



1992

## Thinking Gelassenheit through Heidegger: The Encounter with the Possible Impossible

Shahriar Mohammad Reza Shafaghi  
*Loyola University Chicago*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_diss](https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss)



Part of the [Philosophy Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Shafaghi, Shahriar Mohammad Reza, "Thinking Gelassenheit through Heidegger: The Encounter with the Possible Impossible" (1992). *Dissertations*. 2933.

[https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_diss/2933](https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/2933)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact [ecommons@luc.edu](mailto:ecommons@luc.edu).



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](#).  
Copyright © 1992 Shahriar Mohammad Reza S

**THINKING GELASSENHEIT THROUGH HEIDEGGER:  
THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE POSSIBLE IMPOSSIBLE**

by

Shahriar Mohammad Reza Shafaghi

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate School of

Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirement for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

January 1992

**Copyright by Shahriar Mohammad Reza Shafaghi, 1991**

**All Rights Reserved**

There is no time to philosophize, but one must have the courage to name the obvious:

Dedicated to those thousands upon thousands—the victims of greed, ignorance and above all lack of spirit—who were murdered this year by imperialism and its zionist servants.

Dedicated to those who still are forced to live under zionism, which, trading on the legacy of the victims of the Holocaust, corrupts and transforms a universal religion into a cult of race.

Dedicated to those who still are forced to live under apartheid, which, directly or indirectly, is supported by European and American institutions and even by Loyola University of Chicago.

---

The above dedication was composed on my own initiative. It is entirely my own responsibility, and not that of my director's or readers'.

S. Shafaghi  
June 30, 1991

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents . . . . .	iv
Abbreviations . . . . .	vi
Introduction . . . . .	1

## 1 WHAT GELASSENHEIT IS NOT

1 What is Will to Power? . . . . .	16
2 Will to Power as the Solution . . . . .	19
3 Why is Nietzsche the Consummation of Metaphysics? . . . . .	25
4 What is Metaphysics? . . . . .	32

## 2 FUNDAMENTAL ONTOLOGY

5 Authentic Care . . . . .	36
6 Disclosive Dasein . . . . .	44
6.1 The Problems . . . . .	45
6.2 Heidegger's Preliminary Solutions . . . . .	59
7 Is It Necessary to Die According to <i>Being and Time</i> ? . . . . .	66
8 The Leap of Reason . . . . .	77
8.1 The Principle of Ground . . . . .	
8.2 The Possible Impossible . . . . .	86
8.3 Leaps Kant Did Not Take . . . . .	90
8.4 Faith and Reason . . . . .	94
8.5 Interest and Reason . . . . .	97

## 3 METONTOLOGY

9 Ontology's Finitude . . . . .	101
9.1 Fundamental Ontology and the Problematic of Finitude . . . . .	
9.2 The Leap Out of Phenomenology . . . . .	108
9.3 The Unprovable Body . . . . .	113
9.4 Transcendence and Difference . . . . .	121
10 Dasein's World . . . . .	124
11 Retrospect . . . . .	127
11.1 Thrownness . . . . .	
11.2 Existence . . . . .	129
11.3 Falling . . . . .	132

## 4 GELASSENHEIT

12	Reading <i>Gelassenheit</i>	138
12.1	Memorial Address: Technology and <i>Gelassenheit</i>	
12.2	Conversation on a Country Path: Thinking <i>Gelassenheit</i>	141
13	Under the Shadow of Parmenides	146
13.1	The Primordial Problem	
13.2	Being and Thinking in <i>Being and Time</i>	147
13.3	Facticity and <i>Erschlossenheit</i>	
13.4	<i>Physis</i> and <i>Logos</i>	148
13.5	<i>Dike</i> and <i>Techne</i>	151
13.6	That Which Regions and <i>Gelassenheit</i>	153
13.7	The Highest Insight of Philosophy	155
14	In Mood for <i>Gelassenheit</i>	160
	Bibliography	168
	Vita	172

## ABBREVIATIONS

BPP	Heidegger. <i>Basic Problems of Phenomenology</i>
BW	Heidegger. <i>Basic Writings</i>
CPR	Kant. <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i>
CPrR	Kant. <i>Critique of Practical Reason</i>
EP	Heidegger. <i>The End of Philosophy</i>
ER	Heidegger. <i>The Essence of Truth</i>
ET	Heidegger. <i>Early Greek Thinking</i>
G	Heidegger. <i>Discourse on Thinking</i>
GM	Nietzsche. <i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i>
ID	Heidegger. <i>Identity and Difference</i>
IM	Heidegger. <i>Introduction to Metaphysics</i>
KG	Nietzsche. <i>Kritische Gesamtausgabe</i>
KHI	Habermas. <i>Knowledge and Human Interest</i>
KPM	Heidegger. <i>Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics</i>
MFL	Heidegger. <i>Metaphysical Foundations of Logic</i>
N1-4	Heidegger. <i>Nietzsche</i> . Vol. 1-4
NG	Nietzsche. <i>Grossoktavausgabe</i>
OWL	Heidegger. <i>On the Way to Language</i>
RP	Sallis. <i>Research in Phenomenology</i>
RWLR	Kant. <i>Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone</i>
SG	Heidegger. <i>Der Satz vom Grund</i>
SZ	Heidegger. <i>Zeit und Sein</i>
TSZ	Nietzsche. <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i>
TWI	Nietzsche. <i>Twilight of the Idols</i>
WCT	Heidegger. <i>What is Called Thinking</i>
WIM	"What is Metaphysics?"
WP	Nietzsche. <i>The Will to Power</i>

# INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation our aim is to think a solution to the problem(s) of metaphysics. Following Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) we call this solution *gelassenheit*. *Gelassenheit* is a term that Heidegger takes over from Meister Eckhart (d. 1327), a German theologian and mystic. Heidegger's discussion of *gelassenheit* is very sparse, and he only specifically makes it into a theme in a short book published under the same title in 1959. Many commentators take *Gelassenheit* to be a very mystical work that belongs to Heidegger's later thinking and that is somehow separate from his earlier thinking which was more rigorous. Our aim, on the contrary, is to show *gelassenheit*, as Heidegger's most appropriate response to the problematic of metaphysics, to be in direct relation to, and indeed a consequence of, his early thinking. One of our aims, therefore, will be to show the coherence between Heidegger's early, middle and final periods. In Chapters Two, Three and Four, which will roughly represent the three stages in Heidegger's thinking, we will discuss his passage to *gelassenheit*. We must add that although we are in a way following Heidegger's path of thinking, our aim *is not* a textual analysis of his works, but is primarily a conceptual development of *gelassenheit* that might not necessarily correspond to the development of Heidegger's own of thinking. In working out this conceptual development the following steps are taken:



In Chapter One, we give a preliminary definition of metaphysics in order to see how metaphysics has attempted to solve most of the problems that it has traditionally faced. As an example of metaphysical thinking we choose the thought of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). Our choice of Nietzsche is justified to some extent in that Heidegger thinks Nietzsche to be the consummation of metaphysics. By considering Nietzsche, we not only contrast *gelassenheit* to an important solution given by metaphysics to its problems, but also consider an important instance of metaphysics itself. Metaphysics inquires about Being, and Nietzsche's name for Being is the will to power.

In §1 we describe Nietzsche's notion of will to power as the self-overcoming of life itself. In §2 we consider how the will to power is Nietzsche's solution to the riddle of life. Metaphysics, according to Nietzsche, reacts with resentment and pessimism against life as self-overcoming. Nietzsche's solution, in contrast, is to affirm life's self-overcoming. Heidegger views Nietzsche's thinking as a reversal of Platonism, where Platonism is the position that divides existence into dichotomies such as there/here, good/evil, mind/body, etc., and gives privilege to only one member of each dichotomy. This dichotomizing, Nietzsche claims, stems from metaphysics' weakness before life and its resentment of the passage of time. Nietzsche's solution to the riddle of life, therefore, is the affirmation of the transiency that life is, i.e., it is the affirmation of the will to power. In the next section (§3) we consider how Heidegger views Nietzsche's thought to be not only metaphysical but the consummation of metaphysics. Heidegger criticizes Nietzsche on three counts:

Nietzsche's 1) understanding of truth as correspondence, 2) resentment against transiency, and 3) giving priority to beings as against Being.

On the whole, Heidegger's view is that Nietzsche understands Being through beings rather than the other way round. If the ultimate characteristic of beings is that they come to be and pass away, Being then, according to Nietzsche, should be transiency. This thought, Heidegger claims, will end in technology and domination of the earth. The theoretical passage from the thought of transiency to technology and dominion is not explicitly clarified by Heidegger. We only speculate that the terms that mediate this passage are "creation" and "control."

By examining Nietzsche's thought and its consequences we are ready in §4 to examine metaphysics, though only provisionally, to see what it is and what makes it metaphysical. Heidegger identifies metaphysics with the inquiry "that always remains guided by the sole question 'what is Being?' ... [and he therefore calls] this question the *guiding question of metaphysics*" (N2 189-190). By analyzing this simple question, Heidegger shows that in fact this question is not as innocent as it looks; that in fact this question is *not* a question about Being, since by using "is" it has already decided something about Being. Metaphysics, by such question, aims "to discover the beingness of Being—in Greek, the *ousia* of *on*" (N2 194).

The important point that we should bear in mind throughout this study is Heidegger's implicit attention to the *stance* or *attitude* of the metaphysical *position* in identifying what it is (*for*) or what it *stands* for. In the final chapter we will show that indeed what is decisive for any thinking is its very stance.

Throughout this study we should have in mind that by "problem(s) of metaphysics," we mean both the problems caused by the metaphysical stance, and metaphysics itself as the problem. Furthermore, these problems are caused by metaphysics' insufficient solutions to the problems or riddle of life (or existence).

Having identified the metaphysical position with the position that forgets the question of Being, we turn in Chapter Two, to Heidegger's own project of fundamental ontology which asks the question of Being. Our aim in Chapter Two is 1) to introduce one of the main themes of this dissertation, namely, the claim that the problem(s) of metaphysics and Heidegger's own solution are a variation of the enigma expressed by Parmenides' maxim: "Being, thinking: the same"; 2) to see how Heidegger can solve the problems of metaphysics; and 3) to retrieve the central insight of *Being and Time* by considering Heidegger's analysis of death. We show that this insight is in fact not dependent on death being the absolute end but is a result of an encounter with the Nothing and a subsequent leap beyond nihilism. We then focus on this leap and consider it in different contexts, e.g., the Kantian discourse on practical reason. By considering the dichotomy between virtue and happiness, we show the leap Kant could have taken in his second *Critique*. The outcome of these considerations is to identify the leap of reason from the principle of sufficient reason to what I call the "possible impossibility" that existence is.

In §5, we show Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology as the laying of the ground of metaphysics to be a repetition of the Kantian project, in that, according to Parmenides' maxim, in order to study Being one has to study thinking or that entity

which asks about Being. As to the question about the justification of this sameness between thinking and Being, we answer that although fundamental ontology presupposes this sameness, Heidegger's whole thinking is in fact a demonstration of it, or rather, a demonstration of *the problem* that it is. We will then give a very short overview of the project of fundamental ontology with the emphasis on authenticity, in order to prepare our way to the discussion of disclosive Dasein in §6.

In §6 ("Disclosive Dasein"), we describe how fundamental ontology can solve the problems of metaphysics. As representatives of the problems of metaphysics we choose the following three general problems: 1) The problem of apriority of knowledge. 2) The moral problem of whether there is such a thing as evil. 3) The problem of freedom and determinism: whether we are free. In order to clarify Heidegger's solutions, by way of contrast, we first give a short description of the tradition's and in particular Kant's way of dealing with these problems. In case of the problem of knowledge we argue that Kant's transcendental move is a step in the right direction, but so far as he does not question how the categories of understanding come about he, as Heidegger demonstrates in his Kant book, shies away from his discovery of transcendental imagination. In case of the problem of morality we argue that both Augustine and Kant fail to account for evil. Our implicit attempt here is to show that the tradition represented by Augustine and Kant cannot overcome those paradoxes that metaphysics creates, which for instance, in case of the problem of morality is the Manichean paradox. This paradox is created when we think about the origin of evil. If God by definition is good then whence comes evil. And if evil has a different

source, then how can God be the ultimate substance if another substance independent of It can exist.

In case of the problem of freedom too we show that the Kantian solution is inadequate. We treat Kant's solution in detail in order to show that as in the First *Critique* where Kant shied away from his discovery, in the Second *Critique* too he does the same. This analysis would be in parallel to Heidegger's analysis in the Kant book, but whereas in the Kant book the decisive term is the "transcendental imagination," in our analysis it is "respect." The Kantian paradox here is about the non-correspondence of virtue and happiness, where Kant has to allow for an after-life in order to account for the injustice in this life.

One of our underlying aims in Chapter Two is to show the centrality of metaphysics as the source of all these paradoxes, and in turn to show the importance of the Heideggerian solution (insight) in overcoming these paradoxes.

Heidegger's own solution to these problems in case of the problem of knowledge is to focus attention on what is already in play in any act of knowledge. Specifically we problematize the notions of intentions and fulfillment in Husserl's *Logical Investigations*. And we then refer to Heidegger's analysis of truth in *SZ*, where he shows that every intention involves creation, imagination, or what he calls "disclosure."

In the case of the problem of morality and free will, Heidegger does not have an explicit solution, so far as his purpose is not to come up with solutions as such. But what we can take to be his way of solving these problems is his radicalizing move of

taking evil to be ontological and therefore somehow necessary. Heidegger takes Dasein's finitude, i.e., "*never* to have power over one's ownmost Being from ground up" (SZ 284/330) to be essential to Dasein's care structure. He then takes this "nullity" to be "the existential condition for the possibility of 'morally' good and for that of the 'morally' evil" (SZ 286/332). We should add parenthetically that if evil is necessary, then the question is why it is so. This is a most difficult and engaging question that occupies Heidegger for nearly all his life. We will postpone the treatment of this issue till Chapter Three.

Having shown how fundamental ontology could solve the problems of metaphysics, we are ready in §7 to retrieve an important and primary insight of *Being and Time*. Since one of our theses is about the coherence of Heidegger's thought, we have to show how *Being and Time* relates to Heidegger's middle and late periods. By identifying its central insight and showing this insight to be at work in the rest of Heidegger's thought we will achieve our goal. By considering the death analysis in SZ, we show how Heidegger works out this insight, and uses it to describe authenticity. Our plan in this section is to demonstrate that death as the absolute end is not necessary to achieve this insight. That in fact the main issue of the death analysis is not death but the "nothing." We show that whether one believes in the after-life or not one has to face the nothing. It is in encountering life as the nothing that one can take the leap beyond nihilism to the insight that therefore the purpose of life is itself. We also show that this insight is the origin of Nietzsche's doctrine of

eternal recurrence. We further show that Maurice Blanchot's analysis of death, despite the claim of some commentators, in fact is similar to Heidegger's.

Having identified the central insight of *Being and Time*, in the next section (§8: The Leap of Reason) we undertake to analyze what prompts this insight, namely, the leap of reason, as Heidegger calls it. For this purpose we read *Der Satz vom Grund* in which Heidegger identifies the leap of reason as the leap from the principle of sufficient reason to Parmenides' maxim ("Being and Thinking: The Same"), and to "Being: The Abyss."

The ambiguity of these statements in turn implies that the site that the leap of reason takes us to, indeed is not a site as such but a path where "it all comes down to the path, to our finding it and remaining on it—which means to our persisting in being 'underway'" (SG 106). The result of the leap is being-underway; a situation in which one cannot settle: a possible impossible situation.

Having shown that life is the possible impossible (§7) and that the metaphysical position of the principle of sufficient reason ends in a possible impossibility, we are ready (in 8.2) to identify metaphysics more clearly as the position of "all is ...." In other words we are suggesting a Heideggerian solution to the problem of the one and the many, and the problem of identity and difference. This is in line with our attempt to demonstrate the centrality of the Heideggerian insight (in SZ) in overcoming (the problems) of metaphysics. To demonstrate the effectiveness of the new schema of the possible impossible and the leap from it, we demonstrate, in a cursory manner, the leaps that can be taken out of the Kantian problems in the First and Second *Critiques*,

and in case of faith/reason and interest/reason dichotomies. By considering these two dichotomies we are also preparing for Chapter Four where we will discuss "the other" of reason.

In Chapter Three we demonstrate how the leap of reason which was applied to some of the important problems of metaphysics can be applied to the project of fundamental ontology itself, the result of which Heidegger calls metontology: the overturning of ontology. Metontology is fundamental ontology itself but faced with its own finitude. In §9 ("Fundamental Ontology and the Problematic of Finitude") we see more clearly how fundamental ontology is a rereading (retrieval) of the Parmenidean maxim, and how it is similar to Kant's laying of the ground for metaphysics. For Heidegger this inquiry is about the problem of intrinsic possibility of understanding of Being. The unveiling of the constitution of the Being of Dasein, however, has within it the problem of the finitude of Dasein. What is the finitude of Dasein? It is the fact that Dasein forgets the question of Being. The problem of finitude of Dasein was originally planned to be treated in Division Three of Part One of *Being and Time* entitled "Time and Being." But the solution to this problem, in the form of justification and proof of finitude, as Heidegger comes to realize, is a formidable task that will engage him for most of his life. We will show that it is impossible to prove the finitude of Dasein, a fact that Heidegger somehow comes to realize and that prompts him to call it "metontology."

Having described what metontology is we then turn to explaining how metontology occurs (9.2). This description is not Heidegger's; it is our way of



showing how metontology can be the result of the application of the leap of reason to fundamental ontology as a phenomenological inquiry. This would show further how Heidegger's original insight is at work in his middle period.

In the following sub-section (9.3: The Unprovable Body) we consider the finitude of time, the finitude of fundamental ontology, and the consequences of such finitude. Whereas Heidegger does not distinguish as such among these finitudes and bases metontology on the facticity of Dasein, in our treatment, we base metontology on the possible impossible. We explain, what Heidegger does not show as such, why facticity cannot be proved.

Further, in order to show the primordially of the possible impossible we demonstrate how transcendence can ground the four primary differences: Being/Dasein, ontological difference, Dasein/world, ontic differences.

Having shown the effects of the finitude of thought for fundamental ontology, in §10 ("Dasein's World") we consider the implication of it for the nature and way of thinking. By this analysis we come to see the involvement of mood and interest in thinking, and recognize the requirement of dwelling for thinking.

In order to show the coherence of Heidegger's thinking, in §11 ("Retrospect"), we demonstrate how much of the insights of metontology and his later thought can be understood from the point of view of the existential categories. In SZ the three existentials of thrownness, existence and falling correspond to the three horizons of past, future and present respectively.

In case of thrownness, as the analysis of MFL shows, it signifies the bodiliness of Dasein, and since the horizon corresponding to thrownness is the past we may ask: What is the relation between Dasein's bodiliness and pastness of time? We show that thrownness can signify the radical givenness of Dasein's situation, what the later Heidegger means by the *es gibt*. The name that we choose as a late existentiale to correspond to thrownness is "passivity."

In case of existence, whose horizon is the future, Heidegger relates it to self-affection of Dasein which is also expressed in the primordial phenomenon of the future as coming toward itself. Identifying authentic futurity with creativity or discovery and basing it—as Heidegger does in "On the Essence of Truth"—on freedom, we represent the activity of keeping open the open region by the late existentiale of "activity." Of course, "passivity" and "activity" as late existentiales should not be understood from the metaphysical context of act and potency.

In case of falling whose horizon is the present, we first identify its meaning as Dasein's being disclosed from the world. Then, by analyzing a crucial passage from *Der Satz vom Grund*, we show the necessity of what Heidegger calls "being underway" to thinking. That is, thinking as discovery can occur through being underway. We then conclude that being underway as going-through requires being-alongside, that is, falling. We then suggest the word "dwelling" as being-alongside to be the late existentiale corresponding to falling. Dwelling, also, understood as the synthesis of activity and passivity is what *gelassenheit* will come to signify.

Having shown the primacy of Heidegger's original insight in his middle period, and having seen the consequences of that insight for thought in the form of activity, passivity and dwelling, we are ready in Chapter Four to read *Gelassenheit*. The book *Gelassenheit* consists of a memorial address (1955) in commemoration of the composer Conradin Kreutzer and an essay entitled "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking" (1944-45).

In the memorial address, Heidegger speaks of a thoughtlessness which express itself in uprootedness in his (our) time. The danger of this unrootedness which threatens us all is in turn expressed by technology, or rather by the fact that technology might "run away" and destroy everything. At this point Heidegger proposes *gelassenheit* in the form of releasement toward things as the solution to technology. *Gelassenheit*, moreover, at the same time means the openness toward the hidden meaning of technology, what Heidegger names by "the mystery." The problem that we want to point out at this time is the *belonging* together of the releasement toward things and the openness to the mystery. We have to think this belonging.

Heidegger first makes the point that *gelassenheit* is beyond willing and goal directed or horizontal thinking. This contrast is then reflected onto what grants the horizon of thinking: the region. The region is thus understood as regioning, an act without a subject, which should remind us of the *es gibt*, the giving. By further analysis Heidegger relates the regioning to *Ereignis* and *aletheia*. These new

characteristics of the regioning are then reflected back to *gelassenheit*, revealing its characters of "waiting" and "patience."

At this point we make clear that these two poles whose belonging together Heidegger is probing are the same poles that Parmenides' maxim names: Being and thinking. And that the problem of their belonging together is the same problem of their sameness and difference. In §13 ("Under the Shadow of Parmenides") we, therefore, undertake to show the centrality of the Parmenidean maxim to Heidegger's thinking. For Heidegger the tension between Being and thinking, also takes the form of the tension between determinism and freedom. Of course, determinism here, should not be understood as predestination (theological determinism), logical determinism or fatalism. We should note that all these tensions are different forms of the primordial problem: the possible impossibility that existence is. At the end of these analysis, we come up with a new name for *gelassenheit* that at the same time represents the link between the thought of *gelassenheit* and Heidegger's previous thinking. This name is "dwelling" which implies the maintaining of oneself in the possible impossible.

We also show that the paradoxes that metaphysics faces, such as one/many, mind/body, freedom/determinism, etc. arise precisely because philosophy (thinking) is looking for an answer. This seeking of remedy, of an answer which relieves existence of its ineluctable fate, that seeks an exit from the possible impossibility of existence, is what we identify as the metaphysical position.

Having reached the insight that *gelassenheit* is dwelling in the possible impossible, we are faced with new problems: In which concrete situation does one dwell? Where does one start? Is there anything that can guide us?

In the final section (§14: In Mood for *Gelassenheit*) we undertake to respond to these questions. We show what guides *gelassenheit* to be a mood, that *gelassenheit* involves mood, or rather is a mood. As a mood which gives the overall orientation *gelassenheit* can be understood as the combination of certain other moods that Heidegger directly or indirectly relates to *gelassenheit*. At the end we allude to spirit as the name of that mood which combines *Angst*, affirmation and wonder.



All the references to *Being and Time* are followed by two page numbers, the first refers to the German edition and the second to the standard English edition. Within quotations all the additions made by the translators to their translations is within braces "{}" and all the additions which are ours are within brackets "[ ]". All the underlines within the quotations are ours, those made by the authors themselves are in *italics*. For the sake of coherence "Being" is always written with the capital B, so if in translations it is written as "being" we have altered it to "Being." *Gelassenheit*, though a German word, is not italicized.

## WHAT GELASSENHEIT IS NOT

Why Nietzsche? A question may be raised about the relevance of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) to our study. Western philosophy seems to have moved beyond Nietzsche, at least in the sense that it has complicated his arguments; but also in the sense that it has given quite a different interpretation of Nietzsche from that given by Martin Heidegger. Yet if we are going to think *gelassenheit*, at first in the form of a contrast to all the solutions of the tradition to the problems of metaphysics, we have to consider Nietzsche, since the consummation of metaphysics, according to Heidegger is to be found in the thought of Nietzsche.

In this chapter we will consider Nietzsche's notion of the will to power as the extreme opposite of *gelassenheit*. In order to do this, we will first see (§1) what will to power means in Nietzsche according to Heidegger. We will then (§2) consider in what sense will to power is the solution to the riddle of metaphysics, and in the following section (§3) we will see in what sense this notion of will to power is metaphysical and why it is the *consummation* of metaphysics. And finally (§4) we will consider, only in a preliminary way, what makes metaphysics metaphysical.

We should add that our interest in Nietzsche in this chapter is to show an extreme counter-example to *gelassenheit*. We are, therefore, avoiding other plausible interpretations of Nietzsche and concentrating solely on Heidegger's interpretations and in particular the one in which he shows that Nietzsche is the consummation of metaphysics.

### §1. WHAT IS THE WILL TO POWER?

The will to power is Nietzsche's name for the Being of beings: "the innermost essence of Being" (WP #693). But unlike Schopenhauer's notion of will, the will to power does not refer to a general willing, nor is it a will that wills something for the sake of redeeming itself.

"Willing" is *not* "desiring," .... but only a willing *something*: one must not remove the aim from the total condition—as epistemologists do. "Willing" as they understand it is as little a reality as "thinking": it is a pure fiction. It is part of willing that something is commanded .... (WP #668)

But beings as what are willed and commanded, so far as they are not Being, are nothing. Nietzsche shows this nothingness of beings in his diagnosis of the history of metaphysics as nihilism. Nihilism is the process of the devaluation of what had hitherto been the uppermost values. These values which were posited by metaphysics are, according to Nietzsche, "purpose", "unity" and "truth."

What has happened , at bottom? The feeling of *valuelessness* was attained with the realization that the overall character of existence may not be interpreted by means of the concept of "*purpose*," the concept of "*unity*," or the concept of "*truth*." Existence aims at nothing and achieves nothing; a comprehensive unity in the plurality of occurrences is lacking; the character of existence is not "true,"

is *false*.... One simply lacks any grounds for convincing oneself that there is a *true* world.... In short, the categories "*purpose*," "unity," "Being," by which we used to invest some value into the world—we *withdraw* again; and now the world seems *valueless*. (WP #12) (Translated by D. Krell)

Nihilism according to Nietzsche has a precondition. It is that will seeks a "meaning" in all events. By "meaning" Nietzsche understands "purpose." Human will "needs an aim" therefore it fears nothingness, "and would sooner will *nothingness* than *not* will at all." (GM 3rd. Essay) This fear of nothingness is a "fundamental fact" on which Nietzsche grounds his proof that the will is in its essence will to power.

We can, therefore, summarize what Nietzsche says about the will as follows:

1. Because of the fear of nothingness, will has to will something (purpose, aim, value).
2. But because the essence of things is nothing, it is gradually realized that existence is devoid of meaning.
3. This realization shows itself as the ascetic ideal, which wills nothing rather than not will at all.
4. This willing nothing (nihilism) shows itself as pessimism (Wagner). Pessimism is a process of the devaluation of all values which Nietzsche explains in the famous passage in *Twilight of the Idols* (§4), that is, in a sense, his criticism of metaphysics.



5. But why did will to power will all the previous values if those ideas are truly false? Because it had to maintain itself, preserve itself in its journey to the end of metaphysics, and to self-consciousness.

"To have and to want to have more—growth, in one word—that is life itself" (WP #125). "The will to power: Becoming *conscious* of the will to life" (KG: XVI, 427). In order to advance beyond a stage, that stage must be secured. Therefore enhancement of power is at the same time, the preservation of power. But although values are false (i.e., not essential), they are necessary for the enhancement/preservation of will to power. In a sense will to power itself posits these values for its own sake. For this reason Nietzsche calls will to power perspectival.

This self-overcoming of will to power has a destructive side to it. Unlike Darwin who thought that the essence of life was only self-maintenance, Nietzsche thinks that life is also self-assertion and self-surpassing. As such, it wants to be ahead of things, to stay on top of things. It is always a going back into its essence, into the origin.

*Self-assertion is original assertion of essence.*

Will to power is never the willing of a particular entity. It involves the Being and essence of beings; it is this itself. (N1 61)

We note that it is life that is asserted; and, therefore, a particular entity that has lived its time must be destroyed. The need to destroy belongs essentially to creation.

Heidegger relates this need for the negative to the necessity of evil as thought in German Idealism. Thus he puts Nietzsche in that tradition.

## §2. WILL TO POWER AS THE SOLUTION TO THE RIDDLE OF LIFE

Can will not will an aim, and not will nothing, but instead will itself? Can it become conscious? With the insight that life is will to power, what would be Nietzsche's solution to the riddle of life, to the passage of time?

Metaphysics' solution, as Nietzsche tells us<sup>1</sup>, is to react with resentment against the "it was" and to create a true world beyond this world of becoming. Metaphysics' solution is self-consolation out of weakness. But finally the true world, metaphysics' utopia, becomes a fable, and metaphysics sees the nothingness of existence; and in response it turns to pessimism and nihilism.

Nietzsche's solution, on the other hand, is not the denial of the nothing but the affirmation of it. This does not mean that life itself is absolutely nothing. What there is, is only life, and life is the passage of things: becoming. So what should be affirmed is no particular being or value or goal, but this becoming itself:

Can we remove the idea of a goal from the process and then affirm the process in spite of this?—this would be the case if something were attained at every moment within this process—and always be the same. (WP #55)

Life, as such a purposeless process, has this trait: it is self-overcoming, it is will to power. The essence of life is will to power; and will to power should become conscious of itself; it should will to be the will to power. This self-affirmation, which can come about only after self-consciousness, takes three forms: the noble, the sovereign, and the artist.

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf., *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, II, 20.

Nietzsche's solution can also be seen as an overcoming of Platonism. Nietzsche, in section four of the *Twilight of the Idols*, subtitled "History of an Error," describes how, by going through six stages, the true world, finally becomes a fable. In the first stage, the true world is attainable for virtuous man. In the second stage it is unattainable for now but promised for the virtuous man. In the third stage, it is not even promisable but its thought is a consolation. In the fourth stage, it becomes unknown and therefore not consoling or obligating. In the fifth stage it "is no longer good for anything, which is not even obligating—an idea which has become useless and superfluous—*consequently*, a refuted idea: let us abolish it!" (TWI: 4, 485). With this abolition the very distinction between true and apparent becomes questionable.

In the sixth stage: "The true world—we have abolished. What world has remained? The apparent one perhaps? But no! *With the true world we have also abolished the apparent one!*" (TWI: 4, 486). The sensuous world is the apparent one only according to Platonism, and with the abolition of Platonism the way first opens for the affirmation of the sensuous, and along with it, the nonsensuous world of spirit as well (N1 209).

Through the abolishing of the true world, the apparent and the sensuous undergo a change of meaning. Beings are neither mere illusions, nor things-in-themselves, but appearances, semblances: "'Semblance' [*Schein*] as I understand it is the actual and

sole reality of things" (KG: VII, 3, 40[53]). In other words, it seems that Nietzsche gives primacy to form:

Belief in the form, disbelief in the content—that constitutes the attraction of the aphorism—thus a moral paradox. (KG: VII, 1, 3[1] 121)

But it is not that Nietzsche gives primacy to form as over against content, rather the form, for him, is the content. Semblance as appearance behind which there is no thing-in-itself is Nietzsche's solution to the dichotomy of form and content. In this sense we could say that Being is appearing. But beings appear only to a point of view; the apparent thus becomes the perspectival. As Nietzsche says: "The *perspectival* [is] the basic condition of all life" (NG: VII, 4). What lives is exposed to other forces. It deals with them according to their form and rhythm in order to estimate them in relation to possible incorporation or elimination. It is from the standpoint of this living creature that everything is interpreted according to its capacity for life. For Nietzsche, what defines the being(ness) of this entity is its point of view, which he also calls "value." And by "becoming," Nietzsche means the interaction of all these points of view, an interaction which results in the destruction of weaker ones and the creation of stronger ones. Therefore, beings as points of view are only semblances with no thing-in-itself behind them. And reality is a letting radiate; it is radiance. This reality is will to power.

Metaphysics, according to Nietzsche, does not see that beings are semblances, and therefore it takes some particular value to be the reality of things. For example, in a religious perspective everything is taken to be a creation of God; it is God who

as the highest being gives meaning to all things as created beings. Although a value as a form is the beingness of an entity, what is ultimately primary for Nietzsche is not the form but the forming. Every being (form, value, point of view) passes away. And like all values, the values that metaphysics posits will change at some point in time, for example, religious mentality will give way to scientific mentality. In order not to be destroyed one should cohere with reality, with the will to power, with life as perspectival shining. This not being destroyed, of course, does not mean that one's values can remain intact; on the contrary by cohering with the will to power, with change, one affirmatively gives up one's identity, one's value system, before one is forced to change.

The activity of creating and forming, Nietzsche calls "art," and the psychic state associated with this activity he calls "rapture." Of course, it is not a psychic state as such, just as Heidegger's own notion of anxiety is not a psychic state. It is an artistic state that supports a relation to art of a creative sort.

If there is to be art, if there is to be any aesthetic doing and observing, one physiological precondition is indispensable: *rapture*." (TWI: 9, 8)

Heidegger equates rapture with mood, and comments: "Mood is never merely a way of being determined in our inner being for ourselves. It is above all a way of being attuned, and letting ourselves be attuned, in this or that way we are. Mood is

precisely the basic way in which we are *outside* ourselves. But that is the way we are essentially and constantly"<sup>2</sup> (N1 99).

Rapture as a mood in which we are beyond ourselves is the feeling of enhancement and plenitude that Nietzsche so emphasizes in will to power.

By an analysis of Kant's notion of the beautiful, as something in which one takes delight without any interest being pursued above the artwork, Heidegger reveals that rapture is a form-engendering force: the artist loves the form for its own sake, whereas the non-artist would want it for what it expresses.

In rapture, one is beyond oneself; rapture is the "feeling of enhancement of force and plenitude" (TWI: 9, 8). Art, therefore, is one of Nietzsche's solutions to the riddle of life.

Heidegger reveals the structure of rapture as a circle and as play in which the goal of the activity is the activity of play itself. The artist loves the form for its own sake:

The creator (knower), the communicator (artist) and the simplifier (lover). (KG: VII, 1, 4[20])

All creating is communicating. The knower, the creator, the lover are *one*. (KG: VII, 1, 4[23])

The counter-example of the artist is obviously Wagner, for whom music was representational. For Wagner form is formlessness, whereas for Nietzsche, form is

---

<sup>2</sup>The fact that mood is the way we are *essentially* and *constantly* raises a problem: if rapture is mood, then everyone is always in rapture, i.e., an artist! At this stage we could answer: rapture is only a necessary condition of being an artist and not the sufficient condition.

the content, "the matter itself." Such bringing together of the opposites (form and content), Nietzsche calls the grand style. As Heidegger comments:

[I]f art has its proper place in the grand style, this now means that measure and law are confirmed only in the subjugation and containment of chaos and the rapturous. Such is demanded of the grand style as the condition of its own possibility .... Decision presupposes divergence between opposites; its height increases in proportion to the depth of the conflict. (N1 126)

What this passage means is, first, that form and law must be imposed on chaos and rapture. Grand style as the essence of art, and therefore Nietzsche's solution to the riddle of metaphysics is to give laws and make order in such a way as to affirm will to power, that is, to maintain and preserve will to power. That is why grand style is "the condition of its own [will to power] possibility."

[Grand] style has in common with great passion that it disdains to please; that it forgets about persuading; that it commands; that it *wills*.... To become master of the chaos that one is; to compel one's chaos to become form: logical, simple, unequivocal; to become mathematics, *law*—that is the grand ambition here. (WP #842)<sup>3</sup>

The grand style implies legislating (creating) new order such that will to power is preserved and enhanced.

Apart from the artist, we may mention very briefly the other figures that Nietzsche introduces as his answer to metaphysics' inadequacies. In *On the Genealogy of Morals* the figures of the sovereign and the noble are the enactments of the grand style in different contexts. The sovereign is the one who obeys rules and

---

<sup>3</sup>Cited by David Krell in N1, p. 129, fn.

laws not by believing in religion or morality, but by believing in himself, by having conscience, and the noble is the one who is rid of resentment.

In short Nietzsche's solution to the riddle of life consists of the following:

1. As against the metaphysics that resents the "it was" of time, one should affirm the passing of things. Such affirmation implies affirming what things are: nothing.
2. Affirming nihilism implies affirming the coming-to-be and the passing away of things: transiency.
3. To affirm transiency is to affirm will to power. Such affirmation is form-engendering, commanding, legislating: the artist, the noble, the sovereign.

### **§3. WHY IS NIETZSCHE THE CONSUMMATION OF METAPHYSICS?**

In this section we have to consider how Heidegger treats Nietzsche's thought of will to power to be not only metaphysical but also the consummation of metaphysics.

Heidegger's critical view of Nietzsche in the *Nietzsche* volumes is stated in three slightly different ways. The first of these criticisms concerns Nietzsche's notion of truth. In the section entitled "Truth as Justice" in the first of the *Nietzsche* volumes, Heidegger gives an elaborate description and criticism of Nietzsche's understanding of truth. The main parts of his argument are as follows:

Although after the abolition of the true world the distinction between true and apparent disappears, for Nietzsche truth still means holding-to-be-true.



Where does the essence of truth wind up if it is traced back to a commanding that is without ground or direction? After the abolition of the metaphysical distinction, all flight to our adapting to something true at hand "in itself" is blocked; but so likewise is the estimation of what is fixated in representing as what only "seems."... Thus the still more original rootedness of the commanding nature of holding-to-be-true must contain and produce something like a *standard*.... To the extent that such holding-to-be-true ... is supposed to hold on to the traditional essence of truth in some sense, that essence of truth also has to gain ascendancy in the fundamental act of holding-to-be-true. (N3 139)

For Nietzsche there are no more things-in-themselves, but he still takes truth to be holding-to-be-true, that is, he takes truth to be correspondence. In that case there must be a *standard* to which things correspond. This "standard" for Nietzsche is the chaos that is life itself.

Nietzsche, in a sense, is offering a description and a prescription:

Description: Life, chaos, will to power is the fact.

Prescription: Let it be so.

How can one be the fact, will to power? Through art and knowledge:

For knowledge as the securing of permanence is necessary, although art as the higher value is still more necessary. Transfiguration creates possibilities for the self-surpassing of life at any given point of limitation. Knowledge in each case posits the fixated and fixating boundaries so that there can be something to surpass, whereas art is able to retain its higher necessity. (N3 140)

One can therefore correspond to chaos, to the will to power by repeatedly positing values (knowledge) and overcoming them (art). But then this creates a tension between knowledge and art which Heidegger calls the "raging discordance." This discordance is a necessary one in that both art and knowledge are necessary for will to power. Knowledge is necessary in order to allow life to exist by fixing a

particular way of life. Art is necessary too, in order to allow life to go on by overcoming the present way of life through establishing a new perspectival horizon.

But not every knowledge and every art is for the advancement of will to power.

Whence is the measure for art and knowledge given?

The thought that assimilation itself alone could and must give the measure and provide "justification," that is, decide in general about measure and direction in essence, becomes inevitable. As *homoiosis*, truth must be what Nietzsche calls "justice." (N3 140-1)

The measure is will to power itself. And this measure is justified by justice.

Justice as "*the supreme representative of life itself*" is the will to power. It is representation because it brings itself before itself. That is, the will to power brings itself as justice (truth) before itself. Justice is will to power, when the emphasis is on will to power empowering itself by preservation (knowledge) and enhancement (art). "Will to power empowers itself to its own essence by positing 'viewpoints' as conditions [of its own Being]..." (N3 243). "Justice then is the ability to posit right, thus understood; it is the ability to will such a will." As Nietzsche says: "**Justice**, as the function of a panoramic power that looks beyond the good and evil ... —the intention to preserve something that is *more* than this or that person" (NG: XI, 118). This something that must be preserved is the making permanent of the absolute essence of will to power as the fundamental character of beings. In other words, to *be* will to power (which *is* the fact) is justice. Notice that what makes Nietzsche metaphysical here is not that he takes a particular thing to be the fact (to have a thing-in-itself) but that the Being of beings *is* the fact: the fact *is* will to power. Or in other

words, what makes Nietzsche metaphysical is that he thinks there *is* a fact to begin with.

And this brings us to the second of Heidegger's criticisms of Nietzsche: That he stamps becoming with Being out of resentment:

The supreme will to power, that is, what is most vital in all life, comes to pass when transiency is represented as perpetual Becoming in the eternal recurrence of the same, in this way being made stable and permanent. Such representing is a thinking which, as Nietzsche emphatically notes, *stamps* the character of Being on beings. Such thinking takes Becoming, to which perpetual collision and suffering belong, into its protection and custody.

Does such thinking overcome prior reflection, overcome the spirit of revenge? Or does there not lie concealed in this very *stamping*—which takes all Becoming into the protection of eternal recurrence of the same—a form of ill will *against* sheer transiency and thereby a highly spiritualized spirit of revenge? (N2 228)

This passage seems straightforward. The yes to time's "it was" is the will that transiency perdure. How? As passing away, time must not only continuously go, but must always come. Passing away and transiency must recur in their coming as the same.

However, there seems to be an ambiguity here. Does the "recurrence" apply to beings or to transiency? Heidegger seems to suggest that it is *beings* that recur: "Nietzsche ... *stamps* the character of Being on beings [and not on transiency]" (N2 228). "Powerless against that which has been done, the [ill] will is an angry spectator of all things past ... it cannot break time and time's desire."<sup>4</sup> Will to power wills the return of things "exactly" as they were, i.e., as they came and as they went.

---

<sup>4</sup>Thus Spoke Zarathustra, II, 20.

Ill will's revenge against passing away, implies that ill will resents its own passing and everything in the world; in other words everything earthly and sensuous, as against the ever present ideas, is denied (Platonism). At this point Heidegger somehow implies that affirming the "it was" of time results in dominating the earth: "Yet how should humanity assume dominion over the earth, ... so long as it degrades the earthly ..."(N2 225)?

affirming the "it was" → affirming beings → dominating beings

Unfortunately Heidegger does not explain (in the *Nietzsche* volumes) how this implication unfolds. We can speculate that Nietzsche's prescription—that because the fact is will to power, therefore one should *be* will to power—implies dominion over the earth.

But if it is *becoming* that is returning, could we still say that this thought is metaphysical? We cannot speculate on this possibility here. In this section we are interested only in the metaphysical Nietzsche; that is, we want to see *what* interpretation of will to power is the consummation of metaphysics and *why*.

The third of Heidegger's criticisms of Nietzsche concerns the fact that Nietzsche, in the manner of metaphysics, gives priority to beings rather than to Being. Heidegger names this stance "the fundamental metaphysical position" (N2 191). Metaphysics "inquires out beyond being as a whole .... Metaphysics, *meta ta physica*, is knowledge and inquiry that posits being as *physis*. Metaphysics does so in

such a way that in and through the positing it inquires out beyond being, asking about being *as* being. To inquire into the *arche*—to ask the question *ti to on?*—is metaphysics" (N2 189).

How is it that Nietzsche gives priority to beings and understands Being in terms of beings? For Nietzsche beings come to be and pass away; therefore, Being is becoming (or rather, beingness is becoming). For Nietzsche the world is nothing but change in the manner of will to power. He then concludes that *Being* must be change or becoming (as will to power). In a sense Nietzsche is inquiring into the ground of beings, into what is primary in them (which he thinks is will to power).

And what about beings themselves? What are they? If the Being of beings is the becoming of beings, then beings themselves, insofar as they come to be and pass away, are nothing permanent, are nothing (neither creatures of God, nor monads, nor sense data, etc.). The fact that Nietzsche, unlike the tradition, recognizes the "nothing" takes him one step ahead, but he still does not question the "nothing." What makes Nietzsche's thought the consummation of metaphysics is that he sees that beings are nothing. On explaining how the true world finally became a fable in the "History of an error" Nietzsche shows how the nothingness of beings gradually came to be realized, and thus puts himself at the end of that history as the one who finally saw that nothingness.

Heidegger in *The End of Philosophy* does explain to some extent how Nietzsche's thought of the will to power gives rise to technology and domination of the earth. He

first makes the point that calculative thinking is necessary for life just as escalation is, which gives the impulse for the enhancement of life:

Why did Nietzsche's metaphysics lead to a scorn of thinking under the banner of "life"? Because no one realized how, according to Nietzsche's doctrine, the representational-calculative (empowering) guarantee of stability is just as essential for "life" as "increase" and escalation. Escalation itself has been taken only in the aspect of the intoxicating (psychologically), but not in the decisive aspect of at the same time giving to the guarantee of stability the true and ever new impulse and the justification for escalation. Hence it is the unconditional rule of calculating reason which belongs to the will to power, and not the fog and confusion of an opaque chaos of life. (EP 94)

In other words, Nietzsche's figures of affirmation—the artist, the sovereign and the noble—as *creators* need both truth and art, stability and escalation:

Nietzsche's passion for creators betrays the fact that he thinks of the genius and the geniuslike only in a modern way, and at the same time technologically from the viewpoint of accomplishment. The two constitutive "values" (truth and art) in the concept of the will to power are only circumscriptions for "technology," in the essential sense of a planning and calculating stabilization as accomplishment, and for the creating of the "creators" who bring a new stimulus to life over and above life as it is, and guarantee the business of culture. (EP 94-95)

What Heidegger sees in "creating" (as Nietzsche's final solution) is the element of control: technology *creates* in order to have *control*. But control is always control *for* something; for what does technology control? Heidegger could answer: technology controls for the sake of more control: will to will. This way of understanding will to power is also present in Heidegger's characterization of truth as certainty in the epoch of will to power.

Behind all this [understanding of life as increase and escalation], however, lies the singular incapacity of thinking in terms of the being of metaphysics and recognizing the scope of truth's essential transformation and the historical sense of the awakening predominance of truth as certainty. (EP 94)

Truth as certainty does not just mean truth as correspondence, rather it implies stability, predictability and *control*.

#### §4. WHAT IS METAPHYSICS?

At this point in our analysis we have to make clear what makes metaphysics metaphysical. This investigation would be a preliminary look at metaphysics. We need this look into metaphysics in order to establish the ground for our thinking of *gelassenheit*.

Metaphysics according to Heidegger stems from one question: the question about the *arche* of beings. And in this sense it is meta-physics, because it goes beyond particular beings, to their *arche*.

Or, to put it the other way round, metaphysics is the inquiry and the search that always remains guided by the sole question "what is being?" We therefore call this question the *guiding question of metaphysics*. (N2 189-190)

But when we inquire into the *arche* of being, all being—as a whole and in entirety—is placed in question. With the question concerning the *arche*, something about being as a whole has already been said. Being as a whole has now become visible for the first time *as* being and *as a whole*. (N2 187)

In asking "What is being?" we are asking about being *as such*: "[W]hat is meant is the whole, being taken as a whole from the outset, being taken *as* such unity.... We are aiming to discover the beingness of being—in Greek, the *ousia* of *on*. We are interrogating the Being of beings" (N2 194).

Each time the guiding question is asked, it "unfolds in itself something that sets the standards. By this 'setting the standard' we understand the preeminence of an exceptional region within being as a whole. The remaining beings are not actually derived from that exceptional region; yet that region provides the light that illumines them all" (N2 197).

In other words, if the guiding question of metaphysics makes beings (as a whole) *visible as being* and *as a whole*, then in a sense this question is not a genuine question, because it has already to some extent decided about Being. Heidegger himself hints at this:

The more this question becomes the guiding question, and the longer it remains such, the less the question itself becomes an object of inquiry. Every treatment of the guiding question is and remains *preoccupied with the answer*, preoccupied with *finding* the answer. (N2 190)

Therefore at the heart of metaphysics is a non-genuine question about Being, that is, a question which only pretends to be a *question* but in fact is a *position*.

Because the stance in question [the stance of "What is being?"] originates from the guiding question and is simultaneous with it, and because the guiding question is what is properly metaphysical in metaphysics, we call the stance that derives from the undeveloped guiding question *the fundamental metaphysical position* [*die metaphysische Grundstellung*].

The concept *fundamental metaphysical position* may be grasped in propositional form as follows: The fundamental metaphysical position expresses the way in which the one who poses the guiding question remains enmeshed in the structures of that question, which is not explicitly unfolded; thus enmeshed, the questioner comes to stand within being as a whole, adopting a stance toward it, and in that way helping to determine the location of humanity as such in the whole of beings. (N2 190-1)



In short, the guiding question, by predetermining its region of inquiry—by asking what beings *are*—presupposes that beings after all must be (present) and that, therefore, *to be* (Being) at least means *to be present* (beingness), means to endure. Such a presupposition excludes the nothing from the field of the question; and therefore, as we said before, metaphysics does not consider the nothing. Such ignorance of the nothing keeps metaphysics separate from philosophy:

Let us then resolve not to forget in anything that follows what it was that rose to meet us in our first tentative steps in the question concerning being, namely, the incontrovertible happenstance that we stumble across the nothing. (N2 194)

Whoever fails to experience it [nothing] remains forever outside the realm of philosophy, without hope of entry. (N2 195)

Since what makes metaphysics metaphysical is that it does not genuinely question Being, the next step would be to engage in such questioning. We will, therefore, follow Heidegger in his engagement in such questioning through his project of fundamental ontology.

## FUNDAMENTAL ONTOLOGY

So far we have seen how metaphysics avoids questioning Being genuinely. In this chapter we turn to Heidegger's own project of fundamental ontology which asks the question of Being. Our aim in this chapter is (§5) to introduce one of the main themes of this dissertation, namely, the claim that the problem(s) of metaphysics and Heidegger's own solution are a variation of the enigma expressed by Parmenides' maxim: "Being, thinking: the same"; (§6) to see how Heidegger can solve the problems of metaphysics; and (§7) to retrieve the central insight of *Being and Time* by considering Heidegger's analysis of death. This insight is then sharpened and identified (in §8) with what Heidegger calls "the leap of reason." For this purpose a reading of Heidegger's *Der Satz vom Grund* is presented. On our way to thinking *gelassenheit* we need to think the important insights in the early Heidegger, since we intend to show the connection between these insights and how they lead to *gelassenheit*.

## §5. AUTHENTIC CARE

We now have to consider Heidegger's own conception of metaphysics and his solution to the problem of metaphysics at the stage of *Being and Time*. Heidegger thinks of Western metaphysics as the history of the forgetfulness of Being. That is, metaphysics as such does not question Being. Although metaphysics claims to ask about Being, it does not really pursue the question.

We should note that there are two distinct claims involved in this assertion of Heidegger: 1. that metaphysics as such does not ask about the question of Being; and 2. that the whole Western tradition is one giant metaphysical epoch marked by the forgetfulness of Being. The first claim does not cause an immediate problem because Heidegger might say that it follows from his definition of metaphysics. The second claim, however, can become problematic since one can ask how Heidegger knows that the Western philosophical tradition is metaphysical, and more importantly, whether the retrieval of the tradition is a matter of historiography.

In order to ask seriously about Being, in order to know what the meaning of Being is, Heidegger makes a strange move whose justification can be provided only retrospectively. This move is to ask about Dasein as the privileged entity whose Being is an issue for itself. "*Understanding of Being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein's Being*" (SZ 12/32).

This move from the question of Being to the question of the essence of human being, Heidegger views as a radicalization of Parmenides' maxim—a maxim repeated throughout the Western tradition: "*to gar auto noien estin te kai einai.*"

The Western tradition understands this maxim to imply that thinking and Being are the same—or rather, that the thinker and what is thought are the same. This is exemplified in Kant's highest principle of all synthetic judgments—that "the conditions of the possibility of experience are the conditions of possibility of the objects of experience." Here Kant proclaims the sameness of the thinker and what is thought and uses it to discover ways of Being by inquiring into ways of thinking (experience). For Kant this regress to man took the form of a critique of pure theoretical reason, an effort which, according to him, was philosophical anthropology. Kant's laying of the foundations of metaphysics, based on the sameness of the thinker and the object of thought, yields the establishment of metaphysics through an interrogation of man (KPM 140).

But according to Heidegger, Kant's anthropology is not pure and not sufficiently fundamental: "Kant does not refer to his Anthropology, not just because it is empirical and not pure, but rather because in and through the execution of the ground-laying itself, the manner of questioning regarding human beings becomes questionable" (KPM 146). The radicalization of this anthropology is Heidegger's fundamental ontology.

Metaphysics asks about Being as such, but this inquiry is transformed<sup>5</sup> into

---

<sup>5</sup>Heidegger gives no reason as such for this transformation, and takes it to be rather self-evident. So he just makes the transformation by making it into a rhetorical question: Is it permissible any longer to abide by the indeterminacy of the question of Being, or must we even risk a still more original step toward the working-out of this question?

....

Must we not first ask: From whence in general do we lay hold of the point of view for which to determine Being as such and thus to win a concept of Being from out of which

asking about "the possibility of comprehending what all of us as human beings already and permanently understand (i.e., Being)"; which is an inquiry into Dasein, into the possibility of the comprehension of Being. It is Fundamental Ontology (KPM 154).

Heidegger's radicalization of Parmenides' maxim in *Being and Time* takes the form of regressing from the "question of Being" to "the question of the meaning of Being" or, in other words, equating "Being" with the "meaning of Being"<sup>6</sup>: "[T]he Question of Being as a question concerning the possibility of the concept of Being, springs forth from the perceptual understanding of Being. Thus the question concerning the possibility of the concept of Being is once again driven back a step to the question concerning the essence of the understanding of Being in general" (KPM 154). Thus, this equation is in fact mediated through another inquiry. The sequence of inquiries starting from the question asked by "First Philosophy" is as follows:

What is the being as such?---What is the Being as such?---Question of the concept (meaning) of Being---Question of the understanding of Being

---

the possibility and the necessity of the essential articulation of Being becomes understandable? (KPM 153)

John Sallis commenting on the link between phenomenology and ontology (i.e., the method and issue of Heidegger's thought) comes close in explaining the above transformation: "How is it that the investigation [phenomenology] of such fundamental disclosure comes to coincide with a renewal of questioning about Being? This connection can be seen only if one considers with more precision just how Being is put at issue in *Being and Time*. What is asked about in the questioning of *Being and Time*? It is the *meaning* of Being that is asked about.... To ask about the meaning of Being is to ask about Dasein's disclosedness" (*Delimitations*, 91f.).

<sup>6</sup>This equation is implicit in Heidegger's project, and he does talk about the "question of Being": "The retrieval must develop this question, which we call the Question of Being for short, as a problem" (KPM 151).

These equations, at first sight, seems quite unacceptable, but when we realize that by "meaning" Heidegger understands the horizon upon which something is understood, and that this horizon, in the case of Being, is time, then these equations become more acceptable.

*[T]ime needs to be explicated primordially as the horizon for understanding of Being, and in terms of temporality as the Being of Dasein, which understands Being. (SZ 17/39)*

We should not of course understand these equations as equality, afterall Parmenides says: "Being, thinking: the same." But the explanation of this can only come later when the meaning of identity is clarified.

The explication of the Being of Dasein will take the form of showing that the structure of Dasein is care. Care comprises Being-already-in or thrownness, Being-ahead-of-oneself or existence, and Being-alongside or falling (SZ 196/241, 346/397).<sup>7</sup>

In analysing the Being of Dasein (Div. One, Chap. VI) as disclosure (*Erschlossenheit*) Heidegger relates disclosure to truth. The idea of truth is first delimited as uncovering and then is shown to be the ontological ground of the traditional notion of truth as correspondence. Heidegger shows that in making the

---

<sup>7</sup>There is a controversy concerning the structure of care. Heidegger says that the components of care in the comprehensive sense are disposition, understanding, falling and discourse. The status of discourse (*Rede*) is problematic and commentators are divided on its structural position. The problem is that Heidegger says on the one hand that "Discourse is existentially equiprimordial with state-of-mind and understanding" (SZ 161/203), as though these were the three constituents of Dasein. On the other hand, in §68 the sub-headings suggest a fourfold division into understanding, state-of-mind, discourse and falling. At SZ 335/384-85 we read that these four are items of the structure of care. For a helpful attempt to resolve this problem see Dreyfus' *Being-in-the-world*, pp. 215ff, 238ff.

assertion about e.g., a picture on the wall that "it is hanging askew," the picture should first be *revealed* as such<sup>8</sup>:

What comes up for confirmation is that the assertion, by Being toward that of which something is asserted, is a pointing out of the being, that such a Being toward uncovers the being toward which it is. (SZ 218/261 my translation)

Such uncovering or Being-uncovering is in turn based on disclosedness or primordial truth. But Dasein discloses not only beings but itself too:

As something that understands, Dasein *can* understand *itself* in terms of the "world" and Others or in terms of its ownmost potentiality-for-Being. The possibility just mentioned means that Dasein discloses itself to itself in and as its ownmost potentiality-for-Being. This *authentic* disclosedness shows the phenomenon of the most primordial truth in the mode of authenticity. (SZ 221/264)

In the authentic mode, Dasein can become itself: its ownmost potentiality-for-Being. But what are Dasein's self and its ownmost potentiality-for-Being? This question raises the issue of Dasein's Being-a-whole and Being-toward-death. In §7 we will treat the death analysis in more detail. For now, the following analysis by which we show how authenticity is the solution to the problem of metaphysics, should suffice.

According to Heidegger, we have Dasein's whole in our grasp when we understand it in relation to its end, i.e., death. Death is the possibility of Dasein's impossibility; it is a possible impossibility. Death is possible because it is pending and can happen at any moment; and as death *of* Dasein it is an impossibility because when it happens Dasein is no more. As such, death cannot be experienced. But

---

<sup>8</sup>For a more detailed analysis of this issue see 6.2.

death, which cannot be experienced, changes its meaning from an event that occurs at the end of Dasein's life to Being-towards-death:

The ending which we have in view when we speak of death, does not signify Dasein's Being-at-an-end ... but a *Being-towards-the-end* {*Sein Zum Ende*} of this entity. Death is a way to be, which Dasein takes over as soon as it is. (SZ 245/289)

This realization that one's life is one's death, implies that life cannot be understood as a teleological act that yields something, that has a purpose, but that the *purpose of life is itself: living*.<sup>9</sup> This insight opens the future: Dasein understands itself as freedom. This insight is enacted by projecting one's future possibilities upon one's death.

But Being towards this possibility, as Being-towards-death, is so to comport ourselves toward *death* that death reveals itself *as a possibility* in this Being, and for it. Our terminology for such Being towards this possibility is "*anticipation*" of this possibility. (SZ 262/306)

"Anticipation turns out to be the possibility of understanding one's *ownmost* and uttermost potentiality-for-Being—that is to say, the possibility of *authentic existence*." (SZ 263/307)

To be authentic is to understand oneself from death in its full character as possibility. The Dasein that projects upon its death has achieved the insight that one is indeed finite,<sup>10</sup> that one's life is not a potentiality that has to be actualized, but

---

<sup>9</sup>Although Heidegger does not articulate this insight the way we have done, it is implicit to his analysis. As the following passages will make clear, Heidegger's conclusion that by anticipation "one is liberated in such a way that one ... can ... choose among the factual possibilities..." (SZ 264/308), is based on this insight. For a full discussion of this issue see §7 below ("Is It Necessary to Die According to *Being and Time*").

<sup>10</sup>Although Heidegger suspends the judgment regarding the after-life, we think that it is implicit in his analysis. Otherwise, if death is not taken to be the absolute end, it cannot have its liberating effect.



rather, that one is pure possibility, i.e., that one can decide oneself. Such insight, in turn, purges one of any nostalgia or utopianism, and makes one realize that one is responsible for one's existence, that one has to attend to one's real possibilities.

When, by anticipation, one becomes free *for* one's own death, one is liberated from one's lostness in those possibilities which may accidentally thrust themselves upon one; and one is liberated in such a way that for the first time one can authentically understand and choose among the factual possibilities lying ahead of that possibility which is not to be outstripped. (SZ 264/308)<sup>11</sup>

At this stage Heidegger tries to answer the question of the ontological possibility of authentic Being-one's-Self, i.e., he is asking about the condition of possibility of being authentic.

But because Dasein is *lost* in the "they", it must first *find* itself. In order to find *itself* at all, it must be "shown" to itself in its possible authenticity. In terms of its *possibility*, Dasein *is* already a potentiality-for-Being-its-Self, but it needs to have this potentiality attested. (SZ 268/313)

We notice a peculiar problem that is expressed here. Heidegger says that Dasein *is* already its (authentic) self but should attest it (in traditional language: "Dasein should actualize its possibility"). But (and this is the peculiar problem) Heidegger wants to find the *ontological* condition of this attestation, implying that this condition is already an aspect of Dasein's Self. This attestation is done by what is familiar to us as the "*voice of conscience*." We should also notice that this attestation is an existentiell matter. The upshot of Heidegger's analysis of conscience is that precisely

---

<sup>11</sup>This is a very Nietzschean move, which Heidegger does not acknowledge as such, although three lines later he mentions Nietzsche, but for a different reason. Heidegger says: "In anticipation, Dasein guards itself against falling back behind itself .... It guards itself against 'becoming too old for its victories' (Nietzsche)" (SZ 264/308).

because Dasein is already a potentiality for Being-a-Self, it has a tendency (effected by the call of conscience) to be disclosed as what it is.

Heidegger then sets out to describe the components of this authentic potentiality-for-Being which is attested in conscience. The three components, understanding, disposition and discourse, are considered. In the case of understanding, it is authentic if one projects oneself upon one's ownmost potentiality-for-Being.

This distinctive and authentic disclosedness, which is attested in Dasein itself by its conscience—*this reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety*—we call "resoluteness." (SZ 296-7/343)

Heidegger's word for "resoluteness" is "*Entschlossenheit*," which means something like "keeping unclosedness" or "openedness." So the word does not directly mean resolve or resoluteness. But later, he says: "Resoluteness 'exists' only as a resolution [*Entschluss*]..." (SZ 298/345). So *Entschlossenheit* does have the sense of resolve in it, so far as one has to resolve to keep oneself open for one's ownmost possibility. Resoluteness, therefore, "is a distinctive mode of Dasein's disclosedness" (SZ 297/343). In acknowledging the call of conscience one becomes one's primordial self.

One's self is a whole if it is seen in its totality, i.e., with one's end, i.e., with one's death. Heidegger shows the relation between anticipation of death and resoluteness in §62. This is a necessary step that he has to take. In Chapter One of Division II he exhibits authentic being toward death (anticipation) at the existential

level. In Chapter Two, he exhibits Dasein's authenticity at an existentiell level (ontic). In Chapter Three he brings anticipation and resoluteness together. Heidegger asks: "*Does resoluteness in its ownmost existentiell tendency of Being itself, point forward to anticipatory resoluteness as its ownmost authentic possibility?*" (SZ 302/349). His answer is that if resoluteness is a distinctive mode of Dasein's disclosedness, then Dasein's existentiell self-disclosure "is made possible only in so far as Dasein discloses to itself its potentiality-for-Being, and discloses it 'right to its end'" (SZ 305/353). But existentially, '*Being-at-an-end*' implies *Being-towards-the-end*. In turn, *Being-toward-the-end* means anticipation of death. Resoluteness, therefore, implies anticipation of death: "When Dasein is resolute, it takes over authentically in its existence the fact that it is the null basis of its own nullity [death]" (SZ 306/355).

## §6. DISCLOSIVE DASEIN

Let us now see how Heidegger's notion of authenticity can solve the problems of metaphysics. Some of the traditional problems that metaphysics has faced can be generally grouped into the following categories: 1. The problem of the apriority of knowledge. 2. The moral problem of whether there is such a thing as evil. 3. The problem of freedom and determinism: Whether we are free.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup>The first problem is in fact the Kantian problem of "What can I know?" but the second one seems to us, to be more fundamental than Kant's "What should I do?" The third problem is that of Augustine.

What makes Heidegger's solution to these problems distinctive is first that his "solution" is a solution to all of these problems at once, and that it is a "solution" not so much to the problems of metaphysics but to metaphysics *itself as the problem*. That is, Heidegger can show that these problems arise because metaphysics itself is the problem. Second, Heidegger's solution is distinctive in that it is really no solution as such, that is, it is not what metaphysics expects from a solution: an answer or a formula such that the mere fact of knowing it would release the problem. As we will show, Heidegger's solution is in the form of transgressing the very domain of these problems, thus clarifying why they are problems *for* metaphysics. We will now give a short description of the first two problems, and a detailed treatment of the problem of freedom. We will then in 6.2 consider Heidegger's solution to these problems.

### **6.1. The Problems**

In the case of the problem of apriority of knowledge, Kant's solution is a step in the right direction. His answer to the question of whether knowledge is a priori, is a yes, but with the qualification that it is only the objectivity of the objects that we know a priori. But Kant does not question how the categories through which objectivity originates come about.

In the case of the problem of morality, the traditional solution, represented by Augustine, as we mentioned in the introduction, was to locate the source of evil in the human will. As Augustine says: "Will wills something but it cannot." This is so

because man is created. For Augustine, the deficiency of the will marks the temporality of man. Time is the distension of the mind, the process of moving from expectation to memory, the synthesis of the mind. Will unifies the past (memory) and the future (expectation) through the present (attention). But the will is never complete, and so the created being is marked by a deficiency of being. This deficiency is that "I will and I cannot." Just as the Manicheans, who in order to account for evil, believed in two substances, Augustine too, by locating the cause of evil in the created being's will, has to come up with two wills in one: "Whence comes this monstrous state?... Mind gives orders to itself, and it is resisted.... Therefore there are two wills...." (*Confessions* 8.9.21)

Kant, too, cannot account for evil. For Kant, evil has a more ontological foundation than it had for Augustine. The world of appearances is a world in which happiness and virtue do not correspond. Evil, for Kant, is the non-correspondence of virtue and happiness in this world.

In *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* Kant states that the origin of evil in humankind cannot be traced to a temporal event but must be traced from rational representation, for it would be contradictory to look for a temporal origin of a free act.

If an effect is referred to a cause to which it is bound under the laws of freedom, as is true in the case of moral evil, then the determination of the will to the production of this effect is conceived of as bound up with its determining ground not in time but merely in rational representation; such an effect cannot be derived from any preceding state whatsoever.... To seek the temporal origin of free acts as such ... is thus a contradiction. (RWLR 35)

Like Augustine, Kant, in a sense, locates the origin of evil in free will. But then he says that human nature cannot be evil in itself:

But the rational origin of this perversion of our will *whereby* it makes lower incentives supreme among its maxims, that is, of the propensity to evil, remains inscrutable to us, because this propensity itself must set down to our account and because, as a result, that ultimate ground of all maxims would in turn involve the adaption of an evil maxim {as its basis}. Evil could spring only from the morally-evil (not from mere limitations in our nature); and yet the original predisposition (which no one other than man himself could have corrupted, if he is to be held responsible for this corruption) is a predisposition to good .... (RWLR 38)

It is interesting that Kant, almost like the Manicheans and Augustine before him, eventually has to introduce another substance responsible for evil: "It (the Bible) finds a place for evil at the creation of the world, yet not in man, but in *spirit* of an originally loftier destiny [*Bestimmung*]" (RWLR 39).

In any case, although Kant situates the origin of evil on the one hand in human will and on the other takes human nature to be originally good (which is again a contradiction), he cannot explain why it should be the case; for him the origin of evil remains inscrutable.

We come now to the third problem—that of free will. Augustine thinks that we are free. Most importantly, the will, for Augustine, unifies the distended man, who by his very nature is temporal. But as was mentioned, will cannot totally achieve its end: "I will and I cannot." For the correspondence of will and what is willed, will needs love and the grace of God.

We see that in a sense, despite man's free will, his salvation depends not on him but on God who can and may grant it. It is as if Augustine sides with a kind of determinism.

Kant's treatment of freedom in his practical philosophy, through the notion of respect, potentially has the power to overcome the traditional contradictions associated with the notion of freedom. Kant unfortunately, as we shall see, does not develop this notion to its end and thus gets himself entangled in ensuing problems. In the following extensive treatment our purpose will be to show further the relations between respect, freedom and finitude.

**Practical Reason:** The notion of "practical reason" is in itself ambiguous and unclear, since reason is usually associated with theory and not with practice. Now, we might understand it as the practical application of theoretical reason. That is, in doing an action, reason determines the possible outcomes of that action and then one can decide which option to take according to one's interest. Reason's applicability in this case is hypothetical. If so, then one does not have two reasons, but only a theoretical reason with practical application. That is, theoretical reason provides the knowledge of the law which can be applied in the satisfaction of desire, and in so far as it does so, theoretical reason is practical too. But this is not what Kant means by practical reason.

We can also understand practical reason as the application of reason in *deducing* laws and maxims from the first principles, or infinitely more difficult, from the

highest good. Such a "grand deduction" has been the aim of traditional ethics but it is not the aim of Kant in his *Critique of Practical Reason*. Kant's intention is to disclose a *pure* practical reason that gives rise to an unconditional practical law, a law which is not hypothetical but categorical. This *disclosing* of the pure practical reason is what Kant means by "critique." In parallel to the first *Critique*, Kant is asking about the possibility of an a priori synthetic judgement. And the relevant justification and explication of this possibility is the transcendental deduction of it.

However, there is another sense of "critique," that is, critique not as explication and delimitation, but in the sense that *Critique of Pure Reason* is also the condemnation of the effort at a transcendent employment of a speculative reason which aims to know the noumenon by itself, (a reason "which presumptuously overreaches itself" (CPrR 3)). Similarly, the *Critique of Practical Reason* is the condemnation of the effort at a transcendent employment of a practical reason which instead of legislating by itself lets itself be empirically conditioned. In this sense of "critique" the *Critique of Practical Reason* is the critique of *impure* practical reason, because it is not pure practical reason that needs a critique or that is the source of illusions, but rather the impurity that is mixed in with it, in so far as empirical interests are reflected in it.

**The Problem of Freedom:** The problem seems to be that of 1. the possibility of freedom, and 2. how to reconcile natural causality with man's freedom. Kant's solution to the first is very simple: he just takes human freedom to be a matter of



fact.<sup>13</sup> (Of course, this does not mean that freedom is not in need of deduction, just as the existence of the categories is a matter of fact and yet they have to be deduced transcendently). The second part of the problem, however, is not so simple.

Insofar as we consider phenomena as they appear under the conditions of space and time we find nothing which resembles freedom: phenomena are strictly subject to the law of *natural causality* (as a category of understanding), according to which everything is the effect of something else and so on to infinity, and each cause is connected to a preceding cause. Freedom, on the other hand, is defined as the power to "begin a state *spontaneously*. Such causality will not, therefore, itself stand under another cause determining it in time as required by the law of nature" (CPR A533/B561). In this sense the concept of freedom cannot pertain to a phenomenon but only a thing-in-itself, which is not given in intuition. If it were to pertain to a phenomenon, reason would run into the antinomy that was explicated in the first *Critique*. This freedom, however, cannot apply to any thing-in-itself but only to human beings, who have active and spontaneous faculties which cannot be reduced to simple sensibility. This concept of freedom, like that of the noumenon, would still remain purely problematic and indeterminate (although necessary) if reason had no

---

<sup>13</sup>"All other concepts (those of God and immortality) which, as mere ideas, are unsupported by anything in speculative reason now attach themselves to the concept of freedom and gain, with it and through it, stability and objective reality. That is, their possibility is proved by the fact that there really is freedom, for this idea is revealed by the moral law" (CPrR 3). Or, "[W]hat in the speculative critique could only be thought [i.e., freedom] is now confirmed by fact" (CPrR 6). Or, "Freedom Must Be Presupposed as a Property of the Will of All Rational Beings.... It is not enough to prove freedom from certain alleged experiences of human nature (such a proof is indeed absolutely impossible, and so freedom can be proved only a priori)." (*Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 50).

other interest apart from its speculative interest. But practical reason determines the concept of freedom by giving it an objective reality. This determination—in the form of moral law—is independent of natural conditions of sensibility that connect every cause to an *antecedent* cause. This is why the concept of freedom, as an Idea of reason, enjoys an eminent privilege over all the other ideas: because it can be practically determined, it is the only concept (idea of reason) that gives to things in themselves the sense or guarantee of a "fact" and which enables us really to penetrate the intelligible world (CPrR, Preface).

We can see how Kant avoids the contradiction between natural causality and freedom by locating the free subject, not in the sensible world but in the supersensible (noumenal) world. This division of the world into sensible and intelligible is problematic, and Kant does not really overcome the (natural causality/freedom) contradiction, but avoids it. This does not mean that Kant's solution is without importance. But its importance lies in the fact that it overcomes the contradiction *inherent* in the very notion of freedom itself, that is, the contradiction between the spontaneity of the free agent and the non-arbitrariness of its choice.

What Kant does is to *overcome* and *reveal* the nature of this apparent contradiction both at the same time. By "deduction" in a more exact sense, we understand the phenomenological explication of this phenomenon of pure practical reason. Heidegger in his lecture course on *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*

gives a short analysis of the Kantian practical reason. Using Heidegger, we will now follow Kant in attempting such explication.

For Kant, it is the moral personality that really characterizes the person in regard to what his personality *is*. The question then is: What does the human being know himself to be in so far as he understands himself morally? Obviously, moral self-knowledge cannot coincide with the types of self-consciousness discussed earlier, either empirical or transcendental. Above all, it cannot be an empirical—which for Kant means sensible—self-consciousness, one mediated by inner or outer sense.

According to Kant there pertains to sensibility not only the faculty of sensation but also the faculty he commonly designates as the feeling of pleasure and displeasure.

Moral self-consciousness is not a sensation but a feeling. We must elucidate this state of affairs phenomenologically. In having a feeling *for* something there is always present at the same time a *self*-feeling, and in this self-feeling there is present a mode of becoming revealed to oneself.

It is important to note the simultaneity and the unitary structure that is involved here. This feeling is not a matter of a simple reflection upon oneself but rather a feeling of *self* in having a feeling *for* something. Now, the moral self-consciousness *must* be a feeling if it is to be distinguished from theoretical knowledge in the sense of the theoretical "I-think-my-existence." As Heidegger says in the *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*:

The preceding interpretation of the feeling of respect shows not only the extent to which it constitutes practical reason, but at the same time it makes clear that the concept of feeling in the sense of an empirically intended faculty of the soul has disappeared and into its place has stepped a transcendental, basic structure of the transcendence of the moral self. (KPM 109)

As such, respect is respect for the moral law. It does not serve as a criterion by which to judge our actions. On the contrary, respect for the moral law first constitutes the possibility of such an act. Through respect the law first becomes accessible to us. The law is not what it is because we have a respect for it, but conversely: this feeling of respect for the law and, hence, the way in which the law is made manifest through it determine the manner in which the law is capable of affecting us. As we said before, respect for the law—as moral feeling—is itself a revelation of myself (a feeling of myself) as the self that acts. The negative aspect of respect is that respect for the law is respect for oneself as that self that *does not let* itself be determined by self-conceit and self-love. This is implied in the fact that moral feeling is not being an empirical feeling but a transcendental one. In having respect for the law, I submit to it. This specific feeling-for ... which is characteristic of respect is a submission. In having respect for the law, I submit to myself. I am myself in this act of submitting to myself.

What, or more precisely *who*, is the self manifested to myself in this feeling of respect? In submitting to the law, I submit myself to myself *as* pure reason. In submitting to myself, I raise myself to myself as a free being capable of self-determination.

The preceding interpretation of the feeling of respect not only reveals to what extent this feeling constitutes practical reason but also makes it clear that the concept of feeling in the sense of an empirical faculty of the soul is replaced by a *transcendental*, fundamental structure of the transcendence of the moral self. The expression "feeling" must be understood in this ontologico-metaphysical sense if we are to do justice to what Kant means by his characterization of respect as a "moral feeling" and as the "feeling of my existence." The self-submissive, immediate surrender to the law is pure receptivity; the free self-imposition of the law is pure spontaneity. In themselves, the two are *originally one*.

**Respect and Transcendental Imagination:** We will now show how respect has the structure of transcendental imagination. Kant, in the first *Critique*, shows that knowledge is obtained by unification between understanding and sensibility. This unification (syn-thesis) is carried out (according to the first edition of CPR) by transcendental imagination. Kant calls it the unitary root of the two stems (sensibility and understanding). As such, transcendental imagination must possess the characteristics of these two stems. Sensibility's characteristic is receptivity, and understanding's is spontaneity. Therefore, transcendental imagination must be receptive and spontaneous, and above all it must be both at the same time. We have to emphasize that these characteristics are transcendental and not empirical.

It is now easy to see that respect, as this structure of receptivity and spontaneity (both at the same time), is the very structure of transcendental imagination, by which

its nature (self) appears to itself. As we said before, Kant solves the enigma of freedom by his analysis of respect. This *solution*, as we witnessed, is of course nothing other than a phenomenological *description* of freedom itself.

This receptive/creative structure defines, for Kant, the finitude of *personalitas moralis*. In the case of speculative reason, finitude showed itself as the positing of the Ideals<sup>14</sup> of reason—as the longing for the unconditioned, for the infinite. In the case of practical reason, however, finitude shows itself as longing for the highest good and for the correspondence of virtue and happiness.<sup>15</sup> As Kant admits, ordinary experience contradicts the claim that happiness and virtue coincide. In fact, we find that the most virtuous person is seldom the happiest. To resolve this apparent contradiction, Kant formulates two additional postulates. The first provides a moral proof for the existence of God (CPrR 128 ff.). Only if God exists can we uphold the

---

<sup>14</sup>For the following description of the Ideal I am using John Sallis' excellent analyses in his *The Gathering of Reason*, p. 132 ff. In the first *Critique* the transcendental Ideal corresponds to the idea of the totality of realities: "this idea is the supreme and complete material condition of the possibility of all that exists ..." (CPR, A576/B604). The Ideal is an individual being determined by its idea *alone*. Reason does not suppose that the ideal actually exists but only posits it as the *archetype* for the complete determination of all other beings. As such, this Ideal is God in the transcendental sense. As Sallis remarks, "[i]n positing the transcendental ideal, reason posits that unity (totality) by which this second moment in the fragmentation of thought would be overcome, namely, the absolute totality of all determinations." But "[t]here is a radical incompleteness, fragmentation, as regards the determinations available to human thought for determining things" (*The Gathering of Reason*, 149). Ideal, therefore, represents the longing of Reason for unity.

<sup>15</sup>The definition of an Ideal in the second Critique is not as explicit as it in the first *Critique*. We can, however, educe that since God as the highest being is the Ideal, and since "the concept of the highest good as the object of a pure practical reason, defines the concept of the First Being as that of a Supreme Being" (CPrR 145), then the highest good is the Ideal in the Second Critique. But since the highest good expresses the correspondence of virtue and happiness, then the Ideal represents this correspondence.

highest good, for He alone can insure that virtue and happiness coincide. God's goodness insures that the most virtuous person will also be the happiest. The second postulate provides a moral proof for the immortality of the soul (CPrR 126 f.). Given that we are *worthy* of happiness only if we are virtuous, we must assume the possibility of becoming completely virtuous. But since moral perfection is not attainable in this life, we must assume the possibility of infinite progress toward that ideal (i.e., in the afterlife).

With these postulates of practical reason, Kant fulfills his promise to limit reason in order to make room for faith. However, he emphasizes that neither of these postulates are essential to the concept of morality as outlined in the second *Critique* and the *Groundwork*. In the first postulate, Kant shows that the highest good is in principle possible to attain. In the second, he explains how the highest good can be actualized by man. Considering the actualization of this ideal, moral perfection is achieved when all of the will's intentions coincide with the law (CPrR 130-132). By definition, this coincidence is achieved in a holy will. However, we do not possess a holy will. Hence, to harmonize our intentions with the law becomes a *goal* that each of us must forever strive to realize. This ideal of moral perfection would not be instructive for us here and now, however, unless we could insure that this life were continuous with the next. Only in view of this continuity could we uphold an ideal of moral constancy.

**Kant's Recoil from His Discovery:** Kant by his turn toward the supersensible and the afterlife, backs away from his discovery of finitude. In the first *Critique*, according to Heidegger, Kant recoils from his discovery of temporality as the structure of the transcendental imagination, where temporality represents the finitude of man. In the second *Critique*, too, Kant does not develop his discovery of respect as the structure of the finitude of the moral person. He makes virtue and happiness antithetical and then resolves the antinomy between them by denying the finitude of man. Kant does not see respect as the very structure of finitude. If he did, he would consider the moral person reaching the highest good in this life, when he practices his freedom to be *virtuous* and (at the same time and most importantly) when *he accepts his finitude by being happy* (when he obeys the moral law).

Of course the status of the *summum bonum* is important here. If we call the correspondence of virtue and happiness—which man *should* and can achieve in this life—the highest good (that is, if we define it this way) then it is *not* an Ideal. But then the question is: Do we need an ideal? Kant seems to think so. And it is an ideal that Kant takes the highest good to be. Therefore, Kant still needs a concept for the humanly possible highest good. Unfortunately he does not talk about this concept, because its possibility in this world as the coincidence of virtue and happiness, according to him, does not occur.



**Demystifying of the Ideal:** If we can show that the function of the Ideal (in its right sense) is accounted for by the notion of *respect*, then we have shown that Kant has backed away from his discovery.

The Ideal in the first and the second *Critique* represents the finitude of reason and/or of the moral person longing for the *infinite*, i.e., longing in the case of speculative reason, for the correspondence of knowing and being, and in the case of practical reason, for the correspondence of virtue and happiness. In the first *Critique* Kant thinks that this desire is an illegitimate one (because it is not achievable); and in the second *Critique* he thinks that it is legitimate, because it is achievable (but in the afterlife).

Now, by the *right* sense of the ideal, we mean not the ideal as a thing in which the correspondence of happiness and virtue occurs, but the *orientation to* the good. Such orientation is not something to be achieved but is something inherent in the nature of man, i.e., it is a priori. Now this notion of the ideal is already operative in the notion of respect. For the a priori orientation toward the good, means the *possibility of being good*: such transcendental possibility is the very notion of *freedom*; and respect, representing the self-legislating person who *can* choose to obey the moral law or not, has this notion of freedom within it.

As we said at the beginning, Kant's rationalistic tendencies force him not to see the potential of his discoveries, and so by positing a supersensible world over against a sensible one he brings in a host of traditional problems that he cannot really solve.

However, as we tried to show, it is possible to save Kant from his metaphysical tendencies!

### ***6.2. Heidegger's Preliminary Solution***

Heidegger's solution to the above mentioned problems of metaphysics is as follows:

In the case of the problem of knowledge, Heidegger's solution is to radicalize the Kantian discovery of transcendental imagination by taking it as the disclosive activity that founds Dasein. Disclosure (*Erschlossenheit*) is Heidegger's non-traditional solution to this problem. This solution has two parts. To the Kantian question of "What do we know?" Heidegger's implicit answer is that we already know what we seek to know, because we are Being-in-the-world. This answer sounds very traditional but only on the surface. By "we already know," Heidegger means that the horizon of understanding upon which we project things is, in the Kantian sense, a priori. To the second (and much more difficult) question, "How do we know something new?" his indirect response is a problematizing of the assumption of the question. Heidegger shows that Dasein is disclosive. That is, we neither create a new thing out of nothing, nor do we come to see it as if it were already there irrespective of how we came to see it. In other words, underlying every act of perception (knowing) is a hermeneutic transaction. To demonstrate this we now very briefly consider Husserl's notion of fulfillment that Heidegger too discusses in the *History of the Concept of Time*.

In every act of recognition there is an intention and an intuition which somehow correspond to each other. Husserl in the sixth investigation says:

From the tranquil, as it were *static* coincidence of meaning and intuition, we now turn to that *dynamic* coincidence where an expression first functions in merely symbolic fashion, and then is accompanied by a 'more or less' corresponding intuition. Where this happens, we experience a descriptively peculiar *consciousness of fulfillment*: the act of pure meaning, like a goal-seeking intention, finds its fulfillment in the act which renders the matter intuitive. (*Logical Investigations* 694)

For example, if I look at an entity which looks like a hammer and continue looking at it and recognize it as the same hammer, then my intention of the hammer is fulfilled by the intuition of it, and, as Heidegger says, an identification occurs: "In such a demonstrative fulfillment the emptily intended and the originally intuited come into coincidence. This bringing-into-coincidence—the intended being experienced in the intuited as itself and selfsame—is an *act of identification*" (HCT 49). It seems to us that in this act of identification there are not one intention and one intuition that coincide with each other but rather *two* intentions and one intuition where the coincidence occurs between the two intentions. In our example, the first intention occurs when I first see the hammer and intend it as such; the subsequent intentions are compared and identified with the first intention. In other words, an intuition cannot be compared with an intention because intuition is not yet knowledge. The real mystery, then, lies in how an intuition finds its way to intention, or how the first intention, as cognition, occurs. To focus on this issue, let us transfer the problem to the discussion of interpretation in §§32-33 of *Being and Time*.

Heidegger distinguishes two different as-structures: "The primordial 'as' of an interpretation ... which understands circumspectively we call 'the existential-hermeneutical 'as'' in distinction from the 'apophantical 'as'' of the assertion" (SZ 158/201). In a sense the hermeneutical 'as' is synchronic, and the apophantic 'as' is diachronic. It is therefore the apophantic as-structure which includes the hermeneutic transaction. In our example, if the head of the hammer is on one side a hammer but on the other an ax, when one for the first time encounters such a hammer, it is not understood circumspectively; one hesitates in order to understand (interpret) it. Through this interpretation the hammer-ax is understood apophantically as a hammer *and* as an ax. In this hermeneutic transaction several syntheses occur, some of which are: 1. The concept of hammer-ax is *created*. This creation is not *ex nihilo*, but done out of the concepts of hammer and ax. 2. The old concepts of hammer and ax are in turn expanded in order to include the new phenomenon of hammer-ax. 3. The referential totality (in-order-to) is reshuffled to accommodate the hammer-ax.

Important for our discussion is the first synthesis when a new phenomenon is created (understood) out of what is already known. In becoming aware of the hammer-ax for the first time, one intuits the data, but the intention of the hammer-ax is not yet there. How does this new intention come about? How does creation occur? Metaphysics wants to know. The problem in the Kantian setting is this: how is intuition taken up in understanding; or, how does productive imagination (*Darstellung*, Third *Critique*) occur?

Heidegger's novel answer to these questions is precisely to focus attention on the fact that every perception (intention) involves creation, productive imagination, or what he calls "disclosure." In the (unarticulated) assertion "this is a hammer-ax," the hammer-ax is pointed out, because as Heidegger says "the primary signification of 'assertion' is '*pointing out*' [*Aufzeigen*]" (SZ 154/196). This pointing out is disclosure. To demonstrate this, we now turn to Heidegger's analysis of truth in §44 of SZ where he aims to show disclosedness to be the ontological foundation of truth.

For his analysis Heidegger takes the example of a man whose back is to the wall and who makes the true assertion that "the picture on the wall is hanging askew." This assertion is demonstrated when the man turns round and perceives the picture hanging askew on the wall. What gets demonstrated in this "demonstration," and what is the meaning of "confirming" such an assertion? Nothing else than *that* this thing *is* the very entity which one has in mind in one's assertion. "What comes up for confirmation is that the assertive Being-toward that of which something is asserted is a pointing out of the being, *that* such Being-toward *uncovers* the being toward which it is" (SZ 218/261). In other words, the assertion as a pointing-out is a Being-uncovering or a revealing.

To say that an assertion "*is true*" signifies that it uncovers the being as it is in itself. Such an assertion asserts, points out, "lets" the entity "be seen" (ἀπόφανσις) in its uncoveredness. The *Being-true (truth)* of the assertion must be understood as *Being-uncovering*. (SZ 218/261)

It seems to us that in this analysis Heidegger is conflating two different assertions into one. The first assertion that Heidegger mentions is articulated by the man whose

back is to the wall. The second assertion, which remains unarticulated, is made in the act of *perceiving* the picture, as if the man by perceiving the picture says to himself "the picture is hanging askew on the wall." It is this second assertion which uncovers the being (the picture). In a sense, it is, as uncovering, as disclosing, as revealing, a *creation*.

If we project this example to our discussion of fulfillment we can say that the act of perceiving or creating the hammer-ax is the act of intending it. Of course by creation we do not mean that one could intend an elephant and then actually see it when one is looking at a hammer-ax. But we do mean that for someone who has never seen a hammer, the hammer-ax could be intended as an ax only.

Heidegger's solution to the problem of knowledge, therefore, is to focus attention on what grounds the act of knowledge, namely, disclosure. In "On the Essence of Truth," Heidegger undertakes to show that this very disclosure is the essence of Dasein: freedom. We will not go into the analysis of this text now, since our aim was to show how Heidegger's notion of disclosive Dasein, in SZ, answers the question of knowledge. However as a final comment we refer to a passage in MFL in which Heidegger clearly equates creation (what he calls "determination") with disclosive activity<sup>16</sup>.

---

<sup>16</sup>In his letter to Richardson (1962), Heidegger explicitly refers to his insight about discovery and creation:

Dialogues with Husserl provided the immediate experience of the phenomenological method that prepared the concept of phenomenology explained in the Introduction to *Being and Time* (§7). In this evolution a normative role was played by the reference back to fundamental words of Greek thought which I interpreted accordingly: *logos* (to make manifest) and *phainesthai* (to show oneself).

Being-already-by-things, having to do with them, is of itself disclosive. This mode of disclosing is, as disclosure of what is objectively present, discovery in the broadest sense. Making statements about objective things [*Vorhandenes*] discovers them in a mode peculiar to it, namely, as *determining* [creating] of something as something. That is the real sense of synthesis (*συνπλοκή*, *connection*). "Something as something" is of itself irreducible but nevertheless founded. It is only possible on the basis of the disclosing that is already to be found in our having to do with things [*Umgang-mit*]. This discovering performed in the proposition is always in reference to something; it is nurtured by the primordial discovering that is there in our intercourse with things. (MFL 127-28)

If we put the question of knowledge in the form "whether knowledge is a priori or not?" Heidegger's answer could be:

What is a priori is the disclosive activity, or Dasein. One cannot hope to know any ontic a priori (such as the Kantian categories) without disclosure, i.e., without the burden of interpretation [determining, synthesis].



Heidegger's *solutions* to the problems of morality and free will are related in that these *two issues themselves* are inherently related. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger takes the issue of evil to be part of the issue of negativity in general (SZ 248/292). He starts his demonstration by saying: "Dasein is not itself the basis of its Being ...

---

A renewed study of the Aristotelian treatises (especially Book IX of the *Metaphysics* and Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics*) resulted in the insight into aletheia as a process of revelation, and in the characterization of truth as non-concealment, to which all self-manifestation of beings pertains. (*Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, x-xi)

John Sallis agrees with us that "the original issue of Heidegger's thought" is disclosedness (*Delimitations*, 92ff.). But he believes further that "Heidegger comes in the later works to dissociate truth from Dasein's self-understanding—that is, he dissociates the contentious opening up of a realm in which things can show themselves (i.e., truth) from the movement of self-recovery by which Dasein is given to itself. The happening of truth is set at a distance from the reflexivity of human self-understanding" (94). Although we agree with analytic separation of these two issues, we think that, for the later Heidegger, as we will show later, self-disclosedness is linked to the happening of truth, so much so that on the one hand, Being needs man, and on the other, man is subject to the sendings of Being.

[but] the *Being of its basis*" (SZ 285/330). That is, "[i]n being a basis— ... in existing as thrown—Dasein constantly lags behind its possibilities" (SZ 284/330). "This 'Being-a-basis' means *never* to have power over one's ownmost Being from ground up. This '*not*' belongs to the existential meaning of 'thrownness'" (SZ 284/330)

This "not" means that Dasein "in having a potentiality-for-Being ... always stands in one possibility or another: it constantly is *not* other possibilities ..." (SZ 285/331). Heidegger relates this nullity of Dasein to freedom: "the nullity we have in mind belongs to Dasein's Being-free for its existentiell possibilities" (SZ 285/331). Furthermore, this nullity is related to inauthenticity: "This nullity is the basis for the *inauthentic* Dasein in its falling;" (SZ 285/331). In fact *care*—Being of Dasein—"*is permeated with nullity through and through*" (SZ 285/331). We can see that the negativity involved in inauthenticity not only is not privation, and not something inessential, but is essential to the Being of Dasein. "Essential nullity has by no means the character of a privation, where something is lacking in comparison with an ideal which has been set up but does not get attained in Dasein;" (SZ 285/331).

This nullity, as essential, is the ontological condition of moral evil<sup>17</sup>:

This essential Being-guilty [nullity] is, equiprimordially, the existential condition for the possibility of the "morally" good and for that of the "morally" evil—that is, for morality in general and for the possible forms which this may take factually. (SZ 286/332)

---

<sup>17</sup>We are collapsing the Nietzschean distinction between "evil" and "bad," taking "bad" to be more fundamental than "evil."



Such ontologizing of evil, implies that evil is necessary for Dasein, just as Nietzsche says that suffering in life is good, in that the essence of life is the overcoming of (working through) suffering.

This interpretation of evil certainly solves metaphysics' problems, but creates more problems than before. Our task, then (in Chap. 3) is to see why this is so. That is, at this stage of the analysis we are *bound* to ask "why evil?" or "why is evil necessary?" But we will realize that this necessity cannot be proved—a lack that is related to Dasein's finitude.



We are now ready to retrieve one of the important insights of *Being and Time*, which we think makes the linkage between different stages of Heidegger's thought possible.

### **§7. IS IT NECESSARY TO DIE ACCORDING TO *BEING AND TIME*?**

Having shown how fundamental ontology could solve the problems of metaphysics, we are ready to retrieve an important and primary insight of *Being and Time*. Since one of our theses is about the coherence of Heidegger's thought, we have to show how *Being and Time* relates to Heidegger's middle and late periods. By identifying its central insight and showing this insight to be at work in the rest of Heidegger's

thought we will achieve our goal. By considering the death analysis in SZ, we show how Heidegger works out this insight, and uses it to describe authenticity.

Heidegger's analysis of death in *Being and Time* (§§ 46-53) is a pivotal stage of the existential analytic; it opens Division Two which is the primordial existential interpretation of Dasein. This interpretation is primordial because Dasein is considered in its wholeness, i.e., in its essence. Dasein is considered as a whole when it is considered with its end (death), i.e., considered as mortal. Yet despite the centrality of the death analysis, it is not difficult to ask oneself what happens to this analysis if the soul is immortal, or rather, if one believed that the soul is immortal. We therefore have to see what the real issue of the death analysis is, and whether this analysis is essentially dependent on the notion of death as the absolute end.

The death analysis makes the following main points:

1. Death is certain: it will definitely happen to everyone. "The ownmost, non-relational possibility, which is not to be outstripped, is *certain*" (SZ 264).
2. Death is possible or pending, i.e., it can happen at any time. "Thus death reveals itself as that *possibility which is one's ownmost, which is non-relational, and which is not to be outstripped*. As such, death is something *distinctively impending*" (SZ 250-51).
3. Death is the possible impossibility of Dasein because when it happens Dasein no longer exists. Therefore, in a sense, one never dies, because one can never

experience one's death, and yet we do die. Hence, "[d]eath is the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein" (SZ 250)

4. Facing death shows itself in anxiety: "Whenever Dasein exists, it has already been *thrown* into this possibility.... Thrownness into death reveals itself to Dasein in a more primordial and impressive manner in that state-of-mind which we have called 'anxiety'" (SZ 251).
5. To be authentically toward death means keeping this threat existentially and constantly disclosed, by anxiety: "Being-towards-death is essentially anxiety" (SZ 266).
6. Anticipation of death means to "authentically understand and choose among the factual possibilities lying ahead of [death]..." (SZ 264).

By projecting upon death as the impossible Dasein takes death not just to be the nothing, but to be the not-yet. That is, by such projecting Dasein discloses itself to itself: "[Dasein's] existential possibility is based on the fact that Dasein is essentially disclosed to itself, and disclosed, indeed, as ahead-of-itself. This item in the structure of care has its most primordial concretion in Being-toward-death" (SZ 251). The upshot of this analysis (which Heidegger shows only indirectly) is that death as the impossible opens the future, i.e., Dasein is essentially non-essential: it is Dasein which decides itself; Dasein cannot have an essence or substance which predetermines it.

§7. IS IT NECESSARY TO DIE ACCORDING TO BEING AND TIME?

There is, however, an untreated assumption in Heidegger's analysis, namely that death means the absolute nothingness, the absolute end, of Dasein in any form, i.e., there is no immortality: "'ending' as dying is constitutive for Dasein's totality ..." (SZ 240). Heidegger takes death to be nothingness: "Its death is the possibility of no-longer-being-able-to-be-there" (SZ 250). However, this is only an assumption, and we *cannot* know whether or not we continue to live in any other form after we die. The analysis of anxiety (*Angst*) too seems to rest on this assumption. The one who maintains himself in the anxiety of death, and anticipates death has taken the resolute relation to life. But if someone does not believe in death as the absolute end and instead truly believes in the afterlife, then he will not have *Angst* toward death. Does this mean such people cannot be authentic? Why should one have *Angst* before death in order to be authentic?

We have to see what the real issue of the death analysis is. As was pointed out, for Heidegger, death means nothingness: Dasein's "death is the possibility of no-longer-being-able-to-be-there" (SZ 250). It is this absolute nothing which gives Dasein the insight that life ends in nothing, that life *is* nothing. With this insight comes the highest insight—if one dares—that if the end of life is nothing, that if the purpose of life is nothing, then life *is* its own purpose: freedom. This insight is a result of a leap from: "if the *end* of life is nothing;" to: "then life itself is no-thing, is no goal directed thing."

§7. IS IT NECESSARY TO DIE ACCORDING TO BEING AND TIME?

The real issue of the death analysis is therefore the "nothing." And why does it show up in the *death* analysis? Because Heidegger *assumes* that death is the absolute end. But what about the person who does not *believe* that life ends in death, but *believes* in everlasting life? Could (indeed, should) that person still confront the nothing? We have to see what brought about the confrontation with the nothing in the death analysis and apply it to this new situation of everlasting life.

Since the "nothing" is the end of life, the confrontation with it comes about when one asks: what is the end of life?; what is the purpose of life, of existing, of Being? Now, for the person who believes in an everlasting life, this question presumably cannot bring about the nothing, because it can be answered by pointing out that the end of life is the afterlife. But wait! Now that life does not end with death, should it refer only to the period between birth and death, or should it rather, refer to the infinite span between birth and eternity?

Now if we ask: What is the purpose of this infinite life?, the answer is that it does *not* end, or, it ends in *nothing*! The purpose and the goal of life is *nothing*. Just when we thought we had gotten rid of the nothing, it returned even more forcefully than before. Is it not more horrible, in the face of this everlasting life, to ask: so what? Isn't the tremendous boredom of this repetitive life even more bitter than a death that at least would allow one to rest in peace? Therefore, after all, the believer in the everlasting life *still* has to face the nothing. Nietzsche, though not a

believer, confronts the nothing not through death but through the argument of everlasting life. The result of this confrontation is the doctrine of the Eternal Return.

Let us think this thought in its most terrible form: existence as it is, without meaning or aim, yet recurring inevitably without any finale of nothingness: "*the eternal recurrence.*"

This is the most extreme form of nihilism: the nothing (the "meaningless"), eternally! (WP 55)

The doctrine of Eternal Return has two parts, 1. that life is meaningless, purposeless, and 2. the leap of thought in face of this purposelessness: that *therefore* life is its own purpose.

We see that one has to confront the nothing whether one believes that death is a terminus or, whether one believes in the afterlife. We could, however, object that one's real situation is neither of these two cases, because one *does not know* about death or an afterlife; that our real situation is that we do not and *cannot* know about the future. And therefore, we will not confront the nothing. Let us think about this situation.

This unknowability of the future, turns out to be more radical than it seems. This unknowability is not a matter of accidental lack of evidence or a matter of poor judgment that by proper reflection can be removed. It is rather an essential unknowability, that is, it is *impossible* to know the end of life. We should then ask the single question we have been asking: What is the purpose (meaning) of a life whose purpose (meaning) it is *impossible* to know? Nothing! We see that the nothing shows up again.

§7. IS IT NECESSARY TO DIE ACCORDING TO BEING AND TIME?

We might object to the previous conclusion, that although it is impossible to know the meaning of life or existence, it *is* still something and not nothing. This is, however, the classic problem of taking Being to be a universal. Aristotle shows that existence cannot be a universal, or rather, that existence cannot be. Of course, existence or life is not nothing either, because nothing is understood with respect to entities that are, that have existence. Therefore life, existence, is *totally other* and exceeds any understanding of it. This otherness is designated by the ontological difference. But existence cannot even be totally (absolutely) other either, because everything that is, exists. Life, therefore, *is not* but it is not nothing either. Life is no-thing.

The Being after which we inquire is almost like nothing, and yet we have always rejected the contention that the being in its entirety *is not*. (IM 35)

This insight, that life is nothing, makes us see the purposelessness (meaninglessness) of life even more forcefully than previous cases. As was mentioned before, this insight into the no-thingness of life provides the ground for a leap into another insight, that the purpose of life is itself.

The real issues of the death analysis, therefore, are not death, but the nothing, the no-thing and freedom.

At this point I would like to consider Maurice Blanchot's discussion of death in order to clarify his discussion and make the point that unlike what some

§7. IS IT NECESSARY TO DIE ACCORDING TO BEING AND TIME?

commentators think, Heidegger's and Blanchot's notions of death are the same so far as they use it to disclose what we call the possible impossible<sup>18</sup>. For Blanchot

As long as I live, I am a mortal man, but when I die, by ceasing to be a man I also cease to be mortal, I am no longer capable of dying, and my impending death horrifies me because I see it as it is: no longer death, but the impossibility of dying. (*The Gaze of Orpheus*, 55)

Blanchot's argument here seems to be slightly different from Heidegger's. For Heidegger death is the possible impossibility of Dasein, because when it happens Dasein is *no more*; so in a sense one cannot die one's death. For Blanchot, when one dies one cannot die *any longer*, so with death dying becomes impossible.

Underlying Blanchot's analysis (so far as his writing is an analysis) and Heidegger's analysis, though indirectly, is the concern with limit. Limit as the end of something X separates X from what it is not. As such separation the limit should be part of X and not-X; Now, death as the limit of life, is both being and nothing. But let us not understand death only as the temporal limit of life, but as the limit of life with respect to nothing. Life (Dasein) is complete (whole) only when it includes its limit: death. But Dasein with death is nothing. Dasein (life) *therefore* somehow

---

<sup>18</sup>By the possible impossible we mean an existent impossibility (contradiction). Hence, "2 + 2 = 5" is not a possible impossibility because it is a non-existent contradiction. Implicit in our claim, that will become evident later, is that Being as the abyss is the possible impossible. Being is possible because everything *is* and yet Being itself is *not*. More precisely, if according to metaphysics everything either *is* or *is not*, that is, exists or does not exist, then Being (which cannot be nothing) has to be. But Being as what grounds everything that is, itself cannot be. Therefore Being as ground is the possible impossible.

Although the possible impossible is in the nominal form, we should not worry that it might be taken as some "thing" that exists, and so we do not need to write it graphically under erasure, since unlike Being or *a-letheia*, the possible *impossible* is semantically under erasure. We could use the "possible impossible" in the following constructions: "the possible impossible situation"; and "possible impossibility."



hovers between being and nothing. With this "therefore" we have taken a leap. The leap is from understanding life at which end death comes, to understanding life as permeated with death.

Life and death, one could say, belong together. One could reread Parmenides' maxim (Frag. 6), read by Heidegger as "Being and thinking belong together," as "life and death belong together," with the added proviso that the "belonging" be understood as both "same *and* different." This belonging, we should notice, is not a Hegelian supersession of life (Being) and death (nothing) into becoming, since this synthesis is not on its way to a higher synthesis; and furthermore, the possible impossibility that life is, is not resolvable. Life therefore does not end in death; it *is* death. This is what Blanchot calls the disaster: "Disaster: That which does not have the ultimate [death] as a limit" (*Writing of the Disaster*, 28). It also means suspension into the abyss:

But the experience of the disaster—the experience none can have, the retreat of the cosmic which it is too easy to unmask as utter collapse (the lack of foundation where once and for all, without ambiguity or questions, everything we can conceive of and think would be immobilized)—obliges us to disengage ourselves from time as irreversible, without the Return's assuring its reversibility. (*Writing of the Disaster*, 78)

Now, it is precisely because disaster (life) does not have death as a limit, or as its end, that suicide fails: "Dying gives the illusion that if we were to die, we would escape it" (*Writing of the Disaster*, 2). That is, suicide mistakes one death for the other (real) death. Suicide, therefore fails. It fails because one either kills oneself in order to have life without its difficulties, in which case by suicide one loses life itself.

§7. IS IT NECESSARY TO DIE ACCORDING TO *BEING AND TIME*?

Or, one kills oneself because life itself is absurd and difficult, in which case death as the shrine of the nothing is itself absurd and cannot give meaning to an absurd life. But death might be thought to be easier to bear than the difficult life. In this case we should notice that the difficult *life* has only meaning in contrast to an easy *life*, and death as the negation of life, cannot be considered an easy life. Suicide is therefore contradictory, in that it cannot achieve what it aims for. Blanchot shows the contradiction in a different form:

Suicide is really asking "*is suicide possible?*" The psychological contradiction encumbering such a project is simply the consequence of this deeper contradiction. He who kills himself says, "I withdraw from the world, I will act no longer." And yet this same person wants to make death an act; he wants to act supremely and absolutely. (*Space of Literature*, 102)

Whoever kills himself has a hope of finishing it all, "and hope reveals his desire to begin, to find the beginning again in the end, to inaugurate in that ending a meaning which, however, he means to challenge by dying. (*Space of Literature*, 103)

The point is that death taken as an event at the end of one's life whether caused by oneself or others or naturally is a contradictory phenomenon. By allowing this contradiction to permeate into life, by taking the leap, Blanchot like Heidegger uses death to understand life or existence.

If death (as life) implies that death as the finishing event cannot overcome, substitute and relieve life, then we could say death is the impossibility of dying.

Blanchot uses the same format to explain nihilism:

Nihilism is the impossibility of coming to an end and finding an outcome in this end. It tells us of the impotence of the nothingness.... Nihilism [is] ... the impossibility of Nihilism.

Nihilism would be identical with the will to overcome Nihilism *absolutely*."  
("The Limit of Experience," 126)

That is, radical nihilism knows that life does not have an end or goal; it knows that the aim of life is itself and therefore life is no-thing.

Although Blanchot's language at some point is more cryptic than Heidegger's, we can see that both, so far as death is concerned, are saying the same thing. Alfonso Lingis in his courageous book *Deathbound Subjectivity* claims that Blanchot's notion of death is different from Heidegger's. He thinks that for Heidegger one can choose one's death by being authentic, and therefore, one can die with one's own "force":

It is true that of itself the premonition of the realm of death is but the intuition into unending impotence, and it cannot disengage the potential being I have to be.... Yet for Heidegger to project the being that has definitively and irrevocably come to pass in me into this singular figure of possibility is for me to release or discharge my forces, to die with my own forces, and it is this summons to die with my own singular powers that orders in the singular figure of possibility articulated for me by another in the world.

Maurice Blanchot has argued that death, the utterly indeterminate, the indeterminate moment and not only the zone of the unending and the indeterminate cannot perform this singularization and this orientation (*Space of Literature*, 87-170). Death hovers about me in *imminence*. It is not located at a moment of time to come .... [T]here is a nonadequation between the death that, of itself, comes to me and the moves with which I convert the passage of time into a distance I actively cross.

....

Is not the death that my anxiety senses at the core of my potential being, which Heidegger takes to be the singular event that singles me out ... rather the death of anyone and of no one, the death before which no individuality stands?  
(*Deathbound Subjectivity*, 186-87)

Authenticity, for Heidegger, is precisely the acknowledgment that death is not an event at the end of life, but that the possible impossibility of death makes life itself the possible impossibility. The authentic person carries the burden of this possible

## §7. IS IT NECESSARY TO DIE ACCORDING TO BEING AND TIME?

impossibility at each instant with no hope of recovering the passivity of death. It is not however clear what Lingis means by "death that singles me out." If by singularization of death he means what Heidegger means by *Jemeinigkeit* (mineness) of death, then it means that death is not a general thing, because I cannot know of other people's experience of death; my *experience* of death is the experience of *my* death. But *my* death is the possible impossibility that *life* is. The jump from "my death" to "life" is enacted by the same leap that we mentioned before; it is also the same leap from the singular (I) to the anonymous (life, Being, existence).

## §8. THE LEAP OF REASON

In the death analysis, as we showed, there are two steps: First, the disclosing of the nothing, and second, the insight that the purpose of life is itself: freedom. We called this insight, after Heidegger, the leap of reason. In this section we will consider this leap in more detail, and from different premises. In doing so we will go through an important step in thinking toward *gelassenheit*.

### *8.1. The Principle of Ground*

In our discussion of the leap of reason, we will first examine an important lecture series by Heidegger called *Der Satz vom Grund*, which can be translated as "The

Principle Of Reason," or "The Leap From The Ground," both of which Heidegger intends by this title.

Heidegger starts by considering the principle of reason, namely that "nothing is without a reason"<sup>19</sup> (SG 13). He makes the point that it is not "the principle of identity—but this one—the principle of reason, that is the highest fundamental principle of all fundamental principles" (SG 22). His reason is that the principle of identity itself cannot do without a ground, and that it is "the principle of reason that deals with grounds" (SG 22).

But just saying "the highest fundamental principle ..." does not do much, if we are not sufficiently clear about what a reason is and what a principle is. Unfortunately, these are presupposed by this fundamental principle! Furthermore if we read the principle in its affirmative form, it would say: "Everything that is in any manner necessarily has a reason..."(SG 26). It would summon us to this question: what is the reason for the principle of reason itself? Heidegger calls this situation an "embarrassment" because the principle itself does not seem to have a reason. We might say this is no embarrassment, since this situation is one of the oldest problems of metaphysics, for which metaphysics has an old solution, namely the unmoved mover or the uncaused cause. But Heidegger's implicit point is that precisely this embarrassing situation is a contradictory situation which metaphysics, according to its

---

<sup>19</sup>I am grateful to Dr. Reginald Lilly for his translation of *Der Satz vom Grund*.

second highest principle, the principle of non-contradiction, should not accept, and yet cannot do without.

"Nothing without reason"—itself without reason—is an obvious contradiction. Yet what in itself is contradictory cannot be. So says the fundamental principle of contradiction. (SG 37)

In the face of this possible impossibility we have to take a leap. This leap is from the principle of reason to the principle of Being. What Heidegger calls the "leap" is enacted by considering the following points:

1. This principle accounts for the way objects stand. It is a principle for everything that *is*:

The powerfulness of the principle of reason displays its power in that the *principium reddendae rationis*—to all appearances only a Principle of cognition—at once and immediately becomes, as the fundamental principle of cognition, the Principle for everything that *is*. (SG 47)

The principle of reason, therefore, is not about reason but about beings:

*The principle of reason is, according to the ordinary way of understanding it, not a statement about reason, but rather about beings insofar as there are at any time beings.* (SG 82)

2. But there is something else said in this principle, something that even Heidegger, as he admits, could not hear when writing the Essay *The Essence of Reason* (1929) (SG 84).

The principle of reason speaks of the Being of beings. What does the principle say? The principle of reason says: *To Being there belongs something like reason. Being is like reason [grundartig], it admits of reason [grundhaft].* The sentence: "Being admits of reason" speaks completely differently than the statement: Beings have a reason. (SG 90)

What remains concealed is that "*Being emerges in itself as reasoning.*" (SG 90)

If we listen to the principle of reason in a new key, Heidegger suggests, we will hear it as a principle of Being, i.e., as a principle about Being. But what does it mean that Being emerges as reasoning?

3.

It would now be worthwhile to bring into view that, and in which sense, something like reason belongs to the essence of Being. Being and reason belong together. Reason receives its essence from its belonging together with Being as Being. Put in the reverse, Being as Being rules from out of the essence of reason. Reason and Being ("are") the same, not an equivalent, which already announces the difference between the names "Being" and "reason". Being "is" in essence: Reason. (SG 92/93)

What Heidegger is saying is that Being "essences" (emerges) as reason, Being shows itself as reason. "Being as Being rules from out of the essence of reason." We could ask: Does Being "essence" as reason only in the epoch of modernity? or in the whole epoch of metaphysics? or does it "essence" as reason always? That is, is this "essencing" as reason an epochal phenomenon or an essential phenomenon?

Heidegger seems to suggest that it is an essential one.<sup>20</sup>

Later, (after the leap) he interprets "Being emerges in itself as reasoning" thus: "In as much as we allow the second tonality, we no longer think Being in terms of beings, rather we think it as Being, namely as *Grund*, that means, not as *ratio*, not as *Ursache* [cause], not as Rational ground and Reason, rather as a letting-lie-present that assembles. ... Being is one that grounds" (SG 185).

---

<sup>20</sup>The very distinction between epochal and essential is problematic. We will attend to this problem later when we consider the difference between epochal withdrawal and *aletheia*.

Indirectly Heidegger also gives another interpretation of the principle of Being.

In talking about listening to the principle of reason in a new key so that we can hear what is unheard in it, he says:

This hearing is connected not only with the ear, but also and equally with the belonging of man to that to which his nature is attuned. Man remains at-tuned to that which de-termines his essence. (SG 91)

Elsewhere, in *Identity and Difference*, Heidegger makes explicit that his interpretation of Parmenides' maxim, "Being and thinking: the same" is that Being and man belong together, that man is the site of Being—Dasein. He also makes clear that he thinks the tradition, on the other hand, reads this saying as a statement about the principle of sufficient reason.

4.

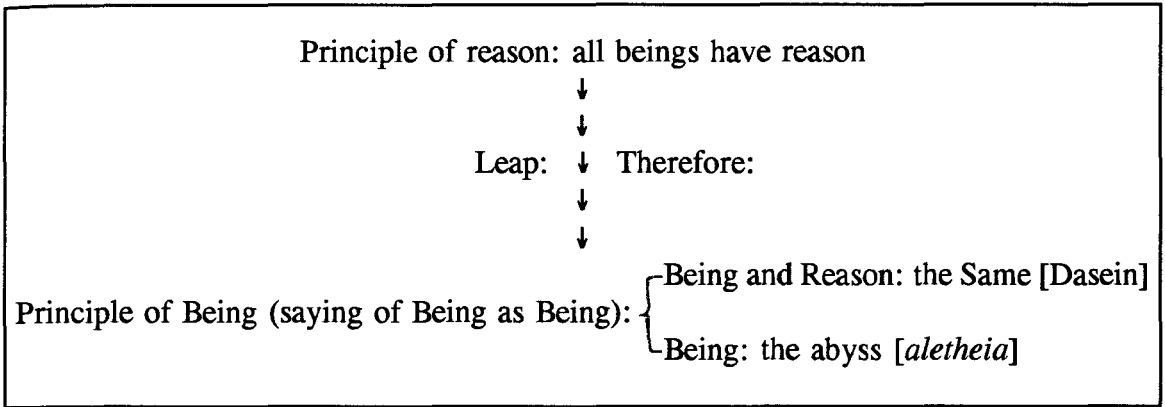
Being "is" in essence: Reason. Therefore Being can never first have a reason which is supposed to ground it. Accordingly reason is omitted from Being. Reason remains apart from Being. In the sense of such a remaining-apart [*Abbleiben*] of reason from Being, Being "is" the ab-byss [*Ab-Grund*]. Insofar as Being as such is in itself reasoning, it remains without reason. (SG 93)

It is with the "therefore" above that what Heidegger calls the leap takes off. The leap is from the position that "Being gives reason to (i.e., grounds) everything" to the position that "therefore, Being itself is without reason." After the leap the principle of reason is read differently, namely, as the principle of Being that says: "Being and reason: the same. Being: the abyss"<sup>21</sup> (SG 93).

---

<sup>21</sup>Notice that Heidegger avoids writing "Being is reason," because a principle about Being cannot itself presuppose what Being is. He also calls these statements sayings and not sentences. Later we will see whether these efforts are effective or merely cosmetic and at best pedagogical.





Notice that this leap is not exactly in accordance with our schema of the leap. What we called the leap starts from a possible impossible situation and moves to the insight that therefore this situation should not be, i.e., it should be reinterpreted.

Heidegger's leap starts from a possible situation (beings have reason) and ends in a possible impossible one (Being: the abyss). However, Heidegger talks of other insights that he bundles together with the first ones, insights that are the result of our kind of leap. These insights are as follows:

In attempting to listen to the principle of reason in the second tonality, i.e., when it is heard as "Being and ground: the same," Heidegger uses the Greek word *logos* in order to understand the unity and separation of Being and ground: *Logos* "names them insofar as in one breath it says: allowing to lie forth as allowing to emerge, emerging-from-out-of-itself: *physis*, Being; *and*: allowing to lie present as displaying, getting a footing, grounds: *Grund*. *Logos* names in one breath Being and *Grund*" (SG 180).

The insight that we have in mind is to understand Being as *physis*, as emergence, without why or reason.

"The sending [*Geschick*] of Being: a child that plays.... It plays, because it plays" (SG 188). We notice that both reason and abyss (no reason) are on the same level. But *physis* is neither Being nor nothing; it is rather the no-thing. In general, this brings up an important point: why should the leap in general be related to the insight that the leap is about? That is, the leap in general is any leap from a metaphysical stance (for example, the principle of sufficient reason) to the stance of taking Being to be *physis*. The insight that the leap arrives at is, "Being has no reason." But the leap itself can be taken if one understands that Being has no reason. In other words the leap is a result of its own result!—a situation that will make us realize that the leap is not an ordinary leap from one point to another.

The site of the principle of reason is where it speaks to us as the principle of Being.

The path that is to lead to this site and is first to explore this site, we call the situating discussion [*Erörterung*] of the principle of reason.

Everything rests on the path. This means two different things. First of all, it means that it all comes down to the path, to our finding it and remaining on it—which means to our persisting in being "underway." The paths of thinking that belong to the situating discussion have this peculiar feature: when we are underway on them we are nearer to the site than when, in order to become ensconced there, we convince ourselves that we have reached the site;...

Secondly that everything rests on the path suggests that everything we must bring into view shows itself only underway on the path. Whatever is to be brought into view lies on the path. Within the purview opened up by the path and through which the path leads, whatever can be brought into view at any given time gathers itself from some point along the path. (SG 106)

This is an important passage that we shall treat in more detail later when we discuss *Gelassenheit* essay. For now we shall only summarize its main points.

That everything rests on the path means that the site where we understand the principle of reason as the principle of Being is not a place at the end of the path, but rather is our very traversing of the path, what Heidegger calls "being 'underway'." Thus, it is by being underway on the path that we reach some understanding of the site. And since in this instance we never reach a place, our understanding is always inadequate.

The other point is that the leap and the passage might give the impression that we move away from one understanding to the other, e.g., in this case, we move away from the principle of reason to the principle of Being. Heidegger points out that "the region from which one leaps first becomes surveyable when one makes the leap" (SG 107). That is, the leap neither leaves behind nor sublates (*aufhebt*) that from which it leaps. Rather, "it assimilates it in a more original fashion." Heidegger calls this assimilation "commemorative thinking." "By this we mean the gathering together of what precisely does not pass away, but which instead essentially unfolds, that is, endures, inasmuch as it vouchsafes to commemorative thinking new insights" (SG 107).

Through commemorative thinking the principle of reason is understood in its formation by Being. It is understood through its origin (and not cause), it is understood in its origination. Commemorative thinking, then, is like genealogy whereby one shows the coming-about of the originated.

A further point is that we set ourselves on the path by the leap. That is, (as Heidegger says) the leap comes first, and then one should try to stay on the path; the two are distinct. Therefore, being underway is not a repetition of the (i.e., Heidegger's) leap:

Thinking must ever anew and more originally make the leap [*den Sprung springen*]. With this ever more rudimentary making of the leap there is no repetition and no recurrence. This is required of the leap until the commemorative thinking ahead [*Vordenken*] to Being as Being has been transformed by the truth of Being into a different saying. (SG 159)

That is, we have to stay on the path by the commemorative thinking of Being as Being (Being as *physis*) until the sending of Being allows a different saying of Being. If this is what Heidegger means by the previous passages, then we find it problematic, since to a thinking which is underway it should not matter what its situation is.

Finally, the last point is that there is a suddenness in the leap. "The second key rings out for itself from out of itself without having any support in the first key. The change of key is sudden. Behind the change in key is concealed a leap of thinking. Without a bridge, i.e., without the steadiness of progress, the leap brings thinking into another region and into another manner of saying" (SG 95).

By the suddenness of the leap Heidegger means that the insight "Being: abyss" is not derivable from "every being has reason." It is not a deduction. However, it could be an induction. But what is odd about this insight is that even an induction is given in the form of subject-predicate, i.e., it assumes what Being is, but in this insight Being itself is the issue and therefore cannot be a term in any induction. It is

as if this leap were a movement on a vertical axis to the plane of the principle of reason. For Heidegger, this axis takes thinking to another "region." As was mentioned before, we shall have to see if this region is *totally different* from the region of the principle of reason, insofar as the very notion of "totally different" itself becomes questionable.

### *8.2. The Possible Impossible*

As was shown in the previous section (§7), the leap in thinking occurs after a confrontation with a possible impossibility. If we characterize metaphysics as the position that claims that "all is x (e.g., God, Being, etc.)" then it has to answer two related questions: 1. what is non-x (entities, man)? 2. What identifies x if *all* is x? The first question can be answered by saying that *non-x* is not (Parmenides). But then the second question follows. This second question is in fact the problem of the one and the many. That is, if all is one, what is, and why do we have, the many? "Why are there beings rather than nothing?" In other words, if all is one, there cannot be (it is impossible) the many, and yet there is (it is possible) the many. In still other words, the possible impossible situation is that there *are* beings, and yet Being *itself* cannot be.

However, to avoid this possible impossible situation, one might say that it is not the case that all is x, but some are x and some are y. This case is, in fact, a general case of Manichaeism, which believes in two substances. It is also a special case of a

kind of atomism, which believes that "all" is made of a certain number of substances. This atomism can be refuted by pointing out that for the substances to interact and communicate, there must be another factor that is in all of them, i.e., these substances cannot be totally different, i.e., they cannot be substances, and therefore, there cannot be more than one substance.

That there cannot be different substances is itself based on another insight, that the very notion of difference itself, as a relation, is problematic. Speaking of the difference between Being and beings, Heidegger says:

If we try to form a representational idea of it, we will at once be misled into conceiving of difference as a relation which our representing has added to Being and beings. (ID 62)

If two entities are totally different, then they cannot even be compared as different, i.e., it is impossible to be different, and yet we see different things everywhere, i.e., it is possible.

Again, when we say "some *are* x and some *are* y," we are already assuming that x and y exist, i.e., Being (all) is. Therefore, the metaphysical position "all is x" cannot be avoided. And yet, this position gives rise to a possible impossible situation. Of course, metaphysics does not have to go so far as to say "all is x," e.g., "all is water," or "all is fire." If it only says "all," it has committed itself to "all is one," (Being as a whole) or to "all is many." Both of these positions, as was shown, are possible impossible situations. Traditionally, metaphysics has stayed with both positions and has gone so far as to say: "one is all and all is one." As Heidegger

shows in *Identity and Difference*, on the one hand metaphysics identifies the One with God as the final cause, or with Being as the final accounting (final grounding):

The original matter of thinking presents itself as the first cause, the *causa prima* that corresponds to the reason-giving path back to the *ultima ratio*, the final accounting. (ID 60)

On the other hand, metaphysics takes the all to be many—at least three—for instance, *arche*, man, cosmos, or God, man, nature. But, precisely, since metaphysics' position is ambivalent, it stays with both positions. Thus it takes Being and thinking, or God and man, to be different (metaphysical difference) and at the same time to be identical: "Being is the absolute self-thinking of thinking [according to Hegel]" (ID 43).

As was pointed out before, Heidegger takes the philosophical tradition, including his own thinking, to be a variation on the reading of Parmenides' maxim: "*to gar auto noein estin te kai einai*." The tradition reads it as "Being and thinking are the same" (IM 136), whereas Heidegger reads it as:

Thinking and Being belong together in the Same and by virtue of this Same. (ID 27)

Heidegger points out that metaphysics emphasizes the *together*, whereas he emphasizes the *belonging*:

If we think of belonging *together* in the customary way, the meaning of belonging is determined by the word together, that is, by its unity. In that case, "to belong" means as much as: to be assigned and placed into the order of a "together," established in the unity of a manifold, combined into the unity of a system, mediated by the unifying center of an authoritative synthesis. (ID 29)

In fact metaphysics does not think either the one (sameness of Being and man) or the many (difference of Being and man). We might ask: Since Heidegger too talks of "the same yet different," then what makes him different from metaphysics? The difference is that he tries to think this paradoxical situation, this same yet different, this possible impossibility. The preliminary fruits of this thought are the thought of Dasein (sameness) and of *aletheia* (difference). Dasein represents the sameness of Being and thinking, the there of Being<sup>22</sup>. *Aletheia* represents the difference of Being and man, the otherness of Being from thinking, an otherness that cannot be overcome.

In *Being and Time* the authentic response to the situation in which life is understood against death was to take the leap to reinterpret both life and death such that living is understood as dying. And here too, we take the leap by reinterpreting Being (all) and man not as identical (ideas, categories, monads) or as different (God, man), but as be-ing: *physis*. Of course this does not imply that man and *physis* are identical since Being itself should be rethought. One could say that Being and Dasein are two aspects of *Physis*.

We do not as yet enter the domain of the *belonging* together. How can such an entry come about? By our moving away from the attitude of representational thinking. This move is a leap in the sense of a spring. The spring leaps away, away from the habitual idea of man as the rational animal who in modern times has become a subject for his objects. (ID 32)

In *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1953) Heidegger says:

---

<sup>22</sup>Heidegger says: "Man *is* essentially this relationship of responding to Being, and he is only this" (ID 31). Or, "This spring is the abrupt entry into the realm from which man and Being have already reached each other in their active nature, since both are mutually appropriated ..." (ID 33)



The questioning itself is "out of order." It is entirely voluntary, based wholly and uniquely on the mystery of freedom, on what we have called the leap. (IM 12)

The result of this, when applied to the above paradoxical situation, is *physis*:

What does the word *physis* denote? It denotes self-blossoming emergence (e.g., the blossoming of a rose), opening up, unfolding, that which manifests itself in such unfolding and preserves and endures in it .... This opening up and inward-jutting-beyond-itself must not be taken as a process among other processes that we observe in the realm of beings. *Physis* is Being itself, by virtue of which beings become and remain observable.... *Physis* is the process of a-rising, of emerging from the hidden, whereby the hidden is first made to stand. (IM 14, 15) (translation altered)

*Physis*, therefore, is not a causal relation between Being and beings: "Appearing is not something subsequent that sometimes happens to Being. Appearing is the very essence of Being" (IM 101). In order to point out the non-causal relation between Being and beings, Heidegger resorts to the language of "self-moving": "The essence of appearance lies in the appearing. It is self-manifestation, self-representation, standing-there, presence" (IM 100).

### 8.3. *Leaps Kant Did Not Take*

Kant was faced with the problem of the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge, which is comparable to the problem of knowledge in the *Meno* (how can we know something which we do not already know?). Unlike Plato who in effect says we already have learned everything and that knowledge is a matter of remembrance, Kant says we know the principles or forms of knowledge: the categories of understanding. These categories, however, must be created by the mind, and for the mind to do this,

it must in a sense be like God as the first cause, self-sustaining, or self-affecting. But precisely *this* is the problem: self-affection. For, if this answer was acceptable, we could have answered the original form of the problem (how can we know something we do not know) by saying, "We create it." As Heidegger points out at length in his *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, Kant shrank back from his discovery, namely, transcendental imagination, which has the character of self-affection:

Kant did not carry through with the more original interpretation of the transcendental power of imagination; indeed, he did not even make the attempt in spite of the clear, initial sketching-out of such an analytic which he himself recognized for the first time. On the contrary:

Kant shrank back from this unknown root. (KPM 110)

Kant's laying of the ground for metaphysics asks about the grounds for the intrinsic possibility of the essential unity of ontological knowledge. The ground upon which it comes is the transcendental power of imagination. (KPM 133-34)

[T]he original unifying which is apparently only the mediating, intermediate faculty of the transcendental power of imagination, is in fact none other than original time. (KPM 134)

When we say Kant "shrank back," we understand that he did not question and think the issue of creation, or better, self-affection or temporality.

Now, precisely because Kant does not question the issue of the uncaused cause (i.e., the possible impossibility, the contradication of the uncaused cause), when he faces this same issue in the notions of God, world and freedom, he also recoils by saying that these regulative Ideals cannot become objects of knowledge, because if they do, reason will encounter the antinomies, i.e., the possible impossible situations. The antinomies are possible because they do exist, and yet they are impossible

because they give rise to contradiction. In other words, Kant says that the possible impossibility should not be an object of experience. Now, the leap in this case (that of the problem of knowledge) comes with the realization that, first, our knowledge is based not primarily on a priori categories but on transcendence (Being-in-the-world) and second, that knowledge is not of *something* unknown that then becomes known, but is a result of creation, or better, *disclosing*. We might say that Heidegger does not explain how this "creation" is done. Of course not, and that is the point. And that this is so Heidegger makes clear by staying with the issue and questioning it. Such questioning transfers the problem of knowledge into something else.

The same problem shows up in Kant's practical philosophy. As was mentioned before, Kant proves the immortality of the soul by way of showing that since God is good and just, and since virtue and happiness do not coincide in this life, there must be an afterlife in order that the virtuous person can be rewarded with his/her happiness. The possible impossible situation that Kant confronts is this: the virtuous person is the happy person (possible), but in this world virtue and happiness do not coincide (impossible).

- Virtue and happiness should coincide
  - The virtuous person is not happy in this world
- 
- Therefore there is an afterlife, in which the virtuous person is awarded happiness

The leap Kant could have taken is that of reinterpreting the premisses and concluding thus:

- Therefore happiness is not what we usually understand it to be; the virtuous person *must* be happy *in struggle*.

It is, of course, Nietzsche who takes such a leap. For Nietzsche, the leap is from the situation in which life is understood to be full of suffering and to be unjust, to the situation in which injustice comes to mean justice, and suffering is understood to be the result of self-overcoming, which is the very essence of life (will to power). The ideals after the leap are, therefore, the reverse of those before the leap:

The most powerful man, the creator, would have to be the most evil, in as much as he carries his ideal against the ideals of other men and remakes them in his own image. Evil here means hard, painful, enforced. (WP 1026)

Let us remove supreme goodness from the concept of God: it is unworthy of a god. Let us also remove supreme wisdom: it is the vanity of philosophers that is to be blamed for this mad notion of God as a monster of wisdom: he had to be as like them as possible. No! God the *supreme power*—that suffices! Everything follows from it, "the world" follows from it! (WP 1037)

The leap for Nietzsche is in affirming life as it is:

*My New Path to a 'yes.'* ... to a Dionysian affirmation of the world as it is, without subtraction, exception, or selection—it wants the eternal circulation:—the

same things, the same logic and illogic of entanglements. The highest state a philosopher can attain: to stand in a Dionysian relationship to existence—my formula for this is *amor fati* (WP 1041).

#### ***8.4. Faith and Reason***

In this and the following sub-sections we will consider the dichotomies between faith and reason and between interest and reason. In considering these cases we have two aims in mind. First, we want to show other important cases to which the leap of reason can be applied. Second, we want to prepare for the coming sections where we try to show how reason (thinking) is permeated with its others (e.g., body, feeling, mood).

In case of faith and reason the possible impossible situation is that faith and reason are different, and yet it is impossible to have one without the other. In order to see how faith involves reason, we will first look at faith in its usual sense. The very fact that there is a discipline like theology, which wants to justify the "faith" or, rather, wants to demonstrate the justification or reasonableness of the faith, shows that faith is dependent on reason. Ernst Cassirer, paraphrasing Rousseau, says: "No revelation can make reason unnecessary or take its place. For when revelation asks us to subordinate reason to faith, it must give us reasons for this subordination."<sup>23</sup>

If, however, we understand faith as the interest of reason, as the a priori of reason, as the always already of reason, then we have to demonstrate how reason

---

<sup>23</sup>Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, p. 50.

always already presumes faith or, in other words, how reason and faith are equiprimordial.

In order to show the apriority of the world, Heidegger, in *The Essence of Reason*, resorts to Kant's analysis of the ideas. He first points out how appearances are in need of a priori unity:

Yet the *unity of appearances*, because it is necessarily dependent on a factually contingent givenness, is always *conditioned* and, in principle, incomplete. (ER 65)

[Ideas] do not arise from the reflection of understanding, ... but from the pure activity of [R]eason in inference. (ER 67)

Ideas provide unity to the manifold of intuition, a unity which is not the result of the categories of understanding. For example, if we look at a beautiful flower and understand it as a creation of God, or a product of nature, the ideas of "God" or "nature" are not intuited along with the flower, nor imposed by the faculty of understanding, but are generated by Reason. Let us clarify that what we originally called faith, Kant calls (ideas of) Reason, and what we called reason, Kant calls understanding.

These ideas "one and all" can be entitled "world": "The concept of world is that idea in which the absolute totality of objects accessible in finite knowledge can be represented a priori" (ER 69). As Heidegger adds, Kant thinks it "quite proper" to entitle these ideas "one and all" concepts of world,

because by world we understand the aggregate of all appearances, because our ideas are directed solely to the unconditioned in appearances, partly because in its transcendental sense the word "World" means the absolute totality of the

aggregate of existing things, and finally because we direct our attention solely to the completeness of the synthesis (although actually only in the regress to conditions). (CPR A419 ff., B446 ff.)

Notice that Kant is talking about an a priori direction or orientation.

Heidegger, here, wants to identify the "world" with human essence: "'world' serves as the name of the essence of human Dasein" (ER 79). And since Dasein is historical, the "world" represents the historical too:

That Kant takes "world" to signify the existence of man within his historical community and not his presence in the cosmos as a species of living creature becomes especially clear if we consider the idioms he uses to clarify this existentiell concept of world: "to know {the ways of} the world" and "to have class {world}." (ER 77)

Heidegger in the footnote (ER 77) explains what Kant means by "to know the world" and by "to have class": "To be *a man of the world* means to know how to stand with other men and how to go in life." "*To have class* {world} means to have principles and to emulate great examples" (Lectures on Anthropology, 711).

The world is that pre-given which allows one to know "how to go in life," how one stands with respect to existence, and this we termed "faith." Heidegger finally emphasizes how the "world" is a constituent of Dasein:

The understanding which anticipates and encompasses this totality is what we have called "surpassing to the world." ...

As a totality, world "is" no particular being but rather that by means of and in terms of which Dasein *gives itself to understand* {signify} what beings it *can* behave toward and how it *can* behave toward them. (ER 85)

We can, therefore, set up the following ratios: faith/reason :: Reason (Kant)/understanding (Kant) :: world (Heidegger)/thinking. By equiprimordiality of faith and reason we thus mean the equiprimordiality of world and thinking.

### 8.5. *Interest and Reason*

Habermas in his *Knowledge and Human Interest* (KHI) shows how a concept of the interest of reason already appears in Kant's transcendental philosophy.

Interest in general is the pleasure that we connect with the idea of the existence of an object or of an action. Interest aims at existence, because it expresses a relation of the object of interest to our faculty of desire. (KHI 198)

For Kant, the problem of the relation between reason and interest is how freedom is possible, that is, how it is that men want freedom. "The task of explaining freedom of the will is paradoxical, because freedom is defined as independence of empirical motive, whereas an explanation would be possible only through recourse to laws of nature. Freedom could be explained only by our designating an interest that men take in obeying moral laws" (KHI 199). But if we obey these laws, it would not be moral action and thus free action. "Yet moral feeling attests to something like a factual interest in the realization of moral laws."

In order to want that for which reason prescribes an ought exclusively to rational beings affected by the senses, a faculty of reason is required that can *install a feeling of pleasure* or satisfaction in the fulfillment of duty, one that thus has causality that can determine the senses in accordance with its principles. But it is entirely impossible to comprehend, that is to make comprehensible a priori, how a mere thought that in itself contains nothing sensual can produce a sensation of pleasure or pain. For this is a special sort of causality about which, as with all



causality, we cannot determine anything at all a priori, but must therefore direct our questions exclusively to experience. (*Metaphysics of Morals, Werke* 4:98)

This "special sort of causality" is what relates pure reason to the interest of reason, a causality that as Kant says cannot be justified by reason itself:

This [causality], however, cannot provide any relation of cause and effect such as that between two objects of experience. Yet here pure reason is to be the cause, by means of mere Ideas (which supply absolutely no object for experience), of an effect {that is, of pleasure in the fulfillment of duty} that occurs in experience. Thus it is entirely impossible for us humans to explain how and why the *universality of the maxim as law*, and thus morality, interests us. (ibid.)

In other words, as Kant reiterates, the problem is "how *can pure reason be practical?*" (ibid. 4:99). The possible impossible situation here is this: it is the case that pure reason has interest, and yet it is impossible to account for this interest by pure reason itself.

In this and previous sub-sections we saw how the poles of the dichotomies of faith/reason or world/thinking and interest/reason involve each other, how one supplements the other, how in fact each is based on the other, how they are the same and yet different, and how it is possible to differentiate between the two, but yet impossible to have each without the other.

Our implicit aim in this chapter has been to retrieve an important insight of *Being and Time*, namely the insight effected after the encounter with the nothing. We also identified the same insight in the encounter with what we called the possible impossibility. The result of this insight (or the insight itself) was the leap of reason. We showed how most problems of metaphysics (double genitive) are a result of not

facing the possible impossibility that Being, existence, life is. We also showed that the leap of reason is in a sense perpendicular to the plane of those problems, in that with the leap the assumptions of each problem is put into question and reinterpreted. For example, the leap out of the dichotomy of faith and reason shows that faith and reason cannot be pure and separate but belong to, and involve each other.

Furthermore we tried to enact this leap in different cases such as virtue/happiness, faith/reason, etc. This would prepare the ground for our thinking of *gelassenheit* when in the final section we will show how *gelassenheit* is not just a matter of thinking. We now apply the leap of reason to Heidegger's own project of fundamental ontology.

## METONTOLOGY

Our chief objective in this chapter is to show how Heidegger's middle period can be viewed retrospectively in light of the insights of *Being and Time*. In §9 we will follow Heidegger in his overturning of fundamental ontology; we do this by identifying the possible impossibility in the project of fundamental ontology, and then taking the leap out of that possible impossibility. This description is not Heidegger's, but our way of showing how metontology can be the result of the application of the leap of reason to fundamental ontology as a phenomenological inquiry. We will then in §10 elaborate on some of the consequences of this leap, which prepare our way to *gelassenheit*. Finally, in §11, in order to show the coherence of Heidegger's thinking we will demonstrate how many of the insights of metontology and his later thought can be understood from the point of view of the existential categories.

## §9. ONTOLOGY'S FINITUDE

So far we have seen how Heidegger could have applied the leap of reason to different problems of metaphysics. Now, we shall apply the leap to Heidegger's own project of fundamental ontology and phenomenology. We must clarify that in doing this we are not following Heidegger as such. This does not mean that Heidegger did not take the leap out of fundamental ontology; he did, but not in a programmatic way such as we are going to take. He somehow stumbled against the finitude of fundamental ontology.

### *9.1. Fundamental Ontology and the Problematic of Finitude*

For Heidegger the question "What does 'Being' mean?" is the fundamental question of philosophy. In order to answer this question Heidegger undertakes to analyze the existence of Dasein. Heidegger's own explicit reason for this move from the question of Being to the analysis of Dasein is given in *Being and Time*. In order to study Being, he says, we have to study beings, and among beings there is one with a privileged status, namely, Dasein, whose own Being is an issue for itself.

Heidegger's regress to Dasein might look arbitrary and seem unjustified. But Heidegger's reason for this regress is one that according to him, the whole tradition of philosophy since the Greeks has invoked. This reason is expressed in Parmenides' maxim: "Being, thinking: the same." The sameness of Being and thinking has prompted philosophers, whether implicitly or explicitly, to study thinking (*psyche*, ego, subject, etc.) in order to know Being. We might ask: Where does the proof for

this sameness come from? Heidegger's fundamental ontology is precisely such a "proof." It shows, firstly, that Being and thinking: the same; and secondly, by showing what Dasein (understanding-of-Being) is, it shows what Being is (or rather, that it is not). Of course, this "proof" is no deduction or inference.<sup>24</sup> It is rather a *disclosing* of what is *already* in play. It is phenomenology.

Fundamental ontology, as the analysis of the existence of Dasein, constitutes the approach to the problem. The analysis proceeds solely with the purpose of a fundamental ontology; the point of departure, execution, limit, and mode of concretizing certain phenomena are governed by this purpose. The understanding-of-Being is to be brought to light by way of Dasein's mode of being, which is primarily existence. The constitution of Dasein's being is such that the intrinsic possibility of the understanding-of-Being, which belongs essentially to Dasein, becomes demonstrable. (MFL 136)

To show the "intrinsic possibility" of understanding-of-Being is to show the conditions of its possibility and, therefore, to engage in phenomenology as transcendental inquiry. An inquiry that Heidegger likens to Kant's laying of the ground for metaphysics. For Kant, such inquiry was a questioning about the inner possibility of the manifestness of the Being of beings. For Heidegger this inquiry is about the problem of the intrinsic possibility of the understanding-of-Being (KPM 158).

The unveiling of the constitution of the Being of Dasein, however, has within it the problem of the finitude of Dasein. Fundamental ontology then seems to consist of two main tasks. Task one as the explication of temporality of Dasein is achieved in Division One and Two of SZ:

---

<sup>24</sup>For further clarification of the difference between disclosing (reduction) and deduction see sub-section 9.3.

We shall point to *temporality* as the meaning of Being of that entity which we call "Dasein." If this is to be demonstrated, those structures of Dasein which we shall provisionally exhibit must be Interpreted over again as modes of temporality [Div. Two]. (SZ 17/38)

But Heidegger adds:

In this interpreting Dasein as temporality, however, we shall not give the answer to our leading question as to the meaning of Being in general. But the ground will have been prepared for obtaining such an answer. (SZ 17/38)

How is this task of finding the meaning of Being to be accomplished? By asking why

Being is understood in terms of time:

Hitherto no one has asked or troubled to investigate how time has come to have this distinctive ontological function, or with what right anything like time functions as such criterion .... [Therefore,] our treatment of the question of the meaning of Being must enable us to show that *the central problematic of all ontology is rooted in the phenomenon of time, if rightly seen and rightly explained*, and we must show *how* this is the case.... Thus the fundamental ontological task of Interpreting Being as such includes working out the *Temporality of Being*. In the exposition of the problematic of Temporality the question of the meaning of Being will first be concretely answered. (SZ 18-19/39-40)

This second task was to have been achieved in the missing Division Three of Part One entitled "Time and Being." The problem of time or the "Temporality of Being" is the problem of the finitude of Dasein. What is the finitude of Dasein? It is the fact that Dasein forgets the question of Being, that time is understood as linear and not as temporality. To attend to this problem is to ask why Dasein is forgetful.<sup>25</sup>

But is it then sufficient simply to explain the "a priori," which in the tradition of ontology passes as the nature of the determination of Being, by simply saying that this "earlier" "naturally" has nothing to do with "time"? Certainly not with the time that the common understanding of time knows. But is this "earlier"

---

<sup>25</sup>"The finitude of Dasein—the understanding of Being—*lies in forgetfulness*" (KPM 159).

positively determined thereby, and is the troublesome character of time thus removed? (KPM 164)

To attend to this problem is the task of construction:

Dasein should be construed in its finitude, namely, with a view toward the intrinsic making-possible of the understanding of Being. Any fundamental-ontological construction asserts its truth in what its projection allows to be seen, i.e., in how it brings Dasein to its manifestness and let its inner metaphysics be there [*da-sein*]. (KPM 159)

As was mentioned, the treatment of this problem was to have been the aim of the missing Division "Time and Being" of SZ. In §§43, 44 of KPM where Heidegger is explaining the project of fundamental ontology, we can easily speculate that the end of §44 is a description of the project of "Time and Being," where Heidegger once more links this project to the problem of finitude:

But where is the *ground* for this spontaneous and self-evident understanding of Being on the basis of time? Have we likewise only attempted to *ask*—in the sense of a problem which has *already been worked out*—why that is so and why it must even occur? (KPM 164)

Finally, Heidegger points out that the main concern of fundamental ontology is indeed the problematic of the finitude of Dasein:

If the problematic of the Metaphysics of Dasein comes to be designated as that of "*Being and Time*," it now becomes clear from the clarification of the idea of a Fundamental Ontology that the "and" in this title conceals within itself the central problem. Neither "Being" nor "time" needs to give up its previous meaning, but it is true that a more original interpretation of their justification and their limits must be established. (KPM 165-6)

That is, it must be shown why Being is understood as time. Or, why truth is understood as correspondence:

Kant says the "transcendental appearance," to which traditional metaphysics owes its possibility, was more necessary. Must not this transcendental untruth, with regard to its original unity with transcendental truth, come to be positively grounded on the basis of the innermost essence of the finitude in Dasein? Does the nonessence [*Unwesen*] of that appearance belong to this essence of finitude?

To answer this question is to derive Dasein in the state that it proximally and for the most part is; it is to prove the everydayness of Dasein, the forgetfulness of Being.

In the appendix to MFL, Heidegger gives a more comprehensive description of fundamental ontology.

By fundamental ontology we mean the basic grounding of ontology in general. This includes: 1) a grounding that exhibits the intrinsic possibility of the Being question as the basic problem of metaphysics—the interpretation of Dasein as temporality; 2) an explication of the basic problems contained in the question of Being—the temporal exposition of the problem of Being; 3) the development of the self-understanding of this problematic, its task and limits—the overturning. (MFL 154)

The first and second tasks were achieved in *Being and Time* and in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, but the third task, the overturning of ontology is what remains to be worked out.

We should note that, according to the above formulation, the overturning of fundamental ontology is itself included in fundamental ontology, in the sense that, it is a consequence of fundamental ontology. Heidegger calls the investigation concerning this overturning [*Umschlag*] *metontology*:

We need a special problematic which has for its proper theme beings as a whole [*das Seiende im Ganzen*]. This new investigation resides in the essence of ontology itself and is the result of its overturning [*Umschlag*], its *μεταβολή*. I designate this set of questions *metontology*. (MFL 157)



Considering the last two passages, there is an important confusion about the exact definition of metontology which has not been addressed by commentators so far. If we take the third task in the first passage to be metontology then we may say:

"Metontology which has beings as a whole as its proper theme is the development of the self-understanding of fundamental ontology, its task and limits." On the one hand, to have beings as a whole as the theme of metontology implies that metontology is the consideration of Dasein in its everydayness, in its forgetfulness, or that it is the consideration of finitude.

On the other hand, metontology as the coming to limit of fundamental ontology, or rather, as the explication of the limit of fundamental ontology is a separate matter.

We could identify metontology as two separate projects:

- 1) Explication (proof) of the finitude of Dasein
- 2) Explication of the finitude (limit) of fundamental ontology

But since it is the project of "Time and Being," as the exposition of the finitude of Dasein, which has to be aborted in fundamental ontology, then we may say metontology is:

- 1) Explication (proof) of the finitude of Dasein
- 2) Explication of the finitude of the above explication (proof)

Taking metontology in its first definition, i.e., as the project of "Time and Being" then Heidegger's effort in "On the Essence of Truth" in which he tries to base

errancy (everydayness, forgetfulness) on transcendence can be looked at as metontology.

We now take the second definition to be the definition of metontology proper, and we try to see how Heidegger arrives at the necessity of this overturning. Heidegger states that "since philosophizing is essentially an affair of finitude, every concretion of factual philosophy must in its turn fall victim to this facticity" (MFL 156). But this finitude of philosophy is not something accidental and *therefore* should not be mourned but affirmed:

The finitude of philosophy consists not in the fact that it comes up against limits and cannot proceed further. It rather consists in this: in the singleness and simplicity of its central problematic, philosophy conceals a richness that again and again demands a renewed awakening. (MFL 156)

This renewed awakening is an important leap that we will attend to later, but for now we still have to see how the overturning comes about.

Since Being is there only insofar as beings are already there [*im Da*], fundamental ontology has in it the latent tendency toward a primordial, metaphysical transformation which becomes possible only when Being is understood in its whole problematic. The intrinsic necessity for ontology to turn back to its point of origin can be clarified by reference to the primal phenomenon of human existence: the being "man" understands Being; understanding-of-Being effects a distinction between Being and beings; being is there only when Dasein understands Being. In other words, the possibility that Being is there in the understanding presupposes the factual existence of Dasein, and this in turn presupposes the factual extantness of nature. (MFL 156)

That is, because Dasein is of necessity contingent (essentially non-essential), Dasein is *ontico-ontological*: to be essentially non-essential is to be a possible impossibility.

This possible impossibility calls for a leap. This leap is the overturning initiated from

within ontology: "Precisely the radicalization of fundamental ontology brings about the above-mentioned overturning of ontology out of its very self" (MFL 157).

This was Heidegger's explicit description of metontology. Although Heidegger bases metontology on the facticity of Dasein, we must notice that his "proof" is no more than **just telling** us that "the possibility that Being is there in the understanding presupposes the factual existence of Dasein, and this in turn presupposes the factual extantness of nature" (MFL 156). This description is not a deduction (nor do we expect it to be), but it is not properly phenomenology either, because Heidegger starts with the premise that if Dasein is essentially ontic, then fundamental ontology has to face its finitude. He does not disclose the reasons for this premise. And most importantly, he does not disclose it through the origin, i.e., Temporality or primordial transcendence. By using the schema of the possible impossible we now attempt to clarify further the link between fundamental ontology and metontology.

### *9.2. The Leap out of Phenomenology*

Heidegger in the last section of MFL only mentions some very important issues related to metontology, under the title of "the guiding principles." The key principles are:

3. Neutrality is not the voidness of an abstraction, but precisely the potency of the *origin*, which bears in itself the intrinsic possibility of every concrete factual humanity.
6. As such, Dasein harbors the intrinsic possibility for being factually dispersed into bodiliness and thus into sexuality.... Dasein ... is rather the authentic

concreteness of the origin, the not-yet of factual dispersion [*Zerstreutheit*].... Dasein's essence already contains a primordial *bestrewal* [*Streuung*], which is in a quite definite respect a *dissemination* [*Zerstreuung*].

7. The transcendental dissemination proper to the metaphysical essence of neutral Dasein, as the binding possibility of each factual existential dispersion and division, is based on a primordial feature of Dasein, that of *thrownness*.

10. .... In so far as being-with is a basic metaphysical feature of dissemination, we can see that the latter ultimately has its ground in the freedom of Dasein as such. The basic metaphysical essence of metaphysically isolated Dasein is centered in *freedom*. (MFL 137-139)

In short, Heidegger is asserting that dissemination is grounded in freedom, but he does not demonstrate how that is so.

We shall attempt to demonstrate the connection between dissemination and freedom, but first we have to show how the overturning itself is grounded in transcendence (freedom).

If, as Heidegger says, the overturning is a result of fundamental ontology itself (cf., MFL 157), then we have to see what in fundamental ontology prompts the overturning. Fundamental ontology is above all phenomenology. Phenomenology as a transcendental science, following the Parmenidean maxim, seeks the conditions of possibility of experience (or thought), it seeks the a priori. "A priori means that which makes beings as beings possible in *what* and *how* they are" (BPP 324). The a priori has been understood by the tradition to mean "earlier." But the a priori as the "time determination 'earlier' cannot refer to the temporal order given by the common concept of time in the sense of intratemporality. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that a time-determination is present in the concept of the a priori, the earlier"

(BPP 324). Heidegger is distinguishing between two notions of time, the common notion and the original one<sup>26</sup>. "Original time" or Temporality (*Temporalität*) in a sense, has nothing to do specifically with time just as it has nothing to do with space, or other things; and on the other hand, it has to do with time just as it has to do with everything else related to Dasein: "time in the sense commonly understood, which is our topic here, is indeed only one derivative, even if legitimate, of the original time, on which the Dasein's ontological constitution is based" (BPP 325). Original time, or Temporality, in other words, as the a priori, is not timely, and therefore, is not the origin as the initial, but as the ground. As such original non-initial it can never be reached, presented or activated, it is absolute passivity:

*Time is earlier than any possible earlier* of whatever sort, because it is the basic condition of an earlier as such.... But, from the fact that time is the earliest ... it does not follow that time is ontically the first being; (BPP 325)

Phenomenology, for Heidegger, then, so far as it means understanding beings in terms of the a priori (Temporality), is a science:

Because Temporal projection makes possible an objectification of Being and assures conceptualizability, and thereby constitutes ontology in general as a science, we call this science in distinction from the positive sciences the Temporal science. (BPP 323)

And so far as "transcendence as such ... is the first condition of possibility of understanding of Being" this phenomenology is "*transcendental science*." But "this notion of transcendental science does not coincide directly with the Kantian

---

<sup>26</sup>In his "*Ousia and Grammé*" Derrida argues that there is no vulgar concept of time and faults Heidegger for such a distinction. But as is apparent, what Heidegger really means is that there has been a vulgar concept of *temporality* and not time.

[transcendental science];" (BPP 323). In fact Heidegger's phenomenology is a displacement of phenomenology insofar as the latter wants to arrive at and present the a priori, be it transcendental apperception or self-consciousness. Furthermore, this displacement is enacted through phenomenology itself, so long as it abides by its motto, "to the things themselves." Phenomenology discovers that beings are understood by being projected on Being, and Being is understood by being projected on time.<sup>27</sup> In an often quoted passage Heidegger says:

The series, mentioned earlier, of projections as it were inserted one before the other—understanding of beings, projection upon Being, understanding of Being, projection upon time—has its end at the horizon of the ecstatic unity of temporality. We cannot establish this here in a more primordial way; to do that we would have to go into the problem of the finiteness of time. (BPP 308)

To avoid confusion we could rewrite the above chain of projections as:

understanding of beings—projection upon beingness  
understanding of beingness—projection upon Being

This is a possible impossible situation. On the one hand, everything is understood out of the original Temporality (Being); on the other, Temporality itself cannot be understood. In other words, it is possible to understand Being since we use it in everything we say; and yet it is impossible to understand Being since we cannot project it on anything else<sup>28</sup>. This possible impossible situation calls for a leap out of phenomenology. Phenomenology, then, in Heidegger's sense becomes the

---

<sup>27</sup>We should note that the use of the word "time" here and in the following quotation is very misleading, since by "time" Heidegger means the a priori, Temporality.

<sup>28</sup>The proto-understanding of Being is not a horizontal understanding.

disclosing of the non-origin through beings, and since the non-origin as "origin" is not disclosable, that disclosure is for ever deferred. It is with this insight that Heidegger makes the following astonishing remark as early as 1927:

There is no such thing as *the one* phenomenology, and if there could be such a thing it would never become anything like a philosophical technique.... The only thing that is truly new in science and in philosophy is the genuine questioning and struggle with things which is at the service of this questioning. (BPP 328)

Genuine phenomenology, which requires "sobriety and real work," is not a project at the end of which truth is disclosed once and for all, "a discipline which is now to be developed and completed so as to bring philosophy to a happy ending in a few decades (as layman or positivist imagines)," but a continuous endeavor: "One just needs to work continually at factual possibilities, because of Dasein's finitude" (MFL 156). This raises a question about whether there are two phenomenologies, the one, a phenomenology of Being, and the other, a set of phenomenologies of beings. What Heidegger is suggesting is that phenomenology of Being *is* phenomenology of beings (factual possibilities). And this is a result of the finitude of time.

The displacement of phenomenology is also a displacement of thinking from horizontal to non-horizontal. Indeed, if time is the final horizon upon which everything else is understood, and if time itself cannot be projected on any other horizon, then to understand time (phenomenology) is not a horizontal understanding, but a breaking of horizons: "there is in every case [of phenomenology] a breaking of horizons;" (MFL 156).

### ***9.3. The Unprovable Body***

So far we have seen that fundamental ontology has to undergo the overturning because, as phenomenology, it reaches "time" (Temporality) as the a priori, which cannot be understood and disclosed. We may ask:

1. How can it be proved that time is not understandable?
2. How does fundamental ontology find out that time is not understandable? I.e., how does metontology occur?
3. What are the consequences of such a limitation (in a word, finitude) for fundamental ontology (i.e., for Heidegger), and for our project here? and why?

And we can answer:

1. The status of time (i.e., Temporality) for Heidegger is similar to the status of the uncaused cause for metaphysics. The a priori is not understandable but it is the ground of understanding everything. Therefore, it is the un-understandable cause of understanding everything. And if everything has a reason (i.e., is understandable), then the a priori is and is not; it is a possible impossibility, and as such it is contradictory.<sup>29</sup> However, as we have demonstrated, the similarity ends here, because metaphysics remains content with the designation of the "uncaused cause," as such, whereas Heidegger takes the leap beyond the intention of understanding.

2. Fundamental ontology (i.e., Heidegger's analysis in SZ, BPP) does not apply the insights of the death analysis (the leap after confronting the possible impossible) to

---

<sup>29</sup>Metaphysics wants to know what Being (Temporality) is, but Being is not.



its own project. It does not consider that since the purpose of life is life itself, one cannot define and understand life fully. That is, one cannot fully know Dasein and beings. To know Dasein fully is to know Dasein in its wholeness, i.e., in its authentic mode. But also Dasein cannot be known fully in its inauthentic mode; that is, one cannot justify fully Dasein's everydayness and forgetfulness of Being.

The problem of authenticity for fundamental ontology is the same as the problem of the universal particular for metaphysics. To be able to account for the particular, one has to know the uncaused cause, one has to know Being. But since Being cannot be fully known, the particular universal cannot be fully known either. Likewise, for fundamental ontology to *want* to *know* Dasein when Dasein becomes itself (i.e., when Dasein is authentic) is to want to know Being, which is impossible. Also, to want to *fully* know the inauthentic Dasein, is to know, to justify the forgetfulness of Being, which is impossible. Fundamental ontology, therefore, stumbles against its own finitude unintentionally. This stumbling also takes the form of abandoning the second movement of fundamental ontology, namely, the discussion of "Time and Being." This issue is what we must treat in the answer to the third question, the question concerning the unknowability of time.

3. One of the consequences of finitude for fundamental ontology is that the original project of fundamental ontology, which consisted of *Being and Time* and "Time and Being" can be achieved only halfway. If by *Being and Time* as

phenomenology we understand the reduction<sup>30</sup> of Dasein to Temporality (i.e., interpreting Dasein as temporality, care), then the project of "Time and Being" was to consist in the exhibition of time (*Temporalität*) as the horizon for all understanding of Being, i.e., as the meaning of Being; this was to be done by constructing Dasein and beings from Temporality (SZ 17/38 ff.) as was mentioned in 9.1.

The impossibility of understanding Temporality implies that in fact there is no Temporality in itself apart from temporalizing; this in turn implies that one cannot start from Temporality and construct Dasein and other beings. If time were the origin, this construction would be possible, but time is not the origin, rather it is the originary<sup>31</sup>. For example, one cannot derive (construction) Dasein's bodiliness or sexuality from transcendence, but one can *show* (reduction) that such phenomena are based on transcendence. In other words, construction, as logical deduction from first principles (in this case, transcendence) is impossible. What remains to be done is to show how the a priori is already in play. But so far as this showing itself tends to ground its claim, i.e., tends to be a full (logical) proof, it fails. We think Heidegger is referring to this issue when he says:

---

<sup>30</sup>Heidegger says: "[Analysis of Dasein] merely brings out the Being of this entity, without interpreting its meaning." "We shall point to *temporality* as the meaning of the Being of that entity which we call 'Dasein'" (SZ 17/38).

<sup>31</sup>By "originary" we are translating "*Ursprünglich*," and we mean what Heidegger calls "the potency of the *origin*" as the ontological possibility itself: "Neutrality is not the voidness of an abstraction, but precisely the potency of the *origin*, which bears in itself the intrinsic possibility of every concrete factual humanity" (MFL 137). For a discussion of issues surrounding this concept see Reiner Schürmann's *Principles of Anarchy*, pp. 120-151.

This [*Critique of Pure Reason*] itself thus rattles the mastery of reason and the understanding. "Logic" is deprived of its preeminence in metaphysics, which was built up from ancient times. Its idea has become questionable.

If the essence of transcendence is grounded in the pure power of imagination, or more originally in temporality, then precisely the idea of the "Transcendental Logic" is something inconceivable, especially if, contrary to Kant's original intention, it is autonomous and is taken absolutely. (KPM 166)

What can be done, therefore, is reduction. By way of analogy let us take the phenomenon of holiness. On whether it can be proved or not Heidegger says:

The problem of transcendence [God] must be drawn back into the inquiry about temporality and freedom, and only from there can it be shown to what extent the understanding of Being qua superior power [Übermächting], qua holiness, belongs to transcendence itself as essentially ontologically different. The point is not to prove the divine ontically, in its "existence," but to clarify the origin of this understanding-of-Being by means of the transcendence of Dasein, i.e., to clarify how this idea of being belongs to the understanding-of-Being as such. (MFL 165 fn.)

This clarification of the comportment to the holy by means of Temporality does not mean that we can deduce the holy from Temporality, but that we can show how the relation to the holy is "based" on Temporality. This method is traditionally called analysis. Kant, making the point that metaphysics cannot be founded on experience but that it should be limited to the realm of possible experience, says: "We are still far from the time when we can proceed synthetically in metaphysics; only when analysis has helped us to attain clear and explicitly understood concepts will synthesis be able to derive complicated cognitions from the simplest, as in mathematics."<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup>Kant, *Enquiry into the Evidence of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morals*, (1763). *Werke* II, 191.

The so-called transcendental deduction in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is not a deduction of the categories from transcendental apperception. But then we might ask where the knowledge about categories comes from. Referring to his methodological difference with Rousseau, Kant declares: "Rousseau proceeds synthetically and begins with the natural man. I proceed analytically and begin with civilized man" (*Fragments VIII*, 613). In other words, despite Kant's claim that the categories come from logic,<sup>33</sup> they come from the factual world (from the table of judgments that he constructs after considering the factual judgments<sup>34</sup>). Kant's belief in the Newtonian world allows him to deduce the twelve categories from this world. But then he says that the transcendental apperception should give rise to these categories. Kant is not aware of this factual ground of the categories. In this sense the ontological is based on the factual ontic. We should notice that there is no fact in-itself and that the reception of the factual ground is subject to the hermeneutic transaction. The crucial point to realize is that there is another sense to this *facticity of ontology*, namely, that

---

<sup>33</sup>"[T]he idea of the 'Transcendental Logic' is something inconceivable, especially if, contrary to Kant's original intention, it is autonomous and is taken absolutely." (KPM 166)

<sup>34</sup>Kant's "transcendental clue to the discovery of all pure concepts of the understanding" is: "The functions of the understanding can, therefore, be discovered if we can give an exhaustive statement of the functions of unity in judgments. That this can quite easily be done will be shown in the next section" (CPR A69, B94). In other words, Kant derives the table of categories from the table of judgments, which are in turn taken from the factual world, i.e., taken to be true. Kant also says: "In this manner there arises precisely the same number of pure concepts of the understanding which apply *a priori* to objects of intuition in general, as, in the preceding table [of judgments], there have been found to be logical functions in all possible judgments" (CPR A79, B105)

ontology, philosophy, and phenomenology always have a factual a priori by which they are already decided:

One may not, nevertheless, lose sight of the fact that with such a fundamental ontological clarification nothing has yet been decided, and what furthermore ought to be shown is that nothing is decidable in this manner. Yet there is also always the factual necessity of the "presupposition" of a factual situation. (MFL 140-1)

We will return to this important insight in §10 (Dasein's world).

We should clarify again what specifically metontology designates. If metontology is the overturning of fundamental ontology onto its ontic ground, it could mean the explication of the finitude of fundamental ontology, i.e., the facticity of the understanding of Being. This, as was pointed out, can never be proved rigorously, only demonstrated, as Heidegger does in two sentences:

The intrinsic necessity for ontology to turn back to its point of origin can be clarified by reference to the primal phenomenon of human existence: the being "man" understands Being; understanding-of-Being effects a distinction between Being and beings; being is there only when Dasein understands Being. In other words, the possibility that Being is therein the understanding presupposes the factual existence of Dasein .... (MFL 156)

If these two sentences describe and *are* metontology proper, then Heidegger is misusing the term when he says we can do a "metontology of space," or metontology of sexuality, unless he is using the first definition of metontology as the project of "Time and Being."

The finitude of grounding applies also to metontology proper. As we mentioned metontology can include two tasks:

1. Explication of the finitude of Dasein (project of "Time and Being").

2. (Coming to limit of the above explication: overturning) The explication of the finitude of fundamental ontology: explication of the overturning.

We should add that part of the confusion<sup>35</sup> as to the definition of metontology lies in the fact that these two tasks are inherently related. To truly understand what Dasein is, to understand why forgetfulness occurs, to understand why beings are, to answer

---

<sup>36</sup>The confusion we alluded to earlier concerning the distinction between the two definitions of metontology is, for example, apparent in David Krell's description of metontology in his *Intimations of Mortality*. In the chapter entitled "Fundamental Ontology, Metontology, Frontal Ontology" Krell equates metontology with the project of "Time and Being": "The *meta-* refers to the tradition of metaphysics as such, which Heidegger still hopes to rejoin in a positive and fruitful way. For the third phase wants to broaden the scope of the existential analysis of *Being and Time* beyond mere 'historiology of metaphysics' and beyond all efforts to define and describe 'humanitas' (39-40). Krell talks of two finitudes: 1) Finite transcendence which he identifies as "finitude of time," as "*the radical absence of grounds*" (42), and 2) The finitude of interpretation as "the daimonic no-saying of interpretation." "[T]he daimonic 'no' holds all interpretation in suspense. *Die Angst verschlägt uns das Wort*. 'Anxiety robs us of speech'" (42). Without criticizing Krell's language, style and intentions we could just point out that this description is not adequate at all. One has to clarify what each of these finitudes means and entails, and if they are related, one has to clarify how.

Heidegger himself is in part responsible for this confusion (and only this) for in an important passage that Krell quotes, he somehow equates these two projects:

Fundamental ontology is this whole of founding and developing ontology; the former is 1) the analysis of Dasein, and 2) the analysis of the temporality of Being. But the temporal analysis is at the same time the turning-around [*Kehre*], where ontology itself expressly runs back into the metaphysical ontic in which it implicitly always remains. Through the movement of radicalizing and universalizing, the aim is to bring ontology to its latent overturning [*Umschlag*]. Here the turn-around is carried out, and it is turned over into the metontology. (MFL 158)

We are saying that these two projects are linked but are not the same. Furthermore, we have attempted to show this linkage, whereas neither Heidegger nor his commentators have done so.

Krell, furthermore, thinks that fundamental ontology fails and also suggests that metontology has to turn into what he calls "frontal ontology." Moreover, Krell's analysis of frontal ontology consists in only suggesting that interpretations are inadequate and that one must continuously go on: "Posed in terms of the central enigma of the recoverable yet insurmountable, the metabolism of Heidegger's project may receive a new name, one that Heidegger himself did not devise. The name would suggest that contemporary thought has neither confronted nor circumvented the central enigma of fundamental ontology but is in dispersion before it, haunted by it on all sides: *Frontalontologie*, 'frontal' ontology" (43). To this effort to create a new ontology Heidegger says: "It would be superficial and pedantic to believe that once fundamental ontology is founded as a discipline, a further ontology with a new title would be adjoined to it" (MFL 157).

the question "why are there beings rather than nothing?" is to know Being, is to know Temporality. It is to reveal the concealedness of Being, to reveal the *lethe* of *a-letheia*. It is to know the unknowable—an impossible task. For example, to explicate the above passage we must clarify how Dasein's facticity, including its bodiliness, is based on transcendence. This clarification is done by pointing out that Dasein *as freedom has body*. Heidegger merely states this and some related issues under the title "the guiding principles," thereby indicating that they cannot be proved as such:

6. As such, Dasein harbors the intrinsic possibility for being factically dispersed into bodiliness and thus into sexuality. (MFL 137)

As we have pointed out, Heidegger does not prove what he calls the principles, because in his view, these principles can be only demonstrated, not proven. What does it mean to prove that transcendence implies bodiliness and facticity? It means grounding the ontic base of fundamental ontology, that is, to ground the finitude of Dasein on transcendence, i.e., on facticity, on the finitude of the understanding-of-Being. It means grounding finitude on finitude, transcendence on transcendence! Can we show this? We cannot; and we cannot show that we cannot. This is even beyond the irony of the Socratic ignorance. Socrates, at least, *knew* that he did not know. But we cannot even prove that we do not know. This implies that we can overcome the perplexity only *through* working *through*.

It seems we can neither step out of pessimism nor go forward out of hope for an answer. It is an impossible situation, our possible situation; a possible impossible situation.<sup>36</sup>

In the second major part of MFL, Heidegger undertakes to demonstrate how transcendence grounds the concrete Dasein, and this is what we now turn to.

#### *9.4. Transcendence and Difference*

In order to demonstrate how transcendence is the ground to the extent that it even grounds the ground, we have to see how what we shall call the "Four Differences" are involved in the structure of Dasein. This also demonstrates implicitly the primordially of the possible impossible. We should also understand the four differences as both difference and sameness.

a) **Being/Dasein:** The first difference is between Being and Dasein. This is the most important of the differences, since it grounds the other differences. What makes this difference difficult to understand is that Being and Dasein are not two poles of this difference. Rather, this difference is a "stretch" that defines Dasein and points to Being. How does Dasein point to Being? Dasein is that being whose Being is an issue for it. This being able to put one's Being into question, this being able to ask

---

<sup>36</sup>We must point out that at the time of KPM Heidegger still was not aware of the radical impossibility of accounting and grounding; he still asked "why?": "But where is the *ground* for this spontaneous and self-evident understanding of Being on the basis of time? Have we likewise only attempted to *ask*—in the sense of a problem which has *already been worked out*—why that is so and why it must even occur?"



"why," and therefore this asking for ground, Heidegger designates as the phenomenon of ground:

The inquiry into the essence of grounds can be put into a formula which formulates the problem as: why do we ask, not just factually but essentially, qua Dasein, about a *why*? Why is there anything such as a why and a because? Because Dasein exists, i.e., because transcendence temporalizes! To transcend, however, is the ecstatic being-toward-itself in the mode of for-the-sake-of-itself. The *for-the-sake-of*, as primary character of world, i.e., of transcendence, is the primal *phenomenon of ground as such*. (MFL 213)

The structure of for-the-sake-of, therefore, allows Dasein to differentiate between itself and Being.

b) **Ontological Difference:** This is the most famous of the four differences. To see how this difference is based on transcendence, we refer to Heidegger's analysis of this difference in the *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (§ 22).

Heidegger first points out that Temporality makes possible our comportment to beings and that "the ecstatically, hence, intentionally, structured comportments toward something always understand this something *as* a being, hence in its Being" (BPP 118). Therefore somehow Dasein knows something like Being. "The distinction between Being and beings *is there* [*ist da*] .... It belongs to existence. Existence means, as it were, 'to be in the performance of this distinction'" (BPP 119). In other words, "[t]he *distinction between Being and beings is temporalized in the temporalizing of temporality*" (BPP 119).

c) **Dasein/World:** Heidegger gives a thorough demonstration of this difference in *Being and Time*. The analysis of Being-in-the-world shows how Dasein is

intrinsically in the world, i.e., how Dasein and world are the same. Furthermore, the analysis also shows how this phenomenon is based on transcendence. In SZ, the analysis is at the level of the in-itself<sup>37</sup>. In the later writings when Being-in-the-world is considered at the level of the for-itself, world is understood as worlding. In the following section (§10) we will consider Dasein's world in more detail.

d) **Fusion of the Opposites:** By "opposites" we mean differences such as faith/reason, language/reality, mind/body, etc.. We think it is important to show how the difference *and* the sameness of such opposites is based on transcendence. We have designated this difference *and* sameness by the word "fusion," where "fusion" is meant to remind us of the word "dissemination." But, whereas dissemination designates the bestrewal of Dasein in the world in multiplicity, fusion designates the dissemination, or infiltration of opposites, where these opposites are intra-worldly in the sense that opposites such as signifier/referent are of the world and seem to be independent of Dasein. A question we have to ask is why this intra-*worldly* fusion should be based on transcendence, on Temporality. Indeed, it should seem rather odd

---

<sup>37</sup>The distinction between the in-itself level and the for-itself level is an important distinction which Heidegger does not treat. Although Heidegger at the end of *Being and Time* refers to the Hegelian categories of in-itself and for-itself, what we mean by this distinction is different from the Hegelian one. We come to this distinction when we are faced with the problem of "how to become what one is?" In describing the existential structure of Dasein, Heidegger refers to the structure of Dasein which Dasein *always already* is. For instance, that Dasein is always already subject to the sendings of Being (determinism) and yet Dasein is also always already free. To be free and to be determined at the same time is paradoxical. The level when Dasein is considered in its a priori structure, we call the "in-itself" level, and the one in which Dasein is considered as becoming what it should be (authentic) we call the "for-itself" level. But since by the for-itself is certainly not meant the Hegelian correspondence and self-consciousness of the subject, we can mean it as for-*IT*self, meaning that authentic Dasein is for *IT* (Being), and therefore radically decentered, rather than being for-it-*SELF*.

that the world (in the sense of "reality") which is supposed to have independence from human Dasein, should have its structure based on Dasein. Of course, this dependence does not imply that Dasein is the subject which through Kant's Copernican revolution has become the center of the universe and meaning, since Dasein itself (!) at its very center is decentered. But this dependence does imply the grounding character of Dasein as the site of Being.

Dasein as Temporality is the ground of the fusion of opposites, because Temporality is the possible impossible, and the fusion of opposites is also a possible impossible situation. The fusion of opposites is a possible impossibility not because of the specific nature of the poles of the opposition but by the mere fact that they are opposites and are limit to each other. Our previous analysis of the metaphysical position, "all is many" showed that "all" can neither be many nor one. The "all" could not be many substances, because the substances need to interact, have contact, and therefore, have to be somehow similar, i.e., have to involve each other. Thus opposites such as faith/reason, thinking/technology, etc., have to involve each other.

### **§10. DASEIN'S WORLD**

Now that we have seen how transcendence grounds differences and samenesses, how it grounds the bodiliness of Dasein and therefore the bodiliness of thought, i.e., the

materiality of thought, we are ready to consider what the bodiliness of thought involves and what it implies.

Phenomenology has shown us that thought is always thought of something. The intentional relation to a being does not involve just a knowing relationship, but a comporting: "This relation, which we signify by intentionality, is the *a priori comportmental character* of what we call comporting" (BPP 61).

To intentionality, as comportment toward *beings*, there always belongs an *understanding of the Being* of those beings to which the intention refers. Henceforth it will be clear that this understanding of the Being of beings is connected with the *understanding of world* .... (BPP 175)

The knowing relationship is included in the comportmental relations: "In whatever way we conceive of knowing, it is, qua that which embraces knowing and understanding in the ordinary conception of it, a *comportment toward beings* ..." (BPP 275).

What a being is, its world, is therefore more than the theoretical aspects of it. Already in *Being and Time*, the analysis of Being-in shows that our involvement with a being involves both understanding *and* disposition, which constitute the world of a being.

According to Heidegger's analysis in MFL, the world (*Cosmos*), for the Greeks, "refers rather to 'condition' [*Zustand*]; *κόσμος* is the term for the mode of Being [*Weise zu sein*] not for beings themselves" (MFL 171). "For Paul, the world is this condition and this situation of human beings, this sort and way for their Dasein ... their way of evaluating goods. Indeed, *κόσμος* is the direct term for the way in which

human Dasein is, for its attitude, its way of thinking..." (MFL 173). For Augustine, *settling* in the world, being worldly, "is characterized primarily by certain basic comportments, evaluations, ways of believing and approaching things, by the 'attitude' ..." (MFL 173). These concepts of world can be gathered under the name "world-view." By "world-view" Heidegger means "representing, thinking, knowing some whole in which every human existence as such has an *interest*" (MFL 179).

Heidegger calls this concept of world, the pre-philosophical:

[T]he pre-philosophical-ontic concept has for its primary significance not a particular being but the how of Dasein's existing—namely, taken in its totality, the active comportment toward beings and toward itself. The mode of human existing consists in defining itself in and by the whole, specifically with respect to the how. Even if Dasein were to conform itself to a single part and expect everything from it, this very expectation would nonetheless witness to existence and its wholeness. (MFL 181)

The comportment toward an entity includes the comportment toward the whole, or—what we like to emphasize—the comportment toward an entity is a *whole* comportment, that is, it does not include just one relationship, e.g., thinking or loving. Thinking is not purely theoretical but involves an interest and thus a mood. To think is not just a matter of thinking; to know something, one has to know that thing's world, and to know its world, one has to immerse oneself in that world, one has to  *dwell* in that world. And if disclosure is the condition of possibility of knowledge, then in dwelling disclosure occurs.

We should note that Heidegger separates the pre-philosophical concept of world from the transcendental concept of it. "The world" is the for-the-sake-of-which Dasein transcends.

The bodiliness of thought therefore means that thought involves mood and interest. It also implies that in order to think something one has to dwell in that thing.

## **§11. RETROSPECT**

In this section we will look back at *Being and Time*, and consider how much of the insights of metontology and Heidegger's later thought can be understood from the point of view of the existential categories. We have to do this in order to see the coherence and connection between Heidegger's early and late thinking.

The three components of the care structure were thrownness, existence and falling, which correspond to the horizons of past, future and present respectively.

### ***11.1 Thrownness***

The analysis in MFL showed that Dasein's thrownness is based on transcendence. It also deepened the meaning of thrownness to make it signify the dissemination and bodiliness of Dasein. Since the horizon of thrownness is the past, we can ask: "what is the relation between Dasein's bodiliness and pastness of time?"

The bodiliness of Dasein means the materiality of thought; and the materiality of thought means that thought is never adequate to itself, that Dasein never corresponds to itself. This materiality is the sign of a lack of total transparency and self-presence of thought. It is the sign of a past that can never be presented. It is the sign of passivity.

Temporality, as the a priori is also the past that can never be presented: "*Time is the earlier than any possible earlier*" (BPP 325). What is the relation between thought's passivity and Temporality's passivity? They are the same. Thought's passivity is based on Temporality's originary structure. That is, the possible impossible that Temporality is, shows itself through thought's materiality.

What should one do in the face of this passivity? The authentic Dasein in acknowledging its historicity acknowledges its passivity. And although Heidegger does not talk about authentic thrownness, we could reckon that such thrownness is the state when Dasein understands itself from out of its socio-political history and out of its context with all its dimensions: "When such a moment [of vision] makes the Situation authentically present, this making present does not itself take the lead, but is *held* in that future which is in the process of having-been.... This kind of temporal existence has its time *for* what the Situation demands of it ..." (SZ 410/463). To understand oneself out of one's Situation is to understand oneself as subject to the play of forces (Nietzsche), socio-political forces as well as forces of feelings, moods and thoughts. To be subject *to* the play of forces is to be the subject *of* the *play* of

forces, is to be subject to no causality. To acknowledge one's passivity is to acknowledge one's givenness, is to acknowledge the *es gibt*.

## 11.2 Existence

The component of care that corresponds to the horizon of future is existence.

Heidegger, in *Being and Time*, relates Dasein's existence to Dasein's self-affection:

"The meaning of Dasein's Being is ... the self-understanding Dasein itself" (SZ 325/372). We are taking self-affection and self-understanding to be the same as self-relatedness: "But then it belongs to the constitution of Dasein's Being that in its Being it has a relatedness-of-Being to this Being"<sup>38</sup> (SZ 12/32). He then relates this self-understanding structure to the authentic mode:

Anticipatory resoluteness ... is *Being towards* one's ownmost, distinctive potentiality-for-Being. This sort of thing is possible only in that Dasein *can in general*, come towards itself in its ownmost possibility, and that it sustains itself—in other words, that it exists. This letting-itself-*come-towards*-itself in that distinctive possibility which it sustains, is the primordial phenomenon of the *future as coming towards*. (Translation altered) (SZ 325/372)

This primordial phenomenon of the future is however a general structure and therefore both authentic and inauthentic Dasein are based on it:

We have in view the coming [*Kunft*] in which Dasein, in its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, comes towards itself. Anticipation makes Dasein *authentically* futural, and in such a way that the anticipation itself is possible only insofar as Dasein, *as being*, is always coming towards itself—that is to say, insofar as it is futural in its Being in general. (SZ 325/373)

---

<sup>38</sup>Translated by John Sallis.



It should be pointed out that the real issue of the futurity is creativity or discovery. Resolute Dasein rather than finding out its Situation, discovers (creates) it:

The Situation cannot be calculated in advance or presented like something present-at-hand which is waiting for someone to grasp it. It merely gets disclosed in a free resolving which has not been determined beforehand but is open to the possibility of such determination. (SZ 307/355)

Although here, Heidegger mentions the relation of futurity to Dasein's self-understanding, it is in "On the Essence of Truth," that he undertakes a more elaborate analysis of this relation. We will now consider the relevant points of this important essay.

Heidegger first considers the concept of truth as correctness. Whereas in *Being and Time*, he grounded correctness in disclosure, here he grounds it in openness:

But if the correctness (truth) of statements becomes possible only through this openness of comportment, then what first makes correctness possible must with more original right be taken as the essence of truth. (BW 124-5)

This openness, in turn, is based on freedom:

How can something like the accomplishment of a pregiven directedness occur?... Only if this pregiving has already entered freely into an open region for something opened up which prevails there and which binds every presenting. To free oneself for a binding directedness is possible only by *being free* for what is opened up in an open region .... The openness of comportment as the inner condition of the possibility of correctness is grounded in freedom. *The essence of truth is freedom.* (BW 125)

Heidegger is pointing to aspects of freedom other than those of transcendence or Temporality; but in the section titled "The Essence of Freedom," he undertakes to show how freedom is eventually related to Temporality and Being. Furthermore, Heidegger once more tries to follow the project of "Time and Being," but—as if he

somehow sees the impossibility of such a project—only to declare and focus attention on the fact that finitude, is grounded on Being, Temporality or freedom.

How is this essence of freedom to be thought? That which is opened up, that to which a presentative statement as correct corresponds, are beings opened up in an open comportment. Freedom for what is opened up in an open region lets beings be the beings they are. Freedom now reveals itself as letting beings be. (BW 127)

To let beings be as the beings which they are, means to engage oneself with the open region. This engagement is in the form of exposure to the disclosedness of beings.

"Freedom, understood as letting beings be, is the fulfillment and consummation of the essence of truth in the sense of the disclosure of beings" (BW 129). Thus, freedom is unconcealedness, *aletheia*. And since freedom was the essence of truth as correctness, we have unconcealedness as the essence of truth (correctness). Not a very original insight; in *Being and Time* Heidegger had already based correctness on disclosure. What is new however is that this unconcealedness happens through Dasein, and that there is the necessary concealedness (Errancy) in unconcealedness, that is based on freedom.

In order to show what futurity eventually implies, so far as Heidegger's later thought is concerned, we have to focus on the link between disclosure and the essence of freedom. If futurity implies discovery, and discovery implies letting-be and engagement with the open region, then authentic futurity should imply keeping open the open region:

The Situation cannot be calculated in advance .... It merely gets disclosed in a free resolving .... *What, then, does the certainty which belongs to such*

*resoluteness signify?* Such certainty must maintain itself in what is disclosed by the resolution. But this means that it simply cannot *become rigid* as regards the Situation, but must understand that the resolution, in accordance with its own meaning as a disclosure, must be *held open* and free for the current factual possibility. (SZ 307/355)

This keeping open understood on the for-itself level, is an act that represents the activity<sup>39</sup> of futurity. If thrownness signifies the passivity of Dasein, futurity signifies its activity.

### 11.3 Falling

The primary meaning of falling is the present. Heidegger's description of this existentiale is confusing and ambiguous.<sup>40</sup> The ambiguity in this concept, can be removed, for our purpose, if we understand falling as a necessary comportment of care, which can either be authentic or inauthentic. The difficulty however is in understanding falling, as being disclosed from the world, as not necessarily inauthentic. The necessity of falling is the necessity of going through the world, or of dealing with the they. This necessity is not clarified in SZ, but is indirectly clarified

---

<sup>39</sup>Act and activity should not be understood with their metaphysical connotations. In the act of letting-be there is no potential which is becoming actualized.

<sup>40</sup>Hubert Dreyfus in his recently published book *Being-in-the-World* (Cambridge, M.A.: The MIT Press, 1991), points to the confusing discussion of falling in SZ. For example, he points out that "there are at least three different versions of falling-away ..." (225). He then raises the question, "why does *falling-away*" lead to *turning away* [of Dasein from a primordial relation to itself]?" and says that to this question Heidegger has "two answers, one structural and one psychological" (ibid.). Although, we agree with Dreyfus on all these points, we do not agree that these ambiguities are the real ones involved in the "falling." We think that the more fruitful ambiguity of "falling" is related to the problem of finitude, where the authentic/inauthentic distinction becomes problematic, which in turn makes falling as Dasein's propensity to be inauthentic problematic.

in *Der Satz vom Grund*. In a passage that we have considered provisionally (8.1)

Heidegger said:

[The site of the principle of reason is where it speaks to us as the principle of Being.]

The path that is to lead to this site and is to first explore this site, we call the situating discussion [*Erörterung*] of the principle of reason.

Everything rests on the path. This means two different things. First of all, it means that it all comes down to the path, to our finding it and remaining on it—which means to our persisting in being "underway." The paths of thinking that belong to the situating discussion have this peculiar feature: when we are underway on them we are nearer to the site than when, in order to become ensconced there, we convince ourselves that we have reached the site;...

Secondly that everything rests on the path suggests that everything we must bring into view shows itself only underway on the path. Whatever is to be brought into view lies on the path. Within the purview opened up by the path and through which the path leads, whatever can be brought into view at any given time gathers itself from some point along the path. (SG 106)

The crucial phrase here is "being underway." The leap from the principle of reason to the principle of Being as Being is not from one site to another at the end of a path. Rather, we reach the site by *being underway on the path*. The proper site is in fact no site; it is being-underway. In fact there is another leap that also takes place with the first leap, and is more important than the first one. This leap is from the thought that everything has a ground, to the insight that the purpose of thinking is not to find the ground of things, but to undergo the pain of thinking to discover things. There are two points implied by this insight: 1. What matters is discovery (or in a Nietzschean language, growth); 2. Discovery can occur through being underway. We will focus only on the second point.

In *On the Way to Language*, Heidegger makes the point that in order to see what language is, one has to undergo an experience with language as language.

"Undergoing experience" is another phrase that Heidegger uses to describe "being underway." Such experience would "bring language (the essence of language) as language (the saying) to language (to the resounding word)" (OWL 130)<sup>41</sup>

We proceed "on the way to language" if we think about the essence of language. Heidegger, by dwelling on the essence of language, discovers that language is the saying, which is something different from speech. "The saying is a showing" (OWL 126). By saying and showing, Heidegger clearly means discovering. By this insight, we seem to have reached our goal of arriving at the essence of language.

In truth, however, commemorative thought merely finds itself confronting the *way to language* that it seeks, and is but barely tracing it. For in the meantime something has shown itself in the essence of language, and it says: In language as the saying, something like a way unfolds essentially.

What is a way? The way lets us get somewhere. Here it is the saying that lets us get to the speaking of language, provided we listen to the saying.

The way to speech unfolds essentially in language itself. The way to language in the sense of speech is language as the saying. (OWL 125-6)

To analyze the argument in this passage carefully:

---

<sup>41</sup>We use David Krell's translation of this text.

-In language as the saying something like a way unfolds.  
-The way is ... language as the saying.

-Therefore, in language as the saying (disclosure) language as the saying is disclosed.

Or: Because language is showing, we can see language as showing.

Or, we can draw the conclusion:

Disclosure is the condition of possibility of the disclosing of itself.

We should notice an important move here; the move from disclosing (as verbal) to disclosure (as nominal). This move is not really legitimate, and is made by simply naming disclosing the disclosure (or, saying, or showing). In fact there is no disclosure *as such*; and that is why we are always on the way (to language).

The saying will not allow itself to be captured in any assertion. It demands of us a telling silence as regards the propriative, way-making movement in the essence of language, without any talk about silence. (OWL 134)

The way-making movement is a disclosive act, and is as such a poetizing.

At the end of this lecture, Heidegger suggests that one can apply the way of getting to the essence of language to anything else in order to get to the essence of that thing. That is, to see what something is, one has to experience it:

Every thinking that is on the trail of something is a poetizing, and all poetry a thinking. Each coheres with the other on the basis of saying that has already pledged itself to the unsaid, the saying whose thinking is a thanking. (OWL 136)

This means the experience of something is a creative (disclosive) act. It is how this disclosure takes place that we turn our focus to.

As we have pointed out, the creative act is not creation *ex nihilo*, but is a letting-happen. The letting-happen requires a kind of closeness and immediacy in order to let happen, instead of deciding beforehand what should happen. It is far reaching theorizing that fixes its view and thus does not let the matter unfold in its own time and logic.

We respond to the way only by remaining underway. To be underway on the way in order to clear the way—that is one thing. The other thing is to take a position somewhere along the road, and there make conversation about whether, and how, earlier and later stretches of the way may be different, and in their difference might even be incompatible—incompatible, that is, for those who never walk the way, nor even set out on it, but merely take up a position outside it, there forever to formulate ideas and make talk about the way. (WCT 168-9)

The immediacy (required by remaining underway) of the matter of thought to the thinking, in turn, implies "going through." And going through requires being-along-side, that is, falling.

This falling has a peculiar status, in that it is neither on the level of for-itself nor on the level of in-itself. The reason for this is that we have taken falling in relation to any thinking. But if we take falling to mean being-disclosed-from-the-world, then it is on the in-itself level and corresponds more to facticity.<sup>42</sup> The authentic falling (for-itself level) is the case when Dasein dwells in its Situation, i.e., when Dasein dwells not in just any particular thought, but in its mortality. Inauthentic falling, in turn, is when Dasein does not dwell anywhere:

---

<sup>42</sup>"The thrownness, however, is not restricted to the concealed occurring of the coming-to-Dasein. Rather, it thoroughly masters precisely the Being-there as such. This expresses itself in the happening which has become prominent as falling [*Verfallen*]" (KPM 161).

Through the waiting which leaps after, on the other hand, the making present is abandoned more and more to itself. It makes present for the sake of the Present. It thus entangles itself in itself, so that the distracted not-tarrying becomes *never-dwelling-anywhere*. This latter mode of the Present is the counter-phenomenon at the opposite extreme from the *moment of vision*. In never dwelling anywhere, Being-there is everywhere and nowhere. The moment *of vision*, however, brings existence into the Situation and discloses the authentic "there". (SZ 347/398)

A key term which belongs to Heidegger's later thought, but is implied here, is *dwelling*. We think the existential category "falling" can be seen retrospectively, as an early concept of dwelling. In the next chapter we will consider this concept in more detail; for now let us tabulate the early and late existential categories:

<u>Horizon</u>	<u>Early existentielle</u>	<u>Late existentielle</u>
Past	Thrownness	Passivity
Future	Existence	Activity (freedom)
Present	Falling	Dwelling

It is obvious that "activity" and "passivity" as late existentials should not be understood, as was pointed out before, from the metaphysical context of act and potency.



## GELASSENHEIT

We are now ready to read *Gelassenheit*; the reason we are finally ready is that *gelassenheit* is not a totally new concept to Heidegger, unrelated to his previous insights. In the following section we will give a brief outline of both the "Memorial Address," and the "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking," which were published together under the title *Gelassenheit* in 1959. In §13 we show how *gelassenheit* as dwelling is the solution to a problem that can be traced through most of Heidegger's works. In the final section (§14) we show what guides *gelassenheit* to be a mood, that *gelassenheit* involves mood, indeed is a mood.

### §12. READING *GELASSENHEIT*

#### *12.1 Memorial Address: Technology and Gelassenheit*

In his memorial address (1955) in commemoration of the composer Conradin Kreutzer, Heidegger presents *gelassenheit*, understood as meditative thinking, as the

solution to the dangerous problems of his (our) time. The problem in its less obvious form is thoughtlessness:

The growing thoughtlessness must, therefore, spring from some process that gnaws at the very marrow of man today: man today is in *flight from thinking*. (G 45)

This thoughtlessness gives rise to unrootedness ("*rootedness* ... of man is threatened today at its core!" (G 48-9)) and therefore, to cure it one has to go back to one's roots: "does not the flourishing of any genuine work depend upon its roots in a native soil?" (G 47). This being rooted is accomplished by meditative thinking:

Does man still dwell calmly between heaven and earth? Does a meditative spirit still reign over the land? Is there still a life-giving homeland in whose ground man may stand rooted, that is, be autochthonic? (G 48)

We have to notice an important ambiguity at this point: by homeland does Heidegger mean a particular homeland—in this case Germany—or the homeland not defined with respect to any people? Heidegger's subsequent references to German homeland and homelessness of the German people give the impression that by homeland, he means the German homeland, but the matter is much more complicated than this; we will come back to this later.

Heidegger then refers to the more obvious form of the danger:

The decisive question [of science and technology] now runs: In what way can we tame and direct the unimaginably vast amounts of atomic energies, and so secure mankind against the danger that these gigantic energies suddenly—even without military actions—break out somewhere, "run away" and destroy everything? (G 51)

The solution to the problem of technology does not lie in not using technology, since no one "can break or direct the progress of history in the atomic age. No merely human organization is capable of gaining dominion over it" (G 52). So, how do we deal with technology?

We can affirm the unavoidable use of technical devices, and also deny them the right to dominate us, and so to warp, confuse, and lay waste our nature.... We let technical devices enter our daily life, and at the same time leave them outside, that is, let them alone, as things which are nothing absolute but remain dependent upon something higher. I would call this comportment toward technology which expresses "yes" and at the same time "no," by an old word, *releasement [Gelassenheit] toward things*. (G 54)

This releasement toward things is only one aspect of gelassenheit (meditative thinking), the other aspect is releasement toward the hidden meaning of technology. Heidegger claims that this hidden meaning of technology not only hides itself, but hides itself even in approaching us. "That which shows itself and at the same time withdraws is the essential trait of what we call the mystery. I call the comportment which enables us to keep open to the meaning hidden in technology, *openness to the mystery*" (G 55).

As we said, "Releasement toward things and openness to the mystery belong together" (G 55). The decisive term here is belonging. What does this belonging imply? Can we be open to the mystery and expect that our comportment to things be proper, or can we be released (how?) toward things and expect that we remain open to the mystery? These important questions will be treated in the following section (§13).

**12.2 Conversation on a Country Path: Thinking *Gelassenheit***

Having described the problem (technology) and having named the solution (*gelassenheit*), Heidegger in "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking," undertakes to think *gelassenheit*.

Heidegger first makes the point that *gelassenheit* is not willing, not because it is opposed to willing so much as because it is beyond willing: "the term non-willing means ... what remains absolutely outside any kind of will" (G 59). As such non-willing, *gelassenheit* is "beyond the distinction between activity and passivity ..." (G 61).<sup>43</sup>

He then contrasts *gelassenheit* (thinking) to representational thinking, and points out that in representational thinking everything is understood out of a horizon, but what grants the horizon is not encountered:

[T]he field of vision is something open, but its openness is not due to our looking. (G 64)

This openness is *the* region, "an enchanted region where everything belonging there returns to that in which it rests" (G 65). The difficult question now is what is this region? "And the enchantment of this region might well be the reign of its nature, its regioning, if I may call it that" (G 65). That is, the region is its regioning. This should remind us of the *es gibt*, the giving. But is this all there is to the regioning? No. "The region gathers, just as if nothing were happening, each to each and each to

---

<sup>43</sup>The words "passivity" and "activity" that Heidegger is using here are meant in their metaphysical sense, where they are opposed to each other. These should not be mistaken with their other meaning in §11 where they were used as late existentials.

all into an abiding, while resting in itself. Regioning is a gathering and re-sheltering for an expanded resting in an abiding" (G 66). The gathering and expanded resting, which is of things, should remind us of *Ereignis*. Indeed, "things which appear in that-which-regions," "rest in the return to the abiding of the expanse of their self-belonging" (G 67). Heidegger is relating the aspects of Being, such as withdrawal (G 66), *Ereignis*, and *es gibt* to that-which-regions.

Heidegger next clarifies the self-belonging as a returning movement which is based on rest:

*Scholar*: But in this return, which after all is movement, can there be rest?

*Teacher*: Indeed there can, if rest is the seat and the reign of all movement. (G 67)

The indirect use of the circle imagery is to understand repetition and return not as a movement which gets somewhere, and achieves a goal but as a movement which does not achieve a goal since it is its own goal. In this sense the movement is based on rest.

Now, Heidegger characterizes this thinking which does not consummate in a goal—because its nature is precisely its movement—as waiting.

*Teacher*: Perhaps we are now close to being released into the nature of thinking

...

*Scholar*: ... through waiting for its nature. (G 67)

This waiting, however, "has no object," it is not a waiting for ...; a more appropriate term perhaps would be "patience." As such patience, thinking will never arrive at its destination, because it has none, but by being underway it only approaches: "thinking

would be coming-into-the-nearness of distance" (G 68). This waiting is somehow enacted by releasing oneself "purely to that-which-regions because that-which-regions is the opening of openness" (G 69).

To release oneself to that-which-regions is to give oneself up to that which dispenses. In the case of this conversation itself, it is the course of the conversation which "determines": "The occasion which led me to myself into waiting in the way mentioned was more the course of the conversation than the re-presentation of the specific objects we spoke about" (G 69). We might object that it is that-which-regions which we let-happen and not the course of the conversation, but then that-which-regions or regioning is not a thing as such that we can let-happen. The regioning, in *this case* regions through the conversation. In the next section we will focus on the letting-happen of ..., under the title of "dwelling."

Next, Heidegger points out that the regioning is a bringing forth in which the naming of what is named *is* its revealment or creation, where creation should be understood on the in-itself level, i.e., understood not from the side of the human agency:

*Teacher:* But is it really settled that there is the nameless at all? There is much which we often cannot say, but only because the name it has does not occur to us.

*Scholar:* By virtue of what kind of designation would it have its name?

*Teacher:* Perhaps these names are not the result of designation. They are owed to a naming in which the nameable, the name and the named occur altogether. (G 70-71)

The regioning cannot occur without waiting, or better, the regioning occurs through the waiting. This can happen only because waiting is essentially related to the regioning:

Insofar as waiting relates to openness and openness is that-which-regions, we can say that waiting is a relation to that-which-regions. (G 72)

But the relation between waiting and the regioning is not an ordinary relation between two separate things; that-which-regions cannot region without waiting: Being needs

Dasein:

Perhaps it [waiting] is even *the* relation to that-which-regions, insofar as waiting releases itself to that-which-regions, and in doing so lets that-which-regions reign purely as such.

....

The relation to that-which-regions is waiting. And waiting means: to release oneself into the openness of that-which-regions. (G 72)

We should notice that Heidegger, here, is considering the relation of waiting and that-which-regions on the for-itself level. And as is always the case, the for-itself is possible because of an in-itself relation between *gelassenheit* and that-which-regions.

It is to this in-itself relation that Heidegger now turns:

Releasement comes out of that-which-regions because in releasement man stays released to that-which-regions and, indeed, through this itself. He is released to it in his being, insofar as he originally belongs to it. He belongs to it insofar as he is *appropriated* initially to that-which-regions and, indeed through this itself. (G 73)

Heidegger, here, is making his familiar transcendental move: the condition of the possibility of releasement to that-which-regions (Being) is that man originally be released to Being, i.e., belong to Being. Indeed man is this very belonging: Dasein.

Now Heidegger for the first time refers to a problem which we considered when we were discussing the in-itself/for-itself relation, namely that if Dasein is already released to Being then why should it wait to be released?

*Scholar:* That is, wait upon the regioning of that-which-regions, so that this releases our nature into that-which-regions, and so into belonging to it.

*Teacher:* But if we are already appropriated to that-which-regions?

*Scientist:* What good does that do us if we aren't truly appropriated?

*Scholar:* Thus we are and we are not.

*Scientist:* Again this restless to and fro between yes and no.

*Scholar:* We are suspended as it were between the two.

*Teacher:* Yet our stand in this betweenness is waiting.

Heidegger's answer to this original and ultimate problem, on the surface looks very unsatisfactory. If Dasein is already appropriated to Being, what does it mean to say "we aren't truly appropriated ...." Dasein is either appropriated or not; it cannot be both. Heidegger's point, despite the success or failure of his text, is to identify this problem as *the* problem, so far as it is the same ancient problem that Parmenides voiced in his maxim; a problem which runs through the whole tradition of philosophy. Furthermore, Heidegger presents the solution, which comes through a leap, precisely as the enduring of the problem as an unresolved tension, as the possible impossible; an enduring which he calls "waiting." For the sake of comparison and an awareness of the centrality of this problem, let us now go through a few of Heidegger's own works to see how this problem shows itself in different forms.



## §13. UNDER THE SHADOW OF PARMENIDES

In this section we would like to show how the primordial problem for Heidegger takes the form of the tension between freedom and determinism. In what follows we will consider mainly *Being and Time*, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, and *Gelassenheit*.

Implicit in our demonstration would be the answers to the following questions: 1. Is there at all, *one* primordial problem? 2. How justified is Heidegger in viewing the primordial problem as the tension between freedom and determinism? We should also remember, as we mentioned in the Introduction, that "determinism," the way we intend it here, should be understood neither as predestination or theological determinism, nor as logical determinism, nor as fatalism. The reason we are using the word "determinism" is only to show the connection between the root of the traditional problems surrounding this concept and Heidegger's problematic.

### *13.1 The Primordial Problem*

As was mentioned, the problem of philosophy is life itself, as the possible impossible. This problem, however, does not present itself (mostly) to the tradition of philosophy as the tension between Being and non-being but, as Heidegger implicitly claims, as the tension between freedom and determinism. We must note, however, that this tension must be understood through Heidegger's own interpretation of it. Moreover, the tension that Heidegger considers to be the overriding problematic of philosophy is

*not* originally thought in terms of freedom and determinism, but in terms of Being and thinking:

Being and thinking: the same

### ***13.2 Being and Thinking in Being and Time***

Heidegger's overcoming of the tension between empiricism and rationalism is achieved by presenting Dasein, on the in-itself level, as Being-in-the-world, and on the for-itself level, as dis-covery or disclosure. Although Being and thinking present quite a different tension than that between freedom and determinism, when they are understood in relation to that tension thinking can be seen as the free act of disclosure from the determinate past given by Being. Discovery is then the struggle of thinking against Being, through the hermeneutic transaction.

### ***13.3 Facticity and Erschlossenheit***

The struggle in the hermeneutic transaction is the struggle between the past and the future. The components of Care that correspond to these horizons are facticity and *Erschlossenheit* (openedness) respectively. The determinism/freedom tension is represented better by the tension between facticity and *Erschlossenheit*, both defined at the in-itself level. At the for-itself level where the tension is affirmed, the authentic act is *Entschlossenheit* (resoluteness).

### 13.4 *Physis and Logos*

In *Introduction to Metaphysics*, originally a lecture delivered at the University of Freiburg in 1935, Heidegger undertakes to clarify the meaning of Being by contrasting Being with something else. By saying Being and ... "we are adding something from which 'Being' is distinguished: Being *and not* [...]. But in these formula-like titles we also mean something which, differentiated from Being, somehow belongs intrinsically to being, if only as its Other" (IM 93). In the section titled "Being and Thinking" Heidegger tries to clarify the relation between Being and Thinking. This clarification is done by rereading the pre-Socratics in such a way as to let free the authentic meaning of what they have said. In particular, Heidegger focuses on the meaning of *physis* and *logos* and later on *dike* and *techne*. What we should notice is that although Heidegger interprets *physis* and *logos* as *Being* and *thinking*, what is really shown is that the underlying opposition is the one between *determinism* and *freedom*.

For the Greeks, Heidegger claims, Being disclosed itself as *physis*. *Physis* as the realm of emerging and abiding is intrinsically at the same time a shining appearing. The essence of appearance lies in the appearing. "It is self-manifestation, self-representation, standing-there, presence" (IM 100). Furthermore, this self-manifestation is a bringing forth:

It is of utmost importance that we think bringing-forth in its full scope and at the same time in the sense in which the Greeks thought it. Not only handcraft manufacture, not only artistic and poetical bringing into appearance and concrete imagery, is a bringing-forth, *poiesis*. *Physis* also, the arising of something from

out of itself, is a bringing-forth, *poiesis*. *Physis* is indeed *poiesis* in the highest sense. (QCT 10)

Using the word creation with care, we can now say *physis* is creation, the power of emerging.

To describe what *logos* means in the sense of "permanent gathering," Heidegger considers two of Heraclitus' fragments. He shows that *logos* is understood by the early Greeks as the steady gathering, the intrinsic togetherness of the being, i.e., Being. Here, *logos* characterizes Being rather than thinking. But in order to see the essential law governing the separation of *physis* and *logos* Heidegger turns to Parmenides' maxim: "*to gar auto noein estin te kai einai*," which is misinterpreted by the tradition as "thinking and Being are the same." The word *noein*, because it is close to *logos* and *legein* is the focus here.

*Noein* means *Vernehmen*, which Heidegger understands as letting something come to one, a receptive bringing-to-stand (IM 138). *Vernehmen* is rendered, by the English translator of the IM, as to apprehend. To further interpret *noein* Heidegger focuses on the meaning of *te kai* as "the same" in the sense of belonging-together.

That is, Being and apprehension belong together:

Being means: To stand in the light, to appear, to enter into unconcealment. Where this happens, i.e., where Being prevails, apprehension prevails and happens with it; the two belong together. Apprehension is the receptive bringing-to-stand of the intrinsically permanent that manifests itself. (IM 139)

Emphasizing the belonging together of appearing (Being) and apprehension (man), one can see how appearing happens through man, when the essence of man is defined from out of the essence of Being itself (IM 144).

Finally, Heidegger makes the link between *noein*, *legein*, and *logos* clear by considering another of Parmenides' fragments (No. 6). It says: "*Chre to legein te noein t'eon emmenai*," which is translated as: "Needful is the gathered setting-forth as well as the apprehension of this: the being (is) Being" (IM 169). "*Legein* is mentioned along with *apprehension* as a process of the same character.... Logos here cannot mean ingathering as the hinge of being, but must, if equated with apprehension, signify the (human) act of violence, by which being is gathered in its togetherness" (IM 169). We can see that whereas before logos was interpreted from the side of Being, here it takes its meaning from thinking. "Thus logos as ingathering becomes a need [*Not*] and parts from logos in the sense of togetherness of being (*physis*)" (IM 169).

What about the relation between *legein* and *noein*? "[I]t is from the *legein* that the *noein* first takes its essence as gathering apprehension" (IM 169).

Our thesis is that Heidegger understands the strife between Being and thinking as the strife between determinism and freedom. And we see how *legein* as gathering apprehension represents the act of creation in contrast to constraints set by Being. Heidegger even uses the term production for *legein*: "*legein* means: to produce the unconcealed as such, to produce the being in its unconcealment" (IM 170).

Having said that Heidegger understands the opposition between Being and thinking, and in this case the opposition between *physis* and *logos*, as the opposition between determinism and freedom, we should emphasize that Heidegger does *not* understand the opposition between determinism and freedom the way tradition understands it. For Heidegger this opposition is not between two separate, identified phenomenon, rather the two poles of the conflict are defined in that very strife and therefore are essentially related, what Heidegger signifies by the term belonging-together.

If the unity of *physis* and *logos* is so fundamental, the separation between them must be just as much so. (IM 135)

The separation between Being and being-human comes to light in their togetherness. (IM 141)

### **13.5 Dike and Techne**

The creative activity at issue in the strife between determinism and freedom is further emphasized by the consideration of the conflict between *dike* and *techne*. Heidegger, for this purpose, reads the first chorus from the Antigone of Sophocles (lines 332-75).

The first two lines read

There is much that is strange, but nothing  
that surpasses man in strangeness

Focussing on the word *deinotaton* (strangeness), Heidegger deliberates on the root word *deinon*. The *deinon* is the terrible in the sense of the overpowering power. It also means the powerful in the sense of one who uses power, is violent. *Deinon* then

has two interrelated meanings. First sense: the being as a whole, seen as power, is the overpowering. Second sense: "Man is *deinon*, first because he remains exposed within this overpowering power, because by his essence he belongs to Being. But at the same time man is *deinon* because he is the violent one in the sense designated above. (He gathers the power and brings it to manifestness.)" (IM 150). Man is the violent one in the sense that in his fundamental violence he uses power against the powerful one.

In these two meanings of *deinon*, Being and thinking and their conflict is named. This conflict is the conflict between determinism and freedom, the conflict of creation:

The violence of poetic speech, of thinking projection, of building configuration, of the action that creates states is not a function of faculties that man has, but a taming and ordering of powers by virtue of which the being opens up as such when man moves into it. This disclosure of the being is the power that man must master in order to become himself amid the being .... (IM 157)

*Techne* names the act of creation by "the creative man": "The Greeks called art in the true sense of the word of art *techne*, because art is what most immediately brings Being (i.e., the appearing that stands there in itself) to stand, stabilizes it in something present (the work)" (IM 159). This *techne* provides the basic trait of *deinon*, the violent; "it wrests Being from concealment into the manifest as the being" (IM 160).

The other pole of the conflict is *dikeo*, which Heidegger calls Fug, and understands to mean framework, dispensation, and the governing structure which

compels adaptation and compliance. "Being, *physis*, as power, is basic and original togetherness: *logos*; it is governing order [*fügender Fug*]: *dike*" (IM 160).

Thus the *deinon* as the overpowering (*dike*) and the *deinon* as the violent (*techne*) confront one another, though not as two given things. In this confrontation *techne* bursts forth against *dike*, which in turn, as *Fug*, the commanding order, disposes [*Verfügt*] of all *techne*. The reciprocal confrontation *is*. (IM 161)

It should now be clear in what way Heidegger understands the conflict between Being and thinking as the conflict between determinism and freedom. A conflict that is so essential that only through it are the participants identified: "The gathering of the supreme antagonism is *polemos*, struggle.... in the sense of setting apart [*Aus-einander-setzung*]" (IM 131). "In the conflict ... [setting apart] a world comes into being" (IM 62).

### 13.6 That-Which-Regions and *Gelassenheit*

The purpose of this section (§13) was to show how central Parmenides' insight is to Heidegger and indeed to the history of philosophy. One can justifiably claim that Heidegger's difference from the tradition can be located in his reading of Parmenides' maxim. This difference is more apparent in the *Gelassenheit*, as we will show in this and the following sub-sections.

The relation between That-which-regions and *gelassenheit* can be looked at as the relation between determinism and freedom. That-which-regions (the regioning) grants, gives, and determines what man can let happen. In fact Heidegger uses the term *determining* to describe the relation of the regioning to things:



*Teacher:* What are we then to call the relation of That-which-regions to the thing, if That-which-regions lets the thing abide in itself?

*Scientist:* It determines the thing, as thing.

*Scholar:* Therefore it is best called the determining. (G 77)

Gelassenheit as the other pole of the conflict can be seen as creation, a creation which does not create out of nothing, but creates by letting happen. As we pointed out before, creation in Heidegger is never *ex nihilo*. Although Heidegger does not use the term creation in the *Gelassenheit*, he does imply it.<sup>44</sup> In the following passage, where gelassenheit has been experienced through gelassenheit by the participants, the question of naming it comes up, and Heidegger says:

Perhaps these names are not the result of designation. They are owed to a naming in which the nameable, the name and the named occur altogether. (G 71)

That is, through gelassenheit, the name gelassenheit is created.

But how is gelassenheit the solution to the problem of creation, to the tension between determinism and freedom? Or, how is Heidegger's interpretation of Parmenides' maxim superior to that of the tradition? It is superior because Heidegger tries to think the belonging-together of thinking and Being, of gelassenheit and regioning:

Now authentic releasement consists in this: that man in his very nature belongs to That-which-regions, i.e., he is released to it. (G 82)

That is, the belonging-together of gelassenheit and regioning is so essential that belonging becomes the nature of man.

---

<sup>44</sup>Heidegger does use the term "creation" in IM several times.

Releasement comes out of That-which-regions because in releasement man stays released to That-which-regions and , indeed, through this itself. He is released to it in his Being, insofar as he originally belongs to it. He belongs to it insofar as he is *appropriated* initially to That-which-regions and, indeed, through this itself. (G 73)

Although man *originally* and initially belongs to Being, this belonging is not an a priori (transcendental) condition. It is "[t]he prior, of which we really cannot think..." (G 83). It is a peculiar condition which is neither ontological nor ontical:

[T]he relation between That-which-regions and releasement, if it can still be considered a relation, can be thought of neither as ontic nor as ontological ....  
... but only as regioning. (G 76)

What Heidegger is pointing out in these passages is the strange logic of becoming what one is. By properly belonging to Being, one becomes one's own, one becomes for-ITself. How can one become what one is?

### *13.7 The Highest Insight of Philosophy*

To be what one is, is to become for-ITself. If the dichotomies that we have discussed so far are on the in-itself level, we can inquire about what their overcoming could be on the for-itself level.

When considering the leap of reason we saw how the leap from the sameness of Being and thinking landed on a path. It is the being on the path that is the meaning of the leap. This being on the path is also called by Heidegger, being underway, or undergoing experience. If being for-itself is the result of a leap, then we should consider the overcoming of the dichotomies with respect to the leap too.

- a) **Being and Thinking:** As we pointed out before, the overcoming of the tension between Being and thinking in *Being and Time* is by "discovery." How is falling involved in discovery? Discovery, as creation of something new, is the result of the participation of all the forces in a constellation. Such participation can happen only if one falls to (goes through) that constellation.
- b) **Facticity and Erschlossenheit:** The authentic mode in *Being and Time* is identified as *Entschlossenheit* (resoluteness). In what way does resoluteness involve being underway? We suggest that falling as the necessity of going through the world is implied in resoluteness. To be resolute, to anticipate death, to know, and to act in such a way, that life does not have a goal except life itself, is to fall authentically to the world, is to go through the world.
- c) **Physis/Logos and Dike/Techne:** Heidegger's term for the overcoming of these dichotomies in IM is *techne* as *poiesis*.
- d) **That-Which-Regions and Gelassenheit:** The tension between That-which-regions and gelassenheit is overcome by gelassenheit itself, as the tension between determinism and freedom is overcome by freedom itself. In this passage from "The Question Concerning Technology," one can see how That-which-regions and gelassenheit, as destining and freedom, play against each other:

Always the destining of revealing holds complete sway over man. But that destining is never a fate that compels. For man becomes truly free only insofar as he belongs to the realm of destining and so becomes one who listens and hears [*Hörender*], and not one who is simply constrained to obey [*Höriger*].

....

Freedom governs the open in the sense of the cleared and lighted up, i.e., of the revealed. It is the happening of revealing, i.e., of truth, that freedom stands in the closest and most intimate kinship. (QCT 25)

This strange logic not only implies that *gelassenheit* as the solution is on the for-itself level, but more importantly, that *gelassenheit* has within it the belonging-together of That-which-regions and *gelassenheit*. What does *gelassenheit* as belonging involve? To belong actively to That-which-regions means to let it happen. Such letting-happen requires waiting for that which gives:

So if That-which-regions were the abiding expanse, patience would extend the furthest—even to the expense of the abiding, because it can wait the longest. (G 85)

"Patience" and "waiting" are the words that Heidegger uses in describing this belonging. "Patience" is a better word than "waiting," since waiting implies waiting for something to come up, whereas patience does not have that sense. A better word than "patience" might be "endurance" since it does not have the sense of resignation that patience has.

What does waiting involve?

... this steadfastness of a belonging to That-which-regions which rests in itself, still lacks a name.... Perhaps the word "in-dwelling" [*Inständigkeit*] could name some of this. (G 81)

Waiting means in-dwelling, but dwelling in what? To answer this question we can get some clue by reading "Building Dwelling Thinking," ("Bauen Wohnen Denken") and "Poetically Man Dwells."

By equating dwelling with building, Heidegger understands it as the manner in which we are on the earth. Earth in turn is defined with respect to the fourfold (divinities, mortals, sky, and earth):

But "on the earth" already means "under the sky." Both of these *also* mean "remaining before the divinities" and include a "belonging to men's being with one another." By a *primal* oneness the four—earth, and sky, divinities and mortals—belong together in one. (BW 327)

Dwelling, then, is to preserve the fourfold in its essential being, in its presencing. As if by dwelling, mortals facilitate the coming forth of the fourfold. Dwelling is saving the earth by setting it free in its essence, and receiving the sky as sky by letting its cycles take their turn, and awaiting the divinities by holding up to the divinities what is un hoped for, and by being capable of death (BW 328).

The conflict between freedom and determinism is also at work here:

- The freedom side: Dwelling as building is responding to the summons of the fourfold (BW 337). Building as *techne* brings forth the things, it is the letting appear of the fourfold.
- The determinism side: Man is already (a priori) dwelling in the fourfold: "Dwelling, however, is *the basic character* of Being in keeping with which mortals exist." That is, man is in-itself subject to *es gibt*.

We should guard ourselves against a dangerous misunderstanding. Heidegger's talk of dwelling on earth and of the homeland might give the impression that authentic dwelling or *gelassenheit* means that one should live in some community or country in unison with the environment and the people there. The fascist implications of this

misinterpretation are apparent and historically tested. In what way then does this interpretation miss the point? Dwelling is not a matter of dwelling here or there, or in any locale for that matter, but a matter of living in between gods and mortals, sky and earth, *es gibt* and freedom. It is to live in tension, in discordance. A never ending quest that asks about the essence of itself, a self-questioning which is done through living and dwelling:

The real dwelling plight lies in this, that mortals ever search anew for the essence of dwelling, that they *must ever learn to dwell*. (BW 339)

Such dwelling can never be at home:

What if man's homelessness consisted in this, that man still does not even think of the *real* plight of dwelling as *the* plight? (BW 339)

A reversal, however, takes place when man affirms his homelessness:

Yet as soon as man *gives thought* to his homelessness, it is a misery no longer. (BW 339)

To dwell therefore is to maintain oneself in the in-between. And in-between is the belonging-together of God and man, of Being and man, of determinism and freedom, etc. Gelassenheit as dwelling is to maintain oneself in the possible impossible. If this maintaining oneself is in a sense primary, then where one dwells, as such, is not the goal. The goal is the maintaining, is the going through, is the being underway. At this point philosophy reaches its highest insight:

*philosophy is not a matter of insight.*

Philosophy is not a matter of great and final insights; thinking is not a matter of thinking.

But how can one dwell? Where does one start? Which issue and locality does one dwell in? Which projects does one take? Is there anything that can guide us?

#### §14. IN MOOD FOR GELASSENHEIT

We now have to see in what sense *gelassenheit* is a mood.<sup>45</sup> For this purpose we will read some excerpts from Heidegger's *Die Grundprobleme der Metaphysik: Welt - Endlichkeit - Einsamkeit* which is the text of a lecture course given at the University of Freiburg (1929-30).<sup>46</sup> We should point out that Heidegger's main issue in the following passages has nothing directly to do with *gelassenheit*. Our effort is to bring out what is implicated about *gelassenheit* in his arguments.

In *Die Grundprobleme* Heidegger "sets himself the task of awakening a basic disposition which would be conducive to speaking from out of metaphysics rather than about it" (RP: 15, 251). Heidegger is introducing disposition instead of theoretical conceptualization as the real entry into metaphysics. "A disposition is not a subjective occurrence in man since a disposition is the original *how* (*Wie*) in which Dasein is Dasein" (RP: 15, 251).

---

<sup>45</sup>We take *Befindlichkeit* and *Stimmung* to mean roughly the same, and translate them as mood, disposition or attunement. "What we indicate *ontologically* by the term "disposition" is *ontically* the most familiar and everyday sort of thing; our mood, our Being-attuned" (SZ 134/172).

<sup>46</sup>We use Parvis Emad's translation and commentary on these passages in his review of GM, which appeared in *Research for Phenomenology*, XV (1985), 247-254.

In order to know what the basic disposition in our time is, we have to find *how* we are. By referring to efforts made by such men as Oswald Spengler or Max Scheler to diagnose and prognose the present cultural situation, Heidegger points out that we are becoming less significant in our eyes, and asks:

Is it perhaps such that an indifference (*Gleichgultigkeit*) yawns at us from all quarters, an indifference whose deep grounds are hidden from us?... Why do we have to make ourselves interesting again? Why do we have to do that? Perhaps because we are bored with ourselves?... *At the end is it such that with us a deep boredom in the abysses of Dasein pulls itself back and forth like a fog?* (GM 115)

In other words the basic disposition in our time is boredom. And as Emad paraphrases: "It is the totalizing ability of boredom which reveals its essential character as a disposition. If we wish to speak from *out* of metaphysics, rather than theorizing *about* it, the experience of totalization inherent in boredom should be our point of departure" (RP: 15, 254).

This experience of totalization allows us to face beings as a whole, the world. And since the world is no-thing, boredom as the experience of no-thing is "that into which we held out and that which leaves us yet empty" (GM 130). In deep boredom we face the totality, which includes ourselves too. "In deep boredom the familiar self-centeredness wanes to such an extent that we become indifferent to it" (RP: 15, 255). In attunement not only do we face what there is, but we become what we are—the nothing:

The emptiness in question is not a hole located between what is filled but concerns the entirety of beings and is nevertheless *nothing (nicht)*, is *no-thing (das Nichts)*. (GM 210)



Is boredom the meaning of nothing, i.e., is it inherent in it, or is it given by us?

Since Heidegger also talks of *Angst* and other moods, we can say that mood or attunement, as this mood or that mood, comes from the experiencer of the mood.

This does not mean that we are the subject *of* mood, but that we are subject *to* it. In other words, it is as if there is no no-thing in-itself; we always face the no-thing, the beings as a whole, and face each being in the whole through a mood. Mood gives the overall *meaning*—for a lack of a better word—and direction to things encountered.

We should now see the relation of mood to *gelassenheit*. Heidegger raises the issue of accessing the mood of boredom. In order to see boredom

what is required is not an exertion for working ourselves into a special attitude but only the composure (*Gelassenheit*) *which is peculiar to the free gaze of the daily life*, a gaze which is free from psychological or other theories of consciousness, stream of consciousness and the like. (GM 137)

There are several points in this passage that we should consider.

1. *Gelassenheit* (which Emad translates as composure) takes us to the other mood of boredom. We cannot work ourselves into a special attitude, rather we have to dispose ourselves, expose ourselves to what takes over. *Gelassenheit* as disposition is not a working but an unworking, a letting-happen.
2. *Gelassenheit* as composure which is peculiar to the free gaze of the daily life, lets happen what rules in *our* daily life. It is *we* who are bored, who are experiencing nihilism. Other people in other epochs could be experiencing something else. Heidegger is making an historical claim here.

3. The fact that gelassenheit as composure can take us to a mood, means that it is more essential than this mood or that mood. Indeed, gelassenheit as composure seems to be the essence of the mood.

But can there be a pure mood? We do not think so. Attunement or mood is not a result of some intuition. It involves thinking. It is the result of thinking. For example, if I have *Angst* it is because I have come across the fact that there is no ground to existence, and because I also know that things need a ground to be. The result could be *Angst*. Without knowing something about the world and existence, *Angst* cannot come upon us. Nietzsche's affirmation too came after years of thinking. Gelassenheit, as the primary mood, therefore, involves thinking and effort. This does not contradict the fact that gelassenheit is non-willing. Gelassenheit is not a will to something, but it involves<sup>47</sup> willing, planning, thinking, etc.

Furthermore, mood as disposition to the whole, necessarily involves taking the totality *as a* whole. We are not talking about a point of view, since the whole is not the object of an intentional act. Moods are not intentional acts. In this sense, the whole cannot be conceptualized. But the taking of it as *a* whole, means rather that our stance, whether *Angst*, boredom or any other mood, pervades all our being so far as our existence is our only window to existence.

As surely as we can never comprehend absolutely the ensemble of beings in themselves we certainly do find ourselves stationed in the midst of beings that are revealed somehow as a whole.... No matter how fragmented our everyday

---

<sup>47</sup>By "involving" we mean what Jacques Derrida means by "contamination." Cf., *Research in Phenomenology*, XVII (1987), 171 ff.

existence may appear to be, however, it always deals with beings in a unity of the "whole," if only in a shadowy way. (WIM 101)

Gelassenheit also seems to involve some other moods. Apart from questioning, waiting, and patience, which Heidegger mentions in *Gelassenheit*, he talks of wonder and courage too.

Then wonder can open what is locked?  
... By way of waiting ....  
... if this is released .... (G 90)

It seems that wonder can substitute *Angst* as the mood in facing the whole: "Only when the strangeness of beings oppresses us does it arouse and evoke wonder. Only on the ground of wonder—the revelation of the nothing—does the 'why?' loom before us" (WIM 111). But there seems to be yet another mood which combines the previous moods.

The anxiety of those who are daring cannot be opposed to joy or even to comfortable enjoyment of tranquilized bustle. It stands—outside all such opposition—in secret alliance with the cheerfulness and gentleness of creative longing. (WIM 108)

Heidegger is not only proposing cheerfulness as the affirmative mood which includes *Angst* and wonder when facing the difficulties of creative acts, but also is pointing out that such acts are not passive resignation from happenings of the world. On the contrary such acts require *daring* and courage:

Yet releasement toward things and openness to the mystery never happen of themselves. They do not befall us accidentally. Both flourish only through persistent, courageous thinking. (G 56)

Gelassenheit, so far as it involves a questioning stance, does not seek an answer.<sup>48</sup> Talking of the patient dwelling of the guiding question of philosophy (what is Being?), Heidegger says:

When we treat the guiding question we are transposed forthwith to a search for an answer and to everything that has to be done on behalf of that search. Developing the guiding question is something essentially different—it is a more original form of inquiry, one which does not crave an answer. (N2 192)

Such questioning which does not have the goal of finding an answer, becomes its own goal and thrives on itself:

Questioning is then no longer a preliminary step, to give way to the answer and thus to knowledge, but questioning becomes itself the highest form of knowing. ("Self-Assertion," 474)

This questioning is "the highest form of knowing"<sup>49</sup> precisely because it is

---

<sup>48</sup>John Caputo in his useful book *"The Mystical Elements in Heidegger's Thought"* while commenting on the possibility of a new beginning for humanity, says: "The new beginning of which Heidegger speaks is nothing inhumane; it is the expression of hope for a renewed dwelling. But it is a possibility we have little confidence will be reached and every fear will be withheld from us. The difficulty with Heidegger is not that he is a mystic, but that he is *not*. That is, thought is so radically worldly and secular and drained of absolute and divine assurances that it can at best assist in a world-play; for the kingdom is in the hands of a child" (252). Caputo, it seems to us, does not consider that gelassenheit, so far as, it is *being underway*, has nothing to do with predictions of future epochal possibilities, and does not depend on "divine assurances." Gelassenheit as that which faces the ultimate danger (of the abyss) cannot "fear" the epochal constellations nor "hope" for anything better (since the *cheerfulness* and *affirmation* in gelassenheit mean that things are always better no matter what).

<sup>49</sup>Jacques Derrida in his recent book *De l'esprit: Heidegger et la Question* (Paris: Galilée, 1987) questions the privilege of the question in the early Heidegger. Sallis in his very helpful review of and commentary on *De l'esprit* ("Flight of Spirit," in *Diacritics*, 19.3-4 (1989), 25-37) questions Derrida's questioning of the privilege of the question in Heidegger. Derrida says that this passage in *On the Way to Language* that "[t]he proper bearing of thinking is not questioning but rather listening to the promise [*das Hören der Zusage*] of that which is to come into question" (71). explicitly revocates the privilege of the question. Sallis points out that in fact this is Heidegger's position in the 1949 *Einleitung* to "What is Metaphysics?": "The thinking attempted in *Sein und Zeit* (1927) sets out on the way to preparing the ... overcoming of metaphysics. But that which brings such thinking onto its way can only be that which is

creation; and as creation it is opposed to representational thinking. In an unusually clear passage Heidegger points out that thinking (as creative questioning) is not a matter of predictions and conceptualization, but a matter of experiencing, what he calls being underway:

Thinking itself is a way. Which responds to the way by remaining underway. To be underway on the way in order to clear the way—that is one thing. The other thing is to take a position somewhere along the road, and there make conversation about whether, and how, earlier and later stretches of the way may be different, and in their difference might even be incompatible—incompatible, that is, for those who never walk the way, nor even set out on it, but merely take up a position outside it, there forever to formulate ideas and make talk about the way.

....

The way of thinking cannot be traced from somewhere to somewhere like a well-worn rut, nor does it at all exist as such in any place. Only when we walk it, and in no other fashion, only, that is, by thoughtful questioning, are we on the move on the way. (WCT 188-9)

Only by dwelling in a place can one know about that place, can one know one's way about that place. One has to *be there* in order to know it: priority of experience. To know it one has to create it. To create it one has to let it unfold: *gelassenheit*.

---

itself to be thought" (GA 9: 368). As Heidegger notes and Sallis remarks, the real issue is "what *calls* for thinking."

It seems to us, however, that Heidegger in his later thinking does privilege the question. But what he privileges is a questioning that is different from questioning as "the quest for essence" and "establishing of ground" (OWL 71). *Gelassenheit* as "thoughtful questioning" is aware of the givenness of thought and is also aware that there are no essences. Whereas Derrida sets the "givenness of thought" up against questioning and privileges it, Heidegger, as we have shown, overcomes the dichotomy between determinism and freedom, or between *es gibt* and thinking by *gelassenheit*. The interesting question now is how questioning as ground seeking is related to questioning as *gelassenheit*. *Gelassenheit* *involves* ground seeking, but *gelassenheit* does not have the *attitude* of ground seeking. We should notice that Heidegger says: "the proper *bearing* [or *attitude*, *Gebärde*] of thought ...." It is this *attitude* which we are trying to show to be primary in *gelassenheit*.

But to let the truth happen one has to endure the hardships of creation. As such questioning which neither stops, because it does not see an answer in sight ("a search without anticipation"), nor remain content with any answer, since it knows that any answer is inadequate, *gelassenheit* is a believing that maintains itself in struggle:

This ordinary believing is not at all a matter of accepting that which offers immediate support and makes courage superfluous. This believing is rather a persisting in the uttermost decision [*Ausharren in der äussersten Entscheidung*]. (GA: 65, §237)<sup>50</sup>

The uttermost decision is not a decision between this way or that way; it is a decision between sitting down and giving in to the demands of the "they," or standing up against everything by questioning. The uttermost decision is also the decision in *determining* what is given.

But where does the persisting in the uttermost decision get its power from? It gets it from "spirit," what the young Heidegger calls "personality," "personal position," or simply "drive":

Philosophy at the same time lives in tension with the living personality, draws its imports and its claims from the depth and abundance of life in that personality. Thus it is that every philosophical conception generally has its grounds in a *personal position* taken by the philosopher in question. Nietzsche found a formula ... for the way in which all philosophy is determined in terms of the subject .... He spoke of "the drive to philosophize." ("Habilitation," 137-38, in GA: 1, 195-96)

---

<sup>50</sup>I am thankful to Professor John Sallis for bringing this passage to my attention. See his paper, "Deformatives: Essentially Other Than Truth," delivered on the occasion of Heidegger's centennial at Loyola University of Chicago, 1989.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. Vernon J. Bourke. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1966.
- Blanchot, Maurice. *Space of Literature*. Trans. Ann Smock. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982.
- . *The Gaze of Orpheus*. Trans. Lydia Davis. New York: Station Hill Press, 1981.
- . "The Limit of Experience." *The New Nietzsche*. Ed. David Allison. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985. 121-127.
- . *Writing of the Disaster*. Trans. Ann Smock. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986.
- Dreyfus, Hubert. *Being-in-the-World*. Cambridge, M.A.: The MIT Press, 1991.
- Cassirer, Ernst. *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*. Trans. J. Guntmann, P. O. Kristeller, and J. H. Randall. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *Knowledge and Human Interest*. Trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro, . Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987.
- Heidegger, Martin. *An Introduction to Metaphysics*. Trans. Ralph Manheim. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959.
- . *Basic Writings*. Ed. David F. Krell. New York: Harper and Row, 1977.
- . *Being and Time*. Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper and Row, 1962.
- . *Der Satz vom Grund*. Pfullingen: G. Neske, 1957. Translated as *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lilly, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).
- . *Discourse on Thinking*. Trans. J.M. Anderson and E. H. Freund. New York: Harper and Row, 1966.
- . *Discourse on Thinking*. Trans. John M. Anderson. New York: Harper and Row, 1966.

- . *Early Greek Thinking*. Trans. David F. Krell and Frank Capuzzi. New York: Harper and Row, 1975.
- . *History and the Concept of Time*. Trans. Theodor Kisiel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.
- . *Identity and Difference*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper and Row, 1969.
- . *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. Trans. Richard Taft. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- . *Metaphysical Foundation of Logic*. Trans. Michael Heim. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.
- . *Nietzsche*. Trans. David F. Krell. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979. Volumes I-IV.
- . "On the Essence of Truth." Trans. John Sallis. In *Basic Writings*, ed. David Krell. New York: Harper and Row, 1977. 117-141.
- . *On Time and Being*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper and Row, 1972.
- . *On the Way to Language*. Trans. Peter D. Hertz. New York: Harper and Row 1971.
- . *Poetry, Language, Thought*. Trans. Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper and Row, 1971.
- . "The Self-assertion of the German University ...." Trans. Karsten Harries. *Review of Metaphysics*, 38 (March, 1985), 467-502.
- . *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays*. Trans. William Lovitt. New York: Harper and Row, 1977.
- . *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Trans. A. Hofstadter. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.
- . *The End of Philosophy*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.
- . "What is Metaphysics?" In *Basic Writings*, ed. David F. Krell. New York: Harper and Row, 1977. 95-112.



- . *What is Called Thinking?* Trans. Glenn Gray. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.
- Husserl, Edmund. *Logical Investigations*. Trans. J. N. Findly. New York: Humanities Press, 1970.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Trans. Norman Kemp Smith. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965.
- . *Critique of Practical Reason*. Trans. L. W. Beck. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1983.
- . *Fragments*. In *Immanuel Kants Sämtliche Werke*, Bd. VIII, 609-645. Leipzig, 1868.
- . *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. James W. Ellington. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing company, 1981.
- . *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*. Trans. Theodore M. Greene and Hoyt H. Hudson. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1934.
- . *Werke*. Ed. Ernst Cassirer. Berlin: Bruno Cassirer Verlag, 1912-23.
- Krell, David F. *Intimations of Mortality*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986.
- Lingis, Alfonso. *Deathbound Subjectivity*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Grossoktavausgabe*. Leipzig, 1905 ff.
- . *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1967 ff.
- . *The Genealogy of Morals*. Trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. New York: Random House, 1969.
- . *The Will to Power*. Trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. New York: Random House, 1967.
- . *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. In *Portable Nietzsche*, edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: The Viking Press, 1974. 112-439.

- . *Twilight of the Idols*. In *Portable Nietzsche*, trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Penguin Books, 1982. 463-563.
- Sallis, John. *Research in Phenomenology*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1971 ff.
- . *Delimitations: Phenomenology and the End of Metaphysics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- . *The Gathering of Reason*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1980.
- Schürmann, Reiner. *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.

## VITA

The author, Shahriar Mohammad Reza Shafaghi is the son of Ja'far Shafaghi and M. Khatami-Hamedani. He was born December 11, 1953 in Iran.

His early education was obtained at the Shahriar Private School and High School in Tehran.

In September 1971, Mr. Shafaghi entered Ariamehr University of Tehran (now Sharief University) but his studies were disrupted by political turmoils at the time. He therefore left to continue his studies in London, England. He obtained his A-Levels from Croydon Technical College, London.

In October 1973, Mr. Shafaghi entered University of London, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Science in Physics and Mathematics in June 1977. In September 1978 he entered Imperial College, University of London to obtain his Masters of Science in Theoretical Particle Physics. He was then admitted to the International Center for Theoretical Physics, to work with Professor Salam for his Ph.D. project. But after reflecting on the heavy moral consequences of being a scientist, he decided to study Philosophy to be able to reflect better. He subsequently obtained his Masters in Philosophy from the New School for Social Research in New York City in 1985. He then entered the Ph.D program in Philosophy at Loyola University of Chicago, where he was granted Teaching Fellowships and the Schmitt Fellowship. He defended his dissertation on April 29, 1991.

Mr. Shafaghi is the author of *The Unity of God*, which he wrote while in High School. His Masters thesis is on "Supergravity and Supersymmetry."

## APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Shahriar Shafaghi has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. John Sallis, Director, Arthur J. Schmitt Professor of Philosophy  
Loyola University of Chicago

Dr. John Llewelyn, Visiting Arthur J. Schmitt Professor of Philosophy  
Loyola University of Chicago

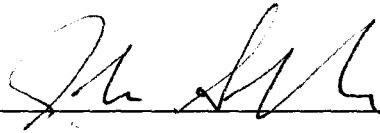
Dr. Thomas Sheehan, Professor of Philosophy  
Loyola University of Chicago

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

1 June 91

Date



Director's Signature