlin

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to think through the issue of freedom in Heidegger's thought from the perspective of what is anything but a simple methodological concern: the question of reading. I argue that reading designates an essential feature of being itself: as being enters the realm of signification – "language is the house of being," as Heidegger says – it becomes a written trace that gives itself to be deciphered and read. What I thus call the legibility of being is housed primarily in poetic language for Heidegger, Hölderlin's poetry having a pride of place in this regard due to its reflexive theorization of poetic language itself. In this paper, I call attention to a particular philological problem in a poem by Hölderlin where it is impossible to tell whether Hölderlin wrote "*spricht*" (speak) or "*spielt*" (play), an impossibility that ought to have prevented Heidegger from ruling out *free play* from the speaking essence of poetry.

...*das Wesen der Sprache spielt mit uns.*

- Heidegger, *Was heißt Denken?*

One of the many examples Heidegger gives in *Being and Time* of the way in which Dasein falls prey to the silent "dictatorship" of "the they" and "the public way of being-interpreted" is that of reading: "we read (*lesen*), see and judge literature and art the way *they* see and judge it."¹ As Heidegger later points out in the "B" section of chapter V of Division One, titled "The Everyday Being of the There and The Falling Prey of Dasein," the "*prattling and gossiping*" (Weiter- und Nachredens) of "idle talk" (*Gerede*) – the everyday mode of discourse which "has lost the primary relation of being to the being talked about," so that what is publicly spoken about "spreads in wider circles and takes on an authoritative character," i.e. "things are so because one (*Man*) says so" – is not "restricted" to the acoustico-vocal dimension of hearing and speaking, as Heidegger's very

¹ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2006), 127; *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2010), 123. References to *Being and Time* will henceforth be given in abbreviated form: "SZ" followed by the German and English pagination. I have occasionally modified Stambaugh's translations throughout.

terminological choice (*Ge-rede*) might misleadingly suggest, but also “spreads to what is written,” that is to say, *read*:

Idle talk is constituted in this gossiping and prattling, a process by which its initial lack of grounds to stand on increases to complete groundlessness. And this is not restricted to vocal gossip, but spreads to what is written, as “scribbling” (*Ge-schreibe*). In this latter case, gossiping is based not so much on hear-say. It feeds on sporadic superficial reading (*es speist sich aus dem Angelesenen*): the average understanding of the reader (*Lesers*) will never be able to decide what has been drawn from primordial sources with a struggle, and how much is just gossip.²

As Jacques Derrida provocatively suggests in his recently published 1964-65 lecture course titled *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*, this problem of reading comes to affect the very project of *Being and Time*: as Derrida has perceptively noticed, the verb Heidegger uses in his question at the opening of *Being and Time* regarding the particular being from which “the disclosure of being is to take its departure” can be more literally *read* – but do we know how to do this? – in the sense of reading, precisely: “On *which* being is the meaning of being to be read (*an welchem Seienden soll der Sinn von Sein abgelesen werden*)?”³

There would be a lot to say as concerns the supposedly metaphorical status of *Dasein* as a text, in and through which being gives itself to be deciphered and read. As always in Heidegger, metaphors are never simply metaphors, and one can imagine Heidegger’s scornful disdain for those who would blithely presume to know what reading is, a common and ordinary – what Heidegger would have perhaps called “vulgar” – understanding of reading which a naïve self-assuredness would calmly transfer on to the meaning of being itself, without realizing that this readability or legibility of being is actually where the proper sense of reading lies and is thus anything but a metaphor for Heidegger.⁴ At which point we might begin to suspect that reading, far from being a simple methodological concern, designates an essential feature of being itself: as being enters the realm of signification, “language is the house of being,” as Heidegger says, being becomes a trace, a *Spur* to be read. In this brief paper, I would like to focus on the rather enigmatic way in which being writes itself out in Hölderlin’s poetry, a writing that, as we shall see, entails

² SZ: 169/163.

³ SZ: 7/5; Stambaugh translates this a bit loosely as: “In *which* being is the meaning of being to be found?” For Derrida’s remarks on “*abgelesen*,” see his recently published 1964-65 course titled *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 2016), 77.

⁴ For an insightful discussion of metaphor in Heidegger, see Derrida, *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*, 62-64, 78, 222-224.

an undecidable, if not indecipherable legibility that Heidegger at once recognizes but pulls back from as he reads Hölderlin's poem "Germania." I call attention to how a particular philological issue in Hölderlin's poem – the problem of deciphering Hölderlin's handwriting of the last word of verse 101 of "Germania" – enacts an irreducible dissemination whereby the trace of being is scattered into an undecidable *free play* between the word "*spricht*" (speak) and the very word for play "*spielt*."

Relatively early on in the 1934-35 lecture course titled *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine,"* Heidegger pauses over what he calls "two textual questions" arising from the poem "Germania," the second of which will be my concern in what follows.⁵ Heidegger calls attention to a word occurring on the fifth verse of the last stanza of the poem which seems to have been a matter of dispute in Hölderlin scholarship. Whereas three different early editions of Hölderlin's complete works render this fifth verse as "*Wie anders ists! und rechthin glänzt und spielt* (How different it is! and to the right there gleams and *plays*)," Norbert von Hellingrath, by far Heidegger's favorite Hölderlin editor, provides a different reading of the verse, changing the last word "*spielt*" to "*spricht*": "*Wie anders ists! und rechthin glänzt und spricht* (How different it is! and to the right there gleams and *speaks*), a "reading" (*Leasart*) Heidegger is prepared to agree with even as he admits to not being "familiar with the manuscript of the poem."⁶ Now the reason why Heidegger is able to discard one reading and confidently sign up for another, without ever having even seen the manuscript and Hölderlin's handwriting of the word in question, lies in what deciphering Hölderlin's handwriting means for Heidegger, "an issue of reading" (*eine Sache des Lesens*) that Heidegger equates with "understanding" the particular word, verse, stanza, and poem

⁵ Heidegger, *Hölderlins Hymnen "Germanien" and "Der Rhein" (GA 39)*, ed. Susanne Ziegler (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1980), 24; Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine," trans. Julia Ireland and Will McNeill (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014), 24. References to this lecture course will henceforth be given in abbreviated form: "GA 39," followed by the German and English pagination.

⁶ GA 39: 25/26. Franz Zinkernagel, Wilhelm Böhn, Paul Ernst and Will Vesper are some of the early editors of Hölderlin's work who read this mysterious word as "*spielt*." For Hellingrath's reading as "*spricht*" instead, see Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, begun by Norbert v. Hellingrath, completed by Friedrich Seebass and Ludwig v. Pigenot, Second Edition (Berlin: Propyläen, 1923), Volume IV, 183. I have contacted Jörg Ennen, head of the Hölderlin Archive in Stuttgart regarding this issue and he agrees in sum with Hellingrath's (and Heidegger's) reading. Here is his answer to my inquiry: "Dear Mr. Therezo, The poem "Germania" is included in the Homburg Folioheft (63). The word in verse 101 you are looking for (4th line, far right), looks a bit fatter. You can enlarge the image (attached) and see the word clearly. I tend to "*spricht*" like the Stuttgart edition (Beissner) and the Frankfurt edition (Sattler). Best Regards, Jörg Ennen."

“from out of the whole” of Hölderlin’s poetry (*d.h. aber zugleich des Verstehens aus dem Ganzen*).⁷ In other words, if Heidegger does not even need to see Hölderlin’s manuscript in order to know that Hellingrath’s reading is correct, it is because he (and Hellingrath) have presumably grasped “the whole” of Hölderlin’s poetry and are now in an optimal position from which to read – or in Heidegger’s case, guess – Hölderlin’s handwriting, a script whose legibility and decipherability are no longer really an issue as long as one has first understood the whole.

Now, were Heidegger to have seen Hölderlin’s handwriting of the aforementioned word and verse, his confidence might have begun to falter. Take a look at how Hölderlin writes this word [show slides 1, 2, 3]: notice that, of all the words in these last verses of the poem, “*spricht*” or “*spielt*” is the least well written word, with its last three letters on a downward incline, breaking the symmetry of an invisible line that is distorted by a trembling of Hölderlin’s hand.⁸ Nevertheless, to a pair of modern eyes, given the alternative between “*spricht*” and “*spielt*,” the loop of the penultimate letter followed by what seems to be an uncrossed “t” seems to indicate that Hölderlin wrote “*spielt*” and not “*spricht*.” Indeed, in the early twentieth century, such was also the reading suggested by at least three different editors of Hölderlin’s work, over and against which Hellingrath, and Heidegger and other editors following him, suggest instead “*spricht*,” no doubt on account of the fact that Hölderlin’s “hs” often have an “l” shape, particularly when used in the rather common *cht*- ending of German words [slides 4, 5, 6]. This makes it difficult, if not impossible to decide between “*spricht*” and “*spielt*,” particularly as there are strong arguments to be made on both sides: even though it is true that the antepenultimate letter of the word seems to resemble some instances of how Hölderlin writes his “c”s in *cht*- endings, it also resembles how he sometimes writes his “e”s, for example just a few lines down in the very same page of the manuscript [slides]. As for the other letters in the word that might help us decide between “*spielt*” or “*spricht*,” they, too, prove to be of little help: the third letter of the word, which could be either the “r” of “*spricht*” or the undotted “i” of “*spielt*,” is followed by a somewhat strange concave-shape arc [slide] that does not resemble the way Hölderlin tends to write vowels after the consonant cluster “spr” [slides], making it difficult to determine whether this unusually elongated mark corresponds either to the undotted vowel “i” of “*spricht*” or to an unintentional scratching of the

⁷ GA 39: 26/25.

⁸ All images of Hölderlin’s manuscripts were taken from the official website of the Hölderlin-Archiv in Stuttgart, most of which has been recently made available online:

http://digital.wlbstuttgart.de/sammlungen/sammlungsliste/?no_cache=1

page, produced inadvertently as Hölderlin's quill moved from the end of the "i" of "spielt" – and not "spricht" – to dot that very same "i." Let it also be noted, however, that it is not impossible that a similar phenomenon – something as mundane as a tired hand – might have caused Hölderlin not to lift the quill from the surface of the page when dotting, this time, the "i" of "spricht," as opposed to the "i" of "spielt," it not being so unusual for Hölderlin to place the dots of his "i"s slightly to the left, explaining the left-upward direction of the accidental scribble.

A philosopher might think to be above such "philological minutiae" when reading Hölderlin's poetry. He would be wrong to do so, argues Heidegger a little later in the course:

Here we have occasion once again to point to a textual question and to examine the alterations among the different versions [of the poem "Patmos"]. People usually call this "philological minutiae." There are such things, but not in a work like Hölderlin's, and especially not if we move beyond merely cataloguing the changes. Here the struggle for every word is a pointer to understanding the poetry.⁹

No wonder, then, that Heidegger should want to come to a decision regarding the *spricht-spielt* dilemma, especially as the poem in question is said to be "a dialogue which brings language to language (*ein Gespräch [...], das die Sprache zur Sprache bringt*)," "a saying of the saying" or "the speaking of language," as Heidegger reads "Germania" as the name of a girl who receives a "mission" (*Auftrag*) to speak and, as Hölderlin poetizes, "dispatch a wealth of golden words (*Fülle der goldenen Worte sandtest du*)."¹⁰ As Heidegger reads the poem, or Hölderlin's poetry in general, as a matter of fact, the singular issue with which Hölderlin is concerned is that of "naming and saying" (*eigentlicher: um das Nennen und Sagen geht es*), it then being decisive, for Heidegger's reading at least, to locate instances in the poem "Germania" where the aforementioned speaking is speaking itself out, as it were, as though we switched registers and the poem *itself* became one of Germania's dispensations and a very special one at that, given that what the poem – and Hölderlin's poetry as a whole, as Heidegger argues – poetizes is the very act of poetic dispensation in general, a dispensation of dispensation, if you like.¹¹

Heidegger offers in the lecture course an explanation as to why "we cannot read 'spielt'" in the aforementioned verse, conceding that this negative and indirect justification "does not yet ground why we must read 'spricht'" instead:

⁹ GA 39: 52/51.

¹⁰ GA 39: 46/45.

¹¹ Ibid.

The word “play” seems to be suggested by the word “joyful” (*erfreulich*). Yet if we merely take the latter in the straightforward meaning of pleasant, welcome, or notable, which fits with “play,” then we are not understanding this in a Hölderlinian sense. Hölderlin does not mean the word *erfreulich* to be understood in the sense in which we say that trial runs of the new race car that is supposed to reach 240 kilometers per hour produced quite “encouraging” results. *Erfreulich*, “joyful,” here means heralding joy (*Freude*), not joy in the sense of pleasure as opposed to disagreeableness, but joy in the eminent meaning of the Greek word *charis* — charm, enchantment, and therein unapproachable dignity. Yet this reading of *erfreulich* indicates only why we cannot read “play,” and does not yet justify why we must read “speak.” This can be shown only from our more extensive interpretation.¹²

Yet what are we to make of the very beginning of the poem “To Mother Earth” where “*spielt*” occurs almost side-by-side “*erfreulich*”? “So, as though to try it out, a string, touched by joyful hands, plays from the beginning.” (*So spielt von erfreulichen Händen [...] eine Saite von Anfang*).¹³ Notice that the manuscript of “To Mother Earth” is much more legible than that of “Germania” where Hölderlin writes “*spielt*,” leaving no room for doubt here [slide]. This would seem to very quickly complicate Heidegger’s claim that the simple existence of the word “*erfreulich*” in verse 102 of “Germania” is enough to prove that Hölderlin could not have possibly written “*spielt*” in the preceding verse, as though the Hölderlinian sense of “*erfreulich*” qua “*charis*” (“charm, enchantment, and therein unapproachable dignity”) were incommensurable with any sense of play, as though “play” in Hölderlin’s poetry named only “pleasure” and not “joy” in the Greek sense. That such is not the case is also attested by another couple of verses from the poem “Homecoming”:

But a string instrument (*Saitenspiel*) lends tones to each hour
And perhaps delights (*erfreuet*) the heavenly, who draw near¹⁴

The same “*Spiel*” of a “*Saite*,” again associated with the joy (*Freude*) of “*erfreuen*,” this time in connection with “the heavenly who draw near,” whom Heidegger would have called, without hesitation, “the Greeks and their gods” who, in the poem “Germania,” “press upon us” (*drängen uns*).¹⁵ And just as this playful music gives rise to a certain readiness (*das bereitet*) at the end of

¹² GA 39: 25/25-26. Heidegger is alluding to the word “*erfreulich*” in the subsequent verse: “*Wie anders ists! und rechthin glänzt and spricht [spielt] / Zukünftiges auch erfreulich aus den Fernen.*” (How different it is! And to the right there gleams and speaks [plays] / Future things also joyfully from afar.)

¹³ See Volume IV of Hellingrath’s edition, 156. For an English translation of the poem, see Friedrich Hölderlin, *Poems and Fragments*, trans. Michael Hamburger (London: Anvil Press, 2004), 469.

¹⁴ Friedrich Hölderlin, *Poems and Fragments*, 331 (translation modified).

¹⁵ GA 39: 47/46.

“Homecoming,” at the beginning of the third stanza of “Germania” a certain “prelude” (*Vorspiel*) seems to go hand in hand with the readiness of a field “nurtured” for the gods whose shadows “visit the earth anew,” drawing near and pressing upon us, as we saw:

Already nurtured for them [the gods], the field indeed grows verdant,

Prelude (*Vorspiel*) to a rougher time, the gift is readied (*bereitet*)

For the sacrificial meal and valley and rivers lie

Open wide around prophetic mountains¹⁶

It is tempting, indeed, to relate this *Vorspiel* to a rougher time to come of the third stanza to that controversial verse of the last where it does not seem so implausible to read “*spielt*” in the context of a future time that already plays itself out “joyfully and from afar,” as the return of a “bygone divinity” which “resonates from ancient times again.”¹⁷ Apparently forgetting his own reservations vis-à-vis “*spielt*” or play in general, Heidegger comments on the third stanza later on in the course, arguing that “history and historical time are the monumental play (*das große Spiel*) which the gods play with the peoples and with a people”:

The Earth, as this Earth of the homeland, is nurtured for the gods. Through such nurturing it first becomes homeland, yet as such it can once again fall into decline and sink to the level of a mere place of residence, which accordingly goes hand in hand with the advent of godlessness. The coming to be of homeland thus does not happen through mere settlement, either, unless it is accompanied by a nurturing of the Earth for the gods, in which the Earth is held open for an encounter with the prevailing of the gods in the course of the changing seasons of the year and their festivals. This occurs in “prelude” (*Vorspiel*) to a rougher time, so that the Earth then first comes fully and properly into play, i.e., history and historical time. History is the monumental play that the gods play with the peoples and with a people; for the great times and eras of world time are a play, according to the word of an ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, whom they call the obscure one, and whose most profound thoughts were thought anew precisely by Hölderlin.¹⁸

Yet if Hölderlin’s poetry “thinks anew” the Heraclitean notion of time (*aiōn*) as a playful child (*pais paizdōn*) from fragment 52, why, then, is it so unthinkable for Heidegger that a similar play might happen in the last stanza of “Germania”? Or, more to the point, why does Heidegger feel as

¹⁶ Friedrich Hölderlin, *Poems and Fragments*, 331 (translation modified).

¹⁷ See footnote xii above; verse 100 runs as follows: “*Tönt auf aus alter Zeit Vergangengöttliches wieder.*” (“A bygone divinity resonates from ancient times again.”)

¹⁸ GA39: 104-105/95-96.

though he has to decide between “*spricht*” and “*spielt*”? What if Hölderlin’s manuscript enacted an undecidability that goes to the heart of what Heidegger is trying to think? What if it belonged to the very essence of language to play, what if *die Sprache spricht* insofar as it *spielt*? And what if this *Spiel* happened primarily in writing?

In the lecture course, Heidegger provides a powerful account of how Hölderlin understands language as “the most dangerous of all goods” (*der Güter Gefährlichstes*) given to man, a danger Heidegger describes as “essentially double”: first “the danger of supreme nearness to the gods and thereby to being annihilated by their excessive character” and, “at the same time,” “the danger of the most shallow turning away and becoming entangled in worn-out idle talk and the semblance that goes with it.”¹⁹ What seems to interest Heidegger the most here is how these two “fundamentally different” and even “conflicting” dangers “intimately accompany each other” (*das innige Beieinander*), it being an “inevitability” (*Unentrinnbarkeit*) that “the creative, founding saying of the poet” be at the same time “the fateful necessity of a decline” into idle talk.²⁰ “To say an essential word,” argues Heidegger, “intrinsically entails also delivering this word to the realm of misinterpretation, of misuse and deception – to the danger of the most direct and contrary repercussions of its determination.”²¹ My suggestion here is that this goes especially for the very words “say” or “speak,” it being perhaps not entirely accidental that at the very moment when language is supposed to speak itself out it should also misspeak itself, “*die Sprache verspricht (sich)*,” as Paul de Man would say.²² Heidegger knows this and goes so far as to describe the “non-essence” of language as playful (*spielerischen Unwesen*), perhaps the same kind of play he identifies in verse 101 of “Germania” where the play is precisely between language and play, “*spricht*” and “*spiel*,” as we saw.²³ But whereas reading this verse forces Heidegger to decide between essence and non-essence, we might want to say, with Heidegger, that if the playful non-essence always already belongs to the essence, then this essence is not so essential as we once thought, and that it is really not our place to decide between terms that we cannot neatly keep apart. What if just this undecidability were the ultimate trait of what reading means? And what if Hölderlin’s poetry gave us to read just that?

¹⁹ GA 39: 60/59.

²⁰ GA 39: 64/62.

²¹ Ibid.

²² See Paul de Man, “Promises,” in *Allegories of Reading* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 277.

²³ GA 39: 64/62.

The Worlding of the World through Prosthesis

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Panel: “Concerning Heidegger and Disability Studies: on Embodiment and Freedom”

Heidegger Circle 2019

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*In enframing, the unconcealment propriates in conformity
with which the work of modern technology reveals the
actual standing-reserve.*

*Freedom governs the free space in the sense of the cleared,
that is to say, the revealed.*

- Heidegger, “The Question Concerning Technology.”¹

ABSTRACT

Utilizing Heidegger’s “The Question Concerning Technology” as a starting point, I want to examine the ontological character of prosthesis despite Heidegger’s own specific account of the prosthetic. How might the making of prosthetics, the disposal of inorganic prosthetics as they become artifact, or the relation of prosthesis to dwelling and to *aletheia* fairly be read from Heidegger’s conception authentic being-in-world and to *mit-sein*? Comparatively, I discuss the ready-to-handedness of the tool, the temporalization of tools, and, most importantly, the habilitation of the world through the prosthetic effect of tools.

In re-reading Heidegger in this way, how might contemporary scholarship on the prostheses – as in the case of Elizabeth Grosz’s “Prosthetic Objects” from *Time Travels: Feminism, Nature, Power* (2005) or “The Service Dog” in Sunaura Taylor’s *Beasts of Burden: Animal and Disability Liberation* (2017) – lend insight on problems given the investments of global capital in the design and fabrication of prostheses, especially if prosthesis is a ‘futural activity,’ a work of ‘disability

¹ Heidegger, “The Question Concerning Technology,” *Basic Writings* (Harper & Row, Inc., 1972), pp. 326, 330.

liberation’? I want to also place significance on the phenomenon of the prosthetic as it transitions to artifact in order to ask what demands must be made on who has access to and who is included in the idea of a livable and sustainable world?

Enframing Ableism

In my book, *Addressing Ableism: Philosophical Questions via Disability Studies* ([hereafter AA], MA: Lexington Books, 2017), I had put forth a project of mapping out the scale and scope of ableism. One chapter, essential to the project of mapping ableism because it proved complex and entangled with assorted, ‘sticky’ ableist ‘affections’ was on prosthesis.

In this mapping exercise, I was able to make progress in thinking through both the power of diagnoses and prostheses in how they participate in the world as ableist in their invisible *dismembering* operations – a way I describe the harm of ableism. Although I make some appeal to Heidegger in the *Ableism* book, it is partial and incomplete; in this paper is my attempt to further read (and return to?) Heidegger for a model of non-ableist or anti-ableist prosthesis-making.

The work of mapping ableism, I have discovered, is and ought to be a failed project. Effectively, spotting ableism was a bit like whack-a-mole; and even when I am successful in identifying one aspect of ableism, it doesn’t begin to address other forms of ableist biases and harms. The plainest example of this is the perceived difference between eyeglasses and hearing aids: why is it the case that eyeglasses do not read symbolically as a disability, but a hearing aid or cochlear implant does? Even more interesting is how eyeglasses can also be a fashion accessory, not a visible indication of some vision impairment, yet, the hearing aid or cochlear implant are preferred as invisible, flesh-colored, non-descript and do not suggest a ‘fashion statement,’ only impairment and disability.

This provides an instructive starting point for the investigation I carry out throughout *Addressing Ableism*; the ‘hot-spots’ – operative and invisible sites of bias – also what I describe as normalized, ableist affections: the need to ‘pass’ as able-bodied throughout our culture, the capitalizing on or denial of disability identity either through the usual mechanism of bias like

tokenism, with the many cultural examples of ‘crip-face,’² inspiration porn,³ and the constant threat of institutionalization and a history of eugenics in the face of the possibility of life-long disability or chronic disorders.⁴ Ableist language and slurs often go unnoticed, also normalized in our culture parallel to the kinds of language rendered permissible in rape culture for instance.⁵ In this way, how often do we utilize ‘crazy,’ ‘stupid,’ or ‘idiot,’ or worse, defend our use of these slurs as perfectly apt terms, justified for explaining our observations?⁶

A sign of the conflation⁷ between value and norm in a neoliberal economy is, for example, in the naturalized shame of ‘needing a crutch.’⁸ There is a compulsion in our society to fear the

² From a blogpost on crippledscholar.com (cited in AA, 153):

Disability rights activists have coined terms like *cripping up*, *crip face*, *disability drag* and *cripiculture* to describe the trend of nondisabled actors taking on disabled roles. There are many examples of disabled people protesting the practice and demanding better representation for disabled people on screen.

In my opinion there is no actual disability representation in a film or television show unless there is an actual disabled person involved. Simply putting in a disabled character [then] casting a nondisabled actor is not representation. It is in fact the active denial of representation.

³ Cited in AA, 155, nt. 24: For a definition of inspiration porn, see Stella Young’s TEDtalk, “I’m not your inspiration, thank you very much.” Posted (Accessed June 9, 2014), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8K9Gg164Bsw>

⁴ Harold Braswell (2014) does an ethnography of US Hospice Care and discovered the importance of family advocates in the sustainment of quality care. End-of-life care through institutionalization tends to render some more precarious than others (cited in AA, 114):

Through this research, I found that, when insufficient familial support is present, hospice patients frequently fail to receive appropriate care. Such patients are either left abandoned in home environments that are inappropriate for their needs or they are sent to nursing homes that are not designed for patients at the end-of-life. Consequently, the US hospice system can be disastrous for dying patients when sufficient familial support is lacking.

⁵ We’ve seen this recently in the discussions about Kavanaugh’s appointment: one Senator stating how he wanted to ‘ram through’ nominee process; language meaning something quite different in the context of sexual assault but in rape culture is read as if this is ‘neutral’ language. See: <https://crooksandliars.com/2018/09/frat-boy-rhetoric-governs-kavanaugh>

⁶ In *Addressing Ableism*, I argue along with Lydia Brown that not all the terms in their ‘Glossary of Ableist Terms’ are slurs, but they are ableist. When they are used intentionally by someone to harm or degrade, I noted that a person would then be a *disablist* (and this follows how Eva Kittay [July 2009] explains Peter Singer’s defense of his ableist bias).

⁷ Joel Michael Reynolds discusses the ableist conflation at length in “‘I’d rather be dead than disabled’: The ableist conflation and the meanings of disability” in *Review of Communication*, (Volume 17, Issue 3, 2017. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15358593.2017.133125>).

⁸ As I argue it [AA, 132], the crutch is closely related to the ideals of neoliberalism:

the [negative connotation of the] ‘crutch’ ... has come to symbolize the ableist desire for self-sufficiency, productivity, and independence [in reference to Sunaura Taylor’s argument]. In our

need for the prosthetic, the support renders the individual as suspicious, as having a vice. Dependency reads as deficit; Sunaura Taylor explains most expertly the error in this conflation:

The ways in which romantic and conservative notions of *self-sufficiency*, *productivity* and *independence* are entangled in contemporary discussions of animal welfare and sustainability is troubling. ... The idea that some dependent individuals are less valuable and more justifiably exploitable because they are understood as burdens who offer nothing of value back to their communities ... has had a long and troubling history for disabled humans as well (117–118, [emphasis added]).

Much of the Disability Studies scholarship and advocacy provides insightful forms of **resisting** ableism; labor-intensive, often requiring the advocate to ‘out’ and identify in order to be taken seriously in their resistance to ableist norms. The tools and devices used to defend disabled identity and experience, to testify to the harms of ableism and able-normativity are rich with critique and creative thinking through strategies of surviving and flourishing with disability identity.

As an invisible, operative dismemberment, most sinister in environments that rely on neoliberal social and political institutions and sociality, we often succumb to the demands of able-bodied comportment. Maximizing inclusion and accessibility is not a principle commonplace and operative; instead a wheelchair ramp is considered an ‘expensive addition’ to a building construction, even ‘interfering’ with the aesthetics. But, through the lens of able-normativity, one would never assume a building ‘ugly’ or unpleasing if it is built with stairs or an entranceway; it would not be considered ‘burdensome’ to include several points of access, typically as stairways and doors. To those who cannot access a building via a traditional stair/doorway, most buildings are ‘ugly’ in their exclusion of non-normative bodies, non-typical mobilities.

Returning to Taylor’s with her later analysis in *Beasts of Burden* (2018), she shows the deeper anxiety built in to the failure of becoming or being dependent, aligning the ontic perceptions of the worlded relation to animals – both domestic and wild -- in its uncritical analogy with disability:

neoliberal system, no one should need a crutch but rather, ‘stand’ on one’s own ‘two feet.’ No one can afford — (or should I say) it seems as if it is unthinkable — to be so vulnerable to that kind of precariousness and therefore becomes a site of shame and blame, moral culpability, and bad habit. At the same time, it has become a naturalized given that those who do not need ‘a crutch’ ... get due praise and [are] rewarded accordingly.

Dependence often becomes an excuse for exploitation, in part because it has extremely negative connotations – no one wants to be dependent. But the truth is that all of us *are* dependent. ...

The negative consequences of dependency are largely human-made, whether through economic disenfranchisement, social marginalization, imprisonment, or societal, cultural, and architectural barriers. (208-209).

She later adds how this negative connotation manifests in a more complex relation of dependency with ‘stupidity,’ insightfully connecting the assumption that disabled people, like domesticated animals, are tragic in their ‘unnaturalness’ of dependency (211). It is very important that “animal and disability liberation [stay] away from limited narratives of suffering and dependence” and move toward “creating accessible, nondiscriminatory space in society where humans and animals can thrive” (207-208).

Crip and Queer theorists have done much to also add to the catalogue of resistance to ableist thinking and ideology. Aimi Hamraie discusses the problem of the ‘mis-fit’ especially as it is an outcome of normative built environments. Citing Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Hamraie argues that:⁹

Rather than accounting for diverse body types, sizes, and abilities, the normate template privileges a small group of individuals in mainstream design, giving these individuals the appearance of normalcy or universality due to their fit in the environment. The resulting built environment is precisely what the social model criticizes—a world built without considering all ranges of ability.

Resistance strategies for ableism can only be catalogued and developed once it is clear that there is something to resist. One example of resistance to ableism as a bias is with the rejection by Autistic advocates of ‘Autism Awareness’ or ‘Light it up Blue’ campaigns. They have found organizations like Autism Speaks – well funded and a benchmark organization for Autism awareness campaigns – not only are more about the non-autistic parents, but the organization itself tends to put very little into the representation of autistic people by autistic persons as such; in effect, *it is something about them, without them*.¹⁰

⁹ Hamraie is discussing accessibility in the context of Universal Design [UD] Principles and methods. ‘Normate’ is Garland-Thomson’s terms. Hamraie goes on to add: “Normate and the mis-fit form a conceptual scheme that takes more common binary notions, such as normal and pathological, and gives them context within the built environment. Normates are unremarkable and perhaps even impossible figures, yet their intended presence permeates the world. Mis-fit is a material construct and a nearly universal experience that demands accountability by the built environment.”

¹⁰ See Autistic Self-Advocacy Network (ASAN) for more thorough critique: https://autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/AutismSpeaksFlier_color_2018.pdf

Confronting ableism requires that we attend to the primacy of disability experience, testimony, and interests while at the same time disburdening the disability community – in its plurality and disparities (and being far from a monolithic interest group) – with the work of confronting and overturning ableist practices and challenging the pervasiveness of ableist attitudes at every turn. At the end of *Addressing Ableism*, I was left with more questions than answers about the future of this bias and to what degree the identifications and resistances could equal a confrontation with ableism in its invisible and dismembering operations. I asked at the end, *is a non-ableist future possible?*

This need to confront the depth of ableism in the framework of the built environment is the problem so named in the title of this paper: how is the prosthetic operative in the worlding of the world?

Prosthesis as Futural

A philosophical examination of prosthesis begs the questions of not about how ableism operates in sites where disability experience is under-valued and non-normative, but in the ways the fabrication of tools specific to everyday function are *already* forms of resistance to able-normativity. Here I will expand on what I have already indicated that I take issue with: the mass production of and commodification of convenience in everyday technology-use. Is our cell phone manufactured so that it would create the same kind of dependence associated with a ‘crutch’? In what ways does it protect us from precarities, shape our *ableist* norms and – as I’ve called it – *affections*? And when a device no longer has a ‘prosthetic effect,’ especially those devices that are not made to be used in sustainable and organic ways, becoming artifact? Or worse, nothing more than junk?

In Elizabeth Grosz’s *Time Travels: Feminism, Nature, Power* (2005), she thinks about the space and time of “things and objects,” while stating that prosthetic objects:

[are] parts of the material world that we are capable of accommodating into the living practices (and experiences) of the body. ... Living bodies tend toward prostheses: they acquire and utilize supplementary objects through a kind of incorporation that enables them to function as if they were bodily organs. ... [Prostheses] are organized by *utility, adaptation, or need* (145–47, emphasis added).

In *Addressing Ableism*, I ask about the status of prosthesis manufacture: what kind of *tools* do we make for able-bodied norms and interests? Why are those prostheses associated with disability carry a different significance than being just another *tool*? In what ways ought we consider all prostheses tools even if all tools are not prosthetic?

I make an important claim in this chapter as well: that when a tool fails, this is a crisis in all contexts, not just in the context of large-scale industrial interests. So, when a ‘construction crane fails, a wheelchair breaks, or when someone vulnerable to malaria does not have access to a mosquito net,’ specifically I argue:

It is that each shows how dependent each person can be to tools, large or small; the precariousness of our existence is in how we might not have tools that we need for survival or that tools break down, particularly and tragically render vulnerable bodies precarious in their failure, and particularly when we need them most to work. (AA, 137)

In each case, that failed tool is a question of everyone’s responsibility, it is to engage in a confrontation with ableism and the way ableism has transcribed itself into the worlding of the world.

A prosthesis that no longer serves as prosthetic becomes artifact. The case that best illustrates this is the one of the ‘Iron Man Arm’ (cited AA 130-131). A young boy born without part of one of his arms at the elbow was subject to much fanfare when Robert Downey Jr. ‘gifted’ him in person with a prosthetic ‘Iron Man’ arm. His mother was grateful and thought this would be incredibly meaningful to her son, as a fan of superheroes. As inspiration porn, we read or hear about these stories so that the able-bodied world ‘feels better’ in managing their deeper fear of becoming disabled. Not as well recognized by popular media, the boy ends up rejecting this prosthetic; his rationale (to paraphrase): ‘I would rather have my friends spend time with me as I am than be fascinated with my (Iron Man) arm.’ He understood that friendship operates more effectively as a prosthesis than the novelty of a prosthetic arm; an insight he was able to gather to the surprise of his mother.

The design of the prosthetic can either be organic or inorganic; produced in a way that opens up site-specific possibilities, or mass produced to serve general and normative need. The ‘straw ban’ is a good example of how inorganic prostheses can render precarity for some and not others, based on ableist interests and stereotype, returning the burden of able-normativity to the individual rather than redistributing the burden(s) of precariousness back to those least rather than

more precarious. The ‘straw ban debate’¹¹ – that disabled people have to debate the problem of banning straws – is a good indication of the lack of consideration for accessibility and the subtler ways in which resisting ableism is, generally speaking, often extraordinarily labor-intensive, and even then, a failed exercise.

Tobin Siebers argues in *Disability Theory* (2008):

It is taken for granted that nondisabled people may choose when to be able-bodied. In fact, the built environment is full of technologies that make life easier for those people who possess the physical power to perform tasks without these technologies. Stairs, elevators, escalators, washing machines, leaf and snow blowers, eggbeaters, chainsaws, and other tools help to relax physical standards for performing certain tasks. ... The moment that individuals are marked as disabled or diseased, however ... the technologies designed to make their life easier are viewed as expensive additions, unnecessary accommodations, and a burden on society.

Our current ontic, ‘everyday’ interpretation of prosthetics are that they are an *exception*, or perhaps for the presumed ‘[lazy](#)’ or ‘a special expense.’

Prosthetics – their symbolism, fabrication – is also an indication of our investments in future world habitability. Often, we see the mass production of tools and devices for the normative interests of the able-bodied, including as mere means to capital accumulation, profit-generation, and market-growth, securing the able-bodied as a ‘class,’ entitled in their protections from the

¹¹ From one site: ‘It costs \$0 to trust that disabled people know what accommodations we need.’ Available [here](https://www.mashable.com/2018/07/16/straw-ban/) (mashable.com, 7/16/18):

MANY DISABLED PEOPLE NEED PLASTIC STRAWS TO DRINK, EAT, TAKE MEDICATIONS, ETC. HERE'S HOW CURRENT ALTERNATIVE, REUSABLE OPTIONS ARE A HARM TO US.

	CHOKING HAZARD	INJURY RISK	NOT POSITIONABLE	COSTLY FOR CONSUMER	NOT HIGH-TEMP SAFE
Metal		✓	✓	✓	
Bamboo		✓	✓	✓	
Glass		✓	✓	✓	✓
Silicone			✓	✓	
Acrylic		✓	✓	✓	✓
Paper	✓		✓		✓
Pasta	✓	✓	✓		✓
Single-use					

by @sarahbreannep

*Pressure to create bio-degradable straw options that are safe for the environment AND for all disabled people should fall upon manufacturer, NOT marginalized disabled consumers.
 *Once we accept the necessity of plastic straws, we can work together on other environmental initiatives that are effective, inclusive and accessible.

precariousness of existence¹² – what Judith Butler described as the ‘grievable life.’¹³ We may consider Stephen Hawking a genius and therefore we justify the investment in his communication technology, mobility devices, his comfort and sustainment of desires and decision-making because his life is considered a grievable life. But, narrowly and harmfully, this is not a benefit distributed as such; as disability advocate, Patty Berne puts it:¹⁴

I really don’t understand the desire for enhancement technologies. We don’t have basic healthcare, not only in this country but globally. Preventable diseases are the number one killer globally. Talk about misplaced priorities. It is ... this huge irony that the research money . . . goes into emerging technologies as opposed to wheelchairs that are waterproof? [Scoffs]. That demonstrates the financial priorities with the healthcare system.

Wheelchairs are amazing and that’s really precious. And at the same time, it’s a machine. You know, I’m subject to its . . . frailties, you know, like any machine. So, it makes me feel pretty vulnerable.

It is important in my claim here that, it is less the case that prosthetics ‘enable’ what one is ‘unable’ to do, instead when I argue that *prosthetics are tools*, I mean that they provide the equipment for *en-memberment* against what otherwise renders one individuated and precarious, as even exceptionally precarious and dis-membered. The world offers itself *in its futurity* when the mosquito net is accessible and functional; one remains prophylactically protected from precarity in the same way my car has airbags; the wheelchair, in its design, ought to be waterproofed such that a wheelchair user could navigate *the world in its possibility*, never limited to the frailties of the tool itself, or to the arbitrariness of dry weather conditions.

What does this have to do with Heidegger?

Although, reportedly, Heidegger did not view prosthesis favorably,¹⁵ I want to re-politicize precarity against what is already a politicization of precarity according to an ableist and able-

¹² This is the subject of Chapter Four of *Addressing Ableism*.

¹³ “If certain lives do not qualify as lives or are, from the start, not conceivable as lives within certain epistemological frames, then these lives are never lived nor lost in the full sense. . . . *The precarity of life imposes an obligation upon us.*” From Butler’s “Precarious Life, Grievable Life” (2010).

¹⁴ From the film *FIXED: The Science Fiction of Human Enhancement*. (R. Brashear, dir., 2013), cited in AA, 129-30. That is not to say that one is or ought to be perceived as ‘wheelchair-bound’; advocates prefer being identified as ‘wheelchair users.’

¹⁵ “[P]hilosophers, such as Heidegger, who emphasize the amputation of prosthetics and view prosthesis as a form of bodily destruction. Heidegger argues, “the hand is the essential distinction of man... The typewriter tears writing from the essential realm of the hand” (qtd. in Kittler 198). As a mechanical device that regularizes the written word, the typewriter obliterates the handwritten mark, the trace of the body. The prosthetic typewriter mediates between the living hand and the dead typographic word.” From:

normative architecture. Being-in-the-world is always, already a being-precarious. My use of Heidegger includes the idea of temporality, the concept of the tool in relation to world-projects, and, from the later work, re-reading “The Question concerning Technology” and “Building Dwelling Thinking” for a working outline of the conditions for the making of organic prostheses in a non-ableist, and perhaps even an anti-ableist habitability. Simply stated, in that prosthetics are tools and can tell us about our temporalization, and the way in which the world gets temporalized, and that could make the world more habitable, then, it is fair to say that I think this might have something to do with Heidegger.

a) zuhandenheit

There is the tool that Heidegger himself describes, the hammer. [From AA, 136]: There is no specific thinking about the hammer, except in relation to its function as a tool in relation to the task of making: hammering nails with the hammer makes it ready-to-hand [*zuhanden*] in its proper environmental, (now invisible) functional proximity to other tools and objects. When ready-to-hand, the hammer is not only perceived as an object in itself, but also in relation to its function in the world. The context by which any tool functions is within its ‘serviceability.’ As Heidegger discusses the road sign along with the hammer:

[The road sign] is equipment for indicating, and as equipment, it is constituted by reference or assignment. It has the character of the ‘in-order-to’, its own definite serviceability. ... But an entity may have serviceability without thereby becoming a sign. As equipment, a ‘hammer’ too is constituted by a serviceability, but this does not make it a sign. (BT 109).

Yet, when the hammer does not work, suddenly it emerges into focus as something “of ontological concern,” as “present-at-hand,” [*vorhanden*] and, for Heidegger, this concern over the broken tool is bound to an existential projection of “Care” [*Sorge*]. When a tool is present-at-hand, we become concerned about its form, its figure and function such that it is a “thing” that will need to be fixed. The way in which tools get fabricated is out of an existential form of care-as-fixity.

The underpinning of the tool-that-can-fix, much like the desire to cure disability, is that its ‘serviceability’ is already for the sake of and underwritten by able-normativity. While Heidegger describes the tool in its *zuhandenheit* as a ‘de-severance’ that one cannot ‘cross-over’ (BT, 142-

<https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/prosthesis/> (¶6) citing Kittler, Friedrich A. Gramophone, Film, Typewriter. 1986. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.

143), such that, “To free a totality of involvements is, equiprimordially, to let something be involved at a region, and to do so by de-severing and giving directionality; ... In that significance with which Dasein (as concerned Being-in) is familiar, lies the essential co-disclosedness of space” (145). The worldedness is concealed rather than revealed by the *zuhandenheit* (147), especially in the activities of ‘making room’ and as ‘spaces’ and ‘places’ are abstracted in relation to this *existentiale*, we engage the world as something to ‘measure’ and ‘calculate’ (146-147).

Yet, the character of *vorhanden* comes to the fore when the ready-to-hand is in a particular mode, and ‘makes itself known’: “The modes of conspicuousness, obtrusiveness, and obstinacy all have the function of bringing to the fore the characteristic of presence-at-hand in what is ready-to-hand” (BT, 104). With disability, most of the world is already not prepared as ready-to-hand, and most of the serviceability of tools and equipment are already rendered *conspicuous* as objects for the projects of others, *obstinate* and inflexible to site-specific, non-ablenormative concerns, and obtrusive, announcing the ready-to-hand as only for some and not others so that to go without is a natural deficit in Dasein; the furniture of the world is already quite *un-zuhanden* in the face of disability.

Re-reading this through this lens, there may be insight into the way there may be no ‘room’ made for non-normative compartments, no ready-to-handedness of the world in its everyday operation. Everydayness already contains *strangeness* in the non-normative compartment, a forfeiture in the ordinary circumspections of worlded Care – in effect, an ableist world, with only room for the able-bodied, shows itself as already present-at-hand, fundamentally without prosthetic effect.

b) temporalization

Next, what is important to these considerations about how the world is mapped out with ableist bias is in how the built-environment, how the worlding of the world is ontologically shaped in relation to clock-time.

As I argue it in AA, (138):

The need for what I will call “time-telling”—to know exactly what time it is—comes into the field of concern both environmentally and physiologically. The demands of organic being require an attention to temporality—the cycles of growth and decay—in a way that we all are dependent on these rhythms for eating, expelling, housing, medicating, culturing, incubating, resting, etc. From the baking of bread and the growing of rice, to the length of a fever to throwing out garbage,

the labors and conditions can be marked and compared to other like labors and conditions, giving us expectation, that power to plan, anticipate, and imagine.

... Keeping time needs measure; what Heidegger had described as the creation of “clock time.” He also talked about the worldliness of clock time as it becomes differentiated with other temporalities: geological time, astronomical time.

Present technology has permitted an absurd amount of exactness in our telling of clock time in a need for synchronicity. Synchronicity in itself is not of particular virtue outside of the economic and cultural conditions that have come to demand it. In fact, any lag against synchronicity, especially as it relates to personal and privileged forms of consumption, has become quite intolerable if not also carries the characteristics of “disablement.” What dependency there is for so much of daily life to be “on” time!

Clock time demonstrates a fixity in worlded circumspection, a uniformity that Heidegger too found suspicious (CT 4E); it is, as he states it, “the specific fixing of the now” (5E).

As we may be ‘governed by our everydayness [*Alltäglichkeit*]’ (8E), the ableist affections in this everydayness can reveal the way in which precariousness *haunts* the normative in a way that it also *frames* the non-normative. Ablebodied normativities – what Garland Thomson named the ‘normate’ – already is a comportment of mis-fit, demonstrating possibilities inconceivable to everyday Dasein, revealed in how when organic prosthetics emerge as remedy to the poverty of ‘fitness,’ this revelatory power might, as the operation of retrofit, show the world in its leveled off circumspections, the limitations of average, everydayness.

If, as Heidegger states it, “the fundamental phenomenon of time is the future” (CT 14E), then how might the uncanniness of the world in its organization of worlded time, in the mismatch between the demands of the ablebodied against non-normative embodiment, instead of being ‘framed’ by the future, be a ‘reframing’ of the future? Heidegger asserts that Dasein is, in being futural, becomes itself. Time therefore, he states, is the “proper *principium individuationis*” (21E).¹⁶

c) habilitation

In “The Question Concerning Technology,” Heidegger describes the en-framing [*Ge-stell*] character of technology as it “reveals,” “unconceals” what is the standing-reserve of the natural

¹⁶ It is important to note here McRuer’s concept of ‘crip time’ and crip times, especially in relation to neoliberalism. Discussed here: https://www.mapping-access.com/podcast/2019/3/25/episode-5-contraneoliberalism-with-robert-mcruer?fbclid=IwAR3ZDKISdCGRC9Zz_7PwwY7eOEeylp_Lhf6b6HzHF6zMdag6-VOutxtEBkQ

world; “Such revealing concerns nature” (QT 326). He goes on to state, “The essence of modern technology shows itself in what we call enframing” (328). While Heidegger cautions us to the dangers of misconstruing “the unconcealed and misinterpret it” (331), “the verb ‘to save’ says more” (333).

It is not the technologies that control, organize, enframe nature that has a revealing power, but the poetic character of unfolding that comes with enduring technologies. I find it very interesting that Heidegger uses the example of the house (335); in which the place of community could ‘hold sway’ and ‘endure.’ In this way, reading for *technē*, ableist applications conceal rather than reveal what can unfold from the standing-reserve.

Merging different technologies in the fabrication of prosthetics can demonstrate the worlded possibilities, as in the case of wheelchair design, but the tendency is to move toward the transhumanist designs ‘for everyone’ – not based on the building around the most precarious but a equalization as if to ‘level-off’ the differentiability of need, (for example, see [here](#)) – which is part of exactly Heidegger’s caution: “enframing does not simply endanger man in his relationship to himself and to everything that is. As a destining, it banishes man [sic.] into the kind of revealing that is an ordering. Where this ordering holds sway, it drives out every other possibility of revealing” (332).

There is an assumption of care in the institutionalization and distribution of *re-habilitations* – for disability, for disorder, for the non-normative; as the housing of that which is outside of the average, everyday, the able-bodied and economically viable. The harm of institutionalizing the non-normative, atypical – the social construction of disability – is also intergenerational. Ableism is passed on from one generation to the next, a danger of which Heidegger indicates is a concealment and enframing of possibility against its unfolding.

If as Heidegger states it in “Building Dwelling Thinking,” “to dwell [*bauen*] ... also means at the same time to cherish, protect, to preserve and care for, ... to cultivate ... Such building only takes care” (BDT, 349), and that, similarly, as *bauen*¹⁷ is also to ‘remain,’ “preserved from harm and danger, preserved from something, safeguarded,” (351), then what does that mean when we

¹⁷ This is also where Heidegger discusses concepts of freedom as a kind of ‘sparing’ – to be ‘spared.’ “To dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its essence” (BDT 351).

sequester, segregate, not safeguard, but institutionalize and reserve more harm and danger for the precarities that come with disability?

It is worth citing Mike Brown writing for *The Guardian* (Jan 25, 2017), in a report titled, “Disabled people are to be ‘warehoused.’ We should be livid”:¹⁸

Disabled people have long fought against the phenomenon of “warehousing” – storing people with care needs under one roof as a way to reduce the costs of providing them with the support they require. The word warehousing captures the full horror people feel about being forced into institutional care, losing privacy and autonomy (§7).

In *Addressing Ableism*, (112-113), I recount the story of Sabine, the central character of a documentary, *Her Name is Sabine* (2007), an autistic woman who, after years of institutionalization and ‘therapies’, is further dis-membered, given the added diagnosis of infantilism after the damages done to her system from the long-standing institutionalized care. Her sister, directing the documentary, sets up a group home for her after getting her released from the institution, with specific supports accommodating her and a small group of peers to live – to dwell – free of the harms and dangers that an ableist society poses – including from its psychopharmaceutical technologies and invasive behavior therapies. In those conditions, her sister revealed herself and was returned to herself as a grievable life. It would be worth restating Brown’s injunction above: when it is clear that we have built and have inherited a world thoroughly ableist and otherwise uninhabitable to the non-normative, out of our own desire to control the anxiety over our own existential precariousness to those whose lives are perceived as burdensome or abject, why not, instead, aren’t we livid?

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¹⁸ Cited in AA, 113-114. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jan/25/disabled-people-disabilities-health-care-homes>

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Is Heidegger a Phenomenologist?

Panel Discussion, Heidegger Circle 2019

ABSTRACT

This panel explores Heidegger's complicated relationship with phenomenology. One question is whether Heidegger was a phenomenologist at all. For Husserl, phenomenology was the study of essential structures of consciousness, and since Heidegger rejects both the ontological and methodological priority of consciousness, it might seem like he rejects phenomenology as well. On the other hand, the defining motto of phenomenology is 'to the things themselves,' and this seems to capture the persistent aim of Heidegger's thinking, be it the work of art, technology, language, animality, or Dasein itself. Yet even if there is some way that Heidegger is 'doing phenomenology,' it's not at all clear *how* he is doing it. He abandons Husserl's reliance on the epoche, self-reflection, eidetic variation, and so on, and yet, while clearly not employing such a method, Heidegger does frequently write about a *way* of thinking proper to philosophy—can this way be described as phenomenological? In some ways our question is intractable—there are just too many ways to define phenomenology and too many ways to read Heidegger such that no single, broad consensus on both is likely to emerge—and yet, the question seems crucial for the understanding of Heidegger's philosophy as a whole. Phenomenology, one can argue, holds the double promise that we can still think with Heidegger, instead of thinking about him as historical figure, and that there is something in his thought that is revealed, and not just postulated or construed.

Phenomenology as Essential Thinking

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I will make a case for Heideggerian Wesensschau. About ten years ago, a famous discussion occurred around Heidegger and the phenomenological legacy on the occasion of the volume *Becoming Heidegger*. This discussion—in which Steven Crowell and Theodore Kisiel marked respectively the endpoints for and against Heidegger's phenomenological legacy—was largely about methodology and the basic assumptions motivating the project of *Being and Time*. I provisionally bracket that debate in order to approach the question from a different angle. Throughout his work, Heidegger frames his investigations in terms of a pursuit of essence. Well-known examples include the essence of truth, the essence of ground, the essence of poetry, the

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essence of art and technology, the essence of the thing, and of course, the essence of time, and of language. I will discuss the ways in which Heidegger's pursuit of essence should and should not be considered phenomenological.

I start with a brief review of Husserl's ideal of *Wesensschau* in terms of the aims and methods of his own idea of phenomenology. Husserl modeled the intuition of phenomenological essences on mathematical intuition, on which he also modeled the methods of phenomenological reduction and eidetic variation. I explain the basic difference for Husserl between fact and essence, and further, the distinction between phenomenological essences, on the one hand, and mathematical and metaphysical essences, on the other. I then turn to Heidegger's investigations into essence. First, drawing from Aryeh Kosman's work on Aristotle, I point out the ways that Heidegger's early investigations into Aristotle can be seen as implicit critiques of Husserl's concept of essence. I show that Heidegger's later studies of essence—the essence of art, technology, and poetry specifically—are consistent with that earlier work on Aristotle. In contrast with Husserl, we find that Heidegger thinks of essences as finite and historical, and active or *poetic*, rather than static and eternal. Furthermore, there is a sense in which *Dasein* is responsible for essences, and activated by essences, in a way that has no obvious corollary in Husserl. I also consider *how* we gain insight into essences according to Heidegger. Kisiel argued that Heidegger abandons phenomenology because he sees no way around Natorp's objection that any reflection interrupts the immediacy of life and must be expressed in a language that distorts that same immediacy. I look at how a third form of directed awareness—which Heidegger later named '*Besinnung*'—escapes Kisiel's dichotomy and is used by Heidegger to achieve insight into essence. I conclude with a few remarks as to how this might still be considered phenomenological.

Phenomenology as Realism

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According to one auto-biographical account, phenomenology is no doctrine for Heidegger but “the ability of thinking to respond to the demand of that which needs to be thought” (*die Möglichkeit des Denkens, dem Anspruch des zu Denkenden zu entsprechen*).³ This ability changes throughout time, but remains effective precisely because it undergoes change. I will argue that for Heidegger phenomenology is primarily this varying yet constant openness to things themselves, making it more of a disposition than a method. I will also argue that through this disposition Heidegger seeks what can be called a radical exposure to an ultimate experience. In the early work, the ultimate experience lies in temporality as finitude, while the exposure to the experience is radical insofar as it is unencumbered by theoretical rationalizations.

Based on this understanding, phenomenology follows a realist intention: it reveals what actually occurs in the ultimate experience. The same holds for the analysis of being: the meaning of being is no mere structure, which could be captured through an epistemic stance, but the way in which being occurs. I will argue that in order to understand the role of phenomenology in Heidegger, one has to understand the realist intention driving his thought. Scholars have debated whether Heidegger is rather a realist or an idealist. *Being and Time* makes clear that he avoids holding either position.⁴ As Dreyfus and others have pointed out, Heidegger has no problem assuming that natural entities exist independent from us.⁵ The point is, however, that mind-independence has no bearing on the question of being. Being determines not *that* natural entities are but *how* they are, and there is no way in which the mode of being can be separated from the very fact of existence. This means that despite his realist intentions, Heidegger can be no genuine realist and his thinking cannot avoid being qualified as a sort of correlationism.⁶

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³ Martin Heidegger, „Mein Weg in die Phänomenologie, in: *Zur Sache des Denkens*, Tübingen: Niemeyer ³1988, 90.

⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*. Translated by Joan Stambaugh, revised by Dennis J. Schmidt, State University of New York Press 2010, 198.

⁵ See Hubert Dreyfus, Charles Spinoza, “Coping with things-in-themselves. A practice-based argument phenomenological for realism.” *Inquiry* 42 (1999), 49-78.

⁶ For a definition of this term, see Quentin Meillassoux, *On Finitude. An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*, London: Continuum, 2010, 5. For Heidegger’s qualified endorsement of realism, see William Blattner, “Is Heidegger a Kantian idealist?” *Inquiry* 37 (1994), 185-201.

Correlationism, however, is often understood in a formalistic and narrow sense that misses the content and concreteness of Heidegger's thought. In addition, correlationism does not make it impossible for an experience actually to occur and carry substantive content, nor does it make it impossible for this experience to be ultimate. I will argue that being, in whichever way it is conceived, is the systematic equivalent to what in other forms of philosophy would be called an ultimate reality. In the final step, I will show that the realist intention of Heidegger's thought can achieve its purpose only through its breakdown. What is actually revealed is revealed as withdrawn, so that the ultimate reality of being lies in its absence for the phenomenological investigation. A Heideggerian realism is possible only insofar as it makes itself impossible. On the other hand, the fact that the reality of being is withdrawn is precisely the reason why it can be deemed ultimate. It is important to decouple realism from the attempt at securing epistemic certainty and the full givenness of phenomena (or to decouple realism from the pretense of being the philosophical correlate of a science). One example of this paradoxical constellation is the way in which *Dasein* confronts death. The anticipation of death, which is inaccessible in itself, constitutes both the ultimate goal and the breakdown of phenomenology in *Being and Time*.⁷ I will conclude by indicating how a similar constellation prevails in the thinking of the *Ereignis* and the clearing in Heidegger's middle and late works.

⁷ Death is "the possibility of the impossibility of every mode of behavior toward..., of every way of existing. In anticipating this possibility, it becomes 'greater and greater', that is, it reveals itself as something which knows no measure at all, no more or less, but means the possibility of the measureless impossibility of existence." (*Being and Time*, 251)

The Multi-Dimensionality of Being-in-the-world: A Phenomenology of Identity

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ABSTRACT

This paper uses the phenomenon of Post-Traumatic Stress flashbacks to illuminate a phenomenology of identity. By taking a phenomenological approach to flashbacks, I delineate the fragility and, what I consider to be, the multi-dimensionality of identity and, correspondingly, the multi-dimensionality of the world (i.e., the contexture of intelligibility opened up when Dasein projects onto a multi-dimensional identity). When severe flashbacks occur, the ontological experience may not seem intelligible to das Man (i.e., the “they”) for the immediate illumination of the multi-dimensional aspect of being does not adhere to the “everydayness” of the world as articulated by das Man. This rapid shift in the world and the meaning of entities made possible within that world provides a significant illustration of the multi-dimensionality of identity. In other words, during a flashback a person’s vocation towards an identity, one whose visceral experience causes action, is an experience that does not coincide nor seem intelligible to the “everydayness” of Dasein. The multi-dimensionality of identity, however, allows entities to afford Dasein in intelligible ways. This state of being that retracts from the “everydayness” of das Man has drastic consequences for those who experience such a rapid shift. Here, I argue that flashbacks that occur are the result of the multi-dimensionality of Being-in-the-world.

INTRODUCTION

Recent phenomenological work has increased our understanding of identity as the basis for lived experience. In *In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self*, feminist phenomenologist Mariana Ortega has had a significant impact on our understanding of the self as multiplicitous.¹ This understanding takes a hierarchical structure which includes subsequent levels of various identities beneath a singular “I”. Ortega contributes the notion of *being-between-worlds* to the phenomenological literature. This critical analysis of the self has not only supplemented a missing aspect in classic phenomenology, specifically in Heideggerian existential phenomenology, but has become helpful in understanding the lived experience of those living in the margins of society. At the same time, few contemporary scholars have approached human psychology using phenomenological analysis and critique. One such scholar, psychoanalyst Robert D. Stolorow, analogizes the psychoanalytic method and Heidegger’s investigation in *Being and Time*.² Stolorow suggests that both psychoanalysis and Heidegger’s

¹ Ortega, M., (2016). *In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self*. SUNY Press

² Also, see Malabou, Catherine, (2012). “Ontology of the Accident: An essay on destructive plasticity.” Translated by Carolyn Shread. *Polity Press*.

Being and Time are phenomenological, hermeneutic, and contextual; further, a Heideggerian approach to trauma benefits the psychoanalytic analysis and the psychoanalytic analysis helps disclose Heidegger's existential phenomenology.³ Following Stolorow, in this paper I take a phenomenological approach to flashbacks to illustrate the multi-dimensionality of Being-in-the-world and, correspondingly, the multi-dimensionality of the world itself. That is, I argue that identity, rather than a hierarchical structure, is a network in which all identities are interacting with no underlying power (i.e., no underlying "I"). This revelation will not only disclose the self as a multi-dimensional Being-in-the-world but will, hopefully, be valuable to psychologists in understanding the lived experience of those who undergo severe flashbacks.

The following is a description of an experience had by a veteran who had recently returned from the Vietnam War. This event constitutes a severe flashback experienced by a veteran diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder:

A Vietnam veteran with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder was driving on the New Jersey Turnpike near Newark Airport when a helicopter flew directly overhead. Suddenly, he slammed on the brakes, pulled his car to the side of the road, jumped out, and threw himself into a ditch. The unexpected sound of the helicopter had taken him back to Vietnam and a time of being psychologically overwhelmed by incoming enemy fire. The flashback was intense. His experience was not of remembering an event, but of living the event.⁴

I will use this example to illustrate the multi-dimensionality of Being-in-the-world.⁵ First, I will give a detailed description of Heidegger's "Being-in-the-world" and explore ways in which this Being-in-the-world may break down. I will delineate Mariana Ortega's recent phenomenological work that considers Being-in-the-world as multiplicitous. Lastly, I introduce Being-in-the-world as multi-dimensional and elaborate on the implications this multi-dimensionality has on Being-in-the-world.

³ Stolorow, R., (2011). *World, Affectivity, Trauma: Heidegger and Post-Cartesian Psychoanalysis*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, (p. 5).

⁴ Psychology Today (15 August 2014). "Is What You Are Feeling A Flashback?" Received at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/conquer-fear-flying/201408/is-what-you-are-feeling-flashback>

⁵ I do not wish to generalize the experience of flashbacks and stress that, when using the term "flashback" within this paper, I am referring to the given example as an exemplary case.

BEING-IN-THE-WORLD

The activity of our existence is what Heidegger calls “Being-in-the-world.”⁶ Heidegger’s “Dasein” refers to a human being as both ontic (an entity as such) and ontological (the possibility of being the entity that itself is). In other words, Dasein is an entity that understands its existence as a possibility of being.⁷ Dasein’s mode of “everydayness” is one that is both *Being-with* and *Dasein-with* (*Mitsein* und *Mitdasein*). The *Being-with* and *Dasein-with* of “everydayness” is a state in which Dasein is *Being-with das Man* (the ‘they’) and *Dasein-with* itself. Heidegger claims that Being-in-the-world is “that basic state of Dasein by which every mode of its Being gets co-determined.”⁸ This co-determination is foundational to Dasein’s “everydayness” as our existence is a collaboration between oneself and Others within the surrounding environment.⁹ That is to say, the ‘they’ (i.e., myself and Others), create the constitutive standards¹⁰ for the identities Dasein takes up and thus, the ‘they’ co-determines Dasein’s Being-in-the-world. Heidegger continues, “by ‘others’ we do not mean everyone else but me – those over against whom the “I” stands out. They are rather those from whom, for the most part, one does not distinguish oneself – those among whom one is too ... Even Dasein’s Being-alone is *Being-with* in the world.”¹¹ In other words, Dasein’s identity is based on an intersubjective relationship with Others living in society, a relationship Dasein cannot easily escape.¹²

When Dasein projects onto a possibility, an identity, she *takes-a-stand* on who she is. For Dasein to do this she must first *listen* away from herself towards the ‘they’ and then project

⁶ When discussing Being-in-the-World and Being-in as such, Heidegger states that “these are both ways in which Dasein’s Being takes on a definite character, and they must be seen and understood a priori as grounded upon that state of Being which we have called ‘Being-in-the-world’. An interpretation of this constitutive state is needed if we are to set up our analytic of Dasein correctly” (SZ53).

⁷ John Haugeland, in *Dasein Disclosed*, states: “For, on the one hand, dasein is, by definition, the entity that understands being – or rather, and more pointedly, dasein is the entity that *is* an understanding of being” (222). Also see Dreyfus, H., (1991). *Being-in-the-World*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 153.

⁹ Heidegger states: “Dasein’s projection of itself understandingly is in each case already alongside a world that has been discovered. From this world it takes its possibilities, and it does so first in accordance with the way things have been interpreted by the ‘they’.” (p. 239).

¹⁰ See: Korsgaard, C., (2009). *Self Constitution: Agency, Identity, and Integrity*. Oxford University Press.

Korsgaard suggests that “every object and activity is defined by certain standards that are both constitutive of it and normative for it” (2.1.6).

¹¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 154-156.

¹² Also see David Gauthier’s “Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Levinas, and the Politics of Dwelling” in which he states, “in the directing course of everydayness, *das Man* exercises a ‘dictatorship’ over the individual that is nearly unlimited in scope” (27).

onto one of the available possibilities given by the ‘they’.¹³ This call or vocation towards a specific identity is world-disclosing in that it opens up a possibility space in which entities (i.e., independently existing subjects and objects) may afford Dasein in meaningful ways.¹⁴

Heidegger suggests Dasein’s “ability-to-be” is what allows Dasein to make sense of entities within the world as well as have the ability to form lasting projects.¹⁵ That is, the identity Dasein takes up allows for a world of possibility space to be revealed and thus, a world in which sense-making is possible. Within this possibility space, entities (e.g., the helicopter for instance) are encountered and, depending on the identity taken up, become meaningful in intelligible ways. Given Dasein’s *Being-with*, the entities that are found meaningful will afford or solicit actions by Dasein in a way *das Man* may find meaningful and intelligible as well.¹⁶

The everyday mode of Dasein, Heidegger suggests, is in a state of *falling* towards the ‘they,’ as a *Being-with* the ‘they,’ by identifying with the constitutive standards prescribed by the ‘they’.¹⁷ The experience of *falling* may be interrupted in moments of anxiety that discloses Dasein as a Being-in-the-world, as a being that has been thrown into a world – involuntarily and without consent - with the possibility of authenticity. Heidegger suggests that when Dasein retracts from the everyday mode of *Being-with*, Dasein is in a state of resoluteness, a state in which Dasein is an “authentic Being-one’s-Self” whose state of *Being-with* is disclosed. Heidegger states that resoluteness “does not detach Dasein from its world, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating ‘I’... Resoluteness brings the Self right into its current concerned Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes it into solicitous Being with Others ... Even resolutions remain dependent upon the ‘they’ and its world.”¹⁸ In other words, this resoluteness discloses Dasein to itself as a *Being-with* Being-in-the-world and prepares Dasein for anxiety in so far as Dasein has revealed itself as *fallen* and illuminates the fragility of itself as a thrown

¹³ The possibilities, identities, available are those given by the ‘they’ within the surrounding environment, without which Dasein would not be a ‘Being-in-the-world’ but rather a mere entity as such.

¹⁴ For example: being that I identify as student, one who is currently working on a writing sample for PhD applications, my computer calls to me in that I need to use this entity in order to complete my current project. Or, the helicopter affords the citizen in a nonthreatening way, while that same entity, the helicopter, affords the soldier as threatening.

¹⁵ See Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world*.

¹⁶ Dreyfus notes that, for Heidegger, “there is no such thing as *my* world, if this is taken as some private sphere of experience and meaning, which is self-sufficient and intelligible in itself, and so more fundamental than the shared public world and its local modes ... *the* world is always prior to *my* world” (p. 90).

¹⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 219-224.

¹⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 344.

being. The possibility of anxiety is what makes fear possible for it uncovers a feeling in which Dasein is not at ease and, in most cases, retracts to the everyday *falling* towards the ‘they’.¹⁹

With respect to the state of anxiety, Heidegger states the following:

Anxiety makes manifest in Dasein its Being towards its ownmost potentiality-for-Being – that is, its *Being-free for* the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold of itself. Anxiety brings Dasein face to face with its *Being-free for (propensio in ...)* the authenticity of its Being, and for this authenticity as a possibility which it always is. But, at the same time, this is the Being to which Dasein as Being-in-the-world has been delivered.²⁰

For instance, the Veteran experiencing a severe flashback is an event in which Dasein’s Being is thrown into a state of anxiety because the entity (i.e., the helicopter) affords Dasein in a way that is not intelligible to *das Man*. What is noteworthy in this instance, however, is that the ease of Dasein’s everyday *Being-with* is ruptured yet replaced by a *Being-with* that was previously disclosed (i.e., the helicopter affords Dasein as if in a war zone, as threatening) and thus, anxiety is not manifested fully. It is this break down in the “everydayness” of Being-in-the-world and Dasein’s pull towards a *Being-with* of the past that illuminates the collision of Dasein’s temporal dimension as well as discloses the multi-dimensionality of Dasein’s Being. When considering a break down in the everydayness of Being-in-the-world, there are multiple ways Dasein may experience this rupture. Within the next section, I will give a few examples of how Dasein’s Being-in-the-world can break down.

BREAKDOWN

Robert Stolorow’s Heideggerian approach to trauma provides rich philosophical reflection with regard to one possible break down, a temporal break that may occur after a traumatic event. Stolorow, in *Trauma and Human Experience*, explores the “breaking up of the unifying thread of temporality, a consequence of trauma usually covered under the heading of dissociation and multiplicity.”²¹ Stolorow uses Heidegger’s notion of temporality as equiprimordial and suggests that the past, present, and future constitute “a primordial whole in

¹⁹ Heidegger states, “The character of Being-in was then brought to view more concretely through the everyday publicness of the “they”, which brings tranquilized self-assurance – ‘Being-at-home’, with all its obviousness – into the average everydayness of Dasein. On the other hand, as Dasein falls, anxiety brings it back from its absorption in the ‘world’. Everyday familiarity collapses. Dasein has been individualized, but individualized as Being-in-the-world” (p. 233). The state of being individualized is what Heidegger refers to as ‘uncanniness’.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 188.

²¹ Stolorow, *Trauma and Human Experience*, p. 19.

which all three are indissolubly united” and thus, “every lived experience is always in all three dimensions of time.”²² That is, when a person experiences a traumatic event, that event does not become merely a memory but continues to penetrate the present which then infiltrates the future. He then argues that flashbacks occur after a traumatic event due to a break in this temporal structure that causes a collision between two dimensions of time (i.e., past and present); that the sense of Being is lost when this temporal rupture occurs for this rupture is not a part of Dasein’s “everydayness”. This rupture in time is a break down for the sequential nature of temporality we typically experience, what Heidegger refers to as “parametrics,” no longer persists; it is one that becomes indifferent as a closed system in which a person is crystallized for the world ceases to have possibilities.²³

Lisa Guenther discussing another possible break down that may occur in *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and its Afterlives*. In her study of the phenomenology of solitary confinement, she introduces the notion of ‘becoming unhinged’ suggesting that “in the context of this inquiry, ‘becoming unhinged’ is not just a colloquial expression; rather, it is a precise phenomenological description of what happens when the articulated joints of our embodied, intersubjectivity are broken apart.”²⁴ Although Guenther is specifically referring to those in solitary confinement when considering the experience of ‘becoming unhinged,’ this notion will be helpful for our inquiry in discussing the breakdown of the individual’s everyday intersubjectivity with regard to the flashback experience. As a person becomes disassociated with those around them, the world, as well as Dasein’s *Being-with*, begins to shift in ways that are unfamiliar and uneasy. Guenther claims that “the very possibility of being broken in this way suggests that we are not simply atomistic individuals but rather hinged subjects who can become unhinged when the concrete experience of other embodied subjects is denied for too long.”²⁵ When a flashback occurs, one has an experience in which resoluteness is present and

²² Ibid., p. 19. Also, see: Withy, K., *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*. Withy suggests that “Dasein’s uncanniness has the same structure: the ‘future’ of Dasein’s finite openness first allows, but presupposes, the ‘past’ of its opening into finitude. Temporality is thus uncanny” (p. 207).

²³ See Fielding, H. A., (2017). *Feminist Phenomenology Future: “Open Future, Regaining Possibility.”* Indiana University Press. Fielding, when discussing the traumatic aftermath of a young girl who eventually committed suicide, states, “it would seem that the inexhaustible present did not appear to them as an open structure. Instead it appeared as a closed but infinite system, and the only possibility for escape was to leave the system altogether, for a system does not allow for the here and now that grounds reality in an open present” (99).

²⁴ Guenther, L., (2013). *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and It’s Afterlives*. University of Minnesota Press (p. xii)

²⁵ Ibid., p. xii.

overwhelming; Dasein is moving away from the mode of “everydayness” and yet, is projecting onto an identity that had previously been familiar, an identity associated with a different world and the embodied Others within that world. In the case of flashbacks, the present *Being-with* of Dasein is ruptured and replaced while the temporal aspect of Dasein’s lived experience loses its symmetry.

Though Heidegger does not consider the embodied experience within his existential phenomenology, this intersubjective reality discloses the importance of *Being-with* and how problematic it can be to be without.²⁶ The body as a point of reference for sensemaking divides a person’s experience from other people causing an intersubjective multiplicity in perceptual experience. Guenther suggests, “this structure of multiplicity of different perspectives on the same object has important implications, both for the constitution of the sense of an alter ego and for the sense of a shared objective world ... the experience of other subjects oriented toward a common world is crucial for the constitution of objective reality.”²⁷ When flashbacks occur, this objective reality breaks down, illuminating the fragility of Being-in-the-world.²⁸

THE MULTIPLICITOUS SELF

In her recent work, Mariana Ortega gives an analysis of *being-between-worlds* that helps to illustrate Dasein as multiplicitous.²⁹ Ortega discusses the self as an “existential pluralism,” suggesting that the self is both flexible and intersectional and undergoes “moments of contradiction, ambiguity, and what I [Ortega] refer to as a thick sense of not being-at-ease, [however,] this self still experiences a continuity of experience, an existential continuity that makes possible the self’s sense of being an ‘I’.”³⁰ When Dasein is a *being-between-worlds* her

²⁶ See Kevin Aho’s “Heidegger’s Neglect of the Body” for further information on the lack of embodiment in Heidegger’s existential phenomenology.

²⁷ Guenther, *Solitary Confinement*, pp. 31-32.

²⁸ Katherine Withy, in *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*, notes that “what withdraws in angst is the world” as the world is “a public network of meaningful relationships, in terms of which entities are intelligible as the entities that they are” (55). If entities are intelligible as the entities they are, these entities should also be intelligible to *das Man*. When Dasein experiences a severe flashback, the world she is in withdraws and is replaced by a world previously inhabited. In other words, the entities within the world, the “totality of involvements,” of Dasein ruptures while the dimensions of time overlap, pulling Dasein into a multi-dimensional world. Withy continues, “when it [the object] lacks a place in the totality of involvements, an entity is only potentially intelligible” (55). Considering the example, the helicopter is intelligible to Dasein and affords a response, however, the helicopter is only potentially intelligible to Dasein as a being-with in the world *das Man* dwells.

²⁹ Ortega, M., (2016). *In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self*.

³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 50.

identities become flexible as the customs of the community and entities within that community afford her in different ways.³¹ This flexibility allows Dasein to live *in-between* while continuing to exist as a *Being-with das Man* within the different worlds she dwells. The *being-between-worlds* Being-in-the-world may not reveal itself to *das Man* for it is a visceral experience she herself lives out and is not typically one that other people are aware of nor understand.³² To illustrate the multiplicitous self, Ortega suggests the following:

The multiplicitous self has multiple social identities in terms of race, gender, sexuality, class ... and this self must negotiate such identities while being between-worlds and being-in-worlds. As a self in process or in the making, the multiplicitous self is continually engaged in these negotiations, which include sometimes having to strategically deploy certain identities in certain worlds.³³

This multiplicitous self includes a continuity of identities that are taken up, voluntarily or involuntarily, and, depending on which identity Dasein is as a *Being-with*, the identity taken up will dictate how Dasein will conduct herself as well as how entities will afford her. Dasein's ability to move *in-between* worlds elucidates a world as distinct from another and how, depending on which world she is in and the identity she takes up, the meanings of entities within that world will adjust accordingly.

THE MULTI-DIMENTIONAL BEING-IN-THE-WORLD

Although understanding the self as multiplicitous is helpful in describing Dasein's lived experience, this notion does not fully capture the complexity of identity. The multiplicitous self arranges identity as a hierarchical structure, one in which a continuity is established as an underlying "I". The multi-dimensional self, which I believe better represents identity, is one that takes the self as a network of identities, a network that considers the complexity of having multiple identities as well as the equi-primordial dimensions of time. This "multi-dimensional Being-in-the-world" will better illustrate and explain the lived experience of those who undergo

Maria Lugones, in "Playfulness, 'World'-Travelling, and Loving Perception," describes four ways in which an individual is at ease in the world: 1) fluent speaker, 2) normatively happy, 3) humanly bonded, and 4) has a shared history with others.

³¹ The different customs may range from language to gestures towards others (e.g., kissing another on the cheek is a sign of greeting in some cultures while inappropriate in others).

³² For example, although my professor knows that I am a daughter to my parents, that professor does not experience the world I am in when I interact with my parents. The professor will only interact with me in a world in which I am their student until I am no longer.

³³ Ortega, *In-Between*, p. 74.

flashbacks. The veteran in this case is not merely living *in-between* worlds but is living in a world in which his everyday *Being-with* is ruptured as he is thrown involuntarily into the past. In other words, the Veteran is living in a world in which the temporal aspect of *Being-with* is overlapping and the “nearness” of a past experience infiltrates the present as the Veteran is afforded by the helicopter as a *Being-with* Others who had previously inhabited the world (i.e., while overseas). This experience, I argue, can only occur if the self, Dasein, is a multi-dimensional Being-in-the-world.

Heidegger suggests that “when saying ‘I’, Dasein surely has in view the entity which, in every case, it is itself. The everyday interpretation of the Self, however, has a tendency to understand itself in terms of the ‘world’ with which it is concerned.”³⁴ That is, to understand itself as the possibilities taken up is to understand itself, not as an ‘I’ but rather, as a multi-dimensional Being-in-the-world for the lived experience in which Dasein is a *Being-with* the ‘they’ consists of many contingencies. Being-in-the-world as one that is temporally equiprimordial results in Dasein’s Being-in-the-world as always temporally a multi-dimensional Being-in-the-world. This multi-dimensionality of Being-in-the-world, and the ruptures that may occur due to this multi-dimensionality, I argue taps into the phenomenological experience of flashbacks. When the veteran returns from war, the trauma experienced while overseas is carried by Dasein and continues to shape Dasein’s world. Although Dasein is thought to be co-determined, this co-determined experience is prevented when Dasein is thrown into a state of resoluteness. This state of resoluteness prepares Dasein for anxiety, to reveal itself as a Being-in-the-world, and the world in which Dasein is a *Being-with*. The co-determined structure of the world in which *das Man* dwells becomes insignificant as Dasein projects onto the identity in which the entity (i.e., the helicopter) is perceived as threatening. This insignificance, one in which Dasein’s *Being-with* is ruptured, occurs when Dasein is thrown into a state of resoluteness.³⁵ Heidegger describes this state as the following:

The resolution is precisely the disclosive projection and determination of what is factually possible at the time. To resoluteness, the indefiniteness characteristic of every potentiality-for-Being into which Dasein has been factually thrown, is something that necessarily belongs ... “Resoluteness” signifies letting oneself be

³⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 368.

³⁵ Heidegger states, “this distinctive and authentic disclosedness, which is attested in Dasein itself by its conscience – *this reticent self-projection upon one’s ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety* – we call “resoluteness”. (p. 343)

summoned out of one's lostness in the "they". The irresoluteness of the "they" remains dominant notwithstanding, but it cannot impugn resolute existence.³⁶

Although Dasein, when experiencing a flashback, retracts from the everydayness of the 'they', anxiety is not fully manifest. For Dasein's resoluteness to result in a state of anxiety, the world, along with the entities that are ready-to-hand, would lack any significant meaning. This, however, is not the final result when considering the experience of a flashback. In the case of the veteran, the entity (i.e., the helicopter) affords an intelligible response from Dasein. This experience is one in which the meaning of what is presence-at-hand does not break down entirely but, rather, affords Dasein's Being-in-the-world as it had in a different, a previous, dimension of time (i.e., while the Veteran was overseas). This experience is the result of temporality being equiprimordial and discloses the fragility of Dasein's *Being-with* due to the multi-dimensional aspect of Dasein's Being-in-the-world.

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³⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 344-346.

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‘ . . . a motherless child’: Heidegger’s Abject Bodies

Reginald Lilly
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“Be not ashamed woman . . . your privilege
encloses the rest . . . it is the exit of the rest,
You are the gates of the body, and the gates
of the soul”

Walt Whitman

“No, as in true theater, without makeup or
masks, refuse and corpses *show me* what I
permanently thrust aside in order to live.”

Julia Kristeva

“With the factual existence of Dasein,
innerworldly beings are also already
encountered. *That*¹ such beings are
discovered in the there of its own existence
is not under the control of Dasein. Only
what, in *which* direction, *to what extent*, and
how it actually discovers and discloses is a
matter of freedom, although always within
the limits of its thrownness.” SZ 366

¹ Emphasis on ‘that’ is mine.

ABSTRACT

I examine Heidegger's concept of body in SZ against the background of trauma studies which has, for some time, assigned the body a central role in trauma, not just as biological entity, but as a lived body with a specific temporality. For humans, as embodied and mortal, trauma is not merely an empirical possibility, but is an essential one; namely, the possibility of an essential dissociation in which wholeness and 'mineness' are fundamentally called into question. In my paper I first indicate the significance of wholeness for his project, and the role of the ontosomatic in it. Heidegger seeks in being-toward-death Dasein's being-whole, but his death analysis reveals a displacement of somato-onticity *that obscures its peculiar temporality*. Two themes converge in this analysis: embodiment and temporality. I propose that the body and its temporality as a (surviving) worldly being is not extrinsic to 'who' Dasein is, or to its 'mineness,' and to that extent, Dasein's body is essentially disruptive of Heidegger's project. Heidegger's fundamental ontology purchases (ontological) wholeness at the expense of the interminable openness of being-with of having-been (natality) and legacy (future) that cannot be understood apart from bodiliness. In this regard, trauma is not an adventitious occurrence, but a fundamental condition of Dasein.

Key words: Heidegger, trauma, embodiment, wholeness, being-with

Whitman's "I Sing the body Electric" is an encomium to bodies, their parts and places – faces, joints, breasts, as well as bodies by the river, in the garden, etc. But Whitman's epigram also speaks of woman ambiguously as a particular, singular women, and as that being encompassing all others, as if through her the world worlds with beings. It calls to a new experience of body and world.

The present study of *soma* developed from work in trauma studies where my working thesis is that humans as being-in-the-world are not just susceptible to trauma, but that trauma brings forward a fundamental existential condition regarding mortality that contest the consolidating function it has served in a long tradition of philosophy, including Heidegger. As such, one may speak of 'fundamental traumatology' as a moment of 'fundamental ontosomatology.' For the most part, *soma*, or embodiment, has been treated as a regional, not a fundamental concern (save for some feminists, psychoanalysts, and a few other thinkers)²; unsurprisingly, traumatology is foreclosed.

² Too many to list, a few representatives are: Judith Butler, Donald Winnicott, Julia Kristeva, and perhaps *primus inter pares*, Jean-Luc Nancy.

For traumatology, the self is a temporalizing embodied survivor living the aftermath of a death. Obviously traumatic events can occur mid-life, but it can also occur intergenerationally, from birth.³ ‘Death experience’ has long been the gold standard for traumatogenesis, but no experience is inherently traumatogenic. Other experiences can be traumatogenic: child and adult abuse, betrayal, loss, etc. But common to all manners of trauma are these features: trauma rivets one to a singular place and time, it is an affair of bodies,⁴ and it effects dissociation. Trauma ‘splits,’ ‘fractures,’ hollows out a ‘black hole’ in the self, the somatopsychic self. The survivor, simply put, is a cloven site, *she is not whole* -- ‘I’ or ‘me’ are signifiers that fail to unify a signified. Three thematic streams converge here: **embodiment**, **temporality**, and **self**.

Bodies

Like the themes of natality,⁵ gender, subalternity and sometimes death,⁶ these traumatological reflections seek to retrieve a displaced body. Given his trenchant critique of Cartesian dualism, one would expect Heidegger to be a ‘friend of the body,’ and indeed he’s inspired many somatophilic thinkers. After all, he thematizes “facticity,” exhorts us to the “concrete,” to

³ See, for example. Mucci, Clara. *Beyond Individual and Collective Trauma: Intergenerational Transmission, Psychoanalytic Treatment, and the Dynamics of Forgiveness*, London: Karnac Books, 2013. Trezise, Thomas. *Witnessing Witnessing: On the Reception of Holocaust Survivor Testimony*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2014.

⁴ Van der Kolk, B. *The Body Keeps the Score*, New York: Penguin Press, 2015.

⁵ See, especially, O’ Byrne, A. *Natality and Finitude*, Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2010.

⁶ See MacAvoy, “The Heideggerian Bias Toward Death: A Critique of the Role of Being-Towards-Death in the Disclosure of Human Finitude, *Metaphilosophy*, (January-April) 27:1 & 2, 63-77; Schchytsove, Tatiana. “Natality and Community: Overcoming Deathcenteredness of the Classical Metaphysical Thinking,” *Topos* 2:19, 2008, 155-168.

“life,”⁷ speaks of ‘Being-in-the-world,’ ‘being-toward-death,’ ‘thrownness and fallenness,’ ‘attunement’⁸ – all terms promising for a discourse on the body.

However, the body seems to have little or no positive determination in Heidegger’s Dasein analytic, although it does serve an important fundamental ontological function; notwithstanding his analyses and concepts no doubt helpful for an exploration of embodiment, the effect of Heidegger’s Dasein analytic is, in fact, *a paradigm of ontosomatic displacement through substitution*. This is precisely my present forensic interest: to explicate *how the body appears* in the Dasein analytic of SZ, *how it fails to appear*, and *what its retrieval would mean*.

Specifically, I’ll argue that, while the ontic body⁹ has a methodological role to play in Heidegger’s Dasein analysis, the body in fact disrupts SZ’s projected being-whole by inserting into the heart of Dasein a somatic temporality irreducible to authentic temporality.

Traumatology recommends that Dasein comprises ontological or primordial temporality, as well as ontosomatic temporality.

In 1972, Heidegger responds to Sartre’s criticism that there’s little in SZ about the body: “I can only counter . . . by stating that the body [*das Leibliche*] is the most difficult [to understand] and that I was unable to say more at that time.”¹⁰ Heidegger’s fuller view of the body must await another venue, but an anecdote of his thinking will help contextualize my remarks. In a 1929 lecture course on the heels of SZ, he asks about the “equipmental character” of the eyes:

⁷ Cf. Campbell, Scott. *The Early Heidegger’s Philosophy of Life: Facticity, Being, and Language*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2012.

⁸ For an attempt to give attunement ‘its own voice,’ see Michel Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, tr. Reginald Lilly, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

⁹ “Ontic body” is something of a pleonasm, but considering how marginalized the body has been even in discussions of the ontic, I occasionally use this term heuristically.

¹⁰ Heidegger, M. *Zollikon Seminars*, tr. Franz Mayr and Richard Askay (Evanston: Northwestern UP: 2001), p. 231.

Can the animal see because it has eyes, or does it have eyes because it can see? [. . .] It is the *potentiality for seeing* which first makes the possession of eyes possible, makes the possession of eyes necessary in a specific way.¹¹

Forty-three years later in a 1972 conversation he says;

Therefore, regarding the whole bodiliness . . . : We are not able to ‘see’ because we have eyes; rather, we can only have eyes because, according to our basic nature, we are beings who can see. Thus, we would not be bodily [leiblich] in the way we are unless our *being-in-the-world* always already fundamentally consisted of a receptive/perceptive relatedness to something which addresses us from out of the openness of our world.¹²

And further on in a discussion about causality (!):

But the decisive point in our context is our insight into the immediate emergence of all *our* so-called material, bodily nature from the physically intangible capacities for receiving-perceiving and for comporting oneself, in which *our* Da-sein in its unfolding essence consists.¹³

This privileging possibility over actuality – ‘intangible capacities’ over ‘material, bodily nature’ are simulacra -- drives Heidegger’s critique of the metaphysics of presence and underwrites the distinction between, and privilege given to, Dasein as possibility over embodied, ‘(f)actual’ Dasein. This becomes evident in his death analysis.

Wholeness

There’s been scant analysis of ‘wholeness’ that drives the Dasein analytic, and even less to the role of the body in it.¹⁴ I will *very schematically* indicate what’s at issue.

¹¹ Heidegger, M. *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics” World. Finitude, Solitude*, tr. William McNeill & Nicholas Walker, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996, p. 218.

¹² Heidegger, M. *Zollikon Seminars*, p. 232/293.

¹³ Heidegger, M. *Zollikon Seminars*, p. 234/296. Emphasis added.

¹⁴ Notable exceptions: Dahlstrom, D. “Heidegger’s Concept of Temporality: Reflections on a Recent Criticism,” in *Review of Metaphysics* 49:1 (Sept 1995), pp. 95-115.” and especially Ciocan, C. “Heidegger, la mort, et la totalité,”

Heidegger avers there is a, *the*, meaning of being ‘as a whole’ (*katholon*)¹⁵ that Dasein understands in all its comportment towards ‘whatever is.’ To clarify this meaning of being, he confronts the methodological requirement of ‘access,’ of where to begin. His genial move is to posit that, among all beings, there is *one, factual, ontic being* whose singular nature is to understand and care about being as a whole, and by analyzing that being’s being, one can arrive at the genuine meaning of being as a whole.¹⁶ That being is ‘us,’ Dasein. The being of this singular being must be clarified not just partially, *but as a whole*.¹⁷ There are ‘two wholes,’ then: the wholeness of ontico-ontological Dasein, and the meaning of being ‘as a whole;’ the former providing access to the latter.

How could this project fail? It could fail ontologically if Heidegger couldn’t get beyond manifold meanings¹⁸ to *the* meaning of being as a whole, *or* if that meaning (temporality) itself wasn’t unified, whole.¹⁹ It could also fail ontically, if a) its chosen being didn’t offer access to the meaning of being as a whole; or it could fail if b) that being’s comprehensive grasp of the meaning of being couldn’t be brought wholly into view as being-whole. Of these two – the ontological and the ontic – Heidegger frequently addresses the priority of the ontic for his

in *Revue philosophique* (2009) 3, pp 291-308, and Aho, K. *Heidegger’s Neglect of the Body*, Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2009.

¹⁵ SZ 37.

¹⁶ SZ 17. “We intimated that a pre-ontological being [Sein] belongs to Dasein as its constitution. Dasein *is* in such a way that, by being [seiend], it understands something like being.”

¹⁷ The argument regarding wholeness in this respect takes us back to a phenomenological argument that cannot be engaged here.

¹⁸ Not once does Heidegger say ‘meanings of being,’ and won’t until he broaches the idea of *Seinsgeschichte*.

¹⁹ This is the challenge of unifying the ‘schemata of temporality,’ identified in SZ 365, that he takes up in *Die Grundprobleme der Phenomenologie GA 24*. See also William D. Blattner, *Heidegger’s Temporal Idealism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999).

project. At the end of SZ, he asks “can ontology be grounded *ontologically* or does it also need for this an *ontic* foundation, and *which* being must take over the function of this foundation.”²⁰ Months later, he answers: “ontology cannot be established in a purely ontological manner. Its possibility is referred back to a being, that is, something ontic. Ontology has an ontic foundation.”²¹ No ontic foundation, no ontology.

Whatever else the ontic designates, it certainly comprises ‘being-embodied.’

Temporality

At the end of his structural analysis of being-in-the-world in Division One of SZ, Heidegger says the Dasein analysis “cannot [yet] lay claim to primordially” because it has not yet brought “the being of Dasein in its possible *authenticity and wholeness* existentially to light.”²² It will be up to an analysis of Dasein’s temporality to establish this wholeness truly.

To bring a whole to light, a *peras* is needed, and for a living being that *peras* is temporal. Hence, Heidegger turns to death-as-end in search of wholeness. There he rejects what we might call ‘ontic death’ as not clarifying the sought-after being-whole. I’ll examine this in a moment. But what he eventually does is well-known: he *displaces* ontic death and substitutes for it an ontological term: being-toward-the-end, or being-toward-death. This frees “the ontological analysis of being-toward-the-end ... [not to] anticipate any existentiell stance toward death;”²³ ‘dying’ no longer is ontic. Rather, “the term *dying* [Sterben] stands for the *way of being* in which Dasein *is toward* its death.”²⁴ For Heidegger this opens up the possibility of a being-whole that

²⁰ SZ 436.

²¹ Heidegger, M. *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, tr. Albert Hofstadter, Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982, p. 19.

²² SZ 233.

²³ SZ 247.

²⁴ SZ 247. Heidegger defines his terms, saying that animals ‘perish’ [*Ableben*], and that although “Dasein, too, ‘has’ its physiological death of the kind appropriate to anything that lives,” “qua Dasein, it does not simply perish.” In

eludes the analysis so long as death is encumbered by cadavers. Let's examine this displacement/substitution more closely.

Heidegger death analysis in §§45-49 wavers between Dasein being fundamentally somatic, and then again as not. On the one hand, with death, "the being still remaining does not represent a mere corporeal thing," it is "'more' than a *lifeless*, material thing" despite its thingliness. But, on the other, Heidegger says, "the 'deceased,' as distinct from the dead body, has been torn away from 'those remaining behind' and is the object of 'being taken care of' in funeral rites." More emphatically: "the deceased *himself* is no longer *factically* 'there.'"²⁵ Blanchot is sympathetic but more nuanced, saying being-cadaverous has 'no proper place' in the world of mere objective presence; the deceased has not been torn away from the cadaver, rather, it has collapsed into it as into its own sheer presence.²⁶

Heidegger distances Dasein's being-whole from its ontosomaticity, concluding that "Dasein does not have the kind of being of a thing at hand in the world *at all*."²⁷ I emphasize "*at all*" because insofar as Dasein's 'Da' is ontosomatic, the 'Da' is inseparable from its being-alongside and 'at hand' in the world – whether as living or as cadaver. Being-ontosomatic is being-alongside or being-with-and-in-relation to others. Only because of this can being-cadaver be thing-like and yet be more than a thing. Dasein's soma falls in the crack between Dasein and nature.

Here Heidegger is underway to the maximum displacement of the ontic by the ontological 'Da'; death becomes the ontological term 'being-toward-death,' and authentic being-whole of Dasein ultimately occurs in the Moment of anticipatory resoluteness as its 'ownmost nonrelational

defining these terms without any existential or even existentiell clarification of the distinction just made, Heidegger effects a disembodiment of Dasein.

²⁵ SZ 238. Emphasis on 'factically' mine. I note the terminological shift from 'body' to 'facticity.' This terminological shift is critical for Heidegger's displacement/substitution strategy.

²⁶SZ 238 See "The Image, the Remains," and "The Cadaverous Resemblance" in Blanchot, M. *The Space of Literature*, tr. Ann Smock, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982, p. 256-260.

²⁷ SZ 242-243.

possibility.²⁸ For its part, body is absorbed into the vaguer, ontological term for *onta*: ‘facticity.’ There, thrown back upon and withdrawing, as it were, into its *Da* from all *ontosomatic* ‘actuality,’

Dasein [becomes] immanent to itself as this possibility [of no-longer-being]. Thus immanent to itself, all relations to other Dasein are dissolved in it. This nonrelational ownmost possibility is at the same time the most extreme one.²⁹

Dasein purchases its being-whole at the expense of its being-*ontosomatic* and, accordingly, of its relations to beings in-the-world alongside of which Dasein always ‘is.’ Heidegger finds the Moment of anticipatory resoluteness, which is the temporality of care, to be the attestation for Dasein’s being-whole and yielding the answer to the question of being: temporality, or more specifically, primordial, authentic temporality. At this point (§§ 65-66), having purchased wholeness at the expense of the *ontosomatic* and its worldliness, Heidegger will seek to retrieve *ontosomatic* Dasein and its temporality, but displaced and redetermined as derivative, inauthentic. His words: “Our next task is to go beyond the temporal analysis of the authentic potentiality-of-being-whole . . . so that the *inauthenticity* of Dasein may be made visible in its specific temporality.”³⁰ This retrieval is driven by Heidegger’s ‘concreteness requirement,’ but rather than restore an *ontosomatic* priority, Heidegger will show its derivativeness. His subsequent derivation of world time from authentic temporality is part and parcel of the logic of deriving our “material, bodily nature” from our “capacities,” of actuality from possibility.

Mineness

What is Dasein’s ownmost? Heidegger says death is Dasein’s “ownmost possibility.” Is there an “ownmost actuality?” For Heidegger, actuality is derivative of possibility. Having displaced the body from Dasein in his death analysis, there is no sense of fundamental or ownmost actuality. Yet, I suggest, being-*ontosomatic* is Dasein’s ownmost actuality; Dasein can no more disencumber itself of its being-bodily than it can ‘leap over’ death. Dasein’s being-bodily is its

²⁸ The first occurrence of this term is on SZ 250.

²⁹ SZ 250.

³⁰ SZ 331.

ownmost ‘mineness,’ not just as a capacity for perceiving/receiving, but as its insuperable being-cadaver-to-come. And this means that Dasein’s ownmost being-bodily is also its ownmost being-expropriated – now and to-come. Being-bodily, Dasein is ‘in-the-world,’ not as an isolated bit of extended substance, like a hammer, but as its ownmost self being-with and being-for others.

The mineness of being-bodily is not simple: as being-from (natality) and being-legacy (future), being-bodily stands exorbitantly beyond any resolute Moment which is (merely) ontological. Both Dasein’s being-natal-remnant of a time immemorial, and being-cadaverous remnant-to-come are ways Dasein is handed over, ontosomatically to, and received and appropriated by, other historical Daseins and situations that exceed all reckoning and resoluteness. In being-toward-death-to-come, ontosomatic Dasein stands ecstatically out beyond every projectable future and as the legacy of an unfathomable has-been. Somatic being-toward-the-end-to-come projects a future back from which there is no return, such as there is in the resolute Moment. So, for somatic Dasein, *there is no being-whole* (something Heidegger certainly realized as he displaced the body). Being-bodily-in-the-world is a “manner of being” a ‘mineness’ irreducible to ‘wholeness.’ Dasein’s ‘ownmost self,’ then, is its ‘ownmost ex-propration.’ Heidegger says Dasein’s “death is the possibility of no-longer-being-able-to-be- there,”³¹ but for ontosomatic Dasein, death is equally the ineluctability of still-having-to-be-there; the ecstatic temporality of being-bodily is fundamentally a contrariety decidedly other than unity and wholeness achieved in the authentic temporality of the Moment.³² I mean not to gainsay any truths about ontological authenticity, but to restore Dasein to its ontico-ontological concreteness.

Ontico-ontological Dasein is grounded both in its ownmost immanent authentic temporality as well as its insuperable susceptibility to reduction to being ‘at hand,’ not only in the manner of being-cadaverous, but also as being-traumatized. In trauma, the true priority of the ontic shows itself.

³¹ SZ 250.

³² Somato-ecstasis is dissemination.

Remnants³³

So, instantiated in the corpse, the remains, Dasein's ontosomaticity has 'its own' temporality, the bi-directionally open, indefinite temporality of being-in-with. While alive, Dasein's being-bodily temporalizes itself as both utterly immanent, but also exorbitant, irreducible to the immanence of the *Augenblick*; being-bodily persists in ontico-ontological alterity to all existential projection of possibilities and meanings. Hence being-bodily as being-in-with lies irretrievably beyond the reach of any irresolute or resolute mineness. In other words, Dasein's being-bodily is, for Dasein as living and temporalizing, a *remnant-to-come*. Being or remaining in-the-world-alongside other beings isn't something that happens to Dasein only with death; as being-toward-death, somatic Dasein is always already a being-remnant: it has been left by others in birth and remains, just as it does with others in death. In this regard, we are all motherless children – not as is Hobbes' man of nature or Dasein, who appears 'in the world' as if by divine fiat, but as essentially being-through-and-with. Being-toward-birth, being-toward-death are two irreducible somatic temporal contraries.³⁴ Being-in-with is an exorbitant ecstasy of the present. Existentially, Dasein is being-toward-dissociation, with regard to the have-been, the to-come, and the now. Dasein is fundamentally trauma-passible.³⁵

Just a few final thoughts.

Heidegger remarks that "Anticipatory self-projection upon the insuperable possibility of existence – death – guarantees only the totality and authenticity of resoluteness. But the factually disclosed possibilities of existence are not to be learned from death,"³⁶ and with this he shifts to a consideration of Dasein's historicity and world time, which "turns out basically to be

³³ Think of the remnant as bodying-forth. Bodies, legacies spatialize. They don't simply occupy space, but they open up space in complex folds of revealing and concealing, accessibility and foreclosure.

³⁴See Schürmann. R. *Broken Hegemonies*, tr. Reginald Lilly, Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2003.

³⁵ This is the point at which a fuller examination of Dasein as fundamentally traumatological may take its point of departure.

³⁶ SZ 383.

just a more concrete elaboration of temporality.”³⁷ World time is “the time ‘in which’ beings are encountered,”³⁸ the time of being-in-with-and-alongside-beings. It is a time of ‘befores’ and ‘afters,’ of ‘here when’ and ‘there then.” World time is “*dateable*.” For Heidegger, world time is about Dasein’s caring for things in the world, as if temporality were the workshop and world time were Dasein’s manner of mapping and managing it; it is the time of reckoning. Despite its concreteness, world time is not the time of decision – that is the province of authentic time.

Derrida better expresses the being-ontic of the dateable: “the date is the mark of a singularity, of a temporal and spatial ‘this here.’ . . . a date is at once what is inscribed so as to preserve the uniqueness of the moment but what, by the same token, loses it.”³⁹ There are at least two sites⁴⁰ where Heidegger seems to indicate that beings are not reducible to the meanings we retrieve, project, and come back to, or to their place on the world time map. They are, however, but fading glimpses of ontic being. World time is less a map of beings that have abandoned their onticity and handed themselves over to Dasein’s ontologizing,⁴¹ than it is a map of the loss of singularities, a map that in rendering them public, repeatable in discourse, memory, and anticipation, occludes their singularity, as if each were Eurydice withdrawing into oblivion before the gaze of Orpheus.⁴² Our death is our singularization-to-come,⁴³ it will have happened in some ‘then’ and ‘there.’ Were one miraculously to survive the dissociation of one’s singularization, one would be a trauma survivor. If one doesn’t survive, *incipit reliquia!*

³⁷SZ 384.

³⁸ SZ 404.

³⁹Derrida, Jacques. “Passages – from Traumatism to Promise” in *Points: Interviews 1974-94*, ed. Elisabeth Weber, tr. Peggy Kamuf & Others, Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995, p. 378.

⁴⁰ In addition to the epigram to this paper of Heidegger, see SZ 152: “Objectively present things encountered [Begegnendes] in Dasein can, so to speak, assault its being; for example, events of nature which break in on us and destroy us.”

⁴¹ This raises basic questions about Heidegger’s concept of language and things.

⁴² Cf. Blanchot, M. “Orpheus’s Gaze” in *The Space of Literature*, Lincoln: Nebraska UP, 1989, pp. 171-176.

⁴³ Reiner Schürmann has thematized this extensively in his *Broken Hegemonies*.

**William J. Richardson, S.J. and the Spelling of Marilyn Monroe:
On Truth, Science, and the ‘Unfolding of Man’ in Heidegger and Lacan**

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“Error is the habitual incarnation of truth.
...Error is the usual manifestation of the truth
itself – so that the paths of truth are in essence
the paths of error.” — Lacan¹

Not so long ago, everyone was engaged in the
search for psychoanalytic foundations of
poetry, *jetzt trieft alles von Volkstum und Blut
und Boden*, but it’s still all the same. —
Heidegger²

How indeed could we explain! We operate
with basic things that do not exist: lines,
planes, bodies, atoms, divisible time spans,
divisible spaces. — Nietzsche³

—that among all these dreamers, I too, the ‘one
who knows,’ dance my dance; that the knower
is a means to draw out the earthly dance and
thus belongs to the masters of ceremony of
Dasein ...— Nietzsche⁴

Dedication

This is an essay in honor of William J. Richardson, S.J., a founding member of the Heidegger Circle. Bill was dedicated throughout his life — in every sense of being dedicated — to full-length presentations which, whenever possible, he strongly preferred to present without stopping. I recall more than one bootless, always bootless, effort on my part to remind him of the time *and* the fact of other speakers scheduled to speak after him, pointing to the need to reserve time for questions (Bill having already spoken over time, at the end of a session, and in another such case, well into the end of a conference day). My efforts ended badly. Bill always wanted to finish the paper he had written. I, by contrast, am always happy to stop as for me the best thing, and they are rare, are the questions.

¹ Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book I. Freud’s Papers on Technique. 1953-1954*, J. Forrester, trans. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988), 263/289. Cited in William J. Richardson, S.J., “Psychoanalysis and the Truth of Pain” in Babich, ed., *Philosophy of Science, Van Gogh’s Eyes, and God: Hermeneutic Essays in Honor of Patrick A. Heelan, S.J.*, (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2001), 333-344.

² Martin Heidegger, GA 39, 254. Cited in Babich, “Heidegger’s Will to Power,” *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (January 2007): 37-60.

³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Fröhliche Wissenschaft* §112, *Kritische Studienausgabe* 3 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1980), 473.

⁴ Nietzsche, *Fröhliche Wissenschaft* §54, KSA 3, 417.

The current essay corresponds to a traditionally articulated lecture, with more than one section and more than one thematic current. Traditionally, the *Proceedings of the Heidegger Circle* permit one to share a full length draft. The new 20-minute limit on presentations (and Bill had picturesque, even alarmingly blue, views on such impositions) will be respected — cut to order, *in situ*.

Thinking Psychoanalysis

An apt image of psychoanalysis in the popular mind foregrounds the return of the repressed along with a variety of films fancied by *either* Stanley Cavell *or* Slavoj Žižek, doesn't matter which taste you favour here. Martin Heidegger, speaking to clinicians and psychologists, psychoanalysts and bio-neuro-physiological scientists in the Zollikon seminars conducted in concord with Medard Boss, returns to the founding insights of phenomenology, almost as if there had been no other beginning or step back, no fourfold even, and one can almost suppose, lulled perhaps by the efficiency of Swiss technology — the nearby train platform with its clock — that the insights of the Bremen lectures are for a moment, along with the lectures on time and being, *Gelassenheit*, going back to his Contributions and Event, and certainly the revelations of the Black Notebooks, may be suspended. Nothing is denied, undone, taken back, repudiated, but the reader encounters phenomenology with a insistent emphasis on Heidegger's *hermeneutic* modality of the same quite in connection with the dissonance between the title of the first Seminar, "in the Burghölzli Auditorium of the University of Zürich Psychiatric Clinic" followed on the same title page by a strange array of half monads, arrows in a semi-surround. All of this is to be set in the ambit of a personal scandal, not that of Nazism, not even world-historical anti-Semitism as Peter Trawny speaks of it, but a nervous breakdown requiring official treatment, some three weeks in a sanatorium⁵ — Heidegger as patient.

In addition, there is the longer association of Heideggerian thinking, filtered through, even before Heidegger, Jaspers' *Existenzphilosophie*, but that prior tradition seems to disappear after Heidegger by way of existentialism, that would be Sartre, and not less with psychoanalysis, psychotherapy with and beyond Binswanger and co., with Medard Boss, this will also include the already installed Jacques Lacan and co. (and there was and still is a co.),⁶ less commonly discussed today, but once all the rage in addition to the Gestalt thinking of this and that and, via the unlikely

⁵ See for a discussion, including references, as Theodore Kisiel writes, to Heidegger's recurrent bouts with "neurasthenia" through his life: Kisiel, "Heidegger's Apology: Biology as Philosophy and Ideology" in: Tom Rockmore and Joseph Margolis, eds., *The Heidegger Case: On Philosophy and Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992) pp. 11- 51 here, p. 32.

⁶ Elisabeth Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan and Co. History of Psychoanalysis in France, 1925-85* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990)

as such, Georg Groddeck,⁷ and even Carl Gustav Jung (I nurse the quiet suspicion that Jordan Peterson's greatest service may well be his rehabilitation of the name of Jung, and, in connection with Heidegger, Matthew Gildersleeve has recently returned us to this conjunction as has Richard Capobianco)⁸ among a range of other readings of Heidegger and psychoanalysis, including Žižek (again),⁹ plausible on the face of it, if only owing to Lacan, and then more complicatedly quite as Boss foregrounds this in terms of what becomes Heidegger's *Daseinsanalysis* distinct from Binswanger's *Daseinsanalysis*, etc.

Bill Richardson, sensitive to the distinction between *ontic* phenomena (of which one can be sensible and thus conscious) as Heidegger patently distinguishes these at the outset of the Zollikon seminars, and *ontological* phenomena (*per se* not sensible as such) argues that Heidegger may be taken as considering "the unconscious as a disclosive process. If the unconscious 'is' at all, it is a disclosure to" the human.¹⁰ Of course Richardson does not write 'human,' he is talking about *man*, and so is Heidegger.

What informs Richardson's reading of Heidegger (between and 'among the doctors,' to quote one essay),¹¹ is the very serious reflection that psychoanalysis be a science or at least a clinical protocol dedicated to what one scholar calls in speaking of Heidegger, a soul cure. Otherwise psychoanalysis is a crock and we cannot have that.

Now, and at the same time, this is not the way psychoanalysis, psychiatry, or psychotherapy functions in the lives of many physicians and clinicians, working with very difficult challenges if they deal with patients in an institution and, if they see them privately, when it comes to therapy

⁷ See Stefan Börnchen, "Aletheia as Striptease: Gendered Allegories of Truth in Heidegger, Gorgias, and Barth," in: Gaby Paler, Andreas Böhn, Stefan Horlacher, Ulrich Scheck, eds., *Gender and Laughter: Comic Affirmation and Subversion in Traditional and Modern Media* (Amsterdam: Brill, 2009), 329-346.

⁸ Matthew Gildersleeve, "Unconcealing Jung's Transcendent Function with Heidegger," *The Humanistic Psychologist* 43 (2014): 297-309; Richard Capobianco, "Heidegger and Jung: Dwelling Near the Source," *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry*, 21:1-3 (1993): 50-59.

⁹ Michael Lewis makes this claim in his *Heidegger and the Place of Ethics: Being With in the Crossing of Heidegger's Thought* (London: Continuum, 2005). Lewis, to be sure draws for his title on Robert Bernasconi, "'The Double Concept of Philosophy' and the Place of Ethics in *Being and Time*," *Research in Phenomenology*, 18 (1985): 41-57.

¹⁰ William J. Richardson, "Psychoanalysis and the Being-Question," in Joseph H. Smith and William Kerrigan, eds., *Interpreting Lacan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 147. Cf. Richardson, "The Place of the Unconscious in Heidegger," *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry*, 5 (Fall 1965): 279-280. This can be helpfully read in conjunction with Fred Dallmayr, "Heidegger and Freud" in Babich, ed., *From Phenomenology to Thought, Errancy, and Desire: Essays in Honor of William J. Richardson, S.J.* (1995 [1993]), 547-566 but also together with Heidegger's own reflections in the Zollikon Seminars.

¹¹ William J. Richardson, "Heidegger Among the Doctors" in: John Sallis, ed., *Reading Heidegger: Commemorations*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 49-63.

(often as not) interminable, quite until the patient calls it off as Lacan seems to have spent a lot of time engineering just such an outcome, or is otherwise punctuated — until Bill Richardson died, he was concerned with, and spoke of, his patients. These are human beings with grief and pain, including challenges on both sides of the analyst-client divide.

Phenomenology and Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis has its troubles in its own medical cohort, given the decades-long criticisms of, just to name one of the best argued of these, the colorful and exquisitely precise Thomas Szasz who admired psychotherapy as a *voluntary* engagement, i.e., provided it was a therapy at the behest of the patient, while refusing the claim to science on the level of the organism, morphology and dynamic physiology, and the factive incarceration, manipulation, denial of that same human freedom in the name of either ‘medicine’ or obligatory, officially ordered therapy on the side of the masters, in the service of the law, the state, or other social authority.¹² And, thinking of Adolf Grünbaum and Ernest Gellner (both of whom hail from the analytic side of philosophy),¹³ psychoanalysis faces yet another set of woes. Heideggerians (against whom Grünbaum directed considerable ire) like Richardson are inclined to be kinder about the project of psychoanalysis, and within the guild proper, Jacques Lacan, wonder of wonders, returns the compliment. As Paul Ricoeur makes plain, and as one can also read albeit critically and in various ways in Gilles Deleuze and the Lacan-baited Felix Guattari in addition to Alain Badiou, it seems patent that one needs hermeneutics for any philosophical reflection on psychoanalysis. Heideggerian hermeneutics, complete as it is with an alethe-ology, seems ‘ready made’ for the unconscious.

The only problem here is ontic: Heidegger had little truck with psychoanalysis, as Bill Richardson always duly related this, to vary a trope Bill was fond of, *not even* ‘on the longest day he ever lived,’¹⁴ as if to say: *yes, yes*, but of course, *no*. I will return to this below. A similar array of nays also marks the conclusion of Richardson’s reflection on and through Lacan’s reading of

¹² See for example, Thomas Szasz, *The Myth of Mental Illness* (New York: Harper, 1961) and his *The Myth of Psychotherapy* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1978).

¹³ Adolf Grünbaum, *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis: A Philosophical Critique* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), and see for an overview, Grünbaum’s later retrospective “The Reception of my Freud-critique in the Psychoanalytic Literature,” *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 24/3 (2007): 545-576 and Ernest Gellner, *The Psychoanalytic Movement: The Cunning of Unreason* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1996).

¹⁴ Richardson, “Heidegger’s Critique of Science,” *New Scholasticism*, xlii (1968): 511-536.

Paul Claudel,¹⁵ impossible for an Anglophone audience to follow, especially one not informed by one part Francophone Catholicism, two parts Lacanian drama, and thus higher church than Bill's own dramatic flair, *Coufontaine adsum*.¹⁶ No, No, and again No (this works well for Lacanians, it is the *nom du père*),¹⁷ it is only confounded, this was also Bill's trouble with, the bravest Lacanian/anti-Lacanian of them all, Luce Irigaray, who for her part dismantled the reading by pointing out not that emperor was naked or, as in the case of Lacan's reading of Poe's *Purloined Letter* (as opposed, say, to Derrida's reading), a giant naked lady in the room, but that the terms were determined, the jig fixed, in advance, the kind of academic cartel everyone learns to ignore by learning whose reading to be fair to (Zizek chides Derrida), who to mention, who to cite, who to invite, who to include in the collection that follows, and who not, etc., *ad alas infinitum*.¹⁸ Irigaray took Lacan out years ago, but like the deft executioner of German *Galgenwitz* fame, cut so cleanly that Lacan and Co, Inc, and Ink continue apace: blithely unaware that any injury has been done, until invited to nod: *nicken Sie mal*.

Bill never had time for Irigaray, so he would say he could not discuss her thinking: how could he? He didn't understand her, all his male friends smile in sympathy:¹⁹ the excuse has been at hand, for some time. These days, Kate Manne has rearticulated its logic — this is the (old) logic of misogyny²⁰ — for philosophers unable to read or understand either Irigaray or de Beauvoir or even Andrea Dworkin: thereby indirectly articulating the distinction between analytic and

¹⁵ Richardson, "The Third Generation of Desire," *The Letter*, Vol. 1 (1992): 1117-1135; also in: François Raffoul and David Pettigrew, eds., *Disseminating Lacan* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), pp. 171-188.

¹⁶ Richardson, "Coufontaine Adsum" in Joseph H. Smith and Susan Handelman, eds., *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 60-73.

¹⁷ If arguably not an especially useful resource, the title says (and unsays) what is at issue (even as the author of this internet fluff piece manages not to name Lacan professionally, as he was, a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst), Eugene Wolters, "French Philosopher Jacques Lacan Was Sort of a Dick," *Vice*, 8 October 2014. https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/4w75en/jacques-lacan-was-sort-of-a-dick-323

¹⁸ Luce Irigaray, 'La psychanalyse comme pratique de l'énonciation', *Journal Le langage et l'homme* (Bruxelles: Institut Libre Marie Harps, 1969) pp.3-8, 'Sujet de la science, sujet sexué?', *Sens et place des connaissances dans la société* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1987) pp. 95-121.

¹⁹ But see: Krzysztof Ziarek, "Love and the Debasement of Being: Irigaray's Revisions of Lacan and Heidegger," *Postmodern Culture*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (September 1999): 1-23 as well as Ziarek's "Proximities: Irigaray and Heidegger on Difference," *Continental Philosophical Review*, 33/2 (2000): 133-158. Cf. Maria Cimitile, "The Horror of Language: Irigaray and Heidegger," *Philosophy Today*, 45/5 (2001): 66-74 and Cimitile, "Irigaray in Dialogue with Heidegger," in Cimitile and Elaine Miller, eds., *Returning to Irigaray: Feminist Philosophy Politics and the Question of Unity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), pp. 267-268.

²⁰ See Kate Manne, *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017). Or indeed, de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (in the Parshley translation).

continental modes in philosophy as a project now and, for reasons of the dominion of the former analytic mode — there is today and has been for some time no other kind — forever foreclosed.²¹ One understands. Women were to be as Marilyn Monroe was or Lady Gaga or some movie star you like, or if not, well then: like Antigone,²² or else as one of the variously named patients Freud or Boss discusses, or like Lacan's more generic characterization of what, *per definitionem*, did not exist but in any case needed to be relegated to a specifically reduced kind: cue Irigaray's ire, but all she did as a linguist was to take Lacan's argument re the unconscious and language and run with it, even before she turned her attention to sexuation. Any variation, any excess would be met not by engagement certainly not by argument but to utter and conclusive effect in professional philosophy, that is philosophy as a science: by inattention, non-citation: call it the gaslighting move. Not unlike the way Husserl is once reported to have said in response to a query re Hegel's phenomenology, and one doubts neither its ingenuousness nor its veracity: *oh? did he have a phenomenology too?*

The Spelling of Marilyn Monroe

I know a fair amount about Bill's work because I assisted him in and throughout several layers of that work. My own research concerned Heidegger²³ and Nietzsche and science, rather in that order. For his part, Bill was concerned to assemble a cast(e) — I need the '(e)' because as a woman I found myself on the low end of the register — of assistants.

If Bill had been engaged in writing on the 'place of the unconscious in Heidegger,' at least since an article he published in the mid-1960s,²⁴ almost as if, not unlike the conceit that makes Leonard Cohen's *First we take Manhattan, then we take Berlin*, having taken Heidegger, as it were, and by anyone's measure (with the exception of the nasty remarks made by Bert Dreyfus

²¹ Reiner Schürmann argued the case for the eclipse of continental philosophy in the US, pointing out that it was politically displaced by analytic philosophy and analytic versions of continental subjects, well over half a century ago. See Schürmann, "De la philosophie aux Etats-Unis," *Le temps de la réflexion* 6 (1985): 303–321, which also appeared in English as "Concerning Philosophy in the United States," *Social Research* 61, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 89–113. But as Nietzsche points out at the start of the third book of the *gay science*, speaking of the shadows of the Buddha still shown in caves, things, especially reports of changes, do take time.

²² See Richardson, "Lacan and the Enlightenment: Antigone's Choice," *Research in Phenomenology*, 24 (1994): 25–41.

²³ Bill nominated me for membership in the Heidegger Circle for the sake of which nomination it was required that one publish a text on Heidegger in a respectable academic journal or book. The Heidegger Circle would eventually do away with such hurdles as restrictive and non-inclusive (which they were and which was the point). I am more grateful to Bill for emphasizing this last than for the nomination.

²⁴ Richardson, "The Place of the Unconscious in Heidegger," *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry*, 5/3 (1965): 265–290.

directed in the first place and specifically against Bill *and* secondarily contra, also explicitly, the Heidegger Circle itself and as such, etc.), Bill might seem to have been on track to do the same for Lacan.²⁵ Thus when I first met him (in the Fall of 1981), he was working on Lacan and language in addition to a project on the ethics of desire that he never relinquished, good student of Lacan's word on the matter that he was, and apart from a never-realized intervention on humanism that he regarded as related to the former. Toward the end of the 1980s, Bill would be 'hawking,' there is no other word for it, a paper he had drafted on a then (and still) popular topic, 'the spelling of Marilyn Monroe.' I worked with him on his early computer efforts and saw versions of this paper which he also read to me. But he could not, so he explained, *publish* it: indeed he said, he daren't finish it: if he did, he would have nothing to present when invited to give a lecture. He did similar sorts of things with other papers, nursing them like a glass of sherry, Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (although video undid that tactic as he discovered with more pleasure than chagrin later in life). Despite his care with publishing his papers, Bill was always dismayed to find that scholars knew next to nothing of his more recent efforts. I am not going to reprise Bill's talk which he gave here and there before offering it as a 1990 lecture honouring the passing of a colleague, Tom Blakely, on the official occasion of commemorating Boston College's 100th Philosophy PhD. And, as of 2011, the lecture finally appeared in print.²⁶ There the concern involved science, not 19th century physics, as Bill distinguished this as the science of the day (as it was) for Freud, but science as Lacan articulated science, thus the imperative to take account of Irigaray despite her irrelevance to Bill, namely "twentieth century linguistics."²⁷ To explicate, Bill cites Lacan's own account:

Linguistics can serve us as a guide here, since that is the role it plays in the vanguard of contemporary anthropology . . . and the reduction of every language to the group of a very small number of these phonemic oppositions, by initiating an equally rigorous

²⁵ See again, Richardson, "Psychoanalysis and the Being-Question." Scholars sometimes refer to Bill's reflections in passing before moving on to their own, often deeper waters: see, just for one example of this very common habitus, as he is better than most in this regard, Ziarek, "Love and the Debasement of Being." By contrast, Dallmayr (cited above) and Kockelmans, "Reflections on the 'Foundations' of Psychology and Psychoanalysis" in Babich, ed., *From Phenomenology to Thought, Errancy, and Desire*, 527-546 offer direct engagements of Richardson in addition to offering their own readings.

²⁶ Richardson "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis: The Spelling of Marilyn Monroe," *The LETTER* 48 (2011): 9-30. The text appears in Spanish however as: "Como escribir el nombre de Marilyn Monroe," in: Donna Bentolila-Lopez, ed., *Lacan en Estados Unidos*, translated by Bentolila-Lopez (Rosario, Argentina: Homo Sapiens, 1992), 67-86.

²⁷ Richardson, "Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain" in: Babette Babich, ed., *Philosophy of Science, Van Gogh's Eyes, and God: Hermeneutic Essays in Honor of Patrick A. Heelan, S.J.* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 333-343, here 333.

formalization of its highest morphemes, puts within our reach a precisely defined access to our own field.²⁸

Intriguingly, had one wished to defend psychoanalysis one could argue that one could do a sight worse than Lacan. By speaking of the unconscious as structured like a language, Lacan would enable psychoanalysis to play and work among the scientists — and not merely doctors, telling tales as it were, out of school.

Lacan was keen to articulate what he called, here to quote Richardson, “a mathematics of the signifier, as has been the case in every science to date.”²⁹ It is essential to add that just such a mathematics is a play of signifiers in a chained circuit of signifiers, a play of those very patent things that, in a word: do not ‘exist,’ i.e., *die es nicht giebt*, as Nietzsche says,³⁰ and can thus never adequately — here in Heidegger’s sense of adequate — explain anything no matter how beautifully self-referential they are. Which does not stop them from being descriptive, in improved ways as Nietzsche will say, speaking as he does in *Beyond Good and Evil*, if only one recognizes, that “without measuring reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical, without a continual falsification of the world by means of numbers, humankind could not live,” (BGE 4), which underscores “untruth as a condition of life,” i.e., the stuff of science.

The beauty of Bill’s reading is that it is very straightforward, nothing like Irigaray, not hard to follow, leading across all the surfaces to land you just where the key take-aways need to be located, as if you were reading an outline or schematic blueprint of philosophy.³¹ But more is going on as Bill reprises his distinctions:

Lacan utilizes the distinction Saussure stresses between signifier (speech sound) and signified (concept represented by the sound). There is this difference in usage, however: for Saussure, the signifier refers directly to a signified, but for Lacan, the signifier refers rather to another signifier. The result is that a congeries of signifiers

²⁸ Lacan, cited in Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 334. Cf. here, Debra Bergoffen, “The Science Thing,” in: Babich, ed., *From Phenomenology to Thought, Errancy, and Desire*, 567-577.

²⁹ Lacan, cited in Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 334.

³⁰ “Wie könnten wir auch erklären! Wir operiren mit *lauter Dingen, die es nicht giebt*, mit Linien, Flächen, Körpern, Atomen, theilbaren Zeiten, theilbaren Räumen—” FW 112. See in general the first sections of the third book of *The Gay Science*, as well as the first sections of *Human all too Human*, etc., etc. I discuss Nietzsche on such issues most recently in *Nietzsches Wissenschaftsphilosophie* (London: Peter Lang, 2010) and for Nietzsche and Lacan’s Real, see my “On the Order of the Real: Nietzsche and Lacan” in: David Pettigrew and François Raffoul, eds., *Disseminating Lacan* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 48-63.

³¹ Those intrigued by this are reminded of Bill’s insightful abstracts of Heidegger’s text in his *Through Phenomenology to Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, [1963]) and not less and broken down as literal outlines in his co-authored study, with his friend and colleague at Austen Riggs, John P. Muller and William J. Richardson, *Lacan and Language: A Reader’s Guide to Écrits* (New York: International University Press, 1982).

becomes a “signifying chain” that functions like “rings of a necklace that is a ring in another necklace made of rings.” And the subject? It is not to be identified with the chain of signifiers as such but rather as an effect of them, suspended from them as it were. “Conveyed (*vehiculé*) by a signifier in its relation to another signifier, the subject is to be rigorously distinguished from the biological individual as from the psychological evolution subsumable under the subject of understanding (comprehension)”³²

Withal, Richardson’s concern is to understand Lacan’s claim, and thus his point of departure and not less my own via the reference to science (as such), “what sense does it make to say that ‘the subject on which we operate in psychoanalysis can only be the subject of science’?”³³ Thus Richardson recounts what may be regarded as the primal scene of Lacanian great-man-ness before his Freudian Parisian school: “Men, listen, I am giving you the secret. I, Truth, will speak.”³⁴ Note Bill’s signature unpacking: Lacan’s “point is that there is no such thing as total truth — especially in psychoanalysis — and truth arrives at best as damaged goods. Eventually [Lacan] will claim that no truth can ever be whole.”³⁵

What then follows is the perfect citation of the perfect working dynamic of the unconscious of truth as of the subject, perfect too if one means to reflect on psychoanalysis as a science:

For you I am the enigma of her who vanishes as soon as she appears. . . . The discourse of error, its articulation in acts, could bear witness to the truth against evidence itself. . . . For the most innocent intention is disconcerted at being unable to conceal the fact that one’s unsuccessful acts are the most successful and that one’s failure fulfills one’s most secret wish. . . .³⁶

The scene, parapraxes, everyday life, all of this is here in Lacan, complete with a reference, this always gets everyone, perhaps more patent today than at any other time, what with the rightly named Trump (Lacan’s own Pascalian reference is) to “Cleopatra’s nose.”³⁷ The point is the *matheme*, we may prefer the more poetic George Gordon: *one shade the more, one ray the less*, to say the same.

³² Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 335-336; see Lacan, “Science and Truth,” trans. Bruce Fink, *NewsLetter of the Freudian Field*, 1 (1989): 4-29, here 23.

³³ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 336.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 337; see Lacan, *Écrits. A Selection*, trans. A. Sheridan (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), 43.

³⁵ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” *ibid.*, see too Lacan, *On Feminine Sexuality, the Limits of Love and Knowledge*, Fink, trans. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998), 92.

³⁶ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” *ibid.*; see Lacan, *Écrits*, 121-122.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

And Bill is right there, on the aletheic track, weaving a reading of Heidegger that more than any other he had made his own, into one more citation of Lacan, with his own gloss:

Truth, then, carries the scars of negativity. In other words: “Error is the habitual incarnation of truth. ...Error is the usual manifestation of the truth itself – so that the paths of truth are in essence the paths of error.” Clearly, any complete account of truth must also account for the error and distortion (i.e., non-truth) that infiltrate it.³⁸

In sum, and this will include Bill’s own fondness for the ‘no’: “The subject itself (of science as well as of psychoanalysis), then, is marked by an irreparable lack/absence/hole that scars its structure with an ineluctable negativity.”³⁹

It might be easy here, having noted this ‘ineluctable negativity,’ to overlook Bill’s own understanding of truth, an understanding that has rather more in common with Vienna style positivism than perhaps anything else, Freud or Lacan or even Heidegger: “Any version of truth (e.g., concordance, coherence) is secondary to the originary manifestation of what is in fact the case.”⁴⁰ In other words, invoking for constation both Lévi-Straus and Lacan, for Richardson, here in a beautifully Husserlian phenomenological articulation: “The e-vidence (truth) is in the sheer manifestation of the correlation as index of the way things *are*.”⁴¹

The next sentence takes the point (do not forget ‘what is in fact the case’) to Heidegger:

Obviously the notion of originary truth as e-vidence/dis-coverey/dis-closure/self-manifestation recalls Heidegger’s thematizing of the Greek word for truth, *a-letheia*: a combination of *-lêthê* (what lies hidden in concealment) and *a-*, the alpha prefix indicating privation. Taken together, they identify truth as non-concealment, or revelation.⁴²

We do not need to forget the positivism of Richardson’s position as this now turns out to be perfectly consistent with Heidegger on truth inasmuch as: “truth as correspondence is made possible by a prior openness (what I have been calling ‘e-vidence,’ etc.),” whereby it transpires that this is a non-essence of truth that

³⁸ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 338, See Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book I. Freud’s Papers on Technique. 1953-1954*, J. Forrester, trans. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988), 263/289.

³⁹ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” *ibid.*, 338.

⁴⁰ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 339.

⁴¹ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 339.

⁴² Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 339.

takes two forms: mystery (*Geheimnis*), the concealment of what still remains unrevealed, and errancy (*Irre*), a compounding in forgetfulness of this double concealment.⁴³

And true to his original project, Bill here cites Heidegger on errancy at length.⁴⁴

This is pure Richardson, the negative truth that is pure Heidegger, the only thing we might need to note with greater care, just to keep it in our sights, is the errant errancy. And just as lightly, Bill observes, here as his justification for reading Sophocles, as indeed Claudel and Poe (via Lacan) and latterly Beckett: “At any rate, the vocation of human beings as such would be to bring to articulation the language of Logos as process of *Aletheia*, a task for which the poets serve as models.”⁴⁵

Thus warned, Lacan’s subject (psychoanalytic science) comes off lacking, *totaliter*, “the philosophical warrant of which it is in need.”⁴⁶

If the master of psychoanalysis comes up short, the subjects of psychoanalysis, these subjects are often women or men oftime treated as women (there is a gender problem here as everywhere), can turn out to be, as we see in Muller and Richardson’s reading of Lacan’s reading of Poe’s *The Purloined Letter*, the object of a certain unmasking.

In the case of Bill’s more pointed reflection on “Philosophy and Psychoanalysis,” the ‘symptom’ in this case, the truth of the subject, seen through the aletheic lens articulated above, is a rebus affair. Indeed: it *is* a letter, literally a doctor’s note, taped to the patient’s abdomen, as Richardson repeats, on display. And, note that it remains true to this day, in what Bill writes that Marilyn Monroe retains her allure, her ‘spell,’ thus the play on spelling, even after, think of Richardson and Muller’s repeated reflections on ravishment, even after she has been handled by any number of clinicians all the way to a locked ward. Thus Bill, speaking on his own considerable clinical

⁴³ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 339.

⁴⁴ “Errancy is the essential countessence to the originary essence of truth. Errancy opens itself up as the open region for every counterplay to essential truth. Errancy is the open site for, and ground of, error. Error is not merely an isolated mistake but the kingdom (the dominion) of the history of those entanglements in which all kinds of erring get interwoven. In conformity with its openness and its relatedness to beings as a whole, every mode of comportment has its manner of erring. Error “extends from the most ordinary wasting of time, making a mistake, and mis-calculating, to going astray and venturing too far in one’s essential attitudes and decisions. . . . By leading them astray, errancy dominates human beings through and through.” Heidegger, “On the Essence of Truth,” in: *Basic Writings* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1993), 134.

⁴⁵ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 341.

⁴⁶ Richardson, “Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain,” 341.

authority, this was circa 1990, researching such extreme cases, counts Marilyn Monroe's clinical history, telling us

that the illustrious Ralph Greenson was her last analyst on the West Coast, that Marianne Kris, another eminent analyst, treated her on the East Coast, and one hospitalization included a locked ward at Payne Whitney (New York Hospital).⁴⁷

Before this case history, we are given a clinical picture no prettier than the tabloid leaks/images of her face was it before? was it after? (the reports being contradictory) her autopsy? Thus a recent article insists on the '*fascinace*' of Marilyn Monroe in death and this same focus is also a key theme in art history, and for some time, what with Andy Warhol and Jean Baudrillard.⁴⁸ In Richardson's case, rather than the objective language of the clinician we get as unsparing an account as possible, one suspiciously sensationalist to boot (though Kate Manne's recent and [analytically styled] *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*,⁴⁹ would have no more trouble than would [the continentally styled] Simone de Beauvoir or Luce Irigaray in parsing the description as we read), as Bill tells us that the subject, here the author of the taped note was at the time,

a thirty four year old high school dropout, actress by profession, insomniac, addicted to drugs and alcohol (after a Bloody Mary breakfast, she would spend a champagne day!), a chronically procrastinating and pathologically late woman, terrified of performing as an actress, sexually frigid, depressed. (because of her failure, despite the many abortions [there would be thirteen in all], to become a mother during four years of marriage to Arthur Miller), and suicidal (six attempts up to that point, two more to go before the final success).⁵⁰

Clinician as he was, there is no mystery, rather "the wonder is that she did as well as she did, for some see in her history the seeds, even signs of psychosis."

Ah, yes.

Now, it is as certain as anything that Marilyn Monroe was no Tom Blakely and if Tom delighted in being engaged critically (as a man and a philosopher, Blakely had a rare joy of research, thinking, challenge), Bill does not engage, critically, as philosophers do, with any details

⁴⁷ Richardson, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," 12.

⁴⁸ See Griselda Pollock, "The Missing Wit(h)ness: Monroe, *Fascinace* and the Unguarded Intimacy of Being Dead," *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 16/3 (2017): 265-296 and see too more broadly but with specific reference to Marilyn Monroe, Betty Cowser, "The Culture 'America': Warhol, Celebrity, Death and the Simulacrum," *The Sloping Halls Review*, 5 (1998): 7-12.

⁴⁹ Kate Manne, *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

⁵⁰ Richardson, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," 12.

of Tom's research but summarises its breadth, insisting, as Bill did insist, on naming himself "a madman or a masochist" just for accepting the invitation to speak:

We don't take kindly to someone trying to edify us. 'Never mind the high talk,' we would say, 'just do it for us, show us! We want to see you bleed.' Anyone who would accept an invitation to do something of the kind would have to be either a madman or a masochist.⁵¹

Bill is surely right about such challenges, and folks on social media might do well to take his words to heart: edifying discourse *an sich* cannot go well, *even when* such discourses do go well, and I do not know how many people at BC today will even remember that talk. Nor, indeed, was the name of PhD number 100 mentioned in Bill's talk. Just the gritted teeth of his own effort, and the justification, excuse that this would be *his* juggling act and the suggestion that everyone listening to him, recently awarded PhDs and colleagues too, would have one of their own. Very Leibnizian:

How, then, do we salute him? I suggest by simply doing our own kind of thing in his honour. I'm thinking of Anatole France's story about the simple juggler who entered the monastery and, finding he was unable to do what the other monks did to honour the Virgin Mary (like writing books, or copying or illuminating them), he resorted to doing no more than his juggling act in front of her statue. Well, whatever else we learn in Graduate School, we all develop at least one little juggling act, and I have been asked to show you mine. The most that can be said for it, perhaps, is that it is one way, among countless other ways that are represented by so many of you here tonight, to live on the edge of truth and try to move forward.⁵²

Thus Bill offers a recounting of Norma Jean's 'young' life, unremarkable despite Bill's blunt highlights, because all such accounts by Bill or others highlight a similar pathos. Bill shows no sympathy/empathy for Norma Jean's mother, how she came to be Norma Jean's mother, or how she without any other means of support (there had been a father of the kind who vanished as soon as he knew he was a father), a mother then who against all odds worked double shifts to take care of her daughter. But none of that comes to Bill's notice, this is what I mean by a lack of empathy/sympathy with any part of this (or with what it might have to entail) that he explains the mother's 'collapse' as a straight result of 'hysteria,' a judgment shared by his psychiatric colleagues: and how could it not be true? Only a Thomas Szasz would seem to bother to raise, *qua* diagnosis confirmed by the experts, any question contra these good doctors: there is 'truth' in

⁵¹ Richardson, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," 9.

⁵² Richardson, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," 10.

power and Norma Jean's mother would be hospitalized for the rest of her life following that collapse and given that diagnosis.

Note here that a clinical tone allows an author a great deal: thereby Bill, taking such a tone, is able to report a subject's report as a "claim," which in turn undercuts it as a statement and this is the essence of psychoanalysis, Freud's stock in trade. If Bill earlier informed us that Norma Jean fantasized mightily about her father based on nothing more than a photograph — is that all? Was she told nothing? We know she tried to contact her father after, as it were, making good, and in his shame and fearing rebuke, he threatened and refused her, *absconditus* as he was to her and to her mother. Bill continues to keep clinical distance from Monroe's reports, assessing "During this time Norma Jeane claims to have been sexually assaulted and having her face slapped when she reported it (later she associated this to her tendency to stutter under stress)."⁵³ Well to be sure, but as Lacan points out the subject of therapeutic discourse always follows the *analyst's* direction.

Richardson then offers an account of Lacan, the same account we are offered every time, taking us via Levi-Strauss and anthropology (I will try to end this essay with just such a detour to remain true to protocol) along with de Saussure's linguistics to get us to the unconscious qua structured like a language, as language. And thus we track, as Bill says, not the request Marilyn Monroe makes of her doctor, fully aware of the vulnerability of her circumstance in such conditions, given her own familiarity with hospitals and clinics and clinicians with which she would have been all the more not the less anxious about. This is given no credence: we are meant to suspect, we are assigned the task of tracking

the signified that slides under the following chain: "Cut as little as possible I know it seems vain but that doesn't really enter into it — the fact that I'm a woman is important and means much to me. Save please . . . what you can — I'm in your hands . . . please Doctor ... no ovaries removed ..." etc."⁵⁴

Foreclosed by such an approach is any consideration that there might be a rational request to be read — interpreted, hermeneutically, not deciphered/analysed — in the symbols written in and through her request to a surgeon, that is to say by a patient to her doctor, in anticipation of surgery. Instead of such a reading, Bill underscores her desperation and analyses her *transference* (what else would it be?) in the process. Thus, the reader, in this case, the male analyst, tells us what the male analyst tells us, this latter is Marilyn Monroe's own psychoanalyst, note here that it is very

⁵³ Richardson, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," 14

⁵⁴ Richardson, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," 16

hard to bracket our own fascination, bemusement, amusement, horror even, at the tragic truth to be wrought on the body of Marilyn Monroe.

Certainly, we recall that, and as Warhol and Baudrillard underline Marilyn Monroe as the sign of signs, a signature signifier in our era of mediatized advertising and the culture industry, like Elizabeth Taylor, Marilyn was iconic.⁵⁵ It is no kind of ideal to be an ‘icon’: object of fascination and denigration. Even the art historian, Griselda Pollock, in her insightful reading between iconographies is disinterested in questions that surround Marilyn Monroe’s death, even in a text about Marilyn Monroe’s death, the more important question being that of public fascination or ‘*fascinace*,’ which is of course the point of Lacan’s reading of Poe’s ‘Purloined Letter.’ Dead Marilyn is tabloid material — even the *New York Times* headline ran as if it were *The Daily News* or *National Enquirer*: “Marilyn Monroe Dead, Pills Near,” — but no water, and no glass by her bedside and nothing in her stomach or digestive tract either —.⁵⁶ We overlook the parallel: in other cases of public ‘*fascinace*’ it would take an Oliver Stone, as if an academic would take *him* seriously, to point to the problems that go along with official autopsies *and* conflicting reports *and* photos of the same: even for art histories. Here we are closer to the Real that for Lacan speaks in death.⁵⁷

If Bill’s reading lacks empathy with Marilyn, there is fascination and, of course, although one can be sure he meant his reading kindly, an aide to help her (but she’s dead, so how could this help her?) to come to her own truth. On Bill’s account, this is a matter of clinical history, Norma Jeane’s truth is the truth of her family, of blood that will out and failure upon failure as these ingredients constituting her could not but mark her:

⁵⁵ See in addition to Baudrillard’s attention to the simulacrum, the cult of the actor, the artist, and death, in Baudrillard, *America* (New York: Verso, 1988), and again, Cowser, “The Culture ‘America’.”

⁵⁶ *New York Times*, 6 August 1962. Lacan would have had a field day with the title alone.

⁵⁷ I thank Tracy Strong for his discussion of a study that appeared just after Bill’s own circulation of his own reflections, of S. Paige Baty, *American Monroe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). Pollock, cited above, refers to Baty. And see too, for a more conventional bio-thanatography, Robert F. Slatzer, *The Life and Curious Death of Marilyn Monroe* (New York: Alcuin, 1974) and of course, on overkill as such, Sarah Churchwell, “Too Many Marilyns,” *The Guardian*, 28 May 2007. Churchwell, also author of *The Many Lives of Marilyn Monroe* (London: Picador, 2005) emphasizes, without moving beyond mainstream exigence or good grace, the massive appropriation and exploitation involved from Warhol onward but also including Hugh Hefner who paid her nothing, not a dime, not ever, for an image that arguably launched his career, whose exploitation continues in death, as he insisted upon (and his resources ensured) the right to buried alongside Monroe. I discuss this with respect to the Chinese Warhol, as some call him, Wang Guangyi, alongside a discussion of pop art and culture in Babich, “On Contemporary Pop Art, ‘Covers,’ Remix, and Political Theology” in: Tiziana Andina and Erica Onnis, eds., *The Philosophy and Art of Wang Guangyi* (London: Bloomsbury, July 2019), pp. 111-146.

For Norma Jeane, then, they came through a manic-depressive grandmother and institutionalized grandfather, through the suicidal uncle and paranoid-schizophrenic mother, through the absent father who refused to acknowledge her, through Aunt Grace who herself would eventually kill herself, through the Bollender family, the English couple, Clark Gable and Jean Harlow, Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, through the whole male chauvinist world of which she would eventually become a ploy.⁵⁸

Still, there is that cheap ontic stuff. This particular movie star would have been all-too familiar with patient-being, submitting as she had to abortions as she had also submitted to the hairdresser, to minor surgeries, cosmetic and the like, as indeed to makeup incursions of the sort taken for granted (hours are involved) by the Hollywood studio system of her day that used her and broke her. Broken as she was, she was also something of a political liability for certain political forces, as, in their turn, JFK and RFK themselves would come to be for other political forces. Today, there is a long interval between stories told and those who need to tell them, so that the subject of truth has perhaps come to something like the light.⁵⁹

Much later, Bill would have surgery of his own, encountering for his own part an aspect of Lacan's Real, but it is unlikely that he even thus would have come to see, beyond the patent temptation to see, Marilyn's request as anything more than a particularly Lacanian expression of her unconscious affixed to the surface of her naked body: a signifier of a fantastic kind, being of course the articulated wish of the cinematic imaginary that is and was Marilyn Monroe.

In fact, we hardly need to invoke the Lacanian register of the Real in the operating room. Surgeons mistake the relevant part of the body in question all the time: Monroe's advice was an everyday word to the wise and uncaring errors continue at what should strike us as alarming rates. This is one of the reasons I mentioned Thomas Szasz above and one of the reasons I begin with Ivan Illich's *Medical Nemesis* (Illich lists the rate of iatrogenic disease/doctor's error, alarming rates which have not gone down since Illich first wrote his book),⁶⁰ when I talk about Heidegger in nursing philosophy and care ethics.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Richardson, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," 17.

⁵⁹ These reflections are dismissed in advance simply by ranging them under the discrediting rubric of conspiracy theories. See, however, most recently, with respect to RFK, Lisa Pease and James de Eugenio, *A Lie too Big to Fail: The Real History of the Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy* (Feral House, 2018) and de Eugenio, *The JFK Assassination* (New York: Skyhorse, 2016).

⁶⁰ Babich, "Ivan Illich's *Medical Nemesis* and the 'Age of the Show': On the Expropriation of Death," *Nursing Philosophy*, 19/1 (2018): 1-13.

⁶¹ Babich, "Solicitude."

What remains worth this one price of admission alone, is the juggling act as I cited Bill's word above as here we have, balanced and clear, one of the best clinical discussions of Lacanian therapeutics that might, arguably, be had.

Bill means his juggling and his title: how do you spell Marilyn Monroe?

Thus, if the message of the taped note were being listened to rather than read, the Lacanian analyst might attend to the signifiers that hint at the problem of castration ('cut . . . woman . . . ovaries . . . scars') rather than to the little girl terror underneath. It is not that he is unaware of, or indifferent to, the terror, but that he is convinced that the only way one can gain access to it in the analytic situation is through the chain of spoken signifiers. He is especially attentive to slips of the tongue and ambiguities of any kind.⁶²

Here the ethical place of psychoanalysis if it has any, and elsewhere Bill will insist that it cannot, is in the locus of deferral and refusal, slippage. But what slips is not the subject of the analysand but the analyst as master, the one who is indeed, so Lacan tells us, supposed to know. This requires a certain recounting of the nature of the transference as such:

transference consists not in the imaginary relationship between ego and ego but in the relationship between the analysand as subject of speech and the analyst as holding the place of the Other of the unconscious, attending to the discourse of the Other as it comes to pass in the analysand and echoing it back to the analysand so that he/she may hear it too. In the analysand's eyes the analyst is the 'subject supposed to know' the meaning of what is being said.⁶³

There is then to be sure, and this happens with all juggling acts, even ones that involve a certain quality that is the *tour de force*, and Bill in 1990 offered these all the time. Thus he reflects, reading between Lacan and Heidegger as Lacan himself reads Heidegger, this is perhaps the key beyond the ordinary Freudian unhappiness, that is more decisive: the recognition that desire is fundamentally negated, as language, tracking the place of her father knotted as it were into the Borromean knot of Imaginary, Symbolic, Real, here somewhat too neatly mapping onto Norma Jean's three husbands, if her analysis went well (and whose fault would it have to be if it did not?)

'she could be helped to realize in some way that it is the Name of the Father (i.e., the law of symbolic functioning) that imposes a 'no' on all human desire simply because the already lost object that causes desire, i.e. the imaginary Mother of the first bonding, is, by the nature of things, ultimately irretrievable. Such for Lacan is the 'tragic sense of life.' If for Marilyn Monroe the lost object included father as well as mother, and if the pain of inevitable castration included for her the frustration of her yearning for

⁶² Richardson, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," 22-23.

⁶³ Richardson, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," 23.

motherhood, such is simply the sad condition of human existence that happens to go by her name.⁶⁴

Science and Psychoanalysis and Heidegger

I have reflected on the above because this has everything to do with science. As a “continental” philosopher of science, I do philosophy of science the hard way, as it were, drawing on Nietzsche who tells us as we have seen that there is no truth and who emphasizes, making it worse, that facts are what we have not got and I draw on Heidegger who tells us a very complicated but not unrelated account of truth and the having of what we do have.

Science is the theme for Heidegger in his more than decade long series of Zollikon seminars. Arguably, given the dates, the reason Bill Richardson writes about Heidegger and science may be less because Bill cares about science (as I think everyone should care) or as Heidegger was himself interested in science, especially what Nietzsche called “the question of science” which he claimed to have been the first to raise or frame “as a question.” Rather, much rather, what is at issue is the status of the unconscious, the status of psychoanalysis as a science.

Thus when I read Bill’s essay, “Heidegger’s Critique of Science,”⁶⁵ I found myself more than a little disquieted: there I was, keen on Heidegger and science, there Bill was: *not* helping. Similarly disquieted was also Bill’s great friend, Patrick Heelan. For his part, Heelan could not but be caught by Bill’s cowcatcher of a first line: “On the longest day he ever lived, Heidegger could never be called a philosopher of science.”⁶⁶ For the thing about that qualification, in addition to being one of Bill’s favoured tropes, I said he liked saying no, is both that Bill and Patrick were friends *and* that Bill’s line was a direct attack on Patrick. There is more: Heelan was in the audience at Bill’s doctoral defence those many years ago, eye to eye even with Levinas as he could thus relate Levinas’ reactions to everything Bill said in his defence (out of Bill’s line of view, as it happened), even taping the procedure for posterity (like conference tweeting today). In addition, Heelan was a Husserlian as he was a Heideggerian, also to be sure a Merleau-Pontyan style philosopher of science, expert on the work of Heidegger’s friend, the physicist Werner Heisenberg.

⁶⁴ Richardson, “Philosophy and Psychoanalysis,” 26-27.

⁶⁵ Richardson, “Heidegger’s Critique of Science.”

⁶⁶ Patrick A. Heelan, S.J., “Heidegger’s Longest Day: Twenty-Five Years Later,” in: Babich, ed., *From Phenomenology to Thought, Errancy, and Desire*, here, p. 579. There are a range of authors, but, alas, not too many, who have engaged Heidegger and science, notably Trish Glazebrook and yet in her 1994 book *Heidegger’s Philosophy of Science* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1994) she engages rather more with Jack Caputo than Richardson or indeed and for that matter, Heelan, Kockelmans, Kisiel, et al.

So we have two pairs of friends, each magnifying as friends do, the other. In this way, Richardson passed his essay along to Patrick, i.e., should one need these dots connected, Bill offered Patrick, a scientist and a philosopher of science, who three years earlier had given him his book on Heisenberg, as a reader of Heidegger and science, in this case not psychoanalysis but cosmology and quantum physics, a text in which Bill cautions against assimilating Heidegger and philosophy of science, never mind the themes of *Quantum Mechanics and Objectivity*, telling Patrick as he tells us that of all the things Heidegger might be said to be, a philosopher of science is not one of them. Bill's essay thus answers Patrick's efforts, and not less and also Kockelmans and other authors. That's fine, as that is what scholarship is for and it is scholarship too when someone praises Bill, and just in passing undoes a few exclusions, however neatly tied down.

For his part, Patrick eschewed all the violence involved in claiming 'not to understand' what someone says — this last being a powerfully effective tactic for discounting claims in advance — but instead took as his own Bill's title, a quarter of a century later in Heelan's: "Heidegger's Longest Day," reading *and* engaging his friend's claim by explaining, with admirable generosity, that "In saying that Heidegger 'could never be called a philosopher of science,' [Richardson] did not mean that Heidegger's philosophy cannot address the problems of scientific knowledge" but simply, and Bill says just this, that Heidegger "was not well versed in science."⁶⁷ Heelan then continues to point out that "Richardson's paper is so important because it became the model for virtually all subsequent papers on the topic of Heidegger's philosophy of science."⁶⁸ Indeed, to this day scholars repeat Bill's claims, Heidegger: not a philosopher of science, did not know science.

Heelan proceeds to take the reader through the project of Heidegger's critique of science in terms of the philosophy of science as Heelan understood this project, the approach Bill excluded from his own articulation of the question, including mathematics and measurement, laboratory observation and the world of the laboratory including 'portable laboratories' as Heelan spoke of these, for the sake of objectivity and 'meaning making,' for Heelan these would be technological instrumentation as such, the ontological status of measures and numbers as well as indications, and concluding, quite relevant for psychoanalysis a reflection on "the ontic being of an abstract or

⁶⁷ Heelan, "Heidegger's Longest Day," 579.

⁶⁸ Heelan, "Heidegger's Longest Day," 579.

theoretical concept.”⁶⁹ In each case, and this is most interesting, as Heelan reminds us, texts “do not interpret themselves,”⁷⁰ bringing in the legacy of Husserl’s engagement with these questions, as this engagement always and also informed Heidegger’s own, as Heelan manages to articulate in and through his reading of Richardson’s original paper.⁷¹

If Richardson’s paper sets the tone for discussions of Heidegger and science it is relevant that Bill would have rather more sympathy with Bacon, Roger not Frances, on science as such. Yet this detail, this favouring is less important for Bill’s engagement with the science question, although I could not have guessed this at the time any more than Patrick could have, what with our focus on science in the context of philosophy of science than the question of the unconscious, *the* question of psychoanalysis as a ‘science.’⁷² This is also the question of a certain tradition of inspiration — *Daseinsanalyse* and the existential basis for psychoanalysis as articulated in the work of Sartre.⁷³ To this may and must be added the work of Binswanger and others who took up and did quite specific things with what they took. If Heidegger was preternaturally sensitive to such appropriations, reclaiming them often with a certain aggression, this is also the story beyond influence of another friendship, including the special forbearance that marks friendships — Heidegger being who he was, and Boss being who he was, to vary Montaigne — between Heidegger and Boss.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Heelan, “Heidegger’s Longest Day,” 585.

⁷⁰ Heelan, “Heidegger’s Longest Day,” 579.

⁷¹ Now this is remarkable: in all the papers contributed to the Festschrift I edited for Bill, I could count on the fingers of one hand (this probably a general rule for Festschriften) the papers that bothered to engage Bill’s work explicitly and of those that did, few kept the engagement as Heelan did: from start to finish. One of the other exceptions, I have already mentioned, Joe Kockelmans who not only read Heidegger as a philosopher of science but with direct relevance to the unconscious and indeed psychology and psychoanalysis offering possibly one of the best discussions of this topic in a chapter titled just as plainly as Bill could ever wish: “Reflections on the ‘Foundations’ of Psychology and Psychoanalysis.”

⁷² This is “The Science Thing,” as Debra Bergoffen writes in her contribution to Bill’s festschrift, Babich, ed., *From Phenomenology to Thought, Errancy, and Desire*, 567-578.

⁷³ To this may be added whole worlds fabricated out of what scholars would have liked Merleau-Ponty to have said which he did not say, sparing themselves an engagement with what he did say. See for a study as much inspired by Merleau-Ponty’s very experimental and very hermeneutic and phenomenological approach to psychology as by Husserl and Heidegger, Heelan, *Space Perception and the Philosophy of Science* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

⁷⁴ Bill we know was more keen on Lacan, but Bill also taught Boss. I would know: I took the course. See further Bruno Verrechia, „Médard Boss et Martin Heidegger : un témoignage exceptionnel du dialogue entre psychiatrie et philosophie,“ *La Lettre du Psychiatre*, Vol. V, n° 3 (mai-juin 2009): 57-65 and Babich, ‘Der Wissenschaftsbegriff bei Martin Heidegger und Medard Boss: Philosophisches Denken und *Daseinsanalyse*’ in Harald Seubert, ed., *Heidegger und Daseinsanalyse* (Köln: Böhlau, 2003), 249-268.

It is in the Zollikon Seminars — and one can read with profit both Dallmayr and Kockelmans on these,⁷⁵ along with recent readings that skip over earlier readings as if irrelevant in what, as time goes by, becomes a self-confirming oblivion — that Heidegger highlights “perceptible ... existing phenomena” as “*ontic* phenomena” referring in good classical fashion to the table.⁷⁶ The framework is drawn more from Kant than Hegel’s phenomenology and Heidegger adds the second kind which causes all the trouble telling us that “Nonsensory, imperceptible phenomena, for example, the existence of something, are ontological phenomena.”⁷⁷

Heidegger is talking to those scientistically minded practitioners who are also used themselves to enjoying great authority, the authority of science and power, namely medical, whereby not only do people typically listen to them, these seminar participants, but they are also those inclined to talk to psychoanalysts about psychoanalysts (as Lacan dedicated himself to doing, and which was one of the reasons for his allure), privy to the master discourse and thus supposed to know. Bill Richardson spends most of his own engagement tacking through the Latin terms for reading Kant⁷⁸ on the actual (together with Husserlian ‘*Evidenz*,’ as elusive here as it is essential, and which Heidegger tacks through Kant to explain what is “obvious,” what in Severus Snape’s careful articulation as Alan Rickman has for a certain generation expressed this), bringing it all back to Kant

the same as *manifest* or *evident*, which is derived from *evideri* — to let oneself be seen (ἐναργής, luminously shining, *argentum*, silver), showing itself from itself.⁷⁹

Thus Heidegger can say, and for the sake of articulation I referenced Rickman’s Snape, “Therefore, according to Kant, it is obvious [*Offenbar*] that *Being* is not a real predicate.”⁸⁰ Here Heidegger is explicating what Heelan emphasizes as what belongs to the axiomatic, critical as this is for science: “This means that ‘not-being-a-real-predicate’ simply has to be taken for granted, that is, accepted.”⁸¹ This is a crash course in scholasticism, for the sake of Heidegger’s interlocutors and what is intriguing as one reads the Seminar protocols is just the care (and not less persistence)

⁷⁵ I have already cited both in the discussion above.

⁷⁶ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars. Protocols—Conversations—Letters*, edited by Medard Boss, trans. Franz Mayr and Richard Askay (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001 [1987]), 6.

⁷⁷ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars. Protocols—Conversations—Letters*, 6.

⁷⁸ See for a valuable (if by no means Heideggerian) discussion of Kant’s style Willi Goetschl, *Constituting Critique: Kant’s Writing as Critical Praxis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994).

⁷⁹ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 4-5.

⁸⁰ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 5.

⁸¹ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 5.

Heidegger takes in laying this out, it is for this reason that I elsewhere call attention to Heidegger's *furore docere*.⁸² Here, Heidegger details three different meanings in which one may speak of acceptance in regards to proof, the first being "to assume" the second two more crucial

2. To be supposed: suppose that ... if ... then....; to suppose something as a condition, that is, as something which actually is not and cannot be given in itself: acceptance as hypothesis, as *suppositio*.
3. Acceptance: accepting something that has been given, to keep oneself open for a thing, *acceptio*.⁸³

The German, it should be noted simply offers variations on what may be assumed: *Annehmen...*, *Angenommen...*, *Annahme...* Heidegger immediately goes in the next corollary to detail such a supposition with respect to Freud's *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, re "the parapraxes, drives, and forces." What is central is Heidegger's explication: "These supposed drives and forces *cause* and *produce* the phenomena."⁸⁴ For Heidegger, QED. "Acceptance," Heidegger goes on to say, "can be taken as accepting something, as a pure and simple receiving-perceiving [*Vernehmen*] of what shows itself from itself."⁸⁵ For Lonergan, this would also be the end of questions or, as Heidegger says "a plain and simple showing of what is asserted ... There is no further need for arguments here."⁸⁶

For his part, in "Heidegger Among the Doctors,"⁸⁷ Richardson focusses on elucidating *acceptio* and *suppositio*, the assumption [*Annahme*] or supposition (translated by Mayr and Askay⁸⁸ as acceptance and supposition) essential to what Heidegger throughout his life — and this too is Kantian — regarded as the question of *Begründung*.

For Heidegger, "each supposition is always already grounded in a certain kind of *acceptio*. Only when the presence of something is accepted, can one have suppositions about it."⁸⁹ It is in this sense that Heidegger introduces the distinction between perceptible, ontic phenomena [*warhnehmbare, seiende Phänomene*] and the "imperceptible [*nicht-sinnenhaft, wahrnehmbare*

⁸² Babich, "On Heidegger on Education and Questioning" in: Michael A. Peters (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory* (Singapore: Springer Nature, 2017). See for a discussion in a broader context, on using such a reading of Heideggerian questioning as a way of organizing a series of complex reflections, Andrea Hurst, "Guest editor's introduction: Identities in question," *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 37/4 (2018): 379-392.

⁸³ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 5.

⁸⁴ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 5.

⁸⁵ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 5.

⁸⁶ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 5.

⁸⁷ Richardson, "Heidegger among the Doctors."

⁸⁸ See translator's footnote, Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 6.

⁸⁹ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 6.

Phänomena], that is the existing of something = ontological phenomena” that “always already and necessarily show themselves *prior to* all perceptible phenomena.”⁹⁰ The point itself is key to “the contrast between the *psychodynamic* and the *Daseinsanalytic* view of the human being” and to that extent Heidegger reflects on what must be assumed, taken as given [*acceptio*] in order to articulate the Freudian schema whereby, as Heidegger explains, phenomena will be required to “take a backseat to suppositions” for Freud just to the extent that Freud is concerned with tracing causality of a scientific kind apart from what is otherwise given to be seen: the unconscious, in other words, which as Heidegger points out counts as such for Freud as “only that which can be explained in terms of psychological, unbroken, causal connections between forces is actual and genuinely actual.”

The claim is the claim of science: this is what is meant by what is “real and truly existent” [*wirklich und wahrhaft seinend*] for Freud. Here Heidegger immediately draws a parallel to Planck in another context, referring to physics, the essence of the scientific: “Only that which can be measured is real.”⁹¹ Heidegger’s counterpoint, contra Planck but also contra Freud is to point to an ineffable otherwise: “Eine Trauer zum Beispiel.”⁹² I find it helpful to hear in this an allusion to Hölderlin’s *Sophocles*, which concludes a poetic word as a ‘measure’ to articulate joy.

By the next meeting, Heidegger takes his interlocutors through a discussion of mathematics, axiomatically articulated, reminding them of what is meant by speaking of assertoric (actual but unnecessary) and apodictic (necessary but not absolute) certainty. It is Heidegger’s emphasis on the non-absolute that should get our attention as he explains a particular mathematical equation qua equation, that is: “gleich”: “ $2 \times 2 = 4$.” Now the example Plato uses in the *Meno* is a little more challenging but there is a good deal more mathematics in Heidegger’s example as he is able, quite in the spirit of Frege and Hilbert and Husserl — all his spiritual grandfathers — to explain this as an instantiation of “apodictic certainty” while pointing out that it is not absolute, anymore than assertoric certainty is and asking why not?

⁹⁰ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 6.

⁹¹ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 7. I discuss Heidegger’s reading of Planck at length in my own contribution to Bill’s Festschrift, “Heidegger’s Philosophy of Science: Calculation, Thought, and *Gelassenheit*,” pp. 589-599 and elsewhere.

⁹² Heidegger, *Zollikonseminar* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1994 [1987]), 7.

In $2 \times 2 = 4$ 'the same as' [= equals] is presupposed [*ist das 'gleich' vorausgesetzt*]. It is also presupposed that two always remains identical to itself; therefore it is a conditional certainty.⁹³

Heidegger goes on to talk about the table once again, space, time, light and dark, orientation in space as a matter of facing toward, including outer space, thus bringing in a reference to the nonperceptible. The discussion is varied and engaged between the participants and when they come together again, Heidegger informs them that: "The last seminar was rather a failure."⁹⁴ Really? He goes on to discuss the way science works, all of which he also and already has laid out in *Being and Time*, but which he here states more plainly and we could call this the articulation par excellence, and *pace* Richardson, of a Heideggerian philosophy of science which also happens to look a great deal like other philosophies of science, at least those that are concerned to consider the foundations of science.⁹⁵

For science the domain of objects is already pre-given. Research goes forward in the same direction in which the respective areas have already been talked about prescientifically. These areas belong to the everyday world.⁹⁶

It is in this context, prefaced with a distinguishing reference to the ontological difference as such, that Heidegger emphasizes science. Explaining this is as the prime reference for us, and defining it by contrast with his own ontological concern, as that "which deals only with beings,"⁹⁷ Heidegger can explicate the sense of our conviction today, key in a gathering of psychologists, medical doctors, psychoanalysts, that it is science alone that is supposed able to "provide objective truth."⁹⁸ The referent in Heidegger's discussion is unspoken as critics of his own preoccupation with Being on the terms of which criticism, "any attempt to think of *Being* appears arbitrary and mystical."

A tiny benefit of the publication of the posthumous works, like the *Beiträge* and not less, in fact, like the Black Notebooks, is that we can see beyond other references, the extent to which such criticisms greatly concerned and occupied Heidegger well before the Zollikon Seminars. Thus Heidegger who very much did see himself, again *pace* Richardson, as a *thinker* of science, and to this extent rather exactly as a *philosopher* of science, insists that this should not be taken to entail

⁹³ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 9.

⁹⁴ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 17.

⁹⁵ One of the best, and clearest articulations of this is in Heelan's *Quantum Mechanics and Objectivity* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965) although Heelan is at pains to reprise this point as foundational in almost all of his essays.

⁹⁶ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 18.

⁹⁷ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 17.

⁹⁸ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 17.

an “abandonment of science, but on the contrary, it means arriving at a thoughtful, knowing relationship to science and truly thinking through its limitations.”⁹⁹ There is no more properly philosophic concern for the philosophy of science as such. But that is not what many (*analytic*) philosophers of science maintain and to this same extent one cannot translate Heidegger, there have been several efforts to do so, in terms that would be recognizable by/useful for mainstream (that is: analytic) philosophy of science.

To articulate as Heidegger does the project of a “thoughtful, knowing relationship to science and truly thinking through its limitations”¹⁰⁰ has to be problematic to the extent that our thinking is scientific enough to be oriented towards natural science, as Heidegger emphasized taking as justification what as such lacks justification. As Heidegger says in discussion with Boss,

The justification of psychology consists only in its point of departure and in its taking the noncorporeal seriously. But then its justification already ends because it researches this noncorporeal with inappropriate methods. It is a justification turned into a justification.¹⁰¹

Failing to reflect Heidegger’s reserves in this fashion, a pro-science orientation characterized by a clear conscience, the thinking of Heidegger’s interlocutors was religiously pro-science and similar concerns continue to characterize philosophers today.¹⁰² To this extent, the participants were not able to see Heidegger’s own reflection as he had already earlier guided the participants in the seminar in reflecting “on the nature of space, temporality, the human being and causality.”¹⁰³ The problem is that just as the claims of the correspondence of scientific entities with ‘reality’ are to be taken with a certain methodological sobriety,¹⁰⁴ there cannot but be correspondent difficulties in thinking the nature of the human.¹⁰⁵ To approach this Heidegger begins with method, invoking not only Kant, specifically on the nature of law (as such), but also Nietzsche, the first in a series of such references, here with an observation regarding our modern and veritably formulaic natural scientific prowess: “With its formulas, the natural sciences will teach how to subdue nature’s

⁹⁹ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 18.

¹⁰⁰ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 18.

¹⁰¹ 22 November 1967; Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 216.

¹⁰² See for a recent discussion, Susan Haack, *Scientism and its Discontents* (London: Rounded Globe Publishers, 2016) along with Tom Sorrell’s earlier (and still useful) *Scientism. Philosophy and the Infatuation with Science* (London: Routledge, 1991).

¹⁰³ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 25.

¹⁰⁴ Thus: “Electrons and so forth are hypothetical. They permit us to operate in a certain way but no one has ever seen them. In cybernetics nowadays there is even the opinion that nature conforms to the ‘apparatus.’ People who operate with this apparatus will be changed as well.” Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 20.

¹⁰⁵ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 25.

powers, it will not put a ‘truer’ interpretation in place of the empirical sensory one (as does metaphysics).”¹⁰⁶

It is useful to recall that Heidegger came to physics at a time when Ernst Mach (as counterpoint to Planck) could and did challenge scientific hypotheticals, in Mach’s case, in the spirit of the empirio-criticism he himself advocated with Avenarius, specifically contra the atom. But — and this is why it is important to know how to read, this is *philology* for Nietzsche, *hermeneutics* for Heidegger — the ‘atom’ to which Mach refers is not the atom that would come to be split in the age named for the eventuality. Terms and referents are part of the scientific furniture or as Heelan would say, it was also Eddington’s and Whitehead’s style of expression, the ‘dress’ or ‘clothing’ or we can say: outfitting of the world. Thus we are barred from saying, as if there were a one-to-one correspondence, that Mach’s atom ‘corresponds’ to what we mean by atoms today, any more than we can say what ‘phlogiston’ or ‘aether’ is.¹⁰⁷ That is a lesson in the history of science, a lesson we need to begin to be able to think the unconscious.¹⁰⁸

And interestingly, inspired as he was by Heidegger, Lacan shifts the referent and the field to the linguistic order, thus we have heard the account from Bill, and the rest is history.

Heidegger remains concerned with science inasmuch as what is at issue for him is consciousness and consciousness as he sees it must be connected both to a Cartesian view of mind and to Husserl.

For this reason, Heidegger asks a seminar participant whether “Binswanger’s ‘psychiatric Daseinsanalysis’ forms a section of Heidegger’s analytic of Dasein?” quickly contending per contra that Binswanger himself was compelled to admit that “he misunderstood the analytic of Dasein,”¹⁰⁹ a fault Binswanger assessed as a “productive misunderstanding.” The particularity of Heidegger’s voice here, indirect but implicitly reproachful is recognizable as we have come to be more familiar with this tone from his unpublished writings, and he speaks in the same tone to

¹⁰⁶ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 27, citing Nietzsche’s unpublished work. I elsewhere reflect on Nietzsche and science and ‘truth’ in just this Heideggerian sense.

¹⁰⁷ See for discussion, Babich, “Heidegger and Hölderlin on Aether and Life,” *Études Phénoménologique, Phenomenological Studies*, 2 (2018): 111-133.

¹⁰⁸ See here, some (perhaps not all) of M. Guy Thompson’s reflections on Heideggerian thinking in “Is the Unconscious Really all that Unconscious?: The Role of Being and Experience in the Psychoanalytic Encounter,” *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 37 (2001):571-612, here 584ff.

¹⁰⁹ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 115.

Wisser to be found in the ancillary reports Wisser is moved to publish after his television interview a few years later.¹¹⁰

You can see this from the fact that there is a ‘supplement’ to Heidegger’s gloomy care [*düstere Sorge*] in Binswanger’s lengthy book on the fundamental forms of Dasein.¹¹¹

It is essentially a treatise on love, a topic that Heidegger has supposedly neglected.¹¹²

I pass over, because this would not be the first time a German professor uses such a second-person reference in speaking of him- (it is almost never *her-*) self (Gadamer did the same thing, as did Taubes, and even Feyerabend in conversation, and I imagine others might have their own experience of the same).

Elsewhere I point out that Heidegger supposes himself in his analysis of care to be always and already explicating ‘love’ (and Agamben, he at least, agrees with him), just to the extent that Heidegger’s *Fürsorge* is as comprehensive and always-already endowing as Heidegger insists it is.¹¹³ It is the same point that permits Heidegger to tell us that he already has an ethics, an originary ethics. For Heidegger, Binswanger himself, is providing a supplement to *Being and Time*, a text he has misunderstood or better said, failed to read, whereby what is problematic is not adding a putatively missing emphasis on love, but failing to see that “care has an existential that is, ontological sense.”¹¹⁴

Heidegger goes on to clarify that Husserl’s phenomenology “which continued to have an impact on Binswanger and remains one of consciousness, blocks clear insight into the phenomenological hermeneutics of *Da-sein*.” Being-in-the-world as Dasein must, for Heidegger, be distinguished from the intentionality of consciousness. To what extent is this parallel to the (putative) intentionality of the unconscious that is to be ‘analysed?’¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ I discuss some of this in Babich, “Being on Television: Wisser, Heidegger, and Adorno,” John Rose, ed., *Proceedings of the 52nd Annual Heidegger Conference*, Goucher College, Baltimore, 2018), 81-95.

¹¹¹ Binswanger, *Grundformen und Erkenntnis menschlichen Daseins* (Zürich: Niehans, 1942). To be sure the phenomenological approach to psychotherapy had already been broached by Karl Jaspers, “The Phenomenological Approach in Psychopathology,” *Br J Psychiatry*, 114 (1968 [1912]): 1313–1323. And see too, Jaspers *Allgemeine Psychopathologie, Ein Leitfaden für Studierende Ärzte und Psychologen* (Berlin: Springer; 1913 [1912]).

¹¹² Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 115.

¹¹³ See, in French, German, and English, in chronological order: Babich: « Vers une éthique de l’assistance », *Symposium: The Journal of the Canadian Society for Continental Philosophy*, Vol. 20, Nr. 1 (2016): 194–212; “Zu einer Ethik der Fürsorge,” *Divinatio*, 41 (2016): 141–165; “Solicitude: Towards a Heideggerian Care-Ethics-of-Assistance” in: Paul Fairfield and Saulius Geniusas, eds., *Relational Hermeneutics* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 9–28.

¹¹⁴ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 116.

¹¹⁵ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 121.

The charge issued by Binswanger, holding that Heidegger omits reference to love, goes hand in hand with other charges that find that Heidegger manages to miss the body (how this claim can be made is astonishing to me as Heidegger invokes the body *and* its surrounds *and* world-around throughout *Being and Time*, but scholars fondly repeat the claim at intervals), and a parallel trope finds Heidegger's thinking antiscientific, a charge Heidegger refuses throughout, here reminding us, fundamentally, pointedly: "If someone speaks about an antiscientific attitude, one must first ask him whether he knows what science is."¹¹⁶ For Heidegger, the overarching concern he has with science, as a question to be raised, is not about "science as science — but only about the absolute claims of natural science."¹¹⁷

In this fashion, didactic as it happens, Heidegger is able to respond to a participant's objection that they are keen 'to remain natural scientists nevertheless,' by specifying: "You must first tell me what psychology is" and then taking his interlocutor through a hermeneutic of nothing other than conversation and understanding in order to offer the helpful distinction from that experiential hermeneutic phenomenological viewpoint: "Daseinsanalyse is ontic. The analytic of Dasein is ontological."¹¹⁸

For Heidegger, the founding project of modern science (and modern technology to be sure) had already begun in the middle ages, whereby today, what "is ascertained by scientific objectivity is considered to be the true being."¹¹⁹ If Heidegger is the thinker of being, if Heidegger undertakes to ask what he claims the entirety of Western metaphysics failed to ask, to wit, the question of Being, how object to such a project? And indeed, "This sounds wonderful." So it seems, but one forgets

easily and all too often that this 'objectivity' is possible only insofar as the human being has entered into, and interpreted himself according to subjectivity, which is not self-evident at all.¹²⁰

The point is resumed at the next meeting of the seminar and it is essential to cite, because Heidegger goes on to repeat the same Nietzsche citation twice in short order, among a range of other references to Nietzsche¹²¹ quite on the question of *the* method Nietzsche characterizes as

¹¹⁶ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 116.

¹¹⁷ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 122.

¹¹⁸ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 124.

¹¹⁹ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 116.

¹²⁰ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 116-117.

¹²¹ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 128, 129, and again, 134 and 135.

exemplifying the 19th century less as the age of the victory of science than “the victory of the scientific method over science.”¹²²

For Heidegger, “in the modern sense, method not only has the meaning of a procedure for treating objects but of a transcendental presupposition of the objectivity of objects.”¹²³ Heidegger is concerned to articulate what belongs to the analytic of Da-sein, *properly* regarded, as well as what would be needed for the sake of a rigorous science. Ultimately what is at stake for Heidegger might be the full and proper (i.e., not in the modern and restrictive self-positing sense of science) sense of a science qua science of the human being as such.¹²⁴

Heidegger on “the Unfolding Essence of a Man”

I’ve emphasized that Heidegger has recourse to Nietzsche, here not regarding Nietzsche’s passionate reflections on knowledge nor his teaching of the will to power but with reference to science and method. At the same time, Heidegger emphasizes Nietzsche on the theme of memory and desire.

Simultaneously, and this was already noted with reference to Richardson’s analysis of “The Spelling of Marilyn Monroe,” one has to read Heidegger in the frame of his understanding of *sexual* care, concern, and human relatedness, one to another. This understanding of care and relatedness, concern: solicitude: assistance, is complex as it is in Heidegger mostly negative, *active* precisely (as care is most commonly expressed as Heidegger argues) by way of the active doing that is what *we do not do*. I have developed this elsewhere with reference to *Being and Time*.¹²⁵ In his dialogue with Medard Boss, Heidegger reflects on a case study of the doctor’s own, there is egregious misogyny, or if one prefers the term, there is sexism, not too different from what one can also read throughout Heidegger’s correspondence with Arendt, etc. With Boss, this sexism, seems to be a, if not *the*, therapeutic good. Whether psychotherapists today would see this in this

¹²² Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 136. I have a webinar keynote “On ‘The Victory of Scientific Method Over Science’: Nietzsche’s Hermeneutic Phenomenology of Science,” 29 November 2017, *Qualitative Research Across Boundaries. Nursing and Health Professionals*, a virtual conference of the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology hosted by the University of Alberta School of Nursing, a version of which was also invited as a plenary at the 50th Annual North Texas Philosophical Society, “Methodology, Hermeneutics, Science: On Nietzsche’s ‘Triumph of Scientific Method Over Science,’” University of Dallas-Richardson. A published version is forthcoming.

¹²³ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 129.

¹²⁴ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 136. In the summary at Boss’ home it is clarified that Heidegger’s reflection on what belongs to the classical conception of the sciences applies neither to nuclear physics nor psychotherapy.

¹²⁵ See Babich, “Solicitude.”

fashion is unclear and not for me to say, but to the extent that they might differ they would need to take leave of both Freud *and* Lacan, Heidegger *and* Boss, and as the reference to the spelling of Marilyn Monroe suggests, arguably Richardson too. The therapeutic, healing, talking cure is discussed in this case as a determining attunement specifically toward ‘the masculine’ as such. In this way, Heidegger offers a therapeutic focus for one of Boss’ case studies: “How is it that you always only encounter the masculine essence as something dangerous?”¹²⁶

Explaining, Heidegger suggests this as a way to “open the patient’s eyes for masculinity, for the unfolding essence of being a man as a whole.”¹²⁷ Here the notion of being ‘as a whole’ proposed as and for an encounter is not the feminine but the masculine, as what matters is, as Heidegger says, quite to allow her to be

tuned over or to [*Umstimmen*] the unfolding essence of being a man, into masculinity. Through this she can become freer for a man, for the unfolding essence of a man which fulfils her unfolding essence as a woman. The being-free for something is a serene and joyful mood [*Stimmung*] in itself.¹²⁸

Note that, just to this same extent, the patient as a woman who is, therapeutically, to be defined through a man in this way, ideally, and should the therapeutic intervention take as such, the patient thus and thereby turns out not to be *Da-sein*, as such or as Heidegger himself here defines it: “The *Da* in *Being and Time* does not mean a statement of place for a being, but rather it should designate the openness where beings can be present for the human being, and the human being also for himself.” Much rather, this *Da* “distinguishes the humanness of the human being.” *Note bene*, there is no question of a parallel therapeutic venture that would ensure a becoming open for femininity, to parallel Heidegger’s language above where he speaks of masculinity, for the unfolding essence of being a woman as a whole. Here, Heidegger in no way ignores, as some commentators have suggested, the dimension of eros (add that to the list along with the body and along with love), beginning with Binswanger. But Heidegger is relentlessly misogynist which is also to say that for Heidegger a woman is less *Dasein* than a being-free, at least *potentially*, if primarily as a bride or as a lover, “for a man, for the unfolding essence of a man which fulfils her unfolding essence as a woman.”

¹²⁶ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 167.

¹²⁷ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 167.

¹²⁸ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 167.

To Boss' reflective query noting the elusive question of sexuality, of masculinity and femininity for psychologists, here "including Freud himself," Heidegger is able to cite "blindness to the unfolding historical essence" and most readers might find his response a bit lacking but not because he has ignored natality, or birth, or the pregnant body because even such foci can be redirected in just the male-oriented terms observed above.

It is with forgetting, as key an issue for Lacan as for Freud, that Heidegger again cites Nietzsche's *Daybreak, Morgenröthe*:

"it has not yet been proved that there is any such thing as forgetting: all we know is that the act of recollection does not lie within our power. We have provisionally set into this gap in our power that word 'forgetting,' as if it were one more addition to our faculties. But, after all, what lies within our power!"¹²⁹

The last exclamation is a challenge: it is a question. *We are*, as Nietzsche begins his reflections in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, preternaturally *unknown to ourselves, we knowers*. The reference to forgetting/remembering is key for Nietzsche, who elsewhere writes that the chamber of human consciousness is small and who devotes a long reflection on the genealogy of, the generation of, morality, what it takes in cruelty, what he calls the mnemotechnics of pain to ensure that "five or six," as he counts of these commandments, "I will nots" might be remembered.

Thus, as we may recall Heidegger's reflection here on the purse left by a young lady visiting a man before she returns to her parents' house, it is not because of an unconscious wish of any kind, it is because in the world openness that she is, she is bodily and affectively absorbed with and 'by' the beloved. The purse was set aside to begin with, irrelevant to begin with, having as it had nothing whatever to do with the world between the two lovers. The closed world, between four walls, or as Arendt was also given to say, between four eyes, is part of this.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 168.

¹³⁰ See, for another account, with a valuable focus on Binswanger, Francesca Brencio, "Heidegger and Binswanger: Just a Misunderstanding," *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 43 (2015): 278-296. And see further Al Lingis' apt reflection, which begins with a review of Lacan's first clinical study of psychosis, repays careful attention: see Lingis, "This Immense Fascination with the Unconscious: Psychoanalysis, and Surrealism" in: Dorothee Legrand and Dylan Trigg, eds., *Unconsciousness Between Phenomenology and Psychoanalysis* (Frankfurt am Main: Springer, 2017), 261-268. See too the contributions by Legrand, Lohmar, Cohen, and Raffoul.

Sicut palea: Like unto straw, ordure, waste, banality

To conclude, it may be helpful to note Alphonso Lingis's convergent reflection to enhance our understanding of Heidegger, as Lingis writes that "Freud's psychoanalytic theory figures as a culminating moment in modern metaphysical subjectivism," noting that

Freud's psychoanalysis figures within the vast movement of subjectification in modern ontology. Teleology, with Francis Bacon, and efficient causality, with David Hume, were relocated from the 'outside' to the 'inside,' that is, they are conceived in the mind and projected outside; space and time were, with Immanuel Kant, taken to be a priori forms of the mind. The secondary qualities of observed things were, with Descartes and Locke, relocated 'inside.'¹³¹

Lingis is able with his extraordinary patience, and not less with his delight in insight, to remind us, via a reading of André Breton and Georges Bataille, of the career of surrealism and withal philosophy's concern "with the waste products of intellectual appropriation. It has most often envisaged these with abstract concepts of nothingness, infinity, the absolute."¹³² But abstraction has a direction: "Bataille calls this 'science of what is completely other' heterology and scatology."¹³³ And yet, and to read as we have read Bill's reflection on Lacan and the linguistic structuralists and anthropologists, considering the other, Lingis reminds us what it is to take a perspective on our own perspective point of view, to draw a critical parallel:

logically putting images and artefacts from other cultures alongside those of Western culture leads to putting the ideology behind and in those images and artefacts alongside the ideology behind and in the images and artefacts of Western culture. Putting the ideologies behind and in images and artefacts of other cultures alongside of psychoanalysis.¹³⁴

Lingis would have us do more than consider the parallel, reminding us of research comparing the efficacy of psychoanalytic protocols between cultures:

Claude Lévi-Strauss compared shamanist treatment among the Cuna people of Panama to psychoanalysis, and conceded that it produced cures.... Vincent Crapanzano wrote that to declare these conceptualizations inadequate is "an act of intolerable cultural arrogance."¹³⁵

¹³¹ Lingis, "This Immense Fascination with the Unconscious: Psychoanalysis and Surrealism," 271 (and note 4).

¹³² Lingis, "This Immense Fascination with the Unconscious," 274.

¹³³ Lingis, "This Immense Fascination with the Unconscious," 274.

¹³⁴ Lingis, "This Immense Fascination with the Unconscious," 275.

¹³⁵ Lingis cites Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf, trans (New York: Basic Books, 1974), pp. 186–205. He goes on to cite Crapanzano and we can read this in the present context for the sake of a consideration of subjectivity and objectivity in the claim to set psychoanalysis on the path of science: "Much of what we in the West call psychological and locate in some sort of internal space ('in the head,' 'in the mind,' 'in the brain,' 'in consciousness,' 'in the psyche') is understood in many cultures in manifestly

As reflection, precisely for the sake of an exemplification and caution contra arrogance and its limitations, Lacan was fond of the phrase *Sicut palea*, repeating it, especially on official or founding or declarative occasions, a phrase which also struck Bill. How would it not do so, as uttered by Thomas Aquinas at the end of his life, a dramatic event that turned his exquisitely articulate spirit to silence and then to death?

Above I suggested that part of what secured Lacan's appeal among his Parisians was the very direct fact that he spoke to them as analyst among analysts, addressing those who might have clients, espousing this and that approach, like Heidegger's correspondence with Boss and his engagement with the seminar. Analysts, indeed: *all of us*, as we know in the age of social media and the sheer amount of time dedicated to self-curation, are fascinated by themselves.

Lacan's reference in 1967 is adumbrated by way, negatively, of a reference to Heidegger: "the foothold of desire is nothing but that of a *désêtre*, disbeing."¹³⁶ He goes on to speak or predict: "Would that he know, about what I didn't know about the being of desire, how things stand with it, having come into the being of knowledge, and that he disappear.' *Sicut palea*, as Thomas says of his work at the end of his life, — like dung."¹³⁷ And six years later, Lacan reprises the phrase in a similar context:

to bring in the contribution of the symbolic and of the real that the imaginary binds together here (that is why one cannot let it drop) and to attempt starting from them, which all the same have proved themselves in knowledge, to augment the resources thanks to which one will manage to go beyond this troublesome relationship, to make love more worthy than the proliferation of chit-chat, than it constitutes to this day, — *sicut palea*, said St. Thomas in ending his life as a monk.¹³⁸

If Lacan was grander in his ambition, Bill Richardson, like Freud, was more inclined to underscore a more tragic, a spare promise as the ideal of the talking cure: less is more, resignation, a kind of stoic acceptance of ordinary unhappiness. If Heidegger in the end might seem to promise more, he also foregrounds the irruption of death in life, quite as something we are meant to be being towards, however articulated as this being tends to be articulated under the aegis of inauthenticity.

nonpsychological terms and located in other 'Spaces.' ... To declare such articulations inadequate, as some Western thinkers . . . have done, is, in my view, an act of intolerable cultural arrogance . . . Sudden blindness, mutism, and paralysis, aphonia, tics, and other motor disturbances, anaesthesias and paraesthesias, glossolalia and echolalia, mimetic behavior, all accompanied by a belle indifference. For all of these a demon (with a particular character and desires) was held responsible. Cures were spectacular: communal exorcisms with elaborate trance dances, possession crises, and acts of self-mutilation." Crapanzano, *Hermes' Dilemma and Hamlet's Desire: On the Epistemology of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 142.

¹³⁶ Lacan, Proposition of 9 October 1967.

¹³⁷ Lacan, Proposition of 9 October 1967.

¹³⁸ Lacan, "Letter to three Italian Lacanians: Contri, Drazien and Verdiglione," *Ornicar* 25 (Paris: Seuil, 1982)

In spite of his long life, he lived to be 96 and was a mere 54 going on 55 when I first met him (i.e., already old), Bill Richardson rarely considered death. Throughout his life, Bill always insisted he was *still young*. To underline this, he was given to quote Heidegger to this effect, in his late 50's at the time, as someone who presented himself to Bill when he first met him, as still with much to think and to do, while he still had, Bill claimed the phrase, the 'freshness' of life. True or not of Heidegger, and I leave this to the biographers, it was true of Bill who before he died had me chase the internet (and Amazon) all the way from Europe for a copy of the song he remembered, *I'm Gonna Live Until I Die* (I recall wanting this to be the version by Frank Sinatra but, it was another Frank, one Frankie Laine's version: a cover of a cover). The beauty of the song, the beat being or not being one's particular cup of tea, is its inevitable truth: the title line works either way, like the ending of German fairy tales: *und wenn sie nicht gestorben sind, so leben sie immer noch*, — *and if they have not died, they are living still* — neater than insisting *they lived happily ever after*.

But what if they have died, as Marilyn has died, as has Heidegger, Lacan, Gadamer, and Bill? What then?

The thing about death, and this, as Lingis also has shown us in his *Deathbound Subjectivity*,¹³⁹ as we know from *Being and Time*, is its impossibility. For our fairy tale characters, in addition to the names we academics tell ourselves, what is closed off by and with death is everything that might have been: possibilities, theirs and ours, utmost and ownmost as we speak of these.

Bill's was the first dead body I have ever seen. This is no achievement, yet it meant that when Richard Kearney sidled up to me at the wake, asking me, of course he wasn't asking, *had I ever seen so much make up?* I could not parse the question, I had no comparison. Richard's complaint was beautifully Irish (I majored in Irish-born locutions: the late Patrick Heelan, the late John Cleary, and I needed all of this to understand Richard's reproach): cosmetic cares had been taken to remove the blotches etched through the translucence of a face at the end of life, Richard called these 'Bill's flowers,' the pain and above all, the color of life.

The same may be read in Tolstoi, in Joyce, Yeats sings of it as he sings of love. We skip over such things, it is awkward even for a meeting of the Heidegger Circle, even in a session that exists by way of a sustained necrologue, this is a memorial session. It is for us that Mitford wrote her book, *The American Way of Death*. Our orientation, our way of facing death, is to hide it from

¹³⁹ Lingis, *Deathbound Subjectivity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).

us: we need a Randall Jarrell to write about it for us, having read as Jarrell had read, he was a friend of Arendt's, some bit of Heidegger.

And we do look away perhaps because were we to look too closely it would mean, it would come close to meaning, that we ourselves, already being older than a day are already so well underway in our own being unto death that, now quoting Hölderlin quoting Sophocles, we begin to wonder: were it not better done never to have been at all? *μη φθῆναι*.¹⁴⁰ And the wise guy answer: *who out of a thousand could be so lucky?* We know: we teach this, we've read our Sophocles, Augustine, Hölderlin, Nietzsche, Heidegger.

Close the book, perish the thought.

Not yet.

¹⁴⁰ Sophocles, *Oedipus Coloneus* l. 1225.

Bill, Facticity, and Eternity

Richard Capobianco
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Richard Capobianco's remarks will be largely drawn from the following article, which will appear in this year's volume of *Gatherings*:

From the Archives: William Richardson's Questions for Martin Heidegger's "Preface"

Edited, translated, and with a commentary by Richard Capobianco and Ian Alexander Moore

**The Presuppositions of *Being and Time*:
Heidegger's Interpretation of Aristotle in the Summer Course of 1924**

Lucas Fain
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ABSTRACT

It is often remarked that Heidegger's *Being and Time* was originally proposed as a book on Aristotle, and that formative work for this initial expression of Heidegger's existential ontology was developed through the early 1920s in a series of lecture courses and seminars on Aristotle's practical philosophy. This paper examines select details from Heidegger's 1924 summer course in order to question the presuppositions of Heidegger's decision to found the project of fundamental ontology on a purely philological reading of Aristotle. At stake is the method of investigation which permitted Heidegger to think politics through ontology in his most controversial writings from the 1930s—and ultimately the meaning of philosophy itself.

It is often remarked that Heidegger's *Being and Time* was originally proposed as a book on Aristotle, and that formative work for this initial expression of Heidegger's existential ontology was developed through the early 1920s in a series of lecture courses and seminars on Aristotle's practical philosophy. However, scholars have tended to focus on the idiosyncrasies of Heidegger's effort to translate Aristotle's philosophical lexicon into a language suited to the ontology of human existence, whereas a considerable lack of attention has been given to the methodological assumptions that undergird Heidegger's decision to found his existential ontology on a reading of Aristotle.¹ While the philosophical importance of this observation cannot be underestimated, it takes on an exceedingly ominous tone when it is viewed in light of Heidegger's boldest ambition to fortify the revolutionary politics of National Socialism with his own revolution in, or against,

¹ For the most prominent scholarship, see, e.g., Franco Volpi, "Dasein as Praxis: The Heideggerian Assimilation and the Radicalization of the Practical Philosophy of Aristotle," *Martin Heidegger: Critical Assessments, Vol. 2*, edited by Christopher E. Macann (New York: Routledge, 1992), 90-129; Franco Volpi, "Being and Time: A 'Translation' of the *Nicomachean Ethics*?" *Reading Heidegger from the Start: Essays in his Earliest Thought*, edited by Theodore Kisiel and John van Buren (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 195-211; Ted Sadler, *Heidegger and Aristotle: The Question of Being* (London: Athlone, 1996), 141-98; Stanley Rosen, *The Elusiveness of the Ordinary: Studies in the Possibility of Philosophy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 117-34; Stanley Rosen, "Phronēsis or Ontology: Aristotle and Heidegger," *The Impact of Aristotelianism on Modern Philosophy*, edited by Riccardo Pozzo (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 248-65; Jacques Taminiaux, "The Interpretation of Aristotle's Notion of *Aretē* in Heidegger's First Courses," *Heidegger and Practical Philosophy*, edited by François Raffoul and David Pettigrew (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002), 13-27; Francisco J. Gonzalez, "Beyond or Beneath Good and Evil? Heidegger's Purification of Aristotle's Ethics," *Heidegger and the Greeks: Interpretive Essays*, edited by Drew Hyland and John Panteleimon Manoussakis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 127-56; Francisco J. Gonzalez, "The Birth of *Being and Time*: Heidegger's Pivotal 1921 Reading of Aristotle's *On the Soul*," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 56.2 (June, 2018), 216-39.

philosophy. If one advances this line of questioning to its end, it becomes evident that we require an investigation into both the political and philosophical ramifications of Heidegger's decision to found the project of fundamental ontology on the reading of Aristotle.

For the purpose of circumscribing the method for this investigation, let us recall that in the summer course of 1924 Heidegger famously remarked about Aristotle: "Regarding the personality of a philosopher, our only interest is that he was born at a certain time, that he worked, and that he died. The character of the philosopher, and issues of that sort, will not be addressed here."² In what follows, the same will be said about Heidegger. Without concern for his intellectual biography, the stakes are far greater insofar as Heidegger's thought may be founded upon faulty assumptions about the value of Aristotle's approach to *philosophy*.

With this proposition in mind, the first question I want to address is whether Heidegger's reading of Aristotle in the 1920s is fundamentally compatible with, if not a preparation for, his subsequent effort to think the ontological basis of the political in his most contentious work from the 1930s.³ As a point of reference, in the student protocols that record the winter seminar of 1933–34, Heidegger took up Carl Schmitt's concept of "the political" in order to elaborate the ontological difference between the people and the state. Whereas Schmitt defined "the political" in terms of the friend-enemy distinction and its basis in the real possibility of war and physical violence, Heidegger argued that beneath this ontic conception there is a more fundamental sense, which describes "a way of Being of human beings and what makes the state possible."⁴ Under this definition, "the political" describes the ontological mode of being-in-the-world that accounts for how a people constitutes itself as a people, whereas "politics" concerns the ontic domain of conflicts among peoples and states. It is remarkable, in this connection, that Heidegger defines the ontological difference between "politics" and "the political" not as a mere *reaction* to Schmitt;

² Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe*, Bd. 18 (V. Klostermann, 2002), 5 / *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, trans. Robert D. Metcalf and Mark B. Tanzer (Indiana University Press, 2009), 4. Cited hereafter according to the following convention: Heidegger, GA 18, 5/4.

³ Michael Allen Gillespie has addressed this question by concentrating on Heidegger's subordination of *sophia* to *phronēsis* in the 1924–25 winter course on Plato's *Sophist*—see "Martin Heidegger's Aristotelian National Socialism," *Political Theory* 28.2 (April 2000), pp. 140–66, esp. 147–50. I have also addressed the continuity of Heidegger's ontological and political thought, with particular attention to the winter courses of 1933–34. See Lucas Fain, "Philosophy and the Problem of Beauty in Heidegger's Translation of 'Justice,'" *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 39 (1): 39–75.

⁴ Martin Heidegger, "Über Wesen und Begriff von Natur, Geschichte und Staat: Übung aus dem Wintersemester 1933/34," *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus, Heidegger-Jahrbuch 4* (Freiburg; München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2009), 74. / *Nature, History, State, 1933–1934*, translated by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 46. Cited hereafter according to the following convention: Heidegger, NGS 74/46.

rather Schmitt's concept of "the political" appears as the occasion for Heidegger to demonstrate the *continuity* of his political thought in the 1930s with his interpretation of Aristotle in the 1920s, especially as this recalls his treatment of Aristotle's notion of *κοινωνία* or "community" in the 1924 summer lecture course at the University of Marburg.

As a first piece of evidence for the continuity of Heidegger's political thought from the 1920s to the 1930s, Heidegger states in the winter seminar of 1933–34 that "human beings are truly the ζῷον πολιτικόν because to be human means: in a community, to carry in oneself the possibility and the necessity of giving form to and fulfilling one's own being and the being of the *community* (*Gemeinschaft*)."⁵ By comparison, in the 1924 summer course Heidegger cites Book 1, Chapter 2 of Aristotle's *Politics* in order to observe how the "determination of human beings as ζῷον λόγον ἔχον ['the animal that has speech'] appears here with an entirely definite aim in the context of demonstrating that the πόλις [the 'city-state' or 'polity'] is a being-possibility of human life." And: "Implicit in this determination is an entirely peculiar, fundamental mode of the being of human beings characterized as 'being-with-one-another,' *κοινωνία*. These beings who speak with the world are, as such, through *being-with-others*."⁶ In both of these excerpts, Heidegger draws our attention to how "the Greek πόλις, which means the state as *community* (*Staatsgemeinschaft*),"⁷ is a "being-possibility of human life"—that is, a "fundamental mode" of being for human beings characterized as *κοινωνία*: "community" or "being-with-one-another." It follows that being-in-the-πόλις belongs to a multitude of ways of human being-with-one-another. Moreover, Heidegger continues to emphasize how Aristotle's definition of the human being as a ζῷον λόγον ἔχον points to the distinctive mode of human being-with-one-another that is made possible through the unique human capacity for speech. The notion that speech as such defines the distinctive mode of human being-with-one-another then serves as the guiding reason for Heidegger's turn to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in the summer course of 1924. In short, rhetoric is the study of how human being-with-one-another is fundamentally determined though an implicit capacity for λόγος: "language" or "speech."⁸

⁵ Heidegger, NGS 71/41. Emphasis added.

⁶ Heidegger, GA 18, 46/32.

⁷ Heidegger, NGS 71/ 41. Emphasis added.

⁸ Space restrictions prevent me from detailing the proto-fascistic ontology of *κοινωνία* in §9 and its connection to remarks about the πάθος of fear regarding "enemies and opponents" in §21 of the 1924 summer course.

Now the question I want to investigate is not whether there is sufficient evidence to support the thesis that Heidegger maintains a certain continuity in his political thought from the reading of Aristotle in the 1920s to his engagement with Nazi politics in the 1930s. This much has been established, whereas the more salient question concerns the *philosophical* basis for Heidegger's decision to press the project of fundamental ontology into the service of National Socialism. As I will try to show in the space allotted, the *philosophical* problem of Heidegger's engagement with National Socialism is foremost a problem of method, insofar as Heidegger builds the project of fundamental ontology upon the *non-philosophical* results of his purely *philological* interpretation of Aristotle.

To begin, let us note that Heidegger opened the 1924 summer course with an explicit statement of the *philological*, rather than the *philosophical*, intention of the lecture. He says: "The lecture has no philosophical aim at all; it is concerned with understanding basic concepts in their conceptuality."⁹ The aim is to "see the *ground* out of which these basic concepts have arisen, as well as *how* they have so arisen."¹⁰ Heidegger adds: "The basic concepts are to be understood with regard to their conceptuality, specifically, with the purpose of *gaining insight into the fundamental exigencies of scientific research*. Here, we offer *no philosophy*, much less a history of philosophy. If *philology* means the *passion for knowledge of what has been expressed*, then what we are doing is philology."¹¹

The philological approach to the reading of Aristotle is thus one of pure explication. However, the lecture's focus on Aristotle's *Rhetoric* will take on extreme *philosophical* importance, as Heidegger would later write in *Being and Time*: "this work of Aristotle must be taken as the first systematic hermeneutic of the everydayness of being-with-one-another."¹² The philological investigation of Aristotle was thus transformed by Heidegger into a key component of the analytic of Dasein. As the project of *Being and Time* was intended to provide "new foundations" for the future of thinking,¹³ this observation underscores the magnitude of Heidegger's admission in 1924 that there are several presuppositions about the investigation of

⁹ Heidegger, GA 18, 5/4.

¹⁰ Heidegger, GA 18, 4/4.

¹¹ Heidegger, GA 18, 4/4.

¹² Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Elfte, unveränderte Auflage (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1967 [1927]), 138 / *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 138. Cited hereafter according to the convention: Heidegger, SZ 138. Page numbers refer to the German edition.

¹³ Heidegger, SZ 9.

Aristotle which must be further considered from the standpoint of *philosophy*—but which cannot be examined in the space of a lecture course with a purely *philological* aim. Among the six presuppositions that Heidegger indicates, I highlight the first and the last:

1. Presupposition: that *Aristotle* in particular actually has something to say; that for this reason it is precisely Aristotle and not *Plato*, *Kant*, or *Hegel* who is selected; [and] that to him there belongs a distinctive position not only within Greek philosophy, but within Western philosophy as a whole.

6. A methodological presupposition: *faith* in history in the sense that we presuppose *that history and the historical past have the possibility, insofar as the way is made clear for it, of giving a jolt to the present or, better put, to the future.*¹⁴

It seems fair to say that in a *philological* investigation some measure of *faith* is required, which would not otherwise be permitted in a *philosophical* investigation. Presumably, in a philosophical investigation one would have to put the results of a philological investigation into conversation with those other philosophers who are presupposed to have “something to say,” namely, something “distinctive [...] not only within Greek philosophy, but within Western philosophy as a whole.”¹⁵ Nevertheless, if the results of a philological investigation are presupposed to “have the possibility [...] of giving a jolt to the present or, better put, [hence, more importantly] to the future,” it befits us to ask about the kind of *responsibility* the *philologist* might bear for jolting the future out of its complacency with the present—and whether a different kind of responsibility falls upon the *philosopher*, insofar as the philosopher is tasked with a responsibility to evaluate a multiplicity of views, which the philologist does not, or cannot, consider.

For his part, Heidegger presents the philological aim of the lecture course as a propaedeutic to “a preliminary understanding of that which is meant by philosophy.”¹⁶ On the one hand, *philology* as “the passion for knowledge of what has been expressed” is meant as a way to

¹⁴ Heidegger, GA 18, 5-6/5.

¹⁵ Heidegger, GA 18, 5-6/5.

¹⁶ Heidegger, GA 18, 7/6.

investigate the emergence of *philosophy* from the prephilosophical ground of conceptuality. On the other hand, the *non-philosophical* basis of Heidegger's approach to the emergence of philosophy results in a philosophical problem: even if the philological investigation of the "ground" out of which Aristotle's basic concepts have arisen is instructive about the meaning of "philosophy," this determination cannot be made without putting the results of Heidegger's investigation into conversation with studies of those other philosophers who are presumed to "have something to say." As this question was too great even for Heidegger to deal with in the space of the lecture course, I want to focus on a more narrow question—namely, what Heidegger's purely *philological* appropriation of Aristotle means for his effort to think politics through ontology in the 1930s.

While it is possible, and even likely, that the political end of Heidegger's appropriation of Aristotle can be explained on the basis of prejudices revealed by his intellectual biography, such considerations terminate in *ad hominem* assessments which can never penetrate to the level of a truly *philosophical* evaluation of Heidegger's thought. Of course, a statement of this kind presupposes a definition of philosophy which is irreducible to the doctrines of one thinker or another, but which speaks, rather, to the meaning of philosophy itself, as that which underlies the doctrines through which philosophy itself issues.

One of the great attractions of Heidegger's thinking, in addition to his innovative and highly nuanced philological approach to reading philosophical texts, is his elaboration of the fundamental insight that *factual life* is the ground of all conceptuality. As such, Heidegger follows in the path of Aristotle under the presupposition that theoretical discourse grows from the ground of average, everyday conversation. Insofar as this presupposition is true, it serves the argument that Heidegger pursues a *non-philosophical* reading of Aristotle according to the methods of philology, not because the *philosophical* value of the philological investigation is to be evaluated later, from an existing plurality of philosophical perspectives, but because the *philological investigation* is supposed to reveal the ground of conceptuality as the condition of the *possibility of philosophy*.

In this connection, it is telling that while Heidegger refers to Aristotle's distinction in the *Metaphysics* between dialectic (διαλεκτική), sophistry (σοφιστική), and philosophy (φιλοσοφία), he does not proceed to turn the power of philological analysis onto an explication of the Greek

φιλοσοφία.¹⁷ In fact, the 1924 summer course is devoid of talk about φιλία and ἔρωσ, “friendship” and “love,” while it contains a detailed examination of the πάθος of fear. Accordingly, it is not an erotic ascent to the Ideas, but rather fear of nothingness or the disappearance of being as presence which turns the soul toward fundamental questioning about the meaning of being.¹⁸ It would extend us too far to work out the details, but the entire question concerning the genesis of philosophy may be contained in this disagreement between Aristotle and Plato. As for Heidegger, to the extent that he offers a definition of philosophy in 1924, he claims to treat philosophy “*in the mode of investigating what ultimately could be meant.*”¹⁹ Thus, while philosophy, sophistry, and dialectic each share the “same object,” dialectic is restricted to the critical analysis of the λόγοι or “speeches,” whereas sophistry attempts to look like philosophy, but does so only in appearance.²⁰ I note in passing that throughout the lecture course Heidegger treats philology as the modern mode of dialectic.²¹ What Heidegger does not discuss is why ἔρωσ and φιλία are left out of Aristotle’s account of the genesis of philosophy, nor does he discuss how fear could be instrumental to the genesis of θαυμάζειν or “wonder,” which begins in looking at the order of nature.²² Insofar as the lecture course is meant as a propaedeutic to philosophy, Heidegger’s account of the disclosive power of fear would necessitate a comparison with the transcendence of ἔρωσ into φιλία, which is vital to the Platonic account of the possibility of philosophy—and again, this line of questioning would lead beyond the bounds of Heidegger’s purely philological investigation of Aristotle.

Let me therefore return to the question of *responsibility*. After telling us that the lecture course “has no philosophical aim at all,” Heidegger concludes his introductory remarks with the assertion: “What is decisive is that we come to a preliminary understanding of that which is meant by philosophy.”²³ This is another way of saying that the lecture course does not presume to say “what ultimately could be meant.” Indeed, Heidegger refuses the responsibility of the *philosopher*

¹⁷ Heidegger, GA 18, 6-7/5-6.

¹⁸ Heidegger, GA 18, 191-92, 248-63, 289-91, 296-97/129, 167-76, 196-97, 201.

¹⁹ Heidegger, GA 18, 7/6. Heidegger’s emphasis.

²⁰ Heidegger, GA 18, 6-7/5-6. Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Γ 2, 1004b22.

²¹ See, e.g., Heidegger, GA 18, 6-7, 127/5-6, 87.

²² For Aristotle’s account of the genesis of philosophy, see *Metaphysics*, A 1, 980a21-27, 982b12-20. Heidegger treats “wonder” as a “basic disposition” in the winter lecture course of 1937–38, but there is nothing of the Platonic conversion of ἔρωσ into φιλία (see GA 45, §§35-48). The winter lecture course of 1921–22, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, also concerns the definition of “philosophy”—but it has less to do with Aristotle than with Heidegger’s early effort to deduce the emergence of philosophy from the motion of *factual life* (GA 65, *passim*).

²³ Heidegger, GA 18, 7/6.

within the context of the lecture course. Instead, he falls back on the presuppositions of the purely *philological* investigation, of which the second and third are of immediate importance.

2. That we are not yet so advanced that there is not something about which we would have to admit that *we are wrong in some respect*.

3. That *conceptuality* constitutes *the substance of all scientific research*; that conceptuality is not a matter of intellectual acumen, but rather, that *he who has chosen science [Wissenschaft] has accepted responsibility for the concept* (something that is missing today).²⁴

These lines highlight both Heidegger's deference to Aristotle—Heidegger's acknowledgement that he is not in a position to criticize Aristotle from a higher (philosophical) position—as well as his admission of responsibility for elucidating the ground of conceptuality in the mode of the philological scientist. In the fourth and fifth presuppositions contained in the handwritten parts of the manuscript, Heidegger further states that because scientific research is not simply a professional occupation but a “*possibility of human existence*,” hence, “a choice and decision,” it follows that “there is, in being-there, a possibility in which alone a stand is taken with respect to the possibilities of one's interpretation and determination.”²⁵ Underlying the philological investigation is therefore a resolute decision to stand with the results of the investigation, which could be evaluated later from the mode of philosophical questioning, insofar as philosophy is concerned with the ultimate meaning of what is revealed by philology.

However, the lecture also reveals a point of slippage in the demarcation between philology and philosophy. In calling Aristotle as his witness, Heidegger remarks that the investigation provides “a treatment of philosophy, but for the purpose of implanting the *instinct for what is self-evident* and the *instinct for what is ancient*.”²⁶ The “instinct for what is self-evident” points to the importance of phenomenology for the fundamental ontology of being-here, while the “instinct for

²⁴ Heidegger, GA 18, 5-6/5. Heidegger's emphasis.

²⁵ Heidegger, GA 18, 334/225. Heidegger's explicit references to “choice and decision” and the possibility of taking a stand with respect to “one's interpretation and determination” are both missing from the text of the lecture course based on student writings.

²⁶ Heidegger, GA 18, 6/5. Heidegger's emphasis.

what is ancient” alludes to both the historicity of being and the originary access of the ancients to the question of being. To recall the sixth presupposition concerning the possibility of the past to give a “jolt” to the future, Heidegger’s decision for philology is intended to implant the “instinct for what is ancient” under the presupposition that it will have the δύναμις or “power” to transform the future possibilities of human being-here.²⁷ As Heidegger also says in this highly anticipatory Introduction, “*Philosophy* is better situated today insofar as it operates outside of the basic presupposition that everything is just as it should be.”²⁸ The point at which philology takes responsibility for its power to jolt the future is therefore the point at which it operates precisely in the mode Heidegger ascribes to philosophy. Insofar as we hold onto the demarcation between philosophy and philology, the point at which the responsibility of the philologist runs up against the motion of history is the point at which the philosopher must take responsibility for what the philologist cannot be called to bear. Otherwise, the philological jolting of the future is entirely *irresponsible*. Its jolting power is rather the result of an entirely *unphilosophical*—but nonetheless resolute—*decision*.

The question that is now of *philosophical* importance concerns the degree to which Heidegger’s reading of Aristotle in 1924 permits him to think the ontological basis of political fascism in 1933–34; and whether the responsibility for this possibility falls in any way on Aristotle. This is, of course, not to suggest that Aristotle is in any way complicit in Heidegger’s political infelicities, which would be anachronistic and impossible, but rather to ask how Heidegger’s appropriation of Aristotle points backward to a problem in Aristotle—that is, a problem in Aristotle’s understanding of *philosophy*, which permits Heidegger to think the ontological basis of the political in a manner that collapses, while remaining consistent with, Aristotle’s characteristic separation of theory from practice. Again, this line of questioning exceeds the limits provided for this study; so, I will end with the following suggestion. What is fundamentally at stake in Heidegger’s appropriation of Aristotle turns back to a disagreement between Aristotle and Plato on the question concerning the possibility of philosophy—and the violence permitted by philosophy itself.

²⁷ For rhetoric as a δύναμις, here translated alternatively as “power” or “potential,” see GA 18, 115/79: “Rhetoric is δύναμις insofar as it sets forth a ‘possibility,’ a possibility to speak in definite ways.”

²⁸ Heidegger, GA 18, 6/5. Heidegger’s emphasis.

The Destruction of Three Aristotelian Concepts: *Ousia, Zôon Logon Echon, and Dunamis*

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ABSTRACT for Open Discussion Session

I will open this presentation on the early Heidegger's project of *Destruktion*, focusing not on the schematic and general discussion in §6 of the Introduction to *Being and Time*, but rather on what seem to be the actual "destructive" engagements with the Aristotelian text in some of the lecture courses from the 1920's to the early 1930's. By directing our attention to these texts for an understanding of the project of destruction, we allow it to emerge in, I would suggest, a quite new and transforming light.

That is, we will come to see destruction not simply, and not even primarily, as an instrument or as an intermediary step in the early Heidegger's grand revision of philosophy—the shifting of the center of contemporary philosophical thinking back toward the question of the meaning of Being through a step-by-step uncovering of the entire tradition as unfolding in the wake of the Greek answer to this question (i.e. the exclusive identification of 'being' with 'being present') and the question's subsequent oblivion. Instead, by focusing on destruction in its actual employment, we will come to see it as a hermeneutic method of rare and profound revelatory power, something between Nietzschean genealogy and Derridean deconstruction that enjoys the virtues of both. Indeed, it will show itself to be a specific way of engaging with and interpreting texts, possessed of its own concrete tactics and strategies and approaching the text in a truly *radical* way, digging down through the text to its *radix* or 'root.'

As we shall see, in the destructive reading of canonical texts, Heidegger employs a method that, first, identifies a difference between two distinct levels or registers in whatever text he is reading—the register of pre-conceptual, or not yet conceptualized, experience and the register of the concept and conceptual relations, which is that layer that, once articulated, will be passed along and come to influence subsequent thinkers in the tradition. The prior experiential level, even as it provokes and gives rise to the formation of concepts, always in part escapes and even to a certain extent resists those self-same conceptual constraints. Second, we will come to see that, in destruction, the text enjoys what could be termed an unusual ontological modality. The text is approached, we might say, as itself always more than it is. It is taken up as including a constitutive excess, a sub-tending source that is not thought nor even ultimately experienced by the author him or herself, but which nonetheless leaves a trace in the conceptualizing work in evidence there that the destructive reader can *excavate*, by prying open and amplifying the differentiation between the experiential and the conceptual registers of the text, and ultimately *activate*, letting that (historically situated textual) excess motivate a new and unprecedented thinking of Being and beings. Ultimately, it is this excessive and disruptive *Grund* or 'ground, basis' to which we enter into contact through the early Heideggerian destruction of the *Grundbegriffe* or 'basic, grounding concepts' of Aristotelian philosophy.

After this general discussion of destruction as an extraordinary and underappreciated method of textual interpretation, appealing there primarily to a few passages from the 1924

course *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, we will then take up passages in which we find Heidegger seeming to engage in just such a destructive reading with respect to three Aristotelian concepts—οὐσία or ‘being, what is most of all,’ the human being as ζῷον λόγον ἔχον or the ‘animal having *logos*,’ and (if there is time) δύναμις or ‘potency.’ We will draw our passages from the 1924 course, as well as from the following: 1919 *Plato’s Sophist*, 1926 *Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy*, 1927 *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, and 1931 *Aristotle’s Metaphysics Θ 1-3*.

My plan is to distribute a handout with the 10 or so passages I would like to discuss, and then simply to talk through them with the audience. I am hoping to spend the first 5 minutes briefly laying out this general conception of destruction as a specific method for approaching and interpreting texts (which, up to now in my opinion, has not been the main strain or emphasis in scholarly treatments of destruction), and then 5 minutes or so on passages relating to each concept and exhibiting the destructive method at work. We should be able to cover at least the first 2 concepts in this amount of time, and it will be possible to expand the scope during the discussion to δύναμις if the attendees wish (and they will have the passages on δῦτο refer to in the handout).

Note: I have a book proposal currently under review with Northwestern University Press on the topic of early Heideggerian destruction. It is tentatively entitled *The Destruction of Aristotle: Historical Method in the Early Heidegger*. I have written the introduction and the first 2 chapters treating each of the aspects of destruction discussed above—1.) The identification and amplification of the distinction between the experiential and conceptual registers in the text and 2.) The excavation of traces of an excessive and unexperienced/unthought ground in the Aristotelian text. I have yet to write the final chapter, which will present the destructive treatment of 3 Aristotelian concepts. It is for this reason that I would look forward especially to the opportunity to discuss this material with the experts gathered at the Heidegger Circle in an unscripted and open format.

The Destruction of Aristotle: Historical Method in the Early Heidegger

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Thinking Transcendence: Heidegger's Ontological Concept of Freedom

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ABSTRACT

According to Hans Ruin, there are two ways to approach the examination of freedom in Heidegger's writings: One can use the notion of freedom as a heuristic concept to interpret the entirety of Heidegger's work as a philosophy of freedom, which was famously done by Günter Figal, or one can reconstruct Heidegger's actual use of the notion of freedom. In my paper I'll focus on the second approach and show that although "freedom" or, rather, "being-free" can already be found in *Being and Time*, his more elaborate concept of freedom as *transcendence* is developed in the years 1928-1930. These years are part of a time period in which Heidegger tried to develop his own positive concept of metaphysics.

The main texts which show this development are the lecture course *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* and the essay *On the Essence of Ground*. Based on Aristotle's twofold metaphysics—consisting of ontology and philosophical theology—Heidegger sketches his own concept of metaphysics. The fundamental ontology which plays the role of ontology is complemented by his cosmological interpretation of theology: metontology. Together, they form Heidegger's novel notion of metaphysics: the metaphysics of Dasein. Whereas fundamental ontology is concerned with the question of *Being*, the main subject of metontology is *world as beings as a whole*. Heidegger develops his concept of transcendence, i.e., metontological freedom, which describes the connection between freedom and world, on the basis of the terms *world-projection* (Weltentwurf), *world-view* (Weltanschauung), and *world-formation* (Weltbildung), each describing an aspect of transcendence.

Introduction

Normally, one wouldn't think of Heidegger in the context of theories of freedom, since freedom is usually connected to an understanding of subjectivity Heidegger wants to overcome. Nevertheless, freedom plays an important role in Heidegger's work particularly in his "metaphysical period." According to Hans Ruin if one wants to find out what role freedom plays in Heidegger's thinking, there are two distinct ways to do so:

1. One can try to answer the question in which way Heidegger tried explicitly to develop a philosophy of freedom with special consideration of the notion of "freedom."
2. One can instead focus on the question to what extent Heidegger's whole work can be interpreted as a philosophy of freedom.

The latter is the goal of Günter Figal's *Martin Heidegger. Phänomenologie der Freiheit*. In his book, Figal is able to demonstrate that Heidegger's thinking can indeed be understood as a "philosophy of freedom" but at the same time neglects the elaboration of Heidegger's actual

concept of freedom. “It is the second question which Figal develops with such good results, but at the expense of a more detailed exploration of the first question” (Ruin 2008, 280).

In my following examination, I’ll focus on answering the first question. What does Heidegger mean when he actually speaks of freedom? And how does he use this notion? To answer these questions one has to focus on Heidegger’s “metaphysical period,” which ranges roughly from 1928 to 1930¹, because Heidegger’s explicit concept of freedom is developed as a key element of his metaphysics of Dasein.

Heidegger’s concept of freedom is quite different from what you would expect. First of all, it is not a concept of freedom of action or of will. His concept is, from the beginning, interwoven with his ontology, so it can be called an *ontological notion of freedom*. His concept of ontological freedom undergoes some changes, which I want elaborate on. To do so I will distinguish between an *existential or fundamental ontological* and a *transcendental or metontological concept of freedom*.

1 The fundamental ontological concept of freedom

Heidegger starts to concern himself with freedom in *Being and Time*² (SuZ/BaT). There, freedom does not play an important role yet—although Heidegger uses the concept of freedom in the analysis of the being of Dasein (Being there). For this reason, I call it *existential freedom*, since freedom is one of the key subjects of Heidegger’s existential analysis. The most important passage in which Heidegger uses freedom to characterize the being of Dasein, reads:

Dasein is not something present-at-hand which possesses its competence for something by way of an extra; it is primarily Being-possible. [...] possibility as an *existentiale* is the most primordial and ultimate positive way in which Dasein is characterized ontologically. [...] Dasein is Being-possible which has been delivered over to itself—*thrown possibility* through and through. Dasein is the possibility of Being-free *for* its ownmost potentiality-for-Being. (SuZ 143f./BaT 183)

That means, in BaT, Heidegger understands freedom as the Being-possible of Dasein. Dasein is potentiality-for-Being. Although it is always thrown in a certain situation, or a certain framework, there are, at the same time, infinite possibilities of being in that framework. In a sense, one could

¹ Although Steven Crowell expands this period to a metaphysical decade because he includes the preliminary steps and the consequences of Heidegger’s positive concept of metaphysics into the whole period (cf. Crowell 2000).

² In the following I will quote Heidegger’s works according to the original German text and the English translation where available.

call Heidegger's notion of freedom a freedom of choice, though not between options of acting but between possibilities of being. The freedom of Dasein lies in its existential projection (Entwurf). But, one shouldn't think of this as a conscious choice like between different drinks or between watching a movie and going out dancing. Rather, it means that as Being-possible Dasein is essentially undetermined and thus "free."³ This indeterminacy means, rather, that Dasein can never comprehend the ground⁴ of its existence—Dasein is Being-possible which has been delivered over to itself. This is what Dasein discloses in the mood of anxiety: its potentiality (Seinkönnen) and at the same time its powerlessness relating to its origin.

Anxiety makes manifest in Dasein its *Being towards* its ownmost potentiality-for-Being—that is, its *Being-free* for the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold of itself. Anxiety brings Dasein face to face with its *Being-free* for ... (propensio in ...) the authenticity of its Being, and for this authenticity as [a] possibility which it always is. But at the same time, this is the Being to which Dasein as Being-in-the-world has been delivered over. (SuZ 188/BaT 232f.)

That is also the reason why Dasein can never exist perpetually in the state of authenticity, because this would mean to stay in the state of possibility and therefore never to realize any possibility—Dasein would lack actualization and thus not be existing (cf. Figal 1982).

Existential freedom undergoes a change in the course of Heidegger's analyses of temporality. Already in BaT Heidegger introduced the notion of transcendence, which, eventually, becomes his new concept of freedom, although Heidegger doesn't give up existential freedom completely. As we will see there are still traces of the existential notion of freedom left in *transcendental freedom*. In the present context, this term describes Heidegger's identification of transcendence and freedom and has to be distinguished from Kant's use of the term "transcendental." Heidegger introduces the notion of transcendence during his analysis of temporality when he talks about the ecstatic character of time (cf. BaT § 69c). This ecstatic character is also essential for his concept of world and will become more important in the period following BaT.

³ For a more elaborate analysis of existential freedom see Herrmann 2007 and Schmidt 2016, 42–70.

⁴ When Heidegger uses the notion of ground it usually includes the meaning "fundament" (that which supports the existence of something) as well as "reason of comprehension." This is already the case in BaT and will become of greater importance in his metaphysical period.

2 The metontological concept of freedom

Transcendence, like freedom, plays only a minor role in BaT. This changes with Heidegger's lecture course *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (MAL/MFL) given in the summer semester of 1928. It was Heidegger's last lecture course in Marburg before he succeeded Husserl in Freiburg. In this lecture course, transcendental freedom is one of the main subjects.

But what does transcendence mean? Heidegger distinguishes his understanding of transcendence from two traditional meanings. It is neither a cognitive transcendence, which describes the "passage across" from a cognitive subject to an object that is perceived (the surpassing of the inside towards an outside), nor is it a theological transcendence which refers to the ascension from the finite and contingent to the divine as the Absolute (cf. MAL/MFL §11). Heidegger's ontological understanding of transcendence, however, is a unique "movement," the ecstatic move, the passage across from beings to the world as the wholeness which encompasses beings. It is therefore more than just the sum of all existing beings.

Transcendence is what can also be called Heidegger's *metontological notion of freedom*. But what does metontological means? The fundamental ontology was the project of BaT; it was concerned with the question of Being. After BaT, Heidegger develops—more precisely, sketches—a complement to fundamental ontology, which he calls metontology. Metontology is concerned with the question of world, with beings as a whole, i.e., beings in their totality (cf. MAL 199-202 / MFL 157-159).

Together, fundamental ontology and metontology form Heidegger's positive notion of metaphysics: the metaphysics of Dasein. He is using Aristotle's concept of metaphysics as a kind of a formal model. Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is concerned with two main subjects: Being and the divine (god). This is considered to be Aristotle's dual conception of philosophy as *prote philosophia* and *theologia* (cf. MFL 158). Heidegger uses the same twofold conception but interprets the divine in a cosmological way, as the "overwhelming," i.e., the world.⁵

⁵ This goes back to Heidegger's reading of the pseudo-Aristotelian work *de mundo*. Cf. MAL 15/MFL 11: "Τὸ θεῖον means simply beings—the heavens: the encompassing and overpowering, that under and upon which we are thrown, that which dazzles us and takes us by surprise, the overwhelming. θεολογεῖν is a contemplation of the κόσμος (cf. *de mundo* 391b 4). Let us keep in mind that philosophy, as first philosophy, has a twofold character: knowledge of being and knowledge of the overwhelming. (This twofold character corresponds to the twofold in Being and Time of existence and thrownness.)" However, it seems Heidegger erroneously thought of this book as an original Aristotelian work. For an analysis of Heidegger's novel concept of metaphysics see also Tengelyi 2012 and Schmidt 2016.

2.1 Freedom and world-projection

Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, transcends towards the world. “Transcendence is Being-in-the-world.” (MAL 218/MFL 170) Therefore “world” as the “towards which” of transcendence becomes the important notion in MFL. To emphasize that, Heidegger uses the term “to world” or “worlding” (*welten*) for the state in which the world exists (cf. MAL 219/MFL 171). The world is not the “product” of a process called transcendence. It is a perpetual change of beings *as a whole*. That means it includes the unity and possible dispersion of this unity. Heidegger uses the image of a stream as an illustration. “Stream” not only means that which streams but also the streaming itself. The same applies for his metontological understanding of world. “‘[W]orld’ primarily and properly means the mode of beings and means, at the same time, these beings themselves. Both meanings can be used together compatibly, ‘world’ meaning beings in a certain mode.” (MAL 221/MFL 173) Heidegger’s metontological notion of freedom is a description of this very mode of the world.

To point out the connection between Dasein, transcendence, and the world Heidegger goes back to, according to his understanding, the philosophical-historical roots of the notion of transcendence. Heidegger sees the character of transcendence already in Plato’s expression *epekeina tes ousias* with which Plato characterizes the idea of the good as “beyond being,” the same applies for Aristotle’s expression *hou heneka*, and Heidegger translates both phrases as “Umwillen” (for-the-sake-of-which or purposiveness). The Umwillen has the function of a pre-structuring focal point for the world as beings as a whole—it is a transcendental form of organization. As the idea of the good gives order to the whole set of ideas, so does the Umwillen lie underneath the totality of the world (cf. MAL 238/MFL 185). This plays a key role in identifying transcendence with freedom because Heidegger sees the condition of possibilities of the Umwillen in freedom.

Now insofar as transcendence, being-in-the-world, constitutes the basic structure of Dasein, being-in-the-world must also be primordially bound up with or derived from the basic feature of Dasein’s existence, namely, freedom. Only where there is freedom is there a purposive for-the-sake-of, and only there is world. To put it briefly, Dasein’s transcendence and freedom are identical!⁶

Here one can see that the transcendental notion of freedom moves farther away from the understanding of freedom in BaT. There, Heidegger speaks predominantly of the being-free of

⁶ MAL 238/MFL 185, translation modified by me. Cf. furthermore MAL 246/MFL 190.

Dasein and denotes with this expression the being-possible of Dasein or the being-possibility of Dasein to understand itself as being-possible. Heidegger uses the word “freedom” only in the context of his analyses of resoluteness (cf. SuZ 266/BaT 311).

In MFL, however, freedom as transcendence is more emphasized than existential freedom is in BaT. Heidegger even says that “freedom itself transcends, and the surpassing of beings transpires and has always already transpired in freedom [...]” (MAL 253/MFL 196). The decisive difference between the existential and the transcendental concepts of freedom becomes clearer in Heidegger’s distinction of the transcendental freedom from freedom as spontaneity, as self-initiating. Because Kant thinks of freedom as spontaneity he has to introduce commitment later on in his ethics in form of the categorical imperative. For Heidegger, however, commitment or binding lies already in freedom itself. But how? Freedom as transcending is a “primal projection” or “primal understanding.” World is primarily structured by the Umwillen, that is, the wholeness that lies ahead. But it is this wholeness in which binding and commitment is found.

In the projection of the for-the-sake-of as such, Dasein gives itself the primordial *commitment* [Bindung]. Freedom makes Dasein in the ground of its essence, responsible [verbindlich] to itself, or more exactly, gives itself the possibility of commitment. The totality of the commitment residing in the for-the-sake-of is the world. (MAL 247/MFL 192)

Through the ways of being of Dasein, the binding or commitment relates not just to beings in general but also to the others, as well to each Dasein itself, which means, that this primordial binding is the condition of possibility of responsibility (to others and yourself). At the same time this binding has the character of a *hold*. Dasein is not a free-floating capacity of being, freedom binds Dasein to beings. “Freedom itself holds this binding opposite to itself. The world is maintained in freedom counter to freedom itself. The world is the *free counter-hold* of Dasein’s for-the-sake-of.”⁷ World is no longer mainly understood through “significance” (Bedeutsamkeit) and thus considered as the “totality of involvements” (Bewandtnisganzheit) like in BaT but as a counter-hold of freedom. At first, a certain relatedness to the fundamental ontological notion of freedom becomes visible through the notion of Dasein’s for-the-sake-of, which was the teleological end of the totality of involvements. But the main difference between the existential and the metontological freedom consists, one could say, in an emancipation of beings which are

⁷ MAL 248/MFL 192, emphasis in the German original.

no longer dominated by the teleological structure of Dasein. From and through the world Dasein experiences the resistance (*Widerständigkeit*) of beings towards which it is powerless.

What becomes visible here is the inner tension of Heidegger's metontological notion of freedom. "Dasein as free one is world-projection"⁸ In the notion of world-projection lie two moments between which an antagonism exists: First, there is the moment of *projection*. Freedom can only be found where there is a teleological perspective, where an *Umwillen* is leading, i.e., where a playground of encounter is opened. This opening enables the world entry of beings, which means the experiencing of beings. But then there is the moment of *deprivation*, because once beings appear they appear in their singularity and peculiarity which includes recalcitrance. In its resistance, beings evade from the *Umwillen*. Dasein finds itself involved with beings. So, beings are no longer revealed primarily through readiness-to-hand. Between these two moments the notion of grounding or reason *mediates*. World is not just the totality of beings but also implies relations between beings. World endows a structure. The search for reasons is the attempt of reintegrating recalcitrant beings in the structured wholeness which enables us to understand.

Therefore, freedom turns out to be *the ground of ground*⁹, as Heidegger writes, because it includes a projecting as well as a depriving moment. Regarding this one can understand why Heidegger is able to reverse the relation between causality and freedom in his lecture course *The Essence of Human Freedom*. According to Heidegger, freedom is not a problem of causality, as it was for Kant, but causality is a problem of freedom because freedom as transcendence enables grounding in general and thus also causality.

2.2 Freedom and world-view

In the lecture course *Introduction to Philosophy (Einleitung in die Philosophie)* (EiPh)¹⁰, given right after MFL, Heidegger picks up essential elements from the previous lecture course and develops them further. The notions of "free counterhold" and the "reluctance of beings" play an especially important role.

⁸ MAL 247. The concept of world-projection plays a prominent role in Heidegger's lecture *On the essence of Ground (Vom Wesen des Grundes)* as well.

⁹ *On the essence of Ground* 134 and MAL 277/MFL 214.

¹⁰ As far as I can see, there is still no English translation of this lecture course. Thus, all the following translations concerning this lecture course are mine.

In transcending beings, the world exposes Dasein to beings through which it can experience them in their resistance. The world surrenders Dasein to beings insofar as it forces Dasein to engage with beings that are like as well unlike Dasein. The reason for this exposure (Preisgegebenheit) does not lie in the mere presence of beings “but is an inherent determination of Being-in-the-world as such” (EiPh 328).

Being surrendered to beings does not mean Dasein just faces beings but instead it is “pervaded” (durchwaltet¹¹) by beings and entwined with them. This occurrence of entanglement is a pervading of beings as a whole. Dasein finds itself in this pervading; it “is thrown into beings” (EiPh 329). Heidegger understands this powerlessness as the “hold-lessness” of Dasein. It is based on transcendental freedom. Hold-lessness lies in the structure of metontological freedom itself. Heidegger writes:

The transcending of beings pervaded by beings themselves, namely in the unity of dispersion [Streuung], is hold-less; in transcendence lies a dependence on hold, but not in the sense of an objective attribute, but the being of Dasein in its occurrence is in itself an exposing-itself to possibilities, in which it is supposed to take hold factually. Hold-lessness in the dispersion is in itself presenting of hold-possibilities [Haltmöglichkeiten]. (EiPh 342)

Although traces of existential freedom are visible—possibilities of being are now hold-possibilities—it is clear that hold-lessness is based on the pervading of beings as a whole, i.e., the occurrence of freedom, over which Dasein has no control. Human beings experience this pervading in the way that they and everything else, every entity, is entangled in it. For this taking hold in the world, Heidegger uses the new term “Weltanschauung” (world-view). This term does not denote a conviction that could be communicated. World-view is an engagement with beings, in which beings as a whole are revealed. “Every revealing of beings is in itself a being pervaded by beings. Every revealing is therefore engagement with beings.” (EiPh 342) This engagement is more than readiness-to-hand, it is more than the arrangement in a teleological framework, and it is, of course, more than just observing.

A view of something (Anschauung von etwas) refers here to “having something as a whole.” This “as a whole” is precisely what Heidegger calls “world.” “World-view means basically having-

¹¹ Heidegger’s term „durchwalten“ cannot be easily translated. Its meaning includes pervading as well as prevailing. Most of the time I use “pervade” as translation but one should think it together with “prevail” to get a more appropriate understanding.

world, to own it, i.e., to hold oneself in the being-in-the-world, that which hold-lessness lacks but prompts to appropriate.” (EiPh 344)

According to the ontological difference, Heidegger distinguishes two forms of world-view: shelter (*Bergung*) and countenance (*Haltung*). In the way of shelter Dasein finds hold in beings themselves, or to be precise, in beings as a whole as superiority. To understand being of beings as superiority is characteristic of myth. Therefore, Heidegger calls Dasein, which conceives being in this way, mythical Dasein. The mythical Dasein understands its hold-lessness in the way of insecurity (*Ungeborgenheit*). It experiences itself as being exposed, as, in a sense, being lost. Dasein distinguishes itself not explicitly from other beings, “its own self is not understood as such but given over to a force, which is the same one prevailing the beings as a whole” (EiPh 359). Being is not articulated, and as an indefinite force it is threatening. The hold-lessness is interpreted as helplessness, as defenselessness in being exposed. Thus, taking hold in beings as a whole becomes taking shelter in them.

But inasmuch as shelter can lose its securing effect, the possibility of self-reliance of Dasein becomes clearer. Both ways of world-view are concerned with the relation of Dasein to beings as a whole, but there is a shift of emphasis in transcendence. Instead of *beings*, it is the *being* of Dasein that provides hold and thus leads to hold as countenance. Although beings as a whole are still experienced in their superiority, the specific modification of the superiority as holiness in the mythological world disappears. Instead of treating beings as a whole in an awestruck way, humans start to be engaged with beings explicitly. Now beings are revealed as something which have to be dealt with, which have to be mastered. To accomplish that, one has to gain knowledge about beings. For mastering things, we need insight in the order of things. So in the engagement with beings, the idea of legality and striving for insight into the laws of nature emerges. Therefore, prevailing of beings as a whole becomes something which has to be understood and not worshiped. This striving for insight leads to a search for reasons and causes. For Heidegger, Philosophy is then understood as the highest or purest form of countenance.

2.3 Freedom and world-formation

The entanglement of world and freedom becomes even closer in the lectures *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics (Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik)* (GdM/FCM) when Heidegger starts using the Greek expression *physis* to conceive the world. *Physis* is considered as that which contains its principle of change within itself. As Heidegger points out, *physis* means, on the one hand, growing or growth and, on the other hand, “that which has itself grown in such growth” (GdM 38/FCM 25). Heidegger, however, doesn’t understand growth in a biological sense but as the “self-forming prevailing of beings as a whole [das sich selbst bildende Walten des Seienden im Ganzen]” (ibid.). Already in the previous lecture courses, Heidegger pointed out that Dasein finds itself in this prevailing of beings as a whole. But even so Heidegger conceives man as world-forming because

the essence of man, the Dasein in him, is determined by this *projective character*. *Projection as the primordial structure of this occurrence is the fundamental structure of world-formation*. Accordingly, we can now say not only in a more strictly terminological way, but also with respect to a more lucid and radical problematic, that *projection is world-projection*. *World prevails in and for a letting-prevail that has the character of projecting*. (GdM 527/FCM 362)

This quotation, without a doubt, leads back to the notion of world-projection in MFL. In FCM, however, Heidegger uses the term world-formation for his analysis of the world, to understand how the world ‘exists.’

Part of that analysis is a revision of his understanding of truth. Already in BaT Heidegger developed an ontological notion of truth (cf. BaT § 44). In FCM, however, truth is brought together with the world in the notion of “manifestness” or “revealability” (Offenbarkeit). Heidegger’s first provisional characterization of the world is as an accessibility of beings. But for beings to be accessible they have to be manifest, or revealed somehow. The manifestness of a particular being is not a property or attribute of the being itself, “manifestness is something that *occurs* and occurs *with* beings themselves” (GdM 406/FCM 280). This occurrence never happens only with one or a few beings but always with beings as a whole. Thus, Heidegger comes to his determination of the world as the *manifestness of beings as such as a whole* (GdM 412/FCM 284). The expression “as a whole,” of course, doesn’t signify the sum-total of beings in the sense of their content, but “it means the form of those beings that are manifest for us as such. Therefore ‘as a whole’ signifies ‘in the form of the whole’.” (GdM 413/FCM 285)

Compared with BaT, the “apophantical ‘as’ ” (which forms the basis of the propositional truth) is still founded in the “hermeneutical ‘as’ ” (cf. SuZ 158 and 223/BaT 201 and 266), but this is no longer understood in the existential-ontological sense but in a metontological sense, which means it is no longer based on the teleological framework of the Um-zu (the in-order-to) as it was in BaT but on transcendental freedom.

Not only must a pre-predicative manifestness in general constantly already occur and have occurred, however, if the [displaying] assertion as pointing out is to be accomplished in whatever way, but this *pre-predicative manifestness* must itself be this *occurrence* in which a particular *letting oneself be bound* occurs. (GdM 49□/FCM 342)

This “letting oneself be bound,” however, is due to the inherent antagonism of the metontological freedom itself. Freedom as transcendence provides a binding commitment, and the world is the counter-hold of freedom (cf. MFL 192). And at the same place in FCM where Heidegger speaks of binding and liability, he uses the term freedom: “This provision of, and subjection to, something binding is in turn only possible where there is freedom” (GdM 497/FCM 342). In this context, Heidegger distinguishes between our being free, which denotes our openness to beings as such (being free for beings as such.), and the (transcendental) freedom, which renders (enables) our being free possible (cf. GdM 492/FCM 339). This very being free is the world-openness of human beings (cf. GdM 497f./FCM 343). And here ‘being open for...’ not only means enabling referentiality but enabling objectivity and concreteness. As Heidegger points out, objectivity is not the primary form of binding. “[A] binding character prevails throughout all being related to..., all comportment toward beings. We cannot explain this binding character in terms of objectivity, but vice-versa.” (GdM 525/FCM 3□1)

3 World and freedom — a conclusion

World-projection (Weltentwurf), world-view (Weltanschauung) and world-forming (Weltbildung) are ways of characterizing transcendence in its occurrence. The emphasis, however, lies in the notion of world-projection and the threefold structure of transcendental freedom. World-projecting describes the surpassing or transcending of beings towards beings *as a whole*. It means forming or constituting a horizon which provides (tense) unity. At the same time, beings are confronted in their resistance, they oppose our expectations. To integrate a particular resistant being, we use various kinds of reasons, may they be causal relations, teleological or motivational reasons, material or formal causes. Reasoning, or rather, comprehending through reasons is always

engagement with beings. This involvement, however, is not possible without transcendence. As a consequence, transcendental freedom is no longer understood as a form of causality, because causality is only one way of reasoning and comprehending. Freedom itself *occurs*, it has the character of an event, because it can't be based on something else, it is *abysmal*.

At the same time, Heidegger points out that the world can no longer be conceived as a constitutional achievement of the subject—although that doesn't mean subjectivity has to be abandoned at all. Rather, in transcendence itself lies a dependence on hold (Halt). World-view is this hold which Dasein obtains in transcendence. Again, our practice of reasoning and comprehending gains an important role because it shows the breaking of the mythological life-form as the primordial form of taking hold and marks at the same time the beginning of the scientific life-form which eventually leads to philosophy.

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Alienation and Freedom in Heidegger's *Beiträge*

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ABSTRACT

If we are to understand the conditions in which human existence or Dasein might be free, we must understand the conditions in which it is not free, that is, the nature of the conditions whereby Dasein's freedom is constricted. In this paper I explore the idea that at best Heidegger's ontology might support a picture of freedom somewhat akin to Spinozan freedom: in the right conditions we might to a greater or lesser degree act in a way aligned with our own being. In the post-*Kehre* Heidegger of the 1930s and early 40s, this would take the form of existing in a way properly grounded in – or rather, aligned with our ground in – beyng (*Seyn*) as event (*Ereignis*). If this is the case, to understand the conditions whereby we are not free – at least at an ontological level – means to understand the nature of our alienation from our ground in beyng as event. In this paper, I examine Heidegger's account of the nature of this alienation in *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*. In that text, this alienation is described in terms of our condition within an alienated configuration or 'epoch' of history – that of metaphysics – a configuration defined by 'Seinsverlassenheit' ('abandonment by being'), expressed in terms of 'Machenschaft' (machination), 'Vor-stellung' (representation), and 'Erlebnis' (lived experience).

Introduction

If we are to understand the conditions in which human existence or Dasein might be free, we must understand the conditions in which it is not free, that is, the nature of the conditions whereby Dasein's freedom is constricted. Now, I have little confidence that in Heidegger's picture Dasein is free in the sense of having the ability to deliberate about, decide upon, and perform an action such that a different action could have equally been chosen and performed. Rather, it seems to me that in the best-case scenario, Heidegger's ontology can support a picture of freedom somewhat akin to Spinozan freedom: in the right conditions we might act in proper accord with or in a way aligned to a greater degree with our own being. In the pre-*Kehre* Heidegger of *Sein und Zeit*, we might understand this in terms of the distinction between inauthenticity (*Uneigentlichkeit*) and authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*). In the post-*Kehre* Heidegger of the 1930s and early 40s, this might take the form of existing in a way properly grounded in – or rather, aligned with our ground in – beyng (*Seyn*) as event (*Ereignis*). If this is the case, to understand the conditions whereby we are not free – at least at an ontological level – means to understand the nature of our alienation from our own being (in the pre-*Kehre* instance) or of our alienation from our ground in beyng as event (in the post-*Kehre* instance).

In this paper, I focus on the latter. More specifically, I examine Heidegger's account of the nature of our alienation from being in *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* (1936-38).¹ In that text, this alienation is described in terms of our condition within an alienated configuration or 'epoch' of history – that of metaphysics – a configuration defined by 'Seinsverlassenheit' ('abandonment by being'), expressed in terms of 'Machenschaft' (machination), 'Vor-stellung' (representation), and 'Erlebnis' (lived experience). Elsewhere I argue that there are in fact two concepts of 'event' in Heidegger's *Beiträge*: one historical and one properly ontological. While Heidegger's ontological concept of event is a concept for being, his concept of an historical event describes a transformative rupture in the historical framework of metaphysics such that the structural alienation of that framework from its ground in being is resolved and Dasein is realigned with or re-grounds itself in being (as event in the ontological sense). In the terms laid out above, this means that the historical event would be one securing a greater degree of freedom for Dasein.

Part I: Da-Sein as the Historical Field Conditioning (and Enabling) Dasein

Heidegger's post-*Kehre* account of the alienation defining the configuration of history in which we live (the epoch of metaphysics) and his account of an historical event resolving that alienation are generated via an evolution along an axis of ground (which I call a 'diagenic' axis) that proceeds from the formulation of Dasein as the condition for the possibility of ontology in *Sein und Zeit*. Yet, one of the defining features of Heidegger's *Kehre* is its shift from explaining being on the basis of Dasein's existence to explaining Dasein's existence on the basis of being. We can make sense of this by applying a diagenic distinction: the turn happens when Heidegger's methodology drives him beyond the existential analysis of Dasein to a more profound level of ground at which he begins to articulate being in terms of features, structures, or processes diagenically and ontologically prior to Dasein.² As an extension of Heidegger's shift, the alienation belonging to metaphysics is no longer understood as simply grounded in Dasein's

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2003), GA65; English: *Contributions to Philosophy: Of the Event*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniella Vallega-Neu (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2012). I shall abbreviate this text as GA65 in endnote citations and as *Beiträge* in in-text mentions.

² In a certain sense (though not with respect to the movement along a diagenic axis), this parallels the Schellingian shift from a transcendental idealism describing the subject to a *Naturphilosophie* that tells the story of the constitution or emergence of the subject on the basis of non-subjective ontological processes.

existence and preserved in artifacts of the *Mitwelt* as it was in *Sein und Zeit*, but rather as part of the ontological and ontic make-up of the field or world itself in which Dasein exists.

With Heidegger's *Kehre* comes a terminological distinction between 'Dasein' and 'Da-sein.' While the former continues to refer to the human being, the latter is a technical term for both (1) the field or world in which Dasein lives, which in the epoch of metaphysics is a field of alienation, but in another epoch might be quite different and (2) the ontological features of that field or world that are diagenically prior to Dasein and make its structure of existence possible. As Heidegger puts it, 'a history [Geschichte], that is, an historical epoch, is 'a style of Da-sein.'³ It is important to emphasize the position of this field in the ontology *Beiträge* presents: 'Da-sein has its origin [Ursprung] in the event and in the turning of the event.'⁴ This means that ultimately we must understand the constitution of Da-sein in terms of the structure of being as event – i.e., of his ontological concept of event (I attempt to do this elsewhere). More specifically, as Heidegger's post-*Kehre* work comes to designate the event's onto-genesis of worlds of beings in terms of the 'essence of truth' or 'truth of being,' 'Da-sein is to be grounded only as, and in, the truth of being.'⁵

We must be careful, though, for this 'grounding' has two senses, both of which are important. In one, it is indeed the story of the onto-genesis of Da-sein. But there is another sense: in the epoch of metaphysics Da-sein is a field alienated from its ground and, in this context, grounding additionally refers to the process whereby that alienation is resolved and Da-sein is realigned with or set back into its ground. Moreover, since Da-sein comprises the structures of being that make Dasein possible, while Dasein's alienation is an alienation from its own being (narrowly) and from being (broadly), the remedy to Dasein's alienation is directly related to the grounding of Da-sein in the second sense. 'The grounding – not creating [Erschaffung] – is, *from the side of humans...*, a matter of letting the ground be [Grund-sein-lassen]. Thereby humans once again come to *themselves* and win back selfhood [Selbst-sein].'⁶

To be sure, 'self' and 'selfhood' here refer in no way to a metaphysical subject identical with 'itself' through the duration of time. In Heidegger's use, I take 'selfhood' to mean Dasein's existence in a state of minimal self-alienation, previously expressed in *Sein und Zeit* in terms of

³ GA65 34/29.

⁴ GA65 31/27.

⁵ GA65 31/27.

⁶ GA65 31/27, italics modified.

authenticity. In the sense discussed above, we might then take Dasein's winning back its selfhood to be a winning of a greater degree of freedom. I take 'self' to refer to Dasein's ground in the form of what Heidegger calls 'das Eigentum'; as he puts it, 'the origin of the self is the domain of what is proper [Eigen-tum].'⁷ *Das Eigentum* is the structure of propriety that makes selfhood possible – a structure generated in the logic of being as event, namely, its 'Er-eignis' or 'appropriation.' But more on this elsewhere.

Part II: *Seinsverlassenheit* and the *Unwesen des Seyns*

Heidegger's 'event' at the historical level is a function of the alienation emblemized by metaphysics – namely, it is a transformative rupture in which that alienation is remedied. In *Beiträge* the prime terms describing the field of distortion in which alienated Dasein lives, that is, describing Da-sein as constituted in the historical epoch of metaphysics, are *Seinsverlassenheit* ('the abandonment by being') and its counterpart, *Seinsvergessenheit* ('the forgottenness of being'). While 'the abandonment by being' applies especially to forms of the self-alienation involved in the structure of being, 'the forgottenness of being' names the abandonment of being insofar as it is manifested in human thought and experience; it is the abandonment by being that is operative in human existence. The two can be distinguished diagenically: 'the abandonment by being is the ground of the forgottenness of being.'⁸ Both are expressed in a variety of modes, the most central of which are machination, lived experience, and representation.

These modes are consequences of a more originary distortion essential to the structure of being as event itself. Namely, according to Heidegger, the abandonment by being has 'arisen from the distorted essence of being [Unwesen des Seyns] through machination.'⁹ Explaining the precise nature of this distorted essence will be a task for another time.¹⁰ For now, the important idea is that the different modes of the abandonment by being 'are merely emanations

⁷ GA65 319-320/253. This marks a slight difference between my interpretation and that of Vallega-Neu, who takes 'the "self" Heidegger is thinking here' to be 'the authentic self which he also thinks in *Being and Time*, the self to which human beings come back only in resolute being-towards-death' (Daniela Vallega-Neu, *Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003), henceforth *HCP*, 85). In their translation of GA65, Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu translate 'das Eigentum' as 'domain of what is proper,' but I use 'domain of propriety' or simply 'propriety' instead.

⁸ GA65 114/91, italics removed.

⁹ GA65 107/85.

¹⁰ In fact, explaining its ontological constitution in terms of historical alienation is impossible, since the former is the ground making the latter possible.

[Ausstrahlungen] from an intricate and obdurate dissimulation [Verstellung] of the essence of being, especially of its fissure [Zerklüftung],’ a dissimulation that results from a tendency structurally inherent to being.¹¹ This tendency is a counterpart of the event’s logic of *Er-eignis* or appropriation, namely, that of ‘Enteignis’ or ‘expropriation.’¹² While ‘Er-eignis’ names the genesis of structural propriety (*das Eigentum*), ‘Enteignis’ names the genesis of a correlative structural alienation. Together these are the basic lattice of Da-sein. The tendency belonging to the logic of the event to generate self-distortion and alienation is what Heidegger calls the ‘distorted essence’ of being. And just as appropriation serves as the ground for whatever selfhood Dasein might attain, expropriation serves as the ground for the different modes of historical alienation. At the historical level, referring in part to Nietzsche, Heidegger writes that ‘in this era [of metaphysics], “beings” (that which we call the “actual,” “life,” “values”) are expropriated [enteignet] of being.’¹³ Beings – especially Dasein – are in a state of expropriation from their ground (being or the event).

Something further and truly elegant must be added to this picture, even if it cannot be unpacked here. In Heidegger’s ontology, ‘Er-eignis’ and ‘Enteignis’ name the *very same* logic of the event [*Ereignis*] – namely, a logic of difference – insofar as it simultaneously generates propriety or ‘self’ and alienation from propriety. Propriety and alienation from propriety are co-determinate: each is what it is insofar as it is differentiated from the other. But this means that each has a constitutive structural reference to the other, without which it would not be at all. The consequence for Dasein is that its ‘self’ is co-constituted by alienation from that self; its ‘self’ is rooted in both propriety and alienation, and thus it is fractured from the ground up. Better said, Dasein’s ‘self’ is a tension or distension between propriety and alienation, each constituting and simultaneously undermining the other. This is the logic at the root of Dasein’s ‘disclosedness’: to exist, for Dasein, is to be continuously torn apart.¹⁴ This *also* means that ultimately we must

¹¹ GA65 118/94.

¹² I am aware of only two uses of cognates of ‘Enteignis’ in *Beiträge* (pages 120/95 and 231/182), but the idea is present throughout the text nonetheless and the term itself is used frequently in the subsequent private manuscripts through which the project of *Beiträge* extends.

¹³ GA65 120/95. I use ‘expropriated’ to translate ‘enteignet’ rather than Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu’s ‘dissappropriated.’

¹⁴ In Heidegger’s view, the logic of *Er-eignis* and *Enteignis* is also that of ‘Zeit-Raum’ (time-space), which generates temporality and spatiality. This, it is worth pointing out, is the Heideggerian analogue to Deleuze’s reading of Kant on the role of time in the constitution of the subject. According to Deleuze, for Kant “‘form of interiority’” means not that time is internal to us, but that our interiority constantly divides us from ourselves, splits us in two: a splitting in two which never runs its course, since time has no end. A giddiness, an oscillation which

understand Dasein's alienation not simply in terms of expropriation from propriety, but in terms of expropriation from the structural distension or self-problematizing logic upon which Dasein is grounded, that is, the obscuration or concealment of that distension. Such an obscuration is found, for example, in the metaphysical conception of Dasein as a self-identical subject persisting through time (a stable domain of propriety of which various attributes can be predicated).¹⁵

Part III: *Machenschaft, Vor-stellung, and Erlebnis*

In the epoch of metaphysics, machination, representation, and lived experience are the core modes of alienation determining Da-sein and, consequently, Dasein. To reconstruct Heidegger's basic account of this historical alienation – and thereby the historical conditions of Dasein's unfreedom – we must explain the nature of these modes.

For Heidegger, being as event is essentially self-problematizing and structurally incomplete – it is not objectively present, fully determinate, or exhaustively representable. Because of this, it is interminably question-worthy. The idea here is not simply that questioning being leads to rich results, but rather that any ontology produced as an answer to the question of being is necessarily incomplete and, if its method is properly grounded, is perpetually driven to question again and again. Machination is the obscuration of this problematic or question-worthy character of being that is enabled by the distorted essence of being and manifested historically in a prevalence of the *Seiendheit* of beings and their ontic presence, determinacy, representability, measurability, and makeability: in short, as Heidegger puts it, 'within machination, there is nothing question-worthy.'¹⁶

The eclipse of being and its question-worthy character is expressed and reinforced in a variety of ways that contribute to the overall dominance of machination. These revolve around the determination of everything there is on the basis of ontic ποιησις ('making' or 'bringing-

constitutes time' (Gilles Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties* [Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003] ix). In *Différence et répétition* he puts the point as follows: 'it is as though the I [JE] were fractured [traversé d'une fêlure] from one end to the other: fractured by the pure and empty form of time' (Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993]; English: *Difference and Repetition*. Trans. Paul Patton [New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1994] 117/86). Deleuze takes Hamlet to supply the slogan for this idea: 'The time is out of joint' (Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy* vii).

¹⁵ No doubt, this all sounds very mysterious without proper explanation, which would go beyond the limits of this paper. I will attempt to provide this explanation by reconstructing the logic of the event by way of Heidegger's ontology of truth in Bahoh, *Heidegger's Ontology of Events* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming).

¹⁶ GA65 109/86.

forth') in correlation with τέχνη ('know-how'). I shall distinguish 'ontic poiesis' from 'ontological poiesis': the former has a negative connotation and refers to the makeability of beings as such within the framework of *techne*; the latter has an affirmative connotation and refers to the genetic character of being and to the ways in which human beings can articulate and preserve that character in creative works like art, poetry, and philosophy. When being is obscured by the presence of beings, the ontic poietic character of beings as such – that is, in their *Seiendheit* – is freed to dominate. In the age of machination 'everything "is made" and "can be made," if only the "will" to it is summoned up.'¹⁷ As Vallega-Neu emphasizes, Heidegger's conception of machination is rooted historically in Greek thought: 'in the overpowering of *phusis* through *techne*.'¹⁸ Nonetheless, Heidegger suggests that the historical dominance of machination becomes *total* for the first time in Christianity.

In Christianity, God is the ultimate craftsman. He takes on the role of an absolute foundation for beings, a foundation that – in place of the self-problematizing character of being – is not intrinsically problematic or self-destabilizing at all. Despite theological claims to the contrary, the traditional characteristics assigned to God are characteristics of *Seiendheit* carried to the maximal degree: if every being must be *one*, God is perfectly simple; if every being must be self-identical through the duration of its existence, God is self-identical to such a degree that He is beyond duration; if beings have causal power, God is perfectly powerful and the cause of all that exists; if beings might have only imperfect knowledge, God has perfect knowledge; and so on. As a being, God is the prime ontic cause of the universe and its beings, which are His product: 'every being is *explained* in its origin as an *ens creatum*, the creator is what is most certain, and beings are the effect of this cause which *is* most eminently.'¹⁹ To be a being, in other words, is to be something essentially makeable and made by another being, and reality is understood on the basis of an ultimate principle of ontic production.

If the early Christian tradition universalized the framework of machination by grounding reality in God the maker, the early modern scientific revolution places the makeability of beings in human hands. The domain of beings becomes mathematically quantifiable, calculable, and

¹⁷ GA65 108/86.

¹⁸ Vallega-Neu, *HCP* 62. 'This process begins with the Greek experience of being as *phusis*, i.e., as an emerging of beings. But soon *techne*, the "know-how" to make things, determines the Greek approach to being so that being comes to be presented analogously to makeable beings. Consequently, being is determined as beingness (*Seiendheit*) and appears to be makeable and quantitatively calculable, like beings' (ibid).

¹⁹ GA65 110/88.

manipulable down to the finest detail via human technology – at least in principle.

Simultaneously, representability gets pushed to a total saturation of reality. Machination is

that interpretation of beings as representable and represented. Representable means, on the one hand, accessible in opinion and calculation and, on the other hand, providable in production and implementation. All that is thought on the grounds that beings as such are the represented, and only the represented is a being.²⁰

Leibniz's reciprocal principles of sufficient reason and the identity of indiscernibles can help to explain the kind of infinite representability Heidegger has in mind.²¹ If Leibniz's system understands determination in terms of the predication of a subject, while a concept is sufficient to the degree that it represents the subject's infinite chain of predicates, then no things in reality are in principle unrepresentable. Indeed, according to these principles there is one sufficient concept for each distinct thing and one distinct thing for each concept, that is, for each thing there is a concept that has an infinite comprehension and an extension of one.²² For a concept to adequately represent its object it must have infinite comprehension: it must contain *all* the object's predicates (in the right order). Since two things between which no difference can be discerned are in fact one and the same thing, such a concept applies to one and only one thing. In contrast, if a concept has a finite comprehension, that is, if it does not contain all its object's predicates, its extension increases (in principle indefinitely, even if not in fact). The concept is no longer adequate to its object, since there are determinations in the object not represented in the concept. Any concept with an extension greater than one is therefore a generality: it ranges over any object bearing the concept's predicates, but it is inadequate to any of them. The objects ranged over can be distinguished numerically as particular instances of the concept, but not adequately, since the concept fails precisely with respect to the differences individuating one

²⁰ GA65 108-9/86.

²¹ In *Différence et répétition*, Deleuze analyzes these ideas in terms of what he calls a 'vulgarized Leibnizianism' (Deleuze, *DR* 21/11). It is 'vulgarized' because it is something of a caricature. Nonetheless, it expresses a set of major ontological problems that both Heidegger and Deleuze target: the universalization of representation, the dominance of conceptual generality, and the reduction of difference to the kind of differences thinkable within the bounds of a representational concept. For Heidegger, these form part of the lattice of machination that texts like *Beiträge* aim to supplant, while for Deleuze they form organizing points for a history of insufficient ontologies that *Différence et répétition* works to overturn.

²² A concept's comprehension is the extent to which it accurately represents its object, that is, the exhaustiveness of its predicates in matching up with the predicates belonging to its object, while its extension is the range of objects for which it is a concept.

from another. The goal of representation is thus to become total: to infinitely saturate the predicates of the beings represented.²³

As a more current illustration, the ideal of machination is carried to the ‘gigantic’ (*das Riesenhafte*) in the Kardashev scale dreamt of by astrophysicists and sci-fi writers.²⁴ This scale proposes to measure the development of a society according to three grand levels of energy control. The first marks a hypothetical society that has grown able to capture, store, and use all the energy radiated to its planet by the star at the center of its solar system. A ‘level two’ society could capture the energy produced by its star *in total* and control that energy – as well as the star itself – for its own purposes. A ‘level three’ society would have attained total control of the energy output of an entire galaxy. When carried to the logical conclusion – total poietic and technological control of the universe – the Kardashevian dream merges the modern image of the human being as poietic wielder of technology with the Christian image of God as maker. To compliment this image of machination at the level of the gigantic, Rick Sanchez’s car battery powered by a fabricated internal ‘microverse’ containing a ‘miniverse’ containing a ‘teenyverse’ carries it to the infinitely small.²⁵ Both the Sanchez battery and the Kardashev scale express the idea of total poietic technological dominance over a reality made measurable and manipulable by the mathematical sciences.²⁶

Within the framework of machinational metaphysics, the eclipse of the self-problematizing, question-worthy character of being goes hand in hand with a general view that there is nothing at all that is irreducibly problematic. As Heidegger puts it, for machination ‘there is no problem that is not solvable, and the solution is merely a matter of number applied to time, space, and force.’²⁷ This view is opposed to what I call the ‘ontological realism about problems’ argued for by Albert Lautman and Gilles Deleuze (who, very much drew upon Heidegger to

²³ Incidentally, this helps show part of why Heidegger argues that being is not a generality: mistaking being for a generality captures it within the machinery of representation.

²⁴ The Kardashev scale illustrates Heidegger’s idea of the gigantic well, but I have seen no evidence that he was aware of it.

²⁵ ‘The Ricks Must be Crazy,’ *Rick and Morty* (Cartoon Network: August 30, 2015) television.

²⁶ Vallega-Neu again captures the idea well: ‘machination and lived experience are completed insofar as they encounter no more boundaries. In the gigantic, beings are discovered through their boundless calculability and makeability. Any being is always already discovered as quantitatively calculable. Indeed, what beings are, their *quale*, is understood as quantity’ (Vallega-Neu, *HCP* 61). Vallega-Neu is referring to a passage found at GA65 135/106.

²⁷ GA65 123/98.

make their cases).²⁸ Nonetheless, in Heidegger's view the problematic, question-worthy character of being is structural and thus cannot be entirely eliminated from the world. Under the determination of machination, this question-worthy character is encountered in sublimated forms defined within the bounds of the machinery of representation. As is well known, Heidegger calls the kind of experience available within such bounds 'Erlebnis' or 'lived experience.'²⁹ In *Beiträge* Heidegger emphasizes the way lived experience expresses a transformed, tamed form of the self-problematizing, question-worthy character of being. Lived experience reduces the question-worthy and the inherently problematic to simple curiosities and the type of problems that disappear once their solutions are discovered.

Since ... machination dispels and eradicates question-worthiness and brands it as downright deviltry, and since this destruction ... is perhaps at bottom not fully possible, therefore this age is still in need of that which allows – in the manner proper to the age, i.e., machinationally – some validity to what is worthy of question and yet at the same time makes it innocuous. That is the accomplishment of *lived experience*.³⁰

Lived experience reinforces the alienation of Dasein by sublimating Dasein's encounter with the pre-representational, problematic, question-worthy character of its self and of being and rendering it innocuous. The key is that it does this in forms of experience that are enticing enough to hold one's attention (or that of a community), but that are captured within the machinational focus on *Seiendheit* and its apparatus of representation. Rather than being struck by the problematic character of oneself, one's attention is captured by sky-diving or watching crime dramas on TV. Rather than looking into the question-worthy character of being, one becomes obsessed with conspiracy theories or solving logistics problems to make a business more profitable. "Lived experience," understood here as the basic form of representation belonging to the machinational and the basic form of abiding therein, is the publicness (accessibility to everyone) of the mysterious, i.e., the exciting, provocative, stunning, and enchanting.³¹

²⁸ See Bahoh, 'Deleuze's Theory of Dialectical Ideas: The Influence of Lautman and Heidegger,' *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 13.1 (2019), 19-53.

²⁹ Heidegger of course critiqued lived experience in several contexts during his career and a full picture would require piecing together his engagement with post-Kantian philosophy. But this would take us far afield.

³⁰ GA65 109/87.

³¹ GA65 109/87.

Crucially, for Heidegger the domination by machination, representation, and lived experience extends to the form of truth predominant in our historical framework. As is well-known, he describes part of the problematic, question-worthy character of being in terms of concealment, which – together with unconcealment – is one of the syngenic elements in his conception of the essence of truth. However, in machination the very fact of concealment is eclipsed: being conceals itself and its inclination to do so is carried into the modes of concealment shaping worlds of beings. In machination there is no room to recognize that this sort of thing has occurred. ‘Not only is it denied in principle that anything could be concealed; more decisively, self-concealment as such is in no way admitted as a determining power.’³² Consequently, machination entails an obscuration of the essence of truth and the predominance of a sublimated, derivative form of truth: “‘machination’ is the name for a specific truth of beings (of the beingness of beings). We grasp this beingness first and foremost as objectivity (beings as objects of representation).”³³ In Heidegger’s view ontological structures of concealment and unconcealment form the diagenic ground of propositional truth. But with machination truth as propositional representation in the form of adequation, correctness, correspondence, and measurability reigns supreme and reinforces the modern ontic poietic view of reality. Precisely this is part of the reason Heidegger argues that to generate an historical event or rupture with the framework of machinational metaphysics our philosophical efforts must be directed to an inquiry into the essence of truth.

It must be emphasized that machination and its manifestation in derivative forms of truth are not simply products of human negligence. Their ultimate ground is not in Dasein’s existence, as that of historical alienation was in *Sein und Zeit*. Rather, they are grounded more originally in the structure of being and expressed in the historical formation of Da-sein in which Dasein exists. “‘Machination’ is at first a type of human comportment, and then suddenly and properly it means the reverse: the essence (distorted essence) of being in which the ground of the possibility of “‘undertakings” is first rooted.”³⁴ In Heidegger’s post-*Kehre* conception of truth, the essence of truth is a dynamic of being that enables the determination of Da-sein and, in turn, worlds of beings. In this picture, machination is moreover a way in which the distorted essence or

³² GA65 123/98.

³³ GA65 132/104.

³⁴ GA65 84/67.

abandonment by beyng is determined in truth. ‘The abandonment by being is basically [im Grunde] an essential decay [Ver-wesung] of beyng. Its essence is distorted [verstört] and only in that way does it bring itself into truth, namely, [in the epoch of metaphysics] as the correctness of representation.’³⁵

Conclusion

Heidegger’s account of the abandonment by being in terms of machination, representation, and lived experience offers a description of the state of historical alienation that conditions Dasein’s existence and renders Dasein alienated from its self or its ground in beyng. With this in mind, I would like to suggest that if we are to find a form of human freedom in Heidegger’s post-*Kehre* work, at the ontological level it will likely be something like a state of selfhood won back from this condition by resolving our alienation and re-grounding ourselves in the logic of beyng as event. In *Beiträge*, Heidegger describes the way we might do such a thing in terms of the process of ‘Er-gründung’ or ‘fathoming the ground,’ which in a core sense operates by an extended inquiry into the essence of truth. Though I do not think this is exactly what Heidegger had in mind when a few years earlier he wrote the essay ‘Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,’ I do think his statement there that ‘freedom is the *essence* of truth itself’ conceptually prefigures this idea.³⁶

³⁵ GA65 115/91.

³⁶ Martin Heidegger, ‘Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,’ in [GA9] *Wegmarken* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976); English: ‘On the Essence of Truth,’ trans. John Sallis, in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 186/143.

Susanne Claxton—*Heidegger's Gods: An Ecofeminist Perspective*

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Claxton's book is the first full length monograph bringing Heidegger together with ecofeminism in an inspired, original articulation of his gods to remind its readers that current practices of ecodestruction and exploitation can be otherwise. It is a Heideggerian and ecofeminist assessment of the conceptual roots of planetary crisis and an argument for a different way of thinking. I found the book shocking in its honesty, disturbing in its rawness, and outrageous in its audacity. I couldn't stop reading. I paused once to sleep. This is not the tedious detailing of citation after citation crawling toward a safe, well-protected conclusion. It's an active vision, a living panorama leaping across mountaintops. Nonetheless, its chapters tether the account tightly to ideas of particular thinkers and so ground the vision in precise, careful and well-founded argument.

The book's honesty appears in accounts of the outcomes of practicing phenomenological methods with students, but also in its intellectual commitment to tenderness throughout. Its rawness is in taking what it needs from existing debates without explicative overkill or insistence on assessing relevant literature that would actually add nothing new or better to the account but simply make for a longer book. An apparent tendency to fall into a metaphysics of presence is just that—apparent—the withdrawal of being cannot be experienced without the presencing of beings, and Claxton's culminating point is exactly Dasein's capacity (whether realized or not) *not* simply to get lost amongst beings but to see a bigger picture. The book's audacity is unabashed claim to prescribe solution for global crises. The thing is, this book brings together Heideggerian and ecofeminist critiques of modernity in a clear, convincing, straightforward way that in fact grounds and provides much-needed conceptual support for what I am regularly and consistently hearing at the annual Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change from policy-makers, environmental economists, non-governmental and civil society organizations, indigenous groups, women of the global South, trade unions, even scientists. This book should certainly be read by ecofeminists, Heidegger scholars, and other intellectuals, but it is not a book just for academics. It should be read by anyone concerned about the planet, exploitation of any kind, and the future of human experience.

The book is strongly Heideggerian in its conceptual framework with respect to dwelling; but it is much more than an explication of Heidegger insofar as Claxton goes beyond Heidegger by ‘describing ... symptoms, making a diagnosis, and ... describing a cure’ (5) for the crises of modernity. Her book is also very much ecofeminist insofar as the particular crisis at issue is environmental crisis that Claxton argues is rooted in a phallic logic of domination.

The book fleshes out what Heidegger might have meant by ‘dwelling’ as an alternative to the homelessness of contemporary experience in the global North. I say ‘global North’ to avoid the totalizing ‘we’ that homogenizes human experience, and to displace the term ‘modernity’ that indicates a time in history but is also a particular global geography and economics, i.e. the hegemony of Eurocentric technoscience driving capital. Not all knowledge-systems are Heidegger’s *Gestell*; not everyone is homeless in nature. This book argues, in fact, for a being ‘at home’ to heal the global destruction enacted by technoscience-enabled capital. Being ‘at home’ in Claxton’s account appropriates Heidegger’s poetic dwelling—a ‘flourishing of beings’ (142) through ‘knowledge and tenderness’ (26 et passim) that is grounded in ‘openness and an abiding care’ (140), and a ‘receptivity’ that is ‘gratitude-laden and appreciative’ (129). This is the vision of this book.

The first chapter introduces this ‘ecofeminist Heideggerian phenomenology or perhaps an eco-phenomenological Heideggerian feminism’ (1). The second and third read Heidegger, first on the Greeks, then on poetry. Concerning the Greeks, the chapter starts with the claim that the Greeks ‘lived with and within something that was exceedingly vital ... yet ... did not analyze it’ (7). I would argue, that is simply not the case—certainly Heraclitus and Parmenides did, and Heidegger spent much ink on what texts remain of their analyses. The larger point holds strongly, however: the Greek word for truth, *alêtheia*, contains at its core *lethe*—the river in Hades that covers over memory. Truth as Heidegger appropriates it from the Greeks is unconcealment that cannot cast off concealment. That is, ‘human dwelling is grounded in hiddenness’ (19); human understanding is never exhaustive. Accordingly, a ‘proper orientation ... entails an attitude of respect and reverence toward nature’ (23) in acknowledgement of the finitude of human knowing.

This is where Claxton first introduces Heidegger’s gods in ‘the Fourfold’ of earth and sky, mortals and immortals (20-31). Her account, more spiritual than religious, interprets Heidegger’s gods through humility, wonder that there are things at all rather than nothing, and

understanding that knowing is finite and nature exceeds human intent. *Physis*, reduced in modernity to ‘nature’, is emergence (hear Aristotle here—what comes into being of its own accord) that Claxton explains using Hesiod’s account of the origin of the universe in Chaos that is not disorder—as it is now understood—but ‘the gap or yawn which ... allows things to begin their essential unfolding’ (37). Respect for life (and therefore death) is missing in the materialist homelessness Claxton seeks to remedy insofar as technoscientific epistemology does not dwell in this gap: rather than understanding truth as an opening of being that makes beings possible, objectivity sees only the presence of beings as objects that can be mastered.

Claxton finds a guide to dwelling, as the experience of being rather than just beings, in the poet. The poet stands in the ontological difference between being and beings. Claxton explicates the poet to show that, while scientific knowledge consists in a subject understanding an object, poetic insight sees beyond this relation with beings to being that withdraws in the face of beings. The poet accordingly understands that there are other possibilities of being that can reveal beings differently. That is, nature is not just what is reducible to technoscientific exploitation, but the unfolding of life in a play of revelation and concealment.

The fourth chapter genders homelessness. Claxton explains ecofeminism as essentially supposition that oppression of women and exploitation of nature are inherently connected. She identifies four factors in the ‘loss of dwelling’ (83), all much more richly than I will do here. First, the *mechanistic, materialist model* of 17th century science reduced nature to ‘simple, dead, and inert matter ... to be conquered, manipulated, and controlled’ (85). Second, *capitalism* has exploited women as ‘mediator of nature’ (87) due to social roles imposed because of women’s reproductive capacity. Third, a distant, masculine, *patriarchal authority* replaced immanent, earth-based divinities in favor of transcendent, non-visible ‘sky-gods.’ Fourth, *value dualisms* that privilege one term over another justify domination of that other, so man becomes ‘the rightful ruler’ while woman and nature are to be dominated (101). This phallic order thus entails homelessness—‘a fundamental loss of reverence for life itself and the life-giving power of the earth, nature, and women’ (99).

The fifth chapter turns to Agamben’s account of sovereign power that Claxton appropriates as the *sovereign masculine*, out of which emerges a fascinating and original reading of the mythical figure Lilith. Agamben argues for the political necessity of *homo sacer*, not the Christianized ‘sacred man’ but the original Roman ‘outcast,’ who is ‘abandoned, exiled’ (109).

Such exile suspends both juridical and divine law; that is, *Homo sacer* is cast outside juridical law so cannot be murdered, and outside divine law so cannot be sacrificed. *Homo sacer* is accordingly in a *state of exception* in which ‘sovereign power is manifest in its own absence’ (110) i.e. sovereign power asserts itself through its withdrawal of protection in law or apotheosis, rendering *Homo sacer* freely killable by anyone.

Agamben argues that the sovereign power to out-cast reveals the outcast as a *hinge* between the two kinds of law, and thus sets up a dominion for *Homo sacer* in both realms. Lilith—who if you remember did not wish to be Adam’s help-mate, main squeeze or friend with benefits and was eventually turned into a tree to escape him—was out-cast by the sovereign masculine. Analogous to *Homo saper*, Lilith is a hinge of human sexuality that establishes the order of Adam and Eve. That is, patriarchy depends on casting out Lilith so order, i.e. the phallic order, is brought to the relation between man and woman in sovereign masculine power.

These five chapters complete Claxton’s diagnosis; the sixth details her cure. Here, Claxton argues that what she identifies as ‘Daseincentrism’ overcomes the binary of anthropocentrism and ecocentrism. This may sound trivial—a dull argument between environmental philosophers—given that what is at stake is global crisis. Yet this is not just any binary. It is the human/nature binary that is decisive for human experience and global ecosystems at a time when an ideology of human superiority over nature (and human ‘others’) and right to unchecked technoscience-enabled exploitation of natural systems (and human labor) for profit is well into engineering the next great extinction by changing the planet’s atmosphere. This ideology is anthropocentric instrumentalism. Yet humans are not ‘merely part of nature’ (125) as ecocentrism contends, argues Claxton. Dasein, as the being ‘for whom being itself is an issue’ (144), warrants ‘special recognition’ (146) because of its capacity to understand being ‘as the source of all beings while necessarily exceeding them’ (147).

This final short chapter displaces sovereign masculinity and its assumptions of man as conqueror and all else consumable instrument. It identifies what Heidegger called ‘meditative thinking’ as ‘fundamentally required for the attainment of full *dwelling*’ (150), i.e. poetic dwelling that encounters beings in ‘receptivity, wonder, and gratitude’ and brings a ‘return to the hearth’ (156). Counter to the logic of domination Heidegger called ‘*Gestell*’ that seeks to master and control all it encounters, meditative thinking tempers knowledge with tenderness and feels

for what it encounters. Meditative thinkers are at home with beings because they live *with* beings in understanding that beings support human life without reducing to human knowledge or desire.

The book is not a final statement but insists instead that knowledge is never complete and invites discussion and carrying forward of its aims and ideas. In this spirit, I ask, if sovereign power is enacted by withdrawal, and being is, as Heidegger often said, a withdrawal (insofar as the concealment at the heart of the unconcealment—the making visible—of beings is a withdrawal of being), then might it be the case that Heidegger's account of being is another inscription of the sovereign masculine? Indeed, given Claxton's ecofeminist analysis, 'anthropocentric' is not really an accurate descriptor of the instrumental, calculative thinking ecocentrics and Heideggerians like me see as setting up global conquest of the planet. Rather, the epoch of 'the sovereign masculine,' modernity, is androcentric. The dualism at issue is accordingly not so much anthropocentric/biocentric as androcentric/biocentric.

In Claxton's account, identification of the hinge is Agamben's method for revealing sovereign power for the sake, I assume, of disrupting blind belief that entrenched prejudices (what ecofeminists call the -isms of domination, e.g. racism, sexism, etc.) are some kind of unchangeable, natural order. Androcentrism/biocentrism, given women's 'mediator' status between man and nature discussed in Chapter 4, is a re-inscription of the sovereign masculine that sets up the binary of man/woman. Lilith is argued to be the hinge of that sovereign masculine in Chapter 5. Dasein is the outcast hinge of androcentrism/ biocentrism in Chapter 6. If I am here reading Claxton correctly, two things follow. First, as the outcast who can be killed by anyone but neither murdered nor sacrificed, Dasein is powerless in the face of the sovereign masculine; can Dasein then enact the cure Claxton envisions?

Secondly, since the binaries at issue here are different expressions of sovereign masculinity, is not Dasein in some fundamental way a different expression of, and in fact always already, Lilith? If so, it's time Dasein came home. She is very much needed. I mean—language warning, by which I mean concept warning—for all this time we have been reading Heidegger as if Dasein is kind of a dick; actually Dasein is a gaping hole from out of which all fruition is possible.

Time and Trauma: Thinking Through Heidegger in the Thirties

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Heidegger underwent a tumultuous transition after the publication of what he had envisioned as the first half of *Being and Time* in 1927. A series of questions drew him into a dark new philosophical and political landscape. He experienced a crisis, an emergency, and emerged from it with a new approach to these very themes: emergency, self-transformation, and selfhood. My new book, *Time and Trauma: Thinking Through Heidegger in the Thirties*, tries to understand the problems that brought Heidegger into a new phase of his thought, and to think through the concerns that drive him during that period.

The focus of the book is the period that begins with the so-called “turn” after *Being and Time* and includes his much-discussed and lamented entanglement with National Socialism. For convenience, we can refer to this phase as “the thirties.” But how should we delimit it philosophically?

This period is marked by a shift “from the understanding of being to the *happening of being*,” as he says in some notes on *Introduction to Metaphysics* (GA 40: 218/233 tm). Instead of describing the temporal structures that allow us to understand being, he now looks to the happening in which we come into our own as those who stand in the truth of being. The emphasis is no longer on our constitution—human nature, in traditional terms—but on a transformative event that seizes us and thrusts us into the condition of “being-there.”

Such an event could involve the founding of a new political order—and the thirties are notoriously the decade of Heidegger’s overt political engagement, including his tenure as Nazi rector of the University of Freiburg. For several years, he is intensely concerned with action, decision, and the awakening of the German *Volk*. By the end of the decade, however, his view of politics is considerably jaundiced; in the forties he will develop a philosophy of *Gelassenheit* or “releasement” that lays aside power and will in order to await the gift of being. The thirties, then, are marked by his attempt to leap into a singular, transformative event that would bring Germany into its own.

By late 1929, Heidegger is ready for a metamorphosis. He writes to Löwith, “Now I am finally at the decisive inception, and am ready to turn the deconstruction against myself.”¹ We can say, not completely facetiously, that his “thirties” began on a weekday evening in that December. Halfway through his lecture course *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, he asks about “our Dasein,” “*the Dasein in contemporary man.*” He claims that we are sunk in profound boredom, insulated from distress (GA 29/30: 242-44). This moment is the beginning of a theme that often recurs in the thirties—the idea that his times suffer from “the emergency of the lack of emergency.” He has leapt into the divination of a shared situation and into a cultural critique.

This juncture in Heidegger’s lectures is the start of what soon becomes a political-philosophical worldview that gets woven into a metanarrative about Western history. This story becomes increasingly difficult to disentangle from the question of being itself, which Heidegger now approaches in terms of the “history of being.” “Dasein” is also historicized: it is no longer the human condition in general, but a possible transformation of the human—a new way of relating to all that there is (GA 29/30: 509; GA 65: 3, 9, 248, 294, 300; GA 82: 22, 56-57, 74).

It was in 1930, by Heidegger’s own account in the *Black Notebooks*, that he began to believe that Nazism could generate a new inception for the West (GA 95: 408). Before this, he may very well have had political predilections, but they stayed out of his philosophy, which focused on describing what seemed to be universal human conditions.

What provoked this change? One could speculate about Heidegger’s new professional circumstances after the publication of *Being and Time*: he gained a chair in philosophy and no longer needed to obey academic conventions. One could also point out the panic that so many in Germany and elsewhere were feeling as they beheld what looked like a failed experiment in liberalism and capitalism. (The American stock market began to crash on October 24, 1929.)

But to judge from the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger himself might prefer to think of the change in his thought in terms of the requirements of philosophy itself as a risky adventure. He writes, at the outset of the thirties, “Only if we actually err—go into errancy—can we run up against ‘truth’” (GA 94: 13/11 tm). Thinkers must learn “long useless straying”; “the history of philosophy is in itself an erring” (GA 95: 227/176).

¹ Letter to Karl Löwith, Nov. 17, 1929, in Martin Heidegger and Karl Löwith, *Briefwechsel 1919-1973*, Martin Heidegger Briefausgabe II.2., ed. Alfred Denker (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 2016), 170.

In trying to understand Heidegger's transition into the thirties, we should not wipe out this element of experimentation and risk. The transition should not be smoothed over in retrospect and turned into a logical extension of his earlier thought. However, we can identify some crucial spurs that urged him to think differently. One is the question of the origin of ecstatic temporality. Others include the themes of emergency and shared selfhood, which were present in *Being and Time* but become more urgent.

As for the end of the "thirties," it is more gradual. Heidegger draws back from his political or quasi-political discourse of leaping, deciding, and founding. His enthusiasm for struggle and power cools. During the Second World War, he moves toward a non-willful letting-be.

Although the transition to Heidegger's "late" thought was incremental, it eventually led to a stark personal and philosophical collapse. After the defeat of Germany and his removal from teaching, he experienced a depressive crisis from which he had to recover in a sanitarium. He had to build a new, humbled way of thinking on the ruins of his former thought, trying to describe "things" in a deliberately simple, unpretentious way, as if he were seeing the world anew. Philosophically, the collapse of the "thirties" could be highlighted in two dramatic reversals. In a lecture from 1945, "Poverty," he defines *Not* (urgent need or emergency) as being forced to focus on what we require for survival, and claims that freedom lies in *Not-wendigkeit*, turning away from such compulsion (GA 73.1: 878-79). Emergency is no longer a requirement for appropriate existence. The other reversal is a postwar passage in the *Black Notebooks* that says the "talk of the history of being is an embarrassment and a euphemism" (GA 97: 382). With such statements, one can say that the "thirties" have been left behind.

To be sure, Heidegger still understands the West as suffering from a certain crisis that must be understood in terms of its entire history. And short of certain extreme breaks, one does not simply become a new person—or a new philosopher. Several themes and concerns run throughout sixty years of Heidegger's thinking, and a case can be made for a unified interpretation of his trajectory.

Why, then, focus on the thirties?

Although the path from *Being and Time* to the thirties is tangled and far from obvious, the thirties radicalize certain tendencies in that book. To remain within Heidegger's thought-world of the twenties would be to neglect these more radical implications. In particular, *Being*

and *Time*'s concepts of the moment, ecstasis, existence, and history imply an embrace of the thinker's own historicity that is not fully explicit there. *Being and Time* claims we must find possibilities to retrieve from our heritage, but it remains at the general level of "existential" ontology, avoiding the particular, "existentiell" question of *which* possibilities to retrieve. At the same time, any response to this question seems arbitrary in the face of anxiety, which confronts us with the ultimate insignificance of all things and roles, reminding us of our exposure to death. Thus, as Heidegger's students quipped, "I am resolved, only towards what I don't know."² In the thirties, however, he makes choices, leaving behind the detached viewpoint of *Being and Time* and acting as a member of a community at a particular historical juncture. This choice of who to be is, in his view, intrinsically linked to the philosophical act of asking the question of being. Heidegger acts—and in the ensuing turmoil, develops a wealth of intriguing ideas.

Heidegger's choices were, in my view, first deeply wrong (joining the Nazi movement) and then unsatisfactory (withdrawing from all politics). But his failed attempt to act politically at least gives us an occasion for thinking about the political realm as such and reflecting on concrete decisions, which was not possible within the ambit of *Being and Time*. The thirties represent his attempt to participate in history, radicalizing the thought of historicity and engaging in his times. Maybe, then, this period could be a fertile source for our own practical thought. It is during the few years when he has faith in action that his concepts are potentially most illuminating for our attempts to think and act today. Potentially—but with the constant danger that we will be seduced by the phantoms that tempted him into evil. This is one reason why the thirties must be thought through.

Of course, we should be cautious if we appropriate any ideas from a philosopher who sympathized with Hitler. Just how much of a Nazi and an antisemite was Heidegger? It was never wholly accurate to describe him as a convinced Nazi, since from the start he hoped for a questioning more radical than any party slogan. As early as 1934, he begins to view mainstream Nazi ideology as an instance of the domineering and reductive metaphysics of modernity. However, this metaphysical critique is not accompanied by a moral or political one, and he even explicitly dismisses such points of view (GA 95: 13). In texts such as the *Black Notebooks* he portrays all modern movements and forces, including the phantasmagoric power of "world

² Karl Löwith, *My Life in Germany Before and After 1933: A Report*, tr. Elizabeth King (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 30.

Jewry,” as instances of one and the same machinational metaphysics. Modernity’s forgetting of its roots is associated in his discourse with the traditional prejudice against Jews as supposedly nomadic cosmopolitans. Despite his critique of Nazism on the theoretical level, he does not resist it, but submits to it (GA 95: 408). He seems to view Nazism as the ultimate modern destiny, an extremity of willfulness that must be played out to its catastrophic conclusion before a new inception can become possible (GA 95: 50, 417).

Clearly, then, there is good reason for concern. Heidegger’s ambiguous but close relationship to Nazism is not just a personal failing, but a disturbing knot in his thoughts of the thirties. As we think through those thoughts, can we be certain that our own thought is not being “infected” with Nazism? We cannot. Philosophers never understand themselves completely. However, if Heidegger’s thought in the thirties offers significant questions and insights, we need to think through them—maybe even especially because they are entangled in error and evil. Instead of avoiding a problematic philosopher—and how many great philosophers are unproblematic?—we should take the problems as occasions for better thinking.

What of Heidegger’s late work? As valuable as it often is, I find it politically inadequate. After he is disappointed by his intervention in politics, he retreats from the sphere of the political altogether. He turns ever farther away from concrete struggles, power relations, and emergencies, in order to focus on the remote and epochal happening of being itself, which lies beyond both power and powerlessness (GA 66: 83, 187-88). He deemphasizes founding, and patiently awaits a new dispensation that can come only from being. His postwar writings seem to abandon *praxis* altogether in favor of a pastoral “dwelling” that claims to be the true “ethics” but is essentially contemplative (GA 9: 356-58/271-72).

In the *Contributions to Philosophy* (1936-38) he could endorse a “will to ground and build” (GA 65: 98/78) and a “will to the event of appropriation” (GA 65: 58/46 tm), but in the forties he identifies the “will to will” as the essence of a modern subjectivism that must be set aside (e.g. GA 5: 235/176). The *Country Path Conversations*, composed in the final phase of the war, suggest that will itself may be evil (GA 77: 208). Willfulness springs from a malignancy in being—a blockage and concealment within the very process of presentation. Heidegger can only recommend “pure waiting,” a releasement to the event that releases us into the open (GA 77: 217/140). We have already almost reached the famous statement from the *Der Spiegel* interview of 1966: “Only a god can still save us” (GA 16: 671/HR 326). Calculation and action cannot

rescue humanity, because the illusion of self-sufficiency is just an effect of the very devastation from which we need to be rescued.

There are various difficulties in this project of setting aside the will. First, Heidegger has to assume that a certain free will is crucial to the human condition: even if oblivion has come upon us, we have some freedom either to resist it or to let ourselves fall all too far into it. (As Plato puts it, we all have to drink from the river of Carelessness on the plain of Lethe, but some of us drink a little deeper than we have to: *Republic* 621a.) Secondly, Heidegger's attempt to understand evil is unsatisfactory. He holds that evil will is essentially the manipulative approach to beings that is typical of modern technology; this approach embodies a "devastation" that has been "sent" to us as our destiny and that stems from the self-occlusion of being.³ But as Bret Davis points out, the deepest evil is not the technological "faceless defacing" that perceives everything as an object and ignores the face of the other; profound evil is "face-to-face defacement."⁴ The sadist knows that the other is there, and willingly treats her as if she were an object in order to enjoy her horror at her own objectification. Sadism is not a misunderstanding, but deliberate and knowing abuse. This fact is the downfall of all theorists who identify evil with ignorance or oblivion. This line of thought also suggests that will, including the possibility of evil will, is not just a phase in Western history; it is an essential dimension of the human condition.

If we want to think about ethics and politics, then, Heidegger's late period is likely to leave us dissatisfied—not to mention that his evasive way of dealing with his own past and the Nazis' crimes leaves a great deal to be desired. He may escape from Plato's cave, but he never comes back down to develop appropriate judgments about particular human relations. Retrieving ethics and politics after Heidegger means resisting the detachment that characterizes his later thought and drawing selectively on his thoughts of the thirties to develop better concepts of decision, will, and initiative. Action must be recovered as a central topic of post-Heideggerian philosophy.

Despite Heidegger's misguided choices and his failure to appreciate particular situations, his writings offer many opportunities to reflect on the deeper ground of ethics and action. After

³ Robert Bernasconi, "Being is Evil: Boehme's Strife and Schelling's Rage in Heidegger's 'Letter on Humanism,'" *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual* 7 (2017): 164-81.

⁴ Bret W. Davis, *Heidegger and the Will: On the Way to Gelassenheit* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 297.

Heidegger, it is harder to place our confidence in conceptions of action as pure self-determination, or will as autonomous choice. One lesson to be learned from his late thought is that we always remain indebted to a disclosure that we did not make, that we cannot harness, and that calls for our response but cannot be exhausted by this response. The most responsible action will always involve a certain responsiveness to what Heidegger in the thirties calls *das Ereignis*, “the appropriating event.”

The greatest promise of the thought of *Ereignis* lies in its possible application to concrete phenomena: we must each discover the appropriating events of emergency in our own lives and communities. Although Heidegger focuses on the rare emergency that would found a world and an era, we can apply some of his thoughts to the smaller shocks and reversals that are frequent elements of our individual and collective lives—developing what I call a “traumatic ontology” of human beings and their understanding of being. I also attempt to retrieve politics with the help of Arendt’s concept of action as an event that both discloses and develops the actor, initiating unpredictable relationships. The political realm can be a seedbed for such events—for the emergence of selves in emergencies large and small.

The challenge is not just to interpret Heidegger, but to think and act today. The twenty-first century is witnessing a disturbing resurgence of neo-fascist movements, complete with an intelligentsia that draws on right-wing theorists of the past, including Heidegger. To denounce these developments in the name of morality and liberal democracy is correct and necessary, in my view, but this is no answer to the ideas of those who reject these standpoints. A more adequate and philosophical response goes through Heidegger to grasp the theoretical inadequacies of his stances toward politics, and to show that his best insights of the thirties can be appropriated in support of a pluralistic and free society.

Let me finish by summing up the contents of my book.

Chapter 1 sheds light on some motivations for Heidegger’s shift after *Being and Time*. No longer content with describing human temporality as the horizon for our understanding of being, he pursues the possibility that our temporality itself originates in a crucial moment. This time when time arises is bound up with the experience of emergency and the question of who we are.

Chapter 2 examines seminars, lecture courses, journals, and other manuscripts in which Heidegger attempts to work out fundamental political questions in light of his new philosophical

orientation. These texts reflect both his initial support for Nazism and his later critiques of it, as the decade of the thirties sees him leap into the event of revolution and then pass through the political into the mysterious “event” of being itself. I consider his conceptions of political founding, the role of silence in his political thought, and his analysis of the metaphysics of struggle and power that is reflected in Nazi ideology. The chapter ends with a look at the *Black Notebooks*, which illustrate his ambiguous relationship to Nazism and other contemporary phenomena.

Chapter 3 unfolds a philosophical critique of Heidegger’s political thought, drawing on Arendt’s views on action and plurality. At stake here are not only his temporary enthusiasm for Nazism and his antisemitic tendencies, but his permanent antiliberalism and his failure to appreciate political realities. Again, his attitudes richly deserve moral condemnation, but I focus on theoretically retrieving politics as a sphere of action.

Finally, Chapter 4 draws on Heidegger’s thought of the thirties to sketch a temporal ontology along the lines of what might have been included in *Being and Time*, Part One, Division III, and then to supplement it with a traumatic ontology—an attempt to understand human beings and our relation to being itself that hinges on transformative encounters with what exceeds established sense.

To “think through” a thought can mean to analyze it; to get over it and come out on the other side; or to think with its help. In *Time and Trauma*, I hope to achieve all three: to work out some interpretive issues, to work through certain problems and deficiencies in Heidegger’s thought, and to work on my own philosophical ideas while drawing on the more promising aspects of his thought.

Heidegger's Poietic Writings: From Contributions to Philosophy to The Event

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ABSTRACT

This paper is about my latest book on Heidegger's non-public writings on the event. It begins with a discussion of *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)* and ends with *The Event*, spanning roughly the years 1936 to 1941. I pay primary attention to shift of attunements, concepts, and movement of thought in these volumes. Thereby a narrative emerges that traces a shift from a more Nietzschean pathos emphasizing the power of being to a more mystical approach in which Heidegger thinks "the beingless," "what is without power," and speaks of originary thinking as a thanking rather than a questioning. The shift begins to happen in 1939, the year World War II broke out but becomes clearly visible in 1940 in the volume *On Inception* (GA 70). Heidegger's path of thinking is one of downgoing into the most concealed dimension of the truth of being and an attempt at thinking more radically without primacy of the human being. Among the many questions my book engages, I am focusing especially on the articulation of both the difference and simultaneity of being and beings in relation to attunement, body, history, and Heidegger's errancies.

* * *

In *Heidegger's Poietic Writings*, I engage Heidegger's non-public writings beginning with *Contributions to Philosophy* (GA 65) and ending with *The Event* (GA 71).¹ These volumes span the years 1936 to 1941 (they are contemporaneous with and sometimes cross-reference Heidegger's *Black Notebooks*) and are dedicated to finding a way to speak of the truth of being as event (*Ereignis*). Since Heidegger's task in these volumes is not simply to speak about the truth of being as a historical occurrence, but to let this truth eventuate in the thinking end saying, I call these "poietic writings" with reference to the Greek notion "poiesis": to bring forth. My reading of Heidegger's poietic writings attempts to stay with the attunements or dispositions that

¹ I discuss the following volume by Heidegger: 1. *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, ed. Friedrich Wilhelm von Herrmann, Gesamtausgabe, 65 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1989); henceforth cited as GA 65. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu as *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012); henceforth cited as E. Martin Heidegger. 2. *Besinnung*, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, Gesamtausgabe 66 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1997); henceforth cited as GA 66. 3. *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, ed. Peter Trawny, Gesamtausgabe 69 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1998); henceforth cited as GA 69. 4. *Über den Anfang*, ed. Paula-Ludovika Coriando, Gesamtausgabe 70 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2005); henceforth cited as GA 70. 5. *Das Ereignis [1941/42]*, ed. F. W. von Herrmann, Gesamtausgabe 71, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2009); henceforth cited as GA 71.

underlie Heidegger's thinking and from there to trace shifts in his thinking and language along some guiding questions that seem to me relevant for the developments of Heidegger's thinking throughout these writings. These developments are far from a progression. If anything, Heidegger attempts a further and further *regression* into "the" beginning, at least in one dominant strand of the developments I am tracing in my book. This regression will come to the fore especially when looking at GA 70-71 where Heidegger rethinks the event as inception and the movement of thinking as a departure into the abyss.

Given the unconventional character of Heidegger's poetic writings, I took a double approach to them. I alternated chapters that are largely expository and in which I try to make sense of Heidegger's writings, with chapters in which I take a more intimate and unconventional approach, questioning Heidegger's thinking along a variety of themes. In this paper, will address some issues arising in my expository reading of Heidegger's poetic writings and then point to some themes I discuss in my more critical and questioning engagement with the texts.

Heidegger's Poetic Writings in the Context of *Contributions*

The fact that *Contributions to Philosophy* is the first of the series of Heidegger's poetic writings gives it a special status and the following volumes, *Besinnung* and *Die Geschichte des Seyns* seem indeed to move within a certain structural articulation of *Contributions*. This changes, however, with GA 70 where Heidegger seems to make a new beginning in search for a language "of" the event so much that, viewed retrospectively, *Contributions to Philosophy* appear as only one first attempt to speak of the truth of being as event. One of Heidegger's retrospective critiques of *Contributions* will be that it is still too structural and too much oriented around a differentiation between guiding question of metaphysics and basic question concerning the truth of being [*Leitfrage und Grundfrage*]. Beginning with GA 70, Heidegger attempts to stay away from any form of structure. He lets go as far as he can of any anticipatory order and from representational thinking. What "organizes" Heidegger's thinking are not structures of thought, but rather dispositions out of which arise words, themes, focal points of exploration. It is quite stunning how creative Heidegger is in his language, how he tries out new words and semantic fields, how certain concepts that first seemed central recede and how others emerge. The shift in language and conceptualities is tied to a profound shift in attunements that begins to announce itself in 1939, i.e. with the outbreak of World War II. A more Nietzschean pathos in which

Heidegger emphasizes the necessity of an empowerment of being and resists the machinational deployment of beings, gives way, to an emphasis on “what is without power,” on “poverty” and a disposition to “let machination pass by.”

Another self-criticism Heidegger voices in the forewords of *The Event*, regards the notion of Da-sein that, according to Heidegger, in *Contributions* was thought to unilaterally in the direction of humans. His middle-voice articulation of the event as inception does not refer to any human response: “*The event* [Ereignis] says the explicitly self-clearing incipience of the inception” (GA 71: 147; E: 127) Heidegger’s attempts to “dehumanize” his thinking of the event, go along with understanding the notion of saying (*Sagen*) not as the saying of thinker (as he did in *Contributions*) but as the saying of being. He also rethinks the importance of questioning that has always been so central to his thinking and instead emphasizes following, thanking, and carrying-out. “Inceptive thinking is not a questioning.” (GA 71: 238) To characterize thinking as a questioning is “futile” (*hinfällig*).

While volumes 67 and 69 of Heidegger’s Gesamtausgabe emphasize more strongly the question of the history of being with conceptualities and movements of thought akin to *Contributions*, in GA 70 announces, fitting for its title (*Über den Anfang*), a renewed approach to thinking the event. The emphasis shifts from a historical meditation on the history of metaphysics and of our age as the age of total lack of questioning (dominated by machination and lived experience) to a more radical attempt of thinking in the fissure, in the abyssal inception of being and from out of the self-withholding of being. A new important concept emerges: the beingless (das *Seinlose*) or nothingless (das *Nichtslose*), which “are” (“are” needs to be crossed out) beings before they come into being (and need to be differentiated from the abandonment of beings by being). Heidegger writes that as the beingless, beings “are in a certain sense ‘prior’ and older than being.” (GA 70: 121) The beingless relates to the notion of *Enteignis*, “expropriation” or “disappropriation,” that is more originary than the self-refusal of being that issues in the primacy of presence and initiates the abandonment of beings by being. With these notions (the beingless and expropriation), Heidegger thinks the most inceptive moment of the event, *almost* “prior” to Da-sein, “prior” to a granting of history. At the same time, one can read the notions of the beingless and nothingless as an attempt at radicalizing the overcoming of the ontological difference that Heidegger spoke of in *Contributions*. Instead of speaking of the “sheltering” of the truth of being in beings that is necessary for Da-sein to occur, he speaks (in a

middle-voice manner) of the “coming-in-between” (Dazwischenankunft) of the clearing (the “between”), in which the formerly beingless (or nothingless) comes or arises into being.” He calls this “the differentiation” (*die Unterscheidung*) that occurs in and out of the more originary difference (*der Unterschied*) that he addresses in the notions of the beingless and of disappropriation. Heidegger attempts to think in the attunement to an originary nothingness prior to any consciousness or self-consciousness, prior to a movement of thinking in which we might come to ourselves.

Heidegger also speaks of inception (*Anfang*), as it is not yet articulated into first and other beginning (*Anfang*). From the incipience of inception, he thinks both, the twisting free (*Verwindung*) into the event, and the twisting out (*Entwindung*) into the first beginning (and eventually into metaphysics). In each case, the event occurs as a differencing of beyng and beings. While one can follow to some extent Heidegger’s thinking of a twisting out that will lead to a prevailing of the notion of *idea*, thus of presencing and what presences, the movement of twisting free into the event is harder to grasp. Heidegger speaks of twisting free into “the wreath of the turning” (*der Kranz der Kehre*). He elucidates twisting free as “the twisting up [*Einwindung*] into the winding (wreath) of the event, such that beyng and its turning purely and essentially occur in the event. Thereby the twisting free is a circulating in the event, wherein a constancy prevails which is itself determined out of the event” (GA 71: 141; E: 121) Where did Heidegger go here? Where did he let himself be drawn into, following, thanking, carrying out, over and over again a thinking at the limit of no-thing?

Questioning Heidegger’s Poietic Writings

I now turn to some questions that arose from my reading of Heidegger’s poietic writings. In my book, I address various topics in my freer critical engagements with these writings: In relation to *Contributions*, in a Chapter titled “Attunement and Grounding”, I question the notion of the “simultaneity” of beyng and beings especially in the context of the body, the transitional aspect of his thinking (that it does not yet ground the truth of beyng), his thinking of the historicity of beyng as a being in decision that carries “indecision”, the question of the last God, and his “knowing” what discloses in the grounding attunement of restraint (*Verhaltenheit*). In relation to *Besinnung* and *Die Geschichte des Seyns* (GA 66 and GA 67), in a chapter titled “Heidegger and History”, I engage Heidegger’s relation to National Socialism and to the War also in the context

of the Black Notebooks. In relation to *Über den Anfang* (GA 70) in a chapter titled “Hovering in Incipience”, I question Heidegger’s relation to history in the context of the movement of “downgoing into departure” that this volume initiates, I reflect on the notions of “staying” in inception, of the beingless, of death and transformation. In relation to *The Event*, in a chapter titled “At the Brink of Language”, I reflect on Heidegger’s work with language, on a certain religious dimension of his writing, and on how after his descent into “the abyss” he will emerge with a new cosmology, a thinking of things.

One dominant strain throughout all my reflective and critical engagements with Heidegger is the question of the difference between beyng and beings. There are a number of issues at play for me in Heidegger’s thinking of the difference between beyng and beings, some that open new venues for thought, others that spark considerations that are more critical. On the “positive” side, if I may say so, is Heidegger’s attempt to think in the simultaneity of beyng and beings, which opens venues for thinking of an “embodied” ontology or an ontology of the flesh. Although Heidegger thinks *from* beyng and refrains to think from beings (i.e. on the basis of represented entities), clearly there is no beyng without beings and there is no truth without a concrete site that involves words, actions, works, things, etc. With respect to truth, this also means that there is no truth without errancy, if we take errancy to name relations to beings that tend to (but don’t necessarily) cover over a more originary sense of truth as unconcealing-concealing. This means that there is no pure originary truth that is not entangled with concrete beings such that there cannot be the word of the thinker that says the truth of beyng purely. The truth of beyng (unconcealing-concealing) always happens uniquely and anew with words, actions, things. To take this fact to heart has, I believe, ethical and political consequences, in that it invites us to keep in question our most cherished truths and the attunements that underlie and guide our actions.

This takes me to more critical questions I have in regards to Heidegger’s thinking of the difference between beyng and beings. Although Heidegger thinks that there is no beyng without beings and no truth without errancy, his continuous attempts to think *from* the event, from the truth of beyng and *not* from beings, reinforces a gathering power in his thought. This gathering power focuses so much on the abyssal truth of beyng, that it does not allow him to release his thinking toward thinking in a plurality. Furthermore, I believe that blinds him toward certain

ontic dimensions of his own life. This has consequences as well for what one may address as Heidegger's ethics or Heidegger's politics as it emerges also in the Black Notebooks.

In his poetic writings, Heidegger tries to think in and through grounding attunements that carry for him a historical dimension. This historical dimension also seems to be progressively removed from what one commonly understands by history or historical events. In *On Inception* he will think the history of being as nothing but the initiation of inception or the eventuation of the event (GA 70, 171f). As to concrete historical events, the Black Notebooks testify as well to how Heidegger interpreted them all in terms of machination and lived experience. His genuine insight into how machination dominates how we relate to things finds confirmation in much of what happens in the West today. However, there seems to be no room, in his being-historical thinking, for local, perhaps inconspicuous events that disclose more or something other than the machinational deployment of beings and that don't fit the narrative of the history of being. There is no room for non-Western lineage that infuse the complex web of what happens in our times as well.

Heidegger's focus on grounding attunements and attempts to think non-representationally also leads him not to engage the question of the body and the relation between attunements and the body. Our bodies, I suggest (and I could develop this in light of the *Zollikon Seminars*), can not only be open or closed to varying degrees to occurrences of truth, but they carry bodily lineages and are attuned and directed by a multiplicity of things and events. Recognizing this complicates even further the question of the relation between grounding attunements and non-fundamental attunements, i.e. attunements that are related to concrete things and events. How could Heidegger be so sure of his "knowledge" of the truth of being? How could he be so blind with respect to concrete embodied lineages informing his own thinking? Why did he have to interpret everything happening around him in terms of the history of being he constructed?

I believe that Heidegger's errancy into National Socialism and his broad-stroke criticism of all forms of political and religious institutions (including his antisemitism) are related to the gathering power of attunements he relentlessly nurtured in his thinking efforts, attunements that were by no means uniform but through which he remind fettered to greatness of the task he saw before him. Powerfully without power, "seemingly" blind toward his own ontic entanglements.

It is hard not to feel the urge to purify oneself from the stains Heidegger left behind, either by not acknowledging that there are any stains, or by purging them through forceful

critiques of Heidegger's wrong-doings. What few people seem willing to do is to question themselves in either their apologies for Heidegger or in their righteous condemnations of where Heidegger went wrong. Our own aversions, perplexities, desires and the judgments they inform, also carry complex lineages with complex attunements. In my more critical engagement with Heidegger, I attempted to stay exposed to those complex attunements, to live and think with the stains but also with the deep and enriching questions and avenues for thought Heidegger's texts opens up for us.

Tracing the Rift: Heidegger, Hölderlin, and “The Origin of the Work of Art.”

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ABSTRACT

Heidegger’s 1936 essay “The Origin of the Work of Art” is notoriously dense and difficult. In part this is because it appears to come almost from nowhere, given that Heidegger has relatively little to say about art in his earlier work. Yet the essay can only be adequately understood, I would argue, in concert with Heidegger’s essay on Hölderlin from the same year, “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetizing.” Without the Hölderlin essay, for instance, the central claim of “The Origin of the Work of Art” to the effect that all art is in essence poetizing, *Dichtung*, can hardly be appreciated in its philosophical significance without the discussions of both essence and poetizing that appear in the Hölderlin essay. This is true of other concepts also. The central concept of the rift (*Riß*)—the fissure or tear—that appears in “The Origin of the Work of Art” might readily be assumed to be adopted from Albrecht Dürer, whose use of the term Heidegger cites at a key point in the 1936 essay. Here, however, I argue that the real source of the concept for Heidegger is Hölderlin, and that the *Riß* is, moreover—quite literally—an inscription of originary, ekstastic temporality; that is, of temporality as the “origin” of Being and as the poetic or poetizing essence of art. I do so, first, by briefly considering Heidegger’s references to Dürer in “The Origin of the Work of Art” and other texts from the period, as well as his understanding of the *Riß* and of the tearing of the *Riß* in that essay and in its two earlier versions. I then turn to Heidegger’s 1936 Rome lecture “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetizing,” in order to show the Hölderlinian origins of this concept for Heidegger.

Note: We now have available three versions of “The Origin of the Work of Art,” representing three different stages of development. In what follows I shall refer to these as the first draft (probably dating from 1934-35), the Freiburg version (1935) and the Frankfurt version (1936), the latter being the final version that was eventually published in 1950.

I. Dürer and the *Riß* in “The Origin of the Work of Art

The central theme of the rift (*Riß*) that appears in “The Origin of the Work of Art” might appear to be adopted from the German Renaissance artist Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), from whom Heidegger cites the statement: “For in truth, art lies hidden within nature, he who can wrest [*reißen*] it from her, has it.”¹ Yet this statement is introduced, I would suggest, not as indicative of the source of the concept of *reißen* and the *Riß*, but as a convenient way of relating the phenomenon of the *Riß* to the inextricable nexus of nature and art, *phusis* and *technē*. In the

¹ “denn wahrhaftig steckt die Kunst in der Natur, wer sie heraus kann reißen, der hat sie.” *Holzwege*, first edition. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1950, 58. Henceforth: H. Translation in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell. New York: HarperCollins, 2008, 195. Henceforth: BW. Translations of this and other texts cited have frequently been modified in the present essay.

published version of the essay, Dürer's statement is introduced in apparent support of a possible objection to Heidegger's claim that we can encounter the thing-like aspect of the thing only through the work-being of the work. Against this claim, the objection may be raised that surely "the work, for its part, must be brought into a relation to the things of the earth, to nature, and indeed before its [the work's] being created, if it is indeed to thrust the thingly aspect into the open in a fitting manner?" (H 58 / BW 195) Accordingly, nature would have to first be manifest in advance, and the work of art only subsequently brought into a relation to nature. Dürer's statement too implies that nature is already somehow manifest, however indistinctly, and that it is simply a matter of the artist (or great artist) extracting or *drawing* from nature the art that lies hidden within her—if only this task were so simple. This view of course goes all the way back to Aristotle's claim that *technē* is a *mimēsis* of *phusis*. Against this, Heidegger argues that what must first be opened up and brought forth is the *Riß*. The tearing open of the *Riß* simultaneously sets it back into the earth, opening up a world, and this happening of the *Riß* as strife is the work-being of the work, the event of origination that first lets both nature and art become manifest. "Certainly," he writes, "there lies hidden in nature a *Riß*, measure and limit, and an ability to bring-forth that is bound to it, namely, art. Yet it is equally certain that this art within nature first becomes manifest through the work, because it lies originarily in the work." (H 58 / BW 195)

Heidegger's citation of Dürer containing the term *reißen* was first introduced in the Freiburg version, "as if to provide some warrant for his use of the word," as Robert Bernasconi puts it.² In the Freiburg version, the citation was simply introduced with the words "We are familiar with the word of Albrecht Dürer." In the Frankfurt version, however, this appropriation and apparent approval of Dürer's statement, as we have just seen, is qualified. *Now* Dürer's statement is read as in fact telling us how *not* to understand the phenomenon of the *Riß* and its being torn open and brought forth. It is not the case that nature comes first, so that art would simply be a supplement to nature. This, indeed, was the point that Heidegger's famous description of the Greek temple was meant to emphasize:

Standing there, the building rests on the rocky ground. This resting of the work draws up out of the rock the obscurity of the rock's bulky yet self-sufficient support. Standing there, the building holds its ground against the storm raging above it and so first makes the storm itself manifest in its violence. The luster and gleam of the

² Robert Bernasconi, *Heidegger in Question: The Art of Existing*. New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1993, 128.

stone, though itself apparently glowing only by grace of the sun, first brings to radiance [*Vor-schein*] the light of the day, the breadth of the sky, the darkness of the night. The temple's firm towering makes visible the invisible space of the air. The steadfastness of the work contrasts with the surge of the surf, and its own repose lets appear the raging of the sea. Tree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are. The Greeks early called this emerging and rising itself and as a whole Φύσις. It clears at the same time that upon which and wherein the human being grounds his dwelling. We name it the earth. (H 31 / BW 167-68)

It is the work of art, here the Greek temple, that *first* lets *phusis* become manifest and appear. It is never the case, as Heidegger goes on to say, that “humans and animals, plants and things are present before us and familiar as unchangeable objects, so as then to present also incidentally a fitting environment for the temple, which one fine day is added to what is present.” (H 32 / BW 168) And yet, Heidegger adds immediately, it is not a matter of mere reversal here: it is not as though art or *technē* comes first into appearance and nature only subsequently. What comes first is neither *phusis* nor *technē*, neither earth nor world, but contestation, the contestation of a strife that is the tearing of time, as I shall argue. More primordial than both is the work, but this means: the work-being of the work, as the event (*Ereignis*) of coming into appearance, of *phainesthai* “in the great sense of the epiphany of a world” (as Heidegger expresses it in the 1935 text *Introduction to Metaphysics*),³ and this is the tearing of the *Riß*, the tearing open of time that must itself be torn into time, inscribing itself in the work of art as its work-being or being-at-work, the happening of un-concealment. And this event is thus also time's becoming and instituting itself as historical.

This, indeed, is exactly what Heidegger says in the first draft of “The Origin of the Work of Art,” apparently composed around 1934-35. In this original draft the theme of the *Riß* and the tearing of the *Riß* is already present, yet conspicuously this version, unlike the Freiburg and Frankfurt versions, contains no mention of Dürer. It seems likely, indeed, that Heidegger encountered Dürer's statement only around 1935 and introduced it accordingly at that point. Precisely in this period, 1935-36, Heidegger appears to have been very taken by Dürer's famous watercolor painting of the hare (the *Feldhase*, dated 1502), which is mentioned in the Nietzsche

³ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, first edition. Niemeyer: Tübingen, 1953, 48. Translated as *Introduction to Metaphysics* by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000, 66.

lecture course of winter semester 1936-37 on “The Will to Power as Art,” and discussed, much more extensively, in his seminar on Schiller held in the same semester.⁴

When Heidegger introduces the reference to Dürer in the second and third versions of “The Origin of the Work of Art,” however, he does not mention painting, and there is no reference to the painting of the hare. He refers Dürer’s statement, rather, to engraving and drawing.⁵ In the second version, he writes: “To tear here means to extract [*Herausheben*], but in the manner of drawing [*Zeichnen*] and working with the drawing pen [or stylus: *Reißfeder*].”⁶ In the third and final version, the accentuation of the tearing of the *Riß* is even more emphatic: “To tear here means to draw forth [or extract] the *Riß* and to tear the *Riß* with the drawing pen on the

⁴ In the Nietzsche course, Heidegger cites a statement of Erasmus about Dürer, to the effect that “he, the painter Dürer, brings to the fore and to appearance [*zum Vorschein*] not just one single, isolated view that offers itself to the eye” (*Nietzsche*, fourth edition. Pfullingen: Neske, 1961, 217. Translated as *Nietzsche* by David Farrell Krell. New York: HarperCollins, 1991, 187. Henceforth: NI.) According to Heidegger, this is evidently said against Plato’s argument in *Republic X* that the painter’s mimetic art sets forth only one aspect, one view of the table, a φάντασμα or εἶδωλον, a partial and impoverished view that is far removed from the truth as εἶδος or ἰδέα (that is, as φύσις) (NI 216 / 186). Rather than presenting just one partial aspect, Dürer’s painting, according to Heidegger, “in showing an individual thing each time as this singular thing in its singularity, he makes visible Being itself: in the individual hare, the Being of the hare, in an individual animal, animality” (NI 217 / 187). This understanding of painting, Heidegger states, presupposes that a historical transformation in the understanding of Being is underway. According to Hallwachs’ record of the 1936-37 Schiller seminar, this transformation is said by Heidegger to be prepared by the rise of Nominalism, indicative of the transition from the medieval period to modernity (Martin Heidegger, *Übungen für Anfänger: Schillers Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*. Hrsg. Ulrich von Bülow. Marbach am Neckar: Deutsche Schillergesellschaft, 2005, 98. Cf. Bernasconi, *Heidegger in Question*, 125), whereby the true Being and essence of things is no longer understood as the universal idea, but as singularity. In the Schiller seminar, this transformation is analysed extensively via an interpretation of Dürer’s painting of the hare (94ff.). Robert Bernasconi notes that it seems odd that, in the *Nietzsche* course, Heidegger writes of the painting of the hare as though he thought it was an engraving (*Heidegger in Question*, 123, 132), given that the statement cited from Erasmus is made in the context of engraving, although we now see from the record of the Schiller seminar that Heidegger gave precisely this interpretation of the hare painting in that seminar from the same semester. It would thus have been a convenient illustration of Erasmus’s statement, which Heidegger interprets as expressing a more general point about the transformation of art (and of the understanding of Being) in that historical period. A further mention of Dürer from the period occurs also in 1936, in the lecture course from the summer semester on Schelling’s treatise *On the Essence of Human Freedom*. See *Schellings Abhandlung über das Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit (1809)*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1971, 37-38.

⁵ In the translation of “The Origin of the Work of Art” in *Basic Writings*, the editor, David Farrell Krell, notes that “The verb *reißen*... is cognate with the English word *writing*.... The rift is writ.” (BW 188n.) Of course, for Heidegger painting would still be a form of *Dichtung* in the broad sense.

⁶ See *De L'Origine de L'Oeuvre d'Art. Première Version (1935)*. Bilingual French and German edition, translated by Emmanuel Martineau. *Authentica* (1987), 50. Henceforth: OWA II. This unauthorized version was delivered by Heidegger in Freiburg on November 13, 1935, and, at the time of publication, thought to be the first version. Two years later, however, the curator of the Heidegger *Nachlaß*, Hermann Heidegger, published a still earlier version (here referred to as the “first draft”). This first version, a first draft that presumably dates from 1934-35, appears in *Heidegger Studies*, Volume 5 (1989), 5-22. Translated by Jerome Veith in *The Heidegger Reader*, edited by Günter Figal. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009, 130-50. Henceforth: OWA I. The English translation includes the German pagination cited here.

drawing board.” The intensifying repetition of *Riß* and *Reißen* is immediately apparent in the German: “*Reißen heißt hier Herausholen des Risses und den Riß reißen mit der Reißfeder auf dem Reißbrett.*” (H 58 / BW 195)

So what, then, is the source of Heidegger’s concept of the *Riß* that is employed in all three versions of “The Origin of the Work of Art,” and with increasing importance as we move from the first to the last version? Already in the first draft of the essay, Heidegger places emphasis not simply on the *Riß*, but on the *tearing* of the *Riß*, indeed, on that which tears. He writes:

How does the contestation of that conflict [namely, between world and earth] happen? The obscure harshness and drawing gravity of the earth, its unreleased pushing and lighting up, its untold keeping silent all things, in sum: the self-expending firmness of its self-closing can only be withstood *in turn* in a firmness. And that is the firmness of the boundary in contour [*Umriß*], outline [*Aufriß*] and foundational design [*Grundriß*]. In that which is self-closing having to be torn forth into the open, that which tears must itself become a rift [*muß dieses Reißende selbst zum Riß*], a drawing boundary and jointure. (OWA I, 12)

What *das Reißende* is, Heidegger does not say explicitly, but my contention is that it is nothing other than time, time in its Hölderlinian inflection as *die reissende Zeit*, as “the time that tears.” The first draft of “The Origin of the Work of Art” is replete with Hölderlinian motifs, including but not limited to: *Seyn* (12), *Innigkeit* (12), *die Erde* (12), *Entrückung* (12), *Heimat* (13). Hölderlin is indeed central to the entire draft, and even plays a more prominent role in it than in the later versions. His poetizing is presented as the path to the Germans’ becoming historically grounded in the “there” of their Being, and thus first becoming a people, a *Volk* (20-21).

Hölderlin’s poetizing, we are told,

stands—even though barely intimated—within the language of our people as more real than all theater, movies, and rhyming verse, more real than the houses in which, for example, book stores and libraries are accommodated, in which the palpable volumes of his collected works are to be found. More real than all this is the poetizing, because in it there is readied for the Germans the as yet untrodden middle of their world and their earth, and monumental decisions reserved for them. (15)

The first draft ends with the same quotation from Hölderlin’s poem “*Die Wanderung*” that would close the final, published Frankfurt version.

Yet it is not just the circumstantial evidence of the omnipresence of Hölderlin and Hölderlinian motifs in the first draft that suggests that *das Reißende* is in fact nothing other than

time in its Hölderlinian inflection. In stating that that which tears must itself become the rift or tear, the *Riß*, the claim is that it must become inscribed into the work. The work of art itself, therefore, in its work-being, must manifest precisely this temporality of its own origination, however enigmatically.⁷ That the work-being of the work must manifest the temporality of its own origination is indeed precisely what Heidegger states, most succinctly in the final, Frankfurt version, where he writes that what is to be made manifest through the work is not its authorship, but the simple fact that it is at all:

... the simple “factum est” is to be held into the open in the work: this, that unconcealment of that which is has happened here, and first happens as this event that has happened; this, that such a work *is* and not, rather, is not. (H 53 / BW 190)

What we experience in encountering the work of art is “the emergence of createdness,” that is, the coming to the fore of its having been created (*das Hervorkommen des Geschaffenseins*) from out of the work itself: the coming forth of the “simple *factum est*” or event of its having come forth. The temporality of disclosure at work in the work is thus that of a futural having-been, of a coming—of an approach and a claim upon us—that can come toward us and thus happen only as already having been. The force of having-been here means that the temporality inscribed is necessarily historical, manifesting in the work the trace of a historical world. The unconcealment of the work of art *first happens as already having happened*. This means: its first coming is already its second coming, or: there is no first coming that would be a self-contained moment: the moment of presencing of the work is temporalized only within and as a progressive recession, a coming-forth that is a receding, a receding that comes forth, approaches in its very receding. Yet this temporality of the work as an event also precedes and constitutes the work’s self-manifestation: It is not an after-effect of the work as already manifest, but rather that which carries and bears the work in its very Being, in its presencing.⁸ Heidegger writes, in the same context:

The event [*Ereignis*—another Hölderlinian word] of its having been created is not simply a subsequent resonance in the work; rather, the work casts this event-like

⁷ This is indeed, I would suggest, the “enigma” or *Rätsel* of art referred to in the Postscript to the Frankfurt version, where Heidegger says that the task is simply to see the enigma, and that the essay makes no claim to solve it. The implication is that, were the enigma to be “solved,” it would no longer be an enigma, and there would no longer be art.

⁸ For more on the event (*Ereignis*) and the paramount importance of art for Heidegger's understanding of the event, see my essay “On the Essence and Concept of *Ereignis*: From *Technē* to Technicity” in *After Heidegger?*, edited by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018, 251-62.

fact [*das Ereignishafte*]—that the work is as this work—forth before itself [*vor sich her*] and has constantly cast it about itself [*um sich*]. (H 53 / BW 190)

This event, which is at once the opening up of a world and the setting it back into the earth, is the inscription, the drawing or engraving of the *Riß* that Heidegger highlights in relation to Dürer, and that the quotation from Dürer neatly lends itself to illustrating, albeit in an articulation that becomes problematic with regard to the relation between *phusis* and *technē* that it seems to imply.

II “Die reissende Zeit” in Heidegger’s Reading of Hölderlin

For Hölderlin, the essence of time is that it “tears”: it is *die reißende Zeit*. Yet this has a twofold implication. On the one hand, such tearing is something that we humans undergo, something to which we are subject. Torn into past and future, we are continually torn away from the present—or the present is torn from us—such that we are unable to remain in the same moment of presence. More than that, because we are torn into past and future, we are never wholly or entirely within the moment. The tearing of time as something we undergo is poetized, for instance, in Hölderlin’s elegy “The Archipelago,” which ends with the lines:

...und wenn die reißende Zeit mir
Zu gewaltig das Haupt ergreift und die Noth und das Irrsaal
Unter Sterblichen mir mein sterblich Leben erschüttert,
Laß der Stille mich dann in deiner Tiefe gedenken.

...and if the time that tears
Should seize too violently my head, if need and errancy
Among mortals disrupt for me my mortal life,
Leave me then to remember the stillness in your depths.⁹

According to these lines, “the time that tears” threatens to seize the human being, to transport the poet into a realm beyond that of mortals, into what, in his “Remarks on Oedipus,” Hölderlin calls “the excentric sphere of the dead” (SW II, 311). Time itself, according to the “Remarks...,” is divine: the god is “nothing other than time” (SW II, 316); what time accomplishes in its divine intervention is a displacement or transport into an excentric sphere: the dimension of the

⁹ Friedrich Hölderlin, “Der Archipelagus.” *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe* I, 304. Henceforth: SW. For other references to *die reißende Zeit*, see Hölderlin’s “Remarks” on *Oedipus* and *Antigone*, discussed briefly below; also the unfinished poem “Wenn aber die Himmlischen...” (SW I, 401).

excentric that exceeds the human. Henceforth, the human being can never be in the center and can never be the center, never coincide with the present moment: he or she is always outside, always somewhere beyond, always displaced, transported in a kind of rapture, *entrückt*, as Hölderlin puts it (SW II, 311).¹⁰

Yet “the time that tears” is not only something that humans undergo, a relentless and unsparing force to which we are exposed. Torn by time, we are torn apart. Yet it is not only we who are torn. That our very Being, the fabric of our existence, is torn into past and future entails that time itself is torn apart—that it is what Heidegger, in *Being and Time* (1927), called “ekstatic,” “the ἐκστατικόν pure and simple.”¹¹ Already in *Being and Time* Heidegger had used Hölderlin’s word for tragic transport, displacement, or rapture, in characterizing the ekstases of time (the relational displacements of having-been, future, and presencing) as *Entrückungen*: raptures.¹² In his first

¹⁰ The tearing of time as an intervention is an interruption, a rupture with properly tragic dimensions, for it opens up both a relation to the gods and a relation to the dead. Yet we know of the dead only by way of remembrance and commemoration, only by remembering those who once were and once have been. It is by this relation to the dead that mortals first properly become mortals, those who know of death and of its necessity. Only the disruption or shattering of the trajectory of mortal life and its destiny lets such a life become truly mortal, understand itself as mortal, undergo its own mortality. This rupture that is wrought by the tearing of time is, according to Hölderlin, what is marked and commemorated poetically in Greek tragedy. Structurally, in terms of the rhythm of representations through which the plot unfolds, the interruption is what Hölderlin calls a “caesura,” and in both Sophocles’s *Oedipus Tyrannos* and *Antigone*, the caesura, Hölderlin claims, is marked by the speeches of the seer Tiresias. Tiresias, he remarks,

intervenes in the course of destiny, as one who watches over the power of nature, which, for the human being in his sphere of life, tragically transports [*entrückt*] him from the midpoint of his inner life into another world and tears him into the excentric sphere of the dead. (SW II, 310-11)

The “power of nature” is the power of time itself, “the spirit of time and nature, the heavenly,” as Hölderlin calls it, which “seizes the human being”; as “the spirit of time that tears” it is, he states, something to which we are helplessly exposed, it offers no protection: “it is unsparing, as the spirit of the eternally living, unwritten wilderness and of the world of the dead” (SW II, 370). The time that tears is both: the spirit of eternally living, unwritten nature, and the spirit of the world of the dead, for it is the rupture instituted by nature herself that first opens our access to the world of the dead—which is to say, of memory.

¹¹ *Sein und Zeit*, first edition. Halle a. d. S.: Niemeyer, 1927, 329. Henceforth: SZ. Translated as *Being and Time* by Joan Stambaugh. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.

¹² SZ, 339, 350, 365. Andrzej Warminski, while not specifying particular terminology, suggests provocatively that “one can with justice argue that “all” Heidegger does is to bring (back) to Hölderlin’s poetry only what he had taken from it in the first place: already in *Being and Time* Heidegger’s language is saturated by Hölderlin’s so that Heidegger cannot easily be accused of forcing a “foreign” (“philosophical”) language upon the (“literary”) language of Hölderlin’s poetry.” *Readings in Interpretation: Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987, 46-47. On *Entrückung* in Heidegger and Hölderlin, see David Farrell Krell, *Ecstasy, Catastrophe: Heidegger from Being and Time to the Black Notebooks*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015, chapters one and two.

lecture course on Hölderlin, on the hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine,” delivered in 1934-35, Heidegger explicitly relates the raptures of ekstastic temporality to the Hölderlinian “time that tears.” As such, ekstastic transport is an oscillation (*Schwingung*) between having-been and future.¹³

This originary time transports [*entrückt*] our Dasein into future and having-been. . . . I have provided an account of the essential constitution of this originary temporality and its essential possibilities in *Being and Time*.

The poet on a number of occasions names this time the “time that tears” [*die reissende*] because it is within itself the oscillation that tears us away [*der in sich schwingende Fortriß*] into the future and casts us back into having-been.¹⁴ (GA 39, 109)

And in his Rome lecture of the following year, “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetizing,” Heidegger uses another word from the 1927 treatise to describe ekstastic displacement: “stretching,” *Erstreckung*, which he had previously used to designate the “movedness” and “happening” within the oscillation of temporality, the “enigma” of the movedness and happening that constitute historicity.¹⁵ Here, in “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetizing,” he emphasizes time’s being torn open into its three dimensions of past, present, and future; and this occurs in the context of his interpretation of the temporal implications of Hölderlin’s claim that human beings are “a dialogue” (*ein Gespräch*), a claim found in the following lines from the unfinished poem “Conciliator, you who never believed. . .”:

Viel hat erfahren der Mensch.
Der Himmlischen viele genannt,
Seit ein Gespräch wir sind
Und hören können voneinander.

¹³ The term *Schwingung* and other cognates of *schwingen*, “to oscillate,” are used by Heidegger especially in the 1928 lecture course *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz*. Gesamtausgabe Band 26. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1978, §12. Translated as *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* by Michael Heim. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.

¹⁴ *Hölderlin's Hymns “Germania” und “Der Rhein.”* Gesamtausgabe Band 39. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1980, 109. Translated as *Hölderlin's Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”* by William McNeill and Julia Ireland. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014, 99. The Schiller seminar also speaks of “*der Fortriß der Zeit*” (89).

¹⁵ A marginal note of Heidegger’s in the second edition of the volume in which this essay appears reads: “see *Being and Time*, Sections 79-81,” directing the reader to precisely those sections in which the discussion of the ekstastic stretching of time is integrated into the “world time” of everyday concern—thus of Dasein’s worldly Being as dwelling. On the “enigma” (*Rätsel*) of historicity and its movement in SZ, see 381, 389, and 392.

Much has the human experienced.
 Named many of the heavenly,
 Since we are a dialogue
 And can hear from one another.

Heidegger reads the “since” here not in a causative sense, but in accordance with the temporal sense of “ever since” that the German *Seit* indeed conveys, and in his remarks further emphasizes that “a dialogue” also means “one dialogue.” Given this temporal sense of “since,” the German use of the verb *sein*, “to be,” really implies “to be and have been,” something I shall mark in brackets in the following translation. Heidegger comments:

Since when are we [have we been] a dialogue? Where there is to be *one* dialogue, the essential word must remain related to One and the Same. Without this relation, even and precisely a dispute is impossible. One and the Same, however, can only be manifest in the light of something that remains and is steadfast. Steadfastness and remaining, however, come to appear whenever persistence and presence light up. Yet this happens at that moment [*Augenblick*] when time opens itself in its stretchings [*Erstreckungen*]. Ever since the human being has placed himself into the presence of something that remains, only since then has he been able to expose himself to what is changeable, to that which comes and goes; for only that which persists is changeable. Only since the “time that tears” has been torn open into presence, past, and future does there exist the possibility of agreeing upon something that remains. [*Erst seitdem die “reißende Zeit” aufgerissen ist in Gegenwart, Vergangenheit, und Zukunft, besteht die Möglichkeit, sich auf ein Bleibendes zu einigen.*] We are [and have been] *one* dialogue ever since the time that there “is [and has been] time.”¹⁶

Yet what constitutes the steadfastness of something steadfast, the remaining of something that remains? The “lighting up” of “persistence” and “presence,” an illumination, emerging from darkness and concealment, occurs in the moment (*Augenblick*) that time is opened up, torn open as such, thus to become manifest and to *be* as time. The opening up of this moment, in which Being is first opened up as such, that is, in which presence first emerges, differentiating itself from what was and what will be, past and future, occurs as the “event” (*Ereignis*) of language,

¹⁶ *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, second edition. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1951, 37. Henceforth: ED. Translated as *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry* by Keith Hoeller. New York: Humanity Books, 2000, 57. Henceforth: EP. My translations in what follows differ considerably from Hoeller's. Another translation of “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry” can be found in *The Heidegger Reader*, op. cit.

whose essence is dialogue. Dialogue, Heidegger emphasizes, is in this sense (Hölderlin's sense) not one possibility among others of the use of language (distinguished, say, from naming, designating, questioning, and so on), but constitutes "the essential event of language" (ED 37 / EP 57).¹⁷

In being opened up, in being torn into presence in the tearing open *of* time, our Being is simultaneously torn *into* time, itself torn apart in being exposed to the tearing of time, to the ravages of having been and being yet to come. If our Being is to withstand this—if Being itself as such, the Being of anything whatsoever, is to withstand this—it must gather itself from out of and amid this dispersion, it must come to a stand and attain a certain steadfastness, not by eradicating such dispersion (since it itself, as presence, first is by virtue of this dispersion, the tearing of time), but in such a way as to also let this dispersion itself be. Being must be gathered, instituted and founded, as "One and the Same," as that which remains, first enabling the one dialogue that we are and that transpires in our openness to presence, in our ability to "hear from one another." Yet how is this to happen? Who could accomplish such a thing? "Who," asks Heidegger dramatically, "will grasp, amid the time that tears, something that remains and bring it to stand in the word?" *Wer faßt in der reißenden Zeit ein Bleibendes und bringt es im Wort zum Stehen?* (ED 38 / EP 58).

The answer is given in the closing words of Hölderlin's hymn "Remembrance" (*Andenken*):

Was bleibet aber, stiften die Dichter.

Yet what remains, the poets found.

That which remains is not found in the sense of finding something already present, coming upon it as something—a being—that is already there. It is found in the sense of being founded, instituted, a founding that Heidegger will proceed to understand as a "free creating" or "free bestowal." This free creating does not proceed from already existent beings (for it first gives rise to Being as such, first lets things "be"), nor, therefore, from the existence of a Subject or individual. It occurs in and through "the word," this conceived as the "essence" of language, an

¹⁷ Heidegger states: "The Being of the human being is grounded in language; language, however, first authentically happens in the *dialogue*. The latter, however, is not just one way in which language takes place, rather, only as dialogue is language essential" (ED, 36 / EP, 56).

essence that is intrinsically “poetic,” that is, that happens as the very event of *Dichtung*, “poetizing.” Amid the time that tears, such founding first gathers into presence that which remains—Being—and lets it be:

Poetizing is founding through the word and in the word. What is founded in this way? That which remains. Yet can that which remains be founded? Is it not that which always already lies present at hand? No! Precisely that which remains must be brought to a stand against the tearing away [*gegen den Fortriß*]; what is simple must be wrested from confusion, the measure must be set before what is measureless. That which carries and permeates beings as a whole must come into the open. Being must be opened up, so that beings may appear. (ED 38 / EP 58)

Hölderlin’s poetizing is thus, in Heidegger’s reading, a commemorative remembrance of that which remains, of Being. It lets Being be as the concealed stillness in the depths of all coming and going, all presencing and absencing, the stillness that remains amid the time that tears.¹⁸ Yet what remains, remains and “is” only by virtue of the temporalizing of naming as poetic founding, that is, only by virtue of the temporality implicit in the event of the essence of language. Its remaining does not survive time, does not live beyond “the time that tears,” but comes to be only in its midst. What is founded poetically is not something that endures beyond the time of poetizing, therefore.¹⁹ “Being is never a being” (ED 38 / EP 59).²⁰ It is, rather, an excess that comes to be in and through the poetic work of this distinctive temporality. What remains, remains not as a supra- or extra-temporal endurance, but as remains—in the sense of the ruins of

¹⁸ Cf. Heidegger’s commentary on Hölderlin’s elegy “The Archipelago” in his lecture course on “The Ister,” where he remarks that the Greek *πέλαγος*, “the sea,” names that which “remains and abides within itself in its surging. . .,” “abides amid change and becoming.” The associated verb *πέλειν* means “that remaining that is what it is precisely in journeying and flowing.” *Hölderlin’s Hymn “Der Ister.”* Gesamtausgabe Band 53. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1984, 88. Translated as *Hölderlin’s Hymn “The Ister”* by William McNeill and Julia Davis. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996, 72.

¹⁹ It may, however, leave a trace, and this is what “great art” does. The ruins of time are therefore twofold (and this is the twofold of the ontological difference): one the one hand, the remains of Being—Being as that which remains; on the other, the concrete ruins of the artwork as an entity. In the ruins of the Greek temple, for instance, there lies the trace of the opening (thus of the event of Being) of a historical world. The trace of this opening is a trace of Being, of the remains of Being, as the Being of a historical world. This trace can “be” only by having already been set back into the earth, into beings. Yet although it can come toward us only as already having been (this “already having been” indicating the force of history), this coming toward us is still a coming that is in itself an event of origination—hence the emphasis on origin and origination (thought now as the “event” of Being), which is a reinscription of the priority of the futural ekstase in SZ.

²⁰ Nevertheless, the relation between Being and beings should not here be understood in terms of the “ontological difference.” Although, as an excess, Being is never reducible to beings, and in this sense “never a being,” it also never happens apart from beings as something different from their presencing. See note 19.

time. These ruins are those of the house in which the human being “poetically dwells,” in Hölderlin’s words, which Heidegger’s essay proceeds to recall.²¹ These ruins are left as something that remains to be retrieved, to be remembered, in and through an appropriate remembrance, one poetically attuned to the remains of Being.

²¹ The “house” here alludes, of course, to the later characterization of language as the “house of Being.” But language is the house of Being “as the clouds are the clouds of the heavens.” This means: Being is always an excess in relation to language. Even though dwelling in Being is first enabled by the happening of language and its poetizing essence, such dwelling is always exposed in advance to not being at home, to the *unheimlich*.

**“Thatness,” Freedom, and Possibility in *Being and Time*
and “The Origin of the Work of Art”**

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The concept of the thing only contains the pure what of the thing, but
nothing of the that, of existence.

Friedrich Schelling, *Berlin Lectures*, 1841-1842

ABSTRACT

This essay focuses on Heidegger’s formula “that it is” (*daß es ist*) *Being and Time* and “The Origin of the Work of Art.” In spite of the substantial shift in philosophical vocabulary and subject matter (associated with the so-called “turn” in Heidegger’s philosophy) between the two works, the *daß*-formula is to be found (at important junctures) in both. In this essay I will show that the expression reveals not only a hitherto unthematized continuity between the two works but also Heidegger’s abiding philosophical concern that remain unaffected by the “turn”: to rethink possibility (potentiality) as no longer subordinate to actuality, to rethink possibility *as* freedom, whether in the human Dasein or in a work of art. For Heidegger it is only when we can say *no more* of Dasein (or the artwork) than *that it is* that freedom and possibility can be thought.

1. Introduction

If one were to jump from Heidegger’s 1927 *Being and Time* straight into the 1935 “Origin of the Work,” then one would feel, in the words of Jean Grondin, “as if he has accomplished what the Greeks used to call a ‘μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος,’ a transition into a different discursive universe.”¹ Not only is the focus of the 1935 essay no longer the being of the human Dasein, or ecstatic temporality, but the vocabulary of “The Origin of the Work of Art” is almost entirely different from *Being and Time*. Yet, there is one particular formula—the brief formula is “*daß es ist*” (that is is)—that survives the “μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος” of Heidegger’s “turn.” Indeed, the *daß*-formula is to be found at the important junctures in both *Being and Time* and “The Origin of the Work of Art.” In this essay I will show that this expression reveals not only a hitherto unthematized continuity between *Being and Time* and the artwork essay but also Heidegger’s abiding philosophical concern with freedom and possibility that remain unaffected by the “turn.” To this end, I will first consider the meaning of the *daß*-formula in *Being and Time*, in particular in Heidegger’s discussion of Dasein’s attunement in §29. Then, I will discuss Heidegger’s

¹ Grondin, Jean. *Le tournant dans la pensée de Martin Heidegger* (Paris: PUF, 1987), p. 9.

employment of virtually the same formula in the last section of “The Origin of the Work of Art,” where he makes a distinction between useful equipment and artworks. I hope to show that what is at stake in the *daß*-formula is nothing less than the reversal of the traditional relationship between actuality and possibility (potentiality), in accordance with which possibility is no longer subordinate to actuality. For Heidegger it is only when we can say *no more* of Dasein (or the artwork) than *that it is* that there is freedom and possibility.

2. *Being and Time*, 1927: “that it is and has to be”

Heidegger first uses the *daß*-formula in *Being and Time* when he introduces the concepts of “*Stimmung*” and “*Befindlichkeit*” in §29 of Division One of *Being and Time*. Although the terms are standardly translated as “mood” and “state of mind” (respectively), it is vital to note that Heidegger takes them as having an ontological rather than merely psychological significance. Now, Heidegger never understands the human Dasein as an isolated subject inserted in a world, as an object can be placed on this or that shelf remaining the object it is. That is, Dasein never just *is* but is always also *there*, which means, for a lack of a better expression, that it is a situated being (being-in-the-world). Crucially, however, Dasein’s situatedness is something that escapes its grasp and control—this is what Heidegger’s concepts of mood and state of mind are ultimately supposed to show.

On the one hand, then, existence is not something that we have voluntarily planned or prepared. It is, in Heidegger’s words, “*prior to all ... volition*” (SZ, 136/175). Dasein chooses neither the place nor the time of its coming into existence; indeed, it does not have a choice whether to be or not to be in the first place. The German word “*Befindlichkeit*” resonates etymologically with the verb “to find” (“*Befindlichkeit*” is thus something like “finedness”). The etymology is significant: Dasein indeed always already finds itself, discovers itself (rather than fashions itself). “In a state-of-mind, Dasein is always brought before itself, and has always found itself” (SZ, 135/174). There is something about Dasein’s existence, then, that can only be discovered belatedly, as it were. Another way in which Heidegger emphasizes this is through the idea of “*Überantwortung*” (delivery): “In having a mood, Dasein is always disclosed moodwise as that entity to which it has been delivered over in its Being” (SZ, 134/173). The sense of passivity is fundamental here: Dasein is delivered over to itself rather than delivers itself.

As much as existence is outside of the sphere of the will, it is also outside the sphere of cognition: it is, in Heidegger's words, "*prior* to all cognition ... and *beyond* [its] range of disclosure" (SZ, 136/175). Heidegger emphasizes the non-cognitive side of the appearing of the world in §29 when he writes that "the possibilities of disclosure which belong to cognition reach far too short a way compared with the primordial disclosure belonging to moods, in which Dasein is brought before its Being as 'there'" (SZ, 134/173). For Heidegger Dasein's primordial disclosure is non-conceptual, does not belong to the register of the concept as "what the thing is" (essence). Indeed, Heidegger writes in the same §29 that "'to be disclosed' does *not* mean 'to be known as this sort of thing'" (SZ, 134/173). Heidegger will ultimately call the priority of existence in relation to volition and cognition "thrownness" (*Geworfenheit*) and "facticity" (*Faktizität*): "The expression 'thrownness' is meant to suggest the *facticity of its being delivered over*" (SZ, 135/174). While the expression "thrown" fulfills roughly the same function as "delivered," facticity means: existence is a fact, intractable in that it can neither be overturned, thus escapes volition, nor grasped (through a prior ground or condition), thus escapes cognition.

There is, then, a certain intractable necessity about the being of Dasein, intractable because outside of Dasein's grasp and control. Intractable also because Dasein is committed to its own being (which is another way to render "*Überantwortung*"), bound even. This is why, I would suggest, Dasein's facticity ought not to be understood in terms of "the factuality of the *factum brutum* of something present-at-hand" (SZ, 135/174). Such is in fact the difference between "factuality" and "facticity" in Heidegger: while the former concerns inanimate objects, the latter has to do with Dasein only. For it is only Dasein that doesn't just discover itself in existence but feels itself bound, committed to it—this is, I submit, what Heidegger calls "the burdensome character of Dasein" (SZ, 134/173). And, as Heidegger will later have it, "[although] it has *not* laid that basis [of its existence] *itself*, it reposes in the weight of it, which is made manifest to it as a burden by Dasein's mood" (SZ, 284/330). Heidegger attempts to convey this idea in the second part of the sentence about "being delivered over" that I have already quoted earlier: "[And] in this way it has been delivered over to the Being which, in existing, it has to be" (SZ, 134/173). Here the emphasis should be placed on "having to be": Dasein does not exist in the mode of presence-at-hand but has to take up and take hold of its factual existence. And that is so because Dasein is always concerned with its thrown existence in one or another; there is always something at stake in thrownness.

For Dasein to take hold of factual existence is to take up the possibilities afforded by it. Then, as Heidegger puts it, Dasein has always already understood the possibilities into which it has been thrown: “As long as it is, Dasein always has understood itself and always will understand itself in terms of possibilities” (SZ, 145/185). To be sure, Dasein’s possibilities are not free-floating but are in each case factually determined by thrownness. Dasein does not freely choose its possibilities, that is:

In every case Dasein ... has already got itself into definite possibilities. As the potentiality-for-Being which it *is*, it has let such possibilities pass by; it is constantly waving the possibilities for its Being, or else it seizes upon them and makes mistakes. But this means that Dasein is Being-possible which has been delivered over to itself—*thrown possibility* through and through. (SZ, 144/183)

As much as Dasein always exists as thrown, as having-been, it also exists (and primarily so) in the mode of potentiality, which is linked to the future. As a thrown possibility, that is, Dasein has a future. For all the emphasis on thrownness, however, Heidegger sees Dasein’s future, its potentiality-for-Being, in terms of freedom rather than necessity. Crucial for Heidegger’s understanding of Dasein’s freedom is the denial of Dasein’s cognitive grasp of its existence. Similarly, that Heidegger denies Dasein the cognitive knowledge of “what sort of thing it is” will become crucial for understanding the meaning of the *daß*-formula in *Being and Time*.

In §58 of *Being and Time* Heidegger reformulates Dasein’s thrownness in terms of “nullity” (*Nichtigkeit*). Nullity means that Dasein has not laid the ground of its own existence. It exists, rather, from the ground or origin that is not, properly speaking, its own and that is opaque to it. In other words, Dasein neither furnishes its own ground nor cognizes it: “Thus ‘Being-a-ground’ means *never* to have power over one’s ownmost Being from the ground up. ... It itself, being a ground, *is* a nullity of itself” (SZ, 284/330). But, as Heidegger writes incisively, it is this very nullity that affords the human Dasein its freedom: “The nullity we have in mind belongs to Dasein’s Being-free [*Freisein*] for its existentiell possibilities” (SZ, 285/331). It is to emphasize precisely Dasein’s freedom, I would suggest, that Heidegger uses the expression “*daß es ist*” in §29 (which is worth quoting at length):

To be disclosed does not mean to be known as this sort of thing. And even in the most indifferent and inoffensive everydayness the Being of Dasein can burst forth as a naked “that it is and has to be [*daß es ist und zu sein hat*].” The pure “that it is” shows itself, but the ‘whence [*Woher*]’ and the ‘whither [*Wohin*]’ remain in darkness. (SZ, 134/173)

Once again, we see Heidegger emphasize that Dasein does not cognize the sort of thing it is (essence). It does not know, as Heidegger puts it, “whence” it comes from. Now, the original meaning of the concept of essence is “τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι,” literally “what it was for the thing to be.” The idea of essence, insofar as it comes from the sphere of arts and productions, indicates the anticipated look of that which the craftsperson will bring into existence. If essence determines in advance what the thing is, then, by emphasizing that Dasein lacks a “whence,” Heidegger suggests that Dasein lacks an essence. Indeed, Heidegger writes à propos of Dasein:

Its Being-what-it-is [*Was-sein*] (essentia) must, so far as we can speak of it at all, conceived in terms of its Being (existentia). ... The ‘essence’ of Dasein lies in its existence [*Existenz*]. ... So when we designate this entity with the term ‘Dasein,’ we are expressing not its ‘what’ [*sein Was*] (as if it were a table, house or tree) but its Being.

Neither is the ‘whither’ transparent to the human Dasein—it does not know where, if anywhere, it is headed. For it is the essence that affords something like a teleological direction: The “whither” of the table, for example, is to be used for eating or writing. Lacking an essence, a predetermined teleology, then, all that Dasein has is the fact of its existence, sheer and directionless. All that it is delivered over to is, to finally use Heidegger’s *daß*-formula, the fact “that it is.” In the absence of an essence, of a positive grasp of what Dasein is supposed to be, nothing more (and nothing positive) can be said of its being than that it is. The point of the *daß*-formula is precisely to convey the poverty or, perhaps, silence of Dasein’s existence, undetermined, directionless, lacking both “whence” and “whither.” “[The] mood brings Dasein before the ‘that-it-is’ of its ‘there,’ which, as such stares it in the face with the inexorability of an enigma” (*SZ*, 136/175). Yet, the enigmatic silence of the “*daß*” is precisely what makes Dasein *free* for its existence. Dasein’s potentiality for being is, in other words, not determined in advance but genuinely free (though it is also, and importantly, factual). Such is Heidegger’s understanding of Dasein’s freedom: freedom is made possible by the suspension of “whence” and “whither.” What Heidegger accomplishes in *Being and Time*, then, is the releasing of Dasein’s potentiality from the yoke of the teleology of essence. As a being about whom nothing more can be said than “that-it-is,” Dasein is an existence of pure possibility or potentiality, which is no longer thought as subordinate to actuality. Such is the way in which Heidegger fulfills the program of *Being and Time* (announced in the Introduction): “Higher than actuality stands *possibility*” (*SZ*, 38/63). Now, §29 is not the only place in *Being and Time* where Heidegger

makes use of the *daß*-formula. But §29 already contains all that is essential about the formula. In subsequent section of the book, Heidegger will specify the mood that discloses the “that-it-is” as anxiety. But anxiety is for Heidegger always anxiety about death, which, as the impossibility of the possibility of existence, discloses Dasein’s potentiality-for-being all the more incisively. We read in §53, for example:

Dasein’s mood brings it face to face with the thrownness of its ‘that it is there’ [*daß-es-da-ist*]. But the attunement which can hold open the utter and constant threat to itself arising from Dasein’s ownmost individualized Being, is anxiety. In this attunement, Dasein finds itself face to face with the ‘nothing’ of the possible impossibility of its existence. Anxiety is anxious *about* the potentiality-for-Being of the entity so determined. (SZ, 265-266/310)

2. “The Origin of the Work of Art,” 1935: “that it is rather than is not”

In the third section of “The Origin of the Work of Art” Heidegger approaches the work of art in terms of two specific marks or characteristics (*Kennzeichen*), which distinguish it from the rest of entities. Although he never explicitly indicates the first “*Kennzeichen*” of the artwork, Heidegger introduces the second one as follows: “Not so when a work is created. This becomes clear in the light of the *second* characteristic, which may be introduced here” (GA 5: 52/189, my emphasis). Then, Heidegger’s explanation of the second characteristic is supposed to clarify the first, which must come before it. In the previous paragraph Heidegger focuses on the difference between equipment and artwork with respect to the material component—this is what I take to be the first characteristic of art. Although the manner in which the material is employed in art “to be sure, looks like the employment of matter in handicraft, [it would be wrong to say] that artistic creation is also an activity of handicraft. It never is” (GA 5: 52/189).² When it is a matter of equipment, the production “is finished when a material has been so formed as to be ready for use. For equipment to be ready means that it is released beyond itself, to be used up in usefulness,” suggests Heidegger (GA 5: 52/189).³ Thus, production (in the context of equipment) is in essence the subordination of material potentiality to the concept (essence) of what is to be made. Equipment consumes, or uses up, the material that underlies it, suggests Heidegger, which

² Concerning the question of distinguishing between artworks and equipment, see Robert Bernasconi, “The Greatness of the Work of Art,” in *Heidegger Toward the Turn: Essays on the Work of the 1930s*, ed. James Risser (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), p. 101.

³ See Michel Haar, *The Song of the Earth: Heidegger and the Grounds of the History of Being*, translated by Reginald Lilly (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), p. 61.

is to say that it exhausts the very potentiality that allows it to be what it is. However, things are different with the work of art: an artwork, in Heidegger's words, "does not use up or misuse the earth as matter, but rather sets it free to be nothing but itself" (GA 5: 52/189). If what makes matter disappear in equipment is the function, then in the artwork, insofar as the material is released from function, it shines forth for the very first time. Matter comes forth as nothing but itself, independently from function. In Miguel de Beistegui's words, "in the work of art, there is an *excess* of materiality, or earth, over function."⁴ At this juncture, however, the very term "material" ceases to be suitable, according to Heidegger. Heidegger substitutes the concept of matter with that of "earth" (*Erde*): "[What] looks like the thingly element [i.e., matter], in the sense of our usual thing-concepts, in the work taken as object is ... its earthy character" (GA 5: 56-57/194). Such then is the first mark of the work of art: an artwork does not exhaust material potentiality but releases it to be itself.

As I have already remarked, the second "*Kennzeichen*" is supposed to elucidate the first, retrospectively. Heidegger introduces the second characteristic as something like the following: "in contrast to all other modes of production, the work is distinguished by being created so that its createdness [*Geschaffensein*] is created into the created work" (GA 5: 52/189). To be sure, there are created (produced) objects other than artworks, for example, useful tools. Then, the property of createdness is not exclusive to artworks: "Everything brought forth surely has this endowment of having been brought forth, if it has any endowment at all" (GA 5: 52/189).⁵ And yet, inasmuch as that createdness is "created into" the work of art, the property is made manifest in art like nowhere else, "in an expressly specific way [*eigens*]," as Heidegger puts (GA 5: 52/190). Then, artworks are characterized by a certain kind of procedural self-referentiality: an artwork is created *as* created, explicitly so. It is at this juncture that Heidegger introduces the *Daß*-formula:

[The] simple *factum est* ["it is made"] is to be held forth into the open region by the work: namely this, that unconcealment of a being has happened here, and that as this happening it happens here for the first time; or, that such a work *is* at all rather than is not [*daß solches Werk ist und nicht vielmehr nicht ist*] ... this thrust, this "that it is" [*dieses "Daß"*] of createdness,

⁴ De Beistegui, Miguel. *Aesthetics after Metaphysics: From Mimesis to Metaphor* (New York: Routledge, 2012), p. 71.

⁵ To be more exact, Heidegger distinguishes between "createdness [*Geschaffensein*]" and "producedness (for a purpose) [*Angefertigtsein*]" as two different kinds of "bringing forth [*Hervorbringen*]" in GA 5: 44/182.

emerges into view most purely from the work. (GA 5: 53/190)

Then, Heidegger uses the *Daß*-formula to contrast the work of art with the being of equipment for the second time:

To be sure, ‘that’ it is made is a property also of all equipment that is available and in use. But this ‘that’ does not become prominent in the equipment; it disappears in usefulness. The more handy a piece of equipment is, the more inconspicuous it remains that, for example, this particular hammer is. (GA 5: 53/190)

Now, recall that what makes an equipment equipment is its function, its use. But it is also what makes the “thatness” of equipment inconspicuous, hidden from view, as it were. However, since the teleology of function is suspended in the work of art, the artwork’s existence, its “thatness,” becomes conspicuous. The work of art is not subordinate to any further end and portrays nothing; instead, it simply *is* (rather than is not). Indeed, the “thatness” of a work of art is conspicuous precisely because nothing more can be said of an artwork than “that it is.”

Although the two marks of the artwork might have appeared disconnected at first, in truth the marks are closely related, illuminate each other. The relationship between them could be formulated as follows: If the the work of art is not subjected to any purpose (for the work simply *is*), which is its second mark, then the material is released to be nothing but itself (as earth), which refers to its first mark. But that means that inasmuch as the material of an artwork is not subjected to function, the work of art retains its potentiality. It uses material without using it up (without subordinating it to use), as it were. If in equipment the material is exhausted in and by a given form, the material of an artwork remains unexhausted, as it were, even after the process of production has finished. The latter thus preserves its potentiality, its future open, while equipment does not. To be sure, the wood of a table, say, can still be made into something else (e.g., a wooden door), but that possibility is merely *per accidens*, i.e., if anything new is to be produced, the wooden table must cease to exist first. On the other hand, when it is a matter of the work of art, its potentiality to be other than it is is intrinsic to its very existence. It exists in the mode of potentiality and freedom, as determinable by and open to interpretation. In other words, it is a *per se* power of an artwork to become something that it is not (while remaining, for a lack of a better expression, the artwork that it is). And it is precisely in its refusal to represent anything, to perform a useful function that the potentiality of an artwork keeps its *freedom* (recall §29 of *Being and Time*). In the language of *Being and Time*, then, possibility indeed stands

higher than actuality in the work of art, and the term that Heidegger chooses to indicate this new thinking of potentiality (in matter) is “earth.”

4. Conclusion

I have tried to show that in spite of the substantial shift in philosophical vocabulary, as well as subject matter, between Heidegger’s *Being and Time* and “The Origin of the Work of Art,” the *daß*-formula is to be found at important junctures in both works. One such important moment in *Being and Time* is §29, where Heidegger’s concern is to show that the human Dasein is in darkness concerning its origin and destination (purpose). Unlike the being of equipment, then, the being of Dasein has no pre-assigned purpose; rather, the Dasein *just* is, and nothing more could be said about it (at least, *a priori*). That is exactly what Heidegger means by formulating the “thatness” of Dasein as thrownness or facticity. Dasein is, as it were, thrown into existence (it has not chosen to exist), factually, without a model or purpose to fall back on. Indeed, we can say no more of the human Dasein than *that it is* (although, as Heidegger adds, the Dasein also *has to be* in its very thrownness). And yet, that is exactly wherein Dasein’s freedom lies, i.e., in the indeterminateness of the “whence” and “whither.” In the vocabulary of potentiality (possibility), that Dasein’s “whence” and “whither” are indeterminate entails that Dasein’s potentiality is open (rather than subordinate to a pre-determinate destination). For Dasein, then, “higher than actuality stands possibility.” Now, it is far from insignificant that Heidegger resorts to virtually the same formula “*daß es ist*” in his description of an artwork in “The Origin of the Work of Art.” My suggestion is that Heidegger’s use of the *daß*-formula in the artwork essay betrays a logic similar to that in *Being and Time*: what Heidegger finds in the work of art is its own peculiar sort of freedom, i.e., freedom from purposive assignment, as well as potentiality (i.e., materiality or earth) that is higher than actuality. If the project of *Being and Time* was to show that the human Dasein is a being of possibility, then what Heidegger accomplishes in “The Origin of the Work of Art” is reverse the hierarchy between actuality and possibility *also* in the work of art. Thus, in the shift (which also largely coincides with the famous “turn” in Heidegger’s philosophy) from the focus on human subjectivity (in *Being and Time*) to works of art, Heidegger’s abiding philosophical concern remains rethinking potentiality as no longer

subordinate to actuality, as freedom.

The Fateful Releasement into World-Time: On the Temporality of Freedom in Heidegger, 1927-1937

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ABSTRACT

Heidegger's notion of freedom depends on an original temporality more fundamental than world-time (the time of determinism). This paper asks whether freedom means a withdrawal from world-time or a releasement into it.

Being and Time discloses Dasein's drifting-along in world-time as inauthentic. In this way, it secures freedom from determinism, but also gives the impression that authenticity, as a resoluteness, entails a withdrawal from world-time.

The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics shows that Heidegger is well aware of the problem of withdrawal. He focuses on the attunement of boredom, which delivers Dasein back into world-time. The tension of the authentic moment of vision is too intense to endure, therefore Dasein has to remove this tension and thus to release itself into world-time.

"The Origin of the Work of Art" extends the boredom of Dasein to a metaphysical boredom of Being in general. The earth, the undifferentiated ground of Being, cannot be given at once in totality. Instead, it bears an impulse toward the work, in which Being is individuated in world-time.

"The Eternal Recurrence of the Same" refigures this tension in Nietzsche's metaphysics between creative Becoming and fixated Being and concludes that Becoming, in order to create or subsist at all, has to be "infected" by Being, thus entering world-time.

Freedom is better understood as a releasement into world-time. This is a tragic event, but it is also the only way freedom may overcome the bondage of world-time: by incorporating the latter as a transient stage of its own.

1. Introduction

For Heidegger, the question of freedom can never be discussed apart from the notion of authenticity. His criticism of the liberal conception of freedom – that to be free is to be free *from* certain limits – consists in his contention that drifting-along in a seemingly "free" space usually ends up *inauthentic*, i.e. bound by average everyday patterns. Genuine freedom entails an existentiell transformation of Dasein, so that Dasein lives in a more authentic manner. In *Being and Time* (1927, henceforth BT), this existentiell authenticity is characterized as "anticipatory resoluteness" [*vorlaufende Entschlossenheit*] (BT 304/352)¹.

As commentators like Michael Zimmerman note, the term "resoluteness" may suggest a voluntarism², where Dasein holds itself in reserve so as to really make decisions for itself instead

¹ In my references to *Being and Time*, the first page number corresponds to the German original (*Gesamtausgabe 2*), while the second to John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson's English translation (Blackwell 1962).

² Zimmerman (1981), p. 199.

of dissolving into the world as “the one” [*das Man*]. Though this line of interpretation is not tenable under closer examination, it is indeed corroborated by the way Heidegger approaches a temporality more fundamental than world-time in Division Two of BT. While living world-time implies a releasement of oneself into the elapse of time, attending to “original temporality” [*ursprüngliche Zeitlichkeit*]³ requires that Dasein live not in a fleeting “now” but in the “moment of vision” [*Augenblick*] (BT 338/387). Dasein has to be “brought back from distraction with the objects of one’s closest concern” (*Ibid.*).

Therefore, in order to give a clear account of Heidegger’s conception of freedom, it is imperative that we understand the modes of temporality involved in his notion of authenticity. Briefly, if authenticity corresponds strictly to original temporality, while inauthenticity belongs inextricably with world-time (and in a more thematic guise, *chronological* time), freedom would be defined as a *detachment* from world-time, incapable of releasement into it. But is this the case for Heidegger after all?

This paper seeks to reconstruct a conceptual trajectory out of four works by Heidegger published during the decade 1927 to 1937: 1) BT (1927); 2) *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude* (1929/30, henceforth FCM); 3) “The Origin of the Work of Art” (1935/36, henceforth OWA); 4) “The Eternal Recurrence of the Same” (1937, henceforth ERS). My aim is not to give a historico-exegetical account of the development of Heidegger’s thought. Rather, I want to articulate how a problematic already implicit in BT gets articulated, step by step, in these works. Instead of trying to recognize a “turning” [*Kehre*] in Heidegger, I pay more attention to the continuity throughout his thinking.

³ I have decided to translate the German “ursprünglich” as “original”, not (as Macquarrie and Robinson does in their English translation) as “primordial”. Though the term itself is linked to Husserl’s discussion of primordiality, translating it as “primordial” may mislead people into thinking that “ursprüngliche Zeitlichkeit” refers to the way in which primordial people experience time, rendering it an existentiell concept. For example, Margot Fleischer (1991) adopts this interpretation and criticizes Heidegger for conflating original temporality (an original dimension) and authentic temporality (a subordinate dimension) (pp. 20-32). In fact, however, original temporality is an existential concept, and is synonymous with authentic temporality since both refer to the temporality authentically construed. See Dahlstrom (1995), pp. 112-114. Following Dahlstrom (1995), I translate “ursprüngliche Zeitlichkeit” consistently as “original temporality”.

2. BT: the horizon of *Daseinanalytik* and the detachment from world-time

“The question of the meaning of Being” [*die Frage nach dem Sinn von Sein*] remains Heidegger’s central concern throughout his philosophical career. Even in Division One of BT, where his project is an “existential analytic of Dasein”, the ultimate aim is fundamental ontology, the inquiry into the meaning of Being in general (BT 13/33-34).

Still, in BT Dasein is the *site* of questioning. Any question concerning Being in general has to be accessed *through* Dasein, though not necessarily remaining in its hold. The pivotal notion that links Being in general to the Being of Dasein is “Being-in-the-world”. On the one hand, Being-in-the-world is “the basic state *of Dasein*” (BT 52/78, my italics), meaning that Dasein is never enclosed in a definite realm but is necessarily an openness towards its surrounding world [*Umwelt*]. On the other hand, Dasein is open towards the *world*. Though the world is not yet equivalent to Being in general, it is the only site where Dasein may encounter Being in general at all.

If one reads only Division One of BT, like Hubert Dreyfus did in his renowned commentary, one would be tempted to construe Dasein as an “absorbed coping”⁴ in-the-world. However, we should note that *Daseinanalytik* is Heidegger’s version of the phenomenological reduction, the aim of which is to single out Dasein as the unique entity as regards the question of Being. Freedom is an expression of this uniqueness: it means that Dasein can never be totally dissolved in entities to the extent that it is juxtaposed with them as just another entity.

To guarantee this, Division Two of BT exhibits a striving towards the authentic Self of Dasein. The way Heidegger accomplishes it is curious: he problematizes the temporality of Dasein’s average everydayness and suggests an original temporality which underlies world-time and gives meaning to it in the first place. Accordingly, he discloses that freedom is inconceivable within world-time, especially if world-time is understood in chronological terms. If chronological time is the only time of Dasein, Dasein would be leveled down to the plane of other entities, and thus would be subject to determinism, which, in turn, always depends on chronological accounts of causal relations.

There is a burning demand, then, to distinguish original temporality from world-time. Heidegger thus distinguishes inauthentic modes of temporal projection (waiting [*Erwarten*], making-now [*Gegenwärtigen*] and forgetfulness [*Vergessenheit*]) from authentic ones

⁴ Dreyfus (1991), pp. 69-70.

(anticipation [*Vorlaufen*], moment of vision [*Augenblick*] and recollection [*Wiederholen*]).⁵ World-time, then, grows out of inauthentic ways of projection. In this way, the freedom of Dasein is secured, for determinism, the major threat to freedom, is shown to be reliant on an inauthentic conception of time, which is not fundamental but rather a perversion of original temporality.

Thus the *Daseinanalytik* in BT concludes with the ontological priority of authenticity over inauthenticity, of original temporality over world-time. It leaves space for the freedom of Dasein, but the way it does so suggests that freedom involves a withdrawal from the world, from the inauthentic everydayness of world-time.

A question remains in such a scenario. If original temporality is ontologically fundamental in that it underlies any conception of world-time, why does Dasein (and even Being in general, as we shall see in Sections 4 and 5) constitute itself as *within* world-time at all? Why not stay with original temporality? After all, Heidegger himself admits that “authentic Being-one’s-Self [...] does not detach Dasein from its world, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating ‘I.’” (BT 298/344) In other words, even an authentic Dasein would find it necessary to plunge back into the world, into supposedly “inauthentic” world-time. This is probably also the reason why Heidegger writes the last chapter of BT – intriguing though sketchy – under the title of “Temporality and within-time-ness as the source of the ordinary conception of time”. Through the odyssey of BT, and especially through its *Daseinanalytik*, the question of Being gets concretized as the question of time – or, to be more precise, the question of the *temporalization* of the authentic into inauthentic time. This clue shall guide our following examination of other texts.

3. FCM: boredom as the inevitability of releasement into world-time

Given as a lecture course shortly after the publication of BT, FCM largely remains in the shadows of *Daseinanalytik*. More important, however, is the fact that it witnesses Heidegger’s shift from ontology to metaphysics. Onto-logy, as the articulation of Being [*onta*] through discourse [*logos*], presumes an ideal of total clarification. A project of ontology, even one of “fundamental” ontology, finds discourse sufficient as an approach to Being. In the context of BT, for example, this would mean that every aspect of Being in general is approachable through

⁵ Gelven (1989), p. 186.

Dasein's discourse and the understanding underlying it, as long as the "ontological difference" between Being and entities is articulated so that one no longer approaches Being as if it were just another entity.

In the course of FCM, a discontent grows with this optimism of ontology. Heidegger says: Perhaps the problem of the distinction between Being and entities is prematurely stifled as a problematic by our entrusting it to ontology and naming it in this way. Conversely, we must ultimately unfold this problem *still more* radically, with the danger of arriving at a position where we *must reject all ontology in its very idea as an inadequate metaphysical problematic*. [...] Ontology too and its idea must fall, precisely because the radicalization of this idea was a necessary stage in unfolding the fundamental problematic of metaphysics. (FCM 522/359⁶, Heidegger's italics)

Here, ontology turns out to be a "necessary stage" in Heidegger's pursuit of metaphysics, yet eventually it is to be overcome by a "still more radical" version of metaphysics. So, what does it mean to be "still more radical"? Considering the general task of FCM, and in retrospect from Heidegger's later works, I suggest that the radicalness consists in the awareness of a primordial concealment underlying the disclosure of logos, of a darkness that has made light possible in the first place. Heidegger calls it "entities' telling refusal of themselves as a whole" [*das sich im Ganzen versagende Seiende*] (FCM 210/139). The discovery of this undifferentiated darkness results from Heidegger's persistent movement towards a more fundamental "ground". The question of Being concerns not only the disclosure of Being, but more importantly the *disclosability* of Being.

But if the undifferentiated ground is more fundamental than the disclosure of logos, an articulated, *onto-logical Daseinanalytik* would no longer be sufficient as an approach to the question of Being – specifically, it cannot address adequately the undifferentiated ground of Being. To do this, Heidegger proposes that we awaken a "fundamental attunement" [*Grundstimmung*] of Dasein, i.e. "profound boredom [*Langweile*]".

To be sure, BT already makes good use of another attunement, anxiety [*Angst*]. An attunement unconceals something, yet not to the extent that the fundamental concealment underlying any unconcealment should be forgotten. Rather, Dasein keeps concealment at work by being unthematically delivered to certain structures of its existence. Now, while anxiety

⁶ In my references to *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, the first page number corresponds to the German original (*Gesamtausgabe* 29/30), while the second to William McNeill and Nicholas Walker's English translation (Indiana University Press 1995).

delivers Dasein from world-time to authentic temporality, boredom does quite the opposite: it delivers Dasein back into world-time. In the meantime, however, boredom discloses the undifferentiated ground of Being without thematizing it.

How exactly is this possible? Heidegger starts with the most frequent and ordinary mode of boredom (“becoming bored by something”), then proceeds to “being bored with something”, and finally reaches profound boredom (“it is boring for one”). While he gives lengthy arguments as to why a proper understanding of boredom cannot depend on the notion of chronological world-time, what interests us here is rather the following ideas. First, Dasein usually encounters boredom by *escaping* it. As Nicolas de Warren notes, the image of boredom as “ebbing back and forth” discloses “time’s atmospheric inquietude”.⁷ This makes boredom the metaphysical attunement *par excellence*, since the only way to learn about the fundamental concealment is to learn from one’s escape from it, i.e. to learn from the unconcealments that distract one from the fundamental concealment.

Second, in boredom [*Langweile*] Dasein finds that “*time* becomes drawn out, becomes long [*lang*]”. Dasein escapes from boredom “by at all times making an effort, whether consciously or unconsciously, to pass the time, by welcoming highly important and essential preoccupations for the sole reason that they take up our time.” (FCM 118/78-79). But the time Dasein thus passes is nothing else than world-time: from the perspective of BT, to pass time like this is precisely to drift along as an inauthentic Dasein (BT 178/222).

We are thus approaching the reason why Dasein, grounded in authentic temporality, nevertheless has to release itself into inauthentic world-time. In an exploratory passage, Heidegger asks:

[W]hat do we take this time for? So as to leave it for ourselves. Where do we leave it? To where do we take [*bringen*] this time we have taken? We spend it, get through it [*bringen sie durch*], waste it. We take time in such a way that we do not have to reckon with it. [...] We remove the time *during* our spending of it, i.e., we remove precisely this *during* within which the invitation and the evening endure, this ‘during’ in its enduring. Enduring – this means lasting, namely lasting in the sense of the constant flowing away of time, that is, the ‘now’ and ‘now’ and ‘now’. [...] We take this time so as to leave it for ourselves, i.e., to give it up as flowing away. (FCM 185-186/123)

⁷ de Warren (2018), p. 522.

To unpack this passage, we should first distinguish between the time we “spend” and the time we give up and let pass. We are able to “spend” the former, not because it is simply our possession, but because it witnesses a moment, full of tension, where our freedom is manifest in a temporality beyond world-time. The latter, by contrast, is the world-time of drifting-along. Recall the two modes of temporal projection concerning the present in BT, moment of vision (authentic) and making-now (inauthentic): the former implies so much tension that it is untranslatable into world-time, thus appearing as an “Augen-blick”. The pervasiveness of boredom means that Dasein cannot remain in this authentic moment, but has to remove the gravity of authentic time by spending time. *During* this removal, however, world-time *endures*, i.e. lasts “in the sense of the constant flowing away”. Inauthentic making-now prevails due to a metaphysical boredom, to authentic temporality’s incapability to *endure*. A duration in world-time can occur only because Dasein is bored enough so as to release itself into world-time, to remove the tension of authenticity so that time may pass.

Heidegger’s seminal analysis of boredom addresses the question why authentic temporality has to temporalize itself as world-time. In this way, it explains why true freedom cannot pervade one’s lifetime, but only shows itself in those pivotal moments of vision, after which one must plunge once again into the drifting-along of inauthentic world-time. It leaves unexplained, however, why boredom is so fundamental an attunement of Dasein, as well as why the authentic is incapable of enduring in world-time. These questions outgrow the framework of *Daseinanalytik*, which is still predominant in FCM.

4. OWA: the earth calling for historical articulation into a work

If FCM discloses a metaphysical boredom of Dasein, in OWA we find a metaphysical boredom of Being in general. Briefly, the work of art is a site where the undifferentiated ground of Being cannot but fatefully enter world-time. In this Section I shall try to unpack this claim.

In OWA, Heidegger rejects the view that art only carries “aesthetic value” in a world ready-made (OWA 3/145⁸); rather, genuine art opens up a world, radically unique and unanticipated, in which alone Being becomes manifest (OWA 27/167). However, what the work of art unconceals

⁸ In my references to “The Origin of the Work of Art”, the first page number corresponds to the German original in *Holzwege (Gesamtausgabe 5)*, while the second to Albert Hofstadter’s English translation in *Basic Writings* (HarperCollins 1993), pp. 143-212.

is not a capricious fabrication by the artist. It has a ground that is “always already there”, grasped in undifferentiated ambiguity. Heidegger calls this ground the “earth” [*Erde*] (OWA 28/168). The earth is singular while there are countless worlds. The work of art is a *work* in that it hosts a constant strife [*Streit*] between the earth and its articulation into a world (OWA 35/174). Worlds are brought forth from the earth and retreat into it; ontologically, the earth is the elusive nothingness that envelopes and nurtures any articulated world.

Here we see that “world”, the central concept in Division One of BT, is further grounded in the earth. As the earth is distinguished from the worlds it gets articulated into, Being in general is distinguished from the referential framework of entities that surround Dasein. This will prove crucial for Heidegger’s mature concept of freedom: thanks to this distinction, freedom, as transcending one’s surrounding world and the world-time that defines it, no longer has to be conflated with a detachment from Being. In other words, a free Dasein cannot, and does not have to, detach itself from the earth. All freedom entails is a flexibility in developing a world further or switching between worlds, instead of remaining in the same fixed world.

But if the earth already contains the totality of Being (though only implicitly so), then its singularized and indeed *historical* articulation into particular worlds would seem trivial. One may compare the earth thus understood to the Platonic realm of Ideas. Every possibility is already actually contained in that realm, which renders their actualization in world-time superfluous.

This, however, is not Heidegger’s view of the earth. He says, “truth does not exist in itself beforehand, somewhere among the stars, only subsequently to descend elsewhere among things” (OWA 49/186). By rejecting the Platonic position, Heidegger reemphasizes that the earth is an undifferentiated ambiguity whose truth is not yet realized. The earth refuses to be given at once in its totality, since it has no totality at all. Its concrete determination is never prescribed, but can only happen when the earth grows into historical worlds. Metaphorically, one might say that the earth, as the undifferentiated ground of Being, suffers a metaphysical boredom – both because it is too fecund to withhold from producing historical worlds, and because it would remain most empty without producing them. Thus Heidegger speaks of the “impulse toward the work” [*der Zug zum Werk*] (OWA 50/187): set forth as a work, Being releases itself into world-time. This is the way Being escapes from its metaphysical boredom.

Moreover, as soon as Being sets itself as a work, it can accomplish something the undifferentiated earth cannot accomplish alone. The strife between the earth and the world is unique to each work, and the identity of the work in its preserving is possible only against the fleeting background of world-time (OWA 26-27/166; 50/187). It is the releasement into world-time that *individuates* Being into works of art, each of which is one of its kind. Accordingly, the preserving of a work is not merely an endurance in the fluctuations of a world-time taken for granted; rather, preserving serves a positive role in the articulation of the work, for the totality of its meaning is delayed, i.e. cannot be given at once, but has to wait for its own time (OWA 54/192; 57/194).

If we are entitled to speak not only of the freedom of Dasein but also of the freedom of Being, it seems that the latter, too, can be characterized as a releasement into world-time, not as a withdrawal from it. If the earth remains only the earth, without ever manifesting itself in works of art, then it is not free insofar as it is bound by a metaphysical purism that is – to borrow Hegel’s words – empty and abstract.

5. ERS: Becoming via the anchorage of Being

A similar idea is expressed one year later in ERS. The problematics of the earth and the work of art (together with the world it opens up) gets transposed in that of Becoming and Being, understood in the context of Nietzsche’s metaphysics. For Nietzsche, Becoming is the principle of creation and meaning-making; it is fundamental to the world, since seemingly static entities in the world are in fact only transient stages in restless processes of Becoming. Paradoxically, however, in order for Becoming to create, or even to subsist at all, it has to be “infected” by fixated Being. Heidegger notes:

Nietzsche argues that Being *is* as fixated, as permanent; and that it *is* in perpetual creation and destruction. Yet Being is *both* of these, not in an extrinsic way, as one beside another; rather, Being is in its very ground perpetual creation (Becoming), while as creation it needs what is fixed. (ERS 417-418/200⁹, Heidegger’s italics)

Thus understood, fixated Being is a fateful detour Becoming has to take. Becoming has to enter world-time, the time of static, disintegrated moments. This is a tragic event, not in the sense

⁹ In my references to “The Eternal Recurrence of the Same”, the first page number corresponds to the German original (*Gesamtausgabe 6.1*), while the second to David Farrell Krell’s English translation in *Nietzsche. Volume II: The Eternal Recurrence of the Same* (Harper & Row 1984), pp. 1-208.

that Becoming is defeated by static Being, but in the sense that Becoming necessarily endures through this ordeal in order to fully be itself:

The sense is not that one must brush aside and replace Becoming as the impermanent – for impermanence is what Becoming implies – with Being as the permanent. The sense is that one must shape Becoming as Being in such a way that *as becoming* it is preserved, has subsistence, in a word, *is*. (ERS 418/202, Heidegger's italics)

It is clear from this passage that, without a releasement into fixated Being, Becoming cannot even *be* or subsist, not to mention accomplish its work of creation. Here “Being” is used in a specific (Nietzschean) sense, and cannot be compared to a work of art that hosts an infinite strife; however, both “Being” and the work of art find their duration in world-time; they have to be specific, therefore detached from other entities. They have to give up the wholeness that the ground – construed either as Becoming or the earth – enjoys in its undifferentiatedness.

To someone almost suffocated by the determinism of world-time (especially when world-time turns into meaningless, neutral chronological time as in science and some philosophies), the metaphysics of Becoming, endorsed by both Nietzsche and Heidegger, must sound liberating. If a principle of creation transcends any static, ready-made world (for that world itself is derivative), then the future is left radically open. However, our examination above of the tragic event of Becoming renders problematic this naïve optimism. So, where does all this lead us to?

6. Conclusion: freedom as vulnerability to the encroachment of time

Our investigation so far has taken a trajectory that traverses different works with radically different problematics. In spite of this, a clue leading through all of them is clear if we ask the following question: if world-time is the time of bondage, what does freedom consist in?

Freedom can mean either 1) withdrawal from world-time, or 2) releasement into it. For the first position, to be unfree is to be immersed in world-time without understanding its derivative status. BT discloses this under the name of inauthenticity. Though in BT Heidegger is not clearly taking the first position, he does not problematize it either. The result is that resoluteness, the road to authenticity, is sometimes conflated with a withdrawal from inauthentic everydayness.

In FCM, however, Heidegger expresses why releasement into world-time is necessary for Dasein. OWA extends this to Being in general, and articulates, with the example of works of art, what this releasement alone may accomplish. Finally, ERS refigures the releasement as a tragic event of creative Becoming.

So is Heidegger turning towards a compromised version of freedom, reconciling it with the bondage of world-time? My view is that this is not simply a concession. By articulating the positive and indispensable roles world-time plays in the achievement of freedom, either by Dasein or by Being in general, Heidegger gradually distances himself from the conception of world-time as absolute inauthenticity. If there is evil in world-time, this evil is not an independent opponent of authentic freedom, but rather a transient stage that authentic freedom inherently demands.

In world-time freedom seems under threat only because world-time is everywhere shot through by the original temporality of authentic freedom. World-time is not merely the time of unfreedom, but the time of the *crisis* of freedom, a crisis that is both fateful and productive. On the other hand, authentic freedom consists not in a withdrawal from world-time, but precisely in a productive incarnation in world-time – it has to become finite, vulnerable to the encroachment of world-time, so as to really *contain* in itself the bondage of world-time, making the latter only a transient moment of freedom itself.

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Heidegger, Freedom, and Alternate Possibilities

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The traditional philosophical debate surrounding the nature of freedom has typically focused on the question of what it means to have free will and whether it is reasonable to conclude that human existence is such that we could have free will. This debate has grown and shifted and moved to the consideration of hyper-specific questions, so I will not pretend that I can address all important facets of the debate here. Rather, in this paper I want to focus on the specific issue of the necessity of alternate possibilities for freedom, as it is often thought that it must be possible for an agent to pursue alternate courses of action if they are to have free will. As Robert Kane puts it in his Introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of Free Will*: “two features of the personal or practical standpoint are pivotal to what has traditionally been called free will: we believe we have free will when (a) it is ‘up to us’ what we choose from an array of alternative possibilities and (b) the origin or source of our actions is in us and not in anyone or anything else over which we have no control.”¹.

My aim here is to address this issue of alternate possibilities from the Heideggerian point of view and bring the discussion of Heidegger’s concept of freedom closer to the mainstream free will debate. This might seem like an odd aim, but I feel that Heideggerians should have some answer to philosophers engaged in this mainstream debate when they ask about Heidegger’s views on free will. My goal is not necessarily to make Heidegger’s thought fit neatly within the conceptual framework of the mainstream debate, but rather to show more clearly what the Heideggerian stance would be on this central concern in the free will debate and to show how Heidegger provides us with a very different understanding of freedom.

The Heideggerian Account of Freedom

The first task is to give at least a rough sketch of what freedom is for Heidegger. Several scholars have made the case that there are two different, and at first glance, unrelated, senses of freedom

¹ Robert Kane, "Introduction: The Contours of the Contemporary Free Will Debates," in *The Oxford Handbook of Free Will*, ed. Robert Kane (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 5.

developed by Heidegger in his work in the late 1920s and early 1930s.² First, there is the understanding of freedom that is developed in *Being and Time* that refers more explicitly to the sort of freedom we think about in the context of normal human actions. This sense of freedom is connected with authentic existence as described in *Being and Time*. As is well known at this point, Heidegger thinks that when existing authentically, we do own our actions, but when existing inauthentically, we do not. The difference is that when existing authentically, we “choose to choose”. It is this second-order choice that occurs in authentic action that makes actions free. The second sense of freedom is broader and not necessarily epitomized in human action. After *Being and Time*, Heidegger starts using freedom to refer more and more frequently to the freeing up of entities. In other words, freedom is the space that lets entities manifest themselves as what they are.

I think the distinction between these two different types of freedom is essentially right, and it provides a good general framework for understanding how Heidegger thinks about freedom in this era of his thought. Going forward, I will adopt Beatrice Han-Pile’s terminology for referring to these two different senses of freedom: ontic/exisentiell freedom and ontological freedom as I think the ‘ontic’ and ‘ontological’ designations are pithy and reasonably familiar to readers of Heidegger’s works. Due to length limitations, in what follows I will focus on giving a rough sketch of ontological freedom and then making the case that this sort of freedom does not require the existence of alternate possibilities. Ontic freedom will be left as a separate, unaddressed issue.

I want to begin by trying to sort out what Heidegger means when he starts using freedom more in this sense of freeing up rather than as a concept most connected with human action. We can work backwards here (as Guignon does) by first looking at Heidegger’s 1930 essay, “On the Essence of Truth.” Here Heidegger makes the claim that the “*essence of truth, as the correctness of a statement, is freedom*” (GA 9, 186). He clarifies this somewhat by stating that, “[f]reedom for what is opened up in an open region lets beings be the beings they are. Freedom now reveals itself as letting beings be” (GA 9, 188). Connecting these two claims, he seems to be saying that

² See Charles Guignon's, "Heidegger's Concept of Freedom, 1927-1930," in *Interpreting Heidegger: Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel Dahlstrom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), Beatrice Han-Pile's "Freedom and the 'Choice to Choose Oneself' in *Being and Time*" in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), and Sacha Golob's *Heidegger on Concepts, Freedom and Normativity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

freedom opens up a space in which beings can appear as what they are, which in turns allows for the possibility of making correct (or incorrect) statements about these beings. The next step is to clarify how exactly freedom opens up a space to let beings be. Heidegger cautions against an overly passive reading of the phrase “letting beings be,” as he says that this “does not refer to neglect and indifference but rather the opposite. To let be is to engage oneself with beings” (GA 9, 188). So, now we have the idea that freedom consists in engaging with beings so as to let them be what they are.

To understand how this is supposed to work, we can back up a little bit chronologically in the course of Heidegger’s thought to his 1929 essay, “On the Essence of Ground,” and the 1928 lecture course, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*. In both of these works, Heidegger equates freedom with transcendence. In *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, he says, quite explicitly, “Dasein’s transcendence and freedom are identical” (GA 26, 238). Furthermore, transcendence “casts something like the ‘for-the-sake-of’ projectively before it” (GA 9, 164). And with the use of this sort of language (e.g., “projection” and “for-the-sake-of”), we see the connection back to his analysis of Dasein in *Being and Time*. There, Heidegger sees our everyday activity as having a broadly teleological structure. In Heidegger’s parlance, our actions constitute and take place within a web of “in-order-to” and “towards-which” relationships. We encounter objects within the world as things to be used in order to accomplish some task, and always have the completion of some project towards which our actions are directed. Heidegger then adds that the “totality of involvements itself goes back ultimately to a ‘towards-which’ in which there is no further involvement” (SZ, 84). In other words, there must be some final goal that all the other, intermediary actions lead up to that does not lead to anything further itself. This ultimate “towards-which” is called the “for-the-sake-of-which,” i.e., that which all of one’s actions are ultimately for the sake of. Heidegger makes a further distinction between the towards-which and the for-the-sake-of-which, as he claims that the “‘for-the-sake-of-which’ always pertains to the Being of *Dasein* [human existence]” (SZ, 84). So, the for-the-sake-of-which is not just some action or completed project that does not lead to anything else, but rather, it fundamentally has to do with human existence. For-the-sake-of-whichs are possible ways of existing towards which we can project ourselves (SZ, 145).

Now we are in a position to put most of the pieces together. Truth is equated to ontological freedom, because ontological freedom lets entities be what they are, which makes it possible to

have correct and incorrect judgments to begin with. Ontological freedom accomplishes this letting be by engaging with entities in world. This engagement takes the form of transcendence, projecting oneself towards some possible way of existing.

Various scholars have attempted to make Heidegger's line of thinking here more concrete by considering the importance of the norms that are constitutive for the various possible ways of existing that we can take on.³ Heidegger makes essentially this point, though without the explicit emphasis on norms, in his lecture, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*. There he analyzes the claim that a chalkboard in a classroom is badly placed (GA 29/30, 497-502). Heidegger maintains that it is objectively correct that the chalkboard is poorly placed, but that the possibility of making such a judgment relies on there being teachers and students with certain expectations. This shows how the language of norms can be helpful. When there are certain norms associated with being a teacher (e.g., communicating information to students from the front of a classroom) and being a student (e.g., dutifully recording the information that your teacher gives you in class), it makes it possible for a chalkboard to be poorly placed. The commitment to those norms lets the chalkboard be what it is. Heidegger does not explicitly do this, but it is easy to see how one could push this further and say that our commitment to being students and teachers lets the chalkboard be what it is.

While I largely agree with these sorts of interpretations that focus on the importance of norms for ontological freedom, I do wonder if they are too narrowly focused. This line of interpretation has opened up a very fruitful way of making sense of Heidegger and building on his insights. However, it should be remembered that the closest that Heidegger comes to giving a concrete example of something that would count as a "for-the-sake-of-which" is to talk about hammering done to make a building safe from bad weather, and says that, "this protection 'is' for the sake of providing shelter for Dasein—that is to say, for the sake of a possibility of Dasein's Being" (SZ, 84). He seems to be saying here that the way of being that lets the action of hammering matter is something like being a creature who needs shelter. It is not obvious that this way of being is fundamentally constituted by the enactment of certain norms the way that, say, being a professor is. Of course, the society in which one finds oneself will have various norms

³ See the various essays collected in Steven Crowell's *Normativity and Phenomenology in Husserl and Heidegger* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), John Haugeland's, "Truth and Rule-Following" in *Having Thought: Essays in the Metaphysics of Mind* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), and Golob's aforementioned *Heidegger on Concepts, Freedom and Normativity* for recent examples of this emphasis on norms.

that dictate what is an “acceptable” form of shelter, but this seems at its base like a biologically defined way of being. If I am hiking and am suddenly caught in a nasty thunderstorm, certain features of the environment around me will stand out in terms of their possibilities for providing shelter (a cave, an abandoned cabin, etc.). They will stand out as such by virtue of my understanding of myself as a being who requires shelter in such circumstances, not by virtue of any social norms that might define what it is to be a hiker or an outdoors enthusiast.

Now we can move to considering how this ontological sense of freedom as freeing up is the basis for our everyday actions.⁴ Heidegger seems focused on how our freedom understood as the projection towards a for-the-sake-of-which lets entities encountered in the world be what they are. I think we can do something similar with the explanation of our individual actions. That is, our projection towards possible ways of being let certain actions manifest themselves as mattering to us. The ontological sense of freedom is thus connected to normal, everyday agency. Even though he is primarily concerned with how beings manifest themselves his discussion of freedom and projection in *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, Heidegger still at times hearkens back to earlier works where he is more explicit about considering human action. In this lecture, for instance, Heidegger pointedly keeps making the claim that the human mode of being open to things encountered in the world is comportment (*Verhaltung*) as opposed to the mere behavior (*Benahmen*) associated with animals.

To use Heidegger’s example of the professor in the classroom again, if I project myself towards the possibility of being a professor, this means that I have committed to certain norms that are constitutive for this particular way of existing. For example, a professor is expected to come to class and deliver a lecture or oversee some other sort of learning activity in the classroom. If I consistently fail to abide by this norm, then I am no longer a professor. It is because I implicitly or explicitly understand this norm to be constitutive for this way of being that I am drawn to performing individual actions that enable me to enact this norm and, thus, this way of being. So, the action of driving to school matters to me insofar as it is necessary for

⁴ Han-Pile does acknowledge this broader role for ontological freedom, but rules out a thorough discussion of this role in her paper due to length constraints. Guignon only discusses the connection between ontological freedom as “freeing up entities” and ontic (human, in his terms) freedom without getting into the general dependence of all action, not just authentic action, on ontological freedom. Golob does do quite a bit to lay out the connection between ontological freedom and agency broadly construed and much of what I say is more or less in agreement with his interpretation.

delivering a lecture in class. My commitment to that norm lets this specific action show up as something that should matter to me.

Seen in this way, ontological freedom thought of as freeing up runs very deep into the structure of our everyday agency. It is not just when existing authentically with the proper understanding of our existence that comes in being-towards-death that this sense of freedom is operative in our actions. It is really the case that this ontological freedom is a necessary condition for any sort of action. This holds even for inauthentic existence in which, for Heidegger, I have merely drifted into a certain self-interpretation that then lets certain actions matter to me. I might have never explicitly chosen to understand myself as professor and just kind of drifted into that role as the obvious next step after graduate school, but I would still need an implicit commitment to that way of being for the actions that I perform on a daily basis to manifest themselves as significant in any way.

Alternate Possibilities and the Ability to Do Otherwise

Now we can consider the Heideggerian response to the question of the necessity of alternate possibilities for having ontological freedom. When focusing on ontic freedom, one might very well conclude that Heidegger would agree with the idea that being free does require alternate possibilities, since he repeatedly emphasizes the importance of choosing, which seems to imply a choice between alternate courses of action or alternate possible ways of existing. But does that relation of necessity hold for ontological freedom? Indeed, Han-Pile extends this belief in the necessity of alternate possibilities to ontological freedom as well, as she says that while she cannot provide a full account of ontological freedom, “for Heidegger, being ontologically free...entails that it has alternative possibilities”.⁵

Contra Han-Pile, I am not convinced that ontological freedom does require alternate possibilities for Heidegger. To make this case, I will focus on the second half of Heidegger’s lecture course, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, where he engages in a lengthy analysis of animal behavior (*Benahmen*) and then spends the final sections contrasting that behavior with human comportment (*Verhaltung*). Human comportment is different because we are free. I do not want to get into the assessment of the potential anthropocentrism of Heidegger’s provocative assertion that animals are world poor, while we are world-forming, but

⁵ Han-Pile, 292.

rather, I would like to use Heidegger's analysis here to figure out how exactly Heidegger thinks humans are different from animals in order to have a better sense of what Heidegger means by ontological freedom and whether or not this freedom requires the existence of alternate possibilities.

Heidegger characterizes animal behavior in terms of captivation (*Benommenheit*). While he is engaging in a bit of word play here with the shared root of *Benehmen* and *Benommenheit*, he is also saying that animals are taken over by their instinctual responses to what they encounter in their environment. Using the example of a bee's flight, Heidegger maintains that instead of having the sort of freedom that is characteristic of human existence, the "bee is simply taken by its food. This being taken is only possible where there is an instinctual 'toward....' Yet such a driven being taken also excludes the possibility of any recognition of presence. It is precisely being taken by its food that prevents the animal from taking up a position over and against this food" (GA 29/30, 352). This is why he goes on to claim that, "Beings are *not manifest* to the behavior of the animal in its captivation, they are not disclosed to it and for that very reason are *not closed off* from it either" (GA 29/30, 361). Not only does an animal engage in behavior without recognizing the presence of the objects which bring about its behavior, it also engages in that activity "*without any so-called self-consciousness or any reflection at all, without any relating back to itself*" (GA 29/30, 340).

Human comportment, by contrast, is characterized by an awareness of entities encountered in the world and a distance from those entities that allow them to manifest themselves. "As transcending," Heidegger says, "i.e., as free, Dasein is something alien to nature" (GA 26, 212). Furthermore, the "human being is a creature of distance!" (GA 26, 285). Humans have a "being open for...*of such a kind that this being open for...has the character of apprehending something as something*" (GA 29/30, 442). A non-human animal, by contrast, is open to its environment, but "lacks the ability to apprehend as a being whatever it is open for" (GA 29/30, 442). He goes on to say that, "Man's being open is a being held toward..., whereas the animal's being open is a being taken by...and thereby being absorbed in its encircling ring" (GA 29/30, 497). The idea here seems to be that animals are open to their environment, but they respond immediately, instinctually to stimuli presented to them and are not aware of the stimuli as stimuli. In human comportment we too are open to being moved by that which we encounter in the environment, but we are also able to hold (playing on *halten* as the root of *Verhaltung*)

ourselves at a distance from those things that move us, and it is this distance that allows the things encountered to manifest themselves as what they are, a *Spielraum* that animals do not have (GA 29/30, 493).

However, Heidegger is not claiming that humans are somehow exempt from deterministic natural laws while animals are not, or that humans have the ability to make choices about how they will act while animals do not. Instead, he repeatedly characterizes human freedom as having a “binding character” (*Verbindlichkeit*). Consider the following passage:

Being open for...is from the very outset a *free holding oneself toward* whatever beings are given there *in letting oneself be bound*. The possibility, which can become binding, of tuning in to beings, this relating to them in comporting oneself in such and such a way, is characteristic in general of every ability and comportment as distinct from capacity and behavior. In the latter we never find any letting oneself be bound by something binding, but merely a sphere of instinctual drives becoming disinhibited while remaining captivated. (GA 29/30, 496).

Here he seems to be characterizing the freedom found in human comportment not with the ability to act in a different way than one is pulled to act, but rather with the phenomenon of “letting oneself be bound.” Returning to the above example of being a professor, my projection towards being a professor binds me to certain courses of action. Insofar as I am a professor, I must teach classes, write papers, attend faculty meetings, etc. These actions are constitutive for what it is to be a professor, so in making a commitment to that particular way of being, I am letting myself be bound to finding these actions important and being moved to act in such a way that I perform these actions. I have the awareness of these actions as discrete phenomena that stand out by virtue of their significance from all other actions, and I grasp (if only implicitly) the larger context made possible by my understanding of myself as a professor that makes these actions appear as significant. And there is still this sense that I can have a sort of distance from my actions, holding them apart as somehow other than myself, while still feeling obliged to perform them. For instance, I could see the stack of student exams to be graded very much as an unwanted, external imposition on me, calling for my attention from the corner of my desk, and yet I would still feel bound to take up my pen and start grading.

Heidegger does connect projection and possibility, but, again, I do not think that he is using ‘possibility’ here to refer to being able to do otherwise. Consider this (knotty and convoluted) passage: “What is projected in the projection *compels* us before what is possibly actual, i.e., the projection *binds* us—not to what is possible, nor to what is actual, but to *making-*

possible, i.e., to that which the possibly actual in the projected possibility demands of the possibility for itself in order to actualize itself” (GA 29/30, 528). He continues a few lines down and states:

For whatever is possible does not become more possible through indeterminacy, so that everything possible would, as it were, find room and be accommodated in it. Rather whatever is possible grows in its possibility and in the force that makes it possible through restriction. Every possibility brings its intrinsic restriction with it. But the restriction of the possible is here that which is in each case precisely actual, that expansiveness that can be filled, i.e., that ‘as a whole’ out of which our comportment comports itself in each case. (GA 29/30, 528)

The ‘as a whole’ he refers to here is the holistic context of significance in which our actions take place and make sense. This context is provided by our projection towards various possible ways of being. Projection towards a possible way of being provides an “expansiveness that can be filled” in the sense that it opens up a space for actions that are necessary to be the sort of person we project ourselves towards being. My projection towards being a professor opens this space for a set of actions to be constitutive for who I am. For me to be successful in constituting myself as a professor, there needs to be a restricted set of actions. It is by restricting myself or binding myself to the performance of a specific, restricted set of actions that are particularly constitutive for being a professor that I actually can be a professor. Now being a particular sort of person is never a completed task; it requires a constant projection towards being that sort of person. Thus, as Heidegger says in the first passage quoted above, projection binds us to a constant making-possible. We continuously have to project towards some particular way of being, which makes it possible for a restricted, binding set of actions to show up as significant for us. So, projection and freedom are very much tied to possibility for Heidegger, but not possibility in the sense of “indeterminacy.”

Crowell and Golob claim that this ability to be bound by norms is the decisive difference between humans and animals. In Golob’s words:

It is because Heidegger, in this characteristically Kantian fashion, understands Dasein in terms of the ability to take on, respond to and assess normative commitments that he analyzes freedom as ‘self-binding’: to be free is to operate under normative rather than merely causal restraints...An animal, in contrast, lacks the ‘as’ and the normative sphere which it characterizes; in Kantian terms, the animal is determined by its impulses without the ability to ask whether such impulses genuinely constitute reasons.⁶

⁶ Golob, 202-03.

I wonder, though, whether a response to normativity is the fundamental difference that Heidegger is going for here. As I point out above, it seems possible to construe the for-the-sake-of-whichs we take up in our projections not only in terms of social roles defined by adherence to sets of norms; we also project towards various biological for-the-sake-of-whichs. Returning to my example of seeking shelter in a storm, on the view I have been developing here, we would still say that freedom is manifested in this action, even if there are not obvious normative constraints at work. My understanding of myself as a being who needs shelter binds me to the action of seeking a cave, cabin, overhanging rock, etc. when caught outside in a bad storm. It is not the ability to do otherwise or the experience of normative constraint that makes this a free action on Heidegger's view, but rather it is my recognition of the cave as a shelter and my awareness of how my projection towards being this sort of being makes it necessary for me to seek shelter. I think it is important to reemphasize this point about the possibility of non-normatively defined ways of existing here, as someone could argue that ways of existing purely defined by social norms do in fact allow for alternate possibilities. I could, for instance, pursue a different career than being a professor, and perhaps one could say that being a professor binds me to certain courses of action, but I am not bound to being a professor. However, the case of being a creature that shelter is different. I cannot exist in such a way that I do not need shelter, but I hope to have shown that nonetheless the same ontological freedom is operative in this case.

To finish these considerations, then, I want to claim that according to Heidegger's account of ontological freedom, we are free in the performance of our everyday actions in a way that does not require the existence of alternate possibilities. One might think that this sort of freedom is not a very meaningful sort as it is consistent with the idea that we have no ability to do otherwise in our actions. I think, though, upon a bit of reflection, it is clear that this is not the case. The phenomenological analysis that Matthew Ratcliffe puts forward in his *Expressions of Depression: A Study in Phenomenology* portrays depression as existing in a world in which there are no salient possible courses action.⁷ Nothing that a depressed person encounters exerts any pull on them; nothing draws them into acting. There is a total indeterminacy about their daily existence, and they do not feel bound or obligated to do anything at all. Non-depressed

⁷ See Matthew Ratcliffe, *Experiences of Depression: A Study in Phenomenology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), especially Chapter 6.

individuals wake up every morning with an array of things that they are concerned with doing and set out to do them, and it is freedom in the sense that I have tried to articulate here that makes this possible.

Sartre's Challenge to Idealism in Heidegger

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ABSTRACT

In the Introduction to *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre provides what he calls an “ontological proof” that purports to undermine Heidegger’s idealist view that the existence of objects is constitutively dependent on our characteristically human mode of existence. In this paper, I introduce an interpretation of Heidegger’s idealism, develop Sartre’s criticism of Heidegger, and explore a promising way Heidegger might respond. It will emerge that Heidegger’s idealism, if understood correctly as embracing a modal commitment central to Kantian idealism, survives Sartre’s ontological proof.

Keywords: Heidegger, Sartre, metaphysics, objects, idealism

In “The Pursuit of Being,” the notoriously complex Introduction to *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre introduces what he takes to be a radically new ontology, perhaps most importantly one that purports to overcome key difficulties with Heidegger’s ontological commitments in *Being and Time*.¹ Sartre acknowledges that Heidegger is right to discard the divide between an object’s appearance and its essence.² But he adds that Heidegger goes too far by holding that the being of objects depends on the being of Dasein, understood broadly as the characteristically human mode of existence.³ Against Heidegger, Sartre argues that objects are not subject to the idealist condition that something exists “only in so far as it reveals itself” (BN 9). To support this view, Sartre provides what he calls an “ontological proof” which aims to show the “transphenomenal being” of objects (BN 24), or the existence of objects constitutively independent of human existence. The existence of such objects provides a crucial building block for Sartre’s post-Heideggerian ontology.

How should we understand Sartre’s challenge? Commentators who contend that Heidegger accepts the realist position that objects exist constitutively independent of Dasein are well-situated

¹ For commentators who stress this point, see Macann (1993: 112); Caws (1979: 63); Gardner (2009: 41-44); Fell (1979: 66 ff.). For those who stress that Sartre more has Husserl’s idealism in mind, see Pitte (1970); McCulloch (1994); Duncan (2005); Tremault (2009: 35, fn. 5). I will not enter into this debate, and instead simply focus on how Sartre’s view might be used to challenge Heidegger.

² See BN 4.

³ See BN 8.

to reject Sartre's proof.⁴ As I see things, however, Heidegger is indeed sympathetic to a particular variety of idealism, and therefore I believe that we should attempt to understand how Heidegger might respond. In what follows, I first briefly introduce my understanding of Heidegger's idealism in *Being and Time*. I then develop Sartre's ontological proof against Heidegger—a task surprisingly absent in the literature. Finally, I argue that Sartre fails to notice that Heidegger embraces a modal commitment central to Kantian idealism, which, when illuminated, helps Heidegger respond to Sartre's challenge. This should provide a new way to understand some crucial ontological disagreements between Sartre and Heidegger.⁵

Idealism in *Being and Time*

To introduce Heidegger's idealism in *Being and Time*, we should start where Heidegger starts: the question of the meaning of Being. According to Heidegger, this question concerns what “determines entities as entities” (BT 25), or, at least in part, what renders entities like trees and leaves, cats and dogs, and planets and moons intelligible. As I see things, the question of the meaning of Being is not fundamentally meant to investigate what renders entities intelligible as certain *kinds* of entities. That is, the question does not primarily concern what contemporary thinkers call the *identity* conditions of objects. In the case of entities such as planets, for instance, identity conditions include orbiting the sun and exhibiting a round structure. These conditions enable us to understand which entities in the world are planets. I take the question of the meaning of Being primarily to target the *existence* conditions of objects, rather than identity conditions. Existence conditions enable Dasein to understand what it means for something in the world to be an entity *simpliciter*—what “determines entities *as* entities” (BT 25, emphasis added). Questions concerning identity can be separated from questions concerning existence, and, I argue shortly, Heidegger believes that intelligibility concerning existence comes prior to intelligibility concerning identity. The takeaway here is that the question of the meaning of Being chiefly concerns what renders the existence of entities intelligible.

⁴ For various realist interpretations of Heidegger, see Dreyfus (1991), (2002); Dreyfus and Spinoza (2002); Cerbone (1995), (2005); Carman (2003).

⁵ Going forward, I intentionally avoid calling Sartre a “realist,” despite the fact that his ontological proof appears to support the realist view that objects exist constitutively independent of consciousness. The debate over whether Sartre is a realist is complex, and I would rather not jump into such thorny territory. For those who read Sartre as a realist, at least in some sense, see Pitte (1970: 22); McCulloch (1993); Duncan (2005). For someone who reads Sartre as a Kantian transcendental idealist and empirical realist, see Gardner (2011: 57), (2009: 73-84). Others, such as Barnes (1992: 25) and Fell (1979: 80), situate Sartre somewhere between realism and idealism.

Heidegger holds that the ability to investigate the question of the meaning of Being is constitutive of Dasein's existence. More specifically, investigating the existence conditions of entities depends on what enables Dasein to ask questions about the existence conditions of entities.⁶ Heidegger calls the features that enable Dasein to ask such questions "existentials" (BT 33). Existentials are necessary conditions of Dasein's existence. The existential crucial for rendering existence conditions intelligible is "worldhood" (BT 91). Very roughly, worldhood is the context in which something is significant to Dasein.⁷ Dasein's existence involves assigning relations of significance or importance to various things in accordance with certain needs and interests. In this sense, worldhood is constituted by Dasein.⁸ Worldhood can be understood as the totality of significance relations constituted by Dasein which function to render the existence conditions of entities intelligible.

What I take to be the basic framework of Heidegger's idealism in *Being and Time* now emerges. The question of what renders the existence conditions of entities intelligible is answered in part by uncovering the context in which things are significant to Dasein. Grasping the existence conditions of objects depends on grasping assignment relations provided by Dasein. As a result, Heidegger holds that the existence conditions of entities are constitutively dependent on Dasein's existence.

Let me illustrate Heidegger's view using an example. Consider again planets. An entity is a planet just in case it (i) orbits the sun, (ii) exhibits roundness, and (iii) has "cleared the neighborhood" around its orbit. In the past, other conditions have been offered, such as (iv) being a massive celestial object, which (i) orbits the sun. Importantly, Heidegger does *not* hold the idealist view that answering the question of the meaning of Being involves constituting which particular group of properties— either the group (i), (ii), and (iii), or just the group (i) and (iv)— determines planethood. To hold such a view is to say that Dasein constitutes the identity conditions of entities. Instead, Heidegger believes that Dasein constitutes the context of significance that allows properties *in general* to emerge as candidate properties for what might constitute planets. The fact that Dasein finds some group of properties significant for something's being a planet comes prior to finding that one particular group constitutes planethood. Moreover, since Dasein

⁶ See BT 32.

⁷ See BT 121.

⁸ See BT 119.

establishes the context in which some group of properties is significant for something's being a planet, Dasein establishes the context in which there can be entities like planets. And what goes for planets, Heidegger would say, goes for other entities as well.

It is worth reiterating that for Heidegger establishing existence conditions comes before establishing identity conditions. Establishing which particular conditions of identity constitute planethood is the job of the *sciences*. Heidegger calls scientific work “ontical inquiry” (BT 31), whereas he calls his own project, which concerns the question of the meaning of Being, “ontological inquiry” (BT 31). Importantly, Heidegger holds that ontological inquiry is “more primordial” than ontical inquiry: “The question of Being aims therefore at ascertaining the *a priori* conditions ... for the possibility of the sciences ... and which provide [the science's] foundations” (BT 31). The context of significance established by Dasein provides the conditions of the possibility of grasping the particular identifying properties of entities. Grasping identity conditions depends on a more basic grasp of what Dasein finds important in experience.⁹

Sartre's Ontological Proof

I have laid out reasons for thinking that Heidegger believes entities are, at least in some sense, constitutively dependent on Dasein. I now turn to Sartre's challenge to Heidegger. Sartre seems to recognize and distance himself from Heidegger's idealist position. He claims that “[an entity's] existence is not a participation in being, nor any other kind of relation” (BN 8), and “the being of the phenomenon [e.g., an entity] ... can not be subject to the phenomenal condition—which is to exist only in so far as it reveals itself” (BN 9, brackets added). I have suggested that there is indeed reason to suppose that Heidegger thinks entities exist in a “relation” to Dasein—they seem to satisfy the “phenomenal condition” Sartre describes. Against this, Sartre contends that “Being is simply the condition of all revelation. It is being-for-revealing, and not revealed being” (BN 8). In short, being is merely whatever allows something to be manifest, which need not be Dasein. Being exists to be revealed, and, contra Heidegger in *Being and Time*, the Being of entities in no way depends on anything being revealed. But how does Sartre justify these claims?

⁹ For an alternative reading of Heidegger's idealism, specifically one that turns on Heidegger's commitments concerning the relation between objects and temporality, see Blattner (1999), (2004). I hope to have suggested that one need not appeal to temporality to get Heidegger's idealism off the ground. For an idealist reading of Heidegger that primarily concerns language rather than ontology, see LaFont (2000).

Enter what Sartre calls his “ontological proof.” The proof begins with a basic definition of human consciousness and attempts to show the existence of a “transphenomenal object,” or an object that exists constitutively independent of consciousness. The basic definition of consciousness is that all consciousness is consciousness *of* something.¹⁰ Sartre then writes:

This definition of consciousness can be taken in two very distinct senses: either we understand by this that consciousness is constitutive of the being of its object, or it means that consciousness in its inmost nature is a relation to a transcendent being. But the first interpretation of the formula destroys itself: to be conscious *of* something is to be confronted with a concrete and full presence which is *not* consciousness (BN 21-22).

To say consciousness is consciousness of something is to say either that consciousness constitutes the being of its object, which Sartre takes to be Heidegger’s view, or that consciousness grasps a transphenomenal object, which is Sartre’s position. Sartre claims that consciousness cannot constitute the being of its object because consciousness is “confronted with a concrete and full presence which is *not* consciousness” (BN 22). The justification for this move is expressed in a conditional:

If being belongs to consciousness, the object is not consciousness, not to the extent that it is another being, but that it is non-being. This is the appeal to the infinite of which we spoke in the first section of this work (BN 22).

Readers should be puzzled here. First, Sartre identifies the “full presence” of something “*not* consciousness” with “non-being,” which seems straightforwardly contradictory. How could something be simultaneously present *and* absent? Sartre then identifies “non-being” with the “infinite.” How do these seemingly disparate ideas come together? And how do they justify Sartre’s claim that consciousness does not constitute the being of its object?

Consider first Sartre’s identification of “non-being” with the “infinite” before turning to the identification of “non-being” with “full presence.” Sartre begins *Being and Nothingness* by rejecting the “dualism of being and appearance” (BN 6), that is, the distinction between that which is hidden from consciousness and that which appears to consciousness. He then offers what he calls a “new opposition,” namely, “the infinite in the finite” (BN 6). The finite properties of an object are properties that appear to consciousness.¹¹ The infinite properties are “*indicated*” by appearances, but do not actually appear to consciousness. A finite property “indicates ... itself and

¹⁰ See BN 11, 21, 23.

¹¹ See BN 6.

the total [infinite] series” (BN 4). Finite properties indicate the infinite series because “each appearance refers to other appearances” (BN 23), and the possibility of “multiplying points of view” of the entity “suffices to multiply to infinity” that entity’s properties (BN 5). While finite properties are present to consciousness, infinite properties are absent, and thus they constitute the “non-being” of the entity. Consequently, the “non-being” of the entity is identified with “infinite” properties of the entity.

Now consider the connection between “non-being” and “full presence.” Sartre writes:

It is true that things give themselves in profile; that is, simply by appearances. And it is true that each appearance refers to other appearances. But each of them is already in itself alone a *transcendent being*, not a subjective material of impressions—a *plenitude of being*, not a lack—a *presence*, not an absence (BN 23).

The properties that constitute the infinite series of the entity are absent because such properties do not appear to consciousness. But insofar as the existence of such properties is *indicated* by the properties grasped by consciousness, the infinite series is *not* absent. The infinite series is “present” to consciousness because it is *indicated* by the finite properties. As a result, the “non-being” of the object is also the “full presence” of the object. And there is no contradiction here: “non-being” refers to that which is not actually grasped in experience, whereas “full presence” refers to that which is indicated by what is not actually grasped in experience.

The crucial point is that Sartre believes the infinite series constitutes the being of the object—the series is the “full presence” of the object. This grounds Sartre’s challenge to Heidegger. Sartre holds that consciousness cannot constitute the being of its object because it is “confronted” with the object’s “full presence” (BN 22). He explains:

If being belongs to consciousness, the object is not consciousness [in that] it is non-being ... It is an impossibility on principle for the terms of an infinite series to exist ... before consciousness (BN 21).

If consciousness constitutes the being of its object, then it must be possible for consciousness to grasp the infinite series that constitutes the being of its object. But Sartre thinks it is *not* possible for consciousness to grasp the infinite series. Such a series is “present” to consciousness only in the sense that the series is *indicated* by apparent properties. Consciousness cannot *actually grasp* the infinite series—the series is merely posited, not grasped. Indeed, Sartre later asserts that “idealism” about objects such as “the table” or “the chair” fails because consciousness cannot “refer” to “an infinite series of appearances” (BN 341). Since it is impossible for consciousness to

actually grasp the infinite series that constitutes the being of its object, consciousness cannot constitute the being of its object. And because Sartre believes that the view that consciousness is always consciousness of something means either that consciousness constitutes the being of its object, or that consciousness is related to a transphenomenal object, it follows that consciousness is related to a transphenomenal object. Such an object exists constitutively independent of consciousness.

In sum, here is my reconstruction of Sartre's argument:¹²

A1. Consciousness is consciousness of something.

A2. To say consciousness is consciousness of something is to say either that consciousness constitutes the being of its object, or that consciousness grasps a transphenomenal object.

A3. It is not the case that consciousness constitutes the being of its object.

A4. So, consciousness grasps a transphenomenal object.

And here is the justification for A3:

B1. If consciousness constitutes the being of its object, then it must be possible for consciousness to grasp the infinite series that constitutes the being of its object.

B2. It is not possible for consciousness to grasp such an infinite series.

A3. So, it is not the case that consciousness constitutes the being of its object.

¹² For other readings of Sartre's ontological proof, though readings that do not describe the details I have laid out here, see Macann 1993: 115-116; Catalano 1974: 39-41; Pitte 1970: 23; Caws 1979: 64-65; Wilson 2000: 48-49. I believe there are problems with these treatments, though I cannot review them here. Consider just one particularly influential example. Caws argues that the proof contains "a certain sleight of hand" (1979: 64). He writes: "The argument began from the existence of consciousness, a being whose essence is to be consciousness *of*; this essence calls for another essence, namely that of the object of consciousness, and this in turn implies the existence of that object. Such is the schematic structure of the logical development. But its validity is another question. It is not clear that A's 'calling for' B, B's being 'demanded by' A, constitute grounds for the inference of B from A. The trouble with all ontological proofs is that what they prove remains relative to the prover" (Caws 1979: 65, cf. Pitte 1970: 23). My rendition of Sartre's proof, which, I have tried to show, is firmly grounded in the texts, does not commit Sartre to such an obviously invalid argument form.

Heidegger's Response

As I see things, Heidegger has the resources to deny B2, which would undermine A3. He would argue that consciousness—better, *Dasein*—can actually grasp the infinite series that constitutes the being of an object. This response turns on the nature of the infinite series, as described by Sartre, and the nature of *Dasein*, as described by Heidegger.

First consider Sartre's understanding of the infinite series. For Sartre, such a series consists in features that *could* actually be grasped by consciousness. The properties of an object indicated by its apparent properties are those that can in principle appear to consciousness.

Next consider Heidegger's understanding of *Dasein*. Heidegger suggests that existence conditions consist in what is *in principle* significant to *Dasein*. He writes:

Only if the inquiry of philosophical research in itself seized upon in an existentiell [viz., ontical] manner as a possibility of the Being of each existing *Dasein*, does it become possible to disclose the existentiality of existence and to undertake an adequately founded ontological problematic (BT 34, brackets added).¹³

It “becomes possible” to undertake an “adequately founded ontological problematic,” or an inquiry into the meaning of Being, only if “existentiell” inquiry, or ontical inquiry, is understood “as a *possibility*” of *Dasein*'s mode of existence (italics added). If we assume that ontical inquiry concerns, at least in part, identity conditions, and that ontological inquiry concerns, at least in part, existence conditions, then Heidegger is saying that grasping the identity conditions of entities depends on grasping what *Dasein* can possibly find significant regarding the existence of entities. “*Only as phenomenology is ontology possible*,” Heidegger declares, and “‘Behind’ the phenomena of phenomenology there is essentially nothing else” (BT 60). Ontology, which concerns existence conditions, depends on phenomenology, which consists in what *Dasein* can possibly grasp. Existence conditions therefore consist in what *Dasein* can possibly grasp.

This modal position, although unique to Heidegger, is rooted in Kantian idealism.¹⁴ In the *Antinomies of the first Critique*, for example, Kant writes

That there could be inhabitants of the moon, even though no human being has ever perceived them, must of course be admitted; but this means only that in the possible progress of experience we could encounter them; for everything is actual that stands in one context with a perception in accordance with the laws of the empirical progression. Thus they are real when they stand in an empirical connection with

¹³ See also BT 120.

¹⁴ The Kantian modal commitment is also central to Nietzsche's neo-Kantian idealist view that all material objects are socially constructed. For discussion, see Remhof (2017: 79-83).

my real consciousness, although they are not therefore real in themselves, i.e., outside this progress of experience (1998, A493/B521).

What does it mean to say that entities such as inhabitants on the moon exist? It means that we can encounter them in the advance of possible experience, specifically by progressing through a series of possible perceptions, which, on Kant's particular view, is enabled by spatial repositioning. The possible "progress of experience" links entities like inhabitants on the moon to a "real consciousness," and what is "actual," or empirically real, is what can be encountered in the "context" of possible perception (Kant 1998, A493/B521, my brackets). For Kant, the existence of entities, in general, depends on what we can in principle encounter in experience.

Sartre appears to overlook Heidegger's Kantian modal commitment. He instead seems to believe that Heidegger accepts the Berkeleyan position that entities exist only insofar as they *actually* reveal themselves: recall that for Sartre "the being of the phenomenon [the object] ... can not be subject to the phenomenal condition—which is to exist *only in so far as it reveals itself*" (BN 9, italics added).¹⁵ But Heidegger is no Berkeleyan. Heidegger holds that the existence conditions of entities depends on the *possibility* of being revealed by Dasein.

What I take to be Heidegger's rebuttal to Sartre now emerges. If Sartre admits that the infinite series consists in features that can possibly be grasped, and Heidegger thinks existence conditions are those that Dasein can possibly grasp, then it seems reasonable to suppose that Dasein can grasp the infinite series that constitutes the being of an object. For Sartre, as I suggested above, grasping some set of an object's properties merely *indicates* an infinite series of properties that consciousness cannot grasp. But for Heidegger, I contend, grasping some set of an object's properties renders it possible to *actually* grasp the infinite series of properties that constitutes the object. Let me return to planets, one last time, to illustrate this point.

How do we grasp the existence conditions of planets? Importantly, what constitutes planethood has changed over time. Being a planet used to mean merely being a massive celestial object orbiting the sun. When astronomers discovered an object more massive than Pluto, they altered their understanding of what makes something a planet, rather than accept a definition of planet that set Pluto at an arbitrary minimum size. The current defining characteristic of a planet is that it has *cleared its neighborhood*, which means that a planet has accumulated enough mass to

¹⁵ Berkeley holds that the existence of an object depends upon it being *actually* perceived by human beings or "some other spirit," namely, God (Berkeley 1982, §3, see also §6).

gather up or sweep away all the smaller objects in its orbit. In effect, planets orbit the sun in isolation, as opposed to sharing orbit with a multitude of similar-sized objects.

Various ways to understanding neighborhood clearing have been introduced. One measure involves dividing the mass of the candidate body by the total mass of the other objects that share its orbital zone. Another consists in calculating the mass of the candidate body over its semi-major axis multiplied by a function of the orbital elements of the smaller bodies being scattered. The details do not concern us. What matters is that these measures present *possible* conditions of identity that are *indicated* by other conditions of identity *actually* grasped by Dasein. The specific identity condition of planets *actually* grasped by Dasein is the mass of celestial bodies, and the infinite series of properties associated with celestial objects that are *indicated* by mass includes, among other properties, *neighborhood clearing*. In general, then, rendering the existence conditions of planets intelligible turns on Dasein's ability to grasp various possible identity conditions—not merely positing such conditions, as Sartre would have it, but actually uncovering certain conditions given what shows up as significant. Grasping the property of *mass* renders it possible grasp the infinite series associated with mass, which includes neighborhood clearing, and this renders it possible to grasp the existence conditions of objects such as planets.

Summary

In this paper, I first provided a general framework for understanding Heidegger's view that the existence of objects constitutively depends on Dasein. I then developed Sartre's ontological proof, which challenges Heidegger's idealism. Sartre believes objects are not constitutively dependent on us because objects are essentially associated with an infinite series of features that escape our grasp. I then suggested that Heidegger embraces a Kantian commitment concerning modality that enables him to respond to Sartre's challenge. Heidegger holds that the existence of objects depends on the possibility of being uncovered by Dasein. This enables him to say that Dasein can grasp the infinite series of properties that constitute an object.

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