Gatherings

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GATHERINGS

Heidegger on Discourse and Idle Talk:

The Role of Aristotelian Rhetoric

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Aristotle plays a fundamental role in the development of Heidegger's thinking. His ontological radicalization of Aristotle's practical philosophy and his hermeneutic reinterpretation of Husserl's phenomenology comprise two of the basic pillars that support the complex thematic and methodological framework of the philosophical program of his youth. Interpretations of Aristotle are a recurring theme throughout his university courses in the first half of the twenties and, as Heidegger himself has pointed out in different autobiographical statements, his journey through Aristotelian philosophy ended up being crucial for the development of his own thinking.[1]

From his arrival in Freiburg as Husserl's assistant in January of 1919, Heidegger concentrated on developing a method for accessing the phenomenon of life. At first, he found in Christian religiosity an initial historic paradigm for his project of an original science of life. However, this first attempt did not end up coming together well – perhaps for philosophical reasons or perhaps because of personal differences with Husserl, who had encouraged him to develop a phenomenology of religion.[2] Even in May of 1919, Heidegger still considered phenomenology of religious consciousness a central theme of his research. But in the 1920–1921 course, *Introduction to Phenomenology of Religion*, he was already hinting that "entering into such a complex [of Christian facticity] is almost hopeless" (GA 60: 121/87). The possibility of carrying out a truly phenomenological analysis of life was brought about with the early rediscovery of Aristotle, exactly as is

attested by his programmatic written work of 1922, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Directives for the Hermeneutical Situation*, better known as the *Natorp Report*. The Arisotelian notion of practical wisdom (φρόνησις) here takes the place of primitive religiosity. Evidently, it is not only a question of a simple virtue that governs our behavior, but rather of a particular openness of life, of a way of being that is fundamental to mankind which Heidegger will bring together in the concept of "care" (*Sorge*).

What is the true nature of human life? What concept of the human being does philosophy control? Traditionally, the human has been defined as an animal endowed with reason (ζῷον λόγον ἔχον, *animal rationale*). If we had to find a modern equivalent to the Greek definition of the human as a ζῷον λόγον ἔχον, Heidegger wonders in his 1924 summer semester lectures, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, we could say that "the human being is a living thing that reads the newspaper" (GA 18: 108/74). For a start, such a comparison seems very surprising, if not disturbing. But if it is taken into account that, in the context of these lectures, Heidegger translates the definition of the human as ζῷον λόγον ἔχον in the sense that "the human being is a living thing *that has its genuine being-there in conversation and in discourse*" (GA 18: 108/74), one can perhaps better understand the background idea which is hidden behind the Heideggerian image. If we wanted to translate this image into contemporary terms, we could say without any great difficulty that any person carries out its existence by discursive and communicative means, and can carry it out either appropriately or inappropriately. With this general argument as a base, the present work is structured in two parts as follows.

First, special attention is given to the significance of the revaluation of Aristotelian rhetoric that we find in the aforementioned lectures of 1924, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. The interpretation of Aristotle in these lectures not only allows us to better understand the role of attunement and of discourse in *Being and Time*, but it also calls into question some interpretations which accuse Heidegger of totally disregarding ethics and politics. Unlike Platonic dialectics which

focuses on the connection between discourse and the truth of statements, Heidegger emphasizes that Aristotelian rhetoric explicitly places itself on the level of the communicability of what the speaker says to her audience. In accordance with this theory, the element of reference of discourse is not the universe of pure thought, but rather the realm of opinions and the communal system of beliefs which thus become the basic criterion for human understanding. In this way, opinion (δόξα) and belief (πίστις) contain, as does idle talk (*Gerede*), which Heidegger addresses in *Being and Time*, an eminently positive sense, insofar as they open up the world to us and reveal us to others through the common element of language (λόγος).

And, *second*, it is shown how Heidegger's interpretation of Aristotle's λόγος helps him understand speech not only as language or discourse, but also as the ontological condition of speaking in and of itself. People are able to speak of the same things due to the fact that they share a common natural language; in this sense, people are able to talk about something that they are not directly familiar with firsthand. But on the other hand, they run the risk of becoming trapped in the snares of public opinion and, consequently, of never achieving a genuine understanding of things. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger analyzes the positive and negative consequences of this occurrence in his detailed phenomenological interpretation of everyday discourse, which is given the technical name of "idle talk" (*Gerede*).

I. HEIDEGGER'S INTERPRETATION OF ARISTOTLE'S RHETORIC

Contrary to medieval systematization which, starting from the 9th century, included rhetoric in the *trivium* of the liberal arts, Heidegger asserts that "Aristotle's *Rhetoric* must be understood as the first systematic hermeneutics of the everydayness of being-with-one-another" (GA 2: 184/SZ2: 138).[3] This assertion, which is stated within the context of the analysis of attunement, once again seems astonishing; on the one hand, because it goes back to an Aristotle that is forgotten by the prevailing Neo-Scholastic trends in the Catholic Freiburg of the beginning of the century, and, on the other hand, because it

occurred at a time in which rhetoric had fallen into deep obscurity. Heidegger specifically refers to this obscurity in the beginning of the third chapter of the aforementioned lectures of the summer semester of 1924, where he characterizes rhetoric as "the discipline in which the self-interpretation of being-there is explicitly fulfilled. *Rhetoric is nothing other than the interpretation of concrete being-there, the hermeneutic of being-there itself.* That is the intended sense of Aristotle's rhetoric" (GA 18: 110/75). Starting from the fundamental possibility of being-together, Heidegger carries out an interpretation of Dasein which adopts Aristotelian rhetoric as its guiding thread. Coexistence or being-together is possible only within the framework of communicability or, as Ricoeur formulates it, in the intersubjective and dialogical dimension of the public use of language.[4]

Rhetoric basically appeals to communication among people: "Again, it is absurd to hold that a man ought to be ashamed of being unable to defend himself with his limbs, but not of being unable to defend himself with speech and reason (λόγος), when the use of rational speech is more distinctive of a human being than the use of his limbs" (*Rhetoric* I 5, 1355b1–2).[5] In the concrete case of rhetoric we do not move within the sphere of pure principles and axioms, but rather within the sphere of opinions (δόξαι). This point of view drastically changes the Platonic approach; the referential outline of opinions is no longer the ideal representation of things, but rather the representation of language. While dialectics focuses on statements from the point of view of the denotative function of language, from which conclusions can be made about the credibility of said statements, rhetoric centers its interest on those same statements from the point of view of the communicative abilities of language, from which now emerge conclusions about its ability to persuade. Rhetoric thus introduces itself as an instrument which determines the requirements that lines of argument must fulfill, as an instrument of selection and justification of persuasive statements.

This is to say that the meaning of a definition is produced in the order of what is said; dialectic formulas refer to other forms of a preexisting language and of a body of beliefs. Δόξα, as a common element of

all individuals in a community, constitutes the starting point of moral discourse, of philosophical arguments, scientific disputes, political discussions, etc.[6] Therefore, δόξα expresses a true basis of wisdom in an already constructed and recognizable language. In this sense, rhetoric possesses a clear political aspect that refers to the space of coexistence that is inter-subjectively shared with others. Contrary to those interpretations which maintain that Heidegger simplifies the analysis of ethical virtues and that he detaches Aristotelian πρᾶξις from its connection to the political community,[7] we find in his commentary on *Rhetoric* an unusual interest in the political aspect. Heidegger explains that this rhetorical-political aspect shows a different side of the ζῷον λόγον ἔχον: "Insofar as the human being lets something be said, he is λόγον ἔχον in a new respect. He lets something be said insofar as he *hears*. He does not hear in the sense of learning something, but rather in the sense of having a directive for concrete practical concern" (GA 18: 111/76).[8] The Greeks, and specifically Aristotle, clearly saw that λόγος comprises the fundamental determination of being human. Furthermore, the Greek definition of the human as ζῷον λόγον ἔχον is no accident, but rather echoes the way in which the Greeks primarily understood themselves within the framework of their coexistence in the πόλις (see GA 18: 110/76).[9]

Heidegger's stimulating transposition of Greek philosophical language to contemporary vocabulary invites us to understand the phenomenon of λόγος as a concept that is specific to human life. Heidegger pleads against the metaphysical tradition that restricts λόγος in a unilateral way to its propositional and categorical dimension. In consequence, Heidegger is unable to accept the classical definition of humans as animals endowed with reason since it reduces their humanity to their rationality – a rejection, incidentally, that he shares with Kant, who thinks that human nature is determined neither by rationality (*Vernünftigkeit*) nor by animality (*Tierheit*), but rather by spirituality (*Geistigkeit*), that is to say, by personality. Contrary to the traditional definition, which reduces the human being to a thing among things, Heidegger highlights the practical, emotional, communicative, and dialogical components of human life. In this sense, he interprets λόγος

primarily as language, as the ability to speak, and, above all, as the capacity to discover *par excellence*. In all texts from this time period one can clearly see that Heidegger defines the function of language from the Aristotelian perspective of λόγος, interpreted as an openness and as a privileged access to the entity, that is, as a primordial form of human life's disclosedness. In his different exegeses of *De interpretatione*, carried out in the lectures of 1923–24, 1925–26, and 1929–30, Heidegger considers statements, and language in general, as an act of discovery, as an unveiling behavior which human life sets in motion in its relationship with the beings it encounters in the world.[10]

Implicit in this interpretation of λόγος as openness, Heidegger asserts, is "an entirely peculiar, fundamental mode of 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*" (GA 18: 46/33). Evidently, it is not a simple question of being-placed-one-next-to-the-other, but rather of "*being-as-speaking-with-one-another* through communicating, refuting, confronting" (GA 18: 47/33). Λόγος, as speaking, is the ontological basis of living-together (κοινωνία) in being-in-the-πόλις. In this respect, Heidegger's interpretation of Aristotelian rhetoric sheds new light on the political aspect of human existence.

Until now, much has been written about the role that πάθος plays in these lectures of 1924,[11] since they refer directly to the analyses of attunement (*Befindlichkeit*), of mood (*Stimmungen*), and of the temporal structure of Dasein that are present in *Being and Time*.[12] Within this context, it is sufficient to remember the place that πάθος holds in Heidegger's interpretation of *Rhetoric*.

> These πάθη [which Heidegger translates as *Affekte*, "affects"] are not states pertaining to ensouled things, but are concerned with a *disposition of living things in their world*, in the mode of being positioned toward something, allowing a matter to matter to it. The affects play a fundamental role in the determinations of being-in the world, of being-with-and-toward-others. (GA 18: 122/83)

In our case, it seems more interesting to highlight Heidegger's interpretation of λόγος and δόξα. In section 15 of the aforementioned lectures of the summer semester of 1924, rhetoric, which for Heidegger "is nothing other than the *interpretation of being-there with regard to the basic possibility of speaking-with-one-another*" (GA 18: 139/96), is intimately related to δόξα, since – as he himself says – "δόξα is the mode in which living knows from out of itself" (GA 18: 138/94). In other words, "δόξα is the mode in which we have living there in its everydayness" (GA 18: 138/94). But this means that λόγος remains in the rhetorical-political sphere of opinions (δόξαι) as the true means and object of conversation. This interpretation is precisely the one which Heidegger supports when he asserts that "in δόξα, and on its basis, one has to do with the world in the way that one lives in the world in an everyday manner and has to do with things. One does not have to investigate everything with regard to its concrete content; what others say about it is what one thinks about it" (GA 18: 151/102).

In this sense, δόξα carries a positive aspect that Heidegger analyzes phenomenologically. Δόξα is not only limited to the practical world, but rather "reaches out to *the entire world*" (GA 18: 150/101), that is, it opens us up, first of all, to the world and to other people: "The world is there for us as what-is-with-one-another in discoveredness, insofar as we live in δόξα. Living in a δόξα means having it *with others*. That *others also have it* belongs to opinion" (GA 18: 149/101, italics original). Opinion is something that, by nature, is shared and, therefore, something that refers to living-together (κοινωνία). Likewise, the credibility of an opinion depends on who is supporting it:

> With an ἐπιστήμη, it does not matter *who* has it. For a valid proposition, it does not matter *who I am*; that contributes nothing to the elucidation, to the being-true, of what is known. By contrast, *the one having the view* is, as such, co-decisive for δόξα [...] In δόξα, the matter itself does not only speak for itself to the extent that it is uncovered, but it also speaks for who has the view. Accordingly, the stability of a δόξα is not exclusively

grounded in the state of affairs that it conveys, but in him who has the δόξα. (GA 18: 150/102)

The reason which explains the importance of who supports the opinion lies in the κοινωνία since we live in a community in which humans are already distinguished from one another and in which the mood (ἦθος) of one speaker seems more truthful and believable than that of another. But these differences can be overcome. To opinion belongs – as Heidegger points out – the ability of revision: "Its sense is to leave a discussion open" (GA 18: 151/102) and allow "the basic possibility of *being-against-one-another*" (GA 18: 138/94).

However, one can also not lose sight of the danger of falling captive to the opinions that circulate in the public sphere of the πόλις. The possibility of falling lies precisely in the fact that a human being exists in dialogue and in speech:

> It is this possibility that being-there allow itself to be taken in a peculiar direction and become absorbed in the immediate, in fashions, in babble. For the Greeks themselves, this process of living in the world, to *be absorbed* in what is ordinary, *to fall* into the world in which it lives, became, through language, the *basic danger of their being-there*. The proof of this fact is the existence of *sophistry*. (GA 18: 108/74)

Thus, the rhetorical-political sphere in which we live makes a first understanding as well as an inauthentic understanding of the world possible. On the one hand, δόξα opens us up in advance to the world with our already being familiarized with it, and, on the other hand, this same familiarity with the world can end up determining our ways of behaving. Δόξα carries the possibility of exercising a characteristic control by means of the undetermined and everyday self (*Man*) (see GA 18: 150–51/101–2). Δόξα, in short, provides the basis of and the impetus to conversation (to the speaking-with-one-another); phrased differently, δόξα is the source of "the genuine orientedness of being-with-one-another-in-the-world" (GA 18: 151/102). In this context,

one can very clearly observe the homologies between Aristotle's δόξα and Heidegger's *Gerede*.

II. *REDE* AND THE PECULIAR FUNCTION OF *GEREDE*

In *Being and Time*, discourse (*Rede*) constitutes, together with attunement (*Befindlichkeit*) and understanding (*Verstehen*), one of the fundamental ontological characteristics of human beings. *Rede* is a technical term which denotes more than the mere ability to speak. *Rede* is the articulation of intelligibility that Dasein possesses by virtue of its communicative competence, which, at the same time, allows it to share the same world with others (see GA 2: 214–15/SZ2: 161–62). Unlike the conventional concept of language exclusively understood as a transmitter of propositional content, Heidegger highlights the dialogical, communicative, expressive, and performative components of discourse. Discourse promotes action. Therefore, it is not surprising that Heidegger includes the phenomena of listening and being silent as discursive elements, since both of these refer to the intersubjectively shared world and to the language practices with which we are already socialized.

In any case, according to Heidegger, the peculiarity of the human ability to use language to communicate is its function of openness to the world. By sharing a natural language, speakers not only share a conventional system of signs, but, much more importantly, they share the same way of speaking about the things in their world that can be shown. Because of this, understanding language is never a question of hearing sounds, but rather of understanding the significant expressions of the world. Knowledge of the world and knowledge of language are two inseparable elements. This explains why speakers, through communication, are able to acquire an understanding about the world which transcends their own personal experience. However, for the same reason, they can become misinformed, deceived, and manipulated through communication. Speakers are able to speak about something that they are unfamiliar with or that they do not fully understand. In order to show the positive and negative consequences of this innovative point of view, Heidegger offers a detailed

phenomenological analysis of everyday speech, to which he assigns the technical name of "idle talk" (*Gerede*).[13]

The analysis of *Gerede* in *Being and Time* seems fascinating and problematic for several reasons. On the one hand, idle talk as the way of speaking within the framework of the public One (*das Man*), first of all, controls and levels out all interpretation of the world. This idea was fruitfully developed by the representatives of the Frankfurt School, in particular by Herbert Marcuse, who wrote his dissertation under the academic tutelage of Heidegger. And, on the other hand, the function of *Gerede* seems problematic within the framework of what Heidegger calls Dasein's "falling" (*Verfallenheit*). This corresponds to Heidegger's provision of two different definitions of the term and, furthermore, his using it to refer to two different, though interrelated, phenomena, without any advance warning.

First, let us observe the two definitions that Heidegger provides for *Gerede*: (1) "Idle talk is the possibility of understanding everything without any previous appropriation of the matter" (GA 2: 224/SZ2: 169); (2) "Idle talk is constituted in this gossiping and passing the word along" (GA 2: 224/SZ2: 168). One first clear difference between the two definitions is that the latter conveys a particular type of communicative act in which speakers can *actively* engage in the form of "gossiping and passing the word along," while the former refers only to the *passive* capacity of linguistic understanding that speakers possess simply by the fact of knowing a language. Without a doubt, these two phenomena are internally related, but they are not identical.[14] Linguistic competence is a condition that is necessary for any type of communication using language (such as "gossiping and passing the word along"), but the reverse is not the case. A speaker with normal linguistic competence could decide not to perform the act of "gossiping and passing the word along." However, she could not decide not to understand the meaning of the terms available in her language and still have linguistic and communicative competence.

Therefore, we find ourselves before two perceptions of *Gerede*: one passive and the other active. The passive form of *Gerede* (idle talk),

which does not involve any communicative act, is what Heidegger calls *Rede* (discourse), that is, the articulation of the intelligibility of the meaningful whole in which Dasein previously lives (see GA 2: 214/ SZ2: 161). In its passive meaning, *Gerede* refers to a specific possibility contained in *Rede*, namely, the possibility of having an understanding of something without previous appropriation of the matter. According to Heidegger, this is possible because "in accordance with this intelligibility, the discourse which is communicated can be understood to a large extent without the listener coming to be being toward what is talked about in discourse so as to have a primordial understanding of it. [...] One means the *same thing* because it is in the *same* averageness that we have a common understanding of what is said" (GA 2: 223/SZ2: 168). Here, Heidegger points out the obvious fact that speakers are able to speak of the same thing, and understand to a certain degree what is said, thanks to the fact that they share a common language, even without being directly familiarized with those things which are being talked about.

For example, one can be informed of the risks of lung cancer without needing to have previously acquired a medical knowledge of this disease. Therefore, it is worth distinguishing between a genuine understanding and an average understanding. The average understanding that one can have of lung cancer is not negative *per se*. Rather the opposite, the purpose of communication is to share the public knowledge at our disposal. The purpose of communication is to make sharing experiences and information possible among speakers who previously did not have them; otherwise, communication would be redundant. In principle, there is nothing against such a practice, particularly to the extent that the acquisition of information and knowledge stems from those who have a genuine understanding of what is spoken about, that is, from the experts on that subject, from those who do not have a mere average understanding of it. As long as this is the case, our "gossiping and passing" is perfectly justified by reference to those who have such authority. In fact, we can only hope to acquire the genuine understanding that the experts already have by learning from them. All the same,

sometimes one asks the question of how expert understanding and average understanding are different, if all speakers that share the same language have – as is stated in the beginning of the section dedicated to idle talk – the same concepts. What is different among speakers is the accurateness of their respective understanding of those concepts by virtue of their different technical abilities, personal experiences, professional authority, and knowledge background.

Nevertheless, things are not so simple. Behind these positive aspects of everyday discourse lies the risk not only of overgeneralization, but also of certain determinability. Indeed, the communicative acts of *Gerede* do not seem as free as they had appeared at first. Communication does not allow us to expand our knowledge beyond our individual experience. In fact, much of what we know comes from this source, that is to say, our average understanding always surpasses our direct and primary understanding: "We get to know many things initially in this way, and some things never get beyond such an average understanding. [...] The domination of the public way in which things have been interpreted has *already* decided upon even the possibilities of being attuned" (GA 2: 225/SZ2: 169, em). In this sense, the term *Gerede,* as a structural possibility, is a necessary characteristic of *Rede,* and, therefore, of the disclosedness of Dasein. However, as Heidegger quickly points out, once communication is set in motion it is almost impossible to distinguish what has been disclosed in a genuine understanding or in an average understanding. This is especially clear in the case of written communication, in which "the average understanding of the reader will *never be able* to decide what has been drawn from primordial sources with struggle, and how much is just gossip" (GA 2: 224/SZ2: 169).

Here is where one can begin to see the negative aspect of *Gerede,* which, as it reaches increasingly broader circles, loses the "primary relation of being to the being spoken about" (GA 2: 224/SZ2: 168). *Gerede* thus ends up taking on an authoritative and normative nature that decides in advance the way to interpret things: "Dasein can never escape the everyday way of being interpreted into which Dasein has grown initially. All genuine understanding, interpreting and communication,

rediscovery and new appropriation come about in it, and out of it and against it" (GA 2: 225/SZ2: 169). Now *Gerede* is interpreted as an existential, that is, as a way of being of Dasein, characteristic of its falling tendency: "Dasein itself presents itself with the possibility in idle talk and public interpretedness of losing itself in the they, of falling prey to groundlessness" (GA 2: 235/SZ2: 177). And the more one becomes immersed in *Gerede*, the more one falls and gets lost. In this way, *Gerede* loses its initial neutrality and acquires a negative sense. As Heidegger describes it, this is a process where Dasein passes from the initial lack of ground to complete groundlessness inherent to gossiping.

Dasein has the tendency to content itself with the average understanding that *Gerede* provides. As is shown in the section dedicated to falling prey and thrownness,

> idle talk and ambiguity, having-seen-everything and having-understood-everything, develop the supposition that the disclosedness of Dasein thus available and prevalent could guarantee to Dasein the certainty, genuineness, and fullness of all possibilities of its being. In the self-certainty and decisiveness of the they, it gets spread abroad increasingly that there is no need of authentic, attuned understanding. (GA 2: 235/SZ2: 177)

But this possibility of falling that is contained within *Gerede* is not in itself a negative phenomenon that necessarily sentences Dasein to inauthenticity by the mere fact that it participates in everyday discourse. As Lafont points out, we must bear in mind that the negative and positive aspects of *Gerede* analyzed by Heidegger "are part of a contiunuum and not an all or nothing affair."[15] The same choice of words that Heidegger uses to describe *Gerede* reflects this process in which the initial lack of grounds characteristic of everyday communication degenerates into the complete groundlessness of idle talk.

Trivialization and simplification are the true culprits behind Dasein's throwness and inauthenticity. Its mistake consists in being anchored to average understanding and in ceasing to look for new ways

of understanding. The average understanding is just our common point of departure. The fact that Dasein shares a common language does not prevent it from achieving a primordial relationship with the entities and with its own being.[16] The social nature of language shows that Dasein always retains in *Gerede* an understanding of the open world, which necessarily becomes the starting point of all interpretive and communicative activity. But, as Heidegger points out, the inevitability of connecting with the public, average understanding of oneself does not exclude the possibility of transforming this understanding. *Being and Time* is the perfect example of such a possibility.

In short, the social nature of language does not itself lead to groundlessness. In the preliminary analysis of the definition of λόγος that Heidegger offers in the first sections of the 1924 lectures, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, we already find this dual negative and positive possibility. In λόγος – as a possibility of "*speaking about something* [and] *speaking with others*" (GA 18: 19/15) – "a *common intelligibility* is given, which has a peculiar character of *averageness*" (GA 18: 20/16), but this λόγος was also used by the Greeks "in order to determine the being of the human being itself in its peculiarity" (GA 18: 20/16). From the perspective of these lectures, one better appreciates the extent to which Heidegger's analyses of *Rede* and *Gerede* and his notion of everyday communication are fed by a weighty interpretation and a stimulating appropriation of Aristotelian rhetoric. Perhaps now we better understand the viewpoint which, at that time, inspired the surprising and disconcerting assertion of *Being and Time*: "Aristotle's *Rhetoric* must be understood as the first systematic hermeneutic of the everydayness of being-with-one-another" (GA 2: 184/SZ2: 138).

ENDNOTES

1   See, for example, the famous letter to Richardson (GA 11: 143–152), the autobiographical remembrances in *My Way in Phenomenology* in *Zur Sache des Denkens* (GA 14: 91–104), and the foreword to the first edition of *Frühe Schriften* (GA 1: 55–57). Undoubtedly, Aristotle is one of the authors to whom Heidegger devoted a considerable part of his energies during his first lectures in Freiburg and Marburg, including the unfinished project of writing a book on Aristotle, as we know thanks to the *Natorp Bericht.*

2   As Pöggeler remembers, in 1920 Heidegger expressed to Karl Löwith his indignation regarding Husserl, who still considered him a theologian rather than a philosopher; see Otto Pöggeler, "Martin Heidegger und die Religionsphänomenologie" in *Heidegger und seine Zeit* (München: Fink Verlag, 1999), 249–252.

3   In this sense Heidegger conceives rhetoric as a possibility (δύναμις) rather than a technique (τέχνη), namely, the possibility of speaking in certain ways; see GA 18: 114–119/78–81.

4   Paul Ricoeur, *La metáfora viva* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1980), 49.

5   For similar textual evidence, see *Politics* I, 1, 1253a9–18 and *Politics* VII, 12, 1332b5.

6   Heidegger recognizes in his commentary on the first book of *Topics* that δόξα is the basis for practical behavior as well as for the theoretical attitude. Δόξα is the specific form of being-in-the-world; to phrase the matter differently, the world comes to presence in δόξα (see GA 18: 152–154/103–105).

7   Stanley Rosen, "Phronesis or Ontology: Aristotle and Heidegger" in Ricardo Pozzo (ed.), *The Impact of Aristotelianism on Modern Philosophy* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 250ff; Jacques Taminiaux, *Heidegger and the Project of Fundamental Ontology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 131; William McNeill, *The Glance of the Eye. Heidegger, Aristotle and the Ends of Theory.* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), ch. 2–4.

8   For a rhetorical and political reading of Heidegger's interpreta-
tion of the Aristotelian text, see Robert Metcalf, "Aristoteles und
Sein und Zeit" in Albert Denker et al. (eds.), *Heidegger-Jahrbuch
3. Heidegger und Aristoteles* (Freiburg/München: Karl Alber,
2007), 156–169, and Daniel Gross, "Being-Moved: The Pathos of
Heidegger's Rhetorical Ontology" in Daniel Gross and Ansgar
Kemmann (eds.), *Heidegger and Rhetoric* (Albany: State Univer-
sity of New York Press, 2005), 1–45.

9   Heidegger takes here up again the idea expressed later in *Be-
ing and Time* that the original meaning of λόγος is ἀπόφανσις:
"to let beings be seen from themselves" (GA 2: 205/SZ2: 154).
Heidegger shows how the different translations of λόγος (like
"reason," "judgment," "definition," "concept," or "statement")
derive from the original meaning of ἀποφάνσις. But it occurs
in other passages of *Being and Time* and this reference to Aris-
totle is really succinct, making it difficult to recognize to what
extent his early phenomenological interpretations of Aristotle are
fundamental for understanding his later analysis of language,
attunement, truth, temporality and care, among other examples.

10   Among other passages, see GA 17: 13–41/9–31, GA 21: 162–
79/136–51, and GA 29/30: 441–73/304–26. For a more detailed
analysis of the peculiar function of λόγος in early Heidegger,
see Friederike Rese, *Praxis und Logos bei Aristoteles. Handlung,
Vernunft und Rede in "Nikomachischer Ethik", "Rhetorik" und
"Politik"* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2003); Franco Volpi, "La Question du
logos dans l'articulation de la facticité chez le jeune Heidegger,
lecteur d'Aristote" in Jean-François Courtine (ed.), *Heidegger
1919–1929: De l'herméneutique à la métaphysique du Dasein* (Paris:
J. Vrin 1996), 33–65; and Charlotta Weigelt, "*Logos* as *Kinesis*:
Heidegger's Interpretation of the *Physics* in *Grundbegriffe der
aristotelischen Philosophie*," *Epoché: A Journal for the History of
Philosophy*, 9/1, (2004): 101–16.

11   See in particular the paragraphs regarding the fundamental role
of mood (πάθος) in human life and the concrete analysis of fear

(φόβος) in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* (GA 18, § 18 and § 21 respectively).

12 See, for example, P. Christopher Smith, "The Uses and Abuses of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in Heidegger's Fundamental Ontology: The Lecture Courses, Summer, 1924" in Babette Babich (ed.), *From Phenomenology to Thought, Errancy and Desire* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1995), 315–33, and Theodore Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger's "Being and Time"* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 276–308.

13 See GA 2: 221–26/SZ2: 167–70. Idle talk (*Gerede*) is an inauthentic mode of discourse (*Rede*). Together with ambiguity (*Zweideutigkeit*) and curiosity (*Neugier*), idle talk constitutes Dasein in its everydayness. Literally, *Gerede* means the whole, as the German collective prefix *Ge-* denotes, of what is said, that is, *Gerede* is the whole of what one says, one thinks, or one discusses in the diffuse context of openness. Therefore, one should avoid interpreting *Gerede* in the pejorative sense of "gossip," "rumor," "chatter," or "prattle." For more information regarding the technical meaning of *Gerede* see Jésus Adrián Escudero, *El lenguaje de Heidegger. Diccionario filosófico 1912–1927* (Barcelona: Herder, 2009), 98–99.

14 Christina Lafont, "Was Heidegger an Externalist?" *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*, 48/6 (2005): 5–6.

15 Ibid., 10.

16 For more discussion of this point, see Taylor Carman, "Must We Be Inauthentic?" in Mark Wrathall and Jeff Malpas (eds.), *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2000), 21–22.

Sounding/Silence

David Nowell-Smith

I

In the introductory remarks to his 1934–5 lecture series on Friedrich Hölderlin's late hymns "Germanien" and "Der Rhein," the first he gave on Hölderlin's poetry, Heidegger discusses the "form" of the opening lines from "Germanien":

> The form of the poem provides no particular difficulties. The meter does not follow the model of any conventional genre. A poem without meter and rhyme is nevertheless not really a poem at all, not poetry, prose rather. […] and yet, [a] common, precise, prosaic "for" [*denn*], sounds, as though spoken for the first time, and this apparent prose of the whole poem is more poetic than the smoothest gambolling lines and jingling rhymes of any Goethesque Lieder or other singsong. (GA 39: 16)

What is at stake when Heidegger says that this word *denn* "sounds, as though spoken for the first time"? Firstly, it has an impact for how we understand Heidegger's relation to poetry, and to what he scathingly calls "literary history and aesthetics." The word's "sounding" is in antagonism with the generic requirements of meter and rhyme; yet meter and rhyme are not therefore irrelevant to what Heidegger is trying to describe, since it is precisely in rejecting meter and rhyme from within verse that this word comes to "sound." The "apparent prose" through which this word "sounds" is only "apparent"; it is not prose but the "prosaic" as it irrupts within verse; its "sounding" cannot be extracted

from its prosodic effect within the verse structure of the hymn as a whole. Such moments show Heidegger in a far more ambivalent relationship with poetics and criticism than we might suspect. Secondly, the "sounding" of the word would collapse the distinction between linguistic meaning on the one hand and the sonority of language on the other. The "sounding" of Hölderlin's poem concerns the meaning of an individual word, *denn*, but is not thereby simply a figure for semantic (or "aletheic," even) clarity. For this meaning is generated prosodically, as the incursion of "prosaic" dissonance into "jingling" singsong. It is only when we experience this word "as prose" (which, were it embedded in prose, we would not do) that we can hear its "sounding." Heidegger's invocation of sounding thus brings us to the very core of his thinking on language. In this paper I wish to approach these two questions alongside one another, and argue that "sounding" is crucial to our understanding both of the truth-value of art and poetry – its capacity to bring a word to "sound, as though spoken for the first time" – and of the phrase "language speaks," which will become a guideword to his thinking from 1950 onwards.

II

Heidegger's thinking on the sounding of language is elaborated at greatest length in the notes to his 1939 lecture series on Herder's *On the Origins of Languages*. The published version of the lecture series is made up for the most part of lecture notes, and constitutes less an overarching account of language than a thinking through of some of his most abiding concerns. Precisely for this reason it provides an illuminating depiction of Heidegger attempting to confront these concerns at a moment when his thought was in flux. Throughout these notes he returns to Herder's claim that the sounds of language are heard not in the ear but the "soul," and which he takes to mean that, instead of sounds being "added to meaning, rather the meaning *sounds*" (GA 85: 111/94). This is precisely what he was getting at in his analysis of the word *denn* in "Germanien": the meaning is not a pre-existing semantic content transmitted through a physical token, rather it is through its

sounding that it becomes meaningful. Sounding – and, by consequence, linguistic meaning – would in this respect be anterior to any opposition between ideality and materiality.

This consideration develops *Being and Time's* central claim that "Dasein hears because it understands" (GA 2: 217/SZ1: 163); however, it also offers an advance on this early account of language. In *Being and Time* Heidegger is arguing that all sensory receptivity to language is grounded on the discoveredness of Dasein. When he turns to language's sounding, the phenomenal heft of the word has become part of what first engenders this discoveredness. However, for this to be the case, Heidegger is at pains to distinguish the "sounding" of language that "means" and "lets appear" from the sonority of the word as verbal icon, *Wortlaut* (word-sound) or *Lautgebilde* (the word's "sound-form"). Heidegger argues that in the *Wortlaut*, the sounding itself has been abstracted (or, in Heidegger's more extreme, and, given the political context of 1939, troubling terminology, "degenerated") into a "present-at-hand" sensuous token whose function is to transmit the meaning of a referential sign (GA 85: 34/38). The sounding of language only becomes mere "sound" when its referential function has been taken to be linguistic meaning in its entirety, with sound itself reduced to a bodily husk. This anticipates his observation, in "The Nature of Language" almost two decades later, that on the referential model it is unlikely "the physical element of language, its vocal and written character, is being adequately experienced," nor that "it is sufficient to associate sound exclusively with the body understood in physiological terms, and to place it within the metaphysically conceived confines of the sensuous" (GA 12: 193/98).

I will return to the question of the body below. Before that, I wish to dwell on the other detail of the "sounding" of this word *denn* in the opening lines of "Germanien": that it "sounds *as though spoken for the first time.*" The motif "for the first time" recurs throughout "The Origin of the Work of Art" (written between the "Germanien" lectures and the lecture series on Herder), as a trope for the artwork's *aletheic* capacity, whereby it "sets up a world." This happens first at the level of the

art medium – "The rock comes to bear and to rest and so *first* becomes rock; the metal comes to glimmer and shimmer, the colours to shine, the sounds to ring, the word to say" (GA 5: 32/24) – but subsequently inflects the surrounding world: the temple at Paestum, for instance, "*first* makes the storm visible in its violence," "*first* brings forth the light of day, the breadth of the sky, the darkness of night," so that "Tree, grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket *first* enter their distinctive shapes and thus come to appearance as what they are" (GA 5: 28/21). In other words, the artwork transforms the ways in which we encounter beings in an open region, and this is experienced as our seeing them "for the first time," just as the poem brings us to encounter the word *denn* differently than we had done so before. And indeed, this is precisely how, in the Herder lectures, sounding is conceived: "'sounding' is at first *a self-showing as a being, an appearing*, that *lets appear*" (GA 85: 111/96). The sounding of language both announces its own entry into appearance (as self-showing), and permits other beings to show themselves.

In this, Heidegger is not simply following the argumentation of "Origin," however. As a "letting-appear," we encounter the basis of something like linguistic reference. Heidegger, that is, is anticipating that programmatic claim of his later writing on language that the essence of language is "saying as showing" (GA 12: 242/123). Indeed, he goes on to characterise λόγος itself as a "gathering sounding" (*sammelndes Lauten*) (GA 85: 35/29), the articulation of beings in openness that language effects coincides with its own appearance in this open.

This description of λόγος as a "gathering sounding" will strike us at first as rather unexpected, given that in both *Being and Time* and *On the Way to Language* authentic λόγος is depicted as silent. Yet the gerundive *Lauten* implies a process of movement into sound from out of an anterior silence. Here we see its sounding coincide with Heidegger's explanation, in "Origin," for how the artwork can engender this "first" quality. For Heidegger tells us that sounding is the "happening of the strife of earth *and* world" (GA 85: 54/45, emphases in original), and in this it is "not essentially related to the tone and sound, but *to the openness and clearing* of being and, that is, to the silence and the rending of

the silence in the strife of world and earth" (GA 85: 125/107). If we are to understand both how language comes to sound, and what kind of meaning this sounding might furnish, we should look in greater detail at its "strife"-character. It is to this question that I now turn.

III

In the "Origin of the Work of Art," "earth," whilst most readily encountered as a brute thingliness, is defined ostensibly by its movement of "coming-forth concealing" (GA 5: 32/24). Heidegger depicts a struggle in which the earth, "bearing and rising up, strives to preserve its closedness" (GA 5: 51/38), but is captured and traced within the world from which it would withdraw. The strife would be "silent" insofar as it withdraws from worldly experience; it would emerge into "sounding" as it is captured and traced momentarily within the world. Heidegger situates the "earth" in the artwork's "work-material" or medium, but to do so poses a particular problem when it comes to poetry. Whereas this work-material is easy enough to identify elsewhere – the "bearing and resting" of stone, the "shining" of colour, and the "ringing" of sound – it is not certain what poetry's work-*material* would be. Heidegger calls the "earth" of language "the naming power of the word" (GA 5: 32/24), but where this "power" resides, and what is "earthy" about it, are not entirely clear. One influential and powerful reading speaks of the "opacity of verbal matter": "The sounds of spoken language, its rhythm, its accents, its timbre, its resonance, its pace, as well as its written characters," which "through their material weight … escape signification and withdraw from the clarity of sense and from the transparency of the world."[1] But there is a danger in this gloss: to "escape signification" will not in and of itself entail a withdrawal from sense and world, especially given Heidegger's attempt to dispute the model of language as signification with an arbitrary sonorous token. Moreover, it cannot be grasped simply in its "sounds," insofar as the earth withdraws from all phenomenality – sound, after all, remains audible. Whatever sonority the earth might have will be far more complex to situate.

In light of this difficulty, I would like to focus on the "strife" itself. If "sounding" has a "strife-character," this would mean that the very movement of language into sounding strives against (or rends, *reisst*) the silencing movement that bounds it. But insofar as it is in "strife," it does enter sounding. Perhaps we might think of earth as something like an open E-string played on the violin: at once pitch, timbre, and the oscillations of the string reverberating on the soundboard, but at the same time the scraping of horsehair on catgut. As anyone acquainted with this sound (especially when it is generated by a five-year-old) will know, the moment that is most violent on the ear is also the moment closest to silence, as the bow almost scratches to a halt on the string (and so the vibrations cease). This would also explain why the word *denn* in "Germanien" "sounds" through its prosodic dissonance, as this is where we most powerfully experience the excess and breakdown of our sonorous experience – and experience this excess, this breakdown, as sonority. It is in its excess over simple audibility, then, in an excess experienced at the limits of audibility, that Heidegger can describe *Wortlaut* as the "*preserving keeping – earth of the world*" (GA 85: 109/93). In the "sounding" of language, earth enters the phenomenal world in such a way as to become audible, but dissonantly and aporetically, and so inhabits the *Wortlaut* even as the *Wortlaut* would blot it out.

IV

It is in this regard that we can understand another of the key phrases of Heidegger's late writings on language, one which obtains its first formulations in the Herder lectures: the "peal ↑ of stillness [*Geläut ↑ der Stille*]" (GA 85: 90/78). In the 1939 lectures, there is an arrow pointing upwards after "peal," indicating non-verbally the movement of this peal into sounding, embodying the "coming-forth" of the earth into phenomenal experience. Whilst the arrow was subsequently dropped, its directional thrust strikes me as illuminating for understanding what is meant by his saying that "language speaks as the peal of stillness." With this phrase, his concern is double: first, he wishes to characterize the way a "silent" language anterior to reference can be experienced;

second, he wishes to grasp the movement by which this originary language enters verbal articulation. In both instances, the way we conceive of verbal sound is crucial, as this becomes the mode by which this "peal" is experienced. In "The Way to Language," which marks the culmination of his thinking of the period, and perhaps the most succinct statement on language he makes, he sums it up thusly:

> The phonetic-acoustic-physiological explanation of sounding does not experience their origin in the peal of stillness, even less so how sounding is thereby brought to voice and determined [*die hierdurch erbrachte Be-stimmung des Lautens*]. (GA 12: 241/121–22, tm)

There are two striking things about this passage; firstly, we can note how, through his insertion of a hyphen into *Bestimmung*, he wishes to suggest that the determination of verbal language takes place as a bringing-to-voice. This means that the fixing of the word's semantic meaning is inextricably bound up with the human body. Indeed, Heidegger links the "phonetic" explanation of verbal sound as a sensuous token with the "physiological" explanation of sound production through the vocal cords. Secondly, this "bringing to voice" is concerned with the movement into language of two stillnesses, which would both come to sound in this "peal": the silence of a "linguistic essence" beyond all human activity, and therefore beyond the limits of the audible, and a silence that stems from the opacity of the human body itself.

The first of these two silences is probed in the 1950 lecture "Language," a reading of Trakl's "Ein Winterabend." Here he argues that silence, *Stille* (also translated as "stillness"), is by no means the "soundless" (*Lautlos*), that is, the absence of sound, but lies anterior to any sound-soundless opposition (GA 12: 26/PLT 204). This echoes his similar claim, in "Origin," that the artwork's "rest" (*Ruhe*) is not the lack of motion but rather the highest form of movedness (*Bewegtheit*) which furnishes motion as such. Indeed, the German *Stille* incorporates both silence and stillness, allowing Heidegger to depict the "sounding" of language as a form of movement into appearance. The "Saying" which

effects such motion would be silent/still both by virtue of lying anterior to verbal language and by virtue of its excess over verbal language. When we hear a "peal" of stillness, what we are hearing in part is this excess from within the framework that is being exceeded.

The "peal of stillness" is not only the point where silence and sounding, stillness and movement, intersect. It is also the point of contact between language's "linguistic essence" and human speech: the "peal of stillness is nothing human" (GA 12: 27/PLT 205), and yet it peals within human speech. This means that the "peal of stillness," when it sounds, is necessarily distorted: coming to sound, Heidegger says, "be it speech or writing, the silence is broken" (GA 12: 28/PLT 206). Arising from out of this silence, the sounding of language loses the silence that is its source; drawn into presence, it has been torn from the withdrawing movement proper to it. And yet, as Chris Fynsk has noted, insofar as language "needs" human speech, the breaking of its silence in fact becomes a condition for this silence. Not only, then, does its silence speak through, and as, "noise"; such "noise" becomes an integral feature to the silence of "linguistic essence" itself.[2]

V

Here, the "silence" that peals in human speech is aligned with an originary λόγος. In the 1957–8 lectures on "The Nature of Language," however, Heidegger identifies a second silence out of which language "sounds." Here, Heidegger takes issue with the notion that language is merely reference, and points to "the property of language to sound and ring and vibrate, to hover and to tremble" as evidence that verbal sound is more than simply the arbitrary husk of the signifier. As in the 1939 Herder lectures, he appeals to the "earth" as the provenance of such sounding, ringing, and vibrating: "body and mouth are part of the earth's flow and growth in which we mortals flourish" (GA 12: 194/98). By this juncture in Heidegger's thought, "earth" is no longer being conceived as in "strife" with "world," but rather one of the "fourfold" that makes up the world. It is in opposition with "sky" or "heaven" (*Himmel*), whilst on a second axis, divinities are opposed to mortals.

This has a subtle shift of emphasis: whilst still characterised by its coming-forth concealing movement, earth is now thematized much more in terms of what is "sheltered" by it and "emerges" from out of it. To see how precisely "earth's flow and growth" becomes at once bodily and linguistic, Heidegger calls upon some passages from Hölderlin, notably the description of language as "the mouth's flower." This phrase, Heidegger continues, lets us "hear"

> the sound of language rising up earthwise. From whence? From a saying in which happens the letting-appear of world. The sound rings out in the resounding assembly call which, open to the open, lets world appear in things. . . . The sounding, the earthly of language is held with the harmony [*Stimmen*] that, playing together in chorus the regions of the world's structure, attunes them towards one another [*einstimmt*]. (GA 12: 196/101, tm)

This "sounding" arises both out of the "earth" of the flowering mouth and throat, and out of the "saying" which first brings world to appear. In this respect, the "sounding of language" is something like the point of intersection of both movements — of saying into speech and of the earth of the body into a language that rings, vibrates, hovers, and trembles. Yet Heidegger is in fact making a far stronger claim: that these two constitute not only one and the same *peal*, but *one and the same movement*. The earth of the body engenders the "open" space in which we encounter ourselves and the world around us; at the same time, "saying" offers a "harmony" that attunes beings towards one another, thus setting them into relation and holding them within the world. We encounter an articulation at once bodily and linguistic, whose "sounding" arises out of the "earth" of this body, and even, as "sounding," preserves this earth in momentary presence. All sounding becomes *Be-stimmung*: a bringing to voice which fixes language in presence.

VI

I would like to finish by treating briefly two final points. Firstly, this account of language's sounding movement entails a striking transformation in the category of voice. And indeed, placing the shared origin of body and language in the voice, Heidegger seems to be committing the most egregious "phonocentrism." This charge, however, would be precipitate. Heidegger's conception of "sounding" aims to think the bodily in language far beyond any simplistic privileging of speech over writing, as evidenced by the marginal notes he adds to the 1960 editions of "Origin of the Work of Art" and "The Way of Language": "Language and Body (Sound and Script)," and "Sounding and Bodying – Body and Script" (GA 5: 62/47; GA 12: 249), and in his apparent indifference in the "Ein Winterabend" lecture, cited above, as to whether human language is in "speech or writing."

Yet Heidegger's thinking at this juncture also offers a significant advance over (I'm tempted to say, it "supplements") deconstructive philosophy. At the crux of Derrida's critique of phonocentrism is the claim that Husserl attempts to secure the absolute presence of voice to the speaking subject through the motif of "hearing-oneself-speak," but cannot because voice itself is ultimately inflected with irreducible difference.[5] When Heidegger portrays language's sounding as the "earthwise" "rising up" of voice in throat, then voice withdraws from the very articulation it renders possible. The body becomes the site for language only as it becomes opaque to it – becomes, indeed, opaque to itself. The intersection of language and body happens, in other words, at the breakdown of bodily self-presence, which is at the same time the breakdown of a transparent λόγος. What is at issue in this silence is precisely how the human body itself, far from securing self-presence, becomes the site of an opacity that shapes our experience of presence as such and endows the limits of presence with an aporetic phenomenal weight. Heidegger depicts language's originary articulation as a "soundless calling gathering" (*lautlos rufende Versammeln*) (GA 12: 204/108); its binding power, and its capacity, in "calling," to engage

with absence, are such that they exceed our experience of the phenomenality of language.

Secondly, and finally, I would like to return to the question of poetry with which I started. Heidegger's account of the sounding of language comes through a gloss of two moments in Hölderlin: "words, like flowers," and "the mouth's flower." This moment is perhaps most famous for the denunciation of metaphor that follows his employment of these phrases, which is one further instance of his disputing a "literary" interpretation of poetry in favour of attending to its significance for the thinking of being. At the same time, and inversely, we can regret the fact that, if Heidegger situates the voice's "rising up" in these lines, he does not attend to their vocal qualities, even though he suggests that, in order to grasp language anterior to the scission of sound and sense, we should attend to "melody and rhythm in language," and to "the kinship between song and speech." Indeed, if the very notion of "sounding" is meant to antecede the sound-sense split, then for Heidegger to focus entirely on the "content" of the phrases (metaphors or similes or no) is somewhat problematic.

In this regard, the first instance I cited, from the lecture series on "Germanien," appears more successful, as the word's "sounding" concerns the meaning of an individual word and yet surfaces out of a prosodic dissonance. But here we find another problem, which is less one of Heidegger's reading practice and more one of how we might reconcile this notion of "sounding" with poetic technique more generally. The prosodic dissonance that effects the poem's "sounding" is itself engendered by a patterning of *Wortlaut*. In this case, it would seem that *Wortlaut*, a derivative form of sounding, is nevertheless that which makes such sounding possible. Or, to see it another way, we could say that Heidegger's concern is with how an anterior truth of language – its gathering of beings into an open region in which they can be articulated verbally – can surface in the words we use, and how we can use words so that they exceed the framework we have at our disposal in order to grasp a linguistic essence that exceeds our linguistic usage and withdraws from it, and yet conditions it. To this end, poetry

would employ language as a medium whose possibilities — tropological, gestural, prosodic, and so forth — would afford us an encounter with this excess. This would be why it is in poetry, Heidegger says, that we hear the "broken silence" that "shapes the mortal speech that sounds in verses and sentences" (GA 12: 28/PLT 206), because poetry attends to the limits of the modes and media of its own sounding, and thereby probes the moments at which this "broken silence" shapes the poem's speech. To think in greater detail the relation between Heidegger and poetics as a discipline, I would suggest that the question of how poetry's engagement with its verbal medium might render audible a prior sounding offers a productive starting point.

ENDNOTES

1   Michel Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, trans. Reginald Lily (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 111.
2   Christopher Fynsk, 'Noise at the Threshold', in *Language and Relation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 27–30.
3   Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, trans. David B. Allison (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 12.

Faith's Knowledge:

On Heidegger's Reading of Saint Paul

Sophie-Jan Arrien

In this paper, I would like to focus on the experience of faith in the proto-Christian life, within the context of the young Heidegger's thought. My thesis is that the notion of faith, within this context, represents the paradigmatic figure of the very type of knowledge that Heidegger strives to describe and unfold through his phenomenological hermeneutics of facticity. This specific type of knowledge is called, in the young Heidegger's words, "formal-indicative" or "based on formal indications" and he considers it to be the most originary grounding for any originary and authentic philosophy.

In order to understand the philosophical implications and scope of this paradigmatic use of the experience of faith in Heidegger's lectures, I follow three steps:

1. The first step is a presentation of some important features of Heidegger's hermeneutics of factical life. These remarks are important to understand what exactly the proto-Christian experience is a paradigm of. I mainly insist on two fundamental, although a bit technical, notions that sustain the rest of my analysis: the notion of "formal indication" (*formale Anzeige*) and the notion of enactment-sense (*Vollzugssinn*).

2. The second step is a description of the phenomenon of faith, as Heidegger understands it in the light of those two notions (formal indication and enactment-sense). In addition to representing the original orientation for Heidegger's phenomenology of life in

general, they provide him with the specific criteria that make it possible to recognize, in the experience of faith, an originary type of pre-theoretical knowledge.[1]

3. The third step is an analysis of how this peculiar knowledge, i.e., faith's knowledge, is incarnated in two fundamental Christian ways of behaving: "serving" and "waiting." According to Heidegger, these are the two fundamental characteristics of the proto-experience of Christianity, as described by Paul. But through them we are also able to see how the authentic sense of factical life in general shows up.

I. ENACTMENT-SENSE AND FORMAL INDICATION IN THE HERMENEUTICS OF LIFE

As early as 1919, Heidegger stated that the vocation of philosophy is to be an "originary pre-theoretical science,"[2] capable of accounting for the disquieting mobility of factical life, without fixing it in advance within a formal and theoretical frame. The whole challenge, in this regard, is to find concepts that express the constantly moving significance of the phenomenon of life. In other words, Heidegger looks for concepts that do not immobilize, devitalize, or de-historicize the lived event of sense (GA 56–57: 74/59, 89–90/69–70, 116/88–89; GA 58: 77, 78).

That does not mean that a phenomenological interpretation of life is totally open and without any landmarks. It certainly requires anticipations or pre-conceptions (*Vorgriffe*), but they must possess a dynamic character in order to correspond to their "object." The phenomenological interpretation thus will not progress by using traditional concepts, the meaning of which is sealed and given once and for all. Instead it must use what Heidegger calls "formal indications," issued from factical life itself and capable of conveying the mobility and dynamism that characterize the intentional cohesion of factical life.

Before I go further with the idea of formal indication, I would like to say a few words about this dynamic intentionality of life that formal indications, in contrast to traditional concepts, are precisely

meant to convey. For Heidegger, every phenomenon is part of a lived experience that implies a behavior or comportment, a *Sichverhalten*. The sense of any given phenomenon is thus always part of a concrete intentional context that participates in the full significance of the phenomenon as such. There is not such a thing as *one* definition that could summarize for good the sense of a given phenomenon. Any phenomenon is inscribed instead in a lived experience and it is to be understood in three different intentional directions that Heidegger calls the "relational-sense," the "content-sense," and the "enactment-sense" *(Bezugssinn, Gehaltssinn, Vollzungssinn).*

To put the matter briefly, the relational-sense (or sense of the relation) characterizes the sense of the comportment as it relates to something. This relational-sense is, for instance, what *Husserlian* phenomenology considered to be the core of intentional consciousness. The content-sense, for its part, represents that to which the comportment refers; it is "the to-what [*Worauf*] and the for-what [*Wozu*] of the relation" (GA 61: 53/40, tm). Traditionally, philosophical concepts aim mainly to discover and fix the content-sense of phenomena, that is to say, to discover what they essentially *are* (their essence, so to speak). Finally, the enactment-sense is the mode of comportment by which a relational-sense and a content-sense are seized within a historical and concrete horizon of sense – thereby unfolding the phenomenon itself as a lived unity of sense always susceptible of a transformation or re-appropriation. This enactment-sense, i.e., the intrinsic possibility for any phenomenon to undergo a transformation of its content-sense and relational-sense, constitutes the greatest Heideggerian innovation in terms of phenomenological description.

Through the attention given to the enactment-sense, Heidegger replaces the traditional ideal of objectivity by the factical determination of all phenomenality (where 'factical' designates the historical and situated character of a phenomenon in relation to a self). Because it preserves the sense of facticity of every signification, the enactment-sense is the dominant intentional dimension within every lived experience. In addition to helping to extricate the content-sense from the

snare of objectivation and bringing about new configurations of the lived world, it also recalls the relational-sense's capacity to determine new ways of relating to the world, which implies new modes for the self to appropriate itself.

And it is precisely in order to respect this open intentionality of phenomena that Heidegger will substitute for the concept (traditionally understood as a closed determination of something) what he calls a "formal indication," understood as the *index* or indication of a horizon of sense. This horizon is not to be fixed or definitely fulfilled, but rather kept open to its manifold possibilities of enactment. To lay down a formal indication is to lay down a "(*pre*)-conception" (*Vorgriff*) that indicates a phenomenon without reducing it to a definition, without shielding it from the constitutive indeterminateness of its sense of enactment, without erasing the historical or "eventual" sense of this enactment.

Neither a position nor an intrusion into a reified domain of things, the formal indication is on the contrary "a defense, a preliminary *precaution* to safeguard the enactment character [of the phenomenon]" (GA 60: 64/44, tm). With formal indications "one intentionally affords the concepts a certain lability/mobility in order to secure their determination in the process of phenomenological study itself" (GA 60: 82/57, tm). The emergence of the formal indication marks, in a way, the birth of a possible "pretheoretical science" or "originary theorization," i.e. a discourse which, although theoretical, assumes its grounding within a worldly and pre-theoretical horizon of sense.[3] In the context of a phenomenology of the religious lived experience, the merit of the formal indication lies in its capacity to maintain open the enactment-sense and to prevent the *a priori* imposition of only one perspective: "A precisely determined constraint resides with formal indication; it implies that I stand in such and such determined *initial direction*, that following the indication only shows the way, in case it should lead to something proper" (GA 61: 33).

Formal indications guarantee the originarity of philosophical investigation, firstly by preventing us from anchoring ourselves to a

particular point of view (*Einstellung*) or regional considerations, and secondly by preserving the factical character of the phenomenon they designate. In other words, a formal indication points towards the "evential" character of sense; the latter brings a potential for mutating, so to speak, to the core of the "concept," which only then can be grasped as an authentic expression of lived experience.

And it is here that the experience of faith in primordial Christianity, as Heidegger interprets it in his reading of Paul's Letters, can be brought into play as a paradigm that illustrates and reinforces not only the pertinence but the *necessity* of using his phenomenological tools (i.e., formal indications and the enactment-sense) when the originary sense of a lived experience is at stake. That is what I aim to demonstrate in the next sections.

II. faith's knowledge

Heidegger's phenomenological interpretation of religious experience in primordial Christianity consists essentially in a close reading of Paul's letters that describe and comment on the lived experience of faith for him and his fellow believers.[4] We ought to remember to begin with that Heidegger is not trying to produce a theological work here. He wants to unfold what he calls a "hermeneutical phenomenology of religious life in proto-Christianity." Now, what does phenomenology care about in general? It does not care so much about texts, but about experience itself. What is significant for Heidegger is not really the dogmatic and proto-theological content in Paul's letters; it is rather the fact that Paul, in those letters, *describes* a specific lived experience − his own and that of his fellow-believers as Christians. Heidegger's interpretation of Paul is above all a phenomenology of this proto-Christian lived experience of faith.

This remark should clarify from the start Heidegger's decision to quickly leave behind the interpretation of the Letter to the Galatians in favor of an interpretation of the Letters to the Thessalonians. The Letter to the Galatians contains crucial dogmatic elements of Paul's preaching, particularly concerning the opposition between faith and

law. To express this opposition in Heideggerian terms, one could say that faith is oriented toward a concrete and lived enactment-sense, whereas law, founded upon theoretical content-senses, finds the horizon of its enactment in the idea of absolute validity (tradition).[5] And if, from a philosophical perspective, the Letter to the Galatians contains more conceptual elements akin to Heidegger's thought, the Letters to the Thessalonians nevertheless offer – from the perspective of a phenomenological "demonstration," as we will see – the possibility of an interpretation directly oriented to the factical experience of Christian life, such as Paul describes it.

This being assumed, I would like to suggest that primordial Christian faith, as a factical lived experience, plays and incarnates concretely the very role that Heidegger assigns to formal indication in a philosophical context. As I understand Heidegger's interpretation of Paul, faith as a lived experience represents a very specific form of knowledge, a pre-theoretical knowledge, whose structures and modes of attestation exemplify and confirm the originary insights of his hermeneutics of factical life. But let us then go back to Heidegger's reading of Paul and see what kind of knowledge we are talking about here.

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul recalls his own call to faith: his fervent Judaism, his conversion, and his apostolic mission to the gentiles (Galatians 1, 11–24). In other words, Paul's factical experience of faith began with an *event:* his conversion on the road to Damascus. It began with a revelation he received directly from God, and this event becomes the meaning and the guide of his existence and action. In a similar way, in his Letters to the Thessalonians, Paul asks his readers from the start to recall the e*vent* of their *own* conversion as he was among them. Here is the critical verse:

> Because you *know* [οἴδατε] that we *have been* [ἐγενήθημεν] among you for your own good. And you *have become* [ἐγενήθητε] imitators of us and of the Lord, receiving [δεξάμενοι] the proclamation amid many tribulations [ἐν θλίψει πολλῇ] with the joy [μετὰ χαρᾶς] of the Holy Spirit; as such you *have become*

[γενέσθαι] a model for all the believers in Macedonia
and Achaea [...]. (I Thessalonians 1, 5–9)

What we ought to notice in this quotation is that Paul is preoccupied by the present situation of the faithful but precisely in regard to a past, in regard to their "having-become." What characterizes the believers' situation is their *having become* Christian and their *actual* knowledge[6] of this transformation. For each of them, a proclamation of the Gospel was *received* and as they embraced the faith, they modified their life to the present. This modification is not just behind them; on the contrary, the fact of "having-become" a Christian still participates in their present experience, it constitutes their *actual* being (GA 60: 94/65). Thus, "having-become" a Christian by receiving the faith actualizes itself in the actual life of the believer.[7] Concretely, it means that faith received as a gift must *also* be factically appropriated (παραλαμβάνειν) as the *knowing* that is intrinsic to the Christian way of life: "You have *learned* from us how to walk in order to please God" (I Thessalonians 4, 1).

In other words, the moment of the conversion is crucial, primarily because it represents the entrance into a new life. But it only truly unfolds itself in its enactment, i.e., in a practical knowing of "how to behave" within the faith. Heidegger thus describes having faith (πιστεύειν) not as a "holding-true" (*Fürwahrhalten*) – as we usually understand the fact of knowing something – but as a "structure of enactment capable of development."[8] One can say that conversion thus determines a factical existence lead by this atypical knowing in the context of faith, or rather co-experienced with this knowledge.

With those first remarks, we can already see that Heidegger, as he interprets the phenomenon of faith as a lived and pre-theoretical knowledge which continually refers back to a factical "behavior," understands it in the same terms he understands formal indication. And faith clearly does hold this formal indicative role in at least two ways: first, by indicating a direction (which is God) to the relational-sense of Christian existence; second, by characterizing the proper mode of enactment of this relation to God.

I suggest that we keep in mind this reading, as Heidegger's interpretation of Paul becomes more specific. And it does become more specific, since once we have said that faith plays the role of a lived formal indicative knowledge within the proto-Christian existence, we still have to know *how* this knowledge unfolds itself factically. For formal indication has a philosophical interest if and only if it goes along with the uncovering of some authentic possibilities of the phenomenon at stake. What, then, are the authentic possibilities of enactment of proto-Christian existence, opened by faith's knowledge?

Heidegger identifies at least two such possibilities, namely, "serving" and "waiting," which he places at the core of his phenomenology of religious life. Those modes of enactment are clearly identified in *one* critical verse on which Heidegger comments: "you have converted from idols to God, to *serve* [δουλεύειν] the living and true God and to *wait* [ἀναμένειν] from heaven his Son Jesus [...] who delivered us from the wrath to come" (I Thessalonians 1, 9–10).

In fact, Heidegger's whole interpretation of Paul, as I read it, seeks to uncover that serving and waiting are "the fundamental directions that determine every other relation" of the Christian life.[9] Let us see in what sense serving and waiting confirm the paradigmatic dimension of proto-Christian faith, within the conceptual frame of a phenomenology of factical life.

III. SERVING (δουλεύειν)

At the beginning of the First Letter to the Thessalonians, Paul writes that Christians, having received the "proclamation," are serving God "amid many tribulations with the joy of the Holy Spirit" (I Thessalonians 1, 6). The obedience to God is a source of tribulations, distress, affliction and, simultaneously, joy. Why such distress and where does the joy come from in spite of the affliction, indeed, *within* the affliction? The answer from a phenomenological point of view is given with the specific enactment-sense of serving in proto-Christian experience. Contrary to "ordinary life" experiences, the horizon in which proto-Christian life finds the possibility of its enactment does not point to

this world but rather to the coming kingdom of God. *This* world is turned toward the works of the flesh (σάρξ), that is to say, as Heidegger explains it, turned toward the sphere of affects not motivated in God. It is therefore a source of tribulation and affliction for the Christian.

However, flesh cannot simply be denied. It represents a true part of life, of necessary part of our being in this world.[10] But the sense of the Christian faith, precisely, does not refer to a fulfillment befalling our surrounding world[11]; the Christian strives for the life in God, freed from the flesh. The latter thus appears as being a part of Christian life but more as a "counter-orientation." Christian life is determined by flesh but in an indirect way. Or so Heidegger interprets this verse of Paul: "Time is short; such that those who have wives should be as though having none [ὡς μὴ]; and those who cry, as not crying [ὡς μὴ]; and those who rejoice, as not rejoicing [ὡς μὴ]; those who buy, as not possessing [ὡς μὴ]; those who use this world, as not using it [ὡς μὴ], because the form of this world passes away" (I Corinthians 7, 29–31).

Is this quote a proof that Christian experience can only be determined negatively from a factical point of view and that it can only find its authentic sense of enactment *outside* of this world? The answer is no. Heidegger reminds us that here, on the contrary, Paul is paradoxically saying something *positive* about the factical enactment of faith. For Paul doesn't use the privative or strictly denying form of negation in Greek (οὐκ), but a negative form (ὡς μή) which preserves the positive sense of what is at stake in the negation.

Heidegger writes about this verse: "it is not a denial of enactment [...]. The 'not' refers to the positing of the context of enactment regarding the relation motivated from it" (GA 60: 109/77). Further: "One would be tempted to translate ὡς μή by 'as if' but it wouldn't work. 'As if' expresses an objective context and suggests the interpretation that Christ should sever his links to the surrounding world. Now this ὡς positively means a new meaning which is added. The μή refers to the enactment context of Christian life" (GA 60: 120/86, tm). In other words, the negation is understood here as a "positive" way to characterize the enactment-sense of the relation to the world, without leading

it back to an objective content-sense or a fixed representation, even a negative one.[12] The enactment-sense of faith is certainly defined in opposition to this world (ὡς μή) and in relation with the coming world. But this shift of horizon does not mean for the Christian to turn away from his own factical life. On the contrary, it makes him endure this life as self-concern, in regards to salvation. Day after day, for each believer, the factical enactment of faith recalls the Pauline injunction: "work out your salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2, 12).

The cohesion of Christian life thus unfolds in serving God, through the constant struggle against flesh, in the distress of fighting against the world and the self. Not that man might defeat the flesh and bring about his salvation only through his own strength and will. To the contrary, it is precisely at the moment where one's weakness is revealed that the might of God is made manifest: "My grace suffices you," says God to Paul, "because *my* might is felt all the better through weakness" (II Corinthians 12, 5–9). In other words, the weakness of the believer, by revealing the power of grace, serves the glory of God and thus becomes a source of joy. It is precisely from the abyss of his uncertainty and distress that the Christian who serves God receives joy.[13]

In terms of hermeneutical phenomenology, this dynamic is of real interest. Indeed, we can find in Paul's acceptance of his weakness the acceptance of a fundamental indeterminateness regarding the objective content-sense of faith and life in favor of the enactment-sense of his Christian vocation. Christian life does not orient itself to representations or visions characterized by their content-sense; on the contrary, it embraces the indeterminateness of the content of faith. It is within this open horizon of enactment in God that the global and intentional sense of proto-Christian religiosity must be understood as a factical experience of faith, constantly renewed and re-appropriated. This is the only way, Heidegger writes, that "the significance of […] one's own world […] is possessed and distinctively experienced" (GA 60: 122/87, tm).

But we still have to understand in what sense serving God unfolds the constitutive historical sense of life (as formal indication tries to unfold it within the concept itself). In what sense and how is

proto-Christian religiosity able to open and grasp in a paradigmatic way the historical character of facticity? The analysis of *waiting*, which is the second key figure of proto-Christian experience of faith, will answer this question and thus fully clarify the paradigmatic relevance of this experience within the frame of Heidegger's hermeneutics of life.

IV. WAITING (ἀναμένειν)

What does "waiting for Jesus" mean factically, as a lived experience of sense? We have to remember again that for the Christian, to convert, to turn toward God, far from idols, means an inversion of the "normal" direction of factical life. The horizon of its enactment-sense is shifted from this world to the *coming* world, from the reign of idols to the kingdom of God, from corruptible flesh to eternal life. Faith's knowledge, the knowledge of "having become" a "new creature" (καινὴ κτίσις) is also and always a knowledge of what is *to come* (see Galatians 6, 15). Therefore, the temporal horizon of Christian facticity's enactment is not only the past or the present but the *future*. The Christian lives in the "expectation" of Parousia, the glorious return of Christ and day of the Last Judgment. But what kind of future is this?

One thing Heidegger sees clearly in Paul's Letters is that waiting for the return of Christ must not be understood towards one specific fulfillment.[14] Based on the nature of factical experience of faith itself, Parousia *cannot* be understood in terms of objective historical representations. This is why Paul, according to Heidegger, does not answer directly to the Thessalonians who question him on the *when* of Parousia, but rather leads them back to the very grounding of their facticity as Christians. Paul does not provide temporal indications for the return of Christ, but only speaks of its suddenness: "But as for the times [χρόνων] and the moments [καιρῶν] you very well know [οἴδατε] the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night" (I Thessalonians 5, 1–3). The knowledge of the return of Christ, rooted in faith, is an indeterminate certainty. It does not manifest itself as the objective "truth" of an objective content but as an open horizon of sense for the possible enactments of life.[15]

In other words, Paul does not answer to the "when" of Parousia in terms of a worldly understanding or apprehension of an "e*vent*." Paul doesn't even use the expression "when" but systematically and conjointly employs "the time and the moment" (GA 60: 102/71–72). For Heidegger, this way of saying disqualifies the temporal sense of "when" as meaning an "objective time." Paul does not say *when* Christ will return but rather provides "kairological" characters to the faithful. Heidegger distinguishes here the καιρός on the one hand and linear objective time or chronological time,[16] on the other.[17] The καιρός is nothing that could be formalized, for example, in a mathematical way. It is, for oneself, the opportune and crucial instant of a decision oriented toward the future. The kairological character of the return of Christ thus opens a tension in each Christian's life. And for Heidegger, this tension that animates proto-Christianity toward a "kairological" future is paradoxically what grounds the future itself in actual life. For instance, Heidegger notices that instead of answering the "when?" of Parousia, Paul refers the Christians back to their own actual knowledge and awareness of the return of Christ: "you very well know [i.e., you *already* know!] the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night [….]"

Furthermore Paul refers them to the *impact* of this pre-theoretical knowledge upon their actual factical life; the "answer" they are waiting for is actually a decision dependent on their own life: "Because when they will say: 'Peace and security,' upon them will fall a sudden ruin, like the pain of a birthing woman, and they won't escape. *For you my brothers*, you are not in the darkness, so this day won't surprise you like a thief. […] *Let us not sleep like the others but let us be vigilant and sober*" (I Thessalonians 5, 3–6). With Parousia, Heidegger says, "the answer of 'when' has been transformed into the question of 'how to live?' – [and that answer is] in the mode of wakefulness."[18] Those who say "Peace and security" have set their mind on the significance of this world which tends to obliterate the disquieting facticity of existence. They indeed live in expectation, but an expectation turned toward their surrounding world, far from their own selves – and the return of Christ will surprise them "like a thief in the night." But there are also those

who are wakeful, i.e., those who have heard and understood what Paul is saying. For them, the "when" is determined in each instant; Parousia is not so much an event to come as a part of their life.[19]

But how can Parousia be situated in the believer's life, how can it concretely "be a part" of this life? Firstly, Heidegger recalls, it is not a question of living with the obsession of the day of the Last Judgment, speculating on the form the Antichrist will take or upon the Apocalypse and the signs announcing the end of the world. Such a worldly attitude remains oriented to the objective determination of present or future events. Nor is it a question of disrupting the surrounding world, or even one's own worldly situation for the coming of Parousia. Paul rather says: "May each persevere in the vocation he was in at the time of his calling" (I Corinthians 7, 20).

Waiting for the return of Christ certainly demands a change – a radical change – but it does not primarily concern the relational-sense to this world and even less so the content-sense of existence. It concerns instead existence's enactment through a specific comportment. When Paul asks to remain aware, he is referring above all to a comportment turned toward the world of self; the Christian's awareness is oriented to his own life – for salvation. He will try, in conformity to the expectations of Christian life, to live within faith and love. But in his weakness, man can never be certain of his capacity for the authentic enactment-sense he is aiming for, or of his capacity to maintain this orientation until the return of Christ. He is thus beset by doubt and he experiences a constant concern for his self: "[He] troubles himself in an authentic sense, as a sign of true concern, with his capacity to accomplish works of faith and love and to persevere until the decisive day" (GA 60: 107/75, tm). For the Christian, it is not a matter of evacuating the anguish caused by the temporal horizon specific to his factical situation, but on the contrary, accentuating it. Authentic Christian life knows no security; constant insecurity and disquiet characterize it as it also characterizes the fundamental significances of life.[20]

Thus, from a hermeneutical and phenomenological perspective, "waiting" as the authentic way of relating to the world in terms of

faith's pre-theoretical knowledge rejoins "serving" in the disquieting being-in-the-world, constitutive of the movement of Christian facticity itself.[21] In the horizon of Parousia, the originary enactment-sense of life opens up on the originary temporality of factical life itself. It reveals the historicity of factical experience in such a way that its paradigmatic character for a broader phenomenology of life again comes to light.

V. CONCLUSION: THE EXPERIENCE OF FAITH AND HERMENEUTICAL PHENOMENOLOGY OF LIFE

How can I sum up the results of what I have written up to now? I previously suggested that faith held the role of an originary formal indication in the context of young Heidegger's phenomenology of religious life. The Heideggerian analysis of "waiting" and "serving," glossed above, seems to confirm this hypothesis. Indeed, in his commentary Heidegger tries not so much to determine the *contents* of embryonic Christian dogmas in Saint Paul, as to underline the essential *indeterminateness* of this content. *It is this very indeterminateness, claimed in the name of the enactment-sense specific to Christian life, that transforms faith's pre-theoretical knowledge into a formally indicative knowledge.*

By way of conclusion, I would like to suggest that the result of this phenomenological exercise on the proto-Christian experience can be read in two directions. For someone who is interested in understanding *religious life* as such, the Heideggerian interpretation can be of some value for the way it underscores both the inescapably factical character of the *experience* of faith and its originary grounding in a temporality oriented towards a future determined as καιρός. One can also consider the consequences of Heidegger's phenomenology of religious life from the perspective of his hermeneutics of facticity as such. For it would be incomplete to stay with the idea that proto-Christian life "only" plays the role of a paradigm or exemplification for a more general phenomenology of factical life. The very discovery of kairological temporality already transforms the simple use of the Christian "paradigm" into a resolutely prospective step towards *Being and Time* – where the horizon

of the future will be completely formalized as the primary temporal ecstasis of Dasein and the condition of its temporalization.

It is also necessary to insist on the preeminence of the enactment-sense compared to every other intentional dimension within the experience of faith. Insofar as the phenomenon of Christian faith *structurally demands* the precedence of enactment-sense over the content-sense and the relational-sense, one can understand the "intrinsically" paradigmatic or exemplary aspect of primordial Christianity's lived experience for Heidegger's phenomenology of factical life.

Thus if we consider Heidegger's phenomenology of religious life as a *test*, so to speak, of his formal indicative method *within a concrete and historical lived experience* (i.e., the experience of faith), it is obvious that it was a very successful test, indeed. That test shows not only that the experience of faith profits from a formal indicative interpretation of it but also how this exercise crystallizes crucial insights for this mode of interpretation and, thereby, for what was coming in Heidegger's way of thought.

ENDNOTES

1   This knowledge in faith *never* refers, as will be made clear, to
     any kind of theoretical insight or cognition but instead indicates
     a concrete orientation for action and a specific enactment for
     worldly significations which are rooted in the lived experience of
     faith itself. To designate this pre-theoretical knowledge entailed
     by proto-Christian life, Heidegger uses the word *Wissen* in con-
     trast to *Erkenntnis* (which would more likely suggest a mere theo-
     retical or "scientific" content). Unlike German or French (*savoir*,
     Wissen and *connaissance, Erkenntnis*), English does not have at
     its disposal two such readily distinct words. For this reason, it
     deserves to be noted from the outset that, whenever I refer to
     Heidegger's use of *Wissen* in GA 60 or to my own interpretation
     of it, I have in mind what I call "formal-indicative" or "pre-the-
     oretical" knowledge. For a different version of the present paper,
     see "Foi et indication formelle" in *Le jeune Heidegger (1909–1926).
     Herméneutique, phénoménologie, théologie*, S.-J. Arrien and S. Ca-
     milleri (éds.) (Paris: Vrin [coll. Problèmes et controverses], 2011),
     135–151.
2   Cf. GA 56/57: 96–97/75–76: "There must be a pre-theoretical
     or supra-theoretical [*übertheoretische*] science, in all cases a non-
     theoretical science, a true originary science, from which the theo-
     retical itself would hold its origin. This science of the origin […]
     won't be a theory." GA 56/57: 59/46–47: "This preeminence of
     the theoretical must be broken, […] because the theoretical itself
     refers back to a pre-theoretical."
3   See GA 60: 55/38: "The problem of '*formal indication*' belongs to
     the 'theory' of the phenomenological method itself […]."
4   But even before considering Heidegger's analysis, one could raise
     an objection: *Why* should the primordial Christian life be a *para-
     digmatic* phenomenon in order to get an originary determination
     of the phenomenon of factical life "in general"? Isn't such a choice
     arbitrary? It certainly may seem so at first glance. Why choose
     an essentially religious experience rather than, say, an aesthetic

or political experience? Why start precisely from the experience of proto-Christianity rather than any other form of religiosity? Because, Heidegger would say, this religious experience seems to reveal more than any others the world of self (*Selbstwelt*). In the historical figure of proto-Christianity, "the phenomenon of sharpening, of effective accentuation of the world of self 'literally jumps to our eyes'" (GA 58: 60). Now, the *Selbstwelt* is the nexus of lived experience; it is where the historical, expressive and comprehensive possibilities of the lived world gather. Insofar as the inner experience of faith refers in a constitutive way to the world of self, the latter is *expressly* taken into account by the primordial Christians. Their entire life is indeed dedicated to a "work" of perpetual betterment of this inner life, which alone will speak for them at the moment of Parousia. This perpetual attention given to the world of self is the first reason, the one raised by Heidegger himself, why one should look more closely to religious experience rather than, say aesthetic experience, when the primordial sense of factical life is at stake. But, in my opinion, there is another reason, more specific and more technical in a way, but of significative relevance in order to grasp the full scope of the Heideggerian interpretation of Paul.

5   In a way, here we find, even into the interpretations of the Letters of Paul, the clash between Heidegger and Rickert's transcendental philosophy of values. Cf. B.D. Crowe, "Heidegger et le néo-kantisme de Bade. Critique de la philosophie des valeurs" in *Le jeune Heidegger*, 75–93.

6   οἴδατε is from εἴδω/ἰδεῖν (inf) that translates as, among other things, "see, appear, know, be skilled at" or, in my native French, *voir; observer; examiner; avoir une entrevue; se représenter; se figurer; M. se faire voir, d'où se montrer; sembler, paraître; avoir l'air, faire semblant, feindre de; se rendre semblable*; (parf. A.) *savoir, être informé, instruit de; être habile à; être en état de, pouvoir; avoir tels ou tels sentiments* (+ acc. n. pl.).

7   GA 60: 94/66, tm: "The γενέσθαι is a δέχεσθαι τὸν λόγον, 're-
     ceiving the proclamation'…."

8   GA 60: 108–109/76–77: *"steigerungsfähiger Vollzugszusammen-
     hang";* in this context Heidegger comments on II Thessalonians
     1, 3: "We ought to unceasingly give thanks to God, my brothers,
     for your faith is growing ever more and the love you hold for
     each other is becoming abundant […]". On the specificity of the
     knowledge in faith, see also GA 60: 310/235–236.

9   GA 60: 97/67: "δουλεύειν und ἀναμένειν bestimmen als Grund-
     richtungen jeden anderen Bezug." Most analyses in Heideggerian
     studies dedicated to the question of primordial Christianity direct
     their attention to the second term (*waiting*) that leads to vast
     perspectives on the question of Dasein's originary temporality.
     The fact that *Being and Time* echoes this problem directly, as well
     as the rather fragmented character of the Freiburg analyses of
     serving, explains in part why this latter notion was neglected in
     favor of the phenomenon of waiting. And yet, from the perspec-
     tive of hermeneutical phenomenology of life, I think that the
     interpretation of "serving" is indispensable, particularly if one
     wishes to understand what is really at stake with "waiting."

10   According to Heidegger, flesh certainly refers to the dynamic
     enactment of "authentic facticity amid life related to the sur-
     rounding world" (GA 60: 124/88, tm).

11   Cf. Philippians 1, 21–24: "Because for me, to live is Christ and to
     die is gain. If I live in the flesh, I will reap the fruit of my labor;
     and thus I don't know which to choose. I feel pressed on both
     sides, desiring to depart and be with Christ, something much
     better for me; and to remain in the flesh, something necessary
     for you."

12   Heidegger developed many analyses based on a similar inter-
     pretation of negation. For instance, see the analysis of the love
     of truth and its enactment-sense (GA 60: 109–110/77–78) where
     Heidegger comments on II Thessalonians 2, 10: "[…] those who

perish, since they didn't receive the love of truth in order to be saved."

13   This uncertainty, indeed this distress, lived as an extreme weakness and vulnerability, opens up the possibility of a true enactment in grace, a testimony to the divine might. Cf. Martin Luther, The Heidelberg Disputation, 18th thesis: "It is certain that man must utterly despair of his own ability before he is prepared to receive the grace of Christ"; Martin Luther, *Luther's Works: Career of the Reformer*, Harold J. Grimm and Helmut T. Lehmann (eds.) (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1957), 39–58.

14   In this sense, for example, the Hegelian interpretation, which tries to grasp "the appearance of Christ in terms of its [content] sense, as the revelation of the profundity of substance or Idea" is absolutely distant from the truth of Christianity.

15   Cf. GA 60: 150/106–107: "Und wie bestimmt er [Paul] dieses Wann ? Nicht durch objektive Zeitangabe, sondern durch das *Wie*, und zwar *Wie* als bezogen gleich auf den Bezug zu dem *Wie*, denn der Bezug bzw. Vollzug ist das Entscheidende des *Wann*!"

16   Καιρός, Pöggeler observes, "places it on the razor's edge in the decision. [Kairological] characteristics do not reckon with and master time; rather they place one into the threat of the future. They belong in life's history of [enactment] which cannot be objectified." Cf. Otto Pöggeler, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, trans. Daniel Magurshak and Sigmund Barber (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1987), 24.

17   This tension that animates proto-Christianity towards a future not chronological but "kairological" is also what grounds this future itself in the facticity of life. Thus is uncovered, for Heidegger, the initial motivation of history (*Geschichte*) and the originary temporality of factical life.

18   Françoise Dastur, *Heidegger et la question du temps* (Paris, PUF, 1990), 19.

19   For them, Heidegger maintains, "the question of 'when' leads back to comportment. The way Parousia is situated in life refers to the enactment of this life as such" (GA 60: 104/73, tm).

20   Hence the task befalling the Christian, on the basis of his factical situation, is to become conscious of his own limited being and be concerned with its enactment, leaving no room for "peace and security."

21   Cf. GA 60: 133/94. Cf. Martin Luther, op. cit., The Heidelberg Disputation, 11th thesis: "Arrogance cannot be avoided or true hope be present unless the judgment of condemnation is feared in every work."

From the Facticity of Dasein

to the Facticity of Nature:

Naturalism, Animality, and Metontology

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In spite of the recent attempts to naturalize phenomenology, the phe-nomenological tradition has been largely critical of naturalism ever since Husserl's attack on psychologism.[1] Throughout the development of his project of a phenomenological ontology in the late twenties, Heidegger's philosophy appears to share this anti-positivistic and anti-naturalistic strategy, in particular due to his resistance to the reduction of the ontological to the ontic. In this paper I initially outline how Heidegger resists naturalism through his attempt to distinguish *Dasein* from *Vorhandensein* and the factuality of natural entities. However, I argue that there are at least two significant moments in the late twen-ties, moments that coincide with Heidegger's abandonment of the proj-ect of fundamental ontology, in which the threat of naturalism returns and the ontological difference is at least questioned, if not altogether undermined. The first is the overturning of fundamental ontology into the complementary project of metontology, specifically in its identifica-tion of the facticity of Dasein with the facticity of nature, while the sec-ond can be found in the famous account of animality and the attempt to distinguish Dasein's mode of being-in-the-world from the animal's world-poverty. In both of these cases what is at stake is not only the stability of Heidegger's ontological difference but the very possibility of a distinction between Dasein and nature. In this paper I contend that,

as Heidegger enters into a more serious engagement with naturalistic questions, several methodological aspects of his fundamental ontology become problematized, if only implicitly.

In order to make the case for this thesis, I begin (in the first part of the paper) by briefly developing the important distinction between Dasein's *factical* mode of being and the *factuality* of entities unlike Dasein. The stability of this difference is itself axiomatic to the project of fundamental ontology developed in *Being and Time*, even if it is briefly questioned at the end of the text. In the second part of the paper I attempt to show how the distinction between Dasein and *Vorhandensein* is important for Heidegger's resistance to naturalism, especially insofar as he repeatedly identifies the being of the *Vorhanden* with nature throughout this period. In the third part I argue that, despite the methodological significance of such distinctions, Heidegger begins to problematize and perhaps even undermine them in his treatment of animality and the project of metontology. Finally, I conclude by showing how Heidegger ultimately shrinks back from these insights and reverts to what might appear as reassertions of the distinctions he had already questioned. I suggest that Heidegger should have accepted a naturalized account of Dasein's mode of being-in-the-world, provided that he had accepted a non-reductionistic view of what naturalism can be.

I. FACTICITY AND THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN DASEIN AND *VORHANDENSEIN*

One of the fundamental theses of Heidegger's *Being and Time* is that the manner of being of the entity he calls *Dasein* is radically distinct from the mode of being of other entities. The analytic of Dasein is developed from the beginning by contrast to the mode of existence Heidegger calls *Vorhandensein*:

> Ontologically, *existentia* means objective presence [*Vorhandenheit*], a kind of being which is essentially inappropriate to characterize the being which has the character of Dasein. We can avoid the confusion

by always using the interpretive expression objective presence [*Vorhandenheit*] for the term *existentia*, and by attributing existence [*Existenz*] as a determination of being only to Dasein. (GA 2: 56/SZ2: 42)

The term "existence" (*Existenz*) designates the manner of being appropriate to Dasein, to entities for whom being is a question, while the other categorical modes of *Vorhandenheit* and *Zuhandenheit* are reserved for other entities. The way in which Dasein is in a world is distinct from the inner-worldliness of other entities. This distinctive characteristic of Dasein is one Heidegger will repeatedly insist on, claiming that to understand Dasein as one objectively present entity among others is to completely overlook Dasein's essential ontological determination: "Dasein is never to be understood ontologically as a case and instance of a genus of beings as objectively present [*einer Gattung von Seiendem als Vorhandenem*]" (GA 2: 57/SZ2: 42). Of course, such a misunderstanding is always possible, and if kept within its proper boundaries, it would not necessarily be a misunderstanding. Just as biology identifies a certain class of entities (*Gattung von Seiendem*) as biological objects for investigation, anthropology or neurophysiology could single out the human for theoretical investigation. But Heidegger insists that in so doing what is distinctive about Dasein's mode of being is either lost or ignored.

Dasein is distinguished ontically from other entities by the fact that an understanding of being is constitutive of its existence: "*Understanding of being is itself a determination of being of Dasein.* The ontic distinction of Dasein lies in the fact that it *is* ontological" (GA 2: 16/SZ2: 12). Treating Dasein as a mere object among other existent objects would obscure this ontological possibility. However, there is an important ambiguity here, since Dasein is also an entity. Dasein *is* an ontic being among others, factically thrown into the world just as other entities are contingently thrown into the natural world. Up to a point, Heidegger accepts the identification of the brute factual existence of Dasein with an objective entity such as a lump of coal: "More precisely, they can be understood within certain limits and with a certain justification as

something merely objectively present" (GA 2: 74/SZ2: 55). However, Heidegger immediately adds that "to do this, one must completely disregard or just not see the existential constitution of being-in" (GA 2: 74–75/SZ2: 55). While there is a way in which Dasein exists as objectively present among other entities, this can be appropriate only if kept within "certain limits." I take Heidegger to mean here that if one thinks that this mode of being is exhaustive of what it means to be Dasein, it would remain inappropriate and reductive. This is because one is either reducing or eliminating the existential mode of being-in that distinguishes Dasein from a stone or a table. While Heidegger admits that in terms of the question of reality Dasein is present (and real) among other present, real entities, thinking along these lines will lead us astray from the goal of fundamental ontology, the goal of thinking through the ontological constitution of Dasein:

> Like other beings, Dasein is also *objectively present as real*. Thus being in general acquires the meaning of *reality*. Accordingly, the concept of reality has a peculiar priority in the ontological problematic. This priority diverts the path [*Dieser verlegt den Weg*] to a genuine existential analytic of Dasein, it also diverts our view of the being of innerworldly things initially at hand [*Zuhandenen*]. (GA 2: 267/SZ2: 201)

That is, it not only obscures the fact that Dasein is in the world in a particular way through its circumspective concern and engagement with entities, but also that the objects encountered in a world are primarily encountered as useful entities within a context of significance, as handy (*zuhanden*). So the problem with the view of Reality as a heap of factually existing entities is that it simply ignores or "skips over the phenomenon of worldliness [*Überspringen des Phänomens der Weltlichkeit*]" (GA 2: 88/SZ2: 65).

But Dasein is also factically thrown into a world among other entities. This singular being-thus and not otherwise is what Heidegger designates by Dasein's facticity. One may think that the facticity of Dasein,

its being thrown into the world (*Geworfenheit*) in some way, designates a mode of being that Dasein shares with other beings. However, this is not the case, and Heidegger goes to great pains to distinguish between the factuality and contingency of the objectively present and Dasein's facticity, reserving the term *Tatsächlichkeit* for the former and *Faktizität* for the latter. Just as there is a contrast between the modes of being (existence, objective presence), there is a contrast in their modes of thrownness as facts (facticity, factuality): "And yet the 'factuality' of the fact [*die 'Tatsächlichkeit' der Tatsache*] of one's own Dasein is ontologically totally different from the factual occurrence of a kind of stone. The factuality of the fact [*Die Tatsächlichkeit des Faktums*] of Dasein, as the way in which every Dasein actually is, we call its *facticity* [*Faktizität*]" (GA 2: 75/SZ2: 56). Of course, there is some form of "facticity" to the being of a stone – its "thatness" or its existing in the very way that it does exist (and not otherwise). But as Agamben and others have noted, this mode of existence has traditionally been understood through the concept of contingency (*Zufälligkeit*), which Heidegger differentiates from Dasein's mode of contingent existence, designated by *Faktizität*.[2] The manner in which Dasein "falls" into the world (*Geworfenheit*, *Verfallenheit*) is not the manner in which stones fall (*Zufälligkeit*) into the world. Agamben is thereby correct to stress that for Heidegger "the difference in modes of Being is decisive here."[3]

This difference is so decisive that almost every time Heidegger returns to the problem of Dasein's facticity in *Being and Time*, he goes out of his way to repeat this distinction just in case the reader has forgotten it: "*Facticity is not the factuality of the* factum brutum *of something objectively present, but is a characteristic of the being of Dasein taken on in existence*" (GA 2: 180/SZ2: 135).[4] This distinction is reiterated so often throughout the book that it could properly be considered a refrain or motif of *Being and Time*. Each time Heidegger further elucidates Dasein's being-in-the-world and articulates a new existential structure, he insists on the difference between factical existence and factual objective presence. For example, when developing the phenomenon of conscience, he observes: "As a phenomenon of

Dasein, conscience is not a fact [*Tatsache*] that occurs and is occasionally objectively present. It 'is' only in the kind of being of Dasein and makes itself known as a fact [*Faktum*] only in factical existence [*faktischen Existenz*]" (GA 2: 357/SZ2: 269). He returns to it when describing the temporality that is proper to Dasein and distinguishing it from the way in which objective entities are "in" time: "Evidently Dasein can never be past, not because it is imperishable, but because it can essentially *never* be *objectively present*. Rather, if it is, it *exists* [*sondern weil es wesenhaft nie* vorhanden *sein kann, vielmehr, wenn es ist,* existiert]" (GA 2: 503/SZ2: 380). From the standpoint of this repetitive and resolute attempt to distinguish *Dasein* from *Vorhandensein*, it becomes surprising to read the closing paragraphs of *Being and Time*, where Heidegger questions this very distinction:

> The distinction between the being of existing Dasein and the being of beings unlike Dasein (for example, objective presence) may seem to be illuminating, but it is only the *point of departure* for the ontological problematic; it is nothing with which philosophy can rest and be satisfied [*ist doch nur der* Ausgang *der ontologischen Problematik, aber nichts, wobei die Philosophie sich beruhigen kann*]. (GA 2: 576/SZ2: 436–37)

A book that involves repetitive attempts to delineate the proper mode of being of Dasein by differentiating it from the being of other entities ends, it seems, by problematizing this very project. The distinction upon which the proper being of Dasein was articulated is something of a heuristic starting point, but not something that we must remain settled with.

II. ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN *VORHANDENSEIN* AND NATURE

While we have seen that the distinction between *Dasein* and *Vorhandensein* is decisive for Heidegger's differentiation between facticity and factuality, it is not immediately obvious what exactly this has to do with nature and naturalism. In the following section I argue that the

ontological difference and the difference between Dasein and *Vorhandensein* are two important and mutually dependent components of Heidegger's general resistance to naturalism. But naturalism is a famously slippery term, which historically has come to mean many diverse and often contradictory philosophical positions.[5] The meaning of naturalism varies widely, from the very specific methodological claim that epistemology be treated as "continuous with natural science"[6] to strict versions of physicalist reductionism to more general forms of skepticism about spooky substances and occult qualities, or what John Dupré simply calls "anti-supernaturalism."[7] In claiming that Heidegger resists naturalism, it is important not to restrict this term to our post-Quinean narrow sense of naturalism: namely, the methodological view that the empirical natural sciences are continuous with philosophy, are the measure of what exists, and therefore ought to determine our ontological commitments. Instead, if one is claiming that Heidegger's philosophy is resistant to naturalism, one must have a much broader category in mind, one that includes any view of the "world" as a natural whole, with human beings as a specific part of, or a specific entity within, this whole. The latter view is what Heidegger, already in *Being and Time*, identifies with "traditional ontology" (GA 2: 88/SZ2: 65). On this more general account of naturalism, any philosophy that subsumes Dasein's mode of existence under a greater cosmological monistic totality called "nature" could be properly called naturalistic. It is therefore a category broad enough to include figures as diverse as Lucretius, Spinoza, and Nietzsche, as well as Wilfrid Sellars.

Heidegger's criticism is of any position, regardless of whether one calls it naturalism, positivism, or traditional ontology, that is reductive towards the proper mode of existence of Dasein. What is at stake is exactly how to understand "world" – and Heidegger's claim is that the positivism of traditional ontology skips over (*überspringt*) the phenomenon of world and determines nature as a totality of objectively present things. From this point of view, Dasein becomes one entity within the natural cosmos and its proper mode of existence is ignored: "Instead, one tries to interpret the world in terms of the being of the

being [*dem Sein des Seienden*] which is objectively present within the world [*innerweltlich vorhanden*] but has not, however, even been initially discovered – in terms of nature" (GA 2: 88/SZ2: 65). Whereas this understanding of nature is not the only one Heidegger mobilizes throughout his work in the twenties,[8] it cannot be ignored that between 1925 to 1929 Heidegger very closely identifies the *Vorhanden* with the natural, and the ontology that determines everything as *Vorhandensein* with the traditional ontology of nature. This becomes most explicit in his lecture course of the summer semester of 1927, where he attempts to differentiate the concept of world he developed in *Being and Time* from this traditional and more naturalistic one:

> The world is not nature and it is certainly not the extant [*die Welt ist nicht die Natur und überhaupt nicht das Vorhandene*], any more than the whole of all the things surrounding us, the contexture of equipment, is the environing world, the *Umwelt*. Nature – even if we take it in the sense of the whole cosmos as that which we also call, in ordinary discourse, the universe, the whole world – all these entities taken together, animals, plants, and humans, too, are not the world, viewed philosophically. (GA 24: 235/165)

In this seminar Heidegger differentiates Dasein from the *Vorhanden* by directly identifying the latter with nature, with the effect of creating a contrast between the human and the "merely" natural. What is distinctive about Dasein is that as long as it is, it is *necessarily* within a world; the two are co-belonging or co-relational. However, being-in-the-world is merely a *possible* (but not necessary) determination of the natural: "Intraworldliness belongs to the being of the extant, nature, not as a determination of its being, but as a possible determination" (GA 24: 240/169). A rock can enter a world or not enter it, but this determination is not constitutive for its mode of being. This change from being "worldless" to being "in" the world is not inherent in what it means to be a rock, or in Heidegger's words, it "does not belong to nature's being

[*gehört nicht zum Sein der Natur*]" (GA 24: 241/269). For purely natural entities, it is, so to speak, optional whether or not they take part in the context of meaning and significance designated by being-in-the-world.

The distinction between Dasein's mode of being-in-the-world (*In-der-Welt-sein*) and that of other natural entities (*Innerweltlichkeit*) is therefore a re-articulation of the distinction between Dasein and natural entities. And the distinction is based on the fact that worldliness in the proper sense is necessary for Dasein, but only a possibility for natural entities. Heidegger is differentiating "between being-in-the-world [*In-der-Welt-sein*] as a determination of the Dasein's ontological constitution [*Seinsverfassung*] and intraworldliness [*Innerweltlichkeit*] as a possible but not necessary determination of extant entities [*des Vorhandenen*]" (GA 24: 239–240/168). Traditional ontology thinks of the world as the entirety of the cosmos, as the universe, as nature in the Spinozistic sense, but this sense of nature is not at all what Heidegger means by *Welt*: "World is only, if, and as long as a Dasein exists. Nature can also be when no Dasein exists" (GA 24: 241/170). Whether we think of a stone or a chair, nature as *Vorhanden* is already described by Heidegger as worldless: "The chair does not have a world [*Der Stuhl hat keine Welt*]" (GA 24: 236/166). The world is something that only "is" or happens when Dasein happens, and only Dasein is properly understood as inhabiting a world: "The world is something Dasein-ish [*Die Welt is etwas Daseinsmäßiges*]" (GA 24: 237/166). There is here a deep continuity between Heidegger's conception of world and the Kantian conception of nature, at least insofar as the human is understood as a necessary contributor to the constitution of the space in which it meaningfully abides. Of course, Heidegger is always weary of the subjectivistic tendencies in these sorts of claims, especially insofar as they may come to mischaracterize the world as the product or fabrication of an active subject. Nonetheless, while not a product of Dasein, the world is not without Dasein's contribution or participation: "So far as Dasein exists, a world is cast-forth [*eine Welt vor-geworfen*] with Dasein's being. To exist means, among other things, to cast-forth a world [*sich Welt vorher-werfen*]" (GA 24: 239/168).

This casting-forth of world, if properly understood in its ecstatic character and not as a mere imposition of the activity of a transcendental subject, is what Heidegger during this period calls the "transcendence" of Dasein. Transcendence is a fundamental constitution of Dasein that allows it to be world-forming and thus to inhabit the cosmos in a manner that is radically distinct from all other entities: "Transcendence is not just one possible comportment (among others) of Dasein toward other beings, but it is the basic constitution of its being [*Grundverfassung seines Seins*], on the basis of which Dasein can at all relate to beings in the first place" (GA 26: 211/165). Transcendence is the basic comportment that explains why Dasein surpasses entities towards "world," and thus enacts the ontological difference within which it abides. Heidegger closely aligns the relationship between Dasein's surpassing of the ontic towards the ontological, Dasein's transcendence, and Dasein's essentially ecstatic mode of being-in-the-world: "insofar as a being-in-the-world is existent, beings (nature) have also already been leapt over [*ist auch schon Seiendes (Natur) übersprungen*]" (GA 26: 213/166).[9] The fact that Dasein exists means that entities have been transcended towards their horizon of intelligibility, giving rise to the ontological difference between being and beings. Heidegger closely associates this surpassing of the ontic that happens in Dasein's transcendence to an understanding of the ways in which Dasein is beyond the merely natural world in which it is always already thrown:

> Dasein is thrown, factical, thoroughly amidst nature through its bodiliness, and transcendence lies in the fact that these beings, among which Dasein is and to which Dasein belongs, are surpassed [*überschritten*] by Dasein. In other words, as transcending, Dasein is beyond nature, although, as factical, it remains environed by nature. As transcending, i.e. as free, Dasein is something alien to nature [*Als transzendierendes, d. h. als freies ist das Dasein der Natur etwas Fremdes*]. (GA 26: 212/166)

Even if Dasein is always embedded in its bodily existence, always one entity among others, Heidegger's point is that it is not just that, but also (and essentially) something that transcends being purely absorbed by or reduced to those determinations, and thus is an entity that is somehow outside of and alien to nature.

It is significant to note that in the very lecture course in which Heidegger introduces the ontological difference he closely relates it to the distinction between Dasein and nature. The ontological difference itself depends on the fact that there is a difference between the facticity of Dasein, Dasein's mode of being-in-the-world, and the factuality of nature. Transcendence is both the mode of being proper to Dasein and that which somehow explains the surpassing of the merely ontic into the ontological. If naturalism were correct and all that existed were entities and nothing more, then strictly speaking there would be no radical ontological difference, nor a radical distinction between the mode of being of Dasein and that of other entities. Characterizing the difference between Dasein's mode of being and that of nature as "this radical distinction of ways of being [*diesem radikalem Unterschied der Seinsweisen*]" (GA 24: 250/176), Heidegger wonders whether there is any way of unifying these senses of being:

> The ontological difference between the constitution of the Dasein's being and that of nature proves to be so disparate that it seems at first as though the two ways of being are incompatible and cannot be determined by way of a uniform concept of being in general. (GA 24: 250/176)

It is unclear what this "uniform" concept of being would be, since if being were simply a higher genus under which both Dasein's existence and natural entities' objective presence were subsumed, we would readily return to the view of "traditional ontology." What is at stake in Heidegger's concern is the following: either we have two radically distinct modes of being that cannot be unified and we end up in some form of dualism (even if a modal dualism rather than a strict substance

dualism), or we have the threat of something like the monistic naturalism of traditional ontology, and Dasein is simply one type of entity among others.

This threat, namely, that of collapsing the distinction between Dasein and nature as well as the distinction between being and beings, is a threat to the very nature of philosophy as Heidegger sees it. In this sense, methodological naturalism, the idea that there is no such thing as a purely philosophical question that could not be dealt with within one of the branches of specific sciences, is also a target of Heidegger's concern. While Heidegger does not use the language of "naturalism," he has this position in mind when he criticizes the "positivism" of these endeavors, in order to stress the way in which they reduce the ontological dimension to an ontic explanation of the positive sciences: "Positive sciences deal with that which is, with beings; that is to say, they always deal with specific domains, for instance, nature" (GA 24: 17/13). While there is nothing inherently problematic with the thematization of a particular region of entities and its objectification for scientific investigation, if the positive sciences consistently interpret *all* entities in this way, it leads to a dangerous form of reductive positivism. Philosophical problems become nothing other than inarticulate versions of questions better posed and studied within anthropology, psychology, evolutionary biology, and so on. The danger of this form of positivism is that "the ontological is denied altogether and explained away ontically" (GA 24: 466/327). This procedure would make philosophy itself either impossible or unnecessary, since Heidegger directly identifies the proper space of philosophical questioning with the ontological difference: "Only by making this distinction – κρίνειν in Greek – not between one being and another being but between being and beings do we first enter the field of philosophical research" (GA 24: 23/17).[10] The very possibility of philosophy, on this view, is closely aligned with the possibility of distinguishing between being and beings, which in turn is dependent on understanding the proper existence of Dasein in a manner different from that of other natural entities.

III.   QUESTIONING THE DISTINCTION

Even though Heidegger insists on these distinctions in a strong way throughout 1926 and 1927, we have already noted how *Being and Time* ends by questioning the difference between Dasein and other entities, or at least in warning us that it must not become something of an unquestioned dogma. While the fault-lines are already beginning to appear, it is only in 1928 and 1929 that these fissures reach a critical point in the overturning of fundamental ontology and in the question of animality. Both of these moments in Heidegger's lecture courses involve some form of *implicit* naturalistic challenge to the difference between Dasein and nature, and Heidegger appears to be acutely aware that they have the possibility of undermining the very project of a phenomenological ontology. In a restricted sense I am claiming that the demise of Heidegger's fundamental ontology happens at the hands of naturalism.

The first important break can be seen in the appendix to his 1928 seminar on the *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*. Here Heidegger notes that the concept of world developed within fundamental ontology leads to a necessary "overturning [*Umschlag*]" (GA 26: 196/154). This overturning is not simply a change in focus or understanding, as if we should now turn to an ontic metaphysics because we have exhausted the resources of fundamental ontology. Rather, he sees fundamental ontology and a new "metontology" as complementary sciences, with the former developing into the latter: "precisely the radicalization of fundamental ontology brings about the above-mentioned overturning [*Umschlag*] of ontology out of its very self" (GA 26: 200/157).[11] In what does this overturning consist? It consists precisely in going beyond the radical distinction between Dasein and nature that was decisive for fundamental ontology, and in further investigating in a more primordial manner the ontic existence that Dasein shares with other extant entities.

> Since being is there only insofar as beings are already there [*Da es Sein nur gibt, indem auch schon gerade Seiendes im Da ist*], fundamental ontology has in it

> the latent tendency towards a primordial, metaphysical transformation which becomes possible only when being is understood in its whole problematic. The intrinsic necessity for ontology to turn back to its point of origin can be clarified by reference to the primal phenomenon of human existence: the being "man" understands being; understanding-of-being effects a distinction between being and beings; being is there only when Dasein understands being. (GA 26: 199/156)

The transformation from fundamental ontology to metontology involves noticing that even though the ontological difference happens only if and as long as Dasein is, all of this is simultaneously dependent on ontic existence. There is a strange circularity here: even though the distinction between being and beings happens only if Dasein exists in a manner different from entities, Dasein can exist in this way and have an understanding of being only "insofar as beings are already there [*indem auch schon gerade Seiendes im Da ist*]."

Why does this return us to the problem of naturalism? Because Heidegger is suggesting that we think of Dasein as one entity among others that factically happens to have an ontological tendency. The dichotomy between the facticity of Dasein and the factuality of nature is here going to break down, and this becomes clear when Heidegger uses the term facticity for the type of being of nature, a term he earlier reserved only for Dasein. This important moment is obscured by the translation, which, in line with Heidegger's earlier claims, insists on differentiating factical and factual, presumably hoping that this is simply a momentary terminological slip:

> In other words, the possibility that being is there in the understanding presupposes the factical existence of Dasein [*die faktische Existenz des Daseins*], and this in turn presupposes the factual extantness of nature [*das faktische Vorhandensein des Natur*]. Right within the horizon of the problem of being, when posed radically,

> it appears that all this is visible and can become un-
> derstood as being, only if a possible totality of beings is
> already there. (GA 26: 199/156–157)

This statement would have been unthinkable in *Being and Time*, since here Heidegger is not only "equivocating" between the type of being of nature and that of Dasein, but also claiming that the facticity of Dasein presupposes the facticity of nature. The suggestion is that beyond the *difference* between Dasein's *Existenz* and nature's *Vorhandensein*, there is a factical (*faktische*) mode of being they share. Furthermore, fundamental ontology is said to depend on an understanding of "a possible totality of beings [*eine mögliche Totalität von Seiendem*]," once again precisely the type of move that he criticized under the name of "traditional" ontology. What would this totality of beings be, if not the "cosmos" he criticized as somehow a misinterpretation of what it means to be in a world? Nevertheless, at this moment Heidegger claims that if posed radically enough, even the problematic of *Being and Time* necessarily leads in that direction.

One year later and now in Freiburg, Heidegger returns to a different question that threatens to undermine the distinction between Dasein and nature, but this time through the issue of animality.[12] Already in *Being and Time*, Heidegger had noted how life is somehow in between Dasein and objective presence, and that it does not fit comfortably within that dichotomy: "Life is neither pure objective presence, nor is it Dasein" (GA 2: 67/SZ2: 50). Within the categories offered in *Being and Time*, this exception should have become central to Heidegger's analytic; however, it remains a marginal comment with no further elaboration. Heidegger famously attempts to deliver on this promissory note in the lecture course *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*. Here, Heidegger returns to the distinction between the "worldless" constitution of the stone (which now replaces the chair as the exemplar of the *Vorhanden*) and the "world-forming" constitution of Dasein (GA 29/30: 263/177). However, Heidegger places the animal in an in-between category, famously claiming that "the animal is *poor in world*" (GA 29/30: 263/177). This poverty is phenomenologically

developed through a comparative and privative analysis in relation to Dasein, an analysis that has led many interpreters to accuse Heidegger of anthropocentric tendencies.[13] As Derrida has shown, Heidegger believes that when compared to Dasein there is something deficient in the "as-structure" (*als-Struktur*) of the animal, even if this deficiency is not to be understood as an absolute privation.[14] While the animal is not world-forming, it does have a mode of access to entities – and entities are actually phenomenologically "given" to the animal: "whatever the lizard is lying on is certainly given *in some way* for the lizard, and yet is not known to the lizard *as* a rock" (GA 29/30: 291/198).[15] Animals have distinct relationships to their environments, treating entities in a manner that is fairly close to *Zuhandenheit*. Just as I may see a hammer *as* a hammer, my dog may see it *as* object-to-be-chewed. However, as Derrida, Calarco, and others have argued, Heidegger is unable to successfully articulate these distinctions. He notices that animality transcends *Vorhandenheit*, but cannot find a way to determine its relationship to Dasein other than through privation and comparison. In the end, the seminar concludes aporetically, once again showing that animality is an impasse to the distinctions essential to fundamental ontology: "Thus the thesis that 'the animal is poor in world' must remain as a problem" (GA 29/30: 396/273). In fact, problems and *aporiai* proliferate in this text, which is the lecture course in which Heidegger questions whether the ontological difference is adequately treated through fundamental ontology, going so far as to suggest the abandonment of ontology altogether (GA 29/30: 522/359).

It is arguable that the problem of animality once again brings with it the implicit threat of naturalism. This is because the distinction between the facticity of Dasein and the factuality of nature is blurred by the addition of a previously excluded middle. Animals are clearly a part of nature, and yet they do not necessarily fit the categories of *Vorhandenheit* or *Zuhandenheit*, challenging the notion that nature is even appropriately determined by these categories. Furthermore, if animals are to some extent within a world, then Dasein is not as distinctive and unique as it would appear from the analytic of Dasein in *Being and*

Time. More importantly, what the question of animality brings with it is the threat of something like gradualism – the idea that one can be more or less Dasein-ish, that one can be "in" a world to different degrees. If that is the case, then Dasein's ontological possibilities can be ontically reinterpreted as capacities or dispositional properties of a particular kind of entity within a natural cosmos. Not only are "animals" poor in world, but many human animals can be poor in world, such as children or the mentally disabled, or perhaps even the severely drunk or sleeping. The problem of world-poverty and the privative interpretation that goes along with it could be equally applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to infants or to humans with specific types of neurological deficiencies. This is a problem Heidegger briefly acknowledged in his treatment of young Dasein in the 1928/1929 winter semester lecture course in Freiburg (GA 27: 123–126). Heidegger wonders about the challenges inherent in understanding early and young forms of Dasein in the fundamental-ontological manner, and how to appropriately treat a mode of being that is not-quite Dasein but already includes several aspects of comportment and understanding of being. As Andrew Mitchell notes, "the similarities with the treatment of the animal are striking."[16] The relationships between Dasein and humans, between Dasein and other animals, between Dasein and nature become much more difficult to clearly delineate, once one acknowledges that there is a serious methodological problem in the constitution of different levels and modes of Dasein itself. If the capacity to have an understanding of being and of effectuating the ontological difference can happen to different degrees, it could potentially be explainable as an ontic capacity embedded in our material nature. What Heidegger called the "enactment of the difference between being and beings [*der Vollzug des Unterschiedes von Sein und Seiendem*]" (GA 26: 199/156) – which was allegedly only possible within Dasein – is itself conditioned by specific natural capacities of human beings. Whether or not Heidegger acknowledges this explicitly, the questions of animality and of metontology bring his project of fundamental ontology to the brink of naturalism and to a radical blurring of the contours of the ontological difference.

IV. CONCLUSION

However, if Kant shrinks back from the abyss of metaphysics, Heidegger does so from the abyss of naturalism. I have argued that in the late twenties, *both* the distinction between Dasein's mode of being and that of other natural entities *and* the ontological difference come very close to collapsing under the threat of a naturalized conception of existence. Heidegger himself saw these problems, especially insofar as they present significant impasses to his project of fundamental ontology. But even though Heidegger gives up on fundamental ontology as an inadequate path towards the proper articulation of the question of being and the truth of being, he reverts back to the distinctions he came close to abandoning along the way. By the mid-thirties, Heidegger can once again claim that the question of being and the ontological difference cannot be understood as a mere factical occurrence: "The asking of this question is not, in relation to beings as such and as a whole, some arbitrary occurrence amid beings, such as the falling of raindrops" (GA 40: 6/5). In the same text Heidegger neutralizes the threat of animality, now going so far as to claim that animals have *neither* a world nor an environment, and are not simply poor in world: "World is always *spiritual* world. The animal has no world [*Welt*], nor any environment [*Umwelt*]" (GA 40: 48/47). This judgment is especially troubling given the fact that Heidegger's phenomenological exercise into the question of animality ends, by his own account, aporetically with the claim that it remains an open problem. And even after Heidegger came to question, through the project of metontology, whether the distinction between the mode of existence of Dasein and other natural entities is as stable as it was presented within the contours of fundamental ontology, he reverts back to such strong formulations as the following: "The human being alone exists. Rocks are, but they do not exist. Trees are, but they do not exist. Horses are, but they do not exist" (GA 9: 374/284). Much of what was problematized in the late twenties simply gets restated a decade later, without a proper justification of how these difficulties were somehow overcome.

What, then, are we to do with the inconsistency between Heidegger's brief contact with naturalistic themes and his repeated renunciation of thinking in any naturalistic terms? Is his reversion to strong versions of distinctions he had already contested and problematized a sign of a repressed danger that Heidegger's phenomenology does not want to face? By way of conclusion, I want to suggest a different way of reading the situation. While Heidegger did come into contact with questions that should have pushed his inquiry towards naturalistic themes, this remained an impossibility for Heidegger because he always understood naturalism as essentially *reductionistic*. We saw above how Heidegger understands positivism as a danger that "the ontological is denied altogether and explained away ontically" (GA 24: 466/327). The fear here is that if we are to think of our mode of existing as if it were factually the same as that of other entities, we would lose what is distinctive about it. We would therefore have to think our mode of being, our intentional acts, as well as our movements in space and time in terms of the efficient causality that governs physical interactions in naturalistic accounts. Because of this fear Heidegger resists any philosophy that reduces the ontological dimension to merely a different form of ontic interaction. This is the minimal sense in which Heidegger maintains that his philosophy must be consistent with transcendental idealism: "If the term idealism amounts to an understanding of the fact that being is never explicable by beings, but is always already the 'transcendental' for every being, then the sole correct possibility of a philosophical problematic lies in idealism" (GA 2: 275/SZ2: 208). However, what is missing here is a sustained argument to show that naturalism *must* reduce the ontological dimension to the ontic. Of course, one can give examples of eliminativist forms of materialism that would be guilty of such a reduction, such as those proposed by La Mettrie in the eighteenth century or Büchner in the nineteenth, and defended by Paul Churchland today.[17] But does it follow that all forms of naturalism must be reductionistic by necessity, and that idealism is the only way not to eliminate the ontological dimension?

Today, it is clear that the objectification and reductionism that Heidegger and Husserl saw as essential to scientific naturalism are characteristics of only one of the many options within a vast array of different types of naturalism. John Dupré, for example, has criticized the fundamental presuppositions of the mechanical and physicalistic views of natural science (essentialism, reductionism, and determinism) in order to offer an ontologically pluralist way of understanding nature while remaining a naturalist.[18] Nancy Cartwright has offered similar critiques, calling the scientistic view "fundamentalism" and suggesting instead a pluralist account of causality and laws of nature.[19] The options that emerge from such historically and practically sensitive accounts of science undermine the either/or of transcendental idealism or naturalism. We too often believe that we must defend the sphere of meaning, intentional comportment, and intelligibility from naturalistic attacks because naturalism must be some form of physicalist reductionism, explaining away any understanding of being as if it were the collision of billiard balls. So we desperately attempt to delineate a sphere that is essentially different from the vicissitudes of natural change and contamination, as Heidegger does in claims such as these:

> Because *this*, that we understand Being, does not just occur in our Dasein like the fact, say, that we possess earlobes of such and such a sort. Instead of earlobes, some other structure could form part of our hearing organ. That we understand Being is not just actual; it is also necessary [*Daß wir das Sein verstehen, ist nicht nur wirklich, sondern es ist notwendig*]. (GA 40: 90/88)

Against all the phenomenological clues that make the distinction between Dasein and nature and between facticity and factuality untenable in the final analysis, Heidegger maintains that the event of an understanding of being happens in a manner completely different from the contingent happening of a naturally evolved capacity. But to say that Dasein's mode of being is not reducible to the way our earlobes evolve, or to the mode of being of a lizard, or that the mode of being of a lizard

is not reducible to the mode of being of stones, is just to say that entities exist in different ways, and to say it in a manner completely consistent with many forms of liberal naturalism.[20] As Cartwright insists, "we live in a dappled world, a world rich in different things, with different natures, behaving in different ways."[21] Once we accept a pluralistic account of modes of being and the reality of non-reducible, higher-level domains, we do not need to maintain the absolute exceptionalism of Dasein's mode of existence. In light of the problems of metontology and animality, Heidegger should accept, at least as question-worthy, the possibility that the facticity of Dasein is intricately related to the facticity of other natural entities. Our understanding of Being *could* then be understood to have a mode of contingent and factical existence, just as the size of our earlobes, or the capacities of our prefrontal cortex.

ENDNOTES

1   Cf. J. Petitot, F. Varela, B. Pachoud, and J.-M. Roy (eds.), *Naturalizing Phenomenology: Issues in Contemporary Phenomenology and Cognitive Science* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999). Some more traditional interpreters of Husserl see this project as doomed from the very start, since, as Lawlor claims, "without any question, the idea of naturalizing contradicts Husserl's entire conception of phenomenology." Leonard Lawlor, "Becoming and Auto-Affection: Part 2: Who Are We?" *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, Vol. 30: 2 (2009), 220. A good summary of the methodological issues surrounding the transcendental aspects of phenomenology and their compatibility with naturalism can be found in Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind: an Introduction to Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 19–41.

2   Giorgio Agamben, "The Passion of Facticity," in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*, edited and translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 188–189.

3   Agamben, "The Passion of Facticity," 189.

4   This distinction is reiterated several times throughout the text; see, for example, GA 2: 366–67/SZ2: 276: "Dasein, after all, always exists factically. […] But the facticity of Dasein is essentially distinguished from the factuality of something objectively present. Existing Dasein does not encounter itself as something objectively present within the world."

5 An excellent history and taxonomy of the term can be found in Geert Keil's "Naturalism," in *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth Century Philosophy*, edited by Dermot Moran (New York: Routledge, 2008), 254–307.

6 W. V. Quine, "Naturalism; or, Living within One's Means," in *Quintessence: Basic Readings from the Philosophy of W. V. Quine*, edited by Roger F. Gibson, Jr. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 281.

7 John Dupré, "How to be Naturalistic Without Being Simplistic in the Study of Human Nature," in *Naturalism and Normativity*, edited by Mario de Caro and David Macarthur (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 290.

8 It must be stressed that Heidegger, even in *Being and Time*, does not exclusively determine nature in terms of the *Vorhanden*. For other senses of nature operating in the early Heidegger, see my forthcoming "The Problem of Nature in Heidegger's Marburg Period," in *Heideggers Marburger Zeit: Themen, Argumente, Konstellationen* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2013). These other senses of nature, however, remain undeveloped in the early work and must be read against the grain of Heidegger's predominant identification of *Vorhandenheit* with nature as understood by the natural sciences.

9 There is, admittedly, a systematic instability in claiming that nature is identified with the *Vorhanden* (as we saw above) and this identification of nature with the ontic (entities), since the *Vorhanden* should only be one of many possible modes of being of entities. Heidegger is not entirely consistent in differentiating presence-at-hand from the bare undifferentiated entity-character of beings.

10 Joseph Rouse claims that Heidegger "joined naturalists in arguing, against his neo-Kantian, phenomenological, and logical positivist contemporaries, that philosophy must begin from and remain within the horizon of our 'natural' involvement with our surroundings in all its material and historical concreteness"; see

Joseph Rouse, in "Heidegger on Science and Naturalism," *Continental Philosophy of Science*, edited by Gary Gutting (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 130. But Rouse is here collapsing the concreteness of Dasein's being-in-the-world with the material and historical concreteness of other entities, and only in that sense could Heidegger be called a true naturalist. The distinction between facticity and factuality is precisely an attempt to differentiate those two forms of supposed "concreteness." Additionally, Rose claims that "opponents of naturalism typically assign a distinctive subject-matter to philosophy, such as epistemology, logic, semantics, or transcendental consciousness, whereas naturalists tend to emphasize the continuity between philosophy and the sciences." According to Rouse, Heidegger's conception of fundamental ontology inclined more in the latter direction (ibid., 130). But we have seen that Heidegger believes that the ontological difference is essential for maintaining the proper space of philosophy independent from the positive sciences, which is why I believe that Rouse is painting a picture of fundamental ontology that is too close to naturalism for Heidegger ever to accept.

11   Heidegger's characterization here is of a general enterprise called "metaphysics" that has within it two complementary parts: "In their unity, fundamental ontology and metontology constitute the concept of metaphysics" (GA 26: 202/158). For an excellent, lucid account of the uncomfortable relationship between ontology, phenomenology, and metontology, see Steven Galt Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001), 222–43.

12   For an excellent summary of Heidegger's account of animality, see William McNeill, "Life Beyond the Organism: Animal Being in Heidegger's Freiburg Lectures, 1929–1930," in *Animal Others: On Ethics, Ontology and Animal Life*, edited by Peter Steeves (Albany, SUNY Press, 1999), 197–248. For an almost exhaustive account of Heidegger's engagement with the contemporary biological theory of his day and its effects on his understanding of

organic life, see Thomas Kessel, *Phänomenologie des Lebendigen: Heideggers Kritik an den Leitbegriffen der neuzeitlichen Biologie* (Verlag Karl Alber, 2011).

13 See, for example, Matthew Calarco, who concludes that despite all the caveats, Heidegger's "discourse on animals constantly falls back into an anthropocentric framework, measuring animals against what he considers to be uniquely human capacities." Matthew Calarco, *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 36.

14 Jacques Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, translated by David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 143–160.

15 However, even if animals do have some mode of comportment towards their world, or in the very least their environmental surroundings, Heidegger denies them the holistic understanding of being which is necessary for world-formation: "World is the manifestness of beings as such as a whole" (GA 29/30: 512/353). This letting-be of the whole is precisely what Heidegger, in his conclusions, denies to animality, determining its world-relation as "poor" in relation to Dasein: "Nothing of this kind is to be found in animality or in life in general" (GA 29/30: 398/274).

16 Andrew J. Mitchell, "Heidegger's Late Thinking of Animality: The End of World-Poverty," *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual*, Volume 1 (2011): 84.

17 Julien Offray de la Mettrie, *Man a Machine*, French-English Edition (Illinois: Open Court, 1912); Ludwig Büchner, *Force and Matter; or the Principles of the Natural Order of the Universe* (London: Asher and Co., 1884); Paul Churchland, "Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes," *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. LXXVIII, no. 2 (1981): 67–90.

18 John Dupré, *The Disorder of Things: Metaphysical Foundations of the Disunity of Science* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

19   Nancy Cartwright, *The Dappled World: A Study of the Boundaries of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). In addition, see also the many practice-oriented and historically sensitive accounts of science found in Ian Hacking's *Representing and Intervening: Introductory Topics in the Philosophy of Natural Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) and Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison's *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007). The picture that emerges from such texts is a view of natural science that does not immediately elicit the fear of reductionism so prevalent in the transcendental aspects of phenomenology.

20   See the essays collected in Mario de Caro and David Macarthur's *Naturalism and Normativity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

21   Cartwright, *The Dappled World*, 1.

Translating Contributions

Wayne J. Froman

Martin Heidegger. *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event).*
Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012. 433 pp.

Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu have done a major service
in providing their translation of Heidegger's *Beiträge zur Philosophie
(Vom Ereignis)* to the Anglophone world. Heidegger's text – written be-
tween 1936 and 1938, but first published posthumously in 1989 (with a
second edition in 1994) as volume 65 of Heidegger's "Complete Edition"
(GA 65) – is of major importance both within Heidegger's corpus and
in terms of philosophy in our time. The thinking here is exceptionally
difficult. Also, the text is incomplete. It never reached the point where
Heidegger would publish it as a fully formed text. The manuscript con-
sists of eight divisions: "Prospect (*Vorblick*)," "The Resonating (*Der An-
klang*)," "The Interplay (*das Zuspiel*)," "The Leap" (*der Sprung*), "The
Grounding" (*die Gründung*), "The Future Ones" (*die Zu-künftigen*),
"The Last God" (*der letzte Gott*), and "Beyng" (*das Seyn*). In accord
with the German edition, the translation places "Beyng" last although
it comes second in the manuscript. Friedrich Wilhelm von Hermann,
who edited the German edition, explains in an "Editor's Afterword"
that in placing "Beyng" last, he took his cue from a note by Heidegger

in the manuscript to the effect that the placement of "Beyng" should be otherwise than where it was, which was second, and that its placement last in the published text reflects the distinct importance of "Beyng." These eight divisions comprise a total of 281 sections, each with its own title. There is considerable repetition in the text and often it has the character of notes for further development and integration within the ongoing thinking. At times the reader finds lists of topics either with brief comments or none at all, and, occasionally, less than fully formed sentences. As elsewhere in Heidegger's writings, the language often goes far beyond common or standard German usage.

In his *Der Denkweg Martin Heideggers* from 1963 (*Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, 1993), Otto Pöggeler first made widely known the existence of the manuscript of the *Beiträge* that was to be Heidegger's second major book. Written a decade after the publication of the first, *Being and Time*, in 1927, the later text departs from the earlier one in quite significant ways. First, *das Seyn*, an earlier form of the word *das Sein*, is understood here by Heidegger as prior to the ontological difference, the difference between being and beings that is crucial in *Being and Time* and in the earlier work generally. *Das Seyn* is helpfully rendered in this translation as "beyng," which is itself an earlier form of the English "being." In *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, Heidegger is intent on thinking beyng in a way that does not begin from beings, or in other words, that is no longer metaphysical. While *Being and Time* carries out an extensive analysis of our Da-sein, our opening for being, in *Contributions* Heidegger repeatedly characterizes Da-sein as not yet, or rather, to come. "The gods" and "the last god," who do not figure in the earlier work, are much in evidence in *Contributions*. While in the earlier text, time is more primordial than space, in *Contributions*, the two are co-primordial and what Heidegger calls "time-space" (*der Zeitraum*) is characterized as the site for *Being and Time's* "the moment" (*der Augenblick*), the authentic present. Another factor that first makes its appearance in *Contributions* is earth, a self-concealing element that Heidegger associates with nature but does not reduce to nature in that earth, like just about all there is in *Contributions*, has an historical

inflection. Earth is in constant contention with "world." This contention is central to Heidegger's lecture "The Origin of the Work of Art" (GA 5: 1–74/1–56), which dates from the period of *Contributions*. It is crucial where the "confrontation" (*die Auseinandersetzung*) between gods and ourselves is concerned. Another point that appears here in contrast to the earlier text is the "denial" (*die Verweigerung*) of beyng, which Heidegger characterizes as beyng's highest gift. Also central to the *Contributions* are the dynamics of "grounding" (*die Gründung*), which Heidegger had not addressed in *Being and Time* but which he had sought to think in the 1929 essay "On the Essence of Reasons" (GA 9: 123–175/97–135).

Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event) is crucial in regard to the emergence of major themes addressed in Heidegger's later work. One such theme is "technicity" (*die Technik*) along with one of its essential features, "the networking" (*das Gestell*), which Heidegger here calls "machination" (*die Machenschaft*). Another such theme is art, and in particular, poetry. A third is language. While the emergence of these themes belonging to the later work is unmistakable here, a transition from *Being and Time* and the thought that generated that major text to *Contributions* is not as clear. Indeed, while *Being and Time* is characterized as a first foray into the thinking of beyng, and while the importance of the earlier text's thinking of time as a clue to the thinking of beyng is sustained, Heidegger announces a willingness here to relinquish particulars of *Being and Time*. He writes, in the division called "The Leap":

> At issue in the question of being is nothing other than the carrying out of this preparation for our history. All "contents," "opinions," and "itineraries" within the particulars of the first attempt (*Being and Time*) are contingent and can disappear. (191)[1]

Given that the text was written in the second half of the decade of the 1930s, it is legitimate to ask about direct references to developments in Germany at the time. Two references to Jews are noteworthy in that regard. One comes from the opening division of the text, "Prospect":

> To ask the question of who we are is in fact *more dangerous* here than any other opposition encountered on the same level of certainty about the human being (the final form of Marxism, a form that has essentially nothing to do with Jewishness or even with Russianness; if an undeveloped spiritualism still lies dormant someplace, then that place is the Russian people; Bolshevism is originally Western, a European possibility: the rise of the masses, industry, technology, the dying out of Christianity; insofar, however, as the supremacy of reason, qua equalization of everyone is merely a consequence of Christianity, which is itself of Jewish origin {cf. Nietzsche's idea of the slave revolt in morals}, Bolshevism is in fact Jewish, but then Christianity is also basically Bolshevist! Which decisions thereby become necessary?). (44)

The other comes from the division called "Resonating":

> *Sheer idiocy* to say that experimental research is Nordic-Germanic and that rational research, on the contrary, is of *foreign extraction!* We would then have to resolve to number Newton and Leibniz among the "Jews." It is precisely the projection of nature in the *mathematical* sense that constitutes the presupposition for the necessity and possibility of "*experimentation*" as measuring. (127)

The sarcasm in evidence in both passages is indicative of a reaction by Heidegger to the nonsensical character and sheer idiocy of what was being said in each case about the "Jews." While the intellectual character of the whole text is so far beyond anything one could imagine any average National Socialist enthusiast taking an interest in, and while both of the above passages are somewhat on the order of passing remarks, it is true that other passing remarks elsewhere get taken at

times as conclusive evidence of anti-Semitism and an ultimate dedication to National Socialism on Heidegger's part.

At the outset, Heidegger is explicit about the crucial importance of *das Ereignis*, which in standard German means "the event." In the title of the text, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, the "subtitle" is of paramount importance. The translators have rendered the title as *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*. This has the advantage of employing the recognizable standard meaning of *das Ereignis*. Furthermore, in rendering "vom" as "of," the translators have made use of a standard form for a title in such a way that "Of the Event" is in apposition, in effect, to "Contributions to Philosophy," elevating the importance of "Of the Event" in accord with Heidegger's specification. In addition, the "of" here can also be understood in a genitive sense. This translation of the title is preferable to the translation *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, the title for the first English translation of the text.[2] That translation of the crucial word *das Ereignis* is not helpful, to begin with, because it omits, altogether, "event." It resorts to a term, "enowning," which is not an English word. It relies on associations of *das Ereignis* with *eigen*, "own" or "proper," and *eignen*, "to be distinct to," which are suggestive, first of all, in so far as the event in question here, the occurrence of world, brings our selfhood with it, but which are probably linguistic associations after the fact. When Heidegger sought untapped possibilities within German the point was not to end up with forced coinages such as "enowning" used as an English word. What *Da-sein*, for example, says for Heidegger is most distinctive; nevertheless, the word is a German word. Heidegger did call attention elsewhere to the fact that an earlier form of the word *das Ereignis* was *das Eräugnis* and that this is associated with *eräugnen*, to bring before the eyes, or to bring to sight. This can be related to *lichten* and *die Lichtung*, both terms deployed by Heidegger, where the former ordinarily means a "lifting" of adverse conditions, particularly atmospheric, such as fog, and the latter means "the clearing." Here *die Lichtung* specifically means a clearing or an opening for a manifestation of what cannot be made present, intrinsic to the occurrence of world, whereby "beyng

lights up as the trace of the path of the last god" (181). The new translation renders *das Ereignis* simply as "the event" throughout the text. While it may not be possible to bring forward all of the above associations in English while using the basic "event," the rendering throughout the text simply as "the event" could easily suggest to a reader who is not necessarily aware of these associations that "the event" is one among any number of events, or that one is dealing here with a version of "process philosophy" that offers a metaphysical alternative to "substance philosophy," and neither of these is so. Heidegger characterized *das Ereignis* as a "singulare tantum." Some means of indicating this utterly distinct status seems to be in order. While current practice, followed by the translators, has moved away from capitalizing crucial words, such as "Being" in particular (an earlier practice, complicated, of course, by the fact that all German nouns are capitalized), nonetheless, perhaps in this one case an exception might have been warranted. The word *das Ereignis* clearly does not have the history in the philosophical tradition that "Being" has, whereby capitalizing "Being" can lend itself rather easily to metaphysical thinking.

A somewhat similar difficulty attends the translation throughout of *das Wesen* as "the essence." When Heidegger tells us that *das Ereignis* is *das Wesen* of beyng, a reader unaware of how Heidegger elsewhere (in *Introduction to Metaphysics*, for example) brings forward an early sense of the verb *wesen* as "to last," "to remain," "to endure," "to abide," or "to while," can easily miss everything by virtue of the rendering of *das Wesen* as "the essence," a term that is maximally ensconced in the metaphysical tradition. By virtue of a further association brought forward by Heidegger, namely, the association of *das Wesen* as "whiling" with *währen*, to endure, we also note the association of *das Wesen* with *die Wahrheit*, that is, with truth. This is to say that here we are very close to the heart of Heidegger's thought.

Bringing forward these associations while retaining the English word "essence" looks to be impossible. One earlier attempt by translators, namely, "essencing," adds a verbal sense, but adds it to "essence" with its own fortified metaphysical sense. Etymological dictionaries

show that the closest English relative is apparently the word "was," from a "proto-English" verb, "wesenan," which had the sense of "to remain" or "to endure." Apparently, the development of imperfect tenses holds the key to the evolution of "was." But again, bringing any of this forward while retaining the basic word "essence" would appear to be impossible. In the "Translators' Introduction," in distinguishing their practice from that of their predecessors in the initial English translation (where *das Wesen* is rendered as "the sway"), the translators write of both *das Wesen* and *das Ereignis*:

> For Heidegger, the decisive junctures of the history of philosophy are marked not by the coining of new terms but by a new sense accruing to the old terms. Thus our translation aims to invite the reader into the task of disclosing the new sense and does not presumptuously impose that sense from the start through idiosyncratic terminological choices. For example, what "essence" and "event" come to mean in the course of these ponderings is up to the reader to decide. (xvi)

In regard to *das Wesen*, it is true that Heidegger complicates the matter by using the word at times in its rather common sense of what is crucial to that of which it is "the essence." But given the associations brought forward elsewhere by Heidegger, and given how deeply this term resonates in Heidegger's thought, one may well consider whether, like *Da-sein*, the term might, at this point, be left untranslated when used otherwise than in this common way. What is said here of *das Wesen* pertains as well to Heidegger's sense of *die Wesung*, rendered in this translation as "essential occurrence." Leaving the terms untranslated would undeniably not be optimum. In effect, it is a different way of throwing up one's hands at the extreme difficulty. But it seems unfortunate to note a problem in leaving the terms throughout as "the essence" and "the essential occurrence" while offering nothing in return.

Beginning in the division "The Resonating" and continuing through the text, Heidegger calls attention to "the plight" (*die Not*)

of beyng. This pertains to the abandonment, in our time, of beings by beyng, as well as to how "[t]he truth of being (and thus being itself) essentially occurs only where and when Da-sein occurs" (205; GA 65: 261: "Die Wahrheit des Seins und so dieses selbst west nur, wo und wann Da-sein"). The lack of a sense of "the plight" in our time marks the extreme state of "the plight." Almost without exception, the translators render *die Not* as "plight." Otherwise, it is rendered as "need," in keeping with Heidegger's point to the effect that beyng needs (*bedürfen*) *Da-sein*. What remains uncaptured is the urgency and the danger that require attention without delay. One is reminded of the prospect of things "going downhill all the way," noted by Heidegger in the interview "Only a God Can Save Us," a prospect that would seem to have some degree of resonance at this historical juncture. In *Contributions*, the gods require beyng, and beyng in turn requires *Da-sein*. It might have been possible to add this factor simply by rendering *die Not* as "urgent plight," which would appear to be both legitimate and helpful.

With regard to how the translators rendered the title of the division *das Zuspiel*, that is, as "The Interplay," "interplay" between the first beginning of the philosophical tradition and the other beginning sought by Heidegger is definitely operative in the transition as understood here as well as in Heidegger's readings of preeminent philosophers in the tradition. At the same time, the German word does suggest "playing to," or "playing toward," and in this case, playing toward the other beginning. In other words, this involves the direction or the trajectory of the dynamic. In the first English translation of the text, the translators saw fit to render *das Zuspiel* as "Playing Forth." Despite the oddness of the phrase in English, this does convey that sense of the direction of the dynamic as indicated by the German term. Perhaps simply using "Play Toward" would have done the same.

Relatedly, there is the new translation's rendering of *die Zu-künftigen* as "the future ones," and of *zukünftig* as "to come." Heidegger does tell us that some of *die Zukünftigen* are already here and this does suggest that ordinarily one is to think of them as "to come." But the primary rendering throughout of *zukünftig* as "to come," and of *die*

Zukünftigen as "the future ones," rather than as "futural" and "the futural ones," those who are toward a coming future, does run into difficulties. For example, Heidegger characterizes Hölderlin as the most *zukünftig* and it is difficult to understand how Hölderlin is "to come." Perhaps one might suggest that Hölderlin's day, so to speak, is yet to come. But the interpellation here does seem a bit of a stretch, and what is more, how is one to understand what it would mean to be the most yet-to-come?

Much the same issue would seem to be at play in sorting out a passage such as the following toward the end of the division "The Last God":

> Mit der Seynsfrage, die die Frage nach dem Seienden und somit alle "Metaphysik" überwunden hat, ist die Fackel entzündet und der erste Anlauf zum weiten Lauf gewagt. Wo ist der Läufer, der die Fackel aufnimmt und seinem Vor-gänger zuträgt? Die Läufer müssen alle, und je spätere sie sind, um so stärkere *Vor*-läufer sein, keine Nachläufer, die das Erstversuchte, wenn es hoch kommt, nur "verbessern" und widerlegen. Die Vor-läufer müssen je und je ursprünglicher als die "Vor" (d. h. hinter ihnen)-laufenden *anfängliche* sein, das Eine und Selbe des zu Fragenden noch einfacher, reicher und unbedingt einzig denken. (GA 65: 415)

The translators translate as follows:

> With the question of beyng, which has overcome the question of beings and thereby all "metaphysics," the torch is ignited and the first run-up to the long heat is ventured. Where is the runner who takes up the torch and carries it to his pre-cursor? The runners must all be *fore*-runners, and this holds all the more strictly for those who come later. They must not be re-runners, who at most only "improve" and rebut what was first attempted. The fore-runners must be *inceptual* in an ever more originary way than their "pre-cursors" (who

actually come after them) and must think still more simply, more richly, and altogether uniquely the one and the same issue that is to be questioned. (329)

But the runners in comparison with whom each runner must be more and more originarily inceptual are those who ran before (*die Vor-laufenden*) and who are actually behind (*hinter*) the more and more originarily inceptual ones, rather than those who run after they do. In other words, the more and more originarily inceptual ones are more and more futural, they reach further and further forth (*vor*) in regard to what is to be thought still more simply, more richly, and altogether uniquely, and are not simply "to come" at one point or another later down the course.

All this recalls the direction or the trajectory of the "play toward" (*das Zuspiel*), and more so, the urgency of the plight (*die Not*) of beyng and the thinking called for by beyng's abandonment of beings. Also, the resonance here with the futural character of authenticity, brought forward by Heidegger in the discussion of historicity toward the end of *Being and Time*, is not insignificant.

As for the mode of thinking that Heidegger found necessary, he specifies an *Er-denken* of the truth of beyng. The translators render *Er-denken* as "inventive thinking." This is suggestive in certain respects, and it might speak to more recent philosophical work (for example, one thinks of Derrida's phrase *l'invention de l'autre*, "the invention of the other"[3]). Yet, while *er-denken* can stand for "inventing" in the sense of "thinking something up," this meaning is arguably not the primary sense that Heidegger has in mind. One has to wonder whether, in this instance, the translators may have fallen victim to what they expressly did not want the translation to do, that is, "presumptuously impose [a] sense from the start through idiosyncratic terminological choices."

What then? *Er-denken* is a mark of becoming *Da-sein*. It is a thinking that abyssally grounds the "da," the "there," or the "here." It is no longer at all a "thinking about," or a "re-flection." This abyssal grounding is fully historical and itself can be thought only in terms of its primordial ground (*der Urgrund*), which is to say, "the event" (*das*

Ereignis). One might think here of a negative characterization, namely, "non-reflective thinking," but "non-reflective" is not to be found in the word *Er-denken*, and, moreover, this loses the sense of the prefix "*er*." The prefix "*er*" will often have the sense of "rendering" or "making," but "making" not along the lines of "constructing," rather, more closely, as an intensification that can suggest compulsion. Returning for a moment to those who "bear the torch," Heidegger describes them as "those of abyssal origin who are among the compelled ones" (329). If "*er*" is to be understood along these lines, perhaps *das Er-denken* could be rendered as "compelling thinking," where "compelling" could refer both to how the thinking comes about and, at the same time, no less importantly, how it takes hold.

One final term to note, one that does not turn up very often in *Contributions*, but that does figure importantly in a subsequent unfinished manuscript by Heidegger published in the *Gesamtausgabe* under the title *Besinnung* (GA 66), is the word *Auseinandersetzung*, which is rendered in the new translation of *Contributions* as "confrontation." The sense of a setting "out of one another," or "apart from one another" (*Auseinander...*) gets lost. It is the setting "out of one another" that opposes vis-à-vis one another. Here a somewhat longer locution may be needed: a setting apart that opposes.

All of the above having been noted, the very impressive strength of this translation, in regard to coming to terms with the exceptionally difficult thinking in Heidegger's text, as well as in regard to the degree of accessibility of the translation, makes one think that the translators must have thought of much, if not all, of this. But this does lead one to ask why important decisions are not discussed here by the translators, either in the Introduction, as the earlier translators did in their Foreword, or in notes. It seems odd to make a critical remark where the exceptional fluidity of this translation is concerned, almost as though the specific intent were to turn a virtue into a vice. However, what can get lost is any sense of why native German speaking philosophers, even when familiar with other texts by Heidegger, can find the language in *Contributions* an exceptional challenge, and any sense of what, overall,

gives this text an unsettled character. After all, what we do not have here is "a philosophy." What would, in fact, go a long way in helping in this regard is some discussion of important decisions that were made by the translators. One hesitates to ask the translators to do anything more than they have already done in providing this remarkable translation of this so very important and so very difficult text, but perhaps providing a supplement to the volume in some form, which could perhaps be based on the English-German and German-English glossaries provided (along with Greek-English and Latin-English glossaries) in the volume, would be in order. As is, the glossaries only tell the reader what German terms are translated by the English terms used, and what English terms are used for German terms being translated, but nothing about why the translators did so.

Having begun by noting the major service done by Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu in providing *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)* to the Anglophone world, all that remains for me is to express my congratulations and my gratitude for an exceptionally skillful translation.

ENDNOTES

1   Unless indicated otherwise, all numbers in parentheses refer to page numbers of the book under review.

2   *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999).

3   Jacques Derrida, *Psyché: Inventions de l'Autre, Tomes I et II* (Paris: Galilée, 1987/2003); *Psyché: Inventions of the Other, Volume I and Volume II*, ed. Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007, 2008).

From Jena to Freiburg, via Asia Minor

Hakhamanesh Zangeneh

Pol Vandevelde. *Heidegger and the Romantics: The Literary Invention of Meaning*. New York: Routledge, 2011. 202 pp.

The Romantic estimation of Plato within the history of philosophy sees precisely not what is actually positive in him: that which is not well-rounded, is fragmentary, what remains underway. That is the genuinely positive element in all research. Of course, this does not mean that every imperfection would as such already be positive, but only that it harbors the possibility of growth.
– Heidegger, *Platon: Sophistes*, GA 19: 412/285.

Pol Vandevelde's *Heidegger and the Romantics* is an important and, in many ways, pioneering study. While many noted scholars have made remarks in passing on the relations between Heidegger's philosophy and that of early German Romanticism (Pöggeler, Frank, Lacoue-Labarthe/Nancy – all of whom are referenced in Vandevelde's book), we still lack thematic, systematic studies of these matters. But the book before us is groundbreaking not just by virtue of its topics but also in its

approach. As Vandevelde explains at the outset of his inquiry, his goal is not philologico-genealogical. This is to say that the goal of this book is not to establish that the Romantics were a source for Heidegger. Rather, the focus is on showing the argumentative compatibility of two projects. The essential contention of the book is that while the Romantics staked out an original philosophical position, they failed to deliver on the conceptual infrastructure that would undergird and sustain that position; they lacked an ontology. To address that lacuna, Vandevelde examines Heidegger's texts, mainly from the 1930s and early 1940s. Herein lies another salient point of interest of this book, namely, its interpretation of Heidegger's texts from the period known for *Seinsgeschichte*. Before turning to an engagement with this project, however, it may be useful first to delineate what this book is not.

The subtitle of the book, "The Literary Invention of Meaning," might make the reader expect a study fitting within the genre of deconstruction as practiced by North American literary theorists in the 1980s. A substantial amount of writing coming from the de Man school turned to Romanticism to examine the relation between philosophy and literature, in order to break down that distinction.[1] Vandevelde neither shares this goal, nor engages that distinction at any length — though we might pose the question to him critically, and especially with respect to his reading of Heidegger. While his earlier work has been directed specifically to the theory of interpretation both conceptually and practically,[2] in the present study he does not interrogate the general category of literature as such. The "literary" in his subtitle is a narrow reference to *Dichtung*, both in the Early German Romantics and Heidegger, and there, the term is essentially understood as "configuration." The deconstructionist project is referenced in this book (though one might read those references as a bit too cursory), but it falls outside the contours of Vandevelde's argument.

The scope of this book is also narrow in its construal of Romanticism. The authors discussed are Friedrich Schlegel, Novalis and Schleiermacher. While it is standard practice to group these authors (all tied to the *Athenaeum*) as constituting "Early German Romanticism,"

German philosophy in those years was (to use Walter Jaeschke's term) highly "dialogical."[3] Schelling's *Philosophy of Art*, for example, borrows entire texts from Schlegel without citation. Hölderlin's relations to Hegel and Schelling are well known. And arguably the most seminal text of this period, the *Ältestes Systemprogramm*, left out of consideration by Vandevelde, was born of collaborations of Schelling, Hegel and Hölderlin, and perhaps Schlegel too. Here again, Vandevelde has structured his argument in a compact manner for his own purposes. But his justification — based upon Manfred Frank's contention that the Jena group was not connected to Hölderlin and the Homburg circle (19)[4] — might leave some readers dissatisfied. The absent author whose basic moves most resonate with Vandevelde's own reading of Early German Romanticism is arguably the early Schelling. The point of noting this absence should be obvious: if the argument of this book is that Schlegel, Novalis and Schleiermacher do not elaborate an ontology of Early German Romanticism, if that is their failure, would it not be obvious to search for that system in Schelling up to 1800?

FRAGMENT AND FLUX

To sketch the philosophical position of Early German Romanticism that Heidegger buttresses according to Vandevelde's argument, we must begin with the Romantic theory of the fragment. The crucial insight is to distinguish between a "fragment" as a description of the state of a work (unfinished, lacunary, etc.) and a "fragment" as a manner of treating a work in general (32). Foreshadowing what would later become reader-response theory (Wolfgang Iser), Schlegel and Novalis took the meaning of the literary work to be co-constituted by the text and its reader (the critic). In this view, the work is treated by the critic as a fragment of the meaning which the critic creates. This act of creation is termed by Schlegel "divination" and its object, an "ideal" (32). This divination is, of course, not arbitrary and contingent but resides, as Vandevelde helpfully points out, between fabrication and discovery, between interpretative idealism and realism. It is this "divination" that the subtitle of the book renders as the "invention of meaning." But is

this doctrine of invention limited to the interpretation of poetry or is it to be generalized to philosophical texts as well, as Vandevelde seems to suggest (22)? To what extent would a generalized fragmentarity still be "literary"?

Already, the reader of Heidegger profits from this investigation inasmuch as such an invention, between fabrication and discovery, sheds some light on what Heidegger calls an *Erdenken* of the other inception that is not merely a *sich etwas ausdenken* (78). Indeed, we can now begin to compare the mode of writing of Heidegger's treatises of *Seinsgeschichte,* or the mode of *reading* that they beckon us to, with the task of the fragment-critic in Early German Romanticism. While Vandevelde does not build this bridge, perhaps this line of thought can help elucidate what Heidegger is after when, for example, he writes: "Zuspiel ist geschichtlichen Wesens und ein erstes Brückenschlagen des Übergangs, eine Brücke aber, die ausschwingt in ein erst zu entscheidendes Ufer" (GA 65: 169/119). If passage is a bridging over to an as yet to be decided shore, a bridging-over which departs from this shore, from this first inception of philosophy that we are still in, but swings out over to a place which is not given, if such a passage is the task of the *Zuspiel* of the *Beiträge*, then perhaps articulating the relation between the first and the other inception of thinking operates on a logic similar to that of the fragment.

Now, the term "fragment" cannot help but evoke its counterpart, the whole or totality. One way to elaborate the topic consists in reading the "ideal" object, constituted by the critic, akin to an Idea in the Kantian sense, as necessarily unrepresentable. The fragment would then turn into a presentation of the unpresentable.[5] But the question of representation seems to be absent from Vandevelde's analyses. Perhaps the overall arc of his study renders that topic less fruitful to his purposes. But it remains the case that Early German Romanticism is premised on a theory of precisely the fragment, and not, say, the index, the sign, the hint, the trace and so on. The question of the mereology of the fragment (the interpretation of the part/whole relation in Early German Romanticism) is unfortunately not elaborated at length. At first, Vandevelde

seems to deny any necessary reference of fragment to whole, but then he endorses references to Blanchot and Benjamin, to the effect that the whole is suspended or fragmented in its very invention (29–32). Strictly speaking, these two views are not identical. One might say that the difference is between a thinking that abandons the mereological dialectic altogether, and one that enacts it as a "negative dialectic" (a term which Hegel uses in this very same period). The second view, i.e. the Blanchot/Benjamin approach, would seem to require some conception of speculative negativity, a metaphysical, self-referential negation.

What Vandevelde gains by circumventing the above topoi is crucial and noteworthy. Suspending a relation to a final whole, he is able to underline the "progressive" nature of invention. The fragment occasions an endless becoming. The actualization of meaning is not terminal but a stage in a process, a raising of the work to a higher degree, a higher potency.[6] This infinite potentialization extends not only "forward" from the work to its interpretations, but also "backwards," behind the work so to speak, and towards nature. Fully within the framework of German philosophy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (but at odds with Vandevelde's depiction of Early German Romanticism as "anti-mimetic"), art – here poetry – is thought in a relationship to nature. That relation is, of course, not one of reproduction but potentialization, invention.

The ontological picture that is thus sketched is a remarkable one. It is only *sketched* in the Romantics, and not argued conceptually. In contemporary parlance, we would call this "a process ontology." Nature, art and meaning are instantiations of a monistic becoming, a continuous flux, the phases of which are different potencies. This formal framework is fleshed out by Vandevelde in the examination of three doctrines in Early German Romanticism: translation, poetry, and interpretation. In this review I can only very schematically report on these rich analyses. Translation as a process of carrying-over is both a potentialization from one language to another (not arbitrarily transforming but inventing under a constraint, creating novelty) and also qua abstract translatability, a passage from the physical to the mental, from things to spirit (39).

Poetry, for its part, in response to a disenchantment with the everyday, is a higher power or potency of the world. Its task is to bring out the becoming, enunciate the flux (55). In the process, this practice avoids an idealism, according to Vandevelde, by virtue of its concomitant critique of the Subject (52). The potentialization is also a union of subject and object, of potentiality and actuality, and is thereby genuinely productive (64). Interpretation, here focused on Schleiermacherian hermeneutics, continues this invention when it follows the (Kantian) directive to understand an author "better" than the author him/herself.

For Vandevelde, this entire conception is based on a "fluid ontology" (36). There needs to be an ontological account arguing that in place of fixed, static, determinate entities, what we have to do with are instances of an infinite becoming, eschewing determinacies. Placing nature, art and thought on one ontological level as processes will remind Heidegger's readers of the broad outlines of statements from, for example, "The Origin of the Work of Art" or the *Beiträge*, where philosophy and art (as well as political action and essential sacrifice) are each deemed to be different modes of the same *Ins-Werk-setzen der Wahrheit* (36) – whereby *Wahrheit* is also described seemingly processually, as the originary disputing (*Streit*) of clearing and concealment. The *Wahrheitsgeschehen* behind artworks, political activity and ontologico-historical thinking is the "same" *Geschehen*; that is to say, there is one *physis*. It is also intrinsically described, starting in the 1930s, as *Geschehen*, happening, event, unfolding. If Heidegger is able to deliver on such an "ontology" – or really *genet*ology – of flux, then he will have made viable the Romantic vision of a world without stable, fixed and determinate things, having replaced them with a becoming of unconcealment not finished but inceptual, unfolding in concretizations.

HEIDEGGER THE IONIAN

The path to Heidegger as thinker of flux is presented developmentally. Before the texts of the 1930s, Vandevelde reviews Heidegger's doctrine of λόγος in the 1920s, in order to bring out the familiar contrast between the meaning of being and the truth of being. He traces Heidegger's

first step into flux to lectures published as GA 38. In these lectures Heidegger thematizes a conception of history through its affinities with language. Notably, we find here a distinction between history thought from being and history thought from facts, a "thinking in terms of centuries" (116). Distinguishing between occurrences that are *geschichtlich* and occurrences that are world-historical enables the author to point to places in Heidegger's corpus where, he claims, Heidegger himself slips from one to the other. Thus Heidegger's various references to European history and politics are interpreted as instances of Heidegger failing his own standard. So, too, Vandevelde interprets connections between Heidegger's philosophy and his political involvement as failing to live up to his own thinking of history and as slipping into the "thinking in terms of centuries" (117). One might compare this contention to Lacoue-Labarthe's approach, which essentially claims that it is precisely *as* an inheritor of Early German Romanticism that Heidegger incorporates the politics of his Germany into an "aesthetic" ontological project.[7]

Vandevelde next turns to GA 39 (1934) and the artwork essay to explicate other characteristics of Heidegger's thinking of the period. The 1934 course shows a clear shift from the earlier positioning of *Stimmung* in Dasein to its positioning in history, emanating from an inception and determining a *Grund*. The 1936 essay describes the clearing intrinsically as a *Geschehen*, a process or happening. All this gives a different status to things and to works whose mission it is to articulate, through world and earth, the happening of things (139). It is here that the "literary" resurfaces, but now qua *Dichtung*, generalized as a "configuring" which can take various examples as outlets − *one* of which will be poetry (137). (And here the connection to the book's subtitle, "The Literary Invention of Meaning," becomes tenuous.) The constitution of the clearing is what can make history, *Geschichte*, and it requires the sought-after "fluid ontology." Thus, the truth-event does not create the thing, but "configures" it, and in order for there to be such configurables for *Dichtung* to instantiate, then things, peoples, etc., cannot have fixed and determinate identities but a fluctuating status. This finally

brings Vandevelde to what I take to be the most interesting section of the Heidegger part of his book.

According to our author, texts such as the *Beiträge* articulate Heidegger's "new ontology," one which is not relative to Dasein, depending on it as sole condition, but which is nonetheless "in some ways idealistic" (141). Things are related to human beings via the process of unconcealment, but human beings are themselves who they are through that same process. While the latter is an uncontroversial characterization, it is premised on a noteworthy hypothesis. The hypothesis is that in the *Beiträge*, we must distinguish truth from being and then understand being *adjectivally* – not verbally. "To be" now means to enter a state, one called being. Truth is here an independent variable, thus a thing can be unconcealed (in truth) without entering into that state (being). "Entering into" is of course a circumlocution for "becoming," and this is how Vandevelde understands formulations such as becoming being, "*seiend werden*" (GA 65: 293/207). What this articulation opens up for us, is the possibility to address that which has not yet become being (adj.), or is no longer being (adj.), is *unseiend* or *seinlos*, but is disclosed. Many insights, but many questions too, arise with this characterization.

On the one hand, the distinction between being (adj.) and non-being (adj.) means that "[we] can reach a level of description that is not bound to the level of well-delineated entities like things and plunge deeper into the process of becoming by showing that things… are one stage in their unfolding…" (144). And yet this characterization seems to risk returning to a metaphysical sense of being as fixity, in contrast to a dynamic, fluctuating non-being behind the fixed. This new depth-dimension, insofar as it is thinkable, is for Vandevelde a departure from a Platonist dualism that would find no λόγος in the sensible flux. Thus he claims that Heidegger's new ontology is distinct from the metaphysical tradition of being/becoming since it opens becoming to discursivity. He elaborates this by reflecting on a distinction in Plato between οὐκ ὄν and μὴ ὄν. The new unbeing is of the order of the not completely being (μὴ ὄν) as opposed to the utterly not being (οὐκ ὄν). This "scale" of beingness thus allows of gradations (151) – though not from the sensible to

the intelligible. Herewith, Heidegger would be recuperating something from Plato that destabilizes Platonism. But is the sensible/intelligible the chief mark of metaphysics? Is being/becoming recuperable beyond metaphysics just because it has been freed of vulgar Platonism? How are we then to think the less vulgar Platonism of the Plotinian tradition, as, for example, in Albertus Magnus' theory of flux (Tractate 4 of *De Causis et Processu…*) or in the thoroughly metaphysical (though not by virtue of sensible/intelligible) ideas of Baader in *Über Starres und Fliessendes*? None of these thinkers identify becoming with οὐκ ὄν, nor do they think the flux as the sensible. At a first, formal level, the newness of the "new ontology" seems doubtful.

The familiar outlines of the formal account give way when the novel details rooted in Heidegger's conceptions of language, translation and poetry are brought in. But then, when the gradation in being (adj.) is parsed as stretching from machination to preservation (*Bewahrung*), some difficulties emerge. Correlating *seiend* and *unseiend*, or *Wesen and Unwesen*, to the degree of preservation is undoubtedly right, but is that not to collapse the degrees of being (adj.) onto degrees of disclosure? This would be the conventional construal of these texts, but then Vandevelde's dissociation of truth and adjectival being becomes ambiguous, at least to this reader. It becomes harder to understand what is meant by a thing which is true but not yet become being (adj.) (144). Unbeing would seem to have to imply untruth. Nonetheless, it remains the case that Heidegger, in this period, does indeed often speak of beingness in comparatives. If we hold on to the doctrine of gradations of being, we find the missing ontology of Early German Romanticism. The poetic qua reconfiguration, *Dichtung*, with its concomitant structure of preservation, allows us to participate in the *Wahrheitsgeschehen*. The latter also opens a glimpse into the unbeing from which we will then have come, and this will be an insight into the fluidity of beings. What is unique in Heidegger's conception is that language here is not a neutral medium for that process but the unfolding itself (161). The power to configure, inherent in language, renders the unbeing unfamiliar, thus shaking our confidence in fixity and alerting us to the flux.

There is much rich detail in Vandevelde's exemplary book; it is based on solid scholarship and it is full of provocative implications – I have only scratched its surface here. The questions and suggestions that I have brought up are certainly not of the order of criticism, but rather a call for further elaboration. The path that Vandevelde has opened up now calls for being extended. Finally, I would like to underline an important methodological lesson taught to us by *Heidegger and the Romantics.* The predilection of English language Heidegger studies for some time has been overwhelmingly in the direction of what I call "philological positivism." A philological positivist studies Heidegger's relations to a philosopher only if Heidegger explicitly writes about that philosopher, and only based on exactly those texts that Heidegger mentions and only in light of Heidegger's interpretation thereof. The scholarship thus takes as its point of departure, and as its destination, a positive philological *fact.* So it is that every study of Heidegger and Schelling that I know of in English focuses on the *Freiheitsschrift* – and none on the early Schelling. Every investigation of Heidegger's debt to Jaspers orbits around the former's early "Bemerkungen" (in *Holzwege*) and is limited to elaborating on themes criticized by Heidegger. But is this *Geschichte* or is it *Historie*? Should not *Seinsgeschichte* be capable of being augmented and amplified through reading say, Plotinus, Spinoza or Fichte? Do we not learn something when we relate Heidegger to authors on whose work he did *not* extensively comment?[8] Pol Vandevelde's book, for example, stages a productive philosophical encounter, between Heidegger and Romanticism, in a register other than that of *actual* historicist fact. We can be grateful to the author for having set an example, in English, of that which is *possible.*

ENDNOTES

1   See, for example, Paul de Man, *The Resistance to Theory* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1986) and Andrzej Warminski, *Readings in Interpretation: Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

2   Vandevelde illustrates that confrontation and examines the question of translation by comparing 50 different translations of a passage of the *Odyssey* in his *The Task of the Interpreter: Text, Meaning and Negotiation* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 79–95.

3   See Walter Jaeschke's introduction to *Früher Idealismus und Frühromantik: der Streit um die Grundlagen der Ästhetik (1795–1805)*, two volumes (Hamburg: Meiner, 1990, 1995).

4   All numbers in parentheses refer to the pages of *Heidegger and the Romantics*, with references to any other literature confined to the notes.

5   See, for example, Rodolphe Gasché's foreword to Friedrich Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Peter Firchow (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), vii–xxxi.

6   Vandevelde notes marginally that this term is used in a different way by Schelling (35). But it would seem to us to be closer than he thinks, especially in the *Philosophy of Art*. There, the real and the ideal, philosophy and art are related as potencies of each other.

7   See Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger and The Politics of Poetry*, translated with an introduction by Jeff Fort (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007).

8   See, for example, Jean-Marc Narbonne, *Hénologie, Ontologie et Ereignis (Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger)* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001).

TEXTS OF HEIDEGGER CITED AND ABBREVIATIONS USED

References to the works of Martin Heidegger are provided parenthetically in the text by volume of the *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1975–), abbreviated "GA," with German pagination provided first, followed by a slash and the English pagination of published translations where extant. The only exception to this is *Being and Time* (GA 2), where no English pagination is provided, but instead the *Gesamtausgabe* pagination is followed by the German pagination of the single-edition published by Niemeyer: *Sein und Zeit*, 17th ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1993). The pagination for this edition is included in the margins of both English translations of *Being and Time* and indicated by either SZ1 or SZ2, accordingly, as listed below. Modifications to published translations are noted by "tm," modifications to emphasis by "em."

FROM THE GESAMTAUSGABE

GA 1   *Frühe Schriften.* Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1978

GA 2   *Sein und Zeit.* Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1977.

GA 5   *Holzwege.* 7th ed. Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1994. English translation: *Off the Beaten Track.* Ed. and trans. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

GA 9   *Wegmarken.* 3rd ed. Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1996. English translation: *Pathmarks.* Ed. William McNeill. Various trans. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

GA 11   *Identität und Differenz.* Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 2006. English translation: *Identity and Difference.* Trans. Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

GA 12   *Unterwegs zur Sprache.* Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1985.

GA 14   *Zur Sache des Denkens*. Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 2007. English translation: *On Time and Being*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

GA 17   *Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung*. Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1994. English translation: *Introduction to Phenomenological Research*. Trans. Daniel O. Dahlstrom. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

GA 18   *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*. Ed. Mark Michalski. 2002. English translation: *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. Trans. Robert D. Metcalf and Mark B. Tanzer. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.

GA 19   *Platon: Sophistes*. Ed. Ingeborg Schüßler. 1992. English translation: *Plato's "Sophist."* Trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.

GA 20   *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*. Ed. Petra Jaeger. 1994. English translation: *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*. Trans. Theodore Kisiel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.

GA 21   *Logik. Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*. Ed. Walter Biemel. 1976. English translation: *Logic: The Question of Truth*. Trans. Thomas Sheehan. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

GA 24   *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*. 2nd ed. Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1989. English translation: *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Revised ed. Trans. Albert Hofstadter. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.

GA 26   *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz*. Ed. Klaus Held. 1990. English translation: *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*. Trans. Michael Heim. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.

GA 27   *Einleitung in die Philosophie*. Ed. Otto Saame and Ina Saame-Speidel. 1996.

GA 29/30   *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik: Welt − Endlichkeit − Einsamkeit.* 2nd ed. Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1992. English translation: *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude.* Trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.

GA 39   *Hölderlins Hymnen "Germanien" und "Der Rhein."* 2nd ed. Ed. Susanne Ziegler. 1989.

GA 40   *Einführung in die Metaphysik.* Ed. Petra Jaeger. 1983. English translation: *Introduction to Metaphysics.* Trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

GA 56/57   *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie.* 2nd ed. Ed. Bernd Heimbüchel. 1999. English translation: *Towards the Definition of Philosophy.* Trans. Ted Sadler. New York: Continuum, 2008.

GA 58   *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie.* Ed. Hans-Helmuth Gander. 1992.

GA 60   *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens.* Ed. Matthias Jung, Thomas Regehly, Claudius Strube. 1995. English translation: *The Phenomenology of Religious Life.* Trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.

GA 61   *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung.* 2nd ed. Ed. Walter Bröcker and Käte Bröcker-Oltmanns. 1994.

GA 65   *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis).* 2nd ed. Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1994. English translation: *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event).* Trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012.

GA 66   *Besinnung.* Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1997. English translation: *Mindfulness.* Trans. Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary. New York: Continuum, 2006.

GA 85   *Vom Wesen der Sprache. Die Metaphysik der Sprache und die Wesung des Wortes. Zu Herders Abhandlung "Über den Ursprung der Sprache."* Ed. Ingrid Schüßler. 1999. English translation: *On the Essence of Language: The Metaphysics of Language and the Essencing of the Word; Concerning Herder's "Treatise on the Origin of Language."* Translated by Wanda Torres Gregory and Yvonne Unna. Albany: SUNY, 2004.

FROM OTHER ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

OWL   *On the Way to Language.* Trans. Peter D. Hertz. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

PLT   *Poetry, Language, Thought.* Translated by Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

SZ1   *Being and Time.* Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.
          Note: cited by the German pagination of "SZ" above.

SZ2   *Being and Time.* Trans. Joan Stambaugh, rev. Dennis J. Schmidt. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.
          Note: cited by the German pagination of "SZ" above.