

Gatherings

*PAPERS FROM THE
50TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE*

THE
HEIDEGGER
CIRCLE
ANNUAL

2017

Gatherings

THE HEIDEGGER CIRCLE ANNUAL

VOLUME 7, 2017

Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual is a publication of the Heidegger Circle, a group of scholars who have been meeting annually in North America since 1966 to discuss the work of Martin Heidegger. In the Spring of 2010, at the business meeting of the Heidegger Circle, the membership voted to produce an annual publication of research on the thought and writings of Martin Heidegger and related themes. The first issue of the annual was published in the Spring of 2011.

ISSN 2165-3275 PRINT / ISSN 2165-3283 ONLINE

Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual

EDITOR

Andrew J. Mitchell, *Emory University*

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Daniel O. Dahlstrom, *Boston University*

Julia Ireland, *Whitman College*

Richard Polt, *Xavier University*

EDITORIAL BOARD

Robert Bernasconi, *Pennsylvania State University*; Walter Brogan, *Villanova University*; Peg Birmingham, *DePaul University*; Scott Campbell, *Nazareth College*; Richard Capobianco, *Stonehill College*; Robert Crease, *Stony Brook University*; Bret Davis, *Loyola University Maryland*; Gregory Fried, *Suffolk University*; Rex Gilliland, *Southern Connecticut State University*; Charles Guignon, *University of South Florida*; Catriona Hanley, *Loyola University Maryland*; Lawrence Hatab, *Old Dominion University*; Theodore Kiesel, *Northern Illinois University*; William McNeill, *DePaul University*; Eric Nelson, *Hong Kong University of Science and Technology*; David Pettigrew, *Southern Connecticut State University*; Jeffrey Powell, *Marshall University*; François Raffoul, *Louisiana State University*; Robert Scharff, *University of New Hampshire*; Thomas Sheehan, *Stanford University*; Daniela Vallega-Neu, *University of Oregon*; Pol Vanderveelde, *Marquette University*; Holger Zaborowski, *Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Vallendar*

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The first page of a paper submitted for publication should include the title of the paper, the author's name, and affiliation (if applicable). All subsequent pages, after the first page, should be submitted for blind reviewing, omitting any references to the author and the author's publications; if the paper is accepted for publication, references to the author's publications and previous work can be added before the final draft. Papers should not exceed 7,500 words, including footnotes, and should be submitted single space, Times New Roman font, 12 point, under one of the following file formats: PDF, RTF, DOC, or DOCX. Any Greek words or text should be entered as Unicode characters. Papers should adhere to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition (see "Chapter 14: Documentation I: Notes and Bibliography"), and follow the citation scheme provided at the end of each issue. The same paper may be submitted to the annual meeting of the Heidegger Circle and to *Gatherings*. All papers should be sent in attachment to polt@xavier.edu, identifying "Gatherings" as the subject.

DESIGN BY AJM

GATHERINGS

VOLUME 7, 2017

PAPERS FROM THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

Heidegger's Legacy <i>Peter Trawny</i>	1
The Negativity of Time-Space <i>John Sallis</i>	17
Heidegger's Birth <i>Peter Hanly</i>	40
Attunements, Truth, and Errancy in Heidegger's Thinking <i>Daniela Vallega-Neu</i>	55
Being Without (Heidegger) <i>Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback</i>	70
The Catastrophic Essence of the Human Being in Heidegger's Readings of <i>Antigone</i> <i>Scott M. Campbell</i>	84
"...And the Whole Music Box Repeats Eternally Its Tune..." <i>Jessica S. Elkayam</i>	103

Heidegger and the Poetics of Time <i>Rebecca A. Longtin</i>	124
Heidegger's <i>Hausfreund</i> and the Re-Enchantment of the Familiar <i>Julia A. Ireland</i>	142
Being is Evil: Boehme's Strife and Schelling's Rage in Heidegger's "Letter on 'Humanism'" <i>Robert Bernasconi</i>	164
BOOK REVIEW	
Dominique Janicaud, <i>Heidegger in France</i> <i>Wayne Froman</i>	182
Texts of Heidegger cited and abbreviations used	200

Heidegger's Legacy?

Peter Trawny

Imagine no possessions, I wonder if you can.

John Lennon

The 20th century has shown that the history of philosophy can no longer be separated from world or universal history. Where Hegel still could offer two separate lecture courses on these topics (the *History of Philosophy* and the *Philosophy of World History*), for contemporary philosophy it only can be asserted that history extends into the thinking of philosophers and that their philosophies attempt to respond to the questions posed by history.

During the 19th century, philosophers took in historical events like the French Revolution, Napoleon, the Paris Commune, the Franco-Prussian War, and so forth, and yet they nevertheless produced their texts in a more or less autonomous way. But the first two decades of (European) philosophy in the 20th century already came to stand in the shadow of World War I. The subsequent decades of totalitarianism – including its mass murders, and most especially the Shoah – concerned every endeavor in thinking almost without exception. (Even Ludwig Wittgenstein responded to the catastrophes of the 20th century, despite the fact that analytic philosophy has generally demonstrated an immunity to its events.)

In this respect, we could become aware of the problem of whether and how philosophy itself still guarantees the independence of the continuity of its reception beyond history, and whether – and how – a “tradition” of philosophy is still possible outside the impacts of history. I want to directly reformulate this question: Does it still make sense to speak of a “heritage,” a “legacy” of philosophy, and here more specifically of the “legacy” of the philosophy of Martin Heidegger?

At the outset, it can be said that Heidegger himself speaks of the notion of a “heritage” (*Erbe*) in reference to the “legacy” of authentic Dasein in the all-too-famous §74 of *Being and Time*, where heritage is without a doubt demanded by philosophical Dasein (GA 2: 507/SZ 383). (And philosophical Dasein is necessarily in itself authentic Dasein, though authentic Dasein is not inevitably philosophical). Derrida has taken up this discourse; however, it remains incumbent on us to continue thinking it.

The question of the “heritage” or “legacy” of Heidegger’s thinking can be understood in several different ways. It could operate historically and investigate when and where this philosophy has left traces in the work of other philosophers (and not only other philosophers but also, for instance, the work of artists and poets). In this respect, I might express an interest in the “history of the reception” or “history of the effects” (*Rezeptions-* or *Wirkungsgeschichte*) of Heidegger’s philosophy. I certainly could discover a tremendous number of documents on and in which I could find Heidegger’s stamp. Even today I can discern Heidegger’s influence in the philosophical projects of Alain Badiou (whom the internet ranks as the second most important philosopher writing today), and in Quentin Meillassoux, who is Badiou’s student.¹

But this type of historical approach to Heidegger’s “legacy” would miss the genuine philosophical problem. This problem is whether today, during a time of the extreme dissipation of philosophical discourse together with its integration in the technical-economic-scientific apparatus, there can still be something like a “legacy” of philosophical thought. If I take this problem into account, totally different questions come to the fore and another perspective opens itself.

Certainly, it is possible to enumerate thoughts, philosophical debts, concepts, and so on, derived from Heidegger’s thinking, which give us the opportunity to continue on with his thinking. I do not want to shirk from this task. A inventory of thoughts that, if one wanted to think productively along with Heidegger and present that as his “legacy,” can indeed be found. But this will not address the deeper problem of what a philosophical “legacy” is; on the contrary, it will show what that problem actually is.

Thus, I will initially offer a inventory of that “legacy.” I will mention ten elements of Heidegger’s thought, just to demonstrate which of his ideas have historical impact and will likely continue to have such impact. Then I will try to destabilize this same presentation by recourse to Heidegger’s own thematization of a “heritage” in *Being and Time*. And in conclusion, I will critique this very thematization with some thoughts drawn mainly from the *Black Notebooks*. The intention of my reflections is to show why philosophy today must accept the loss of its own discourse about the notion of a “heritage.”

*

Heidegger’s “legacy” may be represented as an inventory of problems in the following way:

1. The heart of Heidegger’s philosophy is the “question of the meaning of being.” This “meaning” is found in the notions of “time” and “timeliness” or “temporality” (*Zeitlichkeit*). Even if Heidegger later claims that the “meaning of being” is the “truth of being,” this “truth” is understood as a specific “timeliness,” namely as an “event of appropriation” or *Ereignis*. The two inverted titles *Being and Time* and “Time and Being” can be interpreted as *the* bookends of Heidegger’s thinking.
2. From the “question of the meaning of being” stems the idea of the “ontological difference” between “beings and being.” In the subsequent course of Heidegger’s thinking, this “difference” is then understood as *Austrag* and as the “*Unter-Schied* of world and thing.” Perhaps here we could speak of “difference as such.” This “difference between beings and being” is the most crucial for Heidegger’s philosophy; every important decision in his philosophy refers to it.
3. Heidegger frequently claims that the “meaning of being” is the “truth of being.” In connection with the above mentioned “difference between beings and being,” “truth” is interpreted as “unconcealment” (*Unverborgenheit*, ἀλήθεια). In this relation between “releasement” and “concealment,” emphasis is placed

on the latter term. "Being" is the "phenomenon" that does *not* "show" itself.

4. In considering the relation of "being" and "time," it becomes apparent that both relata of the relation – as well as this relation itself – are (very probably) finite. This finitude indicates the very problem of "history," which in turn becomes the "history of being." The idea of the "history of Being" seems to include the risk of an absolutizing of "history" that opposes itself to the idea of its "finitude." As a result, everything is subjected to what Heidegger terms the "destiny of Being" (*Geschick des Seins*); everything appears tautologically according to the formula "it is what it is, and it has to be what it has to be."
5. This thought brings to mind three more elements of Heidegger's thinking. Much as in Hegel's thinking, there is in Heidegger's a non-empirical concept of "experience" (*Erfahrung*). This, too, is related to the "ontological difference." We not only experience the givenness of "beings" but also the withdrawal/concealment of "being," or of the above suggested "difference as such." This kind of "experience" – Heidegger designates it as "pain" (*Schmerz*) – is the only indication that there is something like a withdrawal occurring.
6. In this sense, Heidegger is also able to speak of an "experience of thinking." If we understand the motto of the *Gesamtausgabe* – "Ways, not works" – as the clue that philosophical thinking is a still open "experience" of these "ways," then Heidegger's thinking may be represented and interpreted as performative. (And it is perhaps even more performative than Platonic or Nietzschean thinking.) From this point of view, the performance of Heidegger's philosophizing could be considered as a "praxis" that does *not* exhaust itself in its presentation as a text but reveals itself in its illumination of a way.
7. The "logic" of Heidegger's thinking is thus not oriented to "argument." When all "showing" and "appearing" is unfolded by way of a "destiny of being," the "argument" *and* the idea that

thinking is more or less a consequence of “arguments” stand in relationship to this “destiny.” For Heidegger, λόγον διδόναι, or “giving an account,” is an epiphenomenon of the “history of being.”

8. Therefore, the rational discourse of metaphysics cannot arrive at the “question of the meaning of being.” This discourse is based on the decision that either “being” can be grasped in a “concept” (*Begriff*), or it has to be delivered intuitively as “mysticism” (or proto-religion). From the point of view of Heidegger’s thinking, metaphysical discourse is not actually able to speak about “being.” Thus the language of philosophy has to abandon this discourse, and can perhaps find in poetry a resource for a different discourse. Part of this shift is also that thinking that Heidegger describes as “mythology of the event of appropriation.” (This is the problem of narrativity.)
9. From all this comes the anti-scientific character of Heidegger’s thinking. “Science” in its modern sense is based on the reality of atomic mass. Access to this reality is based on “method” (whether as mathematics, the empirical experiment, or quantifying processes) and bars access to “being as such” (“difference,” “unconcealment,” “withdrawal”). This holds true of “academic philosophy”: such a (scientific) institution cannot have an authentic access to Heidegger’s step toward poetry.
10. With modernity the discourse of “science” (i.e., “argument,” “method”) became the *one and only* generally accepted discourse concerning false or verifiable propositions. For Heidegger this is – as I addressed earlier – an epiphenomenon of the “history of being,” i.e. the current epoch of “enframing” or *Ge-stell*. At the end of the “history of being,” the world in its totality is *gestellt* by this “enframing.” Our current time stabilizes – or even petrifies – itself in the total immanence of technology. Heidegger at first responds to this situation with a pathos of “decision” (either the total decline into “machination” or the alternative “other beginning”); then with an enigmatic contextualizing of

“enframing” and the “event of appropriation”; and finally with his later discourse of “serenity” (*Gelassenheit*) as a liberation from “decision.”

If there is a “legacy” of Heidegger’s thinking, then it refers more or less to this incomplete inventory.

But what just took place with the presentation of this inventory? What was its effect? The inventory objectifies not only Heidegger’s thinking, but thinking as such. Heidegger’s thinking appears as a compiling and contextualizing of his main ideas, which can be elucidated with the horizon of the main presuppositions of this thinking. I just did what a Ph.D. student must be able to do — namely, fix a series of given thoughts. Furthermore, I fixed this inventory without any genuine philosophical interest (*inter-esse*) or motivation. Finally, I produced a distillation of ideas within a certain economy, the economy of a “heritage.” I appeared to have an access to thinking by reconstructing the ideas of a “great philosopher.” I appeared as a descendant, a successor, a beneficiary, an heir, even a son. But is the economy of possession and property the real economy of philosophy? With this last question I want to advance to my next question: How is Heidegger’s own discourse of a “heritage” to be understood at all?

Heidegger introduces the concepts of *Erbschaft* and *Erbe* (heritage) in §74 of *Being and Time*. Thus the notion of “heritage” belongs to the context of the “historicality” (*Geschichtlichkeit*) of Dasein in its self-understanding as “resolute.” In such “resoluteness,” Dasein “comes back to itself by disclosing current factual possibilities of authentic existing in terms of heritage” (GA 2: 507/SZ 383). Dasein is able to do this because as “thrown” “resoluteness,” it appropriates its “heritage.” Coming back to its own “thrownness” (*Geworfenheit*) occurs as a “handing down to oneself the possibilities that have come down [*Sichüberliefern überkommener Möglichkeiten*],” which do not necessarily have to be recognized “as having thus come down.” Therefore it may be that from such “handing down” (*Überlieferung*), coming possibilities are disclosed that are actual (they are already valid here and now).

From this then follows one of the more enigmatic formulations from *Being and Time*: “If everything ‘good’ is a heritage, and the character of ‘goodness’ [*Güte*] lies in making authentic existence possible, then the handing down of a heritage constitutes itself in resoluteness.”² It is not easy to understand what the nouns “good” and “goodness” actually mean here. Is Heidegger thinking of the Platonic idea of the “good,” but of course in the decidedly un-Platonic sense of a historical “good”? Or could “goodness” be instead a virtue, the virtue that is, for instance, attributed to the “good Lord”? Or should “good” be understood here more in the sense of “suitable” or “fitting”? Then “goodness” would be something like the quality or fitness of beings.

In any case, everything “good” is “heritage”; it comes from “history” and must be “handed down” (*überliefert*). Its significance is “making possible authentic existence.” Yet how? “Authentic existence” includes within it “history” as “destiny” and “fate.” Dasein cannot evade the unavoidable first and last horizon of specific significations, which to say that Dasein cannot escape “history.” Even if Dasein were able to argue against this horizon, such an arguing against would be nothing beyond an already situated, specific response to a set of historical significations. The difference between “authentic” and “inauthentic” Dasein is that “authentic” Dasein performs its response in “resoluteness”; “inauthentic” Dasein does not know what it is doing, because it is completely absorbed in the presence of its actuality.

According to Heidegger, “fateful destiny” can be “disclosed explicitly as bound up with the heritage which has come down to us.” This “handing down to oneself” is “the repetition of the heritage of possibilities”; it is itself “authentic historicity.” As I suggested above, we do not inherit the past but rather the future. And in “authentic historicity” we are not only the inheritors but, still more, the bequeathers.

In this context, the concept of a “heritage” seems to approximate a function otherwise accomplished by the term “tradition” (*Überlieferung*). But a “heritage” does not only make possible a connection with the past, rather it also opens up the future (and explicitly opens it up in relation to the past). In this sense, *Being and Time* makes a distinction

between the notion of a “heritage” and that of a “tradition.” Heidegger explains that “tradition” uproots the “historicality of Dasein” so far that “it confines its interest to the multiformity of possible types, directions, and standpoints of philosophical activity in the most exotic and alien of cultures” (GA 2: 29/SZ 21). It does so in seeking to veil the fact “that it has no ground of its own to stand on [*Bodenlosigkeit*].” The “consequence” of such veiling will be “that Dasein, with all its historiological interests and all its zeal for an interpretation which is philologically ‘objective’ [*sachlich*], no longer understands the most elementary conditions which would alone enable it to go back to the past in a positive manner and make it productively its own.” It is obvious that a “heritage” is never the mere preoccupation with the “multiform” (*vielgestaltig*) past.

*

In other words, Heidegger distinguishes “heritage” from “tradition” in a manner analogous to the distinction he draws between “authenticity” and “inauthenticity.” “Tradition” can decline to a lifeless stock of texts and other artefacts while “heritage” in its futural sense remains a possible object of real appropriation. But with this difference, the inner similarity of “heritage” and “tradition” does not disappear. This inner similarity signifies a displacement of the whole discourse – or it could be that my discourse of “heritage” has already been marked by a signification that I did not mention. I am speaking here of the economic *signification* of “legacy” and “heritage.”³

With this I want to recall the Roman concept of “private right” as the origin of this entire discourse of “inheritance” and “legacy” (in Latin, *heres*, *legatum*). “Inheritance” is understood in reference to a “property” (*dominium*) which the bequeather – the *pater familias* but not only him – disposes in his “will” (*testamentum*).⁴ As possession and property, the “inheritance” is bequeathed to a specific group of people, who in the course of time come to appropriate a specific quantity of things. This specific quantity of things constitutes a “status,” which not only has a life-sustaining signification, but also a representative one in

the relation of one group to another. Thus “inheritance” underpins the stability of a society differentiated by the representative, that is, more or less powerful signification of property, i.e. of a thing. In this sense, “inheritance” and “heritage” is a thing in which a certain economy (re-)presents itself.

This is the way we have to understand the famous lines from the beginning of Goethe’s *Faust*: “If you would own the things your forebears left you, / you first must earn and merit their possession” (*Was du ererbt von deinen Vätern hast, / Erwirb es, um es zu besitzen*).⁵ Faust thinks of the “old implements” (*alte Geräte*) of his father, which until now he did not use. Before he can use them, he must prove that he has reached the dignity of his father. With this he can “acquire” (*erwerben*) them. In a text by Novalis, this point is even more clear. He writes: “Ways to acquire money. 1. By gambling. Lottery. 2. By accidentally finding it. 3. By inheritances.”⁶ (Novalis goes on to provide five further ways.) The quantitative signification of “inheritance” finds its most immediate reference, its equivalence, in money. Every “inheritance” is an economic phenomenon, even if it may not be equivalent to money. A quantity of something will be one of its inherent features.

Of course, Heidegger instead thinks of “possibilities” and their “repetition” (*Wieder-holung*). But in “authentic historicity” these “possibilities” are, for Heidegger, obviously specific “possibilities.” One could say that the “heritage” consists in these very “possibilities” that it “hands down” or “delivers over.” This became clear in 1933 when Heidegger perversely thought that National Socialism might be able to take up the Presocratic ἀλήθεια through the interpretation of Hölderlin’s hymns. What the Germans were to inherit was a stable narrative of certain “possibilities.” The last line of Heidegger’s 1934 *Logic* lectures articulates this situation in the following way: The Germans should learn to “preserve what they already possess” – namely, Hölderlin’s poetry (GA 38: 170/142). But nobody ever “possesses” a poem. Did Heidegger reduce the “heritage” to a property, to a *dominium*, that is to say, to “a being”?

*

Derrida presumably inherited the semantic field of “heritage” and “inheritance” from Heidegger. In considering his corpus, this emerges in his writings on Marx (*Specters of Marx* and “Marx & Sons”). The work of Marx is as such a “heritage,” especially during times in which major historic events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall or the phenomenon of neo-liberalism seem to contradict everything that Marx’s thinking contains. As Derrida puts it, one at first has to consider “the radical and necessary *heterogeneity* of an inheritance.”⁷ He continues: A heritage never gathers as if it would be “one with itself.” Its “presumed unity” – if there is one – could only consist in the “*injunction to reaffirm by choosing*.” As a consequence, one has to “filter, sift, criticize”; one has to “sort out several different possibles that inhabit the same injunction.” If the “readability of a legacy were given, natural, transparent, univocal,” then, he writes, “we would never have anything to inherit from it.”

For philosophy – and not only for it, but presumably also for cultural memory in general – the “heritage” must offer the possibility of “critique.” It is always polyvalent, precarious, difficult. Thus, for Derrida, one cannot just be “faithful” to the “heritage.” The relation to the “heritage” is instead a matter of being “faithful-unfaithful,” “unfaithful for being faithful: *with a view to* being faithful and, at the same time, *because* it is or would be faithful.”⁸ Being “unfaithful” to the “heritage” means to be “faithful” to the actual signification of the “heritage.” A “heritage” can be “difficult” but it can never be bad, at least not in philosophy (in German we speak of *Erbsünde*, “original” or “inherited” sin). Does this positivity of the “heritage” (the “good”) belong to its economy?

It is true that Derrida also criticizes Marx. And of course, he is not a dogmatic Marxist nor perhaps even a political one. But does he really criticize the notion of “heritage” as such? In one sense he does indeed criticize it. In this regard he speaks of the “*phallogocentric* tendency of this metaphysics,”⁹ this “heritage.” He recognizes the longstanding connection between the question of the “heritage” and the question of the “father” and the “son” (*pater familias*, *filius familias*). Certainly, the “father” is the bequeather as such. In this sense “metaphysics” is a

“heritage” passed down in the name of the “father.” And is there “heritage” beyond “metaphysics”? (Maybe it is typical that where Derrida approaches the economic element of “heritage”/ “inheritance,” he also enters into a critique of the discourse on gender. This move belongs to a new “Left” politics – and one taking place not just in Europe – that privileges gender discourse in relation to social justice discourse. I hope to critique this shift at some future point.)

It is somewhat ironic that Derrida himself activates the discourse of “heritage” in his readings of Marx. Marx calls for the “abolition of all right of inheritance [*Erbrecht*]” in the *Communist Manifesto*, but in a later newspaper article from 1869 argues this point in a more sophisticated way. The “right of inheritance” is only “therefore of social importance, because it passes on to the inheritor the power that the deceased exercised during his lifetime.”¹⁰ According to Marx, this “power” consists in the ability to “transfer the fruits of alien labor to oneself by the support of the bequeather’s property.” The “inheritance” does not on its own “produce this power to transfer the fruits of labor from the pocket of one person into another”; rather, it relates only “to the change of the persons exercising this power.” As Marx comments, “Like every other bourgeois legislation,” the “rights of inheritance are not the cause, but the effect, the legal consequence, of the actual economic organization of society, which is developed on the basis of private property and its means of production.” This allows Marx to claim: “Our overarching goal should be the abolition of those institutions which give to some people during their lifetime the economic power to transfer the fruits of labor of the many to themselves.”¹¹ The “abolition of the right of inheritance” would in turn be this broader goal.

I admit that this reduction of the “heritage”/“inheritance” discourse to its economic origin is violent in certain respects. But such violence allows some of the hidden features of both Heidegger’s and Derrida’s approaches to emerge. Without “heritage”/“inheritance” our hands would have nothing to receive that is being delivered over. We would have nothing to possess. The impossibility of “heritage”/“inheritance”

would be an expropriation, the abolition of a certain “power” (of transfer) that inscribes itself in “history” as far as that “history” is received in a way that concerns us.

*

Shortly after the failed revolution, Heidegger recognized that the model of a “heritage” in which every “good” should be found was not sufficient for understanding “authentic historicity.” The notion of “history” itself became unstable, its economic structure began to change. The “resoluteness” of Dasein – even in its openness for “being” – explained nearly nothing in reference to the events of the 1930s and 40s.

Why did no one follow the “ways” that the thinker was unfolding? Was there truly no time for such a “thinking”? “Perhaps in the year 2327?” Heidegger queries in one of the *Black Notebooks* (GA 96: 196/154). But this was “still an error, nourished by history [*Historie*] and its calculating.” Nevertheless, Heidegger himself during this period begins to speak of “history” (*Geschichte*) in calculated time spans. To cite just a few examples, he does this at the conclusion of *Ponderings VI*, in which he endows a fictitious history (“abyssal German history”) with the names of Hölderlin, Wagner, and Nietzsche, fixing its culmination with the date September 26, 1889 – Heidegger’s own birthday (GA 94: 523/380); or when, in the *Anmerkungen II*, he connects the publication dates of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) to Marx’s *Capital* (1867), and then to *Being and Time* (1927), as if the sixty-year intervals between these publications would signify something on their own (GA 97: 131).

Immediately after the war Heidegger claims that “The isolation [*Vereinsamung*] of thinking in the future will be so distinct [*eindeutig*] that for this there are no measures from the previous [*Bisherige*]. Who will bear and preserve this isolation for the next three centuries?” (GA 97: 82). In *Anmerkungen I*, in connection with this, Heidegger continues: “Thinking has for the next three centuries found its home on another star” (GA 97: 108). And then in *Anmerkungen II*, he claims it took three centuries for thinking to make a real difference between Descartes and himself, apropos the overcoming of modern times. As he continues, it will take three centuries for the next leap: “A world-historical turn

[*Wendung*]” needs “at least three centuries” (GA 97: 185). We therefore have to face “three centuries” without thinking occurring.

Heidegger continues in this vein when, just six years before his death, he remarks in a famous line from his interview with Richard Wisser: “A future thinker, who is perhaps given the task of taking over this thinking which I have tried to prepare, will have to acknowledge the following words, which Heinrich von Kleist once wrote: ‘I step back in front of one who is not here, and I bow a millennium ahead of him, before his spirit.’”¹² Heidegger quotes this passage from a letter of 1803 that Kleist wrote to his sister Ulrike. For many years, Kleist worked to compose the *Trauerspiel Robert Guiskard*, but failed to finish it, burning nearly everything he had written. It is “foolish,” Kleist writes, “to want to invest one’s forces a longer time for a work [that is] too difficult” for one.¹³ It is important to note that Heidegger does not say that he himself wants to “step back” in front of this future thinker. In fact, that future thinker who is to take up the thinking Heidegger prepared is understood “to bow” in front of a still coming thinker. The absence of thinking thus extends now from “three centuries” to a “millennium.”

There are more of these kinds of remarks, which would be misunderstood were I to interpret them as a kind of self-aggrandizing staging. What Heidegger wants to indicate with them must be taken seriously; they make the transition from the theoretical recognition of a “heritage” of “possibilities” for an “authentic existence” to a philosophizing that is itself enacting the problem of “heritage” as such. In this sense, “thinking” is a unique event, and is not to be compared with a scientific attitude, or probably even a “philosophical” one.

What is shown in this enactment is a different relation to the “history of philosophy.” This different relation appears as a different economy, perhaps a “being-historical” economy in distinction to a metaphysical economy. In this economy we have to be aware of the loss of every “heritage.” I want to recall two concepts from the later Heidegger that gesture toward this different economy. The first is the concept of “poverty,” or *Armut*. In the usual sense, “poverty” is a “not-having as a lacking what is needed.” But according to Heidegger, the “essence of poverty” lies in “beyng”: “To be truly poor means that

we are not lacking something, if not the un-needed" (GA 73.1: 878). A "heritage" as articulated in *Being and Time* is based on a "lacking what is needed." The second concept belonging to this different economy is the concept of the "event of expropriation" (*Enteignis*). Thus there is a "legacy [*Vermächtnis*] as event of expropriation" (GA 73.1: 796), or to put this succinctly, as a liberation to non-being (*Befreiung zum Nicht-Seienden*). In reference to this, Heidegger poses the following question: "How would it be – if it were the case that the modes of pain [*die Weisen des Schmerzes*] were the event of expropriation [*Enteignis*]?" (GA 73.1: 799). The "event of appropriation" begins with a parting from "beings," with a parting from their priority, with a parting from possession.

I began my meditation on the problem of "heritage"/"inheritance" with the remark that no philosophy has ever related to history in the way that philosophers in the 20th century have related to history. In this relation, in this focus, Heidegger underwent the loss of a philosophical "heritage." Philosophy was not just unprepared to bear that century's catastrophes, philosophers – and not only Heidegger – were in fact aware of a withdrawal of possibilities for thinking. Heidegger tried to turn this loss into a gift. But did he succeed? And can we, today, say that history has handed down to us new possibilities for philosophy? My brief overview is that the metaphysical understanding of "heritage" and "legacy" no longer offers any new ways of thinking. And here perhaps Heidegger was right and it will take "three centuries" for a new philosophical question – for a new time of philosophy.

NOTES

- 1 Alain Badiou, *L'être 3 – Figure du retrait* (1986–1987) (Paris: Fayard, 2015). Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*, trans. Ray Brassier (London: Continuum, 2008).
- 2 See here Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman, trans. Judith Norman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 220: “All good things are inherited: anything that is not inherited is imperfect, a beginning” The ellipsis at the end of this phrase is important: the “beginning” is no “heritage.”
- 3 There is basically no real difference between the words *Erbschaft* and *Erbe*. Perhaps one could say that *Erbschaft* is the action, and *Erbe* is the object of the action. Moreover, the German language does not distinguish between “heritage” and “inheritance.” If I, as a German, speak about a cultural “heritage” or about a financial “inheritance,” in both cases I use the word *Erbe*. However, if I were to speak of a spiritual “heritage,” I could use the word *Vermächtnis*. But this word can also possess an economic signification; the verb *vermachen* can also be used in reference to things. It is interesting to note that etymology has established a connection between *Erbe* and *arm* (poor).
- 4 See *De romanum iure: Latine et germanice: Delegit, convertit, annotavit, praefatus est Ervinus Scharr* (Zürich and Stuttgart: Aedibus Artemidos, 1960).
- 5 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust I*, ed. and trans. Stuart Atkins (Cambridge: Suhrkamp/Insel, 1984), 20, l. 682.
- 6 Novalis, *Schriften: Die Werke Friedrich von Hardenbergs*, ed. Paul Kluckhohn, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, n.d.), 326.
- 7 Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), 18.

- 8 Jacques Derrida, "Marx & Sons," trans. G.M. Goshgarian, in *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's "Specters of Marx,"* ed. Michael Sprinker (London: Verso, 2008), 219.
- 9 Derrida, "Marx & Sons," 258.
- 10 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. Samuel Moore, rev. David McLellan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 26. Karl Marx, "Bericht des Generalrats über das Erbrecht," in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, vol. 16 (Berlin: Dietz, 1962), 367.
- 11 Marx, "Erberecht," 368.
- 12 *Martin Heidegger im Gespräch*, ed. Richard Wisser (Freiburg and Munich: Karl Alber, 1970), 77.
- 13 Heinrich von Kleist, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, vol. 4, ed. Ilse-Marie Barth and Hinrich C. Seeba (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker, 1991), 320.

The Negativity of Time-Space

John Sallis

In the title of Heidegger's initial project, the entire course that its demonstrative analyses will traverse is delimited. For it is through the increasingly more explicit analyses of time that the question of the meaning of being comes to be developed. Though time goes largely unconsidered in the articulation of the existentials that constitute the being of Dasein, the unveiling of temporality as their ground is merely deferred. Thus, once the ecstatic character of temporality has been exposed, the analysis of the existentials must be repeated so as to display their grounding in temporality.

It turns out, then, that the progression from being to time has as its complement a regression from time to being. This circle traces the limits of – that is, delimits – Heidegger's initial project in its broadest expanse.

The unveiling of time as grounding the being of Dasein extends, then, from the beginning to the end of *Being and Time*. Yet, in addition, there is to be found at the beginning and at the end, respectively, two unique and very different results that are to be – or that come to be – achieved. At the beginning the result is merely anticipated, namely, in the statement that the preliminary goal of *Being and Time* is the interpretation of time as the horizon of the understanding of being. Since, in the analyses within the work, meaning will be shown to have the character of horizon, this statement is tantamount to declaring that the goal is to interpret time as the meaning of being.

At the other extreme the result is quite different and conveys a sense of time that does not readily cohere with the initial statement. In the final chapter of *Being and Time*, Heidegger describes a certain kind of reckoning with time that contrasts both with the orientation

to the question of being and with the analysis of the ecstatic character of time. It is a reckoning that is turned concretely to things. It is by virtue of this reckoning that things are revealed as “within time.” Yet, this, in turn, presupposes another kind of reckoning, which Heidegger describes as the “concern with time that we know as astronomical and calendrical time-reckoning” (GA 2: 544/SZ 411, em).¹ He observes that, as thrown, Dasein is submitted to the rising and setting of the sun, that is, to the day as the most natural measure of time. It follows that the articulation of the day, hence of natural time, is determined by the course of the sun. Such is the context in which Heidegger puts forth a statement regarding time that appears to fall entirely outside the bounds of his ontological project. Most likely it is this externality, this displacement, that is marked by the reservation with which he writes the word: “‘Time’ [*die Zeit*] first shows itself precisely in the sky, that is, there where one comes across it in directing oneself naturally according to it, so that ‘time’ [*die Zeit*] even becomes identified with the sky” (GA 2: 554/SZ 419).

A similar reference is found later in *The Event* (dated 1941–42), though what is referred to is space rather than time. What is especially pertinent is that the reference is again to the sky. Heidegger declares that mundane space – the space occupied by things (*Dingraum*) – “is accessible to us only by way of the space in which the stars exist” (GA 71: 216–17/186).

In *Being and Time* the two results regarding time border on opposition, though this opposition is not at all simply symmetrical. On the one hand, time is oriented to being; indeed, as the projected meaning of being, it is cast even beyond being (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας) (See GA 24: 399/282). On the other hand, it is referred to beings such as the sun and to the space of such beings, the sky. Time is thus oriented both to being and to beings, in particular, to the space of those beings that we share “under the same sky” (GA 2: 546/SZ 413). To be sure, Heidegger attempts to rein in the latter result, to demonstrate that astronomical time is grounded in ecstatic temporality. Yet, regardless of whether this effort succeeds or not, the results of the analyses serve

to pose two comprehensive and fundamental tasks. The reference of time to the space of the heavenly bodies poses the task of thinking through the cohesion of time and space, of doing so in a manner that surpasses Heidegger's effort to found Dasein's spatiality on temporality, an effort that he later confesses was inadequate (GA 14: 29/23). But, in turn, in the oppositional relation between the two results there is posed the further task of thinking cohesive time and space in their relation to being, to the meaning of being, to what will come to be thought as the truth of being.²

*

In the thinking that, thus protended, opens beyond *Being and Time*, a decisive – even the most decisive – role is assumed by the concept of negativity, though, in the course of this thinking, negativity will prove to limit the very provenance of the concept as such. Yet, already in *Being and Time* negativity enters into several of the most extensive and fundamental analyses. Three such analyses are especially pertinent.

The first is the analysis of anxiety. Here Heidegger forges a connection between this distinctively disclosive disposition and the experience of the uncanny (*Unheimlichkeit*). Expressing literally a not-being-at-home (*Nicht-zuhause-sein*), the word is taken to signify the indefiniteness in which Dasein finds itself in anxiety, “the nothing and nowhere,” as Heidegger calls it (GA 2: 250/SZ 188). In being exposed to this nothing and nowhere, Dasein encounters a distinctive mode of negativity.

In the second analysis, that of death, the indication is still more direct. It lays out the various forms in which negativity enters into being-toward-death. The analysis begins with the observation that in death “Dasein is no longer there [*ist . . . zum Nicht-mehr-da-sein geworden*]” (GA 2: 315/SZ 236). At a deeper level of the analysis, Heidegger describes the character of death in these – so often repeated and recast – words: it is “the possibility of *the impossibility of existence as such*” (GA 2: 348/SZ 262). Most telling is his declaration that death, as a possibility to which, from birth, Dasein comports itself, gives Dasein *nothing* – nothing that it could aim at actualizing, nothing even that

one could imagine actualizing. Being-toward-death gives *nothing*; it is pure negativity.

A decade later, in *Contributions to Philosophy*, Heidegger radicalizes the connection between being-toward-death and negativity, while, in this very move, he broaches a concurrence of negativity and being, which by then will have proved to constitute the center – if there be a center – of his discourse. He declares that one of the fundamental determinations harbored in being-toward-death is that in it “there is concealed the essential belongingness of the *not* to being as such” (GA 65: 282/222).

The analysis of being-toward-death developed in *Being and Time* already tacitly reveals a connection between negativity and time. For the projection upon death as possibility is, like all projective understanding, grounded on temporality. Hence, the negativity that haunts being-toward-death leads back to temporality as its ground.

In the third of the analyses, that of guilt, Heidegger displays still more openly the specific form in which negativity enters into this phenomenon. He declares that in the very idea of guilt “there lies the character of the *not*” (GA 2: 376/SZ 283). More specifically, he writes: “we determine the formal existential idea of ‘guilty’ as: being the ground of a being [*Sein*] that is determined by a not – that is, *being the ground of a negativity* [*Grundsein einer Nichtigkeit*]” (GA 2: 376/SZ 283). In the course of the analysis that follows, Heidegger identifies the ways in which, both in understanding and as thrown, necessarily guilty Dasein is the ground of a negativity. In understanding, a projection on certain possibilities entails that other possibilities are excluded, negated – that Dasein does *not* take up these other possibilities. In its thrownness, the negativity lies in Dasein’s inability to bring itself into its *Da*, that it cannot come back behind its thrownness so as to release from itself its being-thrown. In other words, the *Da* exceeds the range of what Dasein can take in hand and control.

Since in and through its constitutive moments Dasein is intrinsically guilty, negativity proves to be operative at its very core. Thus it is that Heidegger goes on to attribute negativity to care as such, that is, to

the very being of Dasein. He is explicit, indeed emphatic: “*Care itself, in its essence, is permeated through and through with negativity.*” Still more directly, more explicitly, he writes that care “means ... : being the (negative) ground of a negativity” (GA 2: 378/SZ 285). Furthermore, since temporality is the ontological meaning of care – the meaning of the being of Dasein – temporality cannot be devoid of the negativity that permeates care. Negativity cannot but be intrinsic to time.

Following the analysis by which is exposed the negativity within guilt and within care, there is a remarkable series of admissions and questions by which Heidegger attests to the incompleteness of his analysis. He grants that “the ontological meaning of the notness [*Nichtheit*] of this existential negativity [*Nichtigkeit*] remains obscure” (GA 2: 379/SZ 285, em). More expansively, he declares that the ontological essence of the *not* in general remains obscure. There follows a series of questions that effectively extend the range of the interrogation that needs to be brought to bear on negativity. Is it obvious, Heidegger asks, that every negative has the sense of a lack and that what positivity it has goes no further than the mere idea of passing over something null and void? In other words, is it obvious that in negating something one marks it as a nullity and through the negation passes on beyond it to something else? Equally portentous is Heidegger’s reference to dialectic. Why is it, he asks, that dialectic constantly resorts to the negative without, however, being able to ground it dialectically? Here Heidegger’s encounter with Hegel appears on the horizon. In that encounter he will take up the very questions that he will have posed in *Being and Time* regarding negativity.

*

In Heidegger’s 1929 inaugural lecture “What is Metaphysics?” he takes up again the question of negativity, traversing along somewhat different lines much of the same terrain as in the corresponding analyses in *Being and Time*. Especially prominent is the account of anxiety as the attunement in which Dasein is brought, in the starkest manner, before the nothing. The lecture also recasts the description of the being of Dasein – that is, of care – as permeated with negativity.

In this regard Heidegger writes: “Da-sein means: being held out into the nothing” (GA 9: 115/91).

The most conspicuous advance in the lecture is broached by Heidegger’s contention that, were Dasein not held out into the nothing, it could never be related to beings or even to itself. In other words – words that indeed leap ahead – “The nothing is what makes possible the openness of beings as such for Dasein” (GA 9: 115/91). In words that leap even farther ahead: the nothing is not merely the indeterminate opposite of beings but “reveals itself as belonging to the being of beings” (GA 9: 120/94). Heidegger’s account entails that the nothing – that is, negativity – is not the opposite either of beings or of being itself. Rather than being the opposite of being – even in the dialectical sense – negativity belongs to being. Now, even more prominently, Hegel comes upon the scene. It is highly appropriate that at precisely this point Heidegger cites from Hegel’s *Logic*, namely, the statement that being and nothing are the same. Needless to say, everything depends on the sense assumed by the word *same*.

*

Heidegger’s encounter with Hegel regarding negativity is inscribed in a text from 1938–39 entitled “Negativity: A Confrontation with Hegel Approached from Negativity” (GA 68: 1–60/3–47). Heidegger’s strategies in this text are to some degree governed by his acute awareness that any opposition to Hegel’s system risks becoming merely symmetrical therewith, in which case it cannot avoid being reabsorbed into the system. In the case most significant for Heidegger, the counter position cannot succeed by positing being and nothing as opposites, counter to Hegel’s assertion that being and nothing are the same. For in Hegel’s *Logic* this assertion comes about as the *Aufhebung* of the assertion that they are opposed. Since the assertion of opposition is, as *aufgehoben*, nonetheless preserved in the dialectical result, it is already incorporated into the system. In other words, what would be put forth as counter to Hegel’s system would be absorbed into the system and its character as counter to the system would be negated, suspended.

Heidegger grants that within Hegel's system negativity is the basic determination. He echoes Hegel's own assertion of "the enormous power of the negative," that it is "the energy of thought."³ On the other hand, Heidegger charges that in the system there is "complete dissolution of negativity into the positivity of the absolute" (GA 68: 14/11, em). In Hegel's terms it is a matter of determinate negation, of negation that, in being itself negated, is transformed into positivity. The reiteration of such transformation defines the life of spirit, which is described in one of the most decisive and oft-cited passages in the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The passage reads: Spirit "is this power only by looking the negative in the face and tarrying with it. This tarrying [with the negative] is the magical power [*die Zauberkraft*] that converts it into being."⁴

Heidegger does not directly oppose Hegel's dissolution of negativity into positivity. He does not risk staking out a position that would then prove to be reabsorbed into the system. Rather, his opposition is oblique in that both being and the negative are fundamentally re-determined. As such they coincide, and to this extent there is an affinity with Hegel's assertion that being and nothing are the same. Yet, their coincidence is of an entirely different sort. The difference stems from the determination of negativity as abyss. Heidegger writes the word in hyphenated form, as *Ab-grund*, in order to express its coincidence with ground, that is, with being. Thus, he asserts that the most a-byssal (*das Ab-gründigste*) is being itself. In order to express the mutation that being undergoes through its conjunction with the abyssal, he writes it in the form *Seyn*.

On the other hand, Heidegger asserts that negativity as abyss is opposed to beyng, that it is the abyssal contrary of beyng. And yet, he adds immediately that abyssal negativity, in its very difference from beyng, is the essence of being. In these assertions he opposes Hegel's position that being and nothing are the same. Yet, this opposition is oblique rather than symmetrical. Being and the abyssal nothing are opposed; there is between them a difference that cannot be dialectically surpassed. And yet, in this very difference, they coincide, they are the same.

How, then, if not dialectically, do being and nothing – in their identity and difference – belong together?

The abyss – that is, negativity – is nothing other than the ground, nothing set apart from it. It is through its grounding that there is opened a clearing (*Lichtung*) in which beings can come to be present. Yet, precisely as abyssal, the ground is never itself present; it refuses itself, withdraws, in the very grounding that clears a space for beings. It is abyssal and yet it grounds. This abyss that belongs essentially to the ground is the negativity intrinsic to ground; it is the negativity that belongs to *beyng*. *Beyng* and nothing are neither the same nor different. Rather, the nothing is, as it were, coiled within *beyng* in such a way as to render *beyng* itself abyssal.

In thinking the abyss of *beyng*, Heidegger thinks negativity in a way that escapes the reach of dialectic and that carries it beyond metaphysics as such.

*

How does negativity, redetermined in this way, bear on space and time? Can Heidegger's rethinking of negativity serve to launch the kind of inquiry prompted by Heidegger's referring of time to the sky, to the space of the heavenly bodies? Can the redetermination of negativity as abyss provide a means by which to extend ontologically the connection between negativity and time revealed in the analyses of being-toward-death and of guilt and care?

In *Contributions to Philosophy*, which was composed a decade after *Being and Time* and at virtually the same time as the text on Hegel, Heidegger devotes an entire section to the question of space and time. This section falls within the fugal division entitled "The Grounding." In the title of this section, the hyphenated word *Ab-grund* occurs.⁵ These indications serve to portend that the account of the abyssal ground forged through the encounter with Hegel will figure prominently in the determinations of space and time undertaken in *Contributions to Philosophy*.

Heidegger poses the question: Why, ever since antiquity, have space and time been thought together? Why, conceived, for instance, as kinds of order or as schemata,⁶ have they always been yoked together, since they are radically different and indeed have nothing whatsoever in common? Why space *and* time? Heidegger takes the “and” as his clue: the “and” that conjoins space and time points back to the ground of the essence of both. In order to think them in their essential conjunction, it is necessary – says Heidegger – to dislodge or derange them (the word is *Verrückung*, a noun form of *verrückt*, which means *mad* or *crazy*). Thereby they are brought back, resituated, within the open (*das Offene*), within the clearing, within the sphere of ἀλήθεια. It is here that they have their common essence. Though throughout the history of metaphysics they were always regarded as conjoined, their common essence could – Heidegger contends – never be thought because the locus of their commonality, ἀλήθεια, had been abandoned and replaced by ομοίωσις. In the first beginning the essential “and” gave way to an “and” that only indicated from afar the essential conjunction of space and time.

Heidegger proposes to recover and redetermine this essential conjunction of space and time by thinking them as originally united in what he terms, in hyphenated form, time-space (*Zeit-Raum*). He designates time-space as the “common root” of space and time (GA 65: 378/298).

The entire discourse on time-space focuses on the bond between time-space and the essence of truth. In fact, the immediately preceding section of *Contributions to Philosophy* is devoted to an analysis of the essence of truth. This section takes over and extends the analysis of truth in Heidegger’s earlier text “On the Essence of Truth” (first composed in 1930). Most significantly, it takes over from the earlier text the deconstruction of the opposition between truth and untruth; in that text Heidegger shows that untruth is not simply the opposite of truth but rather belongs to truth. In addition, truth is itself redetermined as disclosedness, as unconcealing; since it is precisely in and as the open – that is, the clearing – that unconcealing takes place, truth can also be determined as clearing – or, recovering the ancient sense, as ἀλήθεια.

In *On the Essence of Truth* a certain strategy is employed, one that recurs decisively in later texts. It can readily be discerned in Heidegger's confrontation with Hegel, in his move from the sheer opposition between being and nothing (such that their identity can supervene dialectically) to a configuration in which this opposition is deconstructed through the inclusion of one opposite within the other, that is, of untruth within truth, of abyss within ground, of negativity within being. Such inclusion does not simply cancel the difference that would obtain if these pairs were opposites; rather, it resituates that difference within the belonging of one would-be opposite to the other. In this strategy, which governs many of Heidegger's analyses – especially where there looms the threat of dialectic – one can discern a kind of logic operative in Heidegger's texts, a logic quite other than the conventional logic of noncontradiction, which has been taken to be logic as such ever since its codification by Aristotle. In Heidegger's strategy there is broached a breakthrough to another logic.

In *Contributions to Philosophy* Heidegger takes up the pairing of truth and untruth as clearing and concealing. Yet, since untruth belongs to truth, since it is internal to truth rather than opposed to it, the pairing can be formulated more precisely by supplementing the phrase "clearing and concealing" with the stipulation: as one (concealment) belongs to the other (clearing), or, more comprehensively, as each belongs to the other. This says, on the one side, that in the happening of clearing – that is, of truth – there is also, within that very clearing, concealment. But also, on the other side, in the happening of concealment there is also, interior to it, clearing. Since concealing is always also self-concealing, that is, since concealing conceals itself, it could never become manifest, were it not for the clearing that belongs to it. This pairing, thought radically, Heidegger often formulates in the expression "clearing for concealing" (*die Lichtung für die Verbergung*). Here it becomes evident that in the inclusion there is a kind of reduplication by which that which is included in the other also includes the other within itself; otherwise, clearing could not be readily subordinated to concealment, as in the phrase "clearing for concealment."

In the course of his discourse on truth in *Contributions to Philosophy*, Heidegger ventures even to reformulate the pairing in the phrase “truth is untruth”; he warns, however, that, though it serves the purpose of indicating the strangeness of the determination of truth, this formulation is seductive and easily misunderstood, especially if construed in the direction of Nietzsche’s dictum that truth is the error without which a certain kind of living being cannot live. To declare that truth is untruth is of course to undermine that very declaration. The declaration cancels itself, and yet, for Heidegger, it expresses something essential. He writes: “This statement, deliberately formulated to be in conflict with itself, is meant to say expressly that the *negative* [*das Nichthafte*] belongs to truth, but by no means merely as a lack but as resistance, as that self-concealing that comes into the clearing as such” (GA 65: 356/281). In other words, the concealing that belongs to clearing constitutes the negativity of truth.

By laying out the various determinations of the essence of truth as well as the logic of oppositional inclusion, which is extended from truth to being and to ground, the stage is set for the analysis of time-space. It will be expedient to reconfigure – indeed to structure – this quite disseminated analysis as proceeding through a series of five stages. These stages do not by any means exhaust the resources of Heidegger’s analyses. Several strands of the discourse lead beyond the scope of the present account, perhaps most notably, that by which the thinking of the event (*Ereignis*) is woven into the analysis of time-space. Other concepts that remain subordinate, that are merely broached but left undeveloped – such as that of the “momentary site” (*Augenblicksstätte*) – must also be left aside.

Note, first of all, that the section on time-space begins by positing a certain relatedness between time-space and the essence of truth. Specifically, Heidegger identifies “time-space as arising out of and belonging to the essence of truth” (GA 65: 371/293). Yet this arising and belonging are of a unique kind. It is not as if the essence of truth – that is, clearing/concealment – is already in place, already deployed, such that time-space would somehow be generated by and from it and hence

would be simply derivative. On the contrary, Heidegger declares that “time-space is merely the essential unfolding of the essential occurrence of truth [*die Wesensentfaltung der Wesung der Wahrheit*]” (GA 65: 386/305). This says: the essence of truth, its very deployment, occurs through the essential unfolding that takes place as time-space.

The second stage is launched with the question: What form does this deployment, this essential unfolding of truth that takes place as time-space, assume? In other words, what are the joinings, junctures (the word is *Fügung*), that is, the structural moments that are operative in this unfolding? There are two such moments, which Heidegger describes with the words *Entrückung* and *Berückung*. *Entrückung* has the sense of being carried away, removed, transported beyond, as in ecstasy. *Berückung* has the sense of being captivated by what is at hand. The words are of course related to the word *Verrückung*, which, as noted already, has the sense of dislodging or deranging.

The two words, taken together, thus describe the deployment of truth that takes place as time-space, as the conjunction of transport beyond and adherence to what is at hand. In and as the essential unfolding of truth in its essence, these moments happen at once; one could say that they happen at the same time, were it not that this happening is antecedent to the emergence of time. Furthermore, through the allusion to *Verrückung*, there is a hint that in this happening there is a dislodging – indeed, a dislodging corresponding to what Heidegger describes as the “dislodging of the essence of the human into Da-sein” (GA 65: 372/294). One could say: in that the human is engaged in the occurrence of truths in the operation of time-space, the human undergoes such dislodging – that is, becomes deranged, is exposed to *μανία*, to madness.

At the third stage Heidegger takes up the question of ground in a manner not unlike that in the contemporaneous text on Hegel. Heidegger declares that time-space grounds the “there” (the *Da*), the open region in which beings can come to presence. Indeed, he says in this connection that it is through the “there” that selfhood and beings in their truth “first come to be grounded” (GA 65: 376/297). In

other words, in and through the grounding of the “there,” that is, the grounding in which is opened the sphere of appearance, both oneself and beings are granted the expanse in which they can come to presence. The very possibility of their appearance thus has time-space as its ground, twice removed.

But what kind of ground is time-space? And how does it ground the “there”? What kind of grounding occurs here?

Heidegger calls it an abyssal grounding. Through time-space there takes place an “abyssal grounding of the ‘there’” (GA 65: 376/297). Thus, the grounding takes place as abyssal; that is, in the grounding, the grounding occurs as abyss. The abyss, he says, “is the originary essence [*Wesung*] of the ground” (GA 65: 379/299). This is to say, then, that time-space, as the essential occurrence of truth, as the ground of the “there,” is to be grasped as abyssal, as the *Ab-grund* that belongs essentially to the *Grund*. Heidegger consistently hyphenates the word *Ab-grund* in order to stress this belonging of the *Ab-grund* to the *Grund*. The *Ab-grund* is not the opposite of the *Grund* but belongs to it. The abyss is interior to the ground rather than being posed over against it as its opposite. Here again Heidegger’s strategy is to deconstruct opposition by turning it into an inclusion, in which, nonetheless, differentiation is retained.

Granted the belonging of abyss to ground, the question is: What is this abyssal occurrence that brings about the very achieving of grounding? Heidegger describes it as an *Ausbleiben* – a staying away, an absenting – of ground. It is a self-concealing of ground – in Heidegger’s words, a “self-concealing in the mode of the refusal [*Versagung*] of the ground” (GA 65: 379/300). It is the self-withholding of ground.⁷

But how is it, then, that in and through a withholding of ground there occurs an achieving of grounding? How, if time-space withholds itself, does it ground the “there” and thereby provide an open region in which beings can come to presence? How is it that time-space grounds and yet, since it withdraws, does not properly ground?

Heidegger’s response – and nothing is more crucial – is that the self-withholding of ground brings about “a distinctive and originary

kind of leaving unfilled-out, of leaving empty.” Thereby it accomplishes “a distinctive kind of opening up” (GA 65: 379/300). In other words, by withdrawing from what will be the site of the “there,” the ground leaves the site empty, without ground, and precisely thereby it opens up the site. In Heidegger’s words: “In withholding itself, the ground preeminently brings into the open, namely, into the first opening of *that* emptiness, which is thereby a determinate one. . . . In this withholding, the originary emptiness opens up and the originary *clearing* occurs” (GA 65: 379–80/300). Thus, it is the self-withholding abyssal ground that brings about the clearing, that lets it open up at a site. Indeed, the connection is so intimate that by inserting only minimal mediation – namely, the word *erstwesentlich* – Heidegger can declare that the *Ab-grund* is the clearing/concealment, that is, the essence of truth. Yet, this is only “the first clearing,” and “it abides in hesitancy [*Zögerung*]” (GA 65: 380/300). It is such because something further must take place in order that the “there” be fully grounded.

At the fourth stage there is a return to the question of time-space, of its emergence as the essential unfolding of the essential occurrence of truth. The question is: How, in and through the withdrawing of the *Ab-grund*, does time-space come into play as the original unity that breaks asunder into time and space? How does time-space come to be installed in the “first clearing” in such a way that the clearing as such is constituted?

Heidegger’s response is formulated in a monstrously abyssal, barely penetrable discourse, which thus enacts discursively that to which it is addressed. He focuses again on the self-withdrawing of the ground, which leaves what will be the site of the “there” empty. It is, then, precisely into this emptiness that the various transportings (*Entrückungen*) enter. There is transporting toward – that is, into – the emptiness of what is not-yet, of what is to come; there is transporting toward – that is, into – the emptiness of what is no-longer, of what has passed by. It is the conjunction, the gathering, of these transportings and, in addition, their impact (which “constitutes the present,” GA 65: 383/303) that constitutes temporalization. Since temporalization is granted – or, more precisely,

its site is first opened up – by the self-withholding of the *Ab-grund*, Heidegger declares that the *Ab-grund* grounds in the mode of temporalization. In an allied but distinctive manner, spatialization arises from captivation (*Berückung*), from the entrance of captivation into the empty site opened by the self-withdrawing of ground. It is the unity of such originary temporalization and spatialization that constitutes time-space. The *Ab-grund* grounds as time-space. Thus, time-space is nothing other than the *Ab-grund* as, withdrawingly, it grounds. Hence the title of the entire discourse devoted to time-space: *Der Zeit-Raum als der Ab-grund*.

Heidegger stresses that temporalization and spatialization cannot be understood on the basis of the usual representations of time and space. On the contrary, time and space can be grasped in their very source only from temporalization and spatialization – that is, most originally, from time-space. Heidegger's account as to how such a derivation would proceed offers only the most preliminary indications, emphasizing that it would require leaving traditional conceptions behind and adhering to the proper conception of time-space.

How, in the end, do time and space come to structure what otherwise would be only the *first* clearing? How, in particular, are they to be thought concretely and not only as remote derivatives from the self-withdrawing of the *Ab-grund*? Heidegger leaves these questions largely unanswered, hardly even posed. But there is one brief passage that in this regard is quite remarkable. Heidegger writes: “Only where something at hand [*ein Vorhandenes*] is seized and determined does there arise the flow of ‘time’ [*Zeit*] that flows by it and the ‘space’ [*Raum*] that surrounds it” (GA 65: 382/302). A possible interpretation would be: time and space become manifest only in connection with things – as in the case of the “time” that first announces itself in the space of the heavenly bodies.

The final stage of Heidegger's analysis makes explicit the bond between time-space and negativity. Heidegger begins by excluding, or at least qualifying, a certain kind of negativity. He observes that the *Ab-grund* is not the negation of *Grund*. The abyss is no proclamation of unlimited groundlessness. On the contrary, the abyss is an affirmation

of ground, since it is precisely through the self-withholding of the abysal ground that the “there” comes to be grounded. Yet, if considered immediately, both the *Ab-grund* and the refusal or withholding contain a certain negativity, which is thus a negativity of time-space. For the abyss is, in a sense, the negative of ground and the refusal is the negative of bestowal or granting. And yet, in both instances Heidegger’s analysis displaces the negativity, breaks down the opposition expressed by negation. For the abyss belongs to the ground rather than being symmetrically opposed to it; and the refusal of ground, rather than negating its bestowal, is the very means by which the bestowal of ground is accomplished. In both cases the alleged negation proves to be interior to, rather than opposed to, its would-be opposite.

Such is the logic of the negativity – that of time-space – that enables the deployment of the essence of truth, that lets a clearing for concealment take place.

And yet, it seems that at a certain juncture this logic is violated. For Heidegger insists that there is a *not* that is neither a mere opposite nor a negativity included in its would-be opposite, a *not* that is not coiled up within that which it would negate. Heidegger calls it “the originary *not*” (GA 65: 388/306). He identifies it only to the extent of saying that it is the *not* that belongs to beyng itself and thus to the event. Beyond this he says only that this negativity occurs in the withholding. One can only surmise that it is the negativity that remains beyond all the grounding that it enables, an originary concealment belonging to beyng and the event and decisively withheld beyond all grounding, the originary $\lambda\eta\theta\eta$ at the heart of $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$.

*

Heidegger’s engagement with the question of time-space and of its negativity does not cease after the account developed in *Contributions to Philosophy*. To take up the most decisive rethinking that Heidegger ventures in this regard, it is necessary to leap far beyond the series of texts discussed thus far.

Two and a half decades after he composed *Contributions to Philosophy*, Heidegger delivered the lecture “Time and Being.” The title was provocative, as it was to have been the title of the never-published third Division of *Being and Time* in which the task of this work, to exhibit time as the meaning of being, would finally have been carried out. Yet, in a note to the published text of the lecture, Heidegger confesses that the lecture cannot be linked up with *Being and Time*, because in the intervening years the question, though still the same, has become still more questionable.

If “Time and Being” is compared with *Contributions to Philosophy*, what is most striking is that, in the lecture, grounding, which is so prominent in *Contributions to Philosophy* plays no role whatsoever. As a result, the distinction that previously was drawn in various connections between ground and grounded is effaced, and the entire analysis now occurs on a plane where the separation between ground and grounded no longer occurs as such.

What is it, then, that replaces grounding or at least that compensates for this exclusion? It is what Heidegger calls *Reichen* – let us say *reaching* or *reaching out to*, though the word also has the sense of *holding out to*, *offering*, *extending to*. Yet, what figures in the lecture is not reaching in general but a single, unique, yet complex reaching. It is a reaching in which each of three moments reaches out to the others. The moments that are submitted to such reaching are those of time: future, past, and present.

What, then, is time-space? Heidegger defines it thus: “Time-space now names the open, which is cleared in the reaching in which future, past, and present reach out to one another” (GA 14: 18–19/14). Two points need to be noted in this definition. The first is that time-space is identified with the open, with the clearing. Here it is evident how grounding and the separation it entails have been eliminated: Whereas previously time-space was thought as the ground that grounds the open or clearing, now they are situated on the same level. Time-space *is* precisely the open that is cleared by way of the reaching. Yet, Heidegger identifies time-space not only with the open that is cleared but also – and

this is the second point – with the complex of reachings by which the clearing is effected. In his words: “What is proper to the time-space of time proper lies in the reaching that clears, the reaching in which future, past, and present reach out to one another” (GA 14: 19/14). Thus, all – that is, time-space, the open or clearing, and the threefold reaching – not only operate on the same level but are so closely allied that each blends into the others.

Within this new configuration, the complex of reachings corresponds to the temporalization that, in *Contributions to Philosophy*, is effected by the abyssal grounding and, specifically, by the transport structure of time-space as the ground. But now, in “Time and Being,” the temporalization merges with time-space rather than being – in any sense – grounded by it. It is as though the language of grounding has been replaced by one of sameness, of a sameness that does not simply – nor in the manner of an *Aufhebung* – exclude difference. To this extent the analysis of time-space has become an exercise in tautological thinking.

Though it is in “Time and Being” that Heidegger dismisses his attempt in *Being and Time* to trace Dasein’s spatiality back to temporality, the lecture seems, in what little is said of space, to mark another dependence within the configuration developed in the lecture. Heidegger says that the reachings are pre-spatial and that it is only in this connection that there is space.

Much more developed than the question of space is that of the unity of the three reachings. Minimally expressed, their unity lies in the interplay (*Zuspiel*) of each with each. Heidegger regards this interplay itself as a fourth dimension along with the three that interplay; indeed, he regards the interplay itself to be the first of the four dimensions of time, since it is what draws future, past, and present near to one another by distancing them from one another.

Near the end of the lecture, Heidegger addresses, in effect, the question of negativity. Central to his account is the observation that in the reaching to the past or the future, there is a refusal of the present, a withholding of the present. There is a hint of this refusal in the description of the past as no longer present and of the future as not yet

present. The negativity that the word *not* here expresses Heidegger terms *Entzug*, withdrawal (GA 14: 27/22).

Toward the end of the lecture Heidegger brings the entire configuration that has taken shape – indeed far beyond these brief remarks – back to what he terms the oldest of the old in Western thought, namely, that which is held concealed in the word – which he hyphenates – ἄ-λήθεια. Here he evokes once more the originary *not*, the *not* that withdraws even from the word *Entzug* and that antecedes all grounding, that – so it seems – is anterior even to the *Ur-grund*, which in its designation retains reference to ground.

Near the end of one of his last published texts, “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking,” Heidegger asks how it is that ἄλήθεια has gone unthought. Is it – he asks rhetorically – something that has happened by chance or as a result of careless thinking? “Or does it happen because self-concealing, concealment, Λήθη, belongs to Ἀ-Λήθεια, not as a mere addition, not as shadow to light, but rather as the heart of Ἀλήθεια?” (GA 14: 88/71).

*

Finally, as a brief epilogue, let me propose a question, one that comes from outside Heidegger’s analysis of time-space as abyssal ground or as a complex of reachings.

Throughout his analyses of time-space, Heidegger takes – in contrast to much of ancient thought – an uncompromising stand against mathematics or what he usually calls calculation. In one passage in *Contributions to Philosophy*, he declares that in calculation in its most powerful form, there is at work “the most indifferent and blindest denial of the incalculable” (GA 65: 446/351). It is as if a mathematical approach could never reach a point at which calculation might prove no longer possible. And yet, it is by no means evident that such an advance to incalculability is lacking in modern physics, for instance, in the discovery of such non-phenomenal phenomena as black holes and in Heisenberg’s indeterminacy principle.⁸

Near the end of the analysis of time-space in *Contributions to Philosophy*, Heidegger poses the question: “What is it about space and time that *allows* their mathematization?” (GA 65: 387/306). He immediately offers an answer: the condition that has made such mathematization possible is that the abyssal ground has been covered over – indeed, already in the first beginning (GA 65: 387/306). And yet, the question is: In what Heidegger regards as the first beginning, specifically with Plato, are there not ἀρχαί that are abyssal – most notably, τὸ ἀγαθόν as ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας and, indeed, most insistently, the χώρα?⁹

The χώρα is announced at the center of the *Timaeus* – if there be a center and to the extent that an announcement is possible. The dialogue is engaged with mathematics from the beginning, from the commencement of the counting – 1, 2, 3 ... – with which it begins. Both arithmetic and geometry serve to structure much of the description carried out in the first of *Timaeus*’ three discourses. For example, in *Timaeus*’ account of how the god formed the cosmic soul, shaping it into a long, harmoniously articulated band (which would prove to be the orbits of the heavenly bodies), he begins by declaring that as the first step the god took portions of the soul mixture corresponding to squares and cubes in the odd and even series of numbers.¹⁰ Such theoretical reliance on mathematics runs throughout the first discourse, only to give way, when another beginning becomes imperative, to the chorology. In this discourse the χώρα proves to be incalculable and inaccessible (except through remembrance of a dream) – indeed to such an extent that the discourse itself is threatened with utter incoherence, with dissolution. Rather than preventing the advance toward the incalculable, the mathematics of the *Timaeus* leads the discourse precisely to the point where it breaks down and opens the space of what is abyssally incalculable.

In still another passage in *Contributions to Philosophy*, Heidegger explicitly contrasts time-space with the space and time of physics. Here again it is so-called calculation – that is, mathematical procedures – that is Heidegger’s primary target. Such procedure – as he describes it – involves leveling space and time down to what is calculable and merely coupling them, merely tying them together (GA 65: 377/298).

And yet, can one maintain that the special theory of relativity – along with its experimental confirmations – merely couples space and time, merely ties them together? For what this theory demonstrates is that the linear spatial movement of one thing with respect to another effects a difference in their time-determinations with regard to any particular event. Spatial movement, space as the medium of movement, is not merely tied together with temporal determination but is intrinsic to it. And this is to say nothing about the manner in which spatial distance between an earthbound observer and a distant galaxy brings about an enormous time-difference: in the present the observer sees the galaxy as it was in the very remote past.

The question is whether the results that modern physics has established regarding space and time have a bearing on the thinking of time-space, or whether these results are entirely undermined and rendered irrelevant for thinking by the role that mathematics plays in their formulation. Can the divide that Heidegger poses, the divide separating originary thinking from mathematical physics – separating it even from philosophy as determined in its Greek beginning – can this divide be crossed? Can the separation be overcome so that what modern physics has shown regarding space and time, along with what can be retrieved from ancient thought in its engagement with mathematics, can be brought to bear productively on the thinking of time-space? Might it be possible that through such a crossing the thinking that Heidegger has launched with such force might be brought to address, more affirmatively and more productively, that which most insistently confronts us in our time?

NOTES

- 1 All translations from works by Heidegger are my own.
- 2 When, in the development that Heidegger's thought undergoes after *Being and Time*, "The question of being becomes the question of the truth of being" (GA 65: 428/338), this task is accordingly transformed. One consequence is that the concept of horizon is subverted. As a result, the question of being can no longer be construed in terms of the manner in which time provides the horizon within which and from which being can be – and always has been – understood and interpreted. Through this development the concept of horizon (which is essentially phenomenological) falls away (see GA 13: 44–45/DT 63–64), and the task becomes that of thinking time and space in their emergence within the event of truth.
- 3 G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes, Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 9 (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1980), 27. English translation: *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 19, tm.
- 4 Hegel, *Phänomenologie*, 27; *Phenomenology*, 19, tm.
- 5 The full title is "Der Zeit-Raum als der Ab-grund."
- 6 The references are to Leibniz and Kant, respectively.
- 7 It is in this connection that Heidegger abruptly introduces references to what he terms the *Ur-grund* and the *Un-grund*. The extreme compactness of the discourse at this point excludes all but minimal and provisional interpretation. He writes: "The *Ur-grund* [a possible translation is: primordial ground] opens itself, as what is self-concealing, only in the *Ab-grund*" (GA 65: 380/300). Presumably the *Ur-grund* is to be taken as the ground as such ("beyng essentially occurring in its truth"), which, however, as entirely self-concealing, is disclosed only in and through the *Ab-grund*, in which the ground is both concealed and exposed. On the other hand, the *Ab-grund* can itself be completely concealed through what is termed the *Un-grund*.

- 8 See my discussion in “The Cosmological Turn,” chap. 6 of *The Return of Nature: On the Beyond of Sense* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016).
- 9 The determination according to which there would have been a first beginning with which – through Plato – metaphysics would have commenced is put thoroughly into question, if not indeed undermined, by Heidegger’s retraction of his Plato interpretation. Granting that ἀλήθεια was initially experienced only as ὁρθότης, Heidegger concludes: “But then the assertion about an essential transformation of truth, that is, from unconcealment to correctness, is also untenable” (GA 14: 87/70). Since it is precisely this alleged transformation that would constitute the first beginning, the very setting of *Contributions to Philosophy* between the first beginning and an other beginning cannot but be thoroughly displaced. On χώρα, see my discussion with Jacques Derrida regarding its relation to what is ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας. The principal texts are 1) Jacques Derrida, “Tense,” trans. D. F. Krell, in *The Path of Archaic Thinking: Unfolding the Work of John Sallis*, ed. Kenneth Maly (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995); and 2) my text “Daydream,” chap. 3 of *Platonic Legacies* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004).
- 10 Plato, *Timaeus* 36a.

Heidegger's Birth

Peter Hanly

We are born with the dead

T. S. Eliot

The intention of this paper is to address the question of inception, or beginning (*Anfang*). It will focus on the volume *Über den Anfang* (GA 70), which dates from 1941 and is a key moment in the configuration of texts that revolves around the *Beiträge zur Philosophie* (1936–38). The reason for this focus is not only because the conception of *Anfang* receives sustained attention in that text. It is also because it is in the course of its development there that the conception of *Anfang* becomes aporetic. Heidegger pushes upon and expands the concept to the point at which it is exposed to significant tension. This tension is not resolved, and the failure to do so has considerable significance. However, in the course of its exposition, altogether new possibilities of thinking are generated; it is with these new possibilities that we will be concerned here. They represent the fullest consequence of the direction in which the tensions surrounding the concept of *Anfang* tend. These tensions, as with so many of the tensions with which the thinking that belongs to this configuration of texts is concerned, largely recede from view in Heidegger's later work. It is because of this recession that the generative possibilities opened up in the tensions that surround the conception of *Anfang* may, and should, be addressed in a vocabulary somewhat foreign to Heidegger's own discourse. This vocabulary is that of birth, of natality and of the natal. It is in these terms that the possibilities that Heidegger finds lodged in the idea of incipience (*Anfängnis*) can

be articulated. To do so is to run against the grain of much received wisdom about Heidegger's thinking. In this respect, the opinion most often ventured is that Heidegger, having begun, very briefly in *Being and Time*, to address the question of birth, fails to properly engage the matter. It is said that, despite the thinking of historicity initiated there, and occasional reference in later writings, the question of the natal is not properly addressed in his work. Instead, we are told, it is Hannah Arendt who picks up this neglected thread, turning it into a cornerstone of her thinking. This paper seeks to show that this story is inaccurate: that the development of a conception of *Anfang* in the texts of the late 1930s can be seen to address in a decisive manner the question of what will be called "natality." It is not my intention here to cast doubt on the originality and importance of Arendt's thinking of natality, nor to control the impact of highly significant work that has been developed in its wake. The intention here is, much more simply, to use this vocabulary to help clarify a difficult text and a difficult concept. Nevertheless, if Heidegger's understanding of *Anfang* can be expressed, in part, as an address to the question of natality, then it seems to me possible that, in filling this apparent lacuna, his work in fact answers the implicit criticisms of Arendt and others; and that, in turn, by an intensification, it can be said to open those very criticisms to question.

We can begin by exploring the moment of *Sein und Zeit* in which the question of birth appears to emerge explicitly, and to which considerations of Heidegger's thought in relation to this question are most generally restricted.

I. DASEIN'S BEGINNING

There is, without doubt, a startling quality to the appearance of the figure of birth in §72 of *Sein und Zeit*. Encountering the figure for the first time, the sense is often of a sudden conceptual re-orientation, almost literally a change in direction. The sense of surprise remains intact despite the realization that this appearance has in fact been fully prepared by the thematic of *Geworfenheit*, the "thrownness" or sense of having-already-arrived which characterizes Dasein's self-experience

as "being-in-the-world." And in the idea, too, of *Sorge*, of the care with which Dasein attends to that being-in-the-world, we might have caught a glimpse of its emergence: it is the absolute inaccessibility of the end that determines the disposition of Dasein toward his or her end; and in this very inaccessibility itself, a question might have been asked about the nature of that end, and about the possibility of its determination. The question might well have been posed, right there: Given this inaccessibility, why death? Why not birth? But it is only now that Heidegger appears to draw our attention to these questions, and begins to address them by means of a re-orienting that will come to seem, to many, inadequate. Heidegger approaches the question by reminding us that what has always been at stake in the inquiry is the "whole" of Dasein. The idea of wholeness has of course been infinitely problematized by what has come before: what is at stake can certainly no longer be a "whole" in the sense of the discrete entity of modern metaphysics. Rather, it is a question of a *Ganzsein*, a way of being a whole: not so much a "what" as a "how." This whole, thus, can in no way be expressed by merely filling out or "completing the picture." Instead, another re-formulation of Dasein will be required. Heidegger in fact now admits to the appearance of a "one-sidedness" and acknowledges that articulating a "whole" Dasein will involve an engagement with its "other end," with birth, and thus with an entirely different kind of being-towards than that with which the book has so far seemed to concern itself. This re-orientation can be said to represent a multiplication and diffracting of the sense and direction of the "towards," a diffraction that has the effect of engaging a sense of Dasein as "between": the "whole" of Dasein, its *Ganzsein*, will be "stretching" between the twin limits that determine it, even as – and because – they remain indefinitely inaccessible. As so determined – held in thrall to what will have always eluded it – Dasein is, as Peg Birmingham says, "an endurance saturated with loss."¹

That Heidegger is nonetheless uneasy with the possibility that this re-orientation towards a "between," in so far as it is induced by the thought of the "other end" of Dasein, might be reduced to a simple matter of a necessary symmetry of ends may be gleaned from the strange

proliferation of inverted commas that invades the text of *Sein und Zeit* at this moment: “end,” “beginning,” “birth,” “one-sided,” “forward,” “behind,” “between” — all are subject to this strange and temporary suspension, only death (or “death”) seemingly able to evade its pull. When, indeed, Heidegger returns, albeit briefly, to the question of birth in the lecture course *Einleitung in die Philosophie* of 1928–29 (GA 27), it is precisely this idea of a simple symmetry that appears to give him most pause: “Necessarily we must approach birth in a return [*Rücklauf*], but that is not simply the inversion of being-toward-death. For this returning what is required is the development of a starting-position entirely different from that of any other traversal [*Grenzgang*] of Dasein” (GA 27: 124–25).²

If this passage suggests, at the very least, an opening onto a future inquiry, it seems that such a possibility is not pursued in what follows. We are left, then, with an uncertainty, an appearance of indecision, from which we seem to be able only to turn back to *Sein und Zeit*. And indeed, although the final published chapters of that work address the question of history in a way that has been unlocked by this shift in orientation, these chapters can easily seem to be inhabited, as Derrida puts it, by a kind of *essoufflement*, a breathlessness, always to be again overwhelmed by the insistent appearance of the “futural.”³

So it is that despite this opening, the question of birth appears to have been left to lie fallow in Heidegger’s thinking. Indeed, it is the received wisdom that this abandoned promise is instead taken up by Hannah Arendt who, we are often told, reverses Heidegger’s preoccupation with “mortality” by insisting instead on the “natality” of the human, on the possibilities for an understanding of action and activity that can only be understood in relation to a natal impulse. It is not my intention, here, to revisit the territory of this “comparison.” Instead, I would like to consider whether Heidegger’s development of the sense of *Anfang* might not, after all, be said to address the question raised in §72 of *Sein und Zeit*, or at the very least attenuate and thereby intensify that question.

In order to approach the question in this way, then, we can begin by addressing the sense of Dasein as a “between” that emerges first in these pages of *Sein und Zeit* and is taken up in the apparently wholly different context of the *Beiträge zur Philosophie*. If we can think a correlation in these terms, it will then be possible to address the sense of a bifurcated “beginning” or inception in the latter text in a way that maps onto the diffracted sense of “end” that determines the “between” for the Dasein of the former. This is the intention of what follows.

II. THE TENSION OF THE BETWEEN

“Dasein,” writes Heidegger in the *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, “is the *crisis* between the first and the other inception” (GA 65: 295/233, tm).⁴ Immediately, in this “between,” the parallel with *Sein und Zeit* leaps out. What is being expressed here is a sense of Dasein as *caught* – as determined in, by and as a between-space, as a *crisis* of between-ness, in a way that resonates distinctly with §72 of *Sein und Zeit*. The sheer, constitutive inaccessibility of these twin inceptions, into the midst of which Dasein finds itself pitched, mirrors structurally the Dasein of *Sein und Zeit*, caught in the between-space of different and equally inaccessible ends. But the moment the parallel leaps out, it also instantly recedes. After all, Heidegger’s concerns appear to be entirely different here: *Anfang* (beginning, inception) is surely being thought here in some relation to an experience of the historical (however “history of being” is to be understood) and not in terms of an existential analytic, so the between of birth and death articulated in *Sein und Zeit* cannot possibly, it seems, occupy the same ground as that of the *Beiträge*. Furthermore, whatever “other inception” might mean, it seems more than anything to suggest some kind of “renewal,” and thus something far from the possibility of death that guides the Dasein of *Sein und Zeit*. If, then, these two ways of thinking Dasein as a “between” are to be brought together, it will be against the grain of the most evident interpretive axes. What we will do here is to describe the outlines and some of the ramifications of the model that appears to be most clearly operational in the *Beiträge*, before indicating the ways in which Heidegger’s own

explorations stretch beyond these limitations, albeit inconsistently. It is possible to discover the warrant for such a double interpretation in Heidegger's own comments regarding the *Beiträge*: the book is, he tells us, "the straightedge of a configuration" (GA 65: xvii/1), a straightedge that, according to a later text, is still "too didactic" (GA 71: 4/xxiv). The circumscription on the project that is implied here is mirrored in the opening of the text itself. Heidegger claims there that the "official title must by necessity now sound dull, ordinary and empty," seeming to suggest that a reading beyond the evident, apparent, "official" surface is not just warranted, but essential (GA 65: 3/5).

In order to describe this "official" surface, we can remind ourselves that the question of inception is presented in the *Beiträge* in terms of two "poles": a "first inception" (*erster Anfang*) and an "other inception" (*anderer Anfang*). It is certainly worth lingering, already, on the fact that inception is always thought as doubled, as always more than one. This will be of importance later. Nonetheless, leaving that observation in parentheses for now, at first glance it would seem that "first" and "other" are difficult to conceive except in terms of priority and dependence: the "other" is the "other" of the first, and so on. They are both distant and interconnected. In this distance and interconnection, and in the difference that these modalities express, we can say that a space is opened – the space of a "between." The text of the *Beiträge* will be preoccupied, greatly, with the "between"-space of these poles, with the transition (*Übergang*) or movement between them. But it is this "between" that also enables the emergence of a kind of linear narrative: a story of sorts, which can escape only with difficulty the structure of the historiographical from which Heidegger is at such pains to distance himself. Never coalescing explicitly, this linear narrative will be nonetheless always operative as a kind of spectral background organizing the work of a text which will play, insistently, within its shadow.

If one wanted to describe this narrative outline in its most obvious form, it could be reduced and described quite simply. The story would go like this: a chronologically identifiable *erster Anfang*, we are told, has given way, in exhaustion, to a period of transition (*Übergang*).

Operating within this transitional moment, given the exhaustion of the resources of the “first beginning,” our obligation is to await a “new beginning” (*anderer Anfang*), attending the “future ones” who will emerge to supply such a possibility. In the meantime – while we wait, as it were – we must occupy ourselves with “preparation” for this supposed re-invigoration. Expressed thus, this narrative is quite familiar, even banal. Or worse: it is a tale of decline and the possibility of renewal that is regrettably familiar in terms of the cultural milieu within which it was composed. Recent, well-known publications have made it distressingly clear that Heidegger remained, in some measure, attached to this narrative; that he was never able to relinquish it entirely; and that it is this that chains him to a dark political arena, despite possibilities in his own thinking that might have pulled him in another direction. What will concern us here, though, are certainly not the ramifications or the working-out of this narrative as such. Instead – beyond the historiographical, though still within its pull – what will engage our attention is the way in which the central terms of the narrative – “the first beginning,” “the other beginning,” “transition/crossing” – can be seen to exceed the orbit that the constraints of a chronology would impose on them.

III. INCEPTION AS MULTIPLICITY

As the *Beiträge* opens, Heidegger announces that what will be at stake is “an attempt at a thinking which would arise out of a more originary basic position” (GA 65: 3/5, em). He describes this thinking as “inceptual.” By this he means both a thinking “from the inception,” but also one that is “of” or “about” inception. But this second sense is not meant to imply simply a speculative reflection from the outside, but – as we shall see – a kind of thinking “from inside” or “within” inception. This is to be achieved by thinking through the sense of crossing or transition (*Übergang*) in which thinking finds itself pitched into a between: at once a “having-left-behind” of one inception and an “on-the-way” towards another. So, this “between-thinking” is one that emerges out of a bi-directional pull, a thinking oriented by the limits that occasion

and determine it. What this thinking from the between is to think is the difference, the juxtaposition of these limits: this is what Heidegger calls “confrontation” (*Auseinandersetzung*). We can begin, thus, to see how this thinking is to be “of inception” in a double sense: “about,” but at the same time “within.”

Crucially, though, in a move that will be decisive for the later text *On Inception* (*Über den Anfang*), the confrontation of limits that defines the possibility of a transitional thinking is said by Heidegger to be “no counter-movement” (*Gegenbewegung*): however the otherness of the “other inception” is to be understood, it is not to be thought as a “counter-direction” (*Gegenrichtung*) to the first. In fact, as Heidegger explains, it is not an oppositional otherness at all. Rather, “the other inception helps the first, out of a new originality, toward the truth of its history and thereby its inalienable, most proper otherness” (GA 65: 187/147, tm). We could say, then, that the “other inception” is not a reaction to the “first.” Rather, the “firstness” of the first is discovered *in* otherness. Reciprocally, though, the otherness of the “other inception” is to be discovered *within* the first, within the initial, not apart from it or subsequently. Thus, for the kind of thinking that is proposed and attempted in the *Beiträge*, it is reciprocity, intertwinement, imbrication that is at stake: inception becomes what it is by becoming other. “Because every inception is unsurpassable, it must constantly recur, set – in confrontation – into the uniqueness of its incipience.... This confrontation is original when it is itself inceptual, but this, necessarily, is as *another* inception” (GA 65: 55/44, tm).

It is, then, in repetition, in recurrence, that inception is “set...into the uniqueness of its incipience.” This does not just mean, however, that repetition is somehow to be expected of inception, that an inception necessarily repeats itself. Rather, it says that inception takes place *in and as* its repetition. Inception constitutes itself *as* repetition, *as* recurrence. It thus can be said to *become* singular in its repetition: it is singular precisely as divided from itself. The paradox of inception is this: that it is a singularity that is always already multiple. Inception *is* the event of this tension – the ἄρον of a wholeness that is not just fractured, but whole *in* its fracturing.⁵

A reminder of the significance of this figure: If we are to think beyond a continuum, beyond the linearity of the dark and spectral narrative that haunts the text of the *Beiträge*, it can only be by thinking entirely differently the structure of inception. This thinking must be directed against the idea that inception just marks a moment of archaic instauration (this would be the archaic origin of historiography) which would then require recovery, renewal, or rejection. Instead, we will be asked to think inception in such a way that, at its core, it is already surrendered to multiplicity. It is in this sense that we can understand the significance of the following, from a later point in the “configuration” of the *seynsgeschichtlich* treatises: “Of the first inception and of the other inception – *which are not two separate inceptions, but rather one and the same in their incessant incipience* – we are equally lacking experience, or are perhaps even entirely without experience” (GA 71: 253/218–19, tm, em).

It is the nature of this “incessant incipience” that needs to be understood: a sameness that is also separated, a first that is also other. More than anything, it is in this figure that the narrative linearity of a forgotten past and an unreachable “to-come” is suspended. Now, however – if we have succeeded, provisionally at least, in holding at bay the trap of a linear chronology – we need to find a way of thinking about inception itself, inception *tout court*: not as instauration, but as singular multiplicity. To do that, a more radical step will be required.

IV. INCEPTION – EVENT – BEING

It is this step that is taken in the texts of the *seynsgeschichtlich* configuration that revolve around the question of event and inception (*Das Ereignis* and *Über den Anfang*). The former, for instance, presents the following claim: “Event *is* the incipience of inception” (GA 71: 227/195, em, tm). What is being suggested, here, is a kind of equivalence: event (*Ereignis*) is to be thought of *as* inception, as its very incipience. So, given this equivalence, an “inceptive thinking” will at the same time be a thinking of event, of the evental – and will be subject to the conditions already noted earlier: in other words, it will be not just a thinking

“about” event or events, but a thinking *of* event, in the double genitive sense. And if inception is to be conceived in a way that moves beyond the confines of a chronological historiography, then event, too, must be thought in an equivalent manner. In the domain of the historiographical, “event” becomes simply a kind of “significant occurrence,” in which sense the equivalence ventured in the claim that “event is the incipience of inception” becomes merely platitudinous, saying only that every historical “beginning” has an “event-like” significance. Instead, we are being asked, here, to think inception – beginning – not at all in terms of a determinate location along a historical continuum, but entirely outside linear chronology. What is at stake, in fact, in thinking together inception and event in this way is the attempt to think being itself, not as chained to a linear temporality, which it is somehow “outside.” Instead, being itself is to be thought as emergence, as irruption: “This ‘unasked’ conceals itself as such and allows inceptual thinking alone the uncanniness of emergence, which constitutes the essential occurrence of the constant presencing of beings in the open (ἀλήθεια)” (GA 65: 189/148, tm).

It is this sense of being as emergence that conjoins it to the thinking both of the evental and of inception. And this is how we can understand Heidegger’s response to the rhetorical question he poses in the *Beiträge*: “What, then, is inception?” The response comes as follows: “It is the essential occurrence [*Wesung*] of *being* itself, but *this* inception is only executable as the other inception, in confrontation with itself. Grasped inceptively, inception is beyng itself... *inception* is *beyng itself* as event... And beyng, as event, is inception” (GA 65: 58/47, tm).

Being *is* inception. It is not merely inceptive, having the qualities of a commencement: it is inception itself, and is so in that it is event.⁶ In that it is evental, it is always multiple, and indefinitely so. The project of thinking inception in the later texts of the *seynsgeschichtlich* period is the project of thinking being as emergent, incipient, irruptive. Inception is not and never has been a unitary concept: it is and always must be multiple, subject to refraction, repetition, re-iteration. And here we can remind ourselves that this thinking – “inceptual

thinking" – is a between: arising from and pitched into the midst of this incipience – a *Dazwischenkunft*, a coming-into-the-midst, as Heidegger's text *On Inception* will have it (GA 70: 67).⁷ The singularity (the uniqueness, *Einzigkeit*) of being is its multiplying, its diffraction or splitting apart.⁸ Inceptual thinking will be the thought that *sustains* the diffraction. The "history of beyng" that emerges in this thinking will be a way of marking the joints, of experiencing the fracture lines – their leaps, resonances, and interplay. And – decisively for this investigation – it is in and as this fractured incipience that a "there" – the *Da* of *Da-sein* – will transpire: "Dasein," after all, "*is* the crisis between the first and the other inception."

V. THE INCIPIENCE OF THE DA – TOWARDS NATALITY

We could express the distance we have covered so far with disarming simplicity: it is a movement that begins, in *Sein und Zeit*, with the thought of a *Sein zum Anfang*, and passes through a rigorous interrogation in the *Beiträge*, at the end of which we find that the thought has transformed: what was the thinking of a *Sein zum Anfang*, has now become, quite simply: "*Sein ist Anfang*" (GA 70: 48, em). The transformation is a radical one because, if the *zum* is to be jettisoned, then the *Da* of *Da-sein* will have to be rethought entirely: no longer will it be possible to think our "thereness" – our being-there (*Da-sein*) – in terms of a directedness-towards. Rather, just as being itself is to be thought as inception, so too the *Da* of *Da-sein* will have to be thought in terms of an "incessant incipience."

What will be required – and it is this project with which the volume *Über den Anfang* struggles – is an entirely new topology of inception, one that tries to distance itself, as far as thinking may, from the narrative linearity of beginnings that still holds together the *Beiträge*. Always this topology will be threatened with collapse, always the knot of inception will want to unravel into the successive, into a before and after, a call and a response, a first and an other. All too easily, says Heidegger, "there awakens the craving to reckon up connections and dependencies." But this is an empty craving: instead, "in each and every

singular, the same must be named – but inceptively, without relation” (GA 70: 61): the hierarchy, and the connectivities out of which a linear history might emerge, are to be indefinitely suspended. What will be at stake now is not the “first inception” and the “other inception.” Inception is to be thought now in its irreducible plurality – not *Anfang* but *Anfänge* – a plurality of inceptions that now “name always their fissured singularity.”

But how, then, are we to understand this dynamic of inception, this difficult new topology? Heidegger suggests that we might begin by suspending our tendency “to think beginning...from out of what is no longer beginning” (GA 70: 57). In other words, we always tend to think inception retrospectively, from the point of view of that which has begun (*das Angefangene*). And because what has already begun “seems to us closer, more real and more complete, inception is through and through what is *not yet*...” Inception is the not yet; it is what somehow precedes the “actual.” And this essential and necessary habit of thought is the reason why inception appears to be always somehow detached from or “in advance” of being. But what if – and this is the leap that Heidegger’s text will attempt – we were to reverse this, and to try to think instead inception *itself* – to think, in a literal sense, *from* the beginning: not in the first instance in relation to what has already begun? And *this*, says Heidegger, is “the hardest, and the most proper, of what is demanded of thinking” (GA 70: 57). Within this difficult reversal, it is *beings* that will be thought of as “what has begun” (*das Angefangene*), and thus – again, from the point of view of this reversal – they will be thought as what has been cast away, divested (*abgelegt*) from being. Being – inception itself – is, then, that which withdraws (*zurückgeht*) in this divesting. Beings are separated (*abgeschiedet*) in emergence; and in this new topology, it is this separative withdrawal that “bears in itself the possibility of the unleashing (*Loslassung*) of what has begun.” This unleashing is “the unleashing of beings into being only ‘beings’ and into no longer needing being” (GA 70: 57). A being, then, is that which has already left behind, abandoned the event of its emergence. This is why Heidegger will say,

not just that being is inception (*Sein ist Anfang*), but also that it is an *Untergang* – a downgoing, separative withdrawal that allows for the emergence of beings.

It is here, then, that we can see at work something like a natality: this thinking of being is a thinking of natality to the extent that it is a thinking of incipience, of a dynamic of emergence and withdrawal. The *Da* of *Da-sein* – our own “being-there” – is a taking place⁹ in the midst of being, in the midst of incipience. For Heidegger, what has begun, what has emerged in the separative withdrawal of being, carries with it “a final echo,” a resonance, a trace of its inception.¹⁰ So, too, the *Da* that finds itself in this emergence carries with it a resonance of its inception, a generative memory of the natal impulse that brings it into its “thereness.”

The difficult sense of what we are now able to call natality in Heidegger is that which is most powerfully deployed in his work to contest the sway of the historiographical. This latter is represented by the linear narrative of decline and redemption that brought his darkest political instincts into line with that of his generation. His work from this period is remarkable not just for its allegiance to this narrative but also for the ferocity with which he struggles against it. That the struggle remains an obscure one, largely buried later in other concerns, is certainly our loss. But nonetheless, what we can recover from this thinking are elements that might still be powerfully used to contest the simplicity of our own narratives.

NOTES

- 1 See Peg Birmingham, “Heidegger and Arendt: The Birth of Political Action and Speech,” in François Raffoul and David Pettigrew, eds., *Heidegger and Practical Philosophy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002), 198.

- 2 The passage is quoted and valuably discussed in Anne O’Byrne, *Natality and Finitude* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 166, n. 2.
- 3 Jacques Derrida, *Heidegger: la question de l’Être et l’Histoire* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2013), 229; *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 153.
- 4 Generally, though not always, I will translate *Anfang* as inception, adapting the existent translations where necessary.
- 5 Here, we can begin to observe, albeit in a cursory and inadequate way, how these texts respond to the kinds of reading that assume that Heidegger’s thinking of being involves the refusal of an “otherness.” In this respect we might consider Luce Irigaray’s reading as exemplary (Luce Irigaray, *The Forgetting of Air in Martin Heidegger*, trans. Mary Beth Mader [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999]). “Surely,” Irigaray asks, “Being must assimilate something in order to have begun to be?” (26). The temptation here is to regard Being as unitary, a force of assimilation which would covertly depend on a latent exclusivity: it is this assumption that enables Irigaray to speak of “the outside of being there” (31). However, as I hope to make clear, this really does underestimate the force of Heidegger’s thinking here and elsewhere: that it is crucially directed towards a thinking of being which is precisely non-unitary, which involves and includes its own outside in radical and abyssal ways. From the perspective of these texts, the desire that Irigaray elegantly expresses to “confront him not with what supports him in the safety and serenity of a re-adhesion to the whole within sameness ... but with that which ... re-opens the question of his relation to the other” appears misplaced, to such an extent indeed that it might be better applied to her own elaborate yet oddly reductive reading.
- 6 As if in deliberate contradiction of Heidegger’s own words – difficult to understand, to be sure, but entirely explicit at the same time – Irigaray asks: “Whence the oblivion of the being’s

beginning?" (*Forgetting of Air*, 102). I believe we can now respond succinctly: there is no such "oblivion."

- 7 The term *Dazwischenkunft* reappears in many different guises throughout the text, becoming quite central as the text progresses, especially where a new understanding of *Da-sein* is sought.
- 8 On *Einzigkeit* and *Einmaligkeit*, see Krzysztof Ziarek, "On Heidegger's *Einmaligkeit* Again: The Single Turn of the Event," *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual* 6 (2016): 91–113. Ziarek's concern is with the language of singularity; as such, his approach is different from that adopted here. Nonetheless, in the concern to think through the relation between singularity and repetition in these texts of Heidegger's, his paper offers an interesting point of comparison and dialogue.
- 9 I am borrowing this phrase and the sense of a "taking-place" of the human from Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, in an unpublished talk given at Boston College, March 2017. I gratefully acknowledge the debt.
- 10 Contra, once again, Irigaray, who writes: "The Being of man will become constituted on the basis of a forgetting: of the gift of this *from which* of which he is": *The Forgetting of Air in Martin Heidegger*, 30. The forgetting of the "from which" is at the center of Lisa Guenther's exemplary article (which also cites this passage from Irigaray), "Being-from-Others: Reading Heidegger after Cavarero," *Hypatia* 23:1 (2008): 99–118. Guenther's expressed intention is to "elaborate this forgotten *from which* into a fundamental structure of Dasein, which I will call Being-from-Others" (101). Again, this reading seems to rest on the assumption that "being-there" is a unitary and somehow pre-given whole, which would then necessarily depend upon a hidden gesture of exclusion – here, quite specifically, the exclusion of a generative origin. Guenther limits her reading to the passages from *Sein und Zeit* that presented us with a starting point. I have tried to show the extent to which Heidegger's thinking of being *as* inception renders this position untenable, at least with respect to the texts under consideration here.

Attunements, Truth, and Errancy in Heidegger's Thinking

Daniela Vallega-Neu

Heidegger's rethinking of truth as a disclosive event that opens up a sense of being and allows for the appearing of beings as such has been a crucial insight for so many thinkers influenced by his work. The same holds for his insight into how attunements are constitutive of senses of being and his attempt at thinking out of fundamental attunements. This essay addresses not only what Heidegger writes about attunement, truth, and errancy (*Irre*), but also how they play out in his own thinking. I will be focusing on Heidegger's non-public writings in the 1930s and 1940s, which I take to include not only what I call his "poietic" writings (*Contributions to Philosophy* and the volumes following it) but also the *Black Notebooks*. What animates my questioning is my belief that what one may call Heidegger's errancies, especially in his *Black Notebooks*, have their seat in a blindness connected to the ways attunements dispose his thinking. Indeed, I believe that all of us are subject to what one may call "dispositional blindness" and errancy. This, however, does not take away from the fact that attunements are at the same time disclosive or revealing and that they can be freeing and transformative.

In what follows, I will first trace how Heidegger's understanding of attunements from *Being and Time* to *Contributions* acquires more and more a historical determination, which will become relevant for the question of the relation between attunements, truth, and errancy as they play out in Heidegger's thinking. This will be followed by the question of the difference between attunements that are grounding and attunements that are not grounding and how this relates to Heidegger's

thinking of truth and errancy. We will see that, whereas grounding attunements (*Grundstimmungen*) disclose a sense of being as such, non-grounding attunements (*Stimmungen*) are disclosive with relation to specific things and events. This difference in attunements relates to Heidegger's understanding of truth and errancy in that truth as such is disclosed through fundamental attunements, whereas errancy (which always belongs to truth) addresses relations to things and events. The difference between grounding and non-grounding attunements thus concerns the difference between being and beings. I will then take a closer look at how errancy is operative at a dispositional level (at the level of attunements) in Heidegger's non-public writings, which will lead me to problematize how determinations arise from attunements and how attunements themselves might be determined by lineages and bodily dispositions.

I. ATTUNEMENTS

When tracing Heidegger's thinking of attunements from *Being and Time* to *Contributions*, one can notice how attunements acquire more and more a historical dimension. In *Being and Time*, the notion of attunement is addressed interchangeably as *Befindlichkeit* or *Stimmung* (GA 2: §29). Attunements reveal our thrownness into possibilities of being; they reveal the "there," the *Da* of Dasein, and at the same time are disposing in relation to how we find ourselves to be in relation to things or events. Just as through the notion of Dasein, Heidegger rethinks human being as non-subjective, as ecstatic, and relational, in the notion of attunement, Heidegger rethinks what one would commonly call feelings or emotions as non-subjective, i.e. not as "interior" properties of a human subject but as fundamentally relational. We don't own and in that sense "have" attunements, but attunements overcome "us" prior to any sense of I or the representation of an object. Thus, when attunements, for instance, reveal specific things as desirable or as a threat,¹ the desire or threat mark the situation or relation to a threatening thing and not a subjective response to an object. Attunements such as fear and desire need to be distinguished from fundamental attunements, which

reveal not a specific relation to this or that thing, but being as such. Indeed, fundamental attunements let our relation to particular things and events retreat and reveal the sheer “that” of being and nonbeing and thus the possibility of being and nonbeing as such. This is what Heidegger shows in his analysis of *Angst* in *Being and Time*.

The way Heidegger writes about *Angst* in *Being and Time* does not indicate an intrinsically historical dimension; *Angst* rather singularizes (*vereinzelt*) Dasein onto its own being-in-the-world and its ownmost possibility of being (GA 2: 249/187), a singularizing that, again, should not be misunderstood in terms of a subjectivity but as a groundless and exposed finding oneself to be in the face of nothingness (death). In the 1929–30 lecture course titled *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, however, Heidegger discusses another fundamental attunement, namely “deep boredom” (*tiefe Langeweile*), that begins to harbor a historical dimension. The “that” of being, which this fundamental attunement discloses, receives an epochal qualification. The development of the question of boredom, as it is offered in this lecture course, begins with boredom related to things and then progressively treats deeper senses of boredom until speaking of deep boredom, which carries a distinctive temporal sense.

Heidegger’s analysis reveals how deep boredom is constituted by “being left empty” (*Leergelassenheit*) and “being held in limbo” (*Hingehaltenheit*). The emptiness of deep boredom is not a specific emptiness left by someone or something. Rather, beings as a whole are indifferent and don’t offer any possibility of engagement.² In deep boredom our relation to things is held in limbo but in such a way that by disengaging us from our relation to beings the possibilities of engagement that are left unexploited become manifest. Beings “refuse themselves,” writes Heidegger. He then interprets the being-left-empty and being-held-in-limbo in the refusal of beings temporally. In the refusal of beings there occurs a “spellbinding” or “entrancement” (*Gebanntsein*) of time (with its unitary horizon of past, present, and future). Thus, deep boredom reveals time as harboring possibilities that are yet to be decided.³ These possibilities “press forward,” writes Heidegger. They are, however, not

possibilities only of a singularized Dasein, as the analysis of *Angst* in *Being and Time* suggested. The analysis of deep boredom closes by thematizing it in terms of the “fundamental attunement of our Dasein” (GA 29/30: 238/160). “Our Dasein,” writes Heidegger, *our* “being there,” not mine, or “one’s.”

At this point in the lecture course, the analysis of boredom receives a more explicit historical or epochal determination; the emptiness of boredom figures emphatically as a “plight” or “need” (*Not*), one that becomes the plight of an age and a people: the “*absence of an essential distress* [Bedrängnis] *in our Dasein as a whole*” (GA 29/30: 244/163, tm). There is, then, something announcing itself in deep boredom, in the plight of the refusal of beings as a whole. What announces itself is that there must occur the decision to break the entrancement of time such that Dasein can be there in the moment of decision. Only thus can Dasein live up to the plight, be open for it (GA 29/30: 246/165), and acquire true knowledge regarding its proper possibilities.

In *Contributions to Philosophy* (written 1936–38) Heidegger will be much more explicit about a historical possibility and necessity that fundamental attunements harbor. He interprets the plight and distress revealed by the epochal fundamental attunement that necessitates his thinking as being rooted in machination and “lived experience,” and he traces the history of machination back to its roots in what he now calls the “first beginning,” i.e. Greek thinking (GA 65: §§50, 51, 61). Furthermore, the possibilities announced in the acknowledgement of the plight of the refusal of beings as a whole are now cast as the possibility of the other beginning.⁴

The grounding attunement of *Contributions* Heidegger most often mentions is restraint (*Verhaltenheit*) and he finds in restraint, oscillating as part of it, shock and diffidence (*Erschrecken* and *Scheu*).⁵ Restraint has an internal dynamic and tension that recalls the constitutive elements of deep boredom, namely, being left empty and being held in limbo. But now Heidegger elucidates restraint, shock, and diffidence in terms of the history of being: Shock occurs in the acknowledgement of the plight of being’s epochal refusal. In shock, thinking is drawn

back and unsettled from customary life and the abandonment of beings by being reveals itself.⁶ Everything appears groundless and empty. In restraint, there occurs a turn toward the refusal such that the refusal is held in hesitation and one is held “in limbo,” in this no longer or not yet being. What is revealed, thus, is a sense of being as refusal, and this is interpreted as an epochal event.

When comparing Heidegger’s thinking of attunements in *Contributions to Philosophy* to *Being and Time* one can notice not only how in *Contributions*, attunements have acquired a stronger historical determination; it is also noteworthy that Heidegger meditates only on fundamental attunements, i.e. he does not inquire into attunements relating to specific things and events, as he did in *Being and Time* and in the 1929–30 lecture course. This is consistent with his attempt to think and speak *from* the event, i.e. from out of an inceptive opening of an epochal sense of being in such a way that this opening happens at the same time, precisely in thinking, as thinking sustains the disclosure of truth in a grounding attunement.⁷

II. TRUTH AND ERRANCY

In so far as attunements relate to specific things or events, they don’t disclose being and nonbeing *as such* or possibilities of being *as such*; they are rather disposing in relation to specific things and events. This suggests that they belong to the realm of what Heidegger calls “errancy.” In everyday life or whenever we are not unsettled by fundamental attunements, we err. We err because we are absorbed in things and events in such a way that we do not think and act out of an event of disclosure of the truth of being.

Heidegger begins to think the intrinsic relatedness between truth and errancy in “On the Essence of Truth” in 1930. Although his conception of truth and errancy changes slightly with the years, he will always continue to think that errancy belongs to truth. In the 1930 essay, Heidegger distinguishes two forms of untruth that belong to the essence of truth. The more primordial sense of untruth he calls “mystery,” the concealment of beings as a whole.⁸ Mystery names the

truth of being and not of beings (GA 9: 193/130).⁹ The second sense of untruth is errancy. In errancy humans relate to beings or things in such a way that they remain stuck with them; they turn away from the mystery of being and take their directive or standard from the most readily available things. Thus errancy tends to conceal the mystery or truth of being.

Errancy cannot be removed, says Heidegger. We always relate to this or that thing and event; our being is always a being with beings, which tends to conceal the truth of being, i.e. the experience of being and nonbeing as such. Errancy cannot be removed, but it can be *known* such that by knowing of errancy humans may not be led astray and therefore may remain open to the concealment of beings as a whole. This knowledge is not so much a cognitive act as a state of being. (I will say more about this below.) Not to be led astray by errancy does not mean that one is correct about this or that thing or event, but that one remains alertly open to the concealment of beings as a whole.

Although one may be led to conceive of errancy as something negative because less originary, the fact that it is constitutive of truth lets it appear in more “positive” terms. In *Contributions*, where Heidegger writes little about errancy but plenty about the “distorted essence of truth” (*das Unwesen der Wahrheit*), we can find this almost heroic reference to errancy: “Only the cool boldness of thinking and the dark errancy of questioning lend ardor and light to the fire of being” (GA 65: 430/340). In the volume following *Contributions*, titled *Besinnung*, *Mindfulness*, Heidegger begins to distinguish errancy from distortion, assigning a more primordial role to errancy than to distortion. Here the positive sense of errancy with respect to the truth of being becomes even more pronounced. Heidegger interprets and repeats a passage from the ancient Greek poet Pindar that begins with the phrase: “The truth (clearing) of being is the being of errancy” (GA 66: 11/7, tm). Not only does errancy need to be sharply distinguished from falsity (a notion that presupposes truth as correctness), but errancy is now also distinguished from distortion. Distortion (*Verkehrung* literally means being turned in the wrong direction) addresses a falling for beings and

their exclusive predominance and thus a concealment of a more primordial sense of truth. Errancy, on the other hand, now names a relation to beings that does not necessarily mean that one falls for beings in such a way that one forgets truth.¹⁰ Thus we need to differentiate, on the one hand, truth (with its errancy) and on the other hand, distortion through beings and the drives or emotions associated with them.

Heidegger seems to suggest that although beyng-historical thinking is prone to be turned toward beings because errancy cannot be removed from the clearing of truth, still being-historical thinking can hold the distorting prevailing power of beings at bay, and the latter manifests itself in a reckoning with causes such as “drives, inclinations, pleasures, and delectations.”¹¹ Heidegger suggests that one can prevail against such powers: “What is true occurs [*ereignet sich*] only in the truth: that we belong to its essential occurrence, that we know the danger of distortion as being rooted in it [in truth] and that we do not let enter what is distorted in its unfettered power and don’t fear it, steadfast in the venture of beyng” (GA 66: 12/8, tm).

III. HEIDEGGER’S ERRANCIES

Thinking can keep the distorting power of drives and inclinations at bay because thinking *knows* about errancy. Looking at Heidegger’s understanding of knowledge (*Wissen*) in *Contributions to Philosophy* and the subsequent volume *Besinnung* (*Mindfulness*), we can see that this understanding has not shifted essentially from what he said at the beginning of 1934 in an address given at Freiburg University to 600 beneficiaries of the National Socialist “labor service” program:

Knowledge means: in our decisions and actions *to be up to* the task that is assigned to us, whether this task be to till the soil or to fell a tree or to dig a ditch or to inquire into the laws of Nature or to illumine the fate-like force of History.

Knowledge means: to be *master* of the situation into which we are placed.¹²

It is clear from this passage that, for Heidegger, the meaning of the word *Wissen* appears to connote a disposition and decidedness: mastery of a situation.

Yet what if not only errancy but also distortion took place precisely there, in this “knowledge,” in this resoluteness toward what one identifies as being essential or true? What if distortion was not about being blinded by beings, i.e. by things and events, as Heidegger thought? What if prior to all concrete relation to things, attunements disposed us toward thinking and acting in ways that may turn out to be destructive or distorting, attunements that cannot so readily be separated from drives and inclinations? What if our lived bodies carried lineages of inclinations and resistances that co-determine attunements through which we find things and events to disclose themselves to us?

What I am suggesting, then, is that there are possibly harmful aspects of what Heidegger calls “knowledge,” aspects that he failed to see. I am also suggesting that Heidegger’s “fundamental attunements” harbor dispositional elements related to aspects, for instance, of bodily being he does not question and does not want to question. I suspect that Heidegger’s attempt to think non-subjectively and his related aversion to biological or psychological approaches to thinking have something to do with this.

But prior to considering further errancies in Heidegger’s thinking, we may want to take into account a shift in Heidegger’s attitude toward questioning and knowledge, a shift that occurs around 1941–42. While in *Contributions* and *Besinnung* a decisional language is prominent and with it a resistance against machination and lived experience, in 1941 the attunement of his writing changes. It is no longer an issue of resisting machination, steadfast in the clearing of truth, but rather the issue is to let machination pass by and to follow “the silent voice of being” (GA 71: 283/246, tm).¹⁵ Departure, pain, poverty, and dignity become prevailing attunements in Heidegger’s thinking; rather than a questioning response, thinking now becomes a thanking.¹⁴ It is as if Heidegger attempted to hollow himself out, to purge all will from his thinking, and to be nothing but a thankful response to being.

What is particularly striking, though, is that the polemics in his *Black Notebooks* don't follow that shift in attunement. While in his writings of the event he lets go of the resistance against machination, his *Black Notebooks* of the same time continue with critical remarks and polemics against his contemporaries as he shuffles all political standpoints and ways of thinking and behaving into the same interpretative pool: everything ends up being a form of machination, rooted in the oblivion of being.¹⁵ And since, for Heidegger, the oblivion of being and before that, the withdrawal of being and machinational disposition of everybody and everything are the origin of what happens with things and events, the withdrawal of being and machination appear more important to address.¹⁶

Nonetheless, we should not confuse the content of the *Black Notebooks* with Heidegger's more philosophical, non-public writings. It is evident that Heidegger differentiated between, on the one hand, the non-public writings that range from *Contributions* to *The Event* (those I call "poietic writings") and on the other hand, what he titled "Considerations" (*Überlegungen*) and "Notes" (*Anmerkungen*) in the *Black Notebooks*. This becomes especially clear in 1941–42, since in the earlier writings there are more overlaps (especially between *Mindfulness* and the *Black Notebooks*). In *On Inception* and *The Event* from 1941–42 there are no anti-Semitic remarks and Heidegger hardly ever mentions the Germans. In the *Black Notebooks*, on the other hand, nationalistic reflections abound, together with troubling remarks on world Judaism and the abundant critiques of Christianity, Americanism, Socialism, and Russian Bolshevism.

I believe that this difference has much to do with attunements and the way Heidegger's thinking lets itself be determined by attunements (and here it is helpful to recall that the German word for "determination," *Bestimmung*, contains the word *Stimmung*, "attunement"). In *The Event* Heidegger's attuned thinking gathers toward the imageless source of being, toward the silent voice (*Stimme* is also akin to *Stimmung*) that is like an echo without origin, such that the determinations that arise here are nothing concrete in the common sense. He speaks

of the event as inception, enduring the pain of departure, as he calls it, dwelling and articulating the not yet differentiated differencing out of which words may arise. He attempts more radically to let go of all representational thinking, and to let thought arise from what is appropriated in the event of appropriation. This leads him to refrain from engaging beings, i.e. things and events in a more common sense. In the *Black Notebooks*, where Heidegger does engage concrete things and events, one senses more common inclinations and especially aversions – attunements in a less fundamental sense than he would wish.

The decisive question to ask here, is, I believe, *how determinations arise from attunements*, since even in his poietic writings Heidegger does not only and always dwell in that originary spacing of the not yet spoken word but comes to articulate at least some things: for instance, his reconstruction of Western history as the history of the abandonment of beings by being; his interpretation of metaphysics as questioning beings representationally; the way he traces the arising and outbreak of machination; the fact that he situates the beginning of Western history with the Greeks and indicates that it is the German people who may be the ones through which a second beginning might arise (GA 94: 27/21).

When one follows Heidegger's meditative reflections in the non-public writings especially of 1941 and '42, there are moments in which his thinking turns toward the most concealed dimension of being, hovering in the not-yet- and no-longer-begun inception of being. In these moments there are not many determinations arising in his attuned thinking as he repeatedly thinks beyng as the event in which truth first is cleared, with emphasis on the clearing of concealment prior to any specific thing or event one may speak about.¹⁷

The *Black Notebooks* of those years (GA 96) are different in that here Heidegger often is looser with language, adheres far less to silence and concealment, and makes political remarks that lack sophistication and differentiations. If we apply Heidegger's own standard of originary thinking to these more political remarks, we must say that they lack fundamental attunements but abound with more common "inclinations." What is troublesome in this context is that he tries to think what

happens around him beyng-historically, i.e. he mixes what he calls inceptive thinking into his interpretations of contemporary events. He often takes ready-made concepts – Americanism, Judaism, Christianity, Socialism, Bolshevism – interprets them beyng-historically, and attacks them driven by “attunements” and “dispositions” that he clearly does not appear to reflect on and that cannot simply be attributed to beyng in its historicity. He thinks in broad strokes rather than in terms of particular things and events; any particularity gets inscribed into his preconceptions of machination and lived experience.

In short, as Heidegger turns to concrete political events, he errs, and this errancy cannot be purified from distortions. But what is distorted here is perhaps less something like the truth of beyng than the very attunements that dispose his thinking.

Heidegger’s lack of sense for the particularity of things and events appears to me like the flipside of his insistence of thinking being as such and not the being of this or that thing. Thinking things, concrete things in *their particularity*, was precisely what he refrained from. “Uniqueness” and “singularity” are words he reserves for the occurrence of beyng as such. For sure, beyng occurs always with beings such that beings are constitutive of the particularity of a site of being, but ultimately what matters for Heidegger is not the singular thing, not this or that particular constellation of things or events, but historical beyng or the world a thing shelters and conceals.¹⁸

IV. CONCLUSION

Let me return, in conclusion, to what I called above a decisive question: How do determinations arise from attunements? I believe that this is tied to another question: From where do these attunements arise?

According to Heidegger, fundamental attunements arise in a middle-voice manner, without agent, without ground, and unsettle us from our customary relation to things. They are disclosive in a fundamental way. Furthermore, once fundamental attunements begin to harbor a historical dimension, for Heidegger this historical dimension is understood strictly as that of beyng in its historicity, and any particular

event gets inscribed into the narrative of the history of *beyng*. What I have begun questioning above is the distinction between fundamental attunements and other attunements that are disclosive with respect to particular things and events. My sense is that what Heidegger says about the relation between truth and errancy applies as well with respect to the relation between fundamental and non-fundamental attunements, i.e. even in fundamental attunements there remains at play a relation to beings, to things and events – a relation Heidegger is not reflecting on much with respect to his own writing – as he attempts to purge any subjective element from thinking and be nothing but a thanking response to the silent call of *beyng*. Said otherwise, precisely in his effort not to be misguided by beings and more “subjective” attunements, Heidegger fails to cultivate an awareness of them, which leads him to be blind to some of his own errancies.

I believe that the relation to beings that fundamental attunements carry also includes something Heidegger has taken into account only rarely in his writings: the body, the body in particular of the one who finds herself to be attuned in specific ways. The attuned body carries its own histories and lineages; it delimits – shelters, one may say – a site of being that weaves together a multiplicity of attunements, histories, and lineages.¹⁹

What I am suggesting here (and I am aware that this constitutes a departure from strictly Heideggerian thinking) is that attunements, and this includes Heidegger’s attunements, cannot be simply disconnected from things, events, and embodied lineages. Our own particular histories, i.e. the histories we embody, play more or less into disclosive attunements. In the case of Heidegger, the *Black Notebooks* make this more clearly evident. It is here that Heidegger seems to me to be particularly blind with respect to how his meditations and polemics carry determinations arising from attunements that cannot simply be attributed to *beyng* in its historicity. We thus can learn from Heidegger not only about the determining role of attunements but also of the blindness and danger attunements can carry with them.

NOTES

- 1 In *Being and Time*, §30, Heidegger gives the example of fear (*Furcht*) and distinguishes the “of what” (*das Wovor*) we are afraid, fearing, and the “about what” (*das Worum*) of fear. It is no accident that he does not write “the thing we fear” and “the thing about which we are afraid,” since the relational directions of fear precede a thinking in terms of represented things. (The Stambaugh translation, which uses “what we are afraid of” and “that about which we are afraid,” might be misleading here.)
- 2 Since this boredom does not refer to anything specific, one cannot find an example for it (GA 29/30: 203/135).
- 3 Heidegger writes: “Time entrances [*bannt*] Dasein, not the time which has remained standing as distinct from flowing, but rather the *time beyond such flowing and its standing*, the time which in each case *Dasein itself as a whole is*” (GA 29/30: 221/147) Entranced by the horizon of time, Dasein is compelled into the “extremity of the moment” (*Spitze des Augenblicks*) as that which properly makes possible (GA 29/30: 227/151).
- 4 The initiation of the other beginning requires a more originary apprehension of the first beginning. See, for instance, section 85 of *Contributions*.
- 5 See section 5 of *Contributions*.
- 6 Humans are “taken aback by the very fact [...] that beings *are* and that being has abandoned and withdrawn itself from all ‘beings’” (GA 65: 15/14).
- 7 Coming from *Being and Time*, section 122 of *Contributions* may be helpful to understand the turn in Heidegger’s thinking which ultimately roots in the way the truth (disclosure and concealment) of being itself occurs as a turning (*Kehre*). He speaks of the disclosure of the truth of being as “appropriating event”: *Ereignis*. Heidegger’s thinking understands itself to be thrown (we may also say necessitated) by being and in this throw “appropriated” by being (*ereignet*), brought into its own, yet in such a way that

- this appropriation occurs only insofar as thinking enters into the disclosive movement and sustains it.
- 8 What Heidegger thinks here in terms of mystery relates to what in *Being and Time* he thinks as the possibility of the impossibility of being in being towards death.
- 9 This more originary untruth is not yet the originary concealment Heidegger will think in *Contributions* (see GA 65: 352/278).
- 10 Heidegger writes that errancy is grounded in the “dignity” of the clearing of truth and is the ground of distortion (GA 66: 112/94).
- 11 “Triebe und Neigungen, Lüste und Vergnügen” (GA 66: 12/8). It is telling that Heidegger does not use the notion of *Stimmung* (attunement) here, but rather words suggesting a primacy of subjectivity in terms of bodily pleasures. Thinking in terms of the body (and of life) is something Heidegger mostly refrains from, perhaps precisely because it suggests a primacy of human subjectivity.
- 12 “The Self-Assertion of the German University,” in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 58.
- 13 For further insight into this shift in Heidegger’s thinking see Daniela Vallega-Neu, “Heidegger’s Reticence: From *Contributions* to *Das Ereignis* and Toward *Gelassenheit*,” *Research in Phenomenology* 45: 1 (2015): 1–32.
- 14 On departure, see GA 70: 24–26; GA 71: 122–23/104–5, 126/107, 132/112, 147–48/127–28, 152/131, 193–94/164–65, 221/190, 233–34/201–2, 236–40/203–7. On pain, see GA 71: 68/55, 169–70/144, 190/162, §257. On poverty, see GA 70: 132, 175. On dignity, see GA 70: 38–39; GA 71: 168/143, 243/209, 249/215, 277/241, 282/245. On thinking becoming thanking, see GA 71: 286/248, 308/268, 313–15/272–74, 328/284–85.
- 15 See, for instance, GA 96: 114 and 125. For the relation between Heidegger’s poetic writings and the *Black Notebooks*, see Daniela Vallega-Neu, “The Black Notebooks and Heidegger’s Writings of the Event (1936–1944)” in eds. Ingo Farin and Jeff Malpas,

Reading Heidegger's Black Notebooks 1931–1941 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2016), 127–42.

- 16 This is how he can come up with, for most of us, unthinkable remarks like the following from 1945: “The terror of ultimate nihilism [the ultimate oblivion of *beyng*] is even more uncanny than the massive presence of the hangmen and of the concentration camps” (GA 97: 59).
- 17 See my essay “Heidegger’s Reticence,” cited above.
- 18 I believe that even in “The Thing” (GA 79: 5–23/5–22), Heidegger does not think a thing in its particularity but the notion of “the jug” as expressing a certain “essence” (*Wesen*) of things in so far as they gather the fourfold. As Mitchell writes, “things are all jugs”: Andrew J. Mitchell, *The Fourfold: Reading the Late Heidegger* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2015), 14. I argue that Heidegger does not think “concrete” things or singular things in their particular happening as well in the last section of my essay “Heidegger’s Reticence.”
- 19 In Chapter Five of *The Bodily Dimension in Thinking* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), I developed the thought that Heidegger’s account in *Contributions* of how being needs to be sheltered in a being (*Seiendes*) in order for the truth of *beyng* to occur needs to be supplemented by thinking the “body” (*Leib*) as a site of sheltering. Merleau-Ponty’s notions of institution and sedimentation would also be useful to develop this thought further. Merleau-Ponty means by institution “those events in experience which endow it with durable dimensions, in relation to which a whole series of other experiences will acquire meaning, will form an intelligible series or a history – or again those events which sediment in me a meaning, not just as survivals or residues, but as the invitation to a sequel, the necessity of a future.” See “An Unpublished Text by Maurice Merleau-Ponty: A Prospectus of His Work,” trans. Arleen B. Dallery, in Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*, ed. James Edie (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 9.

Being Without (Heidegger)

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback

The question about “future legacies” has stepped beyond the closed walls of the academy. It is no longer a mere *querelle* between Ancients and Moderns or between Analytic and Continental philosophers. It has become a question in and of the world. Moreover, it is a question not only about how a legacy, that is, whether an inherited meaning can have a future, but above all whether the future itself can become a legacy, can be inherited as meaningful.

The question about “future legacies” is a question about the *paradox* of tradition rather than about tradition. Thus, “tradition” does not mean merely preservation of meanings, institutions, and practices but a double transmission – the transmission of meanings, institutions and practices, and the transmission of transmission itself. Because tradition is both preservation and transmission, a keeping of something for itself and a handing over of something to another, it carries within itself the possibility of transformation. Indeed, in the *querelle* between Ancients and Moderns – which has become a tradition of its own – the inexorable bond between the old and the new, between revolution and tradition, has not been taken seriously in its problematicity. Defined as rupture with the past, with the old, with tradition, and thereby as a position *against* the past, *against* the old and tradition, modern concepts of revolution and of the “new,” such as those we can find for instance in Kant, did not pay attention to how their *against* built *again* a tradition, and hence how revolution and tradition go always together as a body and its

shadow. It is in the sense of how a body and its shadow are, at the same time, separated and inseparable that I am speaking here about tradition as a paradox, the paradox of being at the same time preservation and overcoming. Tradition preserves when trying to overcome overcoming and preserving preservation; tradition overcomes trying to preserve overcoming and to overcome preservation.

The paradox of tradition appears today clearer and clearer. The expansion of capitalism in the globe obeys a fundamental law that Marx described as “general equivalence” (*Das Kapital* I). It can be understood in the sense that capitalism can only expand globally insofar as everything becomes whatsoever for the sake of being used, abused and misused as whatsoever, whenever and wherever by whomsoever. This means that, on the one hand, everything becomes anything and, on the other, that anything becomes everything. This means that all things lose their ontological determination and become nothing. However, becoming nothing, they can become whatsoever. Hence, becoming nothing, everything can acquire whatsoever ontological determination and be, let us say, re-ontologized. In short, general equivalence can be seized as the double intertwined movement of dis-ontologization and continuous re-ontologization. A further consequence of this expansive movement of capitalism is that there are no longer traditions but, at the same time, and precisely because of that, all traditions are re-claimed and over-traditionalized. The more globalization dislocates traditions and de-traditionalizes existence, the more it promotes re-traditionalization. Tradition is used both as a critical weapon against global, media-technological de-traditionalization and as a violent weapon against tradition. Today tradition rapes its own tradition. The world is over-hanging on its right wing. The difficult challenge that the violent conservatisms that have emerged in this dynamics of de-traditionalization, re-, and over-traditionalization present is the challenge of being not only without being – this or that – but the challenge of being with the without of being. Today being is without being, and the most haunting question seems to be how to be with the without of being.

Departing from these assumptions, I would like to address the question about “future legacies” proposed by the Heidegger Circle this year as a question about *being with a without*. I will not discuss whether we should or could be with or without Heidegger today and/or in the future, nor what a post-Heideggerian era could mean – not only because it is not certain that a Heideggerian era has ever existed. I will rather present a kind of brief *philological conversation* with Heidegger’s thoughts that are closest to what I am proposing to think in terms of “being with a without.” For Heidegger, the question is rather to think “being without.”

The expression “being with a without” is not an expression used by Heidegger. However, his thought can be seized as a long, sinuous, suffering, obsessive, and erring thought on the ontological-historical condition of being without, a thought that assumes different philosophical figures and textures in his extensive work.

The first philosophical figure and texture of “being without” that we seize in his thinking path is the figure of *destruction*, destruction of the ontological tradition. The discussions about the “destruction of tradition” in *Being and Time* present a very significant insight in the paradox of tradition that, on another occasion, could be brought into a fruitful dialogue with Benjamin, Adorno, and Arendt’s views on tradition and its paradoxes.¹ For Heidegger, “tradition uproots the historicity of Dasein”² insofar as it covers over what it recovers. It is the very recovery accomplished by tradition that covers over tradition. It is tradition that undermines tradition. It is history that kills history. Heidegger acknowledges that if, on the one hand, tradition uproots existence, on the other, it is impossible to exist without tradition.³ That is why tradition is not to be recuperated but to be “destroyed,” indeed, deconstructed, *abgebaut* (GA 24: 31/23), in the sense of being brought back to the originary experiences that oriented a certain interpretation of the world and of being that dominated history and grounded common views of today. In fact, what has to be destroyed, or deconstructed, in Heidegger’s view is not the past – maybe this is what most distinguishes Heidegger’s thoughts on the destruction of tradition. What is

to be destroyed or deconstructed is the very *today*. Heidegger's fight is against the to-day. Moreover, destruction or deconstruction is not the aim of philosophical inquiry but the means and way, that is, the *method* for fighting against the today, which for Heidegger exposes the obscure reign of public universality, embodied in the bodiless "the they," *das Man*. The aim of destruction is to win an insight into the originary experiences that constitute the sources of the dominant explanations of the uncanny up-rootedness of the today and of the world – the sources of the uncanny and uprooting public universality and universal publicity. It is the task of learning to be without what one cannot be without, namely, the today. The today appears as *pierced* and *tattooed* by a *without*, a without ground, without familiarity, without experience and concreteness – in short, a *without being* – a without that structures and constitutes "the they." Speaking about uprootedness, homelessness, and worldliness, Heidegger speaks about how being is today without being, how the universal, conceptual, formal and abstract renders being empty of being. Indeed, he is speaking of how philosophy became the form of an experience of the world without experience and without world. The without appears as *negative without* in the extensive and intensive uses he makes of the prefix *un-* and the suffix *-los* in German. By means of destruction, that is, of deconstruction, what is expected is reaching the possibility of existing – which for Heidegger means thinking – without the without that constitutes the today. Expected is to be *without the without*. Phrasing it in this manner, a *positive without* is also considered. Immersed in tradition – in the complex mechanism of "the they" – existence exists without existing, being is without being. Destruction or deconstruction of tradition is meant to prepare a way to exist without this without. The distinction between a negative and a positive without is only a simplified and hence provisional way to rephrase the paradox of tradition viewed and thought by Heidegger. The figure of thought presented by him is the one about the need to be without the without.

Heidegger's thoughts on destruction reach extreme intensity in the black 1930s and 40s. In the extremity of destruction, "destruction" is thought further in terms of overcoming. In a certain sense, Heidegger's

turn is the turn from *destruction* of the ontological tradition to the *overcoming* of metaphysics. The move from destruction to overcoming corresponds to an inquiry about how “traditional ontology” reveals itself as the fate of Western civilization. For Heidegger, Western civilization is philosophical civilization. The West could only become a civilization insofar as it is grounded on philosophy, on the search for universal grounds and reasons for the entirety of beings. It becomes civilization precisely because this philosophical striving for universalization strives to become universal. Philosophy – the search for universal ground – is for Heidegger itself the ground upon which Western civilization could be built. Philosophy as a search for the first beginning is itself the first beginning of the West. The search for a universal ground for all that is seizes, but at the same time also loses, the event of being, the mysterious fact *that being is*. It takes being for *what* is being, and accomplishes the civilizational grammatical error of taking the infinitive verb “to be” for a substantive, for a thing, for something in itself. It forgets being.

The West is the civilization of the oblivion of being, of being without being for being exclusively with beings. The West is a civilizational experience of a certain fate of being – the one of giving itself as being, withdrawing in beings. This way of *self-donation in self-withdrawal* defines metaphysics for Heidegger. The history of the West is the history of metaphysics, of this way of donation, which is performed as the striving for universalization of this striving for universalization. Western civilization is the universalization of the philosophical striving for universality by means of the expansion of its power. This expanding universalization grows and intensifies in different moments of history, through different forces and figures, not only Roman Latinity and Christianity but also Judaism or Jewry, which in the *Black Notebooks* becomes the figural embodiment of Modernity and of the bodiless “the they,” of publicity and universality. Heidegger’s anti-Semitism is anti-Platonic, anti-Christian, anti-modernist insofar as Platonism, Christianity, Judaism and modernity are names for the intensification of the striving for universalization as a result of the oblivion of being. History as the movement of intensification of the oblivion of being is the core

of Heidegger's concept of the onto-historical, of *Seynsgeschichte*. Crucial in this concept is, however, how the metaphysical fate of being – the fate of showing itself as being while withdrawing in beings, the fate of being as *self-donation in self-withdrawal* – shows itself. It shows itself at the point of its own saturation, at the point of its plenitude, at the point of its *end*.

Heidegger is obsessed with the idea that the “Western revolution,” which means the beginning of philosophy as metaphysics, is the beginning of an end that is still ending. In the black 1930s and '40s, Heidegger writes a kind of testament of the *ending* of the world, as I have suggested in another article.⁴ In the *Black Notebooks*, he seems sometimes to be writing down the *ending* of the world. Here, the distinction between “end” and “ending” is crucial. He writes and thinks under the threat – and sometimes even the desire – that the end should come as soon as possible. The trance of transiting shows itself as the ecstasy of the apocalypse of time itself. At stake is a turn in being itself, a revolution of being, an ontological revolution, so to speak.

The black 1930s and '40s present the intensification of this ending, where the possibility of a total end of Western civilization is at stake; world war means for Heidegger not only the possibility of the end of the world, but the risk of the end of being itself. As such, however, even the end would end. Heidegger speaks about the “eschatology of being.” Heidegger's “history of being” is an apocalyptic narrative that also reveals the “apocalyptic tone” of the whole history of philosophy (recalling Kant's and Derrida's discussions of this tone).⁵ Heidegger seizes the *ending* of the first philosophical beginning of the West as a “between,” as a *Zwischen*. The ending is a between in the sense of an end that does not cease to end, in the sense of an endless end. It is a between also because in this ending of the first philosophical beginning of the West another beginning can, however, be surmised. The thought of the “other beginning” developed by Heidegger in this period is perhaps the most extreme formulation of modern ideas of revolution. Thus at stake is not simply a beginning anew, or a transformation, or even a metamorphosis of a former beginning. Instead what is meant is

the impossible thought of another beginning of the beginning itself, a reset of being itself. As such, the other beginning cannot be compared to whatever has ever been, but precisely by virtue of its being absolutely incomparable, the only way to embrace its presentiment is by comparing the incomparable – that is, by comparing it to the first beginning by means of *listening* to the echo of what is far-away-still-not-yet-here in what has been since the beginning.

The thought of the “history of being” is the thought of how the event of being and the events of history are “intertwined,” or *verstrickt*. The moment of dark clarity in which the fate of the truth of being as self-donation in self-withdrawal is itself given is the long moment of an ending that did not end to end. It is the long moment of a “transition” (*Übergang*) from which the experience of an “overcoming” (*Überwindung*) is thought. “Between,” “transition,” in which another beginning can be surmised through the echo of its not yet in the already and the having been – these are descriptions of a being without a way out of the first philosophical civilizational beginning. Rather than a thought of being with the without, these descriptive figures propose a thought of *being within the without*. They propose a thought of the immanence, of the within, a thought capable of describing from within being in transition, in between, in the meanwhile.

After the war Heidegger follows these thoughts, connecting even more intensively thoughts on transition and between-ness with the thought of overcoming. In this connection, the desperate thought of being without a without turns more into a thought that is closer to what I am calling a “being *with* the without.” In the essay “Overcoming Metaphysics” – which should be read, I think, as a kind of summary of the difficult thoughts developed during the 1930s and 40s rather than as their “overcoming” – the need to “leave” (*überlassen*) metaphysics for itself becomes central. To step beyond metaphysics is discussed mainly in terms of a stepping into metaphysics so that metaphysics can be left to itself. Overcoming is conceived as *Verwindung*, “enduring,” in the sense of someone who endures a suffering. Being *with* the without, this *with* I am somehow *inflicting* here upon

Heidegger, is seized however as a *within*, as a within the without. Heidegger's thoughts on "enduring" are thoughts on *being within the without*. This "within" is not a place or really a preposition. It is rather a kind of verb, a verb conjugated in a middle voice, that is neither active nor passive but both at once. This is the heart of Heidegger's thoughts on "leaving," *lassen*, expressed in the terms *Gelassenheit*, *einlassen*, *zulassen*, *überlassen*, and its other variants.

It is also the heart of Heidegger's thoughts on "poverty" (*Armut*) pronounced in a talk held just after the end of the war in June 1945,⁶ and briefly recalled in the "Letter on Humanism" in 1946. In this talk poverty is defined as the poverty of being. It is neither privation of the necessary nor loss of property and ownership. It is poverty in the sense that there is nothing missing except the non-necessary. "Necessary today is the non-necessary" – this Heideggerian formulation presents the thought of the *Not der Notlosigkeit*, the "plight of a lack of sense of plight," which was already formulated in the *Contributions to Philosophy (On the Event)* from 1936–1938 (GA 65: §4). In this sense, poverty is being within the without. Poverty is treated by Heidegger as being within the without and not only as being without. The difference between being without the without and being within the without is the difference of the awareness of the truth of being. Thus what is at stake here is how being appears not only in its own withdrawal but *while* withdrawing. The difference lies in the focus on this *whiling* to which Heidegger will become even more attentive after the war. It is the focus on the whiling and abiding, on *Weilen*, *Verweilen*, *Während* – which is to say, on the spatio-temporality of the *within* – that enables Heidegger to think *Ge-stell*, enframing, composition as a "pre-form" (*Vorform*) and "prelude" (*Vorspiel*) to the "event," or *Ereignis* (GA 11: 46/36–37); to think the *Enteignis*, dis-appropriation as a prelude to *Ereignis*, appropriation; to see how in danger grows what saves, recalling the verses by Hölderlin that Heidegger repeatedly quotes almost as an ontological prayer. With this, another motive, namely the motive of the need to overcome the need to overcome, also appears.

In the 1945 talk on poverty, Heidegger recasts the heroic tone of revolution and overcoming in the tone of poverty. (Both Lacoue-Labarthe

and Trawny comment on this talk, the latter connecting it to Hegel's ideas on property.⁷) He proposes this meaning of poverty as the richness of needing nothing except the non-necessary as a path for the transformation of the West. He no longer speaks about "the Germans" but about "the Western people." However, the thought about poverty as the richness of needing nothing but the non-necessary opens up a thought of being *without*, *ohne*, and of serenity, *Gelassenheit*. Not-willing appears as the only path toward the serenity of being *ohne warum*, or without reason or ground, as the rose is in its being. In the 1957 *The Principle of Reason*, the articulation between "being without reason" or "ground" – *ohne Warum* – is discussed in a deep articulation of the experience of listening. Here, Heidegger re-reads himself, confessing what he had not "listened" to before and professing the need to change the "tonality" (*Tonart*) of thought. He presents the thought of the "sleep of being" (*Schlaf des Seins*) and of how "being properly still sleeps" (*Sein eigentlich noch schläft*) and is "dreamt in advance of its own dream" (*vorausgeträumt*) (GA 10: 97/54). Sleep is indeed an experience of being with the without. It is also in relation to a without that Heidegger formulates his later thoughts about the "constellation" between being and the humans. He states, for example, in the important lecture from 1962, *Time and Being*, that "time is not without the human being" and inquires into the meaning of this "not without," of being "not without" (GA 14: 21/16).

In Heidegger's discussions about being without, *ohne*, being within the without, not being without, about the poverty and sleep of being, a thought about the overcoming of overcoming is at stake. A thought about the "need" to transform the very meaning of transformation is sketched out. Being within the without is understood as a learning not of another way to be and to think, but rather of an unlearning. We could recall here a verse by the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, who speaks about the need to *aprender a desaprender*; "to learn to unlearn." For Heidegger there is such a need "to learn to unlearn" in order to think further the paths of this overcoming of the overcoming, which has defined the philosophical beginning of the West as metaphysics.

Thus what does the Greek word “metaphysics” mean if not literally “over-coming” (meta-physics)? To be learned is to unlearn the grammar of the intertwining of *being and time* in which temporal being is understood as a coming from ... over to ..., and transformation as the passing from one form to another – keeping, however, untransformed the movement of transformation itself. The language of being coined by the Greeks and condensed into a nugget in the Parmenidean formula τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι, “The same is to think and to be,” needs to be unlearned. This “need” haunts the late Heidegger. This “need” haunts us as well.

In contrast to philosophical thoughts on transformation based on a metaphysics of forms and formations, Heidegger will propose in his later years a thought of the *tautology of Being*. This late thought is described again as a listening, but more specifically a listening to what Heidegger called the *tautophasis* and *phenomenophasis* of being.⁸ In its tautology, being says itself in such a way that the same is already another, sounding other and otherwise. The same of being is “sameother,” *selbander*; a term used by Heidegger in late notes from the 1970s. However, in all these attempts to overcome overcoming, Heidegger remains prisoner of the arche-teleology implied in the idea of transformation qua overcoming.

Being without Heidegger. Is that the claim, the desire, the imperative? For many it is very much so. But this means above all being without being, or to put it less rhetorically, being without the language of being. Heidegger himself did try to say being in a way that could express the experience of being within the without, being within the ending and transition of a philosophical civilization. *Sein* written with “y” (*beyng*), being scratched over with an X, being as nothing, as poverty, as sleep, as “event” instead of being, being as danger, as turn, as pain, as serenity, as gathering – all these attempts not to say being when saying being indicate how Heidegger’s language of being comprehends itself as a language within the without of being itself. To be without Heidegger, without the language of being, to write against being or not to say being – to think with, against, despite Heidegger – these

attempts would, however, not free us from the sediment of the apocalyptic structure and tones of a long tradition of thoughts about overcoming and being-without that accompanies both dreams of revolution and the disenchantment of the so-called post-historical times. Indeed, the problem lies in the apocalyptic tonal structure of philosophy and the difficulty – the human, too human difficulty – of *leaving*. The question concerning how the meaning of “leaving-off,” “abandoning,” *lassen* is intertwined with the “leaving-off,” or abandoning, of meanings remains a question, and with it the task of unlearning the apocalyptic structural tone of thoughts on leaving-off, separation, and crisis.⁹

Today, we see this apocalyptic tone becoming more and more widespread. We hear it everywhere, stated with different accents and pronunciations. The sentiment of the world is the one of finding itself in the middle of a race speeding to its end: no longer the end of art, of history, of philosophy, of the human being, but now the end of all resources pertaining to the world, the earth, the planet. In all those dimensions of the ending that has occupied Heidegger intensively, and in the intense debates and excess of writings about the “end of,” about the “post” – post-modernism, post-history, post-colonialism, post-post, and so on – and further about “being and coming after,” about “afterness,” the question about “future legacies” has not ceased to haunt contemporary existence. Today, the question about “future legacies” emerges as a very dangerous question, as the very question of danger itself; thus the world experiences today the war of legacies, and the distressing question of whether the future itself can be or become a “legacy.” In the age of the politics of memory in which we now live, it seems more than ever necessary to think what it means to be with the without – without the need to speak in the name of a past or of a future. To be without this need would mean to take seriously another need, namely the need to “give ourselves to nature before she takes us,” as Hölderlin put it in the mouth of a dying Empedocles, as well as to listen to the voices of plurality who scream unheard in the powerful monochord of the global One. What is left is the task of reading rather than interpreting, in order to thereby discover that *archi-reading* is the condition of possible and impossible interpretative writings.

To close, two quotes, one from Hölderlin in the *Death of Empedocles*:

Oh, give yourselves to nature, before she takes you! –
[...]
So, dare it! your inheritance, what you've earned and
learned,
The narratives of all your fathers' voices teaching you,
All law and custom, names of all the ancient gods,
Forget these things courageously; like newborn babes
Your eyes will open to the godliness of nature [...]¹⁰

and the other, "Autumn Day" by Rilke:

Lord: it is time. The summer was so immense.
Lay your shadow on the sundials,
and let loose the wind in the fields.

Bid the last fruits to be full;
give them another two more southerly days,
press them to ripeness, and chase
the last sweetness into the heavy wine.

Whoever has no house now will not build one anymore.
Whoever is alone now will remain so for a long time,
will stay up, read, write long letters,
and wander the avenues, up and down,
restlessly, while the leaves are blowing.¹¹

NOTES

- 1 See here Theodor Adorno, "On Tradition," *Telos* 94 (Dec 1992): 75–82; Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York: Viking Press, 1961); Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History" in *Selected Writings*, vol. 4: 1938–1940, eds. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (Boston: Belknap, 2003), 389–400.
- 2 As Heidegger writes, "the tradition that hereby gains dominance makes what it 'transmits' so little accessible that initially and for the most part it covers it over instead. What has been handed down is handed over to obviousness; it bars access to those original 'wellsprings' out of which the traditional categories and concepts were in part genuinely drawn. Indeed, it makes us wholly incapable of even understanding that such a return [the return to it] is necessary" (GA 2: 29/SZ 21).
- 3 On this point Adorno is quite close to Heidegger when he writes: "There is no tradition today and none can be conjured, yet when every tradition has been extinguished the march toward barbarism will begin." Adorno, "On Tradition," 78.
- 4 Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, "Heidegger, die Juden, Heute," in *Heidegger, die Juden, noch einmal*, eds. Peter Trawny and Andrew J. Mitchell (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2015), 117–44.
- 5 Immanuel Kant, "On a Recently Prominent Tone of Superiority in Philosophy" (1786), trans. Peter Heath in *Theoretical Philosophy after 1781*, ed. Henry Allison and Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), and "The End of All Things" in Immanuel Kant, *Religion and Rational Theology*, ed. and trans. Allen W. Wood and George DiGiovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). See also Jacques Derrida, "Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy," trans. John P. Leavy, *The Oxford Literary Review* 6:2 (1984): 3–37.
- 6 Martin Heidegger, "Die Armut," *Heidegger Studies* 10 (1994): 5–11. English translation: "Poverty," trans. Thomas Kalary and Frank

- Schalow, in *Heidegger, Translation, and the Task of Thinking: Essays in Honor of Parvis Emad* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 3–9.
- 7 See *La Pauvreté / die Armut*, trans. Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Ana Samardzija (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2004) and Peter Trawny, “Die Armut der Geschichte: Zur Frage nach der Vollendung und Verwandlung der Philosophie bei Heidegger; Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann zum 65. Geburtstag,” *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 53: 3 (Jul–Sept 1999), 407–27.
- 8 See Martin Heidegger, *Auszüge zur Phänomenologie aus dem Manuskript “Vermächtnis der Seinsfrage,”* Martin Heidegger Gesellschaft Jahresgabe 2011–12 (Stuttgart: Offizin Scheufele, 2012).
- 9 The thinking of Reiner Schürmann gives us thoughtful insight into these questions.
- 10 Friedrich Hölderlin, *The Death of Empedocles: A Mourning-Play*, ed. and trans. David Farrell Krell (Albany: SUNY Press, 2008), 90.
- 11 Rainer Maria Rilke, “Autumn Day,” in *The Essential Rilke*, ed. and trans. Galway Kinnell and Hannah Liebmann (New York: Ecco Press, 1999), 5.

The Catastrophic Essence of the Human Being in Heidegger's Readings of *Antigone*

Scott M. Campbell

Outside of his two readings of *Antigone*, Heidegger makes few references to Greek tragedy, forcing commentators to cobble together a theory of tragedy in Heidegger's thought from dispersed citations ranging over many years. Even in the *Antigone* interpretations, from the *Introduction to Metaphysics* in 1935 and *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"* in 1942, Heidegger says little about what he thinks of tragedy, again prompting commentators to piece together a theory of tragedy from his detailed interpretations of the play's first choral ode. Interestingly, much of the work in this area has focused on Heidegger's philosophy in general as opposed to what he took to be the main effort of his reading of *Antigone*, namely, as a retrieval of how the ancient Greeks understood the essence of the human being. Both of his *Antigone* interpretations may be found during the turn in his thought, which we can say broadly involves a shift away from Dasein and toward Being, and yet he is focused in these readings on the essence of the human being as it is found in Sophoclean tragedy and, more broadly, in Greek thinking.

Both readings of *Antigone* are meditations on Sophocles' claim in the first choral ode that there is nothing stranger than the human being, which Heidegger takes as saying that the human being is the uncanniest of all creatures. Strangeness and uncanniness do not on their own make the human being tragic, but in a remarkable passage

in which Heidegger is discussing uncanniness, he says that “human beings themselves in their essence are a *katastrophe*,” preferring the Greek in order to emphasize the way in which the human being is a turning (*strophe*) down (*kata*). Instead of claiming that Heidegger’s philosophy is tragic, as many readers of these works have done, I want to argue that for Heidegger, the human being is essentially tragic, a catastrophe or, if we follow the Greek term, a turning down away from oneself. This is not a new development in his thought. We see it in some of the early lecture courses, and we see it, as well, in *Being and Time*, but Sophoclean tragedy provided Heidegger with a new way to think about this tragic human essence, namely, as an intrinsic propensity toward rise and fall residing within the human being.

As we ponder Heidegger’s future legacy, it will be important to keep this in mind, that he thought of the human being as being in essence a catastrophe. Students of Heidegger are familiar with what he says about inauthenticity in *Being and Time*, where the human being evades itself, becoming lost among beings. The sense of “empty and errant wandering” is retained in his later work on tragedy, but also deepened, for now human beings are inflicted with what he calls a “counterturning” in their very essence. The aim of this paper is to explore that counterturning and its catastrophic consequences. The first section traces the roots of this catastrophic essence back to the idea of alienation in the early lecture courses and *Being and Time*. The second section explores the notions of shattering and counterturning in his readings of *Antigone*. Concluding, I suggest that Heidegger thought of his own involvement with National Socialism through the lens of the Greek tragic hero, and in particular Antigone, who is caught within the catastrophic counterturning essence of human being.

I. ALIENATION

Fallenness and inauthenticity may be some of the most recognizable and frequently taught topics in Heidegger studies, so there is little need to rehearse the details of them. It is noteworthy, though, that the voluntarism that we find in *Being and Time* includes the possibility not

just of resoluteness but of alienation. Dasein can become alienated from itself while attempting to discover itself. Such alienation forces Dasein back upon itself, not away from itself, in its misguided and deluded attempts to understand itself better. He writes that

this alienation cannot mean that Dasein gets factically torn away from itself. On the contrary, this alienation drives it into a kind of Being which borders on the most exaggerated “self-dissection,” tempting itself with all possibilities of explanation, so that the very “characterologies” and “typologies” which it has brought about are themselves already becoming something that cannot be surveyed at a glance. This alienation *closes off* from Dasein its authenticity and possibility, even if only the possibility of genuinely foundering. It does not, however, surrender Dasein to an entity which Dasein itself is not, but forces it into its inauthenticity – into a possible kind of Being *of itself*. The alienation of falling – at once tempting and tranquillizing – leads by its own movement, to Dasein getting *entangled* [verfängt] in itself. (GA 2: 236/SZ 178)

Reading this passage may call to mind self-help books and personality tests that break down the human person into types (“characterologies” and “typologies”) and can often result in wildly distorted perceptions of ourselves. Considering the contemporary shift toward data-driven analytics of the human personality, Heidegger’s remarks here in 1927 are remarkably prescient. He saw a danger in conceiving the human person as an analytical subject, a mode of inauthenticity that stems not from the failure to explore one’s own Being but from a sincere, yet misguided, attempt to do so.

He adds that this kind of alienation closes off the possibility of “genuinely foundering,” a curious expression, for how can one founder in a genuine way? For Heidegger, falling apart was not the worst thing that can happen to a person. Indeed, it may be the most appropriate

thing to do, depending on the situation. If one's best friend commits suicide, it might be inappropriate not to fall apart, even though many school psychologists are called upon to prevent that very thing from happening. Maintaining one's composure in the face of extreme pain and loss may be inappropriate if not absurd, a kind of psychological calm that prevents one from "genuinely foundering." Heidegger does not mention Aristotle here, but his analysis hearkens back to Aristotle's claim in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that virtue depends on responding appropriately to the given situation.

In one of his early lecture courses, however, entitled *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, we see that it is precisely the difficulty in trying to do "the right thing, at the right time, and in the right way" that accounts for human ruination. Aristotle says that while vice is easy, virtue is difficult, which means that human beings spend most of their time in vice. Heidegger reads this as saying that the human person is always revolving around itself in what he calls an elliptical movement (GA 61: 80/108). Importantly, though, life's ruination and its attendant alienation do not separate us from ourselves. Rather, we find life itself precisely there where it is most alienated. He says, "In constantly new ways of looking away from itself, [life] always searches for itself and encounters itself precisely there where it does not suppose, in its masking" (GA 61: 80/107). In both this text and in *Being and Time*, human alienation is not a condition or state of Dasein's Being, but rather a movement. We can become lost, alienated from ourselves, while trying to find out who we are. Summing up the phenomenological features of fallenness in *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes, "This 'movement' of Dasein in its own Being, we call its 'downward plunge' [*Absturz*]" (GA 2: 237/SZ 178), employing language that hearkens back directly to GA 61 on *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, where he says that the movement of factual life is a crash through the nothingness. In his translation of this lecture course, Richard Rojcewicz uses the word "collapse" (as opposed to "crash") to translate the German term *Sturz*, writing, "the 'whereto' of the collapse [of factual life] is not something foreign to it

but is itself of the character of factual life and indeed is ‘*the nothingness of factual life*’” (GA 61: 108/145). In both texts, we see that human life involves falling, crashing, or collapsing into itself, that is, into the nullity of its own existence, for it is precisely its own existence which is at stake here. In *Being and Time*, Dasein becomes alienated, but not “factically torn away from itself” (GA 2: 236/SZ 178); Dasein can lose itself and live “*away from itself*,” but these phenomena do not speak against the existentiality of Dasein, rather they reinforce it: “falling, as a kind of Being of this Being-in, affords us rather the most elemental evidence *for* Dasein’s existentiality” (GA 2: 238/SZ 179).

Commentators who work on the early Heidegger have shown definitively that the categories of ruinance from 1921–22 develop into the categories of fallenness in *Being and Time*. What I am trying to emphasize here is that, first, in both texts, we see that alienation can result from self-exploration. It is not necessarily thoughtlessness or indifference that can lead to alienation, but rather a sincere and genuine attempt at self-understanding. Secondly, alienation is a movement, first an elliptical movement around oneself, and then in *Being and Time* a “downward plunge...out of itself into itself” (GA 2: 237/SZ 178). Thirdly, alienation does not draw the human being away from itself. Instead, it draws it into itself and manifests as a mode of Being. This elliptical, plunging movement of Dasein away from itself and yet at the same time toward and into itself becomes refined during his two lectures on *Antigone*.

II. COUNTERTURNING

Interpreting Greek tragedy gives Heidegger a way of thinking about human alienation that is deeper, and more troubling, than what he had previously described. In his two readings of *Antigone*, the alienation of the human being is no longer an elliptical movement around itself (1921–22), nor is it a downward plunge into and out of itself (1927). It becomes in 1935 a violent strife between *technē* and *dikē* that shatters against Being. In 1942, this alienation is still a movement, but now it is a counterturning movement within oneself that drives us away from

home, that is, it drives us out of what is homely. Both of his readings of *Antigone* focus on the first choral ode, in which Sophocles uses oppositional expressions when describing the essence of the human being.¹ Sophocles says in the first choral ode that the human being is both of the following:

- 1) *pantoporos-aporos*: “Everywhere venturing forth
underway, experienceless without any way out.”
- 2) *hypsipolis-apolis*: “Towering high above the site,
forfeiting the site.”

Interestingly, Heidegger ignores the division between both of these oppositional pairs, where editors have placed punctuation marks, which show that Sophocles is describing different people with each one, and yet they are also written right next to each other, and they are negated versions of the same word. There is warrant for Heidegger to interpret Sophocles as saying, poetically, that there is an oppositional, conflictual nature within the human being.

Central to this conflict is a violent relationship between *technē* and *dikē*, which is the same as the relationship between the human being and Being. *Technē* is a human power of knowing while “Being is fittingness that enjoins: *dikē*” (GA 40: 171/123). This is a violent relationship because it involves breaking out beyond beings and setting Being to work in them. In becoming aware of this relationship and engaging it, the human being becomes historical. In other words, humanity begins to unfold as history when we attempt to “know” or “understand” (*technē*) “the overwhelming sway of Being” (*dikē*) and set it to work in beings. We can see this relationship at work in Antigone’s own life and, in particular, in the difference between her and her sister Ismene. Both sisters value the gods and their family and the city, but honoring gods, family, and city means something different to Antigone than it does to her sister.² It is neither a quantitative nor a qualitative difference. Antigone seeks to know what it means to *be* a brother or sister; she wishes to understand what it means to *be* someone who honors the gods, and

she suffers for it. Heidegger writes, “the knower fares into the midst of fittingness, draws Being into beings [in the draft], and yet can never surmount the overwhelming. Thus the knower is thrown this way and that between fittingness and un-fittingness, between the wretched and the noble” (GA 40: 171–72/123).³

This violence is a relation between the human being as violence-doing (*technē*) and the overwhelming sway of Being (*dikē*), itself violent. “Doing violence,” he writes, “must shatter against the excessive violence of Being, as long as Being holds sway in its essence, as *phusis*, as emerging sway” (GA 40: 171/173). Heidegger equates thinking and knowing Being with trying to say the unsaid and think the unthought. He writes, “The one who is *violence-doing*, the creative one, who sets out into the un-said, who breaks into the un-thought, who compels what has never happened and makes appear what is unseen, this violence-doing one stands at all times in daring,” and the Greek term for daring is *tolma*, which appears in line 371 of the first choral ode (GA 40: 172/123).⁴

At the beginning of the play, when Antigone attempts to conscript Ismene into helping bury the body of Polyneices, she resists, telling Antigone that it is not their place to defy Creon’s decree. Immediately, Antigone is disdainful of her sister. She says, “I won’t press you any further. I wouldn’t even let / You help me if you had a change of heart. / Go on and be the way you choose to be” (*Antigone*, 69–71).⁵ What is at stake for Antigone is what kind of person she is and what kind of person her sister is. She cares about what it means to be a human being, and she is willing to dare, to take a risk, in order to become that. Ismene is concerned about the consequences of their action and the need to respect certain limits. Indeed, Ismene is unwilling to trespass limits of any kind, saying “My mind / Will never aim too high, too far” (*Antigone*, 67–68). Certainly, Antigone violates the law, but at a more fundamental level, her transgression is not a legal one. She transgresses because she asks about what it means to *be*: to be a sister, to be someone who believes in honor and the gods and the city, to be a human being.

In reading the play, one is tempted to find in Antigone’s decision a stubborn willfulness. Creon accuses her of being stubborn throughout

the play. Certainly, she refuses to capitulate to Creon's demands, and that comes across as stubborn. She is so committed in her beliefs that at times it seems as though she is motivated by a kind of righteous, moral indignation. But her actions are not an assertion of the will, and she is not morally righteous. Rather, she reveres the gods and she reveres her family, and so she is urged on in her actions by "pure reverence" (*Antigone*, 943). I think that in Heidegger's terms, Antigone is motivated by Being itself. Her tragic fate is to shatter against Being because she dared (*tolma*) to break into the un-said and the un-thought by trying to live a pure and reverent life. Antigone herself thus offers us a way of thinking about the human being as being urged by Being and then shattering against Being in an effort to break out beyond the familiar and the everyday. Heidegger writes, "this necessity of shattering can subsist only insofar as what must shatter is urged into such Being-here (*Da-sein*). But the human being is urged into such Being-here, thrown into the urgency of such Being, because the overwhelming as such, in order to appear in its sway, *requires* the site of openness for itself. The essence of Being-human opens itself up to us only when it is understood on the basis of this urgency that is necessitated by Being itself" (GA 40: 173–74/124). We find here described in stark and clear terms the tragic essence of the human being, to become violent by breaking out beyond the familiar and the everyday and, in doing so, to shatter against Being.

In his later reading of *Antigone* from 1942, he will focus on the counterturning essence within the human being. These interpretations provide more nuanced discussions of the oppositional pairs stated above (*pantoporos-aporos* and *hypsipolis-apolis*), and they are considerably less violent in tone than his course from 1935, but they affirm this tragic essence of the human being who, in trying to know what it means to *be* shatters against Being. He first finds the counterturning within those words that describe the human being. Sophocles claims that the human being is the *deinon*, the strange, which Heidegger interprets as "fearful," "powerful," and "inhabitual," but each word includes its own counteressence. The fearful is both the frightful and that which inspires admiration; it is both horror and awe. The powerful prevails,

and it is violent. The inhabital exceeds the habitual and stands within it as skillfulness regarding that which is habitual. For these reasons, Heidegger feels justified in translating *deinon* as uncanniness, which is meant to capture the “reciprocally counterturning belonging together” of all three terms (GA 53: 67–68/82–83).

The essence of uncanniness is its counterturning character, and this is what defines the human being. As *pantoporos-aporos*, human beings venture forth in all directions and, in doing so, may achieve great success, and yet in all their ventures they come to nothing. Humans come to nothing, in one way, because they die, but more importantly, they come to nothing because in spite of their success they do not have an insight into their own essence (GA 53: 75/91–93). So far, this treatment of uncanniness does not go much beyond *Being and Time*, where Dasein is thrown down amongst beings and lost amidst them. But within this same discussion of uncanniness, Heidegger claims that the most extreme form of uncanniness is “homelessness,” a plight reserved for human beings and no others. He says that “unhomeliness is not at all one form of the uncanny among others but is essentially ‘beyond’ these, something the poet expresses in calling the human being that which is most uncanny” (GA 53: 77/94). He then goes on to claim that the human being is a “catastrophe,” “a reversal that turns them away from their own essence”; even in their homeliness, they forget Being, and then being homely becomes “an empty and errant wandering for them” (GA 53: 77/94).

This account marks a decisive shift away from the uncanniness of *Being and Time*. There he says that in anxiety, “Everyday familiarity collapses. Dasein has been individualized, but individualized as Being-in-the-world. Being-in enters into the existential ‘mode’ of the ‘not-at-home’. Nothing else is meant by our talk about ‘uncanniness’” (GA 2: 251/SZ 189). Thus, in *Being and Time*, uncanniness draws Dasein out of its empty and errant wandering whereas in his second reading of *Antigone*, uncanniness includes the catastrophic forgetting of Being. Here, human beings are a catastrophe precisely because they are uncanny.

It is tempting to cast the counterturning essence of the human being as consisting of both a positive and negative side, but for Heidegger this is a metaphysical temptation. Sophocles thought more deeply about the human being than we are able to today precisely because his thinking is not metaphysical. The inward counterturning of the human being is not a vacillation between positive and negative, good and bad, moral and immoral. Heidegger claims that the “un-” of the uncanny can be thought of as “evil,” so long as this sense of evil is not thought to be “morally bad.” He even says the idea that the human being is essentially a catastrophe is not pessimistic for catastrophic here does not mean disastrous. The counterturning is negative, but it is not lack, nor is it sin. It means that what “human beings attain in venturing forth is never sufficient to fulfill and sustain their essence” (GA 53: 84/103–4). The second of the oppositional pairs, which relates to the city (*hyppolis-apolis*), makes the same point as the first pair, but it does so with respect to a particular realm of being. It is a more particular claim, and it is one that speaks directly to the unhomeliness of human beings because the city is the historical home of human beings (GA 53: 87/107–9).

Heidegger describes the counterturning human essence in terms of the homely/unhomely in order to rethink that essence in non-metaphysical language. It is also language that captures the sense of not-being-at-home that is there in the German term *Unheimlichkeit*. The human being is both *unheimlich* (uncanny) and *unheimisch* (unhomely). The human being is a catastrophe because “human beings in their innermost essence are those who are unhomely” (GA 53: 90/111–13). But the real key to thinking about the human being in a non-metaphysical way is to show that this counterturning essence is not a duality, where one is either homely or unhomely. This is a problem that we also find in *Being and Time*, where Heidegger seems to suggest at times that Dasein is either authentic or inauthentic. Here, in his reading of Greek tragedy, it becomes clear that the counterturning within the human being is a conflictual relationship. “Becoming homely,” he writes, “makes manifest the essential ambiguity of being unhomely” (GA 53: 115/143–44).⁶

At the end of his second reading of *Antigone*, we find Heidegger focusing more and more on the character of Antigone herself. Doing so allows him to make a critical distinction between two kinds of unhomeliness. One is the same that we find in *Being and Time* an aimless wandering among beings. The second one he calls proper unhomeliness.⁷ Veronique Fóti claims that Heidegger sees here in Antigone an “ontological passion” over and against “earthly concerns and attachments.”⁸ Fóti views proper unhomeliness as an “estrangement from familiar patterns of world-construal” that “puts one at risk of losing one’s home in the *polis*.” The term “ontological passion” captures the sense in which Antigone wishes to be a sister and one who honors the gods, and she risks greatly in doing so. But Antigone’s concerns are in great measure earthly ones relating to family, honor, and the city, and the loss of home is necessary. Focusing on Antigone herself, and echoing what he said about daring in 1935, Heidegger claims that she is the “supreme uncanny” precisely because she risked becoming this proper (authentic) unhomeliness: “To be this risk is her essence” (GA 53: 117/146–47). What she shows us then is “a becoming homely in being unhomely,” a phrase that Heidegger affirms is the fulfillment of our potentiality for being (GA 53: 120/149–51).

Richard Capobianco emphasizes the sense in which the human being becomes homely in the second of Heidegger’s readings of *Antigone*. He rightly points out that while there is no sense in which the human being is at home in the first of the two *Antigone* readings, the human being does achieve a sense of home in the second one. He then connects this sense of being at home to the notion of “releasement” in Heidegger’s later writings, and to his own theory that, eventually, Heidegger’s view of Being was a kind of celebration that we see in the shining forth or gleaming of objects. Capobianco sees a progression in Heidegger’s thinking about the human being, from being essentially “unsettled” (his translation of *Unheimlichkeit*) in *The History of the Concept of Time* (1925), *Being and Time* (1927), and *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935), to a more nuanced and complex sense of homeliness that includes being not at home in Hölderlin’s *Hymn “The Ister”* (1942), to, ultimately, a “sanguine and

serene view of Dasein's 'return home' to Being" in the later works such as *Gelassenheit* (1955) and "Messkirch's Seventh Centennial" (1961).⁹ Capobianco's argument turns on Heidegger's unacknowledged reinterpretation of the last lines of the first choral ode, "May he who does such things never sit by my hearth or share my thoughts," which in the early reading (1935) says that the chorus, representing average everydayness, bears "contempt for the 'daring,' 'unsettled' one who upsets the familiar and customary."¹⁰ Focusing on the notion of the hearth, Capobianco points out that in the later reading, from 1942, the chorus is "pointing 'beyond' the human being's 'unsettledness' unto the *hearth* – unto Being, the 'place' where human beings primordially belong."¹¹ Noting Heidegger's claim that coming home requires a "passage through the foreign" (GA 53: 60/49), Capobianco calls this return home a "re-centring" of the self, back at home in Being, where one finds "*joy, calm, and rest* in meditatively wondering and marveling about its being in relation to Being, the temporal giving and flowing forth of all beings."¹² This shift toward home to which Capobianco calls our attention is extremely important, and he is the first to highlight it, but what should we make of Antigone's "becoming homely in being unhomely"? Heidegger calls Antigone the "supreme uncanny," emphasizing the risk she takes, and this does not seem to square with the meditative calmness of a re-centered self. Or perhaps it does, but only if that calmness reflects the composure of one who is sensitive to the ambiguity of unhomeliness and thus sensitive to the tragic alienation of human life. Heidegger's insistence that "proper" or "authentic unhomeliness" involves "becoming homely in being unhomely" indicates to me an acknowledgement of unhomeliness that is not forgetful and errant wandering, but which is also not a freedom from homelessness.

Distilling what has been said so far, we can say that the human being is a catastrophe because, whether in a proper and appropriate way or in an improper and inappropriate way, it is still unhomely. That unhomeliness can (improperly) involve aimless and errant wandering amidst beings, or, as in the case of Antigone, it can involve risk. To be properly unhomely is to risk an understanding of Being. Antigone

does so when she aims to *be* the sister of a fallen soldier. Heidegger insists that we cannot say what motivates Antigone. For both her and Sophocles, it goes “without name,” for it is “no mere human ordinance” and “yet it is something that pervasively attunes human beings as human beings” (GA 53: 116–17/144–47).¹⁵ Antigone knows what to do, not because she understands what is morally right or what she is obligated to do. Rather, what she knows takes the form of an intimation that comes, phronetically, from the heart (GA 53: 106–7/131–34). The play is a tragedy: Antigone commits suicide as does her fiancé and her aunt. But Heidegger saw proper unhomeliness in the risk she took, an unhomeliness that included a “belongingness to Being.”

III. CONCLUSION

Heidegger presents us with two alternatives: 1) aimless wandering amidst beings, and 2) a belongingness to Being, which in 1935 is a knowing (*technē*) that shatters against Being (*dikē*) and which in 1942 is an unhomeliness that, as we see in *Antigone*, ends in tragedy. This alternative is a catastrophic double bind because they both involve unhomeliness. Dennis Schmidt sees in Heidegger’s interpretations of *Antigone* the attempt to describe an originary ethics, one that goes beyond – or perhaps below – the categories of good and evil. In doing so, according to Schmidt, Heidegger grasps “an essential errancy at work in human life” as he attempts to understand “the nature which drives us into catastrophe.” Through the “profoundly solitary” figure of Antigone, Heidegger is trying to “think life radically.”¹⁴

We see this in what Heidegger says about moral calculation. Antigone’s actions cannot be considered moral. Heidegger makes a point of saying that it is a mistake to try to evaluate the human being using a “moral appraisal” (GA 40: 175/125). When this happens, the human being becomes a thing. “Such an appraisal,” he says, “posits the human being as something present at hand, deposits this thing into an empty space, and appraises it according to some table of values that is attached to it externally” (GA 40: 175/126). The essence of the human being is tragic because the human being is essentially homeless, lacking a site,

but that homelessness is not a kind of nihilistic emptiness. Heidegger contrasts the homelessness of uncanniness, which places the human being beyond the everyday world, with moral appraisals of the human being, which operate within the emptiness of values. For Heidegger, values belong to the register of calculative thinking, where one asks, “What is the best thing to do in this situation?” Antigone does not ask that question, nor does she appeal to a pre-existing set of standards that might help her make the decision to bury her brother. Rather, in Heidegger’s terms, she dares to venture into the un-said and un-thought, into a “place” that lacks familiar suggestions about how to act. To say that Antigone’s actions are moral would be to say that others ought to follow suit.

But no one would blame Antigone for obeying the law, especially in this case. It is not an unjust law to leave Polyneices’ body unburied. While it was bold, perhaps even arrogant, to leave the bodies of the enemy lying on the battlefield, it was not an entirely uncommon practice. Polyneices summoned an army and led them against his own city, so he was certainly an enemy. As Aristotle remarks in the *Poetics*, Creon is not an unjust ruler. He is committed to upholding the law during a time of great upheaval and uncertainty for Thebes. If Antigone had obeyed the law, she would be obeying a just law delivered by a just ruler. Her decision cannot be considered moral. But it can be considered heroic. Heidegger does not say much about the tragic hero, but he seems to view the human being that is described in the first choral ode as a heroic figure because the hero lives beyond morality. No one expects others to act as the hero does. The hero is a figure who defies moral categories and moral appraisals. Heidegger makes it possible for us to think of Antigone as a heroic figure, as a heroine, albeit a tragic one, and this was a mark of her humanity.

Did Heidegger think of himself in this way?¹⁵ Heinrich Wiegand Petzet recounts the story that in November of 1947 he told Heidegger a story about how he had been treated unfairly during the war. Then the lights went out, and Petzet writes, “For two hours or more we sat in total darkness and only heard each other’s voices.”¹⁶ Conversing in

total darkness, Heidegger opens up about how he was treated during the war: he was surrounded, he had difficulty publishing his writings, a seminar participant was a Gestapo agent. Petzet concludes that Heidegger was deeply wounded by how the university treated him, and then he says this: "Heidegger brought the conversation to an end in his inimitable way; he reached for a printed sheet and read to me his own translation of the great chorus song from Sophocles' *Antigone*. This is the song that deals with humanity and its destiny...When I departed two days later, Heidegger offered me the chorus song from *Antigone*, as a generous gift."¹⁷

NOTES

- 1 In reading the play, one will find numerous instances where things that should be unified are opposed to each other, or where things that should be opposed to each other are unified. For example, Polyneices and Eteocles are brothers and should be united, but they oppose and kill each other in battle. Polyneices is dead but left above ground. Antigone is alive but buried underground. It is the oppositional pairs in the first choral ode, however, that indicate to Heidegger the fundamental conflict defining the essence of the human being.

- 2 In this regard, Heidegger's reading of *Antigone*, and my own reading as well, differ markedly from that of many commentators. Heidegger sees Antigone herself as being conflicted. I view this conflict as arising from her commitments to her family, her city, and the gods. Many commentators view the play as a conflict between commitment to family and the law, or between the unwritten laws of the gods and the written laws of the state. Perhaps the most extreme view of this position is offered by Martha Nussbaum in the *Fragility of Goodness*, who writes: "I want to suggest that Antigone, like Creon, has engaged in a ruthless simplification of the world of value which effectively eliminates conflicting values" (63) and concludes that, "We have, then, two narrowly limited practical worlds, two strategies of avoidance and simplification" (66). Nussbaum accurately describes tragedy as the conflict between competing commitments, but she does not think that Antigone is facing this kind of conflict. Heidegger's reading of the play takes seriously the idea that the play is tragedy. For Nussbaum, it would not meet the requirement of being a tragedy. Moreover, Heidegger makes it possible to see Antigone as a heroine in a way that Nussbaum does not. I think it becomes clear that Antigone loves her city when, just before she goes to suffer her punishment, she says: "City of my fathers, Thebes! Gods of my people! They are taking me against my will. Look at me, O you lords of Thebes: I am the last remnant of kings. Look what these wretched men are doing to me, For my pure reverence" (42). See Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- 3 In the opposition between *technē* and *dikē*, Heidegger also finds a kind of unity. It is the *deinon* as "the overwhelming" (*dikē*) and the *deinon* as "the violence-doing" (*technē*) that "stand over against each other" (GA 40: 169/171). The unity of *deinon* is in conflict with itself, as the violence-doing shatters against the overwhelming. Here, though, what we see is that, "In the opposition between beings as a whole as overwhelming and the

human being as violence-doing Dasein, the possibility arises of plunging into what has no way out and has no site: perdition" (GA 40: 171/173). Perdition, eternal punishment and damnation, translates the German term *Verderb*. This perdition is not the result or outcome of the opposition between *technē* and *dikē*. Rather, "this perdition holds sway and lies in wait fundamentally in the opposition between the overwhelming and doing violence" (GA 40: 171/173).

- 4 It is often remarked that Heidegger's rhetoric in the course is polemical because of Heidegger's own complicity with violent Nazi extremism. It is also remarked that when he speaks of the "creative ones" he is referring to Hitler, himself and other remarkable but rare individuals who are capable of historical greatness. I do not doubt any of these interpretations, but in my judgment, the most immediate reference that Heidegger is making here is to Antigone herself, and it does make sense to talk about her in this way.
- 5 Citations of *Antigone*, when not from Heidegger's own translation, are by line number from the Meineck and Woodruff translation: Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Theban Plays*, trans. Peter Meineck and Paul Woodruff (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003).
- 6 In her account of the place of tragedy in Heidegger's thinking, Karen Gover explains how he is trying to use tragedy to overcome metaphysical thinking. In a remarkable passage, she also seems to support the idea that for Heidegger, the human being is a catastrophe, at least insofar as human knowing and insight always comes too late. She writes, "Too late: Creon arrives at Antigone's grave too late, Oedipus sees who he truly is too late, tragedy culminates in the hero's discovery of the meaning of his own actions – too late. Heidegger calls us latecomers with respect to our own history, and he writes out of a sense of *Not*, distress or emergency." See Karen Gover, "Tragedy and Metaphysics in

- Heidegger's "The Anaximander Fragment," *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 40: 1 (2009), 37–53, 49.
- 7 The term "proper" translates the German *eigentlich*, and one may wonder how much Heidegger intended for this sense of *eigentlich* to resonate with the *Eigentlichkeit* of *Being and Time*. Is he suggesting an authentic unhomeliness? In her article "Heidegger's Antigones," Claire Pearson Geiman employs the terms "authentic" and "inauthentic" to describe homeliness in this text. She sees in Heidegger's use of the term *technē* an almost necessary connection to totalitarianism. She writes, "the potential for violence and totalitarian politics belongs inextricably to the attempt to conceive human knowing through the working of *technē*" (162). She highlights the shift in Heidegger's two readings of Antigone from knowing as "violent production" to knowing as "phronetic intimation," but she does not see the latter form of knowing as a deepened understanding of *technē*. She sees it rather as a qualitatively different form of poetic knowing, one that is carried over into his account of releasement in the later works. To be sure, the earlier reading of Antigone is more violent, but Heidegger's understanding of *technē* comes from Aristotle, and for Aristotle the activity of *technē* is *poiesis*. As we see from "The Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger is searching for a deeper meaning of *technē* and *poiesis*, so that it is not simply a matter of making and producing, as Geiman claims, but rather of poetic knowing, as we find it in his second interpretation of *Antigone*. I think that there are interpretive possibilities within *technē* that Geiman does not account for. See "Heidegger's Antigones," in Richard Polt and Gregory Fried, eds., *A Companion to Heidegger's "Introduction to Metaphysics"* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).
- 8 See Véronique Foti, "Heidegger, Hölderlin and Sophoclean Tragedy," in James Risser, ed., *Heidegger Toward the Turn: Essays on the Work of the 1930s* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), 174.
- 9 See Richard Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2010), 69.

- 10 Capobianco, *Engaging*, 57.
- 11 Capobianco, *Engaging*, 62.
- 12 Capobianco, *Engaging*, 69.
- 13 Both William Richardson and William McNeill discuss this mysterious source that motivates Antigone's decision. Richardson leaves it a mystery, affirming that it is not a being. McNeill also leaves that source a mystery, but he thinks of it temporally because it is in terms of this original and mysterious source that Antigone comes to be who she is. See William Richardson, "Heidegger and the Strangeness of Being," in Richard Kearney and Kascha Semonovitch, eds., *Phenomenologies of the Stranger* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 155–67 and William McNeill, "A 'scarcely pondered word.' The Place of Tragedy: Heidegger, Aristotle, Sophocles," in Miguel de Beistegui and Simon Sparks, eds., *Philosophy and Tragedy* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2000), 169–89.
- 14 Dennis Schmidt, *On Germans and Other Greeks: Tragedy and Ethical Life* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 259.
- 15 Heidegger seemed to view Germany as being caught in the kind of double bind that Antigone herself is caught in. In the *Introduction to Metaphysics*, he says on a few occasions that Germany is "in the pincers," caught geographically in the middle of Europe and ideologically between Communism and Americanism. But there is another, more personal account, suggesting that Heidegger thought of himself through the lens of the Greek tragic hero and, in particular, Antigone.
- 16 See Heinrich Wiegand Petzet, *Encounters and Dialogues with Martin Heidegger* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 45.
- 17 Petzet, *Encounters*, 47.

“...And the Whole Music Box Repeats Eternally Its Tune”

Jessica S. Elkayam

I

Heidegger's 1937 reading of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* argues that two narrative episodes mysteriously correspond. In pursuit of this internal connection, one notices a particular emphasis on *awakening* the thought, and correspondingly the thinker, of eternal return.¹ Should we further pursue the emphasis on awakening, i.e., beyond the parameters of Heidegger's explicit Nietzsche "interpretation" or "confrontation" (*Auseinandersetzung*), we would discover a conceptual space in which Heidegger's own call to awaken betrays a certain intimacy with Nietzsche's. Curiously, this newly discovered space not only predates but also prefigures the *Auseinandersetzung* to come, as Heidegger himself cryptically insists.² My remarks in this paper will focus chiefly on this space, that is to say, on the masterful 1929–30 lecture course in which the awakening of a fundamental attunement takes center stage: *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*.

In order to specify precisely the scope and parameters of the present engagement with *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* – doubtlessly a difficult and complex lecture course whose treatment of finitude and ambiguity has a dizzying effect on the execution of its central argument(s) – I begin with a single claim: Heidegger's call to awaken a fundamental attunement should be read as analogous to the Nietzschean awakening of the thought of eternal return.

At first glance, such a claim may appear all too ambitious. Even if one granted the analogy between the theme of awakening in the thought of Nietzsche and Heidegger, does extension from the theme to the object(s) thereof have any justifiable basis? To these initial objections I offer a twofold response: first, if it were possible and even plausible to locate Nietzsche's thought of eternal return in Heidegger's exhortation to awaken a fundamental attunement, then the analogy would be more sound; and second, assuming a basic possibility and plausibility, the function of the analogy would be better secured by identifying a key text in *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* that strategically indicates a Nietzschean inspiration in Heidegger's call to awaken a fundamental attunement in his own name. And, while we cannot entirely circumvent the difficulty surrounding Heidegger's reticence as regards his interlocutors in the work of the late 1920s,³ when he transitions in §§17–18 from the positive characterization of attunement toward the question of precisely *which* attunement we are to awaken, Nietzsche comes explicitly and indisputably into play.

In this key text, Heidegger intriguingly passes from what I would argue are tacit invocations of Nietzsche to an *explicit* reference, the likes of which we do not see in his corpus until the lecture courses of the mid to late 1930s, which are delivered in Nietzsche's name but with rare exception remain marked by a certain critical distance.⁴ By contrast, here in *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, three consecutive pages are dedicated in large part to block quotations of Nietzsche's "final interpretation" of the opposition between the Dionysian and Apollonian – block quotations, not incidentally, from *Der Wille zur Macht*.⁵ This text of Nietzsche's, we know, is a posthumous collection of aphorisms from his considerably vast *Nachlaß*, but it is also one that Heidegger in *Fundamental Concepts* refers to as "decisive and major," and later, in the eponymous lecture courses, calls Nietzsche's *Hauptwerk* – his masterwork.⁶

Much may be gained by noting the structure of Heidegger's presentation. This striking series of block quotations, for which he offers uncharacteristically little interpretation, is secured in two principal

moves. First, Heidegger justifies their inclusion by linking analysis of the “contemporary situation” to the question of which attunement to awaken. Second, having furnished the link, he insists that all prior considerations of the contemporary situation by the four select philosophers of culture have a common source: in Nietzsche.⁷ Thus it is Nietzsche who indicates the place and source “where the confrontation proper [*eigentliche Auseinandersetzung*] must occur” if we are to decide which fundamental attunement to awaken (GA 29/30: 107/71).

Therefore, if it is interpretation of the contemporary situation that decides which attunement to awaken and Nietzsche lies at the source of all such interpretation, his thinking more than satisfies Heidegger’s condition of existentiell fidelity to the contingencies of the historical moment. To wit, the Nietzschean necessity that Zarathustra awaken and fully incorporate the thought of return so as to overcome nihilism, and the urgency of Heidegger’s call to awaken a fundamental attunement from out of which to decide the fate of the West, may have more in common than initially meets the eye.

This commonality of urgency, call, preparation, and decision is no coincidence. I argue (elsewhere and at length) that it results from Heidegger’s effort to fully digest the debt of gratitude his youthful thinking owes to a Nietzschean horizontality of time. To briefly recapitulate: it is the concept of horizon on sharpest display in, but not exclusive to, the second of Nietzsche’s *Untimely Meditations* that motivates the ekstatic temporality of Heidegger’s *Being and Time* to turn on what he calls the “enigmatic,” and I call the elliptical, movedness (*Bewegtheit*) of Dasein.⁸ This is to say that it is horizon that furnishes both the open expanse and the closure that are the conditions for the possibility of the travel and transport distinctive of Dasein’s temporality, i.e., of Dasein’s Being.

And yet a conceptual insufficiency with respect to horizon plagues the existential analytic. While certainly not unaware of the problem, Heidegger himself seems unsure as to how to deploy horizon, on the one hand, formally, i.e., in terms of the Kantian conditions of possibility that secure for phenomenological ontology its status as first philosophy (and

here some of the difficulties surrounding the Husserlian legacy show themselves); and, on the other hand, temporally-constitutively, i.e., in terms of what makes Dasein's particular way of Being – *existing* – possible.⁹ The complexities of inspiration and appropriation may have, in other words, kept Heidegger quiet about Nietzsche.

Regardless of how we read Heidegger's silence, however, by explicitly addressing this insufficiency in and through a consistent and programmatic pursuit of horizon *qua* temporal making possible, the thinking of the period immediately following the publication of *Being and Time* (to which *Fundamental Concepts* no doubt belongs), demonstrates a provocative tendency. Heidegger's intimacy with Nietzsche, far from waning, only intensifies. It is even arguable that Heidegger's interest in Nietzsche's final interpretation of the Dionysian/Apollonian opposition in its "most beautiful and decisive form" is inseparable from a conceptual stake in the (temporal) function of horizon. This is to say that for the Heidegger of *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, the "urge for unity" (*Drang zur Einheit*) expressed by the Dionysian, opposed to the "urge for complete-being-oneself" (*der Drang zur vollkommenen Für-sich-sein*) expressed by the Apollonian, in a peculiar way maps on to the temporalizing of the ekstases of Dasein's *Zeitlichkeit*. While the Apollonian is expressed by the ekstases themselves in their articulate individuality and as temporally productive of individuals, the Dionysian is expressed by the conditional stipulation that these individuals emerge *from out of a single unifying horizon* – a horizon not of lateral distances traversed and transgressed, but of depth. This is to say, at the root of the riddle of time may be a Dionysian source.

It is not, however, my intention to use the space of this paper to provide proof of Heidegger's renewed engagement with horizon and with making more precise the notion of its temporal function. Rather, I ask that you allow me a provisional and summative gesture meant to get at the crux of the problem. In its farthest or perhaps deepest range, horizon implies a robust notion of possibility that grants the coming into being of finite individuals who then negotiate their intrinsic duality *and* their relations with other such individuals across horizontal thresholds.

In other words, horizon has a double function: as *unifying*, it grants the very possibility of a manifest double, originarily binding a two into a third (as *one*); and as the (plastic) *between*, it regulates negotiation in all of its manifestations.¹⁰ If Heidegger's post-*Sein und Zeit* work on the concept of horizon can be said to evince a more profound intimacy with Nietzsche, and if the awakening of a fundamental attunement can be understood as analogous to the Nietzschean awakening of the thought of eternal return, then the task that remains is to locate and articulate the connection between such Nietzschean horizontality and the Heideggerian phenomenon of attunement. As we shall soon see, *in* the very phenomenon of attunement itself the force of the problem of horizon in its double function is demonstrable, and, with it, the extent to which Heidegger's thinking is inspired by Nietzsche.

II

In order to make plain that attunement is not simply one among many such demonstrable possibilities but rather one of a few axial phenomena around which thought-constellations specific to this period of Heidegger's thinking turn, one must acknowledge the methodological shift in Heidegger's thinking post-*Being and Time*. By the summer semester of 1929–30 Heidegger advanced from fundamental ontology through metontology, and finally to the full conception of metaphysics, characterized as such because it welcomes what was bracketed in *Being and Time*: those Nietzschean questions concerning “man” and “life.”

Consequently, once the exclusionary wall between Dasein and (human) life collapses, and with it the reliance of first philosophy on Aristotle's law of non-contradiction, metaphysics withdraws into what Heidegger calls “the obscurity of the essence of man” (GA 29/30: 10/7). If we are to sharpen our metaphysical questions against the whetstone of such withdrawal, it therefore becomes of the utmost necessity that we be gripped by (or in the grip of) a fundamental attunement. Owing to this necessity, attunement becomes the vehicle of the special methodology of *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, i.e., of the undertaking of

metaphysics properly conceived; attunement becomes (quite literally) fundamental to the advance of the metaphysical project as a whole.

And yet attunement, both at the level of whether we are attuned and at the level of precisely *how* we are attuned at any given moment, can neither be chosen nor willed. What is more, *fundamental* attunements, i.e., attunements of the type we are here tasked with awakening, are neither readily accessible nor commonly experienced. In fact, we must accede to the demand that a fundamental attunement be awakened precisely because of our primary tendency to be and to fall asleep: to forget. Acknowledging the vast and polyvalent plane that charts the concept of forgetting for both Nietzsche and Heidegger without opening it fully to examination, I would draw attention to the way in which forgetting is figuratively rendered for both thinkers in terms of sleep: that sleep that is necessary for survival, for function, for life – that sleep that we cannot do without but that is nevertheless *not* awake. Thus to a primordial forgetting that is rendered figuratively by sleep is opposed not remembering but awakening.¹¹

In *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, §6, Heidegger refers awakening contra forgetting to the concept of the “fundamental stance” (*Grundhaltung*) the attainment of which proves to be complicated. It is, however, no coincidence that Pierre Klossowski – arguably the best commentator on the pivotal role of forgetting in the experience of Nietzsche’s eternal recurrence – is in profound agreement with Heidegger: to the realization of the limit-experience, rare as it is profound, *Stimmung* is the key.¹² A “certain tonality of the soul” emplaces the human being who, if ready – i.e. vigilant, prepared, awake – can experience a sudden revelation, the opening of which is subject to near immediate closure.¹³ Thus the attunement that emplaces the human being into sudden revelation hearkens to the aperture of the *Augenblick*, the Moment, the finite glance of the eye.¹⁴ Anticipating, and perhaps even inspiring, Heidegger’s characterization of the awakening of a fundamental stance as revealed in the testimonial pain of a hangover, Nietzsche writes:

Rather as one divinely preoccupied [*Göttlich Zerstreuter*] and immersed in himself into whose ear the bell has just boomed with all its strength the twelve beats of noon suddenly awakens [*aufwacht*] and asks himself: “what really was that which just struck?” so we sometimes rub our ears afterward and ask, utterly surprised and disconcerted, “what really was that which we have just experienced?” and moreover: “who are we really?” and, afterward as aforesaid, count the twelve trembling bell-strokes of our experience, our life, our being – and alas! miscount them. – So we are necessarily strangers to ourselves, we do not understand ourselves [*wir verstehen uns nicht*], we have to misunderstand ourselves, for us the law “Each is furthest from himself!” [*Jeder ist sich selbst der Fernste*] applies to all eternity – we are not “men of knowledge” with respect to ourselves.¹⁵

Indeed, there is no better offer of sensuous imagery for Klossowski’s tonality, for the tuning in Heidegger’s attunement (or the *stimmen* in *Stimmung*) than the tolling of the bells, the striking of which transports (us) by seizure rather than by way of some voluntaristic will. Equally notable is Nietzsche’s use of the language of “dispersion” (*Zerstreuung*) to speak to the preoccupation of our self-immersion, our absorption in a present that without forgetting would not be possible, and from which, as though we had been sleeping, we occasionally and suddenly awaken.¹⁶

Nevertheless, the awakening Nietzsche describes in *On the Genealogy of Morals* and that Heidegger reprises in *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* is an awakening to the present moment that comes *after*, i.e. after the experience of (sudden) transport and removal – *ekstasis*, *Entrückung*. For a moment bewildered and uncomfortable, we ask after who we ourselves really are, but only while we are still reeling from that *basso profundo* of the depths from which we have only just returned. In our reeling we do not rightly know where we have been. We do not know “that which just struck.”

Upon waking the only things of which we may be certain are: first, that the person whom we identify as “we ourselves” had been transported elsewhere, removed unto an alternate locale; and second, whatever it is “we” saw and wherever it is “we” were – these phenomena, like attunement itself – defy capture by the logic of our waking sensibilities. In the present moment of the limit-experience, the experience that can only be articulated in plain and coherent language after the fact, our waking selves who bow to the law of logic and the rule of what is present-at-hand have gone to sleep. And yet as they drift off – already a metaphor of transport – something else or, perhaps better, *someone* else, awakens. This “other” awakens *within* transport to the depths, where the hour is midnight, where the boom of the bells is no jubilant sunny noontime refrain. Nietzsche calls such “transport” *Untergang*, or “down going,” and Heidegger, I would argue, insists this is underway as the selected attunement of boredom grows ever more profound.¹⁷

Once returned, the familiar “we” awaken as though from a nightmare, but the implicit suggestion is that only in the nightmare are *we*, the remote but true selves, in fact awake. Whether “we,” with Nietzsche, rub our ears in surprise or, with Heidegger, rub our temples from the hangover, our “awakening” after is only ever derivative, is *a posteriori* in the fullest sense. Thus the multiple valences of forgetting find analogues in those of awakening, and it is with a primordial awakening of our true selves *in* the moment of transport – as opposed to a derivative awakening after it – that we must concern ourselves. But the question remains: how do we wake the sleeping, particularly if we are at once the one who rouses and the one who sleeps?

While provocatively commensurate with Zarathustra’s need to awaken his sleeping “other” who, if left to sleep will choke on the black snake of nihilism, this problem more broadly serves to underscore the curious constitution of the human in Heidegger’s metaphysical schematic: human beings are creatures of the double, *at once* both there and yet not – i.e., *finite*.¹⁸ Furthermore, Heidegger’s insistence that awakening a fundamental attunement involves *both* making

wakeful and letting be wakeful – both assertion and relinquishment – evinces the oscillation between extremes he aligns with the “unrest” (*Unruhe*) of finitude. While this suggests that attunement uniquely attests to finitude, this is not all, for that which is sleeping is, in a peculiar way, absent and yet there. Awakening is thus the awakening of something that is already there (and yet not there...i.e., asleep), and thereby enacts the attestation to finitude in ways that mere remembering cannot.

However, just as Heidegger attempts to make this clear, he immediately forecloses the question of what sleep properly is “in order not to make the problem all too complicated here at the outset” (GA 29/30: 93/62). He instead stresses that a clarification of sleep or awakening *per se* is not the way. What we need, by contrast, and in anticipation of the much attended comparative analysis of Part Two, is a “fundamental conception of how a being must be structurally determined such that it can sleep or be awake” (GA 29/30: 93/62). Running through the main players of the comparative analysis to come, Heidegger demonstrates the force of the problem: a stone cannot sleep (nor can it therefore be awake), but the plant? Things are getting a little shaky there. Advancing a step in the traditional hierarchy of beings (according to medieval onto-theology), we are certain that the animal sleeps, but is its sleep the same as that of the human being? Emphasizing the need for a structural determination vis-à-vis the possibility of sleep and awakening, Heidegger concludes, “This problem is intimately bound up with the question concerning the structure of Being pertaining to these various kinds of beings: stone, plant, animal, man” (GA 29/30: 94/62).

Certainly modernity has mischaracterized sleep many times over. Yet in antiquity, Heidegger notes, its fundamental character has been grasped in a manner “much more elementary and immediate” (GA 29/30: 94/62). Aristotle, while also the author of the principle of non-contradiction to be shattered in its very foundations (GA 29/30: 91/61), has nevertheless noticed something remarkable in his treatise

on sleep: sleep is an *akinēsia*, a movement, alpha-privatively negated. Heidegger explains:

he says that sleep is a *desmos*, a being bound, a peculiar way in which *aesthesis* is bound.¹⁹ It is not only a way in which perception is bound, but also our essence, in that it cannot take in other beings which it itself is not. This characterization of sleep is more than an image [*Bild*], and opens up a broad perspective which has by no means been grasped in its metaphysical intent. (GA 29/30: 94/62–63)

Let us note simply that the binding here in question, the peculiar binding of perception and the binding of the human essence, seems to belie a negotiation between sleep and awakening, the metaphysical intent of which remains mysterious. Could this be because the binding of *one* self, the “waking” self for example when asleep, is the liberation of the *other* self, viz. Dasein? And conversely, when Dasein goes to sleep, i.e., is bound, does not the “waking” self regain the ability to move about? With the closing of one and the opening of the other, what is at stake here is a negotiation I would, after Nietzsche, call *horizontal*: one (or the other) may move this far (and not farther), for this long (and not longer), and so on. But there is more. Horizontal negotiation also means that a question is opened, a question that asks after *how* far, *how* long, and even *how* much, implying that the range of motion is – in spite of our utter lack of control over its distribution or dispensation – quantifiable. And, the extent to which one or the other (or in extremely rare cases both) of the selves who together comprise a singular human being is awake, resounds to the tune of this quantum. Thus does our mood, the unique and singular expression of our finitude, at any moment express the music of our personal spheres.

III

Indeed, this is precisely what Heidegger, drawing ever closer to Nietzsche and ever more carefully distancing attunement from the subjective phenomenon of emotion or feeling, expresses in the examples he selects to present. Programmatically following Heidegger, at this stage we venture beyond the limits of his extensive preliminary and privative analyses of attunement – thorough as they are to combat the profound entrenchment of the traditionally metaphysical conception of the human being – so as to accompany Heidegger on the first steps of his *positive* characterization.

Our first step is to note that the examples of attunement themselves – viz. grief and good humor – are opposites. In fact, they are opposites not far off from joy and woe, the extremes unified in tragic insight and celebrated by Zarathustra in their intrinsic connection throughout his journey of becoming. What is more, Heidegger speaks not of grief or cheerfulness *per se*, but of people who are attuned in these ways, people we – the listeners in the lecture hall – are hypothetically *with*. To be sure, this emphasizes that attunements are not present-at-hand psychological states, flashing and disappearing in the mental vacuum of the subject's mind, but it likewise stresses how attunements complicate the very notion of the interiority and exteriority of the self. They are at once felt uniquely and incommunicably by the one attuned, and felt “infectiously” by the others in her company.

In other words, attunements negotiate the horizons of already delimited “selves,” and furthermore have a role to play in the delimitation of those “selves” (as, for example, in the *Angst* through which the authentic self is individuated in *Being and Time*). Heidegger thus speaks of grief as making the grieving one whose company we share “inaccessible,” as though proximity to the death of one cherished enough to incite grief would narrow a horizon, force one into a space altogether *je meines*, a space that remains closed to those who do not grieve. That good humor that brings a lively atmosphere, by contrast, can broaden horizon so much so that collective enjoyment threatens the distinction between self and other – this is that festival spirit of Dionysus that so

fascinated Nietzsche. In either case, attunement is no mere emotional experience that is transmitted from one isolated ego to another as though a mood were an infectious germ – even though we speak in the common parlance of mood in these terms. Rather, Heidegger stipulates, moods are infectious because they are already there, determining us in advance, like “an atmosphere in which we first immerse ourselves in each case and which then attunes us through and through” (GA 29/30: 100/67).²⁰ Heidegger continues:

It is a matter of *seeing* and *saying* what is happening here... Attunements are ways of the being-there of *Da-sein* and thus ways of being-away [*Sie sind Weisen des Da-seins und damit solche des Weg-seins*]. An attunement is a way, not merely a form or a mode, but a way [*Weise*] – in the sense of a melody that does not merely hover over the so-called proper being at hand of man, but that sets the tone for such being, i.e. attunes and determines the manner and way [*Art und Wie*] of his being. (GA 29/30: 101/67)

The *way* of Being that is attunement is both a *how* (*Wie*) as opposed to a *what* (opting for *praxis* over the object speculation of theory), and a *Weise*, a “tune.” Accordingly we know this tune, this *Weise* that is both *how* and *refrain* from the third book of Nietzsche’s *Gay Science*, a central text in Heidegger’s later readings of, and lectures on, Nietzsche. In §109, foreshadowing the advent of the “thought of thoughts,” Nietzsche cautions us against treating the world as though it (too) were a living thing. He argues:

The astral order in which we live is an exception; this order and the relative duration that depends on it have again made possible an exception of exceptions: the formation of the organic. The total character of the world, however, is in all eternity chaos – in the sense not of a lack of necessity but of a lack of order, arrangement, form, beauty, wisdom, and whatever other names there

are for our aesthetic anthropomorphisms. Judged from the point of view of our reason, unsuccessful attempts are by all odds the rule, the exceptions are not the secret aim, and the whole music box repeats eternally its tune [*und das ganze Spielwerk wiederholt ewig seine Weise*]. . . .²¹

Recognizing that this tune is an image for the “thought of thoughts,” i.e. that it sonorously expresses recurrence and its differential principle of motion, then the two things that follow don’t strike us as the least bit surprising. First, attunement is not itself a particular being but the “fundamental way” (*Grundweise*) that Dasein is (as Dasein). Dasein is quite literally tuned; this is its way of Being, its *how* – its existence. Given due consideration of Heidegger’s later argument in the 1937 lecture course *The Eternal Return of the Same* (GA 6.1), that eternal recurrence is precisely the how, the way, the manner, the *existentia* of Nietzsche’s fundamental metaphysical position, this first positive characterization is quite striking. Second, once we acknowledge that in the third book of *The Gay Science* Nietzsche offers a metaphor for eternal recurrence in the *ganze Spielwerk* that repeats eternally its *Weise*, its “tune,” we are poised to grasp the alignment of the tuning of attunement and eternal recurrence, sonorously expressed. For if attunements transport and in so doing horizontally negotiate – i.e. resound to a particular tone – then *fundamental* attunements may intimate or gesture toward that *ganze Spielwerk* from which they issue. They may, for the vigilant and awake, gesture toward the constitutive possibility that is the *Abgrund*, or deep horizon, of the human being. Thus Heidegger concludes, and with him so shall we:

attunement is not something inconstant, fleeting, merely subjective. Rather because attunement is the originary way [*ursprüngliche Wie*] in which every Dasein is as it is, it is not what is most inconstant, *but that which gives Dasein its subsistence and possibility in its very ground*. (GA 29/30: 101/67; em)

NOTES

- 1 The two episodes issue from Part Three of *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, but are separated by several sections: the first (“The Convalescent”) is the episode that indicates that Zarathustra has not yet incorporated the thought of eternal return; Zarathustra awakes from the shock of his newly commenced downgoing to discover that beside him in bed lies a sluggish worm, or the thought of return projected and incarnated as a figure to be awakened and incorporated. The second, and that to which the first episode corresponds (“On the Vision and the Riddle”), indicates what would happen should Zarathustra awaken the thought of return: a full confrontation with the black snake of nihilism, with the experience of choking and the necessity of the decisive bite. In this instance it is not the thought itself that must be awakened, but the one who is choking – the thinker who, having fallen asleep and had the snake crawl down his gullet, must somehow rouse himself to bite. See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, in Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, eds., *Kritische Studienausgabe* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1993), henceforth “KSA,” vol. 4: 270–77, 197–202. English translation: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Viking Penguin, 1982), 327–33, 267–72.
- 2 That Heidegger was already considering an *Auseinandersetzung* with Nietzsche in the summer of 1930 is in itself astonishing. But that he was already considering it in light of the philosophy of culture’s diagnosis of the decline of the West that would somehow involve a return to life (whether by rejecting spirit or by balancing it with life), i.e., that he was considering it in terms of Nietzsche’s prognosis that nihilism was inevitable, is an even more powerful suggestion that the seed of Heidegger’s mature reflections on Nietzsche (and perhaps more) first germinates here in *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*.
- 3 For example, it is widely considered to be the case that Nietzsche is something of a secret source and resource for the temporal

structuration of the existential analytic of Dasein in Heidegger's *Being and Time*, and yet his name is only explicitly mentioned twice: in §53 and §76. One is a reference to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and the other to the second of his *Untimely Meditations*. Taken in isolation, each of these references give precious little to the inquisitive reader to consider, but when taken together as their temporal co-implication would appear to demand: §53 freedom for death: *future*; §76 historicity: *having-been*, it becomes clear that Nietzsche has thoroughly inspired Heidegger *in spite of* the near lack of direct acknowledgment in prose.

- 4 In the expanded space of my dissertation I argue at length that Nietzsche inflects, in turn, each of the three fundamentally metaphysical questions, viz. those that ask after: world, finitude, and solitude.
- 5 Cf. *Der Wille zur Macht*, ed. Peter Gast and Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1996), 659–88. English translation: *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann & R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, 1968), 520–43.
- 6 To be sure, Heidegger argues that Nietzsche knew the Dionysian/Apollonian distinction sustained and guided his philosophizing from early on – and with this he is likely referring to Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. But this is not all. Nietzsche also knew, Heidegger insists, that the opposition became transformed in his philosophizing; in fact Nietzsche furthermore knew (the third time Heidegger uses the same formulation in the span of just a few sentences) that “Only whoever transforms himself is related to me” (quoted by Heidegger: GA 29/30: 108/702). Thus it is with the transformed conception of the opposition that Heidegger is here most concerned. On masterwork, cf. the 1936 lecture course *The Will to Power as Art*, §2, GA 6.1: 5–9/N1: 7–11.
- 7 I.e., Spengler, Klages, Scheler, and Ziegler. Cf. GA 29/30, §18a.
- 8 In *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, Nietzsche describes horizon as a dynamic threshold that negotiates what, and how much, may be incorporated and forgotten before an

individual, a culture, or a species falls ill – potentially fatally ill. The mysterious negotiation pertains, of course, to the past. The question becomes: how much past, that is, how much remembering as invocation and preservation of the past, is conducive to health when forgetting is essential, Nietzsche argues, to both action and to life?⁹ To remember to too great a degree, to take in too great a dose of history, is comparable to being forcibly deprived of sleep, that necessary darkness that brings respite from illumination and in which everything organic properly gestates. KSA 1: 250. English translation: *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 62. The pursuit of this dynamic threshold, culminates in Nietzsche's statement of a universal law: "a living thing can be healthy, strong, and productive only within a horizon; if it is unable to draw a horizon around itself...it will feebly waste away or hasten to a timely decline." KSA 1: 251, *Untimely*, 63, tm. When considered in light of Dasein's "stretching along" (*Erstreckung*) in *Being and Time* §72, and the extent to which Dasein must incorporate birth, death, and the between as the temporal stretch that it is should it succeed in the historical self-retrieval and "eventual" appropriation that determines it as authentic, these Nietzschean considerations of horizon seem not only less alien to the logic of Dasein's temporality but altogether indispensable to it.

- 9 Consider, for example, §7 of the second "Introduction" to *Being and Time* in which philosophy is characterized as "universal phenomenological ontology," as the "science of the Being of entities." Therein, Being itself is emphatically characterized as "*the transcendens pure and simple*," and every disclosure thereof as "*transcendental knowledge*," such that "*phenomenological truth (the disclosedness of Being) is veritas transcendentalis*" (GA 2: 51/sz 62).
- 10 It would be fascinating to explore in greater depth the connection between this double function of horizon and the Dionysian/Apolonian opposition in which Heidegger is so interested in GA 29/30,

§18b. He explores it precisely in terms of the tension between unity and individuation, such that the granting of possibility would belong to the Dionysian component, and the negotiation of distinction, i.e., the limning of individuals by horizontally governing the between, would belong to the Apollonian. (Hence the *plasticity* of horizontal negotiation as opposed to something like the more rigid or static exchange across boundaries). Thus, posing the question as to whether for Heidegger there is a Dionysian source for the riddle of time is a way of asking after the unifying horizon of time's manifold appearances and manifestations.

- 11 Without fully opening the Pandora's Box relative to the thematic of forgetting in *Being and Time*, it suffices to say that in the discussion of the temporality of "understanding" (*Verstehen*) and, correspondingly, of "situatedness" (*Befindlichkeit*) in §68 a) and b), forgetting plays a pivotal role. When understanding (futurally) is determined as authentic, the having-been which corresponds thereto is in the mode of "retrieval" (*Wiederholung*). However, when understanding is determined as inauthentic, i.e. when possibles are projected so as to make the objects of concern present, the having-been that corresponds to it is "forgetting" (*Vergessen*). Heidegger stipulates that this forgetting is not nothing, "nor is it a failure to remember; it is rather a 'positive' ekstatic mode of one's having been...[the ekstasis (rapture) of which] has the character of backing away in the face of one's ownmost 'been'... in a manner which is closed off from itself" (GA 2: 448/sz 339). We do well to note the analogue in the first section of the "Second Essay" of Nietzsche's *On The Genealogy of Morals*: "Forgetting [*Vergesslichkeit*] is no mere *vis inertiae* as the superficial imagine; it is rather an active and in the strictest sense positive faculty of repression, that is responsible for the fact that what we experience and absorb enters our consciousness as little while we are digesting it (one might call the process 'inpsychation') as does the thousandfold process, involved in physical nourishment – so-called 'incorporation'. To close the doors and windows of consciousness

for a time; to remain undisturbed by the noise and struggle of our underworld of utility organs working with and against one another; a little quietness, a little *tabula rasa* of the consciousness, to make room for new things...that is the purpose of active forgetfulness, which is like a doorkeeper, a preserver of psychic order, repose, and etiquette: so that it will be immediately obvious how there could be no happiness, no cheerfulness, no hope, no pride, no present [*Gegenwart*], without forgetfulness.” KSA 5: 291–92. English translation: *On The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale and Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1967), 57–58, em.

Having juxtaposed Nietzsche to Heidegger, we are left to wonder what repression is, if not the (inevitable) backing away in the face of that which is closest – perhaps too close – i.e., one’s ownmost “been,” or, to put a Nietzschean spin on it, that “it was” that “gives conflict, suffering, and satiety access to man so as to remind him what his existence [*sein Dasein*] fundamentally is – an imperfect tense that can never become a perfect one.” KSA 1: 249, *Untimely*, 61. Furthermore, should we take the positive characterization of forgetting seriously – for both Nietzsche and Heidegger – we would conclude that it is only on the basis of the rapture pertaining to forgetting, i.e. only on the basis of the sudden transport away from ourselves – away from our having been, our having undergone the tragic contingency of our thrownness such that we may function (with a little quietness) in the world of our concern, in the present – that anything like ‘remembering’ is possible. And it is only against the backdrop of the remembering enabled by primordial forgetting that “forgetting” in the quotational and purely derivative sense emerges. To be sure, these passages in *Being and Time* and in Nietzsche’s *Genealogy* extend – to use Jacques Taminiaux’s expression – to a plane that stretches *ad infinitum*. Consider the following: first, the “forgottenness of Being” (*Seinsvergessenheit*) that comes to play a central role in Heidegger’s diagnosis of the legacy of metaphysics

in the late 1930s and beyond; and second, as in Nietzsche's "On Truth and Lie in an Extramoral Sense," for example, the extent to which our entire relationship with language and truth is based upon our having forgotten that words are metaphors, insufficient to capture that *of* which they are metaphors. Above all, the parenthetical recollection of this infinite plane, while acknowledging that we could never speak to the whole of the problem it invokes, is to emphasize that the counterpoint to primordial forgetting is rarely remembering, but *awakening*. This counterposition thus implies that primordial forgetting, the forgetting that for Heidegger entrances us and, that for Nietzsche heals us, is akin to a kind of sleep.

- 12 Cf. Chapter Three in *Nietzsche et le Cercle Vicieux* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1969). English translation: *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).
- 13 By "emplacement" I mean to refer to the connection between *Befindlichkeit* (situatedness), *sich befinden* (finding oneself), and *Stimmung* (attunement).
- 14 There is no better commentator on this point than William McNeill, who dedicates an entire book to its relation to the *kairos* – the opportune moment for decisive action in Aristotle (and eventually in the Christian temporality of grace) – whose importance cannot be emphasized enough. See *The Glance of the Eye: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the Ends of Theory* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999). Heidegger's focus in *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* on the confrontational thinking that is decisive for action cannot be divorced from his understanding of the *Augenblick* and the thereby form of the *ekstasis* of the present.
- 15 KSA 5: 247–48, *Genealogy*, 15, tm.
- 16 Cf. the first section of the "Second Essay" of the *Genealogy*, KSA: 5 291–92/57–58), quoted above in note 11.
- 17 See for example, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, §§19 and 20, in which Heidegger characterizes a certain species of boredom

as deadly; in §24 he then reprises this theme in analysis of the third, and most profound form, of boredom. These examples are consistent with a conception of “down going” (*Untergang*) as accession to death, de-actualization unto possibility, or being-towards-death authentically determined.

- 18 Cf. Derrida, *L'animal que donc je suis* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2006). English translation: *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008). There, on the heels of a masterful reading of the connection between the problem of world (as seen through a threefold lens: of history in the 1928 “On the Essence of Ground,” of our everyday being-in-the-world in *Being and Time*, and of the human being characterized as “world-forming” [*Welt-bilden*]) and the problem of animality, that is to say, the problem of living versus existing and thus the problem of the animality of the human, Derrida calls for our continued interest in “the question of the animality of Dasein, which Heidegger naturally leaves aside or in suspense – I would say from one end to the other of his life and thinking.” He continues, and I quote this passage at length: “I would have liked [had there been more time in the day’s seminar session] to comment on the moments of vertigo and circularity in this text. That’s what would take time: taking an interest in the difficult moments, admitted to and made explicit by Heidegger, regarding what he calls the circularity of his manner of proceeding, the vertigo – and he insists a lot on that word (*Schwindel*): turning round and round. He notices that these comparative considerations are caught in a circle, and that circle makes one dizzy. He insists a lot on this dizziness, which, he says, is *unheimlich*: ‘Schwindel ist unheimlich.’ And there are many moments in the text, which I would have liked to point out, where one’s head spins and where Heidegger confesses that the vertigo is *unheimlich* but that it is necessary. This vertigo is that of an interrogation into the animal, and finally, it’s the concept

- of world itself that becomes problematic and fragile” (Derrida, *Animal*, 155).
- 19 It is worth noting that Derrida was also drawn to this intriguing citation, and quoted it at length. But at this point in the quotation, Derrida opens one of his famed parentheses and inserts: “[the question of binding is going to come back regularly, the stricture also, and subjection by means of the animal’s narrowing (*reserrement*) – I am anticipating enormously in saying this – the animal is finally, in comparison to man, simply caught in tighter networks of constraint, ‘a ring,’ Heidegger will say, tighter rings; it is a problematic binding].” Derrida, *Animal*, 149.
- 20 An explicit reflection on the repetition of “atmosphere” in a context so attuned to the concept of horizon as it finds expression in Nietzsche’s second “Untimely Meditation” would, I think, make an interesting contribution to the argument here. Nietzsche there characterizes the unhistorical as an “atmosphere,” as a vaporous cloud in which we are immersed, which we breathe (a primordial negotiation of horizons that goes both in and out, no less), and that enables us to live. The question of attunement and the *unhistorical* as the giving of possibility, as Heidegger will soon claim of the former and Nietzsche argues of the latter, is something I hope to take up as future work.
- 21 KSA 3: 468, English translation: *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1974), 68. The pronouncement concerning world as “chaos” is taken up by Heidegger in the 1939 lecture course *The Will to Power as Knowledge* (§§10–13) such that chaos as world becomes the “truly actual” harmony that weds – no matter how hidden – to truth as *homoiōsis*. It is also worth noting that Heidegger takes Nietzsche’s pronouncement as to the character of the *world* to hold to beings as a whole (consistent with the Heideggerian definition of “world”), thus making the Nietzschean conception thoroughly metaphysical in its deciding for the predominance of beings (the bodying forth of life, in this case) over being. GA 6.1: 493–519/N3: 64–89.

Heidegger and the Poetics of Time

Rebecca A. Longtin

Heidegger's engagement with the poet Friedrich Hölderlin often dwells on the issue of temporality. In his *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, Heidegger calls Hölderlin "the one who *poetized the furthest ahead*" and contrasts him with his contemporaries, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, who attempted to understand all of history in absolute terms (GA 94: 204/143). Similarly, in Heidegger's 1934–35 Freiburg lecture course on Hölderlin's hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine," he calls Hölderlin the "most futural thinker [*zukünftigster Denker*]" (GA 39: 5/5). For Heidegger, Hölderlin is the furthest ahead of thinkers – a poet who opens new possibilities for the present. The *Beiträge* raise the question, "To what extent does the poet Hölderlin, who has already gone ahead of us, become *now* our necessity, in his most unique poetic experience and work?" (GA 94: 353/247). The futural saying of Hölderlin's poetry makes him necessary for us *now*, and in this sense he belongs to the *present* time, a "destitute time." Yet Hölderlin also speaks to us from the past. At the time Heidegger wrote the *Beiträge*, the poet had been dead for nearly a century, and his poetry was fairly obscure during his own time. It is for this reason Heidegger states that we must *wrest* Hölderlin's poetry "from being buried" by the past (GA 94: 204/142–43). Heidegger thus frames the poet in the intersection of past, present, and future. Yet Hölderlin's relevance for Heidegger's thinking of temporality goes deeper than these formulations. Namely, Heidegger describes Hölderlin as being able to *poetize* time.

The purpose of this paper is to examine what it means to *poetize time* and situate this poetic temporality in the context of Heidegger's thinking of time. In doing so, I will attempt to show that thinking about time is essentially a *poetic* task, and one that Hölderlin understands as

his poetic vocation. To unravel this poetics of time, I will first lay out Heidegger's thinking of time in relation to Husserl's concept of internal time consciousness – and Derrida's critique of it – to explain the strange interface between presence and non-presence that characterizes temporality (section I). Whereas Husserl's concept of time is musical, I will suggest that Heidegger's is essentially poetic. I will then address Heidegger's poetic time in relation to the *Es gibt*, i.e. the sending of time from a groundless and indeterminate source (section II). Both these elements, the interplay of presence and non-presence (I) and the sending of time (II), are central to Hölderlin poetry. Lastly, I will address how Hölderlin poetizes in order to describe the sense of poetic time that resounds in his use of language (III). In doing so, I hope to unearth why Heidegger found this poet to be so necessary for his thought.

I. THE CHALLENGE OF THINKING TIME

First we must consider the challenge of thinking time. The common sense notion of time, which Heidegger calls “vulgar time” and I will call the “naïve concept of time,” envisions temporality as a constant stream of now-moments, or “a succession of nows that come into being and pass away” (GA 2: 558–59/SZ 423). This sense of time seems self-evident but falls apart as soon as we question it further. With the naïve concept of time, only the present is real. The past is dead, no longer actual, and becomes a mere memory. The future is at worst a mere imaginary projection into the unknown and at best a possibility that has not yet been realized, but either way is not actual and thus also not real. Each now becomes a singular moment. As a result, it is not clear how the present relates to past or future if neither is real. By making only the present real, this concept of time undermines temporality as the interrelation of past, present, and future. Moreover, insisting on this stream of nows is thoroughly contradictory because it must be understood as uninterrupted and without gaps, which makes the timeline infinitely divisible like a geometrical line (GA 2: 559/SZ 423). Yet if time is an infinitely divisible line, then the “now” has no duration, so how can a stream of now-moments have any continuity? The now

clearly *cannot* be just *now*. Heidegger explains, “Every last now, *as a now*, is always *already* a right-away that is no longer, thus it is time in the sense of the no-longer-now, of the past. Every first now is always a just-now-not-yet, thus it is time in the sense of the not-yet-now, the ‘future’” (GA 2: 560/SZ 424). Questioning this naïve concept of time shows its contradictions – i.e. the now is never just *now* – and leads us to Husserl’s thinking of time.

Husserl describes the structure of time as a continual interplay between past, present, and future. Instead of a constant stream of now-moments, time is like a melody. To hear a melody, a note cannot be a singular instant or I would never be able to detect the movement from one note to another. To hear melody, I must hear this note in relation to the previous one, but I do not need to use my memory to recall the prior note. Similarly, I anticipate future notes in a melody. Music continually plays with our anticipations or we would not be able to detect patterns, like scales or the resolving of a dissonance. In this sense, the tonal moment cannot be an isolated now. How would we even isolate this “now” of the tone – is it a millisecond, a nanosecond, when the finger first touches the string, or when the string vibrates in response? We cannot divide time this way.

Instead, Husserl explains the nature of the present in terms of retentions (the just-past) and protentions (the almost-future). Husserl states that a “now-phase is conceivable only as the limit of a continuity of retentions.”¹ A retention is a moment that has just passed – not a memory that needs to be recalled from the past – and so it remains tied to the now-apprehension. This means the now is not an isolated moment but instead a limit that Husserl describes as “the head attached to the comet’s tail of retentions.”² The now-apprehension also anticipates the future that is just about to happen, which Husserl calls “protention.” Instead of a stream of isolated now moments, the present must bring together past and future.

Compare Figure 1, the naïve concept of time as stream of now-moments with Figure 2, Husserl’s internal time consciousness. In Figure 1, now-moments lack duration and it is unclear how they form a continuum. The past is dead. The future is an imaginary projection. Only the present is real. In Figure 2, the line A, B, C, and D represents the

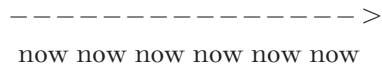


FIGURE 1. Naïve concept of time as stream of now-moments.

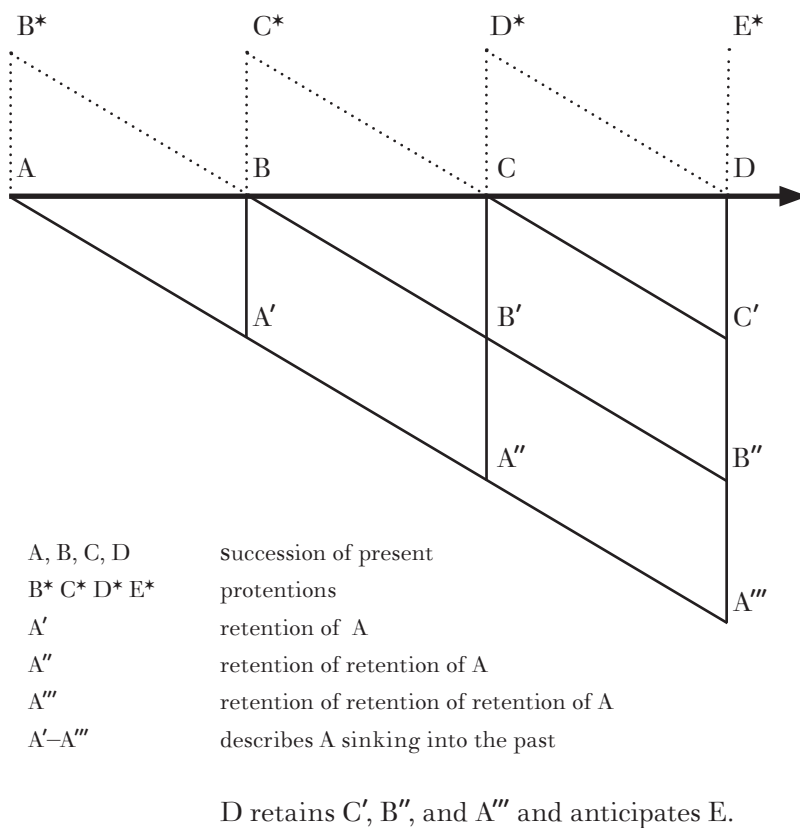


FIGURE 2. Husserl's internal time consciousness (an edited and expanded version of his diagrams).

succession of the present, or primal impressions. From point A to point B, A becomes a retention rather than a primal impression. When B is the primal impression, A is a retention and C is a protention. Moving to C, B becomes a retention, and A becomes a retention of the retention of A. With each successive moment, A retains its previous retention and thus fades away into the past.

Husserl's account of time, however, overlooks the problem of the now-moment. Even though the now-moment is not isolated in his account, he still has to treat it as a limit. How do we talk about a primal impression, except as a limit? Derrida discusses the implications of this limit in *Speech and Phenomena*. As Derrida notes, in *Ideas I* Husserl privileges the present insofar as every experience "is an experience according to the mode of 'being present'... as *being* certain and present."⁵ Derrida states that this sense of presence, or *self-presence*, "must be produced in the present taken as a now."⁴ But in Husserl's internal time consciousness lectures there is no "now" in this sense. Since the "now" is a comet with a tail of retentions and protentions, there is *no certain and present now*. Rather, the now always includes, by necessity, a not-now. As Derrida points out:

As soon as we admit this continuity of the now and the not-now, perception and nonperception, in the zone of primordially common to primordial impression and primordial retention, we admit the other into the self-identity of the *Augenblick*; nonpresence and nonexistence are admitted into the blink of the instant. There is a duration to the blink, and it closes the eye. This alterity is in fact the condition for presence, presentation, and thus for *Vorstellung* in general....⁵

In other words, presence necessarily involves nonpresence and otherness – which means there is no pure presence. *Différance* is at the center of the now-moment. Thus while Husserl's musical sense of time challenges the naïve notion of time, he fails to recognize its meaning for presence. Presence remains mysterious, not clear or certain, by

necessity. Understanding time is a task that must recognize the radical non-presence of the present, or the concealment that always remains, which is an essential task for poiesis. This appears to be Heidegger's sense of time after the *Kehre*.

II. THE KEHRE AND THE RADICAL NON-PRESENCE OF THE PRESENT

In contrast to Husserl, Heidegger's discussions of time – especially in his lectures on Hölderlin's poetry – present a more radical reworking of temporality, one that is poetic rather than musical. It may seem at first that Heidegger's *Being and Time* merely adopts Husserl's interweaving of past, present, and future and applies it to Dasein, who is stretched between birth and death. But *Being and Time* should not be understood in a Husserlian framework because (1) Heidegger does not locate temporality in consciousness, and (2) *Being and Time* emphasizes the futural in a way that goes far beyond Husserl's notion of protention.⁶ Husserl's internal time consciousness replicates some of the qualities of the naïve concept of time, the flow from past to present to future, whereas Heidegger sees time as coming from the future, not the past. For Heidegger, “The future is *not later* than the having-been, and the having-been is *not earlier* than the present. Temporality temporalizes itself as a future that makes present, in the process of having-been” (GA 2: 463/SZ 350). The future is the origin of time, the source from which the present is made present as a past process, the future perfect tense, the *will have been* that enfolds all dimensions of temporality.

Moreover, *Being and Time* already anticipates one of Heidegger's most radical moves in the thinking of time, the *Kehre*, which was supposed to happen in the infamous missing section “Time and Being.” *Being and Time* is incomplete and, more importantly, is only a preparation for the fundamental ontology that he hoped would work out “the central range of problems of all ontology as rooted in the phenomenon of time” (GA 2: 25/SZ 18).⁷ The unpublished section of *Being and Time*, “Time and Being,” was meant to develop this fundamental ontology of time through a reversal (*Kehre*) that would explicate being *from the standpoint of time*; however, Heidegger claimed that he could not

publish it due to his inability to articulate these ideas in any intelligible way.⁸ The end of the second division anticipates this reversal from *Being and Time* to “Time and Being,” the move to fundamental ontology, which Heidegger describes in a marginal note as an “overcoming of the horizon as such. The return into the source. The presencing out of this source.”⁹ We can gather more about this reversal from Heidegger’s later writings, which emphasize the withdrawal of this source of presencing.

In “A Letter on ‘Humanism’” (1946) Heidegger emphasizes the reversal as arriving “at the locality of that dimension out of which *Being and Time* is experienced, that is to say, experienced in the fundamental experience of the oblivion of being” (GA 9: 328/250). The turn after the preliminary analyses of Dasein directs us toward a more fundamental experience of being, one of oblivion – or as Heidegger later notes, an experience of *withdrawal*. Withdrawal is neither presence nor absence, but the trace of what was present as it returns to its origin from whence it was sent. As Richardson notes, the *Kehre* is distinguished from Heidegger’s earlier explanations of time by the “mittence of Being,” the *sending* of being.¹⁰ This sending becomes clearer in Heidegger’s eventual writing and publishing of “Time and Being” (1962), where he discusses time in terms of *Es gibt* (*there is*, or literally translated *it gives*).¹¹

In “Time and Being,” Heidegger explains that *Es gibt* is the only way we can speak about the essence of being and time. *Es gibt* is the groundless ground of both being and time because it is the most fundamental idea that we can have. We can say “there is being” and “there is time” – even if we can say nothing more. *Es gibt* sets a limit for thought, since what is given comes from a nameless and identity-less “it.” *It* gives, but we have no sense of what this *it* is. Heidegger explains that the “it” in “it gives” is completely undetermined – it is not an object or a subject (GA 14: 22–23/17–18). What is given comes from a source that we cannot discern. Time and being are characterized by a giving or a *sending* – they are gifts from an unknown and undetermined source (GA 14: 10/6). There is no determinate origin of time and being. Time has a hidden source that makes what is present deeply ambiguous. The *Es* of *Es gibt* is a radical non-presence that underlies all presence.

To think time in this way, Heidegger turns to Hölderlin, a poet who recognizes this very sense of time: namely, *time as it is sent* which makes the “now” a strange interweaving of presence and non-presence.¹² It is in Heidegger’s engagement with Hölderlin that he develops a “poetic time” that can overcome the naïve concept of time.

III. HÖLDERLIN AND THE TASK OF POETIZING TIME

Since this paper is far too brief to do justice to the many ways Heidegger addresses Hölderlin’s poetizing of time, especially insofar as temporality is thematic in many of his lecture courses and essays on the poet, I will have to summarize only a few of these very rich and suggestive passages. I will focus on two aspects of Hölderlin’s poetic time: (A) the poetic ‘now’ as ambiguous and mysterious, and (B) the rhythm of his poetry insofar as it reflects the relational dynamics of temporality.

A. THE POETIC NOW

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger explains that the vulgar, or naïve, sense of time levels the dimensions of temporality in order to reduce it to “datability” and treat it as though it were something we can measure. Yet if time is temporalized from the future and not the past, it is neither datable nor measurable. Heidegger expands on this sense of time in his lecture on Hölderlin’s “The Ister,” where he contrasts *poetic time* with calculative approaches to time. Heidegger focuses on the first few lines of the poem, “Now come, fire! / Eager are we / To see the day” (*Jetzt komme, Feuer! / Begierig sind wir / Zu schauen den Tag*) (GA 53: 3/2). The poet calls to the fire, but not in the sense of commanding it. Instead, as Heidegger explains, this is a call for the “coming fire to make visible the day” (GA 53: 6/7). The poet calls to what is looming ahead, what is already on its way. What kind of ‘now’ belongs to this calling? Heidegger describes this ‘now’ as “a star that has suddenly risen and that shines over everything” because of its strong and singular intonation (GA 53: 8/8). This ‘now’ resounds, and moreover, “names the time

of calling of those who are of a calling, a time of the poets" (GA 53: 8/8). For Heidegger, this 'now' is *a time that calls upon poets to poetize* – it is a *poetic time*. He asks, "How can poetizing determine a time, lend distinction to a 'now'?" (GA 53: 8/8). Poetizing, as *dichten* (from the Latin *dictare*) means "to tell something that, prior to this, has not yet been told" (GA 53: 8/8). To poetize is to bring forward a unique beginning, a temporality that "cannot be established in accordance with the calendar" or "dated" (GA 53: 8/8).

This poetic 'now' is not a moment of pure presence, nor something we can determine in advance. Heidegger tells us that poetic time is "different in each case, in accordance with the essential nature of the poetry and the poets" (GA 53: 9/8). Each poet poetizes time anew, poetizes as if for the first time. Heidegger sees this sense of a new and singular beginning as being particularly true of Hölderlin's poetry. For Heidegger, "the 'Now come' appears to speak from a present into the future. And yet... it speaks into what has already happened... something has already been decided," which he describes as an event of appropriation (*Ereignis*) (GA 53: 9/9). The poet calls what has already been decided, what will be made present by the future. The present is fulfilled by the future and past, a relational dynamic that elicits wonder, not calculation.

Heidegger situates Hölderlin as someone who can poetize temporality in an age that only cares to calculate and manage it. As Heidegger explains, "the modern era gives rise to the calculation of flux" (GA 53: 41/49). Time becomes another dimension added to space and, as a dimension, is thoroughly calculable (GA 53: 41/49–50). We measure time for specific ends and uses. Clocks help us to keep track of time and can measure our productivity. Calendars allow for planning. Its calculability imposes an order that is so useful it becomes unquestionable. In the end, this clarity of calculation means that we no longer feel the need to think about time. This calculative approach, however useful it is, treats time as an object (*Gegenstand*) that stands apart from us as subjects. Heidegger does not think we can approach time in this way (GA 53: 45/55). Heidegger explains that this notion does not make sense

as space and time are the conditions that make experience possible. Yet space and time cannot be “merely a subjective representation” or a construct that is proper only to the subject (GA 53: 46/56). We experience space and time in terms of objects. Thus space and time are not simply objects apart from us or subjective constructs that have nothing to do with the world. This issue leads to the significant conclusion that “whatever the case, they are something that cannot be accommodated within the schema of ‘either objective’ – ‘or subjective’” (GA 53: 46/56). The poetic experience of space and time thus must defy the distinction of subject and object and instead opens up a new, more fundamental relation. For this reason, the clarity and success of calculative approaches to time oppose the wandering, reflective way in which that poetry engages with time. Poetry provides a “mediation on the essence of time,” which “accomplishes nothing in terms of improving our apparatus for measuring time” (GA 53: 42/50). Poetry treats time as something mysterious that outruns any effort to subordinate it to our uses.

This sense of the “now” as incalculable and mysterious in its interweaving of future and past is very apparent in Heidegger’s 1944 lecture course on Hölderlin and Nietzsche. In this lecture course, Heidegger describes what is present as a “leap out of the facing approach” between the future (*Zukunft*) and origin (*Herkunft*) (GA 50: 146/51). The future (*Zukunft*) means to come (*kommen*) to (*zu*). The origin (*Herkunft*) means to come (*kommen*) from (*her*). Temporality moves to and from the present. As Heidegger explains, “What is present only exists as the alternating transition of what is to come into what was and of what was into what is to come. Therefore, every present moment is an ambiguous ambiguity” (GA 50: 146/51). This ambiguity of the present moment seems profoundly poetic, especially when we consider *poiesis* as a mode of revealing that preserves concealment. This present for Heidegger is ambiguous. He explains it by noting that “this ambiguity stems directly from what exceeds the present and what exists more so than does the present” (GA 50: 146/51). The present is not real in this sense, but an *open* for the past and future that exceed it. The “now” is a strange interface between past and future that is filled by what is more than

present, by what is excessive.¹³ We see this tension and ambiguity in Hölderlin's poetry, especially in the gods, who are "nothing other than time" (GA 39: 55/53). The gods are time, a time that has its own measure, a different measure than calculative time. The gods are neither fully present nor fully absent in Hölderlin's poetry, because they have fled leaving only traces.¹⁴

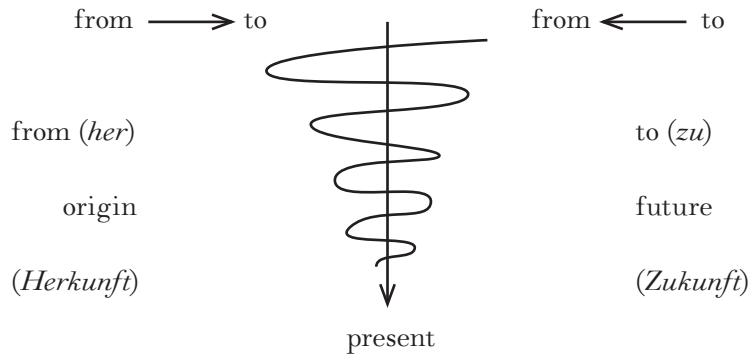


FIGURE 3. Attempt to visualize Heidegger's description of time in GA 50.

Temporality interweaves presence and absence so that they form a necessary relation. The past is not dead, nor the future foreign – both give birth to the present, revealing what is concealed but not making it fully present. This temporality, moreover, is not only present in what Hölderlin's poetizes but also *how* he poetizes. His poetry is sensitive to time in every syllable, meter, and dramatic crescendo.

B. HÖLDERLIN'S RHYTHM AND THE FULLNESS OF TIME

Wilhelm Dilthey's essay on Hölderlin (1906/1910) provides one of the first philosophical commentaries on the poet and is especially relevant here since it focuses on the temporal aspects of his poetry. Dilthey's Hölderlin essay is particularly helpful since he discusses the more formal aspects that Heidegger's lecture courses purposely omit because they are "readily accessible everywhere" (GA 39: 7/6). According to

Dilthey, “the fullness and melodious flow of Hölderlin’s verses is unsurpassed by any other writer.”¹⁵ Hölderlin’s poetic voice is marked by a strong rhythm, especially due to his study of Greek and Roman poetry, which inspired his adoption of ancient metrical forms for his hymns and elegies. As Dilthey notes, Hölderlin’s metrical variations produce a sensation as if “carried along as if by waves. By frequently weakening the first stressed syllable of the pentameter, he creates the impression of a crescendo” (SW 5: 377). The cadence of his verses rises and falls, the movement of which is often interrupted suddenly by an exclamation or enjoiner. These interruptions produce a syncopated rhythm, and Hölderlin fragments his poems further through his use of ambiguous modifiers and unfinished phrases. As Alice Kuzniar describes his writing, “Hölderlin interrupts, complicates, and even at times suspends articulated language. He discovers a speech that maintains silence.”¹⁶

This rhythmic flow of silences and suspended moments means that the tempo of his poems privileges the *caesura*, a break or interruption.¹⁷ Breaks in music and poetry are never simply silence, but are pregnant pauses where what came before and what is anticipated can resonate. A caesura emphasizes the relational dynamic between presence and non-presence, i.e. the moment as an open space for the interplay of past and future. Dilthey thus describes Hölderlin’s musicality as a new lyrical form of poetry that “seems to emanate from indiscernible distances only to disappear in them again” (SW 5: 376). For Dilthey, as for Heidegger, Hölderlin’s poetry defies simple presence. His poetry resonates, emanates, and disappears again. Hölderlin’s rhythm thus describes temporality not as an ongoing flow or stream of now-moments, but as an interweaving of past, present, and future.

Heidegger too describes the rhythm of Hölderlin’s poetry as a waxing and waning, a presencing that withdraws again, in his discussion of the poem “Germania.” In this lecture, Heidegger discusses how the rhythm (*Schwingungsgefüge*) of Hölderlin’s poem goes beyond the individual meters of each line and acts as a source of expression that reverberates through the entire poem from a primordial origin (*vorausschwingende Ursprung*) (GA 39: 14–15/17). This rhythm, as a movement of waxing

and waning, is also thematic in Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin's hymn "The Ister." The river flows and in flowing intimates what is coming here before it vanishes into what is hidden. The river appears from primordial depths and then returns. Both the rhythm of the poem and the movement of the river suggest a particular way of understanding time. According to Dilthey, the rhythm and style of Hölderlin's poetry conveys a moment that is filled with the past and anticipating the future (SW 5: 304). The unfolding of Hölderlin's lyrical verse continually evokes the past and future, which breaks from the idea of time as simply the present. This dynamic temporality, moreover, seems to be especially palpable in poetry.

Dilthey's "Fragments for a Poetics" (1907–1908) examines the experience of time in relation to poetry.¹⁸ In these notes, Dilthey recognizes that time cannot simply be a continuum in which we continually advance from past to future – i.e. a linear timeline – because the present would be a mere "cross-section in this stream" which cannot be experienced (SW 5: 225). Instead, "lived experience is not merely something present, but already contains past and future within its consciousness of the present" (SW 5: 225).¹⁹ Given this aspect of the experience of time, Dilthey asks, "How then is the present really experienced?" and answers that

It is the nature of the present to be filled or ful-filled with reality in contrast to the representation of reality and its peculiar modifications either in memory or in the anticipation of reality and the will to realize it... The present as experienceable is not this cross-section, but the continuously advancing being ful-filled with reality in the course of time (SW 5: 225).

The present is not a point that advances along a line from past to future. Rather, the present is the advancing fulfillment of reality that unifies past and future.

Dilthey contrasts Hölderlin's fullness of time to Goethe's complete submission to a single moment (SW 5: 370). Whereas Goethe's poetic

time was of the present moment, Hölderlin's poetry reflects the way in which the present is filled with and shaped by the past and future. Hölderlin "always lived in the context of his whole existence. His present feeling was constantly being influenced by what he had suffered and by what might still happen" (SW 5: 370). Dilthey emphasizes Hölderlin's sense of time in his poetry, which demonstrates that "the past has an efficacy just like the present" (SW 5: 370). Dilthey points to the "existence of the hermit Hyperion" who "is completely saturated by the spirits of what has been" and Empedocles who "feels the pressure of the past so strongly that he can only hope for liberation from it through death" (SW 5: 370). Hölderlin's poems not only take up Greek myth and bear witness to the past, they also anticipate and envision a future.

For both Heidegger and Dilthey, Hölderlin poetizes the fullness of time and the mysterious gathering of past and future in the present. This gathering is recollection (*Andenken*), which Hölderlin considers the task of poetry. For Hölderlin the vocation of the poet is to recollect, i.e. to gather what cannot be complete and to understand the unity of this gathering without dissolving difference.²⁰ Remembrance is not about simply holding onto the past for the present, which would assume time is a simple succession of moments to be collected. Instead, the poet *gathers* and preserves what has passed *and* what will come to pass in light of the now, which is incalculable and never the same. Remembrance is a type of calling to presence what it is not present, of wrestling with what is hidden. As Hölderlin tells us in "Remembrance"...

The current sweeps out. But it is the sea
That takes and gives remembrance,
And love no less keeps eyes attentively fixed,
But what is lasting the poets provide.²¹

NOTES

- 1 Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893–1917)*, trans. John Barneett Brough (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991), 35.
- 2 Husserl, *Consciousness of Internal Time*, 32.
- 3 Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena: Introduction to the Problem of Signs in Husserl's Phenomenology in Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays*, trans. David Allison (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 58. Derrida quotes Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* I, §111.
- 4 Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, 59.
- 5 Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, 65.
- 6 Husserl's concept of protention is much less robust than Heidegger's concept of the future in *Being and Time*, and Husserl emphasizes retention more than protention which privileges the past over the future, as Hoy notes. See David Couzens Hoy, *The Time of Our Lives* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009).
- 7 *Being and Time* is a "fragment" according to Theodore Kisiel. See Kisiel, "The Demise of *Being and Time*" in *Heidegger's "Being and Time": Critical Essays*, ed. Richard Polt (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 189–214. See also Kisiel, *The Genesis of Being and Time* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
- 8 Heidegger describes cutting this "unintelligible" section from his manuscript of *Being and Time* after visiting Karl Jaspers (GA 49: 40). Richardson explains that the *Kehre* "consists in having found a way to bring-to-expression that in the author's original experience which SZ did not and *could not* say. In other words, we understand the whole of Heidegger II to be a *re-trieve* of Heidegger I." See William Richardson, *Through Phenomenology to Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1993), 625.
- 9 GA 2: 53n.a. English translation *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: SUNY Press, 2010), 37n2.

- 10 Richardson describes Heidegger's thought after the *Kehre* as "profoundly marked by ... the finitude of the mittance of Being." Richardson, *Through Phenomenology*, 624.
- 11 The meaning of *Es gibt* is not only central to "Time and Being," it is also one of Heidegger's earliest philosophical concerns. Heidegger's war emergency lecture course (1919) emphasizes the given as a question: "The 'there is' [*es gibt*] stands in question or, more accurately, stands in questioning. It is not asked whether something moves or rests, whether something contradicts itself, whether something works, whether something exists, whether something values, whether something ought to be, but rather whether *there is* something. What does 'there is' mean?" (GA 56/57: 67/54). For Heidegger *Es gibt* is a question, the ultimate question, that gestures beyond itself. It does not ask something specific, but asks if there is anything at all – "Is there something?" (GA 56/57: 67/54).
- 12 For a more thorough discussion of Heidegger's sense of time see Andrew J. Mitchell, *The Fourfold: Reading the Late Heidegger* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2015), especially Chapter 3, §11, "The Time of the Sky."
- 13 See also Heidegger's explanation of the moment (*Augenblick*) in his lecture course on Nietzsche's eternal recurrence of the same: "Whoever stands in the Moment is turned in two ways: for him past and future *run up against* one another" (GA 44: 41/56–57). The moment is the collision of past and future in the present.
- 14 See Chapter 1 of Charles Bambach, *Thinking the Poetic Measure of Justice: Hölderlin-Heidegger-Celan* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2013), especially 84–85; Andrzej Warminski, *Readings in Interpretation: Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1987), especially 63–64.
- 15 Wilhelm Dilthey, "Friedrich Hölderlin," trans. Joseph Ross, in *Poetry and Experience, Selected Works* vol. 5, ed. Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 303–383, 377. Henceforth cited as "sw 5" followed

by page number. This essay was one of his best-known writings from *Poetry and Lived Experience* and plays a key role in Dilthey's attempt to create a new model for literary analysis.

16 Alice A. Kuzniar, *Delayed Endings: Nonclosure in Novalis and Hölderlin* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1987), 166.

17 Hölderlin's narrative structure for tragedies also reflects a rhythmic and musical notion of time, which he conveys in his discussion of caesura in his notes on *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone*. Hölderlin discusses peripety – the tragic climax or turning point of a tragedy that Aristotle defines in his *Poetics* – as a musical caesura, a pause or moment of silence. Dilthey explains, “the development of a tragedy is for him a rhythm, and what we call a *caesura* in verse appears as the climax or *peripeteia* in the tragic plot where all that had been presented to the spectator is recapitulated in his consciousness” (SW 5: 362). The tragic moment gathers all parts together, recapitulates them, but does so as a pause. The gathering of the narrative moments in the caesura is an absence – yet this absence resonates with the whole like a rhythm. With rhythm, pauses are as significant as the sounds. In Hölderlin's tragedies, the caesura is the most significant moment and determines the connections and meaning of the entire narrative structure. The caesura does not only give a structure to the temporal structure of a tragic narrative, it also provides a point where “every subsequent part refers back to a beginning, whereby what is first given is given greater and greater depth” (SW 5: 362). In this way, Hölderlin's narrative structure also treats temporality as a resonance or rhythmic echo rather than simply a constant stream of pure presence. Dilthey is the first to note the importance of the caesura in Hölderlin's tragedies. Others have explored the significance of the caesura for rethinking time. Walter Benjamin discusses this in “Goethe's Elective Affinities,” trans. Stanley Corngold, *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings 1913–1926*, volume I (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2004), 297–360. Lacoue-Labarthe thinks Hölderlin's caesura is a critique of Hegel. See Philippe

Lacoue-Labarthe, “The Caesura of the Speculative” in *Typography: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics*, ed. and trans. Christopher Fyrrnsk (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 208–235. See also Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei, *Heidegger, Hölderlin, and the Subject of Poetic Language: Toward a New Poetics of Dasein* (New York: Fordham Press, 2004), 195–201; William S. Allen, *Ellipsis: Of Poetry and the Experience of Language after Heidegger, Hölderlin, and Blanchot* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), 125–127; David Nowell Smith, *Sounding/Silence: Martin Heidegger at the Limits of Poetics* (Fordham University Press, 2013).

- 18 These fragments are an incomplete attempt to revise *The Imagination of the Poet*. Interestingly, Heidegger was very dismissive of Dilthey’s poetics, even during his Diltheyan period – and yet Dilthey’s revision of his poetics show that he wanted to rethink temporality in relation to poetry. Dilthey’s posthumously published, incomplete works follow a similar path of thought as Heidegger here. Heidegger, unfortunately, would not have read these fragments or been aware of how closely his sense of poetic time reflects Dilthey’s description here.
- 19 These notes reflect how Husserl’s time consciousness lectures influenced Dilthey’s philosophy. Yet Dilthey’s explanation of time seems to have more in common with Heidegger’s than Husserl’s. For a comparison of these thinkers concepts of time see David Carr, “The Future Perfect: Temporality and Priority in Husserl, Heidegger, and Dilthey,” *Phenomenologica* 106 (1987): 197–211.
- 20 See GA 52.
- 21 Friedrich Hölderlin, “Remembrance” in *Friedrich Hölderlin: Poems and Fragments*, trans. Michael Hamburger, 4th ed. (London: Anvil Press Poetry), 541.

Heidegger's *Hausfreund* and the Re-enchantment of the Familiar

Julia A. Ireland

With the post-war publication of such collections as *Holzwege* (1949–50), *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (1954), and *Unterwegs zur Sprache* (1959) Heidegger became known for his interpretations of poetry just as much as for his reflections on the Western philosophical tradition. While he had been lecturing in Freiburg on Hölderlin in a sustained way since 1934, prior to the publication of the *Gesamtausgabe* the majority of Heidegger's writings on poetry were delivered as talks that appeared in special publications or narrow academic journals. With the exception of "Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung," which appeared in 1936 in the National Socialist periodical *Das innere Reich* and established Heidegger as the whipping boy of critic-ideologue Willi Könitze, up until the late 1960s the only people who took an interest in Heidegger on poetry were philologically oriented *Germanisten*. And then their attitude was one of fascinated horror. As Max Kommerell confides in a letter to Gadamer written after his visit to Heidegger's hut in 1941: "Heidegger sent me his essay ["Wie wenn am Feiertage..."]. It is a productive trainwreck over which those train signalmen of literary history must throw up their hands (to the extent they're honest)."¹ Kommerell *was* one of the honest ones, and had the intellectual integrity to retain some of this language in his later letter to Heidegger. Heidegger's reply:

“You are right, the piece *is* a ‘wreck,’” and concludes his response with the question, “Is it caprice [*Willkür*] or the highest freedom?”²

However, with the publication of *Unterwegs zur Sprache* in particular, Heidegger’s “Is it caprice or the highest freedom?” was revealed as a sustained concern with the speaking of language that, even if it did not make his readings of individual poems any more palatable, at least showed that he was doing something philosophically innovative. This ambivalence remains in place today: We love Heidegger on language, we just hate him on poetry. The collection also served to add the poets Trakl and George to a Heideggerian canon dominated by Hölderlin, peppered with citations from Goethe, Novalis, and Eichendorff, and marked (or perhaps marred) by a relationship to Rilke that David Farrell Krell has described as “hysteric.” Yet through what is obviously more than the way the timing of publication dictates reception, Heidegger’s numerous talks and references to the Alemannic poet and writer Johann Peter Hebel (1760–1826) garner little interest within his corpus.³ And here it is worth noting that *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* was published by Neske as an independent monograph in 1957, two years prior to *Gelassenheit*, with which it was co-composed, and that in a rare appearance on German television Heidegger reads the talk’s concluding section on the reduction of language to information.⁴ Thus, where Derrida’s “*Geschlecht*” pieces have succeeded in establishing the larger significance of Heidegger’s interpretation of Trakl, and there have been several attempts to account for Heidegger’s “missed interlocution” with Paul Celan,⁵ there is no sustained work of scholarship on Hebel as whom I want to call “the poet of *Gelassenheit*,” which is to say, the poet whose vocation as “friend of the house” both exemplifies and makes manifest what Heidegger means by the phrase “openness to the mystery” (*die Offenheit für das Geheimnis*).⁶

On those few occasions when Heidegger’s interpretations of Hebel are referenced, the tendency is either to trace a direct line from Heidegger’s involvement within National Socialism to an interest in a writer whose provincialism connotes a *Blut und Boden*-style indigeneity – the German word here is *Bodenständigkeit*, which Heidegger

explicitly connects to the notion of “homeland” (*Heimat*) – or to find in Heidegger’s post-war turn to a dialect poet confirmation of an irredeemable nostalgia.⁷

Outside Germany, these critiques demonstrate shockingly little knowledge of the larger literary and cultural significance of Hebel. Hebel is the most democratic and cosmopolitan poet on which Heidegger wrote; the practice of reading aloud Hebel’s *Kalendargeschichten*, one of the few books German peasants possessed, played a significant role in the rise of literacy in the southern Rhine region.⁸ Hebel’s later collection of these stories as the *Schatzkästlein des rheinischen Hausfreundes* was praised by Benjamin as “one of the purest achievements of the filigree craft of German prose,” and both Kafka and Jean Paul adapted to startling effect aspects of the stories’ compositional style as a formal literary model.⁹ Within Germany, a pedestrian reading of Heidegger on dialect and indigeneity has turned the interpretation of Hebel into a referendum on Heidegger’s rejection of Enlightenment thought, pitting Hebel’s cosmopolitanism against what a figure no less than Goethe identified as his “countrification [*verbauern*] of the universe” (GA 13: 145/HFH 97). This is best exemplified by W. G. Sebald’s posthumously published *Logis in einem Landhaus*, whose opening chapter attempts to rescue the Alemannic Hebel from Heidegger in what Sebald explicitly puts forward as the Jewish Hebel as informed by the interpretations of Benjamin and Bloch.¹⁰

Yet when placed into the context of the immediate significance scholars attached to Heidegger’s remarks on technology in *Gelassenheit*, this failure to engage Heidegger’s interpretations of Hebel as philosophically important or, still more pointedly, to even be able to read them with any degree of sensitivity to Heidegger’s own operative distinctions – and this especially concerns what Heidegger has to say about Nature – reveals something important with respect to tone and urgency. In response to a Germany repressing a new, which for Heidegger meant unprecedentedly uncanny type of *Heimatlosigkeit* through a massive rebuilding campaign, and in place of Paul Celan, Heidegger offers up a poet who is the German equivalent of America’s *Uncle Remus* (minus

the racism) combined with the *Old Farmer's Almanac*. What kind of an answer is this?

Heidegger offers an important clue toward the end of *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* when he writes as the summation of a series of statements that each begin with the refrain, “What is worthy of question...”:

We are errant today in a world which is a house without a friend, that is, which lacks that house-friend who in equal manner and with equal force is inclined toward [*zugeneigt*] both the technologically constructed World-Edifice and the world as the house for a more original dwelling. Missing is that friend of the house who is able to re-entrust [*zurückbergen*] the calculability and technology of nature to the open mystery of a newly experienced naturalness of nature.¹¹

The key word in the above citation is “re-entrust” (*zurückbergen*), which might be more literally rendered as a “re-sheltering” or “sheltering back.” In the context of Heidegger’s writings on Hebel, the re-entrusting of technology to “a newly experienced naturalness of Nature” takes place through, of all things, “enchantment” – *Zauber* – which makes manifest the order of the invisible as the proper orientation toward “the rule of mystery.” As Heidegger writes in his September 5, 1954 Zähringen talk on Hebel in describing “true and high poetry” (his concern is that Hebel’s folksiness makes him a low art form):

[Poetry] brings into appearance the invisible [*bringt das Unscheinbare zum Scheinen*]. However, the invisible always remains that which prevails through and determines everything that is familiar and superficial. But then the invisible only comes to appear and before our view when we step back [*zurücktreten*] from it, when we are sufficiently remote from it. (GA 16: 494)

The word *unscheinbar* is one of the most important throughout the Hebel talks, and I’m translating it as “invisible” rather than Foltz and

Heim's "inconspicuous" because of something important Heidegger goes on to do with the dark of the moon. In his vocation as "house-friend," Hebel lets be seen the presencing of the invisible or alien element that not only inhabits the familiar but whose very withdrawal within the structure of appearance first allows it to *be* familiar.

Though this insight into the counter-turning between the foreign and the at-home, of course, pervades Heidegger's thought beginning already in *Sein und Zeit*, what distinguishes *das Unheimliche* from *das Geheimnis*, the uncanny from mystery, lies in the specific modality of the revelation of the foreign and the experience of displacement that occurs as its recasting of the familiar. Thus where the uncanny for Heidegger is most often disclosed as a threat that thrusts *Dasein* back onto itself through the collapse of world, the enchanted delights and even bewitches. The "step back" that invites what is remote to draw near reveals world anew as seduction, world transfigured through Hebel's language as though seen by moonlight and accessed through a "secret door" – in Alemannic, *gheimi Tür* – whose shining back at us points into the essence of "things" understood in a Heideggerian sense. This experience of delight is captured in readers' consistent response to the *Schatzkästlein* as "charming," and in Heidegger's important and repeated use of the word *neigen*, "to incline" or "tend toward," which I want to suggest is his reinterpretation of *philia* precisely as it moves in the direction of *charis* as Heidegger defines it at the conclusion of "...dichterisch wohnet der Mensch...": friendliness understood in the way that kindness ever calls forth kindness.¹² It is the charity Hebel extends when he addresses the reader as "kind reader" (*geneigte Leser*) so that we, for our part, might incline toward the world to whose house he is friend.

Before turning to my interpretation, an initial point of clarification is necessary concerning Heidegger's texts. Between 1954 and 1960, Heidegger gave no less than four talks on Hebel of varying lengths that revised and expanded upon material drawn from his first Hebel talk delivered in Zähringen on September 5, 1954. The 1957 Neske edition, *Hebel – Der Hausfreund*, is in fact a revision of insights introduced in that first talk that Heidegger still further revised for a 1955 speech he

gave in Lörrach. (While the 1960 “Sprache und Heimat” focuses on Hebel’s *Alemannische Gedichte*, Heidegger’s insights into dialect were also prefigured in the Zähringen talk.) Indeed, I believe part of the reason Heidegger’s interpretation of Hebel has been neglected is because *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* suffers from being a compilation; some of Heidegger’s most provocative formulations, which link his Hebel interpretation to “...dichterisch wohnet der Mensch...” and “Das Ding,” were edited out to the detriment of an interpretation unique in the way it explicitly connects a meditation on poetry to what it means to say “yes” and “no” to technology.

Despite their sometimes significant differences in content, all of Heidegger’s talks on Hebel are structured around his posing the question, “Who is Johann Peter Hebel?” Given the fact that many of these speeches were delivered on the occasion of celebratory gatherings, and that selections from the *Alemannische Gedichte* and *Kalendargeschichten* were standard fare within a German primary and secondary school education, the question can hardly be considered provocative. And on the surface Heidegger intends it to fill in the biography of a poet referred to as the “Homer of Wiesental.”¹³ However, in his first speech on Hebel, “Johann Peter Hebel,” Heidegger uses this question to resist Hebel’s easy categorization as a “provincial poet” (*Heimatsdichter*) and instead defines him as “the poet of the homeland” (*der Dichter der Heimat*) (GA 16: 494). Though this characterization might also seem merely descriptive, the structure of this type of genitive – Heidegger adopts it in characterizing Hölderlin as the “poet of the Germans” – serves as an anticipatory deflection whose provocation is to place Hebel’s relevance into the future. As Heidegger writes in the 1954 Zähringen talk:

For that reason, the time in which Hebel’s poems truly “penetrate the soul” [citing Hebel] may first still be to come; then, namely, when the progressive desolation of the modern world is no longer able to be endured by the human being; then, namely, when the human being is everywhere – and that means nowhere any longer – at home. And so when we look ahead it is more fitting for

us to say that we do not yet know Hebel's *Alemannische Gedichte* instead of bemoaning that we no longer know them. (GA 16: 494)

The significance of Heidegger's insistence that "we do not yet know" Hebel is twofold: First, the context in which the meaning of Hebel's vocation as "house-friend" initially becomes available is not the time in which Hebel was actually writing but the now current epoch, which is distinguished by an experience whose "right name" Heidegger claims we also do not know but that he decisively characterizes in terms of the "setting against one another" and "racing further and further apart" of calculable Nature and natural Nature as "alien realms" (*fremde Bezirke*) (GA 13: 146/HFH 97–8). Rather than a sentimentalizing return to the past, Heidegger finds in Hebel the poet who not only brings these two realms together but whose attunement to the invisible allows him to reciprocally articulate them in terms of one another. Second – and the two points are internally related – the homeland of which Hebel is poet is not in fact given but something whose future possibility first emerges from out of his vocation as "house-friend" as he "inclines" the reader toward what Heidegger, in a startling reduplication, refers to as "the naturalness of Nature," *die Natürlichkeit der Natur*. As this formulation intimates, such "naturalness" is not an undifferentiated immediacy but a poetically recuperative one whose letting be seen as enchanted "saves" the disclosive structure of appearance through the capturing-making manifest in language of the mystery that constitutes Nature's own event.

Heidegger's understanding of Hebel as equally inclined toward calculable Nature and natural Nature emerges in his focus on Hebel's positioning himself in the *Schatzkästlein* as a "stargazer and investigator of Nature" or, as Foltz and Heim more prosaically translate, as an "astronomer and physicist" (GA 13: 144/HFH 93). To the extent that Heidegger is at all interested in the Enlightenment Hebel, it is the Hebel who, in adopting the model of the "upright Copernicus," speaks the language of modern science in representing Nature in "numbers, diagrams, and laws." As Heidegger notes, the *Schatzkästlein* is very carefully ordered,

and includes observations on cosmology, adventure stories, reports on disasters and revolutions, cleverly executed moral teachings, practical farm advice, jokes, poems, riddles, and so on. Yet with the exception of his 1954 Zähringen talk, Heidegger's remarks are exclusively focused on Hebel's various meditations on the "World-Edifice" (*Weltgebäude*), which concern what Hebel characterizes in traditional theological terms as the "Book of the Heavens."¹⁴ Hebel calls *die Sterne* "the golden letters in the Book," and in describing the activity of the "house-friend" as secretly placing "little golden kernels" – they are kernels of wisdom – it becomes clear that Hebel understands the *Schatzkästlein* to be scattering stars whose sparkling enchants but whose fixity he intends to provide moral guidance. Though this is not a point Heidegger addresses (it is important for my later discussion of dialect), in his opening "General Meditation" Hebel importantly positions himself as a *dolmetscher*, or "oral translator" – the word derives from the Uralic *tolmács*, and means "the person who stands between" – structuring his meditations as a series of numbered observations that begin by addressing the relationship between the Earth and sun, and that then progress to the moon, planets, stars, and comets. In contrast to the stories, whose perfected self-containment Benjamin claims makes them "utterly forgettable," Hebel's observations on the different heavenly bodies either begin or end with the word "continued" (*fortgesetzt*), which creates the narrative arc that enables the *Schatzkästlein* to be a progressive and cosmological whole rather than a mere almanac. Though Heidegger only gestures toward this connection, Hebel's narrative spanning of the Heavens by translating scientific facts and numerical statistics measures out the "between" (*zwischen*) of the world that Heidegger describes as the "human sojourn between Earth and sky, between birth and death, between work and word" (GA 13: 144/ HFH 93). In a surprising variation of his analysis of the "dimension" in "...dichterisch wohnet der Mensch...", Hebel's poetic compassing of the "between" is not only presented as compatible with numerical calculation but in fact takes place in terms of it, at the same time those numbers are themselves given measure in being placed into the context of that mortal spanning that is human dwelling.

Heidegger makes precisely this point in what, according to my interpretation, is an essential passage he edited from the 1955 Lörrach version of *Hebel – Der Hausfreund*:

What Hebel offers, then, in his meditations is a lesson on the findings of modern natural science. The house-friend speaks instructively as nature observer but not as poet. But – what remains decisive is the way, *how* Hebel places these observations about Nature before and upon the heart of the reader in order to maintain his inclining in its true light and bring it to its appropriate path. Hebel restores scientifically represented Nature back [*holt zurück*] to the immediately lived world in which the sun rises and sets, the rose blooms, springs rush forth, and fountains flow. Hebel does not think to dissolve the world as it appears to the eye into a mere appearance in order to abandon it as the untrue world in favor of the modern scientific one as the supposed solely true world. But neither does Hebel let the world as it appears to the eye stand unmediated next to the presumably solely correct representation of Nature. Still less does it occur to Hebel to, in retrospect, piece together into one two separate realms. Hebel looks poetically into what is inseparable from its inception [*ein anfänglich Ungetrenntes*].

In his reflectively contemplating the world as house-friend, his poetic gaze has already taken back [*zurückgenommen*] the scientifically represented world into the daily-nightly appearing world. This comes to appear thus renewed and saved in the fullness of the illuminating, sounding, smelling, surging, and resting for the dwelling of human beings. (GA 16: 534)

The movement outlined in this quotation importantly complicates the position from which the house-friend's "sheltering" or "restoring back"

is understood to occur. For as Heidegger here makes clear, Hebel does not bring together two realms of Nature originally separate – the mediation implied in Heidegger’s repetition of the word *zurück* does not culminate in the return of a Hegelian synthesis – but instead makes manifest a “reciprocal seeing in terms of” that nonetheless privileges Hebel’s “poetic gaze” (*dichterischer Blick*) in its inclination toward the invisible.

In responding to Goethe’s statement that Hebel “countrifies the universe,” Heidegger articulates this “reciprocal seeing in terms of” as a “mirror-play” (*Spiegel-Spiel*), which is, of course, the term Heidegger adopts to describe the ex-appropriating appropriation of the fourfold in his 1950 talk “Das Ding.” When Hebel speaks in numbers as a natural scientist, he does so in terms of Nature as it appears to the eye – whence Heidegger’s claim that Hebel “restores scientifically represented Nature back to the immediately lived world” in what later becomes a description of Nature as *physis*.¹⁵ However, the immediacy of the immediately lived world is in turn reciprocally transformed by this “restoring back,” whose mirroring “seeing in terms of” brings forward in its concealment what remains hidden within the givenness of Nature when regarded as a separate realm. Surprisingly, then, it is the mediation and “sheltering back” of calculable Nature that allows what is natural about Nature to be disclosed in the taking back of what is hidden, precisely in the coming to appear of the invisible as mystery. Heidegger makes exactly this point in his revision of this passage in *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* when he comments, “[The] naturalness of Nature never grows directly out of Nature itself,” and it also comes forward in the paradoxical temporality that emerges in Heidegger’s statement that the “restoring back” (*zurückholen*) of the poetic gaze has “already taken back” (*schon zurück-genommen*) the scientific representation of Nature into the sensuously lived world. Indeed, this temporality effects a kind of poetic rescue, whose letting appear “as though for the first time” renews and saves the world for dwelling. As a re-seeing that sees “as though for the first time,” the phenomenological structure of enchantment is always the delight of a re-enchantment.

Hebel's mediating between calculable Nature and the naturalness of Nature from out of the order of the invisible connects his vocation as house-friend to that heavenly body that Hebel himself identifies as the "actual house-friend" (*der eigentliche Hausfreund*) – namely, the moon. Not surprisingly, given the period in which he was writing, this meditation is the most statistically rich and includes, for example, the height of the lunar mountain range, even as the calculations Hebel reports are now known to be wildly inaccurate. Yet what distinguishes this particular meditation on the "World-Edifice" is not so much Hebel's numbers as his complicated shifting back and forth between Earth, sun, and moon in explaining the relations between them as they become manifest in the moon's phases. Here, mirror-play is seen to operate as a triangulated, which means differential, reflection that thwarts any notion of a "unified" original or even an original itself. Crediting the moon with being the "first calendar-maker" and the entity from which he derives his poetic vocation as "house-friend," Hebel emphasizes the moon's watchfulness in the night sky: Its changing aspects cyclically measure the progression of lived time in the alternation of day and night – indeed, Heidegger remarks in *Sein und Zeit* that "'time' shows itself in the sky" (GA 2: 554/SZ 419) – and the softness of the moon's reflected light recasts the space of the familiar into the mutual inclining of seduction, whose mortal order is realized in the way all mortal orders should be: with a kiss. To quote the final point in Hebel's meditation on the moon, which is the sole passage Heidegger cites in *Hebel – Der Hausfreund*:

Eighth and final point: What function does the moon in heaven really perform? Answer: Whatever it is that the Earth performs. So much at least is certain: the moon illuminates our night with soft light reflected back from its sun, and the moon watches how boys kiss girls. It is the actual house-friend and first calendar-maker of our Earth, and the highest ranking official night watchman when other watchmen are asleep.
(GA 13: 145/HFH 96)

In responding to this point, Heidegger, on the one hand, focuses on the triangulation of the moon's reflected light for "whatever it is the Earth performs," and, on the other, on what he identifies as those "unique characteristics" that the moon as "house-friend" and Hebel as "house-friend" share between them. Within the larger compositional arc of the *Schatzkästlein*, Hebel's meditation on the moon thus occupies a privileged place because it is in Hebel's seeing his own activity as calendar-maker in terms of the moon that Hebel comes into his poetic vocation as *Hausfreund* – as the one who re-casts the invisible in an Earthly, which is to say, mortal light. As such, this reciprocal "seeing in terms of" operates not as the mirroring of a self-reference but as a *dolmetschen*, an oral translating, in which Hebel's ability to *read* what is written on the face of the moon in its phases allows him to translate the moon's light into his style of writing, whose use of dialect and everyday rhythms enchants – and thereby inclines – the reader toward him.

Yet before turning to Heidegger's treatment of dialect and writing, I want to address his interpretation of the moon, whose darkness allows the mirror-play between sun and Earth. Heidegger writes: "The moon brings light into our nights. But it has not lit the light it brings. The light is only a reflection [*Wiederschein*] of the light the moon previously received from the sun whose brilliance shines onto the Earth, too" (GA 13: 140–41/HFH 94). As this passage indicates, what enables the moon to "reflect" or "shine back" is precisely its own darkness, which withdraws itself as its receptivity to the sun's light. Thus where the moon's light is not original to it, is not something it has "lit" itself, its self-withdrawal into its own darkness *is*, and leads Heidegger to comment (and he intends this description to also characterize Hebel's language): "The phases, stance, and motion of the house-friend are a single uniquely restrained and at once wakeful shining that puts all things into a soft, scarcely noticeable light" (GA 13: 141/HFH 94). Self-withdrawal shows up as self-withholding as the moon yields its darkness to the reflection of the sun's light. The moon's restraint – which is directly tied to its wakefulness – has a dual effect, and serves to generate what Heidegger, citing Hölderlin's "Remembrance" in his first "Freiburg Lecture," calls

“dark light” (*dunkles Licht*): The moon’s darkness softens the brightness of the sun’s glare, which as Plato duly noted can never be looked at directly, and so allows the sun’s light to be seen in the only way it can be seen – as infused with darkness.¹⁶ However, the insubstantiality of that “dark light” also draws forward the realm of the invisible that the bright light of the day hides and that itself only becomes visible through the transfiguration of the familiar when seen by moonlight. In what is no doubt an unusual connection, Nathaniel Hawthorne addresses this phenomenon at the beginning of *The Scarlet Letter* in discussing moonlight as the medium of the romance writer in its creation of the interface or threshold in which the actual and the imaginary meet:

Moonlight, in a familiar room, falling so white upon the carpet, and showcasing all its figures so distinctly, – making every object so minute visible, yet so unlike a morning or noontide visibility ... whatever, in a word, has been used or played with, during the day, is now invested with a quality of strangeness and remoteness, though it is still almost as vividly present as by daylight.¹⁷

The experience of “remoteness” within what is nonetheless a distinct visibility accomplishes what Heidegger in the 1954 Zähringen talk describes as a “stepping back” whose disclosure of the alien within the familiar allows what is invisible to come to appearance in the always already inclining of the hidden toward us. Heidegger makes this same point still more strikingly when he writes in a strange appropriation of the Thracian maid’s jest: “Mortal thinking must let itself down into the dark depths of the well if it is to see the stars by day” (GA 79: 94/89).

Hebel’s poetic vocation as “house-friend” accomplishes exactly this – allows the stars to be seen by day, plants them even – in the way the disclosivity of his language “relays” or “gives on” the moon’s reflected light within the specific context of Earthly dwelling. Prior to his analysis of the moon, Heidegger consistently describes Hebel’s language as in effect “moonlit” in its softness, charm, and playful humor. Yet in

Hebel – Der Hausfreund's most dense claim, Heidegger seeks to connect the heavenly compassing of the World-Edifice to his statement in the "Letter on Humanism" that "language is the house of Being" in referring to Hebel's poetic telling as itself an "image" (*Bild*) of the moon's shining (GA 7: 194/233). It is important to be clear that Heidegger's use of the word "image" here is not to be interpreted as a reversion to the language of traditional poetics (and especially not Platonic poetics), but instead hearkens back to what he calls an "authentic image" (*das eigentliche Bild*) in "...dichterish wohnet der Mensch....": "...poetic images are imaginings in a distinctive sense: not mere fancies and illusions but imaginings that are the visible inclusions of the alien in the sight of the familiar" (GA 7: 197–98/223–24). What makes Heidegger's characterization of Hebel's language as an "image" of the moon's shining particularly complicated is the way he understands Hebel to have not only come into his vocation as "house-friend" through the moon, but the manner in which Hebel's language reflects back the moon's own reflecting so as to enable its specifically mortal extension. Indeed, this is how the function "the moon performs" echoes and thereby reveals "the function that the Earth performs." In a highly compacted sentence propelled forward by the repetition of the word *wieder* – the prefix "re-" in English – Heidegger states: "The reflected light of the sun [*Widerschein*] softened by the moon and re-given to the Earth [*wieder geben*] is the image [*Bild*] of the saying addressed to the house-friend so that he, thus illuminated, re-tells [*sagt wieder*] what has been addressed to *him* to those who inhabit the Earth with him" (GA 13: 141/HFH 94). The triangulation of the moon's reflecting back takes place as the re-giving of the light it has previously received, a reception and a re-giving whose reflection is in turn taken up and extended by Hebel into the realm of an "inhabiting with," or *Mitsein*, through a telling whose re-telling makes manifest the relationship between Earth, sun, and moon. As the extension of the peculiar manner in which the moon companions the Earth in the watchfulness of its scarcely noticeable light, the moon's house-friendliness is relayed by Hebel's poetic house-friendliness as the condition for a neighborly dwelling.

I want to turn in conclusion to the way Heidegger interprets Hebel's use of dialect (*Mundart*), which still further re-inflects the structure of an "authentic image" in what Heidegger refers to in his 1954 Zähringen speech as a "pure echo" (*reines Echo*). Needless to say, what Heidegger elaborates here substantially complicates the critique of his privileging of oral discourse; notions like "mirror-play," "original image," "pure echo" do not accommodate themselves to binary schemas whose structures compel critics to misread the Heideggerian "between" as the givenness of an opposition or dialectic. As suggested earlier, in speaking as an "observer of Nature" Hebel understands himself to be acting as a *Dolmetscher* in translating the "Book of Nature" into familiar terms, which in this case means softened by the playful rhythms of spoken forms. Significantly, this act of translation occurs not only in what Heidegger understands to be Hebel's "restoring back" of calculable Nature to natural Nature but also in Hebel's translating dialect back into written language. And here the mistake critics make is in acting as though Heidegger understands the indigenouslyness of dialect as a form of direct (and therefore essentialist) transcription rather than a mirror-play that reciprocally sees the oral and the written in terms of one another. Heidegger addresses this in his assertion that Hebel's "simplicity" is the expression of an "elevated" or "intensified" (*gesteigert*) language that stems from his ability to hear the welling up of the hidden source of language. Reminiscent of the way Hebel's poetic gaze allows him to see "calculable Nature" in terms of "natural Nature," Hebel can *write* dialect because he can hear the way oral discourse is already operative in written language in a manner that similarly "restores" or "takes it back." In answer to the question, "Wherein lies the mystery of Hebel's language?" Heidegger replies:

The mystery of Hebel's language in the *Schatzkästlein* rests in the fact that Hebel was able to capture the Alemannic dialect in written language, and allows this, written language, to ring out as the pure echo of that, dialect. It certainly belongs to a patient and careful listening [*Lauschen*: eavesdropping] in order to truly

hear this singular resounding of dialect in high speech.
If we succeed in that, we have a passing intimation of
how Hebel, now going in the opposite direction, hears
in dialect the concealed treasure of high and written
speech. (GA 16: 496–97)

In the 1960 “Sprache und Heimat,” Heidegger provocatively asserts that “there is no such thing as ‘language,’” by which he means that the way we speak of “language” already reflects a decontextualization from its lived source – a claim that is as much an argument against purity as it is against philosophical abstraction. High and written German is a translation of dialect, but as a translation it also retains what about dialect specifically lends itself to the written. What Hebel already has to hear in order for his writing in *Alemannisch* to sound “natural” – and this is the word Kafka uses, and the stylistic effect he himself strives to create in the uncanny realism of his own stories – is the way writing is already a kind of *dolmetschen*. Hebel’s “pure echo,” then, is to let resonate through his use of dialect the presence of oral speech constantly being heard and overheard in writing. Analogous to the moon’s “reflecting back” the light of the sun, the pure echo of dialect within the written gives back the speaking of the oral to be heard in the only way it can be heard – through writing.

What is arguably Heidegger’s most important interpretation of Hebel’s use of dialect is to be found in the brief speech he gives on the occasion of his acceptance of the Hebel Memorial Prize on May 10, 1960. In this speech Heidegger reads the concluding lines from Hebel’s final poem in the *Alemannische Gedichte*, which concerns death.

und s’ sin no Sachen ehne dra.
nämlich uf dr andere Sitte von stille Grab im chüele
Grund.
Sel Plätzli het e gheimi Tür,
und s’ sin no Sachen ehne dra.

and there's no thing any longer there.
namely on the other side of the still grave in the cold
 ground.
 its place has a secret door,
 and there's no thing any longer there. (GA 16: 565)

Heidegger's focus is on the word *e Sach*, which he writes is "something astonishing because filled with mystery." Some time during this same period, and in what is still a different kind of translation, he exclaims to Heinrich Petzet that this *e Sach* is the "ontological difference put into Todtnaubergish!"¹⁸ In a restatement of the way he understands poetry to make visible the invisible, he continues: "Insofar as no thing is understood on its own, everything is an *e Sach*. In its essence every being *het e gheimi Tür* – has a secret door – into mystery through which it comes forth and shines back towards us. The vocation of the poet is the following: to point in the direction of this secret door in all things or even to lead us through it" (GA 16: 566). As a variation of the wonder that underlies the experience "that there are beings and not rather nothing," Hebel's enchantment is to make visible the secret door of things always shining back at us, always beckoning us from within the familiar as a nearness which becomes available only through that stepping back that is a stepping through into moonlight. Yet as also a mortal door, Hebel's friendship – and the kindness he does us – is to incline us toward our essence and our dwelling as the threshold of mystery.

The initial prompt for this paper came from conversations I had with students on Heidegger and poetry at the 2013 Collegium Phenomenologicum, "Heidegger: Gelassenheit, Ethical Life, Ereignis 1933–1946." These conversations led Kate Davies – also my student at Whitman College – to extend the gracious invitation to be the keynote speaker for Emory's 2014 graduate student conference on friendship. I want to thank that amazing cohort of students at Emory for their manifold generosity, and I dedicate this piece to them.

NOTES

- 1 Max Kommerell, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen 1919–1944*, ed. Inge Jens (Olten and Freiburg im Breisgau: Walter Verlag, 1967), 403.
- 2 Kommerell, *Briefe*, 405.
- 3 Hebel was born in Basel in 1760 and attended grammar school in Lörrach until the age of thirteen when he was orphaned by the death of his mother. He went on to read theology at the university in Erlangen before returning to the Gymnasium at which he studied in Karlsruhe, where he served as both teacher and subdeacon. He wrote the dialect poems *Alemannische Gedichte* (*Alemannic Poems*) in 1801 after returning home to the Black Forest and Basel. In 1808 he took over writing the Lutheran almanac for Baden, which at the time every household was required to purchase, re-titling it *Der Rheinländische Hausfreund* (*The Rhenish House-Friend*). (It is more frequently referred to as the *Kalendargeschichten*, or *Calendar Stories*). The stories included in the almanac were widely circulated throughout Germany, and drew the attention and praise of Goethe. Hebel was approached by the German publisher Cotta to put together a selection of the stories for wider publication within Germany, which were collected in 1811 under the title *Schatzkästlein des rheinischen Hausfreundes* (*Treasure Chest of the Rhenish House-Friend*). Unfortunately, there remains scant information available on Hebel in English. John Hibberd's introduction to his translation of a selection from the *Schatzkästlein* provides a helpful overview, and includes a list of "Further Reading" of primarily German sources. See *The Treasure Chest*, introduced and translated by John Hibberd (New York: Penguin, 1994), ix-xxvii. Here, it needs to be noted that Hibberd's selection does not include the astronomical observations important to Heidegger's interpretation of the moon. More recently, Bernard Viel has published an updated and comprehensive biography of Hebel entitled *Johann Peter Hebel oder Das Glück der Vergänglichkeit* (München: C. H. Beck Verlag, 2010). Heidegger's piece on the *Alemannische Gedichte*, "Sprache und

Heimat" (in GA 16), was included as part of a tribute volume commemorating the 200th anniversary of Hebel's birth, and communicates something of Hebel's reception in the early 1960s. See Theodor Heuss, Carl J. Burckhardt, et al., *Über Johann Peter Hebel* (Tübingen: Rainer Wunderlich Verlag, 1964). The Project Gutenberg – DE site includes a nice survey of Hebel's works in German at <http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/autor/251>.

- 4 The source text for *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* and "Sprache und Heimat" was a speech Heidegger gave in Zähringen on September 5, 1954 that predates "Gelassenheit" by slightly more than a year. ("Gelassenheit" was delivered on October 30, 1955). The two texts are closely related in their composition, and Heidegger went on to give a revised version of his Zähringen talk at a *Volkhochschule* in Göppingen just ten days after delivering "Gelassenheit." With the exception of *Hebel – Der Hausfreund*, "Sprache und Heimat," and "Die Sprache Johann Peter Hebels," which are included in GA 13, all of Heidegger's speeches on Hebel can be found in GA 16. The *Nachweise* of these two volumes include helpful notes on when, where, and in what context talks were given (GA 16: 810, GA 13: 248–49).

The primary text to which I'll be referring throughout this article is *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* (Pfullingen: Günter Neske, 1957), translated as "Hebel – Friend of the House" by Bruce V. Foltz and Michael Heim. I have modified Foltz and Heim's translation throughout. An abbreviated version of *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* focusing on the reduction of language to information aired on the German television station SWF on May 10, 1960. The clip can be found on youtube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7kj4kAyRXA>. This clip draws heavily from the November 9, 1955 talk, "Johann Peter Hebel," that Heidegger delivered at a *Volkhochschule* in Göppingen, which he then revised in conjunction with the Zähringen talk in composing *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* (see GA 16: 530–33).

- 5 This is Veronique Fóti's phrase in *Heidegger and the Poets: Poiesis/Sophia/Techne* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1992). See Chapter Six, "A Missed Interlocution: Heidegger and Celan," 78–88. In a provocative and otherwise comprehensive treatment of Heidegger's engagement with poets, it is notable that Fóti omits Hebel.
- 6 My characterization of Hebel as "the poet of *Gelassenheit*" is intentionally ambiguous. On the one hand, I intend it to refer to Hebel as the poet who concretely makes manifest what "openness to the mystery" looks like in its orientation between the familiar world and technology. On the other, I mean this phrase literally: Heidegger makes explicit reference to Hebel in "Gelassenheit," and concludes the talk with a reference to "We are plants" as exemplifying the "rootedness" (*Bodenständigkeit*) of creative flourishing. See "Gelassenheit" (GA 16: 517–29), translated as "Memorial Address" in *Discourse on Thinking* by John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund (New York: Harper & Row, 1966) 43–57. I have modified Anderson and Freund's translation throughout.
- 7 This thesis was first and most forcefully put forward by Robert Minder in "Heidegger und Hebel oder Die Sprache von Messkirch" in *Dichter in der Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1966), 211–14. Minder's knowledge of the full scope of Heidegger's engagement with Hebel was limited, and he reduces – if not entirely misreads – the complexity of what Heidegger is doing with dialect vis-à-vis written language. Charles Bambach reprises a version of this same argument (without apparent knowledge of Minder) in his piece "Heidegger, Technology, and the Homeland," *The Germanic Review* 78:4 (Fall 2003): 267–82, which he then revised for his book *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism, and the Greeks* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 329–35. Robert Metcalf goes on to offer a nuanced reply to Bambach in his article "Rethinking 'Bodenständigkeit' in the Technological Age," *Research in Phenomenology* 43 (2012): 49–66. While Metcalf gestures toward the importance of Hebel,

he does not offer an interpretation of what Heidegger actually says about Hebel as a poet.

- 8 See James M. Brophy's treatment of Hebel in *Popular Culture and the Public Sphere in the Rhineland, 1800–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). The chapter "Reading," pp. 18–53, includes a discussion of politicized calendars and the practice of reading Hebel out loud. The cover of the 1808 edition of *Der Rheinländische Hausfreund* shows the house-friend as a public figure rather than a domesticated and interior one. As Heidegger remarks in responding to Hebel, the house-friend styles himself as a type of preacher (GA 13: 143/HFH 96).
- 9 *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Vol. 1, 1913–1926*, eds. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 428. Benjamin has two short pieces on Hebel, "Johann Peter Hebel (I): On the Centenary of his Death," 428–31, and "Johann Peter Hebel (II): A Picture Puzzle on the Centenary of his Death," 432–34.
- 10 W. G. Sebald, *Logis in einem Landhaus* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 2002), translated by Jo Caitlin as *A Place in the Country* (New York: Random House, 2013). Sebald's first chapter, "A Comet in the Heavens," is on Hebel, and is vehemently critical of Heidegger. Wonderful as Sebald is, it is about as consummate a misreading of *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* as is possible.
- 11 GA 13: 146/HFH 97. This passage was also singled out by Roger Munier in the seven questions on technology that he posed to Heidegger in the Le Thor seminars that took place in the late 1960s (GA 15: 77/FS 44).
- 12 See GA 7: 197–98/PLT 226–27. Heidegger's remarks here are a gloss on Hölderlin's reference to "friendliness" (*Freundlichkeit*) in "In lovely blueness. . .," which he interprets by way of Hölderlin's translation of *charis* in a line from Sophocles' *Ajax*.
- 13 "Homer aus Wiesental" is the title Benno Reifenberg gave to his contribution to the commemorative volume *Johann Peter Hebel*

- (55–64). The essay was originally published in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on May 10, 1960.
- 14 Heidegger is the only reader of Hebel of whom I am aware to focus on Hebel’s cosmology, and it is absolutely essential to following out what is at stake in his interpretation. To not understand this, and – still more specifically – to not understand the role Nature as *physis* plays in that cosmology is to misread Heidegger. Here, it is significant that Hebel’s meditations on the “World-Edifice” tend to be left out of German anthologies on Hebel, and that none of these meditations have been translated into English, which includes Hibberd’s version of the *Treasure Chest*.
- 15 In *Hebel – Der Hausfreund* Heidegger in fact replaces this entire passage with a reference to *physis*, writing: “The naturalness of Nature never grows directly out of Nature itself; rather, it is caught sight of expressly in that to which the ancient Greek thinkers once gave the name *physis*” (GA 13: 146/HFH 97).
- 16 In citing Hölderlin, Heidegger interestingly draws the connection not to Plato but to Oppenheimer’s quotation of the *Bhagavad Gita* in reference to the detonation of the first atomic bomb: “The light is no longer an illuminated clearing when the light diffuses into mere ‘brighter than a thousand suns’” (GA 79: 93/88–89).
- 17 Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, 3rd ed., ed. Seymour Gross (New York: W. W. Norton, 1962), 27–28.
- 18 Heinrich Petzet, *Encounters and Dialogues with Martin Heidegger 1929–1976*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 126. See also Petzet’s account of Heidegger’s relationship to Hebel in the section entitled “A Hebel Day,” pp. 200–204.

Being is Evil:
Boehme's Strife and Schelling's Rage
in Heidegger's "Letter on 'Humanism'"

Robert Bernasconi

In 1947, in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Heidegger publicly addressed the concept of evil. He did so in "Letter on 'Humanism'" and the passage in question is so enigmatic that it has been largely ignored in spite of the evident importance of the topic. In fact, there is reason to believe that Heidegger did not mean his readers to understand this part of the text at that time. The keys to understanding the passage were not provided until much later. These keys are to be found in the lectures on Schelling from 1936, first published in 1971 (GA 42), and in "Evening Conversation in a Prisoner of War Camp in Russia, between a Younger and Older Man," dated 8th May 1945, the day on which the Allied Powers accepted the unconditional surrender of Germany, but not published until 1995 (GA 77).¹ I am leaving for another occasion the question of how these sentences might impact the debate around Heidegger's politics. In the present essay, I will confine myself to the task of trying to understand the four sentences on evil from "Letter on 'Humanism'" using these additional resources.²

The sentences in question read: "With healing, evil appears all the more in the clearing of being. The essence of evil does not consist in the mere badness of human action, but rather in the malice of rage. Both of these, however, the healing and raging, can essentially occur in being only insofar as being is itself what is in strife. In it is concealed

the essential provenance of nihilation [*Nichtens*]” (GA 9: 359/272). I will take each sentence in turn, but first I must say a word about “Evening Conversation.”

I

Heidegger’s “Evening Conversation” opens with a discussion of the experience of healing, a discussion that begins with the younger prisoner of war announcing that he has had an experience of the vast Russian forest that was enigmatic to him but that gave him a sense of healing (GA 77: 305/133). The older of the two men identified this sense of healing with a sense of freedom in spite of the fact that they were both prisoners of the Russians. He was also the one who introduced into the conversation “the devastation [*Verwüstung*] of the earth and the annihilation of the human essence,” saying that devastation here meant that “everything – the world, the human, and the earth – will be transformed into a desert [*Wüste*].” This, he added, is something evil (GA 77: 211/136). According to “Evening Conversation,” the nature of the devastation as something evil becomes more apparent in the experience of the forest as healing. The desert and the forest are both vast expanses where “nothing is encountered that bends our essence back on itself” (GA 77: 205/132), but only the experience of the forest is described as healing. This suggests that if we could come to understand the relation of the forest to the desert, then we might have some understanding of the first of the four sentences on evil in “Letter on ‘Humanism’”, the sentence which reads “With healing, evil appears all the more in the clearing of being.” The relation between the forest and the desert comes into focus when we approach it through the transformation that the idea of the devastation undergoes in “Evening Conversation.”

This transformation begins when the devastation is no longer conceived exclusively in terms of “what is visible and tangible” but as something evil (GA 77: 207/133). The transformation is marked by the way that the devastation is no longer conceived in terms of a body count or in terms of the destruction of cities, but is referred instead to the desert understood as “the abandoned expanse of the abandonment

[*Verlassenheit*] of all life” (GA 77: 212/137). The pursuit of what are ordinarily conceived to be the highest goals of humanity – progress, equal employment opportunities for everyone, the uniform welfare of all workers, and so on – conceal the devastation (GA 77: 211/136). This means that one can spread devastation under the guise of doing good. As the younger man explained: “Under the appearance of a secured and improving life a disregard – if not indeed a barring – of life could occur” (GA 77: 213/138). Heidegger’s central point here was that these efforts to improve life, arising as they do out of a high regard for life, belong to the annihilation of the human essence insofar as they take life as the ultimate value. This takes us to the heart of Heidegger’s confrontation with Nietzsche where, on the basis of his account of the history of being, he proposed that, beginning with Hegel, but culminating in Nietzsche, being is thought of as life (GA 47: 318/157). Indeed, in “Evening Conversation” it is said that in occidental thinking “life” coincides with “being” since ancient times (GA 77: 213/137). If we put all that together, we can see that Heidegger, speaking through the older man, suggests that if what are often conceived as the highest goals of humanity can also be seen in terms of the abandonment of life and thus in terms of the abandonment of being, then being is ambiguous (GA 77: 213/138).

The desert is Heidegger’s word for “the deserted expanse of the abandonment of all life,” that is to say, of the abandonment of being (GA 77: 212/137). But to complete the transformation of how Heidegger thinks the devastation, he recognized that to think it in terms of the abandonment of being is already to think it being historically (*seinsgeschichtlich*), and that is to think it in terms of the clearing of being, which, from Heidegger’s perspective, is already to think it in terms of a healing insofar as the clearing is what occidental thinking failed to think and so is what points beyond the history of Western metaphysics as such. The desert and the forest are not simply opposed to each other. In Heidegger’s metaphors (if one were allowed to speak of such a thing, which of course Heidegger resists), the forest is associated with the clearing. Heidegger’s frequent association of the experience of the

clearing with the free points in the same direction, given the claim that the experience of the forest is described as an experience of freedom. Hence one can say that it is in and out of the experience of the forest that the desert is experienced as such. The forest and the desert are intimately connected.

This means that when in “Letter on ‘Humanism’” Heidegger wrote that “With healing evil appears all the more in the clearing of Being,” he was not only summarizing the fundamental thrust of the first part of the “Evening Conversation,” but also formulating what he elsewhere called “the saying of a turning.” This interpretation is supported by the way he had introduced the idea of healing earlier in “Letter on ‘Humanism’” by suggesting that what is distinctive about the world-epoch in which we belong is the closure of the dimension of healing, a dimension that remains closed “if the open region of being is not cleared and in its clearing is near to humans” (GA 9: 351–52/267). The experience of healing is thus an indication of a transformation in the relation to the open region of being, that is to say, to the clearing. This interpretation is vindicated by the later stages of “Evening Conversation” where healing is characterized as a transplanting into knowing. To be sure, at the point of the conversation the discussion has come to focus on the Germans and the knowledge in question is that by which “we, as those who wait” are beginning “to turn and enter [*einzukehren*] the still-withheld essence of our vanquished people” (GA 77: 234/153). “Letter on ‘Humanism’” is often read without reference to the Second World War, but as soon as its close connection to “Evening Conversation” becomes apparent, this is no longer possible, and its highly problematic character becomes apparent.

II

The second of the four sentences reads: “The essence of evil does not consist in the baseness of human action, but rather in the malice of rage [*es beruht im Böartigen des Grimmes*]” (GA 9: 189/272). Understanding this sentence must also begin with a reading of “Evening Conversation.”

The introduction of “the malice of rage” into “Letter on ‘Humanism’” echoes the shift in “Evening Conversation” from the discussion of evil to a form of malice in which rage is uppermost (GA 77: 208/134). When the older man suggested that the devastation of the earth and the annihilation of the human essence were evil, the younger man proposed this shift to a discussion of malice so as to mark a turning away from issues of morality. The shift is necessary to avoid misunderstanding: evil cannot be reduced to the morally bad and insight into evil is not granted to those who consider themselves morally superior (GA 77: 209/134). Heidegger here rejected morality as a product of devastation, which it is most of all when morality is directed to world order and world security. This may well strike us as outrageous in the context of the war that had just ended, especially given his expressed desire to separate his discussion of from “the moral badness of the supposed originators of this devastation” (GA 77: 209/134), but we cannot see here the legacy of Nietzsche. On the contrary, Heidegger considered Nietzsche’s doctrine of discipline and breeding (*Zucht und Züchtung*) as an extreme affirmation of morality in the precise sense in which he was dismissing it. According to the younger prisoner, “the realm of pure will to power is least of all a ‘beyond good and evil’ – if there otherwise can at all be a beyond-evil” (GA 77: 209–10/135). Indeed, in the same place the will itself is said to be evil, but what is meant is not a judgment on the human will as such, but *will* as a word for being, in the same way that *life* is a word for being.

What then is to be understood by “the malice of rage”? In “Evening Conversation” the younger man offered this account:

Malice is insurgency [*Auführerische*], which rests in furiousness, indeed such that this furiousness [*Grimmige*] in a certain sense conceals its rage [*Ingrimm*], but at the same time always threatens with it. The essence of evil is the rage of insurgency [*Aufruhr*], which never entirely breaks out, and which, when it does break out, still disguises itself, and in its hidden threatening is often as if it were not (GA 77: 207–8/134).

A little later in the dialogue the younger man adds “The rage [*Grimm*] which essentially prevails in evil lets loose the insurgency and the turmoil [*Wirrnis*] that presages on all sides” (GA 77: 208/134, tm). These sentences do not on their own offer much clarity and the keywords – “rage” and “insurgency” – quickly disappear from “Evening Conversation.”

To understand what was meant by both the “malice of rage” and “the insurgency” we must go back behind both “Letter on ‘Humanism’” and “Evening Conversation” to Heidegger’s 1936 lectures on Schelling’s *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom*. Heidegger read Schelling’s essay as an essay on evil and it is, like these two other texts by Heidegger, about evil as, in Schelling’s own words, “a universal activity,” “an unmistakable general principle,” and not a discussion of how evil becomes actual in individuals.³

Heidegger tried to distill into the word *Aufbruch* what was for him most productive in Schelling’s account of evil. The term can be translated by “insurgency,” “uprising,” “revolt,” “sedition,” “insurrection,” “upheaval,” or “furor,” but its meaning must be established by the context. Heidegger attempted to summarize Schelling’s account of evil early in the lecture course in the formulation “Evil is the insurgency [*Aufbruch*] that consists in perverting [*Verkehrung*] the ground of the essential will into the reversal [*Umkehrung*] of God” (GA 42: 184/106, tm; see GA 86: 223). The word *Aufbruch* is not found anywhere in Schelling’s text, but the notion of perversion is important there. Schelling referenced Franz Baader’s account of evil as “a positive perversion or reversal of the principles” as a way of not thinking it as in straightforward opposition to the good.⁴ Heidegger also inserted the word *Aufbruch* into his interpretation of Schelling’s account of “the ruin [*Zerrüttung*] of beings”⁵ to make the point that this perversion is not simply negative. This insurgency against the primal being is rather “negation placing itself into dominance” (GA 42: 247/143).

The word *Grimm* appears twice in Schelling’s essay and it too was borrowed from Baader, indeed from the very same place in which the latter presented evil as “a positive perversion or reversal of the principles.” Baader had borrowed the word *Grimm* from Jacob Boehme, who

would have found it in Luther's translation of the Bible.⁶ On the second occasion that Schelling used the word *Grimm*, he did so in his own voice: "even the most dissolute and false life still remains and moves within God to the extent that he is the ground of existence. But it [this life] perceives him as consuming rage [*Grimm*] and is posited by the attraction itself in an even higher tension against unity until it arrives at self-destruction [*Selbstvernichtung*] and final crisis."⁷ What is at stake here for Schelling in his account of God's consuming rage is the claim that evil is necessary for the revelation of God and that every essence can only reveal itself in its opposite.⁸ Schelling initially presented this as a formal argument, but he subsequently followed it up in terms of an account of the experience of evil. He described how evil provokes feelings of terror and horror, whereas weakness or incapacity leads only to feelings of regret.⁹ He argued that these feelings can be explained only if we recognize that sin strives to profane what Baader called the mystery, that is to say, the *centrum*, which Schelling also identified with the primal will of the first ground.¹⁰ But Schelling added that this terror can *only* be explained because "the bond of the dependence of all things and the being of God which is before all existence" is revealed in sin.¹¹ Hence God as the ground of existence is accessible to "the most dissolute and false life" as consuming rage through sin. Schelling's discussion of rage is in this way part of a larger account of how what appears negative can also be taken as something positive. By adopting the word *rage* Heidegger evoked that discussion, leaving us with the question of how much of that account Heidegger retained in 1947.¹²

Heidegger in 1936 was quite explicit about his need to distance himself from Schelling's account. He insisted that by interpreting evil as sin Schelling took the question in a Christian direction. Heidegger, by contrast, wanted to take this questioning of evil toward what he called "the essence and the truth of Being," even while admitting that to do so was one-sided (GA 42: 252–3/146). Furthermore, his re-writing of Schelling's account of decision in terms of resoluteness and his further re-writing of resoluteness in terms of *Inständigkeit* represented another departure from Schelling, as did the substitution

of the moment (*Augenblick*) for eternity and the disappearance of the account of the terrible in God. Nevertheless, in the context of his reading of Schelling's essay Heidegger wrote that "evil itself determines a new start [*Ansatz*] in metaphysics" (GA 42: 168/97). This formulation does not repeat the phrase "another beginning" that Heidegger had already introduced in the previous year in *Introduction to Metaphysics* to indicate his own efforts (GA 40: 42/43), but it gave to Schelling's essay a unique significance.

The fact that Schelling fell back into "the rigidified tradition of Western thought" by remaining attached to the idea of a system only succeeded in bringing to the fore the difficulties already found at the beginning of Western metaphysics, thereby established the need for "a second beginning" in relation to the first (GA 42: 279/161). In other words, even though Heidegger was more reserved about Schelling when he returned to him in 1941 (GA 49), one can still read Heidegger's comments on evil in 1945 and 1947 as an attempt to make good on the promise to make a new start through the reading of Schelling given in the 1936 lectures.

What was Heidegger attempting when he retained from Boehme and Schelling the word *Grimm*? Heidegger was correct in saying that for all his originality Schelling followed his predecessors by presenting his essay as an attempt to reconcile the capacity for evil with a God who is regarded as pure goodness.¹⁵ Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that Schelling approached God with an extraordinary conceptual novelty by deploying a distinction between being in so far as it exists and the ground of existence, which he had already developed in his philosophy of nature. He argued that God has the ground of existence in himself but that this ground, which precedes God in existence and to which he also gives the name "nature," is not God.¹⁴ One formulation he introduced in an effort to make this idea more accessible was to present the ground as "the yearning the eternal One feels to give birth to itself."¹⁵ However, at this point Schelling introduced the term *will*, a term that, as we saw in "Evening Conversation," not only belonged to

the abandonment of being but could also be understood as a word for evil (GA 77: 210/135).

For Schelling God is the unity of the two principles: being in so far as it is and the ground of existence. Evil is their perversion. Among human beings the principles are not indissoluble as they are in God, except in their spirit, and it is through their severability that evil becomes actual. What appealed to Heidegger in his reading of Schelling's essay was how what was initially presented as the opposition (*Gegensatz*) of good and evil became transformed into a duality which was separate from all opposition.¹⁶ Schelling had been forced at the beginning of the essay to treat opposition and duality as synonymous, but once he had the resources in place to separate them, he had set himself the task "to seek that which lies outside of, and beyond, all opposition."¹⁷ Heidegger shared that ambition, even though his detailed presentation of Schelling in the 1936 lecture course stopped well short of the end of the essay where this happens.

When Heidegger wrote in "Letter on 'Humanism'" that "The essence of evil does not consist in the baseness of human action, but rather in the malice of rage" he was drawing on Schelling in an effort to move the discussion of evil away from its actuality in individuals toward evil as a universal activity. But he was also attempting to follow Schelling in the way he took up evil as a general principle that is "everywhere locked in struggle [*Kampf*] with good."¹⁸ Schelling did not see this struggle as a war. He wrote: "The passions against which our negative morality wages war are forces of which each has a common root with its corresponding virtue. The soul of all hate is love, and in the most violent wrath [*Zorn*] only the stillness of the most inner *centrum*, attacked and excited shows itself."¹⁹

Schelling's reference to the *centrum* returns the reader to Baader's account, as found in his discussion of rage cited earlier. This account, which highlighted the return of the *centrum* from the periphery, derived from Boehme.²⁰ Everything points to Boehme as a crucial figure in helping these three thinkers – Baader, Schelling, and Heidegger – move from a perspective that highlighted the kind of negative opposition seen

in war to the model of strife, which is what Heidegger now turned to in order to think what he had earlier in the conversation referred to when he said with reference to the thinking of being as life that “the being of all that is remains ambiguous” (GA 77: 213/138).

III

The third sentence of the paragraph reads: “Both of these, however, healing and raging [*das Heile und das Grimmige*], can essentially occur in being only insofar as being itself is in strife [*das Sein selber das Strittige ist*].” Heidegger in *The Origin of the Work of Art* had employed the word “strife” to avoid a rigid opposition of world and earth so as to think them “in the intimacy of their simple belonging to one another” (GA 5: 35/26–7). This is why he returned to it in *Letter on Humanism* to suggest that strife governs the relation of healing and raging.²¹

Schelling had referenced “strife” in his *Philosophical Investigation into the Essence of Human Freedom*. For example, he wrote: “For every essence can only reveal itself in its opposite, love only in hate, unity in strife [*Streit*]. Were there no severing of principles, unity could not prove its omnipotence; were there no discord, love could not become real.”²² But Boehme had already proposed that life is *streitig* or strifeful.²³ It seems that again Boehme, not Schelling, was Heidegger’s main inspiration here, even if he seemed more ready to accuse Boehme of thinking metaphysically in his account of freedom as belonging to the ground of being than he was to accuse Schelling of doing so on the same subject (GA 86: 232).

Heidegger read Boehme alongside Schelling.²⁴ When Heidegger in 1936 – as part of his exploration of the possibility of a specifically German philosophy – praised the boldness of Schelling’s thinking, he said it was only the continuation of an attitude of thinking which began with Meister Eckhart and is uniquely developed in Jacob Boehme (GA 42: 204/117). Boehme’s role was crucial. Contrary to a widespread impression, *Gelassenheit* is more Boehme’s word than it is Eckhart’s.²⁵ More pertinent in the present context is the fact that Heidegger in his notes on Schelling from the early 1940s quoted from Boehme’s *The Way*

to Christ: “And the visible world is a revelation of the inner spiritual world, out of eternal light and out of eternal shadow, out of spiritual workings. It is a counterthrow [*Gegenwurf*] of eternity, with which eternity has made itself visible.”²⁶ This led Heidegger to ask: “From where and how is evil and torment [*Qual*], wrath [*Grimm*] and the anger [*Zorn*] of God?” Once more attempting to move beyond a negative oppositional thinking toward one based on strife, he answered his own question as follows: “Everything reveals itself only in its counterthrow [*Gegenwurf*] – the good only in evil – light only out of darkness – Spirit only in terms of the base” (GA 86: 232). Heidegger found in Boehme a different sense of the word *Gegenwurf* from that which had its source in Tauler and Seuse, where it was employed as a synonym for *objectum* (GA 6.2: 267/N3: 220). It is clearly not in that sense, but rather in the Boehmian sense, that in “Letter on ‘Humanism’” in the same passage where Heidegger famously called the human being “the shepherd of being,” he also called the human being “the ek-sisting counterthrow of being” (GA 9: 343/260).²⁷ And one suspects that for Heidegger what matters is which – being or the human being – is at the centrum and which at the periphery. Heidegger – with Boehme’s assistance – attempted to move away from human subjectivity in order to think the human being as belonging to being as its counterthrow, just as in Boehme the visible world belongs to eternity as its counterthrow.

IV

The fourth sentence says of the strife: “In it is concealed the essential provenance of nihilation [*Nichtens*].” The reference to the nihilating in being was Heidegger’s way of linking the discussion of evil to his thinking of the nothing that had been the topic of “What is Metaphysics?” in 1929. That he should attempt this is not surprising, given that “Letter on ‘Humanism’”, taken as a whole, represents Heidegger’s main attempt to reread his own thinking being-historically from the perspective of another beginning. The remainder of the paragraph from which these four sentences are drawn are devoted to integrating the thinking of the nothing from the 1920s into the thought of

the abandonment of being. He wrote: "The nihilating in being is the essence of what I call the nothing. Hence, because it thinks being, thinking thinks the nothing" (GA 9: 360/273). *Being and Time* took as its starting-point the long-forgotten question of being, which implied that the question at least had been remembered so it could be asked anew. This begged the question of how it came to be remembered, but it is a question that he subsequently called *die Kehre*, the turning, which he referred to the history of being. In "Letter on 'Humanism'" Heidegger offered his best answer of how it was possible that in "What is Metaphysics?" he thought the oblivion of being (*Seinsvergessenheit*) as the nothing and then re-thought it being-historically as the abandonment of being (*Seinsverlassenheit*) (GA 9: 306/233).²⁸

In "Letter on 'Humanism'" Heidegger proposed that his own thinking of the nothing was made possible by the strife that joined the healing and the raging in a kind of intimacy. In other words, the thinking of *Being and Time* was, from this perspective, already in a sense a thinking of evil. A being-historical thinking of evil is possible only in and out of the healing. That the nothing comes to dominance, that the thinking of being happens in our time as a thinking of the nothing, shows the dominance of what he called the unhale (*Unheil*). The unhale or un-healing, in the sense of "the closure of the dimension of the holy [*des Heilen*]," is what is distinctive of this world epoch (GA 9: 352/267). This lies behind Heidegger's summary of his reflections on evil in the sentence "Being first grants to healing ascent [*Aufgang*] into grace, to raging its compulsion [*Andrang*] to the unhale" (GA 9: 360/273, tm). Being grants the healing that enables evil, the unhale, to appear in the clearing of being.²⁹ In other words, Heidegger's own thinking of the nothing arose from and was a response to the dominance of evil, even if the manner in which he did so was itself, on his own account, to be understood as the happening of a healing.

When a human subject carries out nihilation, it is in the sense of a denial.³⁰ By contrast, when Da-sein nihilates it is "inasmuch as it belongs to the essence of being as that essence in which the human being ek-sists" (GA 9: 190/273). This ek-sisting is "the ek-sisting counterthrow

of being” mentioned earlier and takes us beyond Dasein as the thrown project (*geworfene Entwurf*) because it highlights the importance of the manner in which Dasein belongs to being. One can approach this from within Baader’s framework in terms of what stands at the center and what at the periphery. Or, one can approach it in terms more reminiscent of Boehme, as when Heidegger responded to Boehme by writing that “everything reveals itself only in its counterthrow [*Gegenwurf*] – the good only in evil” (GA 86: 232).

The fourth sentence of the sequence that I have isolated from “Letter on ‘Humanism’” Heidegger says in effect that one must look behind the thinking of the nothing to the strife between healing and the raging for the origin of the nihilating. Being is this strife. But what does that mean for the thinking of evil, especially if one understands as a healing the remembering of what was forgotten in metaphysics (GA 6.2: 439–448/EP 75–83)? The sentence, “With healing, evil appears all the more in the clearing of being,” is already an answer, albeit one that had already been taken a step further still in the unpublished “Evening Conversation.”

We have already seen how in “Evening Conversation” Heidegger declared the will to be evil. He meant that insofar as Western metaphysics, thought being-historically, culminates in evil, then Western metaphysics culminates in evil. Indeed, a contemporary text, “The Anaximander Fragment,” said so directly: in the collapse of thinking into the sciences and into faith the destiny of being (*Geschick des Seins*) is evil (*böse*) (GA 5: 353/266). However, the further consequence that he drew in “Evening Conversation” and put in the mouth of the younger prisoner was that “malice, as which the devastation occurs, may very well remain a basic trait of being itself” (GA 77: 215/139). Heidegger acknowledged that to think that evil dwells in the essence of being represented a challenge. In that text the immediate emphasis was on not becoming pessimistic, but it is also the case, as I have already emphasized, that the claim can be approached only insofar as one has learned to think otherwise, both being-historically and outside of rigid oppositions. Insofar as Heidegger can be read as saying that being is evil, it is, of course, not an identity

statement. This is already reflected in his comment in the treatise *Das Ereignis* about “an ‘epoch’ in the history of being.” He wrote: Being conceals its essence after its emergence in the first beginning; the concealment lets come into being – i.e., now, into ‘power’ – the abandonment of beings by being in the form of beingness as machination. The ‘*agathon*,’ the ‘good,’ ‘is’ its essence: ‘evil’” (GA 71: 17/10). That in the time of *Machenschaft* the essence of good is evil means that being withholds itself and the nihilating comes to dominance. But to think this not in terms of opposition but in terms of perversion is possible only insofar as the reversal is happening, because the malice of rage appears in a manner divorced from all morality only with healing.

Because Heidegger seems to have left the thinking of evil to one side after he wrote “Letter on ‘Humanism,’” it is possible to argue that it occupied him for only a brief interval and that it can be dismissed as a dead end among the thought paths he pursued. But there is reason to believe that it is more fundamental than that insofar as it is intimately connected with the thought that governs the turning, *die Kehre*. In this regard Heidegger loved to quote Hölderlin’s lines from the poem *Patmos*:

*Wo aber die Gefahr ist, wächst
Das Rettende auch.
But where the danger lies, there also grows
That which saves.*

These lines are most often cited from their appearance in “The Question concerning Technology” (GA 7: 29/28, 36/34), but their appearance in “Why Poets?” from 1946, is more revealing for an understanding of “Letter on ‘Humanism.’” After quoting Hölderlin, Heidegger there commented “Perhaps any salvation [*Rettung*] other than that which comes from *where* the danger lies is still within the unhale [*Unheil*] (GA 5: 296/222, tm). It is a thought rephrased close to the end of the essay: “The unhale, as the unhale, traces the healing for us” (GA 5: 319/240, tm).

Heidegger’s insight that when divorced from the will, the thinking of evil as the insurgency of a perversion turns into a conversion, came to him during the course of his profound confrontation with the thought

of Boehme and Schelling. It is his insight into the turning, the turning thought being historically. What emerges most clearly is that one can follow this line of thought only insofar as one has met the challenge of abandoning oppositional and calculative thinking. One should not be surprised to find that Heidegger did not expect the readers of "Letter on 'Humanism'" to be ready for the idea that being is evil thought in this way. Insofar as they did not, then they would not have understood that for the Heidegger of "Letter on 'Humanism'" the thinking of the nothing in *Being and Time* and in "What is Metaphysics?" was already, in a sense unrecognized by Heidegger himself at the time he wrote those works, a thinking of evil. Writing for posterity, he wrote this while holding back the keys that would have allowed his contemporaries to unlock his train of thought there.

There is perhaps no better indication of the gulf separating him from even those who had followed his thought closely than the fact that in 1987 Emmanuel Levinas could ask of *Being and Time* "Can we be assured, however, that there was never any echo of Evil in it?"⁵¹ For Levinas this meant reading Heidegger against Heidegger, reading him with profound suspicion because his silence about the death camps long after the war was over seemed to indicate that he consented to the horror. No doubt Heidegger would have dismissed Levinas's question as moralistic. But one cannot help but wonder what Levinas might have said in return if he had recognized that, in the four sentences from "Letter on 'Humanism'" that I have been investigating, Heidegger made the shocking claim that it is only insofar as there is an echo of evil in *Being and Time*, that this thinking of the nothing can be said to be a thinking of being at all. According to "Letter on 'Humanism'" the very legitimacy of *Being and Time*, the sense in which it can account for its own possibility, depends on the degree to which one can track the traces of the unhale in it.

NOTES

- 1 That the Schelling lectures on their own are not enough is well-illustrated by the difficulty Werner Marx has interpreting the discussion without GA 77: *Gibt es auf Erden ein Mass?* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1983) 18–19; *Is There a Measure on Earth?* trans. Thomas J. Nenon and Reginald Lilly (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 30–31.
- 2 One important publication that does take account of these two volumes of GA in order to understand these sentences from “Letter on ‘Humanism’” is Aleš Novák, *Heideggers Bestimmung des Bösen* (Nordhausen: Traugott Bautz, 2011), 99–106. See also Bret W. Davis, *Heidegger and the Will* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 293 and Bernd Irlenborn, *Der Ingrim des Aufruhrs. Heidegger und das Problem des Bösen* (Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 2000), 222–23.
- 3 F. W. J. Schelling, Über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit in *Philosophische Schriften* (Landshut: Philipp Krüll, 1809), 451; *Philosophical Investigation into the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006), 40.
- 4 Schelling, *Freedom*, 367/35. Baader reprinted the essay in which this phrase is found, “Ueber Starres und Fliessendes,” in *Beiträge zur dynamischen Philosophie im Gegensaze der mechanischen* (Berlin: Realschulbuchhandlung, 1809), 149.
- 5 Schelling, *Freedom*, 38/34 at GA 42: 248/143.
- 6 Boehme seems to have taken up the word from Luther’s translation of Psalm 90.7: Martin Luther, *Die gantze Heilige Schrift*, Bd. 2 (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1974), 1045. Jacob Boehme himself wrote: “we lie captive in God’s wrath [*Grimm*] between anger and love in great danger.” *Sex puncta theosophica, oder Von sechs Theosophischen Punkten*, Sämmtliche Werke VI, ed. K. W. Schiebler (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1846), 357; *Six Theosophic Points*, trans. John Rolleston Earle (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1971), 47.

- 7 Schelling, *Freedom*, 493/66, tm.
- 8 Schelling, *Freedom*, 452/41.
- 9 Schelling, *Freedom*, 475–476/55.
- 10 Schelling, *Freedom*, 442n and 445/35n and 37.
- 11 Schelling, *Freedom*, 476/55.
- 12 One clear difference between Schelling and Heidegger might well be that for the former we need evil for good to reveal itself, whereas for the latter it is with healing that evil appears all the more in the clearing of Being.
- 13 Schelling, *Freedom*, 26/24.
- 14 Schelling, *Freedom*, 429–30/27.
- 15 Schelling, *Freedom*, 431–32/28.
- 16 Schelling, *Freedom*, 497/69.
- 17 Schelling, *Freedom*, 511/77.
- 18 Schelling, *Freedom*, 451/40.
- 19 Schelling, *Freedom*, 461/46.
- 20 On the *centrum* in Boehme, see *Aurora*, ed. Andrew Weeks (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 20.
- 21 Heidegger described the strife of world and earth here as a *Gegen-einander* but not as a *Gegensatz*.
- 22 Schelling, *Freedom*, 452/41, tm.
- 23 Boehme, *Sex puncta theosophica*, 355; *Six Theosophic Points*, 44.
- 24 The only extended study of Boehme and Heidegger I am aware of is Hans-Joachim Friedrich, *Der Ungrund der Freiheit im Denken von Böhme, Schelling und Heidegger* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: frommann-holzboog, 2009). Unfortunately, it does not take account of GA 77 and it was too early for GA 86. Furthermore, it does not mention the four sentences from “Letter on ‘Humanism’” with which I am concerned here.
- 25 See, for example, *Von wahrer Gelassenheit*, in *Der Weg zu Christo, Sämtliche Werke I*, 97–98; trans. 85–136. It seems that the word *Gelassenheit* appears in only one of Eckhart’s authenticated texts where it is introduced as a synonym for *Abgeschiedenheit*: *Die Rede der Unterscheidung, Die deutschen Werke*, Band 5 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1936), 283; *The Complete Mystical Works*

- of *Meister Eckhart*, trans. M. O'C. Walshe (New York: Crossroad, 2009), 514.
- 26 Jacob Boehme, *Der Weg zu Christo*, Sämtliche Werke 1, ed. K. W. Schiebler, zweite Auflage (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1860), 144; *The Way to Christ*, trans. Peter Erb (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 185–86, tm. In the same section of GA 86 there is a further quoted phrase from Boehme: “Die Qual des Abgrund.” It is not from *Aurora*, as the editor suggests, but from *Von dreifachen Leben des Menschen*, Sämtliche Werke IV, ed. K. W. Schiebler (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1842), 25. Heidegger omitted the final words from that sentence. They read: “since the self-will and the released [*gelassener*] will work one with another, as [do] evil and good.” One can speculate that Heidegger stopped the quotation early because he sought to divorce *Gelassenheit* from the will.
- 27 For this reason, Heidegger in his own copy of *Brief über den “Humanismus”* annotated the phrase “the ek-sisting counterthrow of being” with the comment “besser: im Sein qua Ereignis” (GA 9: 342/260).
- 28 See further Robert Bernasconi, *The Question of Language in Heidegger’s History of Being* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1985), especially 54–57.
- 29 The close association of the unhale with evil in the sense of malignancy (*der Bösertige*) is made clear from some notes on Sophocles’ *Ajax* that Heidegger made for a lecture on the Anaximander fragment (GA 78: 305 and 307).
- 30 Heidegger is probably thinking of Sartre’s account according to which the origin of negation is traced to the freedom which reveals itself in anguish: Jean-Paul Sartre, *L’être et le néant* (Paris: Gallimard, 1943), 71; *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), 34.
- 31 Emmanuel Levinas, “Comme un consentement à l’horrible,” *Le nouvel observateur*, no. 1211 (28 January 1987): 83; trans. Paula Wissing, “As If Consenting to Horror,” *Critical Inquiry* 15: 2 (Winter 1989): 488.

BOOK REVIEW

Dominique Janicaud's

Heidegger in France

Wayne J. Froman

Dominique Janicaud, *Heidegger in France*.
Eds. and trans. François Raffoul and David Pettigrew.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015.
xv, 540 pp.

Heidegger In France is a translation of Dominique Janicaud's massive work *Heidegger en France*, which tracks the history of the role, played in various ways, of Heidegger's thought in French philosophy over the course of seven decades, from the late 1920s up to the year 2000.¹ As one might well expect from the author, the text is exceptionally careful, measured, judicious and thorough. One of the dimensions of this multi-dimensional study pertains to "the Heidegger controversy" or Heidegger controversies, in short, "l'affaire Heidegger" in France, and together with Janicaud's earlier *The Shadow of that Thought*,² *Heidegger in France* makes it manifest that his voice is indeed one of those sorely missed as students of Heidegger's writings must grapple with the most recent of said controversies.

Important dimensions of Janicaud's text also include the history of French translations of Heidegger's work and the issues associated with this, the role played by Heidegger's visits to France (in 1955 for the

Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual 7 (2017): 182–99.

conference at Cerisy, in 1958 for a lecture in Aix en Provence and in 1966, 1968, and 1969 to conduct the Le Thor seminars in Provence), Janicaud's philosophical assessments both of published studies of Heidegger's thought and original philosophical work taking Heidegger's work as point of departure, as well as the development or evolution of Dominique Janicaud's interaction with his mentor, Jean Beaufret, a pivotal figure where Heidegger in France is concerned. Developments in each dimension reverberate throughout the others. The French text is comprised of two volumes, the first of which is 594 pages in length, while the second, 291 pages in length, consists of eighteen interviews with people significantly involved in the history related by Janicaud in the first volume, and seven of these are included in the one volume translation. The translator's "Introduction" to *Heidegger in France* notes that in a 2002 review of the French text that appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement*, George Steiner wrote that Janicaud's is an "intellectual history of the first rank," and I would suggest that the philosophical sensitivity and perspicacity called for by the subject matter in this particular history, and provided by Dominique Janicaud, is integral to that particular judgment. The translators are to be congratulated indeed for seeing this project with its sizeable proportions through to its successful completion. As a mark of the success, at points where the meticulous judiciousness of Dominique Janicaud can risk leaving the reader suspended or stranded in mid-air, the translators manage to track the subtlety of the text, which can, by not resolving fully all the equivocal nuances, get us to the other side of the passage in question. I will illustrate briefly with a passage from the eighth chapter, which addresses the turmoil precipitated by the Víctor Farías book,³ and which is entitled: "The Return of the Repressed?" Janicaud is discussing a piece published in *Le Monde* of May 27, 1988 under the title "Heidegger: La parole á la défense" (with the accent in "la défense" missing on p. 220 of the translation), in which the author, Roger-Pol Droit reviewed a recently published text by François Fédier, *Heidegger: anatomie d'un scandale*,⁴ whose aim was the protection of "Heidegger's reputation" against the slander propagated by Farías and his followers. Here is the passage by Janicaud, in translation:

In his account of Fédier's book, Roger-Pol Droit tried to stick to the facts. We certainly cannot expect him to unconditionally support Fédier, the most resolute defender of "the accused." We have seen that this is not the case. But among the arguments that he gave to justify important reservations, the most decisive were not, in my view, the details that he cited (for example, the case of Abraham a Sancta Clara or that of the dedication to Eugen Fischer – points on which Fédier seemed, on the contrary, convincing): the most decisive were his reservations concerning what tended, paradoxically, to "weaken the very path of Heidegger." Indeed, the excellent defense of Heidegger's "reputation," of his dignity, of his motivation, of the extenuating circumstances that one must recognize, led Fédier to accord less attention to the very core of the thought that constitutes the unique originality of the Master.

(222)

Regarding the question as to how to address the various dimensions of the work together, Janicaud explains his choices in his "Introduction" to the work and the straightforward account in terms of synchrony and diachrony warrants citing the short paragraph fully. Janicaud writes here:

The chief obstacle remains: how could we combine narrative and analysis to account for this enormous mass of facts, events, and thoughts, in order to untangle the most essential knots, to mark the necessity of divisions? A completely synchronic composition, working on the level of general themes, would drain all the life and even interest from this sequence of discoveries and episodes, which constitute veritable intrigue that is often fascinating and almost always unpredictable. Conversely, a purely chronological overview would miss the

coherence or incoherence of the positions that are under discussion. We have therefore chosen to respect the diachronic order, punctuating it with divisions that will in each case have to be justified. Each main chapter corresponds in principle to a decade but we have not applied this rule mechanically, which would have led to absurdities. (11)

In the first chapter, “First Crossings of the Rhine,” Janicaud points out, on the basis of reports and publications, how quickly after the publication of *Being and Time* in 1927, there was recognition “that a philosophical event had taken place in Germany” on the part of such distinguished professors as Léon Brunschwicq and Xavier Léon. Brunschwicq spoke of a “profound resonance” to Heidegger’s thought. In a volume containing the first translations by Henri Corbin, Alexandre Koyré wrote in his Introduction: “In Germany’s philosophical firmament, Martin Heidegger’s star shines with a brilliance of the highest order. Some would say it is not even a star: it is a new sun that rises” (25). Despite the astronomical bobble here, Koyré’s highly laudatory Introduction would certainly play a role in establishing Heidegger’s recognition.

At the close of the chapter entitled “First Crossings of the Rhine,” Janicaud writes:

Long before Jean Beaufret, and even before Sartre, brilliant minds and precursors whose perspicacity deserves to be commended produced pioneering works and interpretive advances that were for the most part remarkable. In different ways, Gurvitch, Koyré, Levinas, Wahl, Corbin and even Aron [Raymond Aron, who was reading both Husserl and Heidegger in the early 1930’s and was instrumental both in introducing Sartre to phenomenology and facilitating the publication of the Corbin volume] laid the foundations for an understanding of this thought and lit the first fires of a paradoxical

glory that Sartre, long after his time in Berlin [in 1933] would brilliantly establish. (31)

It is noteworthy, I think, that if one were to add to Janicaud's list here the names Brunschwicq and Léon, the two identified by Janicaud as exceptionally early in calling attention to Heidegger and his thought, and a hitherto unknown Rachel Bespaloff, who wrote a letter, later published in a journal, and addressed to Daniel Halévy, which Janicaud describes as one of the most beautiful texts ever inspired by Heidegger, eight of the total then of nine were Jews. The home discipline of the eighth, Henri Corbin, was the study of ancient Persian religiosity and Islam. In Janicaud's Introduction, he calls attention to the significant participation of Jews in the French reception of Heidegger's thought. The fact is not altogether unrelated to the statistically strong "over-representation" of Jewish students in his early courses going back to Marburg, a fact that Heidegger himself evidently found puzzling. The pertinent questions here eventually open on immeasurably larger questions. As we now know, towards the end of the period covered by this first chapter of Janicaud's text, Heidegger himself would touch on those issues briefly in his so-called "black notebooks," and what he ended up with there, I think it fair to say, hardly amounts to one of his particularly insightful analyses.

Janicaud's next chapter bears the title "The Sartre Bomb," which is also known as *Being and Nothingness*.⁵ Here we find ourselves on more widely familiar ground. Published in 1943, Sartre's text, Janicaud observes, is saturated with Heideggerian themes, but recast as they are in terms of a philosophy of consciousness, it is possible to say that the themes remain the same in name only. Given the exceptional scope of Janicaud's text, he at times resorts to condensations that are sometimes successful and sometimes are less than fully successful. To my mind, the condensation of how crucial features of *Being and Time* are transformed, so to speak, in *Being and Nothingness* is a case of the latter. I find that to be so particularly when Janicaud writes that in *Being and Nothingness*, the ontological difference becomes the difference between being-for-itself and being-in-itself. This could be suggestive provided one

thinks this within the context of what Merleau-Ponty will later characterize as Sartre's "truncated dialectic," but sooner rather than later, the old saying (apparently native to the state of Maine) does come to mind: "you can't get there from here." Janicaud, accurately, and fairly, points out that Sartre never did say that one of his aims had been faithfulness to Heidegger's meaning. Janicaud also makes what I consider a fair point to the effect that whatever one makes of Sartre's "appropriation" of Heidegger's thoughts, Sartre did come up with points that have had some philosophical staying power, including "bad faith" (which Janicaud associates suggestively with "das Man") and "being-for-the-other," points I consider well chosen.

Sartre would visit Heidegger in December of 1952 and lecture at Freiburg. Evidently, the visit was less than fruitful. From that point on, each would go his separate way, without mentioning the other in print. But we get a bit ahead of the action here. *Being and Nothingness* had catapulted the name Heidegger to the status of a "household word" designating the mysterious source, the father of existentialism, a figure whom philosophers needed to rediscover.

Janicaud's next chapter is called "Postwar Fascinations." Some details are provided concerning visits to Heidegger by Paris notables including Frédéric Towarnicki, Edgar Morin, Maurice de Gandillac, Jean Wahl, and last, but decidedly not least, Jean Beaufret, the author of the letter of questions to which Heidegger would respond with his "Letter on Humanism," and whose role in regard to Heidegger in France was now taking shape: "recognized as the privileged interlocutor, gradually he became a sort of personal representative of the Master [*le Maître, der Meister*] in France" (66).

It is in this chapter that Janicaud discusses Merleau-Ponty and his 1945 *Phenomenology of Perception*. Janicaud describes how Merleau-Ponty, like Sartre, situated his thinking with respect to both Husserl and Heidegger. It had been noted before that the crux of a type of back-and-forth analysis between the German phenomenologists lies in what Merleau-Ponty says in regard to temporality. At this point Janicaud writes: "what is not at all Heideggerian...is the apprehension of the

essence of time as subjectivity. ‘*We must understand time as the subject and the subject as time*’” (61). On my reading, that Merleau-Ponty does not simply say that we must understand time as the subject but also says that we must understand the subject as time is indicative of the fact that the intent there is not to re-introduce a self-contained Cartesian subject. While Janicaud observes later that Merleau-Ponty continued to be occupied with Heidegger’s thought after *Phenomenology of Perception*, unfortunately, Janicaud does not say anything in this volume about Merleau-Ponty’s unfinished text at the time of his death in 1961 and published soon after under the title *Le Visible et l’Invisible*.⁶ In one of the Working Notes published with the text, Merleau-Ponty wrote that it is necessary to understand as ontology what in *Phenomenology of Perception* may appear to be psychology.⁷ I take him to mean that it is, in fact, ontology, and when it is read that way, it is clear that Merleau-Ponty was quite aware of the ontological difference, which is rather an indispensable step when it comes to understanding Heidegger. Janicaud also does not say anything about the *Notes de Cours* from Merleau-Ponty’s lectures at the Collège de France shortly before Merleau-Ponty’s death, and published in 1996.⁸ Merleau-Ponty’s proposals, particularly in regard to Heidegger’s later thinking, before significant texts, such as *Contributions to Philosophy* (GA 65), were published, are a very strong indication that he was well prepared by his own earlier work for what came later from Heidegger.

All in all, I am inclined to think along the lines indicated in one of the interviews in Part II of Janicaud’s text, specifically the interview with Éliane Escoubas, when she says that “...the reception of Heidegger’s aesthetics [sic] as well as his ontology in France passes through Merleau-Ponty” (368). In a 2010 article on Derrida’s reading of Heidegger, Françoise Dastur (also one of those interviewed by Janicaud) made the provocative point that the legacy of Heidegger’s thought in France is to be found, paradoxically, in Merleau-Ponty’s work rather than Derrida’s, and the reason she gives is that Derrida remains too close to Sartre.⁹ Presumably, Dastur says “paradoxically” because of the centrality of perception in Merleau-Ponty’s analyses, whereas for

Heidegger, perception as long understood had long provided the model for the standard ontology. But it is precisely the long-standing model of perception that is de-structed in Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*. It is rather gratifying to find Merleau-Ponty thus viewed as a major contender when it comes to the path for Heidegger's legacy in France.

The following chapter, "Humanism in Turmoil," addresses Heidegger's "Letter on 'Humanism'", which serves, in effect, for a response to Jean-Paul Sartre's essay "Existentialism Is a Humanism,"¹⁰ in particular for Sartre's characterizations of Heidegger's thought, and the Letter provides a first look at features of Heidegger's later thought. Janicaud notes how readily Heidegger took the opportunity to respond at length to the question concerning humanism that Beaufret apparently thought needed refinement or development but sent nonetheless in the interests of an opportunity to visit the philosopher again. A comment here from Dominique Janicaud warrants attention. He writes:

We also have to recognize that the Master of Freiburg needed a certain boldness (or recklessness?) to shift the terms of the debate to a purely ontological – and thus dehumanized ground, only two years after the discovery of the Nazi crimes and the other horrors of the Second World War. One easily conceives that he may have wanted to remain above the political or national divisions, and for good reason! However, now that fifty years have elapsed, should we not recognize the troubling nature of his obstinate refusal to utter even one word, or acknowledge the suffering and distress of human beings, whoever they were? (80)

Something of a response will come in the course of Janicaud's interview, in Part II of this study, with Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, who says: "He said nothing...: he did not want to. He did not want to say anything against Germany" (389).

Janicaud's next chapter is called "The Bright Spell of the '50s." As Janicaud puts it, although unavoidably somewhat ambiguous, and notwithstanding ongoing significant opposition by the university to the dissemination of Heidegger's thought, Heidegger's name and work grew in prestige even as this took different routes in different domains. The highlight was undoubtedly Heidegger in France, literally, for eight days devoted to his thought at Cerisy. Jean Beaufret carefully planned the whole trip with the collaboration of Kostas Axelos. Heidegger opened the first day with the lecture "Was ist das, die Philosophie?" (GA 11). It provided an opportunity for participants to witness first-hand how his thought proceeded. Almost without exception, the fifty participants found the week a success. All indications were that Heidegger agreed. Janicaud points out that Heidegger was in all probability exceptionally pleased by the reception by virtue of the fact that in Germany, after the fairly recent de-Nazification procedure and the prohibition of his teaching, his fortunes were at a relatively low ebb.

The visit marked the transition from Heidegger as father of existentialism to Heidegger as major interpreter of the metaphysical tradition of the West. Three more lectures followed, in 1956, 1957, and 1958 in Aix-en-Provence and Janicaud cites a description of Heidegger delivering that 1958 lecture, "Hegel and the Greeks," to a thousand people. Janicaud also notes that these years saw "a wave of translations." They included translations of *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit* and *Kant und der Problem der Metaphysik* by Alphonse de Waelhens and Walter Biemel, *Der Brief über den Humanismus* by Roger Munier, *Vorträge und Aufsätze* by André Préau, and *Was heisst Denken*.² by Gérard Granel.

At the end of the chapter "The Bright Spell of the '50s," Janicaud includes the first of eight "Epilogues" at the ends of successive chapters. These "Epilogues" basically track the development of Janicaud's engagement with Heidegger's thought beginning in lycée and continuing with his relation with Beaufret (evidently a cousin), who became Janicaud's mentor for a thesis that actually addressed "Hegel and the Destiny of Greece."

In any event, the “bright spell” came to a close in the year 1961. The year was a watershed in a number of respects. There was the shock of the death of Merleau-Ponty at the age of 52. At the time, Merleau-Ponty was working on having Heidegger invited to lecture at the Collège de France. Lévi-Strauss, having just taken up a position at the Collège de France, installed structuralism firmly in the intellectual setting at the time. Michel Foucault published *A History of Madness in the Age of Reason*. Emmanuel Levinas published *Totality and Infinity*. At the same time, the Fifth Republic was being installed, and the Algerian war ended.

The polemics regarding the political topic returned when Jean-Pierre Faye discovered previously unknown texts in Freiburg, in which Heidegger, as Rector, expressed support for Hitler. At one point, Janicaud characterizes certain features of the polemics as “Byzantine,” and I take that as warrant not to try to sort out the twists and turns here or in regard to subsequent outbursts. In the interview with Jacques Derrida in Part II of the text, Derrida says at one point: “... I found myself, with others, in the situation of a nondevotee who, at the same time, cannot stand the anti-Heideggerians. We are caught in the cross-fire...I strive to find a path, a line, a place where one might continue to read Heidegger seriously, to question him without giving in either to political Heideggerianism or to its opposite.... There is nothing original in this: there are a few of us who respect this rule. I wanted to emphasize this” (345). It is a point I find quite understandable. Derrida will return shortly.

First, briefly, apropos Levinas, in his 1946–47 lectures he had already made known a dissatisfaction with “Mitsein” as discussed by Heidegger (and worth noting is that in those immediately post-war commentaries Levinas does not mention Heidegger’s early public endorsement of the National Socialist regime or the topic of the Shoah). Sartre too had taken exception on the topic of “Mitsein,” and in *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas’s unnamed interlocutor is, first of all, Sartre. Where Heidegger is concerned, first, on Levinas’s assessment, Heidegger’s “Mitsein” does not offer the alterity needed to respond successfully to Sartre. Beyond this, when it comes to Heidegger, I find

that Levinas's issue, so to speak, is largely a matter of disappointment when viewed perhaps particularly in regard to *Introduction to Metaphysics*, in that earlier he had lauded Heidegger's phenomenological break-through, so to speak, to the world in which we find ourselves, and now found Heidegger leaving this behind as he sought Being (a point that *Contributions to Philosophy* would appear to confirm later, depending on how one reads Heidegger's specification there of a necessity to think Being without beginning from beings). In Levinas's later *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, Heidegger, actually, is hardly in sight, the title notwithstanding. Janicaud does venture to say of *Totality and Infinity* that "...it required the exceptional lucidity of some particularly attentive minds such as Wahl, Ricoeur, Blanchot or Derrida to recognize that these stakes (i.e. those of *Totality and Infinity*) apart from any narrowly partisan position – were on par with the most far-reaching intuitions of the Master of Freiburg" (122).

Turning now to Derrida, I would venture to say that Janicaud's condensation here of how Derrida proceeds is one of the more successful of Janicaud's condensations. He describes how Derrida engages in an exceptionally close reading of Heidegger's text that brings out a type of instability where Derrida finds a "trace" of presence's withdrawal, and thereby marks, in effect, how the "literality" of the text is undermined. What lends itself to "deconstruction" in this way is left standing provided one reads it "under erasure," which is akin to how Heidegger in late work would cross out Being and leave it crossed out in the text (an indication, I would say, of Heidegger's own sensitivity to how "Being" has a tendency to lend itself to the type of metaphysical reading that concerned Levinas as well as others).

Janicaud quotes Derrida at one point to the effect that Derrida sometimes had the impression that Heidegger represents the single most profound defense of what Derrida would call into question. At the same time, Derrida characterizes his relation to Heidegger as one of admiration, of respect and recognition, and identifies Heidegger as the thinker who constantly "oversees" him, has him under surveillance (347). In his important piece on "Différance," Derrida says explicitly that what he wants

to attempt would not be possible without the opening of Heidegger's questions.¹¹

In the "Epilogue" to his chapter "Renewed Polemics, New Shift," Janicaud describes his own visits with Heidegger. In addition, he reports here on how he reached the point of deciding that he would have to put some distance between himself and Jean Beaufret, and specifies that a reason was Beaufret's repeated "unconditional" advocacy for Heidegger. In particular, such distance would become especially necessary when Janicaud prepared to write his *The Shadow of that Thought*, which would be published in 1990. Later in *Heidegger in France*, in recounting a dispute concerning translating, Janicaud asks whether it was necessary for Beaufret to charge that the "official university curriculum" categorically refused to address Heidegger, which was clearly not so.

The long-awaited book from Henri Birault, *Heidegger et l'expérience de la Pensée*,¹² would not appear until 1978, two years after Heidegger's death. But Birault is pertinent at this point because he taught at the Sorbonne for some years and his courses were exceptionally well attended, all of which is evidence that the complaint to the effect that the university was less than receptive to the teaching of Heidegger may indeed have been, as Janicaud suggested, somewhat exaggerated or distorted. During my own years in Paris in the early 1970s, I had the good fortune to hear everyone from Ricoeur to Levinas to Derrida to Lacan to Lévi-Strauss to Birault and the last named was decidedly one of the best lecturers. As it turns out, at the end of Birault's book, as Janicaud puts it, "he remained split between Nietzsche and Heidegger" (174). To this day, I've never understood why that book has not been translated, particularly given the extent to which interest in Nietzsche, and Nietzsche in comparison with Heidegger, has increased.

Janicaud's chapter "Dissemination or Reconstruction," begins with the following:

The years that led from the events of 1968 to the death of the Master in 1976 cannot be characterized in one way. On the contrary, the French reception of Heidegger split up into different, if not contradictory camps.

The appropriation of his thinking became dogmatic in each camp, each closing in upon itself; marginalizations, and indeed excommunications, proliferated. In acknowledging this dissemination, we are not forgetting what this allusion to the title of Jacques Derrida's book (which appeared in 1972) connotes: threads become woven with more specialized research and with Heidegger's most difficult, ambitious, and inapparent themes, one should neither sever them nor forget them.¹³ But did this "dissemination" foreshadow a reconstruction of the philosophical landscape? (141)

Regarding the events of '68, in effect, as Janicaud understands the matter, a tremor that was felt in a number of institutions, this was actually a time of decline for Heidegger's influence, in favor of structuralism, of linguistics, and of a renewed Marxism (due, no doubt, in good measure to Sartre's *Critique de la Raison Dialectique*¹⁴). Janicaud notes that "if Heidegger's thought is reintroduced into the ideological horizon of the time, it is rather through Marcusean protest – also relayed by Kostas Axelos – against the one-dimensionality of technology and the increasing tyranny of a society of production and consumption on the road to globalization, suffocating the message of thinkers and word of the poets" (145).

Heidegger, however, did return to France during this period. In Provence, as a guest of the poet René Char (whom Heidegger, at his own initiative, had met and conversed with when in Paris before the Cerisy conclave), Heidegger conducted a series of seminar sessions, first in 1966, and then in 1968 and 1969, on topics including a proximity between Heraclitus and Parmenides, Hegel's early *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, and Heidegger's own thinking in regard to the destiny of metaphysics since the Greeks.

The "reconstruction?" in "Dissemination or Reconstruction?" (the chapter's title) pertains largely to the publication of the first of three volumes of Jean Beaufret's *Dialogue avec Heidegger*.¹⁵

“Death and Transfiguration?” is the title of Janicaud’s next chapter. Heidegger dies in 1976. Janicaud writes that it would be naïve to expect a transfiguration, “all things being equal,” comparable to the apotheosis of Roman emperors. The responses in philosophical journals broke down between those that exhibited restraint or discretion and those of cautious homage. Janicaud identifies a text from Pierre Aubenque as a standout among the latter. Aubenque confesses his “painful and deep conviction that one of History’s few great thinkers in history had passed” (166). At the same time, Aubenque distanced himself from the “French Heideggerians.” He closed by addressing the political question in an apologetic mode that appealed to Heidegger’s difficult situation, and did so, Janicaud observes, somewhat naively.

Jean Beaufret will die in 1982. In a moment of tribute in his text, Janicaud mentions Beaufret’s inimitable style of joining what was important to the anecdotal by explaining them together, and notes how with this and other traits of originality, Heidegger’s inspiration takes on its own unforgettable life in the French language. With Beaufret’s death, six years after Heidegger’s death, there was an impression that an era was drawing to an end. Janicaud points to two publications from that period that do signal vitality. One is Reiner Schürmann’s *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*, about which Janicaud notes that it contributed, from a progressive (left-leaning) perspective, to a resurgence of interest in Heidegger in the early eighties.¹⁶ The other is an edition of *Cahiers de l’Herne* in tribute to Heidegger. It was edited by Michel Haar, and Dominique Janicaud writes of “the care for quality [that] presided over the endeavor” (181). Janicaud identifies, as the guiding thread, the completion of metaphysics in the age of technology (at a point, one might add, when the “Gestell” was advancing on Paris).

In the title of Janicaud’s next chapter, “The Letter and the Spirit,” “the letter” refers to the French translation, or more precisely, two translations, of the full text of *Sein und Zeit*, which appeared in 1985 and 1986, the first by Emmanuel Martineau,¹⁷ and the second by François Vezin,¹⁸ just short of sixty years after *Sein und Zeit* first saw

the light of day. The “Spirit” in the chapter title “The Letter and the Spirit” is a reference to the Derrida text *De l’esprit: Heidegger et la Question*, published in 1987 and based on Derrida’s lecture at the Heidegger conference held at the Collège International de Philosophie.¹⁹ At the end of the chapter, Janicaud notes that Derrida’s text appeared only several months before the scandal provoked by the appearance of the Fariás text, *Heidegger and Nazism*, and then Janicaud writes: “With the ‘Heidegger affair’ we descend vertiginously in the quality of the discourse...” (205). There is one point from Janicaud’s observations with regard to “l’affaire Heidegger” that can shed additional light here and that concerns how it is that much of the intensity can be attributed to the extraordinarily divisive issue of French collaboration that still simmered in the background.

We come now to the final decade of the twentieth century. Janicaud’s chapter is called “Between Erudite Scholarship and Techno-Science.” With respect to the “erudite scholarship,” Janicaud mentions in particular the “monumental study” from Jean Greisch, *Ontologie et Temporalité: Esquisse d’une interprétation intégrale de Sein und Zeit*.²⁰ Janicaud writes of this text that: “Greisch took a salutary distance from the French quarrels; and one can affirm without exaggerating that Greisch undeniably advanced research in France” (244). Janicaud addresses a number of studies involving Heidegger’s thoughts on science and technology, a topic broached several years earlier by Janicaud himself in *Powers of the Rational: Science, Technology, and the Future of Thought*.²¹

This brings us to the closing chapter, “At the Crossroads.” Janicaud writes: “There is no limit to the possible topics that would lead to a final dialogue between French interpreters and Heidegger’s thought. We have gathered the themes – in the contemporary context – that seemed the most significant with respect to which the debate is far from being closed...” (268). I will simply retain the list here, with a comment or two, and without details from Janicaud’s brief discussions of work ongoing. Janicaud lists: the question of phenomenology, the relation to the Hebraic tradition with its connections with the possibility of a new

ethics (with respect to which Janicaud notes the strong contribution made by Marlène Zarader), the role of hermeneutics, the theological debate, and the legacy of a complete rereading of metaphysics. Janicaud briefly addresses Paul Ricoeur's contributions in regard to several of these topics. I think it fair to say that Ricoeur, notwithstanding reservations he had in regard to Heidegger's thought, indeed, in all probability because of them, contributed, in one way or another, and to one extent or another, to the conversation in regard to each of them.

In the Conclusion that follows "At the Crossroads," Janicaud finds that the history he has tracked has confirmed what inspired the text, namely, the omnipresence of Heidegger's influence in France, directly or indirectly, during the major part of the twentieth century. Furthermore, this has been possible only by a diversification of that influence. Finally, and I would say crucially, all this required a two-way dynamic. Heidegger was attentive to his French audience, welcoming (both literally and figuratively), and grasped the opportunities and the invitations he received. Janicaud writes: "as for the French, it is clear that the 'reception' would have been infinitely less influential if it had not been sustained and stimulated by the brightest minds from Koyré to Levinas, from Beaufret to Birault, and from Merleau-Ponty to Derrida" (302).

With respect to the moment in time when Dominique Janicaud's work on these volumes was at an end, I will close with two comments from the Conclusion to *Heidegger in France*. Janicaud writes: "What has appeared incontestable to us is that the ideological and personalized fascination that marked the first decades of Heidegger's reception in France has faded" (320). And then: "If the intellectual landscape has changed completely, this transformation should not be limited to France. At least the awareness that an important page of philosophical history seemed to have been turned nourishes the hope that our historical research and analysis would not turn out to be fruitless. Each one will judge the result for him- or herself" (321).

NOTES

- 1 Dominique Janicaud, *Heidegger en France* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel S.A., 2001); *Heidegger in France*, trans. François Raffoul and David Pettigrew (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press 2015). All numbers in parentheses refer to page numbers of the book under review.
- 2 Dominique Janicaud, *Heidegger and the Question of Politics*, trans. Michael Gendre (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1996).
- 3 Victor Fariás, *Heidegger and Nazism*, trans. Joseph Margolis and Tom Rockmore (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).
- 4 François Fédier, *Heidegger: anatomie d'un scandale* (Paris: Lafont 1988).
- 5 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984).
- 6 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible: suivi de Notes de travail*, Édition de Claude Lefort (Paris: Gallimard, 1964); *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press 1968).
- 7 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New York: Routledge, 1962).
- 8 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Notes de cours; 1959–1961*, préface de Claude Lefort (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1996).
- 9 See Françoise Dastur, “The Reception and Non-reception of Heidegger’s Thought in France” in *French Interpretations Of Heidegger: An Exceptional Reception*, eds. David Pettigrew and François Raffoul (Albany: SUNY Press, 2008), 78–79.
- 10 “Existentialism Is a Humanism,” trans. Carol Macomber (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).
- 11 Jacques Derrida, “Différance” in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).
- 12 Henri Birault, *Heidegger et l'expérience de la pensée* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978).

- 13 Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
- 14 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique de la raison dialectique: Théorie des ensemble pratiques précédé de Questions de méthode* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960).
- 15 Jean Beaufret, *Dialogue avec Heidegger*, Vol. 1: Philosophie grecque. (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1973).
- 16 Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*, trans. Christine-Marie Gros (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).
- 17 Martin Heidegger, *Être et Temps*, trans. Emmanuel Martineau (Paris: Authentica, 1985).
- 18 Martin Heidegger, *Être et Temps*, trans. François Vezin (Paris: Gallimard, 1986).
- 19 Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).
- 20 Jean Greisch, *Ontologie et Temporalité: Esquisse d'une interprétation intégrale de "Sein und Zeit"* (Paris: PUF, 1994).
- 21 Dominique Janicaud, *Powers of the Rational: Science, Technology, and the Future of Thought*, trans. Peg Birmingham and Elizabeth Birmingham (Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1994).

TEXTS OF HEIDEGGER CITED AND ABBREVIATIONS USED

References to the works of Martin Heidegger are provided parenthetically in the text by the volume of *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1975–, abbreviated “GA”), followed by the German pagination, a slash, and the English pagination of published translations where extant. The relevant translations are listed following the information for the corresponding GA volume. There is one exception to this practice. No references to the pages of English translations are provided in the case of *Being and Time* (GA 2); instead the GA pagination is followed by “sz,” referring to the single edition, re-issued several times: *Sein und Zeit*, 11th ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1967), since the pagination of sz is contained in all three of the English translations of *Sein und Zeit*. Modifications to published translations are noted by ‘tm’; modifications to emphasis by ‘em.’

FROM THE GESAMTAUSGABE

- GA 2 *Sein und Zeit*. Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 1977. English translation: *Being and Time*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh, rev. Dennis J. Schmidt. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010; trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.
- 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 6.1 *Nietzsche I*. Ed. Brigitte Schillbach. 1996.
- GA 7 *Vorträge und Aufsätze*. Ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann. 2000.
- 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 10 *Der Satz vom Grund*. Ed. Petra Jaeger. 1997. English translation: *The Principle of Reason*. Trans. Reginald Lily. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.
- 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 13 *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens*. Ed. Hermann Heidegger. 1983.
- 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 15 *Seminare*. Ed. Curd Ochwadt. 1986.
- GA 16 *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*. Ed. Hermann Heidegger. 2000.
- 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 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 38 *Logik als die Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache*. Ed. Günter Seubold. 1998. English translation: *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*. Trans. Wanda Torres Gregory and Yvonne Unna. Albany: SUNY Press, 2009.
- GA 39 *Hölderlins Hymnen “Germanien” und “Der Rhein.”* 2nd ed. Ed. Susanne Ziegler. 1989. English Translation: *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine.”* Trans.

- William McNeill and Julia Ireland. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014.
- GA 40 *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. Ed. Petra Jaeger. 1983. English translation: *Introduction to Metaphysics*. 2nd ed. Trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014.
- GA 42 *Schelling: Vom Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit (1809)*. Ed. Ingrid Schüßler. 1988. English translation: *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1985.
- GA 49 *Die Metaphysik des deutschen Idealismus (Schelling)*. Ed. Günter Seubold. 1991.
- GA 53 *Hölderlins Hymne "Der Ister."* Ed. Walter Biemel. 1984. English translation: *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister."* Trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.
- 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 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 68 *Hegel*. Ed. Ingrid Schüßler. 1993. English translation: *Hegel*. Trans. Joseph Arel and Niels Feuerhahn. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015.

- GA 70 *Über den Anfang*. Ed. Paola-Ludovika Coriando. 2005.
- GA 71 *Das Ereignis*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2009.
English translation: *The Event*. Trans. Richard Rojcewicz.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013.
- GA 73.1 *Zum Ereignis-Denken*. Ed. Peter Trawny. 2013.
- GA 77 *Feldweg-Gespräche*. 2nd ed. Ed. Ingeborg Schüßler. 2007.
English translation: *Country Path Conversations*. Trans.
Bret W. Davis. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.
- GA 79 *Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*. Ed. Petra Jaeger. 1994.
English translation: *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures: Insight
Into That Which Is and Basic Principles of Thinking*. Trans.
Andrew J. Mitchell. Bloomington: Indiana University
Press, 2012.
- GA 86 *Seminare: Hegel – Schelling*. Ed. Peter Trawny. 2011.
- GA 94 *Überlegungen II–VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931–1938)*. Ed. Peter
Trawny. 2014. English translation: *Ponderings II–VI*. Trans.
Richard Rojcewicz. Indiana University Press.
- GA 96 *Überlegungen XII–XV (Schwarze Hefte 1939–1941)*. Ed. Peter
Trawny. 2014.
- GA 97 *Anmerkungen I–V (Schwarze Hefte 1942–1948)*. Ed. Peter
Trawny. 2015.

FROM OTHER ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

- DT *Discourse on Thinking*. Trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans
Freund. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
- EP *The End of Philosophy*. Ed. and trans. Joan Stambaugh. New
York: Harper and Row, 1973.
- FS *Four Seminars*. Trans. Andrew Mitchell and François Raffoul.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003.
- HFH “Hebel – Friend of the House.” Trans. Bruce V. Foltz and Michael
Heim. *Contemporary German Philosophy* 3, ed. Darrel E. Christ-
ensen, et al. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University
Press, 1983. 89–101.

- N1 *Nietzsche*, vol. 1: *The Will to Power as Art*. Ed. and trans. David Farrell Krell. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1991.
- N3 *Nietzsche*, vol. 3: *The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics*. Ed. and trans. Joan Stambaugh, David Farrell Krell, and Frank A. Capuzzi. San Francisco: Harper, 1991.
- PLT *Poetry, Language, Thought*. Ed. and trans. Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper & Row, 2001.