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THOUGHTS ON HEIDEGGER

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Hannah Arendt

in memoriam

Contents

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Preface

These essays are collected in honor of Martin Heidegger's one hundredth birthday. They encompass a variety of perspectives, ranging far enough to include some comparisons with Eastern thought. But, as Heidegger himself might say, they have *ein inneres System*, an inner system, partly vouchsafed by the interests and limits of their author. They pursue some fundamental questions in Heidegger's thought that have their roots in *Being and Time* and extend throughout the *corpus* of his writings.

Issues such as authenticity and inauthenticity, so fundamental in *Being and Time* as to play a part in the structuring of the whole book, recede in the later philosophy as Heidegger distances himself more and more from any possible taint of anthropocentrism. The question of God, conspicuously absent in *Being and Time*, receives a growing consideration after Heidegger's intensified encounter with Hölderlin, and finally comes to inhabit a definite and lasting place in the poetic conception of the Fourfold. The other two issues that form the subject of these essays, time and the overcoming of metaphysics, concerned Heidegger throughout his lifetime from beginning to end.

When asked in the *Spiegel*-interview what philosophy could do to ameliorate the world situation today, Heidegger replied with a laconic "nothing." He was denying any instant efficacy to philosophy to "solve" anything, particularly in its present state. But a soteriological note is not totally lacking in Heidegger. We have reached the end of philosophy, and that means the end of metaphysics. What remains for us now is the task of thinking. We need to cultivate a thinking that is no longer metaphysical, objectifying and calculating. To have thought through the question of what thinking is and pointed to what a new kind of thinking could do is perhaps the most fundamental import of Heidegger's thought.

Joan Stambaugh
New York November 1989

Part I

Being and Time

Chapter 1

Heidegger Primer

Martin Heidegger is still perhaps the most influential contemporary German philosopher today. Although he is often termed an "existentialist," this term is misleading, since Heidegger has almost nothing in common with the so-called existentialists. Perhaps the most famous proponent of existentialism is Jean-Paul Sartre who stated that existence precedes essence and that man is the sum of his actions. When Sartre states that existence precedes essence, he reverses the traditional concept of man which holds that man's essence is prior to his existence. Traditional philosophy has been more concerned with defining the essence and nature of man, what man is, than with inquiring into the factual existence of the individual. Factual existence seemed to be something obvious, something given which needed no further questioning with regard to its meaning.

The essence of something is *what* it is; for example the essence of a triangle is to have three angles or the essence of man has traditionally been to be a rational animal. The existence of something consists simply in the fact *that* it is; it exists, it factually *is*. These two concepts, essence and existence, have been traditionally separated in all finite beings. If essence and existence coincided in a finite being, that being would exist necessarily and eternally, since its very essence would be to exist. This is incompatible with the meaning of finitude. Only in God, the infinite being, do essence and existence coincide. Only God's essence is to exist.

In saying that man's existence precedes his essence, Sartre is depriving the term essence of any independent meaning of its own. Man's essence is simply the retroactively taken sum total of his actions. What is important about man is what he does with his life, his existence. His existence first determines his essence and his nature.

Heidegger would not state that man's existence precedes his essence and he would certainly never state that man is the sum of his actions. Thus he is not an existentialist in Sartre's sense of that word. Heidegger

is interested in existence, which in contemporary continental thought means human existence, but his interest in man's existence is only a starting point. Heidegger wants to start by examining the human being and to work toward an understanding of Being itself. This is his unchanging philosophical enterprise and it guided his thinking over a period of nearly fifty years.

At the time of his major early work *Being and Time*, Heidegger was concerned with the phenomenological method of his teacher, Edmund Husserl, the founder of phenomenology. Phenomenology is less of a doctrine than it is a method of inquiry and a way of seeing things as they show themselves. That which shows itself is the literal meaning of the word phenomenon. Phenomenology's motto is: "to the things themselves." It attempts to see things as they show themselves without any presuppositions or concerns with factual existence on the part of the viewer. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger uses his own version of the phenomenological method in order to study man and his world, his being-in-the world, which for him are an indissoluble unity.

One can distinguish two problems in this attempt. The first is the overcoming of the traditional subject-object split of modern philosophy since Descartes. The second, more fundamental problem for Heidegger, to which we shall return later, is to gain an understanding of the meaning of Being through an examination of the human being.

First Problem

The split between subject and object means that there is a separation, a dichotomy between the knower and what he knows. In the formulation of Descartes, the subject is a thinking thing which is not extended (or material) and the object is an extended (or material) thing which does not think. These two things have nothing in common and the problem of their relationship to each other becomes very acute.

Heidegger attacks the subject-object split in an analysis of human existence. What he is criticizing about the subject-object split is not its legitimacy on a certain level of thinking, but rather its ultimacy. He takes

human existence as his starting point not because he wishes to start with the subject and subjectivity, but because man is the only being who is *aware*: of himself, of the world, and of Being. He is the only kind of being through whom we can gain access to these problems. But he is not a subject. One of Heidegger's most basic insights is that we don't know what man is, even whether he can be understood as a "what" at all. The German word for human existence which he uses is taken from everyday language and given a precise, pregnant signification. "*Da-sein*," which in everyday language means life or existence--for example, "*was für ein elendes* Dasein" means: "what a miserable existence this is"--acquires for Heidegger the literal meaning of Being-there. Man is Being-there, he is the "there," (In the sense in which we say of somebody that he is not all "there," i.e., his mind is somewhere else.) so to speak the non-spatial "place" of Being. *Being and Time* is full of concrete analyses showing that *Dasein* or human existence is never something like a worldless subject. *Dasein* is always aware of itself as being in a world. Any isolation from this world in terms of a knowing subject by itself is artificial. Heidegger's claim is that the phenomenon of *Dasein*, of man's being in the world, is a primordial unity of experience. If one accepts this claim and if one is convinced by the phenomenological analyses of *Dasein*, it is then impossible to separate man and world. If this claim were invalid, then the Heidegger of *Being and Time* would be just another German idealist.

In discussing the relation of *Dasein* and the world, Heidegger points out that what he calls world is an "existential" of *Dasein*. Just as traditional philosophy distinguishes categories, that is, ways of speaking about something, for things, existentials are categories which apply only to human beings. Categories apply to a "what," existentials apply to a "how," to the manner of being which *Dasein* is. The statement that world is an existential of *Dasein* thus means that it belongs to the nature of *Dasein* to be in a world which is disclosed to it. World is not the sum total of things in nature. Rather, world is that within which we encounter things and it is what gives them their connectedness. The character of this "within which" is more basic to the phenomenon of world than the things encountered in it. The "within which" makes the coherence of our experience possible.

The two basic manners of being other than *Dasein* which *Dasein* encounters in the world are what Heidegger calls natural objects and tools. Heidegger's analysis of tools bears a certain resemblance to similar analyses of John Dewey. One of the most striking ways in which we discover tools is through their absence, through the fact that they are not there. If I want a pencil in order to write something down, and the pencil is not in its usual place (possibly next to the telephone), I become acutely aware of that pencil--precisely through its absence. It is not there where it belongs. This example of the absence of a tool or thing strongly emphasizes the interconnectedness of everyday things. They are not there each in isolation, but rather within functional contexts.

The second manner of being, that of natural objects, is more problematic and has more far-reaching implications. It corresponds roughly to the object reified by the subject. It is the kind of being which we encounter when we stare at something in isolation, cut off from all of its functional connections. It is Heidegger's contention that regarding things as natural objects has characterized the ontology of traditional logic. The ontology of natural objects regards everything as static entities separated from each other and from the knowing subject in a way in which it is impossible to get them back together again. Ontology has been thing-ontology, an ontology of static things.

To end these sketchy remarks on *Being and Time*, a little more might be said about *Dasein's* manner of being which then brings us to the question of time and temporality. The two basic possibilities of *Dasein's* being are being authentic, in a real way, and being inauthentic, in an untrue way. This does not mean that some people live authentically and others live inauthentically. Everybody lives inauthentically a great deal of the time,[1] to live inauthentically is to live under the force of habit, to live as the "one" or the "they." One does what everyone else does. This is a necessary element in public life. Heidegger insists that there is no value judgment involved here, but of course the connotation of living authentically being preferable to living inauthentically is hard to avoid.

[1] Surely nobody is born authentic.

It is living inauthentically which Heidegger treats first, since it is the more prevalent phenomenon, the way in which we mostly are. Living authentically is the less prevalent phenomenon, since its possibility arises in intense, rather extreme experiences. Two of these experiences which Heidegger analyzes are those of dread and the anticipation of death. In contrast to fear which has a specific object, dread has no object. It is a dread of nothing in particular. This experience is uncanny, for one cannot say what it is one dreads or why. Everything loses its aspect of familiarity and becomes strange. Through its absolute lack of familiarity dread takes us out of the realm of everydayness and the One, and brings us face-to--face with our own potentialities of Being without the comfortable and reassuring insulation of habit and familiarity.

Heidegger's analysis of the second experience, the anticipation of death, has nothing to do with a morbid preoccupation with dying. Its intention is to show the finite structure of consciousness, not of physical life. It is the finite structure of consciousness which makes it possible for consciousness to be open to itself and the world and to be able to come back to itself forming a unity of experience. Otherwise consciousness would be, so to speak, either infinite expansion or else a contracted point. The anticipation of death reveals care as the most basic manner of being of man and reveals time or temporality as the ontological ground of care. What Heidegger calls being-toward-death has the structure of projecting toward the future, coming back to the past and engendering the present. This is made possible by the structure of temporality. In being toward death, man is able to understand himself as a kind of totality in terms of all that is possible for him. He then ceases to confuse himself with the they or the one and becomes free for the possibilities which really belong to him and to no one else.

In contrast to the traditional theory of time as a series of nows, some not yet present, some no longer present, temporality is conceived as the unifying activity of all three modes of time--past, present, and future--together. Man projects into the future, the most essential mode of time, returns to himself to find the past which is still an integral part of him, and experiences the present. It is the ecstatic nature--ecstatic in the literal sense of standing outside of itself--and this is also the basic meaning of the

word ex-sistence--of temporality which makes the transparency and openness of consciousness, its structure of awareness possible. Heidegger concludes *Being and Time* with a question: the question whether time might not reveal itself as the horizon of being. To state this in a rather oversimplified fashion, he is asking whether a more fundamental understanding of the activity of original temporality which discloses being in the world, might not lead to the meaning of Being itself.

Second Problem

Let us return to the second problem, that of the relation of man to Being. It is more difficult and has more far-reaching implications than the traditional, epistemologically conceived problem of the subject-object split. It is also most characteristic of what is unique in Heidegger and of the direction of his later works. In fact, it is the exclusive concern of the later works. Heidegger makes a distinction between Being and beings. This is what he calls "the ontological difference." We are all familiar with beings. Beings are everything that *is*: tools, chairs, trees, animals and also man. All of these *are*. One might, however, say that man is more of a manner of Being, a *how*, than merely a being, a what. Insofar as man *is*, however, he is also a being. When studied in isolation with certain methods, for example sociologically or psychologically, he can even be considered purely as a being, almost as a statistical entity or thing. But man is that being which has an awareness not only of beings, of the world around him, but also in some unreflected, preontological way has an awareness of Being itself.

This brings us to the formidable question: What is meant by Being? It is a question which Heidegger has never answered, primarily because it is presumably not answerable in terms of traditional philosophy which he claims has thus far been interested only in beings. Heidegger's whole efforts strive to be able to *ask* the question of the meaning of Being which he feels has been "forgotten" since the beginnings of Greek philosophy. Only a few Pre-Socratic thinkers were open to the meaning of Being, above all Parmenides, and it is very difficult for us to understand them

genuinely. Western thinkers have not "forgotten" the question of Being in the same way that one forgets to wind one's watch or the absent-minded professor forgets his umbrella on a rainy day. Rather, the preoccupation of Western thinkers with beings has obscured the question of Being which has somehow, so to speak, withdrawn itself, although it can never be totally absent. This is not the "fault" of Western thinkers. It is simply what has happened.

The word "Being" is so abstract and so general that it is almost impossible to imagine any concrete meaning for it. Hegel states that the word "Being" is so empty and lacking in concrete qualities that it is practically the same as "Nothing." But Heidegger rejects the characteristics of empty generality and abstractness for the word "Being." Being is not the most all-inclusive kind of thing under which everything can be subsumed. Being is the nearest thing to us, but we are so close to it that we cannot see or be explicitly aware of it, for it is not a thing, not a being. We use the small word "is" constantly, and yet we are at a loss to say what it really means.

Heidegger tries to elucidate this problem by citing the question raised, first by Leibniz, then again by Schelling: Why is there anything at all--and not far rather nothing? This is perhaps the most fundamental philosophical question there is. It does not ask: Why does this or that thing exist, but rather: Why does *anything at all* exist, why is there anything at all? The answer to this question, if an answer were appropriate, could never be in terms of some other thing or being. The question points beyond the dimension of beings into that of Being.

It is this unrelenting inquiry into the meaning of Being which sets Heidegger apart from existentialism and suggests for him the characterization of "a philosophy of Being." One more example might be given to illustrate the difference between existentialism and a philosophy of Being. In his *Letter on Humanism*, Heidegger quotes Sartre's statement: "*précisement nous sommes sur un plan où il y a seulement des hommes*"--we are precisely in a situation where there are only human beings--and gives his formulation of that statement: "*précisement nous sommes sur un plan où il y a principalement l'Etre*"--we are precisely in a situation where there is principally Being. For Sartre, there is nothing more fundamental than man,

nothing transcending him. For Heidegger, "there is" Being. This does not mean that Being is something "above" man. This phrase, there is, reads in German "*es gibt*" and means literally "it gives." "There is being" thus means that Being gives itself and makes it possible for anything at all to be. Being cannot be equated with the highest being, or God, who creates, causes or grounds the world. Yet, without Being, nothing at all could "be."

The development of Heidegger's thinking after *Being and Time* has led many people to speak of a "turn" in his philosophy and to distinguish between the "early," more phenomenologically oriented Heidegger before the turn and the "late" Heidegger after it. There are ample grounds for speaking of a turn, but it is misleading to see any radical break in Heidegger's development. The turn represents a shift of emphasis, but it is a shift which Heidegger himself foresaw and prepared for in *Being and Time*: the shift from the perspective of man to that of Being. The books written from the perspective of Being are concerned with the history of Being which takes the form of a thorough and intensive analysis of the history of philosophy. But these writings are no mere historical commentary. They bring to light in a unique manner the way in which Being has given itself to us since the beginning of philosophy with the early Greek thinkers. Thus, the earliest Greek thinkers experienced Being as nature or *physis*--that is, as what arises out of itself and becomes unconcealed--and as truth or *aletheia* which Heidegger characterizes not as the correspondence theory of truth, as the *adequatio* or correspondence of idea and object, but as unconcealment. It is, so to speak, wrested out of concealment which is equiprimordial with it if not more primordial. The root word of concealment in truth or *aletheia* is familiar to us in the myths of the river of Lethe, the river of forgetfulness. The two, unconcealment and concealment, are always together, one can never be without the other. One might say by way of interpretation that if there were only concealment and oblivion, all would remain in undifferentiated darkness. If there were only unconcealment, all might be exhausted and cut off from the generative source.

With Plato, philosophy begins to go in a certain direction--that of metaphysics--in a direction which it has followed up to and including the thought of Nietzsche. By metaphysics Heidegger means the separation of

essence and existence--of the eternal realm of idea and the transient realm of becoming--implicit in Plato's thought, and the consequent preoccupation with beings accompanied by an oblivion of Being. Heidegger analyzes the transformation of the fundamental concepts of philosophy, showing how, for instance, Aristotle's entelechy becomes the medieval concept of actuality and how Descartes' emphasis on the clarity and certainty of the *ego cogito* leads to the development of subjectivity which finally culminates in the concept of the Will in the nineteenth century. With Nietzsche's statement that by abolishing the true world (Plato's Ideas), we have also abolished the apparent world, in other words that there is no longer any criterion to distinguish between them, metaphysics has come to its end. This does not mean that metaphysics stops dead in its tracks stunned by Nietzsche's lethal proclamation. Nietzsche's statement is itself still metaphysical since it merely turns Plato upside down. (This is most evident in another formulation where Nietzsche states that the apparent world is more real than the true world.) The end of metaphysics could last for centuries. The phrase "the end of metaphysics" simply means that metaphysics has run through the gamut of its possibilities. Its last stage in which we are now is that of the age of technology. Technology is now what is decisive in our experience of what is, of the world and even of ourselves.

In some ways Heidegger's preoccupation with the history of philosophy sounds very much like Hegel, but in reality it is not. Whereas the danger with the earlier Heidegger might lie in confusing him with existentialism, the danger with the late Heidegger might lie in confusing him with Hegel. Hegel treated history as the continuous, progressive manifestation of the Absolute Spirit developing itself in and through history. Hegel's claim to possess the omniscience of an Absolute Spirit and himself to represent the culmination of the development of the Absolute Spirit seemed to later thinkers, particularly to Søren Kierkegaard, simply "fantastic" in the special sense of that word. By "fantastic" Kierkegaard meant that Hegel had forgotten that he was a finite, concrete, existing individual and confused himself with the Absolute Spirit or God. He compared Hegel to a man who had build a magnificent mansion, that is, his philosophical system, and

was then compelled to live in a sort of dog house next door because no finite human being could live in that kind of mansion.

What, then, is the difference between Hegel and Heidegger? It is true that Heidegger claims for himself by implication a privileged perspective, that of an openness to Being. This is a point which one either accepts or rejects, it can hardly be proved or disproved. But there the resemblance between the two thinkers stops. Heidegger's Being cannot be equated with Hegel's Absolute Spirit which Heidegger would call a form of absolute subjectivity. Nor does Heidegger treat history as a continuous, progressive, calculable development. History for him is not progressing and we cannot predict or calculate the future. History is not a continuous dialectical process. Rather, Being gives itself to us in different epochs or phases and these we can never calculate. We cannot derive these epochs one from the other dialectically as the progressive manifestation of some all-pervading Absolute. But they are the real, incalculable force shaping our world.

Heidegger's view that all Western philosophy since its beginning has been metaphysics seems at first a startling one. He is not saying what the metaphysician says to the empiricist or the positivist when the metaphysician claims that the empiricist does not understand the presuppositions of his own philosophy and thus really has a kind of presupposed metaphysics which he is incapable of realizing. This would be tantamount to entrenching the reign of metaphysics still more securely. Rather than saying that everyone *has* to be a metaphysician, as an Idealist might say, Heidegger is searching for a new way of thinking that is not metaphysical.

In order to understand the radical and undeniably controversial statement that all Western philosophy has been metaphysics, one must keep in mind what Heidegger means by metaphysics and how his own thinking attempts at least to catch sight of a possible path leading out of metaphysics. For Heidegger, the history of philosophy, i.e. the history of metaphysics, is the history of the forgetfulness of Being. This means that metaphysics has been concerned exclusively with beings. If it has given any heed to the ontological difference--the difference between Being and beings--at all, it has simply interpreted Being as the *ground* of beings and thus placed it within the framework of beings. Metaphysics has at best thought the difference between Being and beings, but only in terms of the

elements of that difference. It has never thought the difference *as* difference. It reduces one element of the relation, Being, to the other element which we more readily understand, beings. Metaphysics fails to see the difference of *dimension* between Being and beings and gets caught up in the elements of the difference. Thus the way in which metaphysics has thought the relation of Being and beings has given it the structure of ontology and theology, regardless of whether it has made explicit use of these terms or not. Metaphysics is ontology (the study or science of beings) in that it thinks Being as the first and most universal ground common to all beings. Metaphysics is theology, the study or science of God,, in that it thinks Being as the highest ground above all beings, ultimately as the ground of itself, *causa sui*, which is the metaphysical concept of God. Metaphysics is thus in its very nature ontotheologic. Its primary concern is to ask why?, to find the ground and reason why (*Logos*) for what it questions. Metaphysics moves from one thing to another as the ground of that thing in the endless regression of a causal chain. It fails to see what is at once most simple and most difficult. In this connection Heidegger cites a simple poem about a rose which begins: "The rose is without a why; it blooms because it blooms." There is no "why?" for the blooming of a rose. There is only a "because." It is the nature of the rose to bloom, and so it just blooms.

It might seem strange that a contemporary thinker should be so concerned with the history of philosophy. We tend to think of the history of philosophy at best as a "history of ideas" or as a long series of arguments in which every philosopher tries to refute his predecessors. Immanuel Kant called metaphysics the battlefield of endless controversies. Philosophy can appear as a series of failures to "solve the problem," to find the answer. Philosophy has not gone anywhere. But Heidegger would say that it indeed has, although it has led us to the threshold of a very questionable, if not ominous, reality: to the age of technology. Technology is nothing we can abolish as Nietzsche wanted to abolish the true world. The question facing us now is whether we can live with it sanely and humanly or whether it will so completely take over that everything, including man, has its exclusive worth in being the raw material and availability for provocation for some technological use. The complete

domination of technology with its exclusive manipulation not only of beings, but of beings in their character of being utilizable for some technological demand, would radically preclude any possibility of an openness to Being.

The last of Heidegger's concerns to be just touched upon has to do with the nature of our Western languages. This concern he shares in name, if not in content, with almost all contemporary philosophy. He is not searching for some kind of meta-language. In his quest for the possibility of a thinking which is non-metaphysical, he is confronted with the problem that the language of our thinking is permeated--implicitly or explicitly--by the structure of metaphysical thinking. His question is: do our Western languages have an intrinsic metaphysical structure so that they are forever fated to be onto-theo-logical in their nature or do they harbor other, more original possibilities of thinking?

The possible positive answer to this question would lie in the direction of no longer insisting upon the kind of thinking that is calculative. Then perhaps a thinking could take place which is more receptive to Being, receptive not in the sense of passivity, but in the sense of the higher activity of a strenuous rigor of thought answering to the claim of Being. If man is ever able to realize that the question of the essence of man is not a question about man--paradoxical as this sounds--but about the relation--inexpressible in metaphysical terms--of man and Being; then there might take place what Heidegger calls "appropriation," the *rapprochement* between man and Being.

Chapter 2

An Inquiry into Authenticity and Inauthenticity in *Being and Time*

Near the beginning of *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger states that the two manners of human being, authenticity and inauthenticity, are grounded in the fact that *Da-sein* is always its own being. The relation of authenticity and inauthenticity does not seem at first to be such a crucial issue in this major, classic work. The issues raised there: phenomenology; fundamental ontology; the question of Being; time and temporality; the ontic and the ontological; etc. appear as the basic problems to be explicated. This is an indisputable fact. The task of this paper will be to show that these issues are rooted in the question of the *self*, conceived in a non-traditional way, and that an elucidation of the apparent ambiguity in the relation between the self's being authentic and being inauthentic, which to my knowledge has never been pointed out, is crucial to an understanding of Heidegger's enterprise.

To begin a talk in this manner might well cause considerable confusion if the audience is unfamiliar with some of these terms and may even be confusing if they are familiar with them. To begin in this manner is, in a way, to take the Kierkegaardian leap and to plunge straight into the ontological abyss of *Being and Time*. But, as Nietzsche says: "Courage slays dizziness at the edge of abysses: and where does man not stand at the edge of abysses?"

I have set for myself here an extremely difficult task, a task of which I am only partially and imperfectly capable. But I believe that someone has to have a go at it.

Let us begin by asking what Heidegger has to say about the self. First of all, he gives an important polemic against the traditional philosophic concept of the self as substance, subject, as that which persists throughout

all the multiplicity and change of our experience. The self is what remains identical throughout my life experience, it is what makes the old man fundamentally the same as the young child he once was. From Plato to Hume, the belief in the substantiality of the self was unquestioned, regardless of whether it was conceived in the Greek manner of an immortal soul imprisoned in and separable from the body, or in the Christian manner of an image of God intimately related to a body which will be resurrected. It was Hume who first challenged this belief in the substantial self, stating that the self was nothing but a behavioristically determined string of events lacking any true unity or self identity.

Heidegger does not adhere to or accept the traditional substantial view of the self, but neither, of course, does he follow Hume's empirical approach to the self as something not ascertainable materially, hence non-existent. Even Nietzsche had said of Descartes' ego in the *cogito ergo sum*: "He should have said: I think, therefore something is going on there." In other words, all that thinking yields is a *process* of thought, not a substantial soul (*res cogitans*) behind that process. With the English word "authentic" which has as its root the Greek *autos*, self, and the Sanskrit *asus*, life of the soul, the problem of the self proves to be anchored for Heidegger in the relation of authenticity and inauthenticity. The fact that the German "*eigentlich*" actually means "real" in everyday usage need not trouble us here. "*Eigen*" by itself means: "what is one's *own*."

Perhaps the best way to immerse ourselves in the problem of authenticity and inauthenticity is to quote the passages from *Being and Time* which present a real problematic contradiction and then attempt to move in the direction of "solving" or at least softening that contradiction. In other words, I shall first document the problem and then try to state it incisively. By way of anticipation, I can say that the question here is: Which is more "primordial"--authenticity or inauthenticity?

The passages which state that inauthenticity is more primordial are:

> The they-self is an existential and belongs to the positive constitution of *Da-sein* as an original phenomenon. (SZ, p. 129, §27)
>
> Authentically being oneself does not consist in an exceptional state of the subject, a state detached from the they-self, but is rather an existentiell modification of the they-self which is an essential existential. (ibid., p. 130, §27)

> Conversely, *authentic* existence is nothing which hovers over falling everydayness, but is rather existentially only a modified coming to grips with that everydayness. (ibid., p. 179, §38)
>
> Authentically being a self is shown to be an existentiell modification of the they-self. (ibid., p. 267, §54)

And the passages which state the primordiality of authenticity are:

> Inauthenticity has possible authenticity as its *ground*. (ibid., p. 259, §52)
>
> The they-self is an existentiell modification of the authentic self. (ibid., p. 317, §64)

In order to begin to try to unravel the ambiguities inherent in Heidegger's statements on authenticity and inauthenticity, let us take a look at the two "disciplines" he is involved with in *Being and Time*, phenomenology and fundamental ontology. For Heidegger, phenomenology is a *method*, a procedure, a *way* of looking at things. It is not restricted and cannot be restricted to a particular area of things as are the other "logies" of biology, which studies life, anthropology, which studies man, theology, which studies God, etc. Nor is it ontologically bound or committed to any definite and specific view of the world. It simply describes what is as it shows itself. Fundamental ontology, on the other hand, which is still Heidegger's main interest in this book, since it is to lead us to the *meaning* of Being, purports to analyze the conditions of the possibility of things and especially of *Da-sein* and its temporality. Here, Heidegger is still fundamentally within the Kantian framework of asking the question of what makes something possible. He has not yet reached the position of his later thought which equates metaphysics *and* fundamental ontology with onto-theo-logic, all of which he wants simply to abandon, no longer to de-struct in the sense of un-building the history of metaphysics as was his aim in *Being and Time*.

I believe that part of the ambiguity in the relation of authenticity and inauthenticity has to do with the relation of these two disciplines of phenomenology and fundamental ontology, and that one of the main questions here is rooted in what is meant by, for lack of a better term, "what comes first." In using the phenomenological method, Heidegger is analyzing the way things are most of the time in average everydayness, the way we relate to and deal with ourselves, others and the world in a fairly indifferent and matter-of-fact fashion. And this, of course, leads him to

inauthenticity as the predominant mode of man's being. Thus, inauthenticity is "what comes first" in the sense of what we find first of all and most of the time. The meaning of "what comes first" here is what we inevitably and without exception start out with. Nobody is *born* authentic. This view Heidegger shares with most of the religious and philosophical traditions of the world; for example, with Plato, Christianity, and Buddhism. Christianity has the myth of the fall which tells us that man cannot remain in the state of innocence and happiness, but must lose this state, collectively and individually. What is interesting here is not so much the question of *why* this is so, which in Christianity involves the ideas of sin, guilt, self-assertion, eating from the forbidden tree of knowledge, etc.; but, rather, the fact *that* it is so. Kierkegaard makes this acute question quite concrete when he says that there is no such thing as uncontested, untested innocence. Man must *lose* his innocence in order to regain it in a way that it can never be lost again. Otherwise, he will be perpetually on the brink of losing it. Only an innocence lost and regained is tenable innocence no longer subject to radical jeopardy.

Plato gives us the myth of the cave, a subterranean cavern in which it is our natural state to live as prisoners without being aware of the fact that we are imprisoned. In fact, it is precisely man's lack of awareness that he is a prisoner which imprisons him most deeply. As Socrates remarks, to know that you do not know is the first, indispensable step toward knowledge.

What are men doing in this cave? They have been chained since childhood, their legs and necks fettered in such a way that they can only see what is in front of them, unable to turn their heads. And what they can see are shadows of stone and wooden images of men and animals, puppets, and artificial objects, shadows thrown by a fire burning behind them. They can neither see themselves nor each other except as shadows cast by the fire onto the walls of the cave. In short, the prisoners believe that reality is nothing other than shadows of artificial objects.

Plato's myth or allegory essentially presents a *process* which has four stages. The first stage we have just described, men imprisoned in a cave. In the second stage, the prisoners are unchained and are able to walk about in the cave. This new stage is accompanied by acute pain, for their

limbs are stiff and unaccustomed to movement and they are blinded by the light of the fire. They can see neither shadows nor the artificial objects and are totally bewildered. They cannot see or understand clearly anything at all. Their former sense of "reality" is gone and they have as yet no sense of a new reality. In the third stage, one prisoner is forcibly dragged out of the cave into the world outside and compelled to go up a rough and steep ascent until he is finally confronted with the sun, Plato's image for the highest reality of all. The prisoner did not wish to leave the cave, for he thought that reality resided there. His ascent is even more painful and blinding than his initial release from his chains, for how much more difficult is climbing than walking, and how much more blinding is the light of the sun than that of the fire. But, finally, he grows accustomed to his new situation and is able to behold the sun, the highest reality, directly. The final stage of the process is the prisoner's return to the cave. Of course, he does not wish to return, for he is overwhelmed by joy at seeing the highest reality. True reality is joy-giving. But he must return for two reasons. He must attempt to tell his fellow prisoners of what he has seen so that they may glimpse the very *possibility* of such an intense joyful experience. And, secondly, Plato's implication is that no one can or should dwell in contemplation of the highest reality, but one must return and live in the world where one belongs, what we would now call the "human condition."

Finally, Zen, or Buddhism in general, states that we are initially and by nature in the condition of ignorance. In contrast to Christianity, there is no fall from a state of innocence here. The ignorance is primordial. This ignorance is not a matter of some facts which we do not know; but, rather, a matter of something already there, our true Self or Buddha nature, which we simply do not *realize*. Buddhism, in general, can explain this ignorance by saying that it is the inevitable product of deeds and actions committed in past lives, or our *Karma* and craving thirst for existence. But Zen, at least in the basic text called the *Mumonkan*, goes beyond that explanation without doing away with it. The name *Mumonkan* means "the gateless barrier," the barrier or obstruction to realization or enlightenment which we all face, a barrier with no gate. One passage states that it is an indisputable fact that every sentient being has its own cause of birth. But

the true Self is, in some non-Western, non-Brahmanic, or non-Hindu sense, eternally free of birth and death while in the midst of birth and death, and thus cannot be merely the product of past karmic causes. The statement, "Show me your original face before you were born," also means show me your original face before your parents, the physical initiators of your existence, were born. Your original face is not subject to coming and going and is ultimately not contingent upon change and causality, although this is extremely difficulty to grasp in a genuine way.

Thus, the *Mumonkan* gives us two statements which are contradictory on the surface but which are inseparable in reality. On the one hand, it emphasizes the primordiality and incredibly stubborn pervasiveness of ignorance. "If you want to see into your own nature, you must not take that nature for granted nor leave that insight to chance." "In order to row a boat, you have to use oars. In order to race a horse, you have to give it the whip." "Man, once and for all, has to be driven to the abyss of dualist contradictions and completely die to his small self in the depths of spiritual struggle. Unless he is reborn, breaking through this barrier, he cannot be really free in living his actual, everyday life." Rebirth of the true Self overcoming ignorance is absolutely crucial.

On the other hand, no one is ever totally estranged or separated from his true Self or Buddha nature since that is what truly *is* and what we truly are. In spite of ignorance, dullness, habit, distractedness, dispersedness, boredom, etc., in the most fundamental sense, we can never escape our true nature. "If you cover 'it,' trying to hide it, the very cover is nothing but 'it' (the true Self)." "It is gateless from the beginning. How can there be any barrier?"

To return to this problem formulated by Heidegger as the question of authenticity and inauthenticity, Buddhism not only presents the situation of initial inauthenticity without exception, but also lands us right in the middle of the ambiguity of authenticity and inauthenticity. We are both at once, usually without realizing it. In addition, authenticity in Heidegger or "enlightenment" in Buddhism is never something automatic, but only to be attained by some extreme experience. For Buddhism, that extreme experience is to be attained only by the utmost exertion and engagement in an intense quest for enlightenment as to one's own true nature or Self.

For Heidegger, authenticity is to be attained, for example, only in the experience of anxiety, anticipation of one's own death, or joy. One difference here between Heidegger and Buddhism is that, whereas the Buddhist actively seeks an extreme experience, for Heidegger that experience is rather something which comes over one. It is unlikely that I seek the experience of anxiety or seek to anticipate my own death or even seek joy, since in the latter case I probably would not know what to search for. On the contrary, in the case of anxiety or the anticipation of my own death, I flee from these experiences and try to refuse to face them by dispersing myself in the affairs of the world. So much for the "what comes first" with which the phenomenological method deals.

What about fundamental ontology in Heidegger? "What comes first" means in fundamental ontology what is most *primordial* and fundamental. What is being questioned is the very *ground* of man's being. This questioning can only be accomplished by analyzing man in his being as a totality and as a whole. Thus, Heidegger's initial question of the Who of *Da-sein*, the real self as opposed to the they-self, which began with inauthenticity, moves of necessity into the sphere of authenticity, of man as he is when he truly is who he is. Ultimately, this leads to an analysis of the temporal structures of his consciousness and to the description of how these structures can temporalize either an inauthentic or an authentic mode of temporal experience.

If one bears in mind that Heidegger's sole enterprise is to raise the question of the meaning of *Being* and that he is analyzing *Da-sein* only because it is that kind of being which has *access* to Being through its preontological understanding of what it means to be, then it becomes clear that it is ultimately authentic *Da-sein* which can lead us to an insight into the meaning of Being. Inauthenticity gets stuck in the things and affairs of the world, in *beings*. It is only on the level of authenticity that the insistent, prevalent claims and demands of the world recede and *Da-sein* can partially abandon things and beings, grasping itself in its *original totality*. This Heidegger emphasizes again and again. And if we consider *Being and Time* in the light of Heidegger's later writings it is not the question of authenticity and inauthenticity or even the whole "existential" emphasis that remains constitutive in the later writings. Man is considered

only in terms of his relation to Being or the Appropriation. The very word "Appropriation" expresses the fact that man and Being are eminently and inseparably related. As mentioned in my brief introduction to *Identity and Difference*, the *relation* is more fundamental that *what* is related. There is not much room for an analysis of inauthenticity here. Rather, Heidegger seeks a new understanding of "authenticity" by carrying out the de--structing, the unbuilding, now conceived as abandonment, of the history of Western philosophy as onto-theo-logic, onto-theo-logic as the exclusive preoccupation with "Being" as the highest being (*summum ens*) and as the cause of itself (*causa sui*). "Authenticity" thus becomes the true relation to Being or the Appropriation undistorted by philosophical constructions. What remains from *Being and Time* in the later writings is the understanding of *Da-sein* as the non-spatial "place" where Being occurs or arrives. Man is truly the "place" of Being, and what corresponds to authenticity is the hope that he will take the step back out of metaphysics and allow Being to be in a new way undistorted and uncovered by the layers of metaphysical thinking.

To return in conclusion to the problem of authenticity and inauthenticity in *Being and Time*, when one considers Heidegger's analyses of these "existentials," the "categories" or ways of being of *Da-sein*, understanding, attunement and discourse, these point to authenticity as Heidegger's main concern, expressed or not. Upon closer examination, the authentic is the fundamental level of *Da-sein* and the inauthentic is simply a flight from authenticity, however prevalent that inauthenticity might be. Thus, the crucial meaning of "what comes first" is what is *primordial*. Only this can lead us to the meaning of Being. Expressed in Christian terms, and in doing this I by no means intend to "Christianize" Heidegger but only to draw a perhaps misleading analogy, a consideration of the "fall" of man will not lead him to an understanding of God, but only to some kind of "theodicy." Only the kind of God-relationship expressed, for example, in Kierkegaard can lead us to God, a *relation*, an appropriation process to an objective uncertainty held fast in the most passionate inwardness. This is Kierkegaard's definition of faith *and* truth. Of course, the terms subjective and objective are out of place here, and the analogy between Kierkegaard and Heidegger breaks down to a certain degree. But the

primordiality of the *relation* holds for both thinkers. It is the relation which authenticates, a relation oriented not toward the things of the world as a distraction and a refuge from the possibilities of becoming authentic, but rather oriented toward those very possibilities themselves which open up the question of the meaning of *Da-sein*'s own Being, about which it is concerned and thus opens up the question of the meaning of Being itself.

Part II

Time:
Comparison with
Other Western Thinkers

Chapter 3

Time and Dialectic in Hegel and Heidegger

Time and Dialectic both play a major role in the thinking of Heidegger and Hegel. With regard to their theories of "history," one might say that Hegel emphasizes dialectic at the expense of time and that Heidegger emphasizes time within the framework of a "dialectic" quite different from that of Hegel.

This chapter will attempt to explore the different structures of those two concepts in the two thinkers. Such an attempt ought to result in the clarification of a further, more general question: The question of Heidegger's relation to German Idealism and to the history of philosophy in general.

Let us first take Hegel on the relation of time and dialectic. History is the history of the self-manifestation of Absolute Spirit, and this Spirit reveals itself in a dialectical fashion. Dialectic in German Idealism has the structure of in itself, for itself, and in and for itself (Hegel) or in Fichte's terminology of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. What is characteristic of this dialectic comes out more strongly in Fichte's formulation, the characteristic of thesis or *positing*. It is the compatibility of positing and time that I wish to question here; i.e., I wish to question which is more commensurably related: Hegel's positional dialectic and his conception of time as externality, punctuality, and coming outside of itself or Heidegger's non-positional dialectic and his conception of temporality as the horizon of Being, a conception which is modified in his later work.

In contrast to Kant who thought that the in itself of things, things as noumena, as they are without appearing to a perceiver, was unknowable, Hegel posits the in itself as the beginning of the dialectical process. This in itself is a *moment*, a factor. Its *raison d'être* is to be *aufgehoben*, superseded; taken by itself it is nothing ultimate at all. Thus, it is only meaningful when thought in terms of and in opposition to an other. The

in itself is potential content which has not yet become real. It yet has to become external to itself and become for itself.

Thus, the in itself is not related to the world of appearance as its static superior; but rather constitutes the beginning of the movement of Spirit comprehending itself. In contrast to Kant's purely "Formal" Idealism, Hegel claims to include content in his logic. Logic is Ontology, ontologic. Spirit posits its own content for itself. It is not limited to simply producing the forms for a content given to it from without. In the strict sense there can be no "without" for Hegel, since everything essential is incorporated into the system. Thus Spirit posits itself as bare immediacy in its beginning. Its beginning contains nothing extraneous to it.

The question then becomes: Where does the negativity come from which is the *conditio sine qua non* of Spirit developing itself in history? Hegel conceives negativity as the moving force of the dialectical process and the temporal articulation of that negativity lies in the *not* yet of the future, in the *no* longer of the past. Thus he thinks time as the actual occurrence of negativity.

If time is, so to speak, the condition of the possibility of dialectic in that it is what *moves* the dialectical process as opposed to leaving a static contradiction, then time would have to become a "structure" commensurable, or even perhaps identical, with that of dialectic. Ultimately, it would then be the "function" of time to mediate something. Time could not resemble the general idea of some kind of flow carrying everything off into the past. The idea of time as Chronos devouring his own children cannot constitute anything, let alone produce a dialectical mediation moving in an ever more inclusive synthesis.

Hegel thinks time neither as Chronos devouring his own children nor as a string of events wandering about in an external framework of absolute Newtonian time like a thing in another thing. Hegel's absolute reflection claims to constitute its own time, determining it through the structure of reflection itself, through dialectic. But we are still left with the insistent question: how can time *mediate*?

Historically speaking, Kant and Hegel brought the problem of time into an indissoluble relation to the self or Spirit--for Hegel, the self is *not*

substance.[1] This is the gist of his whole polemic against Spinoza. The Self is positing subject, ultimately the absolute Spirit. This brings the Self into a genuine relationship to time, since it is essentially an activity. But the nature and structure of this activity is dialectical; it is a positing. It is precisely the relation of the predetermined structure of dialectic to the structure of time that Hegel cannot explain. That Hegel was aware of this difficulty is evident in his constant polemic against bad infinity (the problem: how are your going to *stop* time, when is the dialectical process *completed*, what prevents it from starting all over again?) and in his attempt to relegate time to an inferior sphere, to a mere externality yet to be elevated through dialectic into the higher sphere of the concept and thus overcome in its independent character by being incorporated in the concept.

For Hegel, time is "the same principle as the ego, the ego of pure self-consciousness."[2] But time is this principle only in its total externality and abstraction (abstraction in Hegel's characteristic use of this word as not yet concrete, as bare abstraction). Time belongs at best to the sphere of representation (*Vorstellung*), it does not reach up into the level of the concept (*Begriff*). "Time is the concept itself which is *there* and represents itself to consciousness as empty intuition."[3] It *confronts* consciousness as something foreign,. For this reason the Spirit appears in time as long as it has not grasped its pure concept; i.e., has not annihilated time as something outside of it.

Hegel thinks the Self or Spirit as activity, but he determines the structure of this activity in such a way that it is incommensurable with time. Hegel saw this problem to some extent, and polemicized against it in his treatment of what he calls "bad infinity." Yet it remains a problem which he was never really able to cope with in a conclusive way.

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[1] The remainder of this discussion of Hegel is taken from *Nietzsche's Thought of Eternal Return*, Joan Stambaugh (University Press of America, 1988), pp. 65-69.

[2] *Encyclopedia*, number 258.

[3] *Phenomenology of Mind*, Section VIII, "Absolute Knowledge."

> It is in accordance with the concept of Spirit that the development of history should fall into time. Time contains the determination of the negative. Something is there, an event, positive for us; but that its opposite counterpart is contained within it, this relation to Non-being is time, in such a way that we don't just think this relation, but also intuit it. Time is this totally abstract Sensuousness. . . .
>
> In nature things fall apart, and all individual buds remain existing beside each other; the transition appears only to the thinking Spirit which grasps the connection. Nature doesn't grasp itself, and thus the negative of her forms is not present for her. In the spiritual realm, however, it becomes apparent that the higher form is produced through transformation of the earlier, lower form. The latter has thus ceased to exist; and that this becomes apparent, namely that one form is the transfiguration of the earlier form, this is the reason why the appearance of spiritual form falls into time. World History is thus in general the interpretation of Spirit in time, as in nature the interpretation of the idea in space.[4]

Nature exists within the realm of the spatial. It never gets beyond the uniform repetition of the same kind of existence. Change is repetition of the same. A tree produces another tree of its kind, not a higher form of a tree. There is no progress in nature as such.

In the realm of Spirit, however, change is, for Hegel, *eo ipso* progress. It is Hegel's claim that nothing new is produced in space, but that every development in time does produce not only something new, but something higher incorporating and containing the earlier stage. The development of absolute Spirit is neither the uniform repetition of the same, nor is it a progression into (bad) infinity. It is a development which returns to itself.

> The concept of Spirit is return to itself, to make itself an object; thus its progression is not an indeterminate one into infinity; rather is there an aim, namely the return to itself. Thus there is a certain cycle, Spirit seeks itself.[5]

The structure of dialectic overcomes the repetition of nature and it avoids endless progression, the not-being-able-to-stop of bad infinity. How is the structure of dialectic constituted so as to be able to do this and how does its structure fit in with that of time, which in contrast to space, affords this possibility? Or has time itself no structure? Is it simply a function of a by-product of the activity of dialectic? The latter would be

[4] *Reason in History*. C, "The Course of World History," a), "The Principle of Development."

[5] *Ibid.*

the easiest answer for Hegel to give, an answer which would characterize time in such a manner that it could not interfere with the activity of dialectic. And yet Hegel says that the development of history *falls into* time. If time were nothing but a function or a by-product of the Spirit, the statement that the development of Spirit falls into time would present serious problems.

Hegel's dialectic is a dialectic of the absolute Spirit. Its activity is essentially that of *positing*, of positing a thesis, then an anti-thesis and finally the synthesis of these two which in turn becomes a new thesis for the further activity of the dialectic.

The development of absolute Spirit falls into time because it must *unfold* dialectically. Hegel makes contradictions *move*; in fact it is this very contradiction, or negativity, which makes the movement and unfolding of the absolute Spirit possible. Hegel's claim is that the dialectical movement of absolute Spirit *loses* nothing, but rather incorporates all that has gone before in a higher and more developed manner.

For Kant, time was a form of *intuition*, the form of inner sensibility and thus indirectly also of outer sensibility and ultimately of all possible experience. Time is thus essentially related to receptivity. For Hegel, time must be related to the *concept*. This means that time is essentially related a) not to receptivity, but to spontaneity; b) to the universal (concept); and c) to the activity of positing. Hegel tries to cope with the relation of time and the activity of positing in his philosophy of nature. His problem here is to relate positing, which is strictly a structure of conceptual consciousness, to time in nature.

Hegel states that the Spirit is commensurate with time because both have the structure of negation of negation. In the case of the Spirit, this is obvious. The negation of negation is synthesis as the negation of antithesis which in turn is the negation of thesis. In the case of time, negation of negation is what Hegel calls punctuality; that is, not the *being* outside itself[6] of space, but a *coming* outside itself.[7]

[6] *Aussersichsein.*

[7] *Aussersichkommen.*

Time is "intuited becoming."[8] When the point (of space) posits itself for itself, the now arises. Thus time is the concept which is *there* and "since Space is simply the inner negation of itself, thus the self-negating[9] of its moments is its truth; time is just the existence of this continual self--negation."[10]

Time is the activity, the actual taking-place of continual self-negation. It is thus the *truth* of space. By truth Hegel means not some kind of correspondence between ideas and things, but the actual fact of existence, the being there of self-negation.

> Time is the pure form of sensibility or intuition, the non-sensible Sensible. Time is the same principle as the I = I of pure consciousness, but the same or the simple concept still in its total externality and abstraction as intuited mere becoming . . . . Pure Being-within-itself as an absolute Coming-out-side-itself.[11]
>
> It is not in time that everything comes to be and passes away. Rather it is time itself which is this becoming, coming to be and passing away, the existing abstracting; Chronos who gives birth to all things and destroys them.[12]
>
> Time is not a kind of container in which everything is placed as in a flowing stream which sweeps it away and destroys it. Time is only the abstraction of this consuming.[13]

Hegel's insight into the nature of time removes time from its traditional representation as some kind of container in which events flow or take place. But instead of inquiring further into the nature of time as an activity, as a kind of "self-occurrence," Hegel relegates it to the domain of externality. It is mere becoming, unrelated to the concept and to consciousness. Implicitly it has the structure of consciousness; i.e., the "existence of continual self-negation," but this process is only intuited, not grasped in the concept. Had Hegel pursued his definition of time as "Pure

[8] *Das angeschaute Werden.*

[9] *Sichaufheben*

[10] *Encyclopedia*, Section 257, Zusatz.

[11] *Ibid.*, Section 258.

[12] *Ibid.*, Zusatz.

[13] *Ibid.*

Being-within-itself as the absolute Coming-outside-itself" further and had he attempted to think it without the predetermined framework of his dialectic, he would have been closer to the direction which Heidegger took.

To turn now to Heidegger, we encounter a quite different philosophical situation. One of Heidegger's supreme concerns in *Being and Time* is with human finitude. It is the finite structure of consciousness which makes it possible for consciousness to be open to itself and the world and be able to come back to itself in a unity of experience. Otherwise, consciousness would be, so to speak, either infinite expansion or a contracted point. The anticipation of death reveals care as the most basic manner of being of man and reveals time as the ontological ground of care. What Heidegger calls being toward death has the structure of projecting toward the future, coming back to the past and engendering the present. This is made possible by the structure of temporality. In being toward death man is able to understand himself as a kind of totality in terms of all that is possible for him. He then ceases to confuse himself with the they or the one and becomes free for the possibilities which really belong to him and to no one else.

In contrast to the traditional theory of time as a 'series of nows,' some not yet present, some no longer present, Heidegger conceives temporality as the unifying activity of all three modes--past, present, and future--together. Man projects into the future, the most essential mode of time, returns to himself to find the past which is still an integral part of him, and experiences the present. It is the ecstatic nature, ecstatic in the literal sense of standing outside of itself--and this is also the basic meaning of the word existence--of temporality which makes the transparency and openness of consciousness, its structure of awareness, possible. In *Being and Time* Heidegger raises the question whether time might not reveal itself as the horizon of Being. To state this in a rather oversimplified fashion, he is asking whether a more fundamental understanding of the activity of original temporality, which discloses being in the world, might not lead to the meaning of Being itself.

The so-called turn or reversal of Heidegger's thought goes together with his realization that a phenomenological analysis of subject--consciousness is inappropriate to his new understanding of Being. With

this shift in his thinking, dialectic begins to play a decisive role for the first time. Heidegger's dialectic is not Hegelian--it is Heraclitian. It does not have a three-term structure, but a two-term structure of polarity. The best example of this would be a drawn bow and arrow. "What is opposed harmonizes and from the disharmonious arises the most beautiful symmetry."

In other words, Heidegger's dialectic has to do with a difference--the difference between man and Being. This difference is literally a carrying and holding apart which provides room for a "place" for something to be. In the relationship between man and Being, the relation itself is more fundamental than what is related. It seems to me that this is a new philosophical idea: to think of a relation as more original than what it relates. Thus, Heidegger's understanding of dialectic is about as far removed from that of Hegel as possible. Whereas the danger with the earlier Heidegger might lie in confusing him with existentialism, the danger in the late Heidegger might lie in confusing him with Hegel. Hegel treated history as the continuous, progressive manifestation of Absolute Spirit developing itself in and throughout history. Hegel's claim to possess the omniscience of an Absolute Spirit seemed to later thinkers, particularly to Søren Kierkegaard, simply "fantastic" in his special sense of that word. By "fantastic" Kierkegaard meant that Hegel had forgotten that he was a finite, concrete, existing individual and had confused himself with the Absolute Spirit or God. He compared Hegel to a man who had built a magnificent mansion, that is, his philosophical system, and who was then compelled to live in a sort of dog house next door because no finite human being could live in that kind of a mansion.

Before turning to Heidegger's later conception of time in contradistinction to his earlier one, a few remarks might be made about what Heidegger says about Hegel. Heidegger considers himself outside the history of metaphysics or at least groping his way out through "the step back" out of the history of metaphysics. It is true that Heidegger claims for himself by implication a privileged position: that of an openness to Being. This is a point which one either accepts or rejects. It can hardly be proven or disproven. This he shares with Hegel, but here the resemblance between the two thinkers stops. Heidegger's Being cannot be equated with Hegel's

Absolute Spirit which Heidegger would call a form of absolute subjectivity. Nor does Heidegger treat history as a continuous, progressive, calculable development. History is not progressing, and we cannot predict and calculate the future.; History is not a continuous, dialectical process; rather, Being gives itself to us in different epochs or phases and these we can never calculate in advance. We cannot derive these epochs one from the other dialectically as the progressive manifestation of some all-pervading Absolute; but they are the real incalculable force shaping our world.

To turn now to the relation of time and dialectic in Heidegger, let us examine his few sketchy remarks in the lecture entitled "Time and Being," which represents the intended goal and completion of *Being and Time* to the extent that Heidegger was able to carry out that intention. In that lecture, Heidegger retracts his earlier emphasis on the future as the primary mode of time. This earlier emphasis on the future grew out of the influence of Husserl's *Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness* and was also compatible with the general Christian concept of time and history. When Heidegger attempts in the lecture, "Time and Being," to elucidate the temporal character of Being and not just the temporality of Dasein, this emphasis on the future has disappeared. He abandons the attempt that he made in *Being and Time* to derive spatiality from temporality and speaks now of Time-Space, differentiating his own conception of time-space from the space-time of modern physics. He places far more emphasis on the present as presence and states that future as the withholding of presence and past as a refusal of presence give and yield presence in a reciprocal relationship. The future is no longer more primordial than the past--the two are rather mutually interrelated; but in some sense, they still engender the present. The present--more precisely, presencing--is granted in the future's withholding of presence and in the past's refusal of presence. Past and future, each in its own way, in not attaining presence themselves--that is, by remaining apart and yet toward each other--grant the "Between" in which man is truly what he is by standing within that Between and enduring it unremittingly.

The description of past and future as held apart and held toward each other coincides with the description of "the difference" in Heidegger's essay, "The Onto-theological Constitution of Metaphysics." In that essay,

the difference between the overwhelming of Being and the arrival in Being grants a Between in which that overwhelming and arrival are held toward each other and yet held apart. This Between is perdurance (*Austrag*). The lecture "Time and Being" describes, so to speak, the temporal character and structure of the *Austrag*. It is Heidegger's attempt to determine what is most originally Time with regard to the present in the sense of presence.

With his intensified emphasis on presence and presencing, Heidegger is continuing to distinguish his idea of the present from the Aristotelian "now." He wishes to dispense with the serial, one-dimensional character of a string of nows, a conception prevalent throughout Western tradition. Thus, when he says that presencing is related to a kind of lingering (*weilen, verweilen*), this lingering is not to be confused with a kind of duration which is merely the prolongation of the series of nows. With the words presencing and lingering, Heidegger continues to think the dimensionality of time begun in *Being and Time*, the outside of itself which goes beyond all seriality.

Heidegger now speaks of "the end of philosophy and the task of thought" and seeks a thinking which is neither metaphysics as the history of oblivion of Being, but enacts *Ereignis*, the Appropriation and belonging together of man and Being. The *Ereignis* offers a possibility of a new beginning and a new origin which is not metaphysical. Heidegger states that thinking must give up the ontological difference which includes dialectic in Hegel's sense because it is necessary to do so for the *Ereignis*. The *Ereignis*, he says, is without history (*geschicklos*).

Between the end of philosophy as metaphysics and the appropriation stands framing which represents a kind of Janus head. Framing is a kind of continuation of the will to will, technology, an extreme formation of Being. Then, again, framing is a first form of Appropriation itself. Heidegger speaks here in declamatory utterances; he offers no explanations. Perhaps in realms such as these, explanations would of necessity be metaphysical reasons and one would thus fall back into the quicksand of reasons why.

Either we get stranded in technology and the will to will and framing thus entrenches itself indefinitely, yielding a relation of man and Being which is that of confrontation and wary challenge; *or* framing recedes as

an obstacle, permitting the relation of man and Being to be one of reciprocity, Appropriation, *belonging* to each other.

When Heidegger says the Appropriation is without history, I believe he means that since there takes place a belonging together of man and Being, there will be no "history" in the sense of history taking place in order to overcome a discrepancy. (In Christianity, the discrepancy between the City of the Earth and the City of God--for Heidegger, the discrepancy between the oblivion of the "It gives" and its gift of Being and time.) This does not mean that nothing further "happens," that everything persists in a kind of static ice-age of nothingness. After metaphysics as the history of Being, as the history of the oblivion of what gives Being, has run its course, man and Being can belong to each other in a different way.

Appropriation is the term Heidegger uses to designate tentatively a new relation of man and Being. Not only is it more inclusive than his early term Being and also less burdened with connotations belonging to the history of previous philosophy, it also includes and envelops both man and Being in the possibility of a new transformation. If this new transformation, the Appropriation and belonging together of man and Being, is without history (*geschicklos*), then time and dialectic have both lost their *processual* character of "going somewhere." Being constitutes the polar tension within which things can be. Time is the presencing within that tension thus held apart.

To summarize: it seems that Heidegger has moved from a conception of time having nothing to do with dialectic, a conception basically compatible with Husserl's phenomenological descriptions in *The Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness* but with an implicit ontological claim if time is the horizon of Being. From there, he has moved to a conception of time which he could probably never have fully reached except in critical dialogue and interaction with Hegel's dialectic. It is no accident that he is critically concerned with Hegel's concept of historical time at the end of *Being and Time*. From a consideration of Hegel's neglectful treatment of time in its relation to history, Heidegger seems to move toward a rethinking of Hegel's dialectical-historical process as such, that is, of the tradition of German Idealism, Christianity and ultimately of what he calls metaphysics as the history of Being. Thus, what is to be without history

might result in a non-calculable way from the end of metaphysics. This is Heidegger's alternative to the only other, unforseeably ominous possibility of getting entrenched in technology, in framing as the insidious hindrance to the Appropriation and belonging together of man and Being.

Conclusion: Both Hegel and Heidegger are concerned with negativity in different ways. Hegel's negativity is logical and oppositional. Every position entails its logical opposite. The labor of the concept and the power of the negative serve to transport the position to its opposite and then on to a synthesis of the two. The result is dialectical mediation.

Heidegger's negativity is temporal. It is conceived at the outset as occurrence, except in statements such as "Nothing is the veil of Being" (*What is Metaphysics?*) which do not belong to this context. In *Being and Time*, anticipation of death, dread, the finite structure of consciousness made possible by time--are all functions of negativity on the level of *Dasein*. In "Time and Being" oblivion, withholding, denial, concealment, absence--are all functions of negativity on the level of what gives Being, what gives time. Thus, Heidegger's negativity is temporal and, so to speak, riveted in the field of polar dialectic. The meaning of temporality or time gets transformed from a linear, mediated progression of oppositions to occurrence operating in a polar field. A polar field does not progress, does not go anywhere in the usual sense of that term. It is simply allowed to be. As far as I can see, this is the closest that Heidegger gets to Meister Eckhart's *Gelassenheit*.

Chapter 4

Existential Time in Kierkegaard and Heidegger

The first question to be asked when considering the issue of existential time in Kierkegaard and Heidegger is what is meant by the term existential time? Ordinarily, we speak of several different kinds of time such as a psychological sense of time, aesthetic time, and clock time, to name just three. The psychological sense of time is perhaps most familiar to us, or individual, personal perception of the slowness or rapidity of the passage of time. If, for example, I spend a week in Paris, the time probably goes by so quickly that I wonder where it went. Actually, this is a most interesting question, where the time went, which I shall not pursue for now. On the other hand, if I am engaged in some routine drudgery, even an hour can seem interminable. Thus the German word for boredom, *Langeweile*, means literally for a long while, a seemingly long stretch of time. Aesthetic time we could characterize as the very special time indigenous to a work of art, for example to a drama or a piece of music. We can get so absorbed in a tragedy or a symphony that the "objective" time measured by the clock becomes irrelevant. Lastly, we must consider this time of the clock, which is what most people mean when they speak of time. Clock time is crucial to everyday existence so that I can get to work on time, meet someone for lunch, catch an airplane, etc. Important as it is, clock time is not really "time," but time *measurement*. But what is it that is being measured?

Most or nearly all discussions of time move between the two possible poles of objective and subjective time. The subject-object dichotomy, which threatens to pervade all contemporary philosophy, seems to provide the exclusive parameters for any consideration of time. Time is either subjective or objective; any possibility between or outside of these two poles is ruled out. Whereas existential time, which I want to consider here, certainly lies closer to the subjective or psychological sense of time, it by

no means coincides with it. This brings us back to our initial question: what is existential time?

Existential time for both Kierkegaard and Heidegger means the time belonging to human existence. It cannot simply be equated with subjective or psychological time without further ado, particularly in the case of Heidegger. In order to answer our question, we must look at what these two thinkers have to say about the time of human existence. While they both maintain the relation of time to human existence, their conceptions soon part ways. Let us consider Kierkegaard first.

Kierkegaard's whole discusssion of time focusses exclusively on the relation of the moment in time to eternity or eternal happiness. He is careful to underscore the difference between the Socratic and the Christian relation to truth.

> For the truth in which I rest was within me, and came to light through myself, and not even Socrates could have given it to me, as little as the driver can pull the load for the horses, though he may help them by applying the lash. My relation to Socrates or Prodicus cannot concern me with respect to my eternal happiness, for this is given me retrogressively through my possession of the Truth which I had from the beginning without knowing it. If I imagine myself meeting Socrates or Prodicus or the servant-girl in another life, then here again neither of them could be more to me than an occasion, which Socrates fearlessly expressed by saying that even in the lower world he proposed merely to ask questions; for the underlying principle of all questioning is that the one who is asked must have the Truth in himself, and be able to acquire it by himself. The temporal point of departure is nothing; for as soon as I discover that I have known the Truth from eternity without being aware of it, the same instant this moment of occasion is hidden in the eternal, and so incorporated with it that I cannot even find it, so to speak, even if I sought it; because in my eternal consciousness there is neither here nor there, but only an *ubique et nusquam*.[1]

For Socrates, everyone is in possession of eternal truths which they have forgotten. All anyone needs is a teacher like Socrates who by posing leading questions can remind him of what he has forgotten. Socrates describes his function as a teacher with the image of a midwife who helps others give birth; in this case not to physical children, but to spiritual ideas. No one can give birth for someone else; that they must do for themselves.

[1] *Philosophical Fragments* in *A Kierkegaard Anthology*, ed. Robert Bretall (Princeton University Press, 1947), p. 157.

It is otherwise with Christianity. The individual is not in possession of the truth, nor can he learn it from a finite human teacher. Nor is any direct transition from the historical moment of time to the eternal at all possible as was the case with the Greeks. Kierkegaard had great respect and admiration for Socrates, but at the same time took great pains to show the difference between Socrates's spirituality and that of Christianity, which obviously was not accessible to Socrates. Kierkegaard wanted to emphasize what he considered the absolute uniqueness of the Christian standpoint. That uniqueness consisted in the fact that the eternal entered time, that God became man in Christ. This is the absolute paradox. For Socrates, the truth was paradoxical in that a temporal and finite being could be related to eternal truth. For Christianity, the truth was doubly paradoxical and the factor of being double does not just add together two paradoxes, but the truth becomes absolutely paradoxical, totally incomprehensible to any rational understanding. The individual existing in time cannot relate himself directly and immediately to the eternal.

> The eternal and essential truth, the truth which has an essential relationship to an existing individual because it pertains essentially to existence (all other knowledge being from the Socratic point of view accidental, its scope and degree a matter of indifference), is a paradox. But the eternal and essential truth is by no means in itself a paradox; it becomes paradoxical by virtue of its relationship to an existing individual. The Socratic ignorance is an expression for the objective uncertainty; the inwardnesss of the existing individual is the truth....
>
> The Socratic paradox consisted in the fact that the eternal truth was related to an existing individual, but now existence has stamped itself upon the existing individual a second time. There has taken place so essential an alteration that he cannot now possibly take himself back Socratically into the eternal by way of recollection....
>
> But if existence has in this manner acquired a power over him, he is prevented from taking himself back into the eternal by way of recollection. If it was paradoxical to posit the eternal truth in relationship to an existing individual, it is now absolutely paradoxical to posit it in relationship to such an individual as we have here defined. But the more difficult it is made for him to take himself out of existence by way of recollection, the more profound is the inwardness that his existence may have in existence; and when it is impossible for him, when he is held so fast in existence that

> the back door of recollection is forever closed to him, then his inwardness will be the most profound possible.[2]

It is crucial to understand the setting within which Kierkegaard discusses time: the relation of the moment to the eternal. Unlike Heidegger, Kierkegaard does not give us any explicitly temporal analyses, but appears to move pretty much within the traditional understanding of time. What is unique about his discussion of time lies in the emphasis on the *existence* of the individual, something that tends to elude words.

We have seen that for Kierkegaard the relation of the existential moment to the eternal cannot be the Socratic one of *recollection*. However, and here Kierkegaard becomes consistently adamant and bitingly sarcastic, neither can the relation of the existential moment to the eternal be one of *mediation*. Here, of course, it is Hegel who is lurking in the background, and not only in the background. Hegel, basically a Christian thinker, stated that the Absolute or the eternal mediated itself in time and appeared in history. I cannot go into the intricacies of Hegelian philosophy nor Kierkegaard's polemic here. Suffice it to say that for Kierkegaard the eternal cannot be directly mediated and related to the moment of existential time.

To show the uniqueness of Christianity, Kierkegaard distinguishes different levels of existence: the aesthetical, the ethical, religiousness A and religiousness B, the religiousness of paradox. Each of the "higher" levels includes the "lower" ones. The aesthetical level is perhaps best epitomized by the diary of John the Seducer,[3] a Don Juan who admires young girls from afar, observing every detail of their dress and manner, but who never takes action. He watches; he is a kind of voyeur. The ethical level involves action and commitment. Religiousness A, which would embrace all religiousness outside of existential Christianity, outside of Kierkegaard's own version of Christianity, involves a direct relation of man to the eternal. What truly interests Kierkegaard is religiousness B, which combines the *pathos* of religiousness A with its own *dialectic*.

[2] *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, in *ibid*, pp. 216-18.

[3] To be found in Kierkegaard's *Either-Or* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959), Vol. I, pp. 299-440.

By pathos or existential pathos Kierkegaard means the existing individual's receptivity to the Idea and ability to be completely transformed by it. Here, as in general, existential pathos is sharply contrasted with aesthetic pathos.

> In relation to an eternal happiness as the absolute good, pathos is not a matter of words, but of permitting this conception to transform the entire existence of the individual. Aesthetic pathos expresses itself in words, and may in truth indicate that the individual leaves his real self in order to lose himself in the Idea; while existential pathos is present whenever the Idea is brought in relation with the existence of the individual so as to transform it.[4]

We now need to take a look at the dialectical nature of religiousness B and then to ask what all of this has to do with the question of existential time. Our discussion up to now has been necessary because Kierkegaard himself does not explicitly focus on the question of time *per se*; it is simply not his major interest. What will interest him about time is the moment. But first I turn to dialectic.

> The distinction between the pathetic and the dialectical must, however, be more closely defined; for religiousness A is by no means undialectic, but it is not paradoxically dialectic. Religiousness A is the dialectic of inward transformation; it is the relation to an eternal happiness which is not conditioned by anything but is the dialectic inward appropriation of the relationship, and so is conditioned only by the inwardness of the appropriation and its dialectic. Religiousness B, as henceforth it is to be called, or the paradoxical religiousness, as it has hitherto been called, or the religiousness which has the dialectical in the second instance, does on the contrary posit conditions, of such a sort that they are not merely deeper dialectical apprehensions of inwardness, but are a definite something which defines more closely the eternal happiness (whereas in A the only closer definitions are the closer definitions of inward apprehension), not defining more closely the individual apprehension of it, but defining more closely the eternal happiness itself, though not as a task for thought, but paradoxically as a repellent to produce new pathos.[5]

By "dialectical" Kierkegaard does not at all mean some sort of Hegelian progression and mediation resulting in a synthesis, but rather absolute contradiction. The word paradox, which actually only means what goes against common opinion (*doxa*), has for him the same meaning. What is

[4] *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 347.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 494.

distinctive and unique about religiousness B is that it breaks through the sphere of immanence and of any possible direct relation to the eternal and requires that the existing individual relate himself to something outside himself, to the determination of God in time as an individual man. For Kierkegaard, it is not possible to even think this, let alone understand it. It is the absurd. In contrast to Camus, who made this the center of his conception of the world, construing it as meaninglessness, the absurd for Kierkegaard is the source of meaningfulness.

For Kierkegaard, in all viewpoints other than religiousness B, the moment in time is swallowed up by eternity. In religiousness B, the eternal can be apprehended only in the moment in time, and nowhere else. One is now prohibited from being, so to speak, uplifted into the eternal; the eternal must enter time, thus profoundly altering and transforming the moment in time.

> In A, the fact of existing, my existence, is a moment within my eternal consciousness (note that it is the moment which is, not the moment which is passed, for in this way speculative philosophy explains it away), and is thus a lowlier thing which prevents me from being the infinitely higher thing I am. Conversely, in B the fact of existing, although it is still a lowlier thing as it is paradoxically accentuated, is yet so much higher that only in existing do I become eternal, and consequently the thing of existing gives rise to a determinant which is infinitely higher than existence.[6]

As Kierkegaard himself said, he would not explain the paradox or contradiction, but merely state it. Only within existence can the eternal transform and authenticate existence. In the language of Heidegger, to whom I am about to turn, only the entry of the eternal into the moment of time offers the possibility of authentic existence.

> Thus it is seen that the moment is not a determination of time, because the determination of time is that it 'passes by.' For this reason time, if it is to be defined by any of the determinations revealed in time itself, is time past. If, on the contrary, time and eternity touch each other, then it must be in time, and now we have come to the moment.[7]

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 508.

[7] *The Concept of Anxiety* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 87.

For Kierkegaard, time is essentially passing by and contains within itself no possibility of true presence. True presence comes about only when time is intersected by eternity.

> Time is, then, infinite succession; the life that is in time and is only of time, has no present. . . . The present is the eternal, or rather, the eternal is the present, and the present is full. . . . Thus understood, the moment is not properly an atom of time but an atom of eternity. It is the first reflection of eternity in time, its first attempt, as it were, at stopping time.[8]

Eternity is that which grants presence in the moment.[9] Eternity does not lie in the past as it did for the Greeks; it is not already "there." Eternity comes into time, and one enters it forwards, not backwards into the past. As Kierkegaard puts it rather cryptically, repetition is that category by which eternity is entered forwards,[10] eternity is indeed the true repetition.[11]

We turn now to Heidegger. Now the concept of eternity drops out of the picture in the interpretation of time. To my knowledge, the only place where Heidegger mentions eternity in the context of his own thought is in a footnote in *Being and Time.*

> We do not need to discuss in detail the fact that the traditional concept of eternity in the significance of the 'standing now' (*nunc stans*) is drawn from the vulgar understanding of time and defined in orientation toward the idea of 'constant' objective presence. If the eternity of *God* could be philosophically 'constructed,' it could be understood only as a primordial and 'infinite' temporality. Whether or not the *via negationis et eminentiae* could offer a possible way remains an open question.[12]

Heidegger's analysis and interpretation of time is unquestionably more "radical" than that of Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard's interest in time is pretty well restricted to the relation of the moment and eternity. Although Heidegger devotes some effort to a discussion of the moment, his real

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

[9] *Øiblikket*, similar to the German *Augenblick.*

[10] *ibid.*, p. 90.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 207.

[12] Footnote 13 to Section II, Chapter 6.

interest lies in the temporal mode of the *future*. Why should the future be the decisive mode of time for Heidegger? There are at least two answers to that question. The first is the rather obvious one that Heidegger in the period of *Being and Time* is basically still within the Judeo-Christian framework of time and especially history. History and the future will bring about something that has never yet been. New events come to transpire in the course of history; history is destined to change the world in some fundamental way. This view of history and the future finds its culmination in the philosophy of Hegel. The fact that Marx fundamentally had the same structural interpretation of history as dialectical progress shows that this interpretation is not necessarily a theological one.

I am restricting my remarks on existential time in Heidegger to *Being and Time* since the later, more allusive analyses of "time" can no longer simply be designated as "existential." Turning now to the second, less obvious answer to the question of why the future is so important for Heidegger, we find that this answer lies in his concern with the *wholeness* of the human being. I shall come back to this important issue. But first I must turn to Heidegger's radically new understanding of time.

To most of us, time means what Heidegger would call "clock time." When we speak of time, we mean time *measurement* or, at best, some vague psychological sense of "keeping track" of time which is again a form of time measurement, albeit less precise. Heidegger does not dispute the fact that clock time is a valid and necessary element in our lives; we could not function without it. But this is not *existential* time. Existential time is the time that belongs to existence, and that means for both Kierkegaard and Heidegger *human* existence. For Heidegger, human existence has two possible fundamental ways of constituting itself: it can constitute itself either inauthentically or authentically. This "either-or" is not Kierkegaard's either-or, which is strictly exclusive: either he passed the exam or he did not. One possibility excludes the other. There are two expressions in Latin for either-or. The exclusive either-or is *aut-aut* but the Latin has a non-exclusive expression for either-or: *vel-vel*. An example of this kind of either-or might be: either I can take a walk or I can go to the movies. If I have enough time, I could do both. The two do not necessarily exclude each other.

Human existence for Heidegger potentially involves both inauthenticity and authenticity. In this essay I only want to deal with this intriguing issue insofar as it is bound up with temporality. Inauthentic existence and authentic existence temporalize themselves in fundamentally different ways. I want to focus on the temporality of authentic existence as that which gives access to human being as a whole.

In contrast to the traditional understanding of time going back to the Aristotelian conception, Heidegger develops a conception that is specifically *existential*. For Aristotle, time was basically a natural phenomenon that included the human being as "the numbering soul." If there is no numbering soul to measure and keep track of the time of nature, then we are talking, not about time, but about motion. What Heidegger called "clock time" is then a further development, becoming more and more sophisticated, of the Aristotelian conception of time as time measurement.

For Aristotle, time is *what is counted*. For Heidegger, time is the very structure of human experience itself. Here Heidegger takes a radical step beyond Kant who had already brought time very close to human experience by saying that time was the form of inner experience, and thus indirectly of all outer experience as well. Kant showed that all of our experience of the outer world must take place in space; space is the necessary form of outer sensibility (*Anschauung*). And any experience whatsoever must take place in time; time is the necessary form of inner, and thus of all, sensibility. Even my spatial experience of, say, a landscape, takes time.

Heidegger dispenses with the "in time" aspect of Kant's conception which was still caught in the Newtonian conception of absolute time as a kind of static container. For Heidegger, we are not *in* time; we *are* time. Our sense of time is not limited to counting and measuring, which is derivative of the kind of thinking that Heidegger later calls *calculative* thinking. Rather, time is fundamentally related to the three modes of human experience which Heidegger calls "existentials." Existentials are categories of human being. The ten categories that Aristotle formulated for things, and which basically outline the structure of our Western grammar, are not adequate to express human and existential reality.

The three modes of experience to which time is related are understanding, attunement and discourse. These three modes undercut the traditional philosophical distinction of reason and the senses. Relating them to counting and measurement simply makes no sense. Thus, given his conception of the modes of human experience and given time as the structure of that experience, Heidegger is already outside of the traditional conception of man and time.

Understanding (*Verstehen*), which is not identical with reason, is primarily related to the future, to our fundamental existential "project" with all of its concrete potentialities, and affords us our dimension of transcendence. In Sartre's words, we are always more than what we are. I cannot simply be equated with my present state; I might become something much more and much better than that state. Of course, there is always the possibility that I might become something much less and much worse.

Attunement (*Befindlichkeit*: literally, how I find myself) is primarily related to the past, to our "thrownness," our having been thrown into the world, and imposes on us the stricture of facticity. There are certain elements in my existence that all the freedom in the world cannot alter. The time and place in which I was born, certain things I have done or left undone, all of these are inexorable factors with which I must come to terms and which I cannot alter. It is truly innovative that Heidegger places attunement and moods squarely in the center of his existential analysis; for two thousand years philosophers have acted as if moods did not exist.

Finally, discourse (*Rede*) is primarily related to the present. By discourse, Heidegger means not only speech and speaking as such, but also and primarily the inner dialogue that we have with ourselves, the inner articulation of our thoughts.

Now, we must distance ourselves from the Aristotelian conception of time in which the past is that which is no more, the future is that which is not yet, and the present is a sort of "knife-edged" *now* that is not even a part of time. Here Heidegger draws on the literal meaning of the German words for his purposes. The future (*die Zukunft*) is literally what is coming toward me and is already with me. The past (*die Gewesenheit*) is what has been and still is. The present (*die Gegenwart*) is what emerges from the meeting of future and having-been in the senses of those words

discussed. I project myself toward my existential potentialities and, in so doing, come back to the facticity of my having-been, what I have done and been thus far. Thus the present is engendered. Time is not conceived as a linear string of unrelated "nows;" future, having-been and present are always inseparably together. The future is not "later" than the past; the past is not "earlier" than the present. This is what is most difficult to understand. We need to take a closer look at what Heidegger says here.

> What is projected in the primordial existential project of existence reveals itself as anticipative resoluteness. What makes possible this authentic being-a-whole of *Da-sein* with regard to the unity of its articulated structural whole? Expressed formally and existentially, without constantly naming the complete structural content, anticipative resoluteness is the *being toward* one's inmost, distinctive potentiality-of-being. Something like this is possible only in such a way that *Da-sein can indeed* come toward itself in its inmost possibility and perdure the possibility as possibility in this letting-it-self-come-toward- itself, i.e., that it exists. *Letting-come-toward-itself* that perdures the distinctive possibility is the primordial phenomenon of the *future*. . . . Here 'future' does not mean a now that has *not yet* become 'actual' and that sometime *will be* for the first time, but the coming in which *Da-sein* comes toward itself in its inmost potentiality of being. Anticipation makes *Da-sein authentically* futural in such a way that anticipation itself is possible only in that *Da-sein, as existing*, always already comes toward itself, i.e. is futural in its being in general.[13]

One could say that in Heidegger's conception time is not what is counted, but rather what does the "counting." Time is not a linear series of now-points already there waiting to be counted; nor is it an inert container-framework.

The literal meaning of the German words for past and future that Heidegger extracts is that of coming toward for the future and of having-been for the past. Thus the future *enters into* the present; it is not conceived as a not-yet-now. The word that Heidegger uses for the past is not the usual one, which would be *Vergangenheit*. In its place he coins a noun from the past participle, "to be," *gewesen*, having been. Thus the past also enters the present; it is still going on. If I say that I have been ill all week, this means that I am still ill now.

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[13] *Being and Time*, Section 65, my translation.

In order to distance himself from the conception of time as a string of now-points, Heidegger introduces such concepts as the datability and significance of time and speaks of its ecstatic and horizonal character.

> We set forth *datability* as the first essential factor of time taken care of. It is grounded in the ecstatic constitution of temporality. The 'now' is essentially a now-that. . . . The datable now that is understood in taking care, although not grasped as such, is always appropriate or inappropriate. *Significance* belongs to the now-structure. Thus we called time taken care of *world* time. In the vulgar interpretation of time as a succession of nows, both datability and significance are *lacking*. The characterization of time as pure sequence does *not* let these two structures 'appear.' The vulgar interpretation of time *covers* them *over*. The ecstatic and horizonal constitution of temporality in which datability and significance of the now are grounded, is *levelled down* by this covering over. The nows are cut off from these relations, so to speak, and, as thus cut off, they simply range themselves along after one another so as to constitute the succession.[14]

Datability and significance get away from the conception of time as uniform and quantitative. The 'now' of world time is a 'now it is time *for* lunch,' 'now it is time *to* go home.' The 'now' is not a uniform, indifferent 'now' interchangeable with any other 'now,' but is filled with a qualitative content. This content gives to the 'now' its significance. The more datability and significance are involved in the experience of time, the more the idea of quantitative measurement and calculation simply drops away. Time becomes the experience itself, not the measurement of the experience.

With the terms "ecstatic" and "horizonal" we arrive at a more technical analysis and at the same time at the heart of Heidegger's conception of temporality. We shall also see that, whereas Heidegger mostly states that authenticity is a modification of inauthenticity, in the case of temporality authentic temporality is without exception stated to be more primordial than inauthentic temporality. If you start out with the conception of time as a series of now-points, which is the vulgar, inauthentic conception, you will never get to ecstatic and horizonal temporality, the authentic conception.

The term "ecstatic," which in common parlance seems particularly suited to the vocabulary of an overenthusiastic teenager, has for Heidegger a very precise meaning. It is cognate with the term "existence;" both mean literally

[14] *Ibid.*, Section 81.

"to stand out." What does ek-sist, standing out, mean? Here Sartre's well-known, suggestive statement, "I exist my body," can be helpful. Even though the sentence is ungrammatical and unusual, since Sartre is using an intransitive verb transitively, we can have some intuitive sense of what he means. "I exist my body" means that I live in that body in the most concrete and intimate way possible. I can in no way escape it, although I can to some extent transcend it; for example, when people function in spite of pain. Heidegger expresses this by speaking of the existence that I am and *have to be*. I cannot change my mind and "start over" as someone else. The term "existence" becomes in Heidegger's later writings perdurance (*Austrag*) and standing-within (*Inständigkeit*). Perdurance, a rather uncommon word, means to stick with something, to bear it. This need not have negative connotations, but it does have intense ones. Periods of great joy also have to be "perdured."

The term "horizonal" is mostly used in conjunction with "ecstatic" and simply refers to the specific direction, context and finitude of any temporalizing. Both terms, ecstatic and horizonal, serve to indicate what, for lack of a better word, I shall call the "dimensionality" of being. This is not a term used by Heidegger himself, but the idea is there in *Being and Time* and emerges more significantly in later writings, particularly in *On Time and Being*.[15]

I stated that for Heidegger instead of being *what* is measured, time is rather what *does* the measuring. Here "measuring" is not meant in a quantitative, calculative sense, but qualitatively and, above all, constitutively. Temporality does not measure something objectively present already there, but first constitutes dimensions. This is Heidegger's way of elucidating something so close to us that we mostly do not even see it; we just take it for granted. That is what Heidegger means by *Da-sein*, being there, being-in-the-world as opposed, for example, to the way the animal is in its environment. The animal has a very restricted sense of time. If I tie up a dog in front of the local supermarket, I cannot say to him: "I'll be out in fifteen minutes." As far as the dog is concerned, I am leaving for

[15] *Durchmessung*, literally, "measuring through."

good. Worse yet, if I go on vacation, I cannot leave him in the kennel and say: "I'll be back in three weeks." All the poor dog can do is hope.

Prior to analyzing the structures of temporality, Heidegger describes the structure of human consciousness or awareness in terms of prepositions. Human beings are essentially concerned about their being, a fundamental characteristic that Heidegger called "Care" and the theologian Paul Tillich later called "ultimate concern." Care and being concerned are made possible by the fact that we are essentially *ahead of ourselves*. That is the prepositional description of the future of anticipation.

> The fact that this referential totality, of the manifold relations of the in-order-to, is bound up with that which *Da-sein* is concerned about, does not signify that an objectively present 'world' of objects is welded together with a subject. Rather, it is the phenomenal expression of the fact that the constitution of *Da-sein*, whose wholeness is now delineated explicitly as being-ahead-of-itself-in-already-being-in. . . , is primordially a whole.[16]

Basically future-oriented, human beings project into the future; they are ahead of themselves. There is an aspect to this that Heidegger does not see or is not interested in: the fact that sometimes being ahead of myself can preclude being where I am. In this limited sense, the animal has the advantage; it always is where it is.

In projecting ahead of myself, I do not just wander endlessly into infinity, but come back to my already-being, my having-been or, as Heidegger calls it, my "thrownness." I am always already "in" something. What am I in? I am in a *world*. Thus, when the ahead-of- itself comes back to having-been, the present, being-in-the-world is engendered.

> Future, having-been and present show the phenomenal characteristics of 'toward-itself,' 'back-to,' 'letting something be encountered.' The phenomena of toward. . . , to. . . , together with. . . reveal temporality as the *ekstatikon par excellence. Temporality is the primordial 'outside of itself' in and for itself.* Thus we call the phenomena of future, having-been and present, the *ecstases* of temporality. Temporality is not, prior to this, a being that first emerges from *itself*; its essence is temporalizing in the unity of the *ecstases*.[17]

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

[17] *Ibid.*, Section 65.

Far from being locked up within "the cabinet of consciousness,"[18] we are always already outside ourselves, outside in the world disclosed to us. This is the meaning of being there, of existence.

> When we talk in an ontically figurative way about the *lumen naturale* in man, we mean nothing other than the existential-ontological structure of this being, the fact that it *is* in the mode of being its there. To say that it is 'illuminated' means that it is opened up (a) in itself *as* being-in-the-world, not by another being, but in such a way that it *is* itself the opening.(b) Only for a being thus opened up existentially do objectively present things become accessible or concealed in darkness. By its very nature, *Da-sein* brings its there along with it. If it lacks its there, it is not only factically not a being of this nature, but not at all. *Da-sein is its disclosure.*(c)[19]

The letters in this passage refer to the marginal notes Heidegger made in his own copy of *Being and Time*. There are not many of these notes throughout the book, and three of them are bunched up on this passage. The notes read:

a. After "opened up": *Aletheia*--openness--opening, light, shining.

b. After "the opening": but not produced.

c. After "disclosure": *Da-sein* exists, and it alone. Thus existence is standing out and perduring the openness of the there: Ek-sistence.

These notes are, of course, written from Heidegger's later stance, a stance that emerged from *Being and Time* and is unthinkable without it. The language of *Being and Time* points unmistakeably ahead to the later development of the clearing, opening, *Lichtung*.

> The ecstatic unity of temporality--i.e., the unity of the 'outside-itself' in the raptures of future, having-been and present--is the condition of the possibility that there can be a being that exists as its 'There.' The being that bears the name *Da-sein* is 'opened.' . . . *Ecstatic temporality opens the There primordially.*[20]

This is Heidegger's description of authentic temporality that can enable us to grasp human being *as a whole. Being and Time* is replete with descriptions of how inauthentic temporality flattens down the ecstatic and

[18] Cf. *Being and Time*, Section 13.

[19] *Ibid.*, Section 28

[20] Cf., *ibid.*, Section 69.

horizonal character of time, temporalizing itself in a series of dimensionless, static now-points. Since he felt that this was not only the common understanding of time, but also the predominant *philosophical* understanding, Heidegger seemed particularly concerned with showing its inadequacy to grasp the phenomena of wholeness and totality. The fundamental inadequacy of inauthentic temporality lies in the fact that it temporalizes itself as within-time-ness. One of Heidegger's most basic insights in *Being and Time* is that we are not *in* time; we *are* time, we *are* temporalizing and temporality. And, paradoxically, it is the very finitude of our awareness, the fact that the ecstatic future simultaneously encounters the ecstatic past and engenders the ecstatic present, which makes wholeness and totality possible.

In conclusion, existential time for both Kierkegaard and Heidegger means the time specifically belonging to human beings as opposed to clock time or the time measured by the physicist. However, their conceptions of what or who the human being, human existence and thus also existential time are, differ. Oriented in opposition to Hegel's system, Kierkegaard's conception of human existence stresses its unfinished quality, the fact that we can never do anything once and for all. As long as I am alive, there is nothing settled or finished about my existence. Kierkegaard never tires of Hegel's failure to realize this and constantly pokes fun at him, asking if perhaps the System will be completed by next Sunday morning at ten A.M. Kierkegaard's conception of human existence represents the best of what is compelling about so-called "existentialism."

In contrast, Heidegger's conception of *Da-sein* is outside the parameters of "existentialism" as defined by Sartre. Heidegger might well agree with Kierkegaard's emphasis on the unfinished quality of human existence, but his whole focus is on what he calls "being." Human existence is the "there," the openness for being, the "place" for it to show itself. Accordingly, time cannot be viewed from an exclusively psychological perspective of any sort whatsoever, but must be seen as a function of the unconcealing or truth of being. Thus, Kierkegaard's conception of existential time remains psychological in the best sense of that word, whereas Heidegger's conception claims from the outset to be ontologically oriented.

Part III

Comparison with Aspects of Eastern Thinking

Chapter 5

Time-Being East and West

Zen Buddhism and Martin Heidegger

I should like to attempt a comparison of the views on time and existence or being found in Martin Heidegger and Zen Buddhism, focusing on Heidegger whom I know better. Ever since the 19th Century, Western philosophy and literature has come more and more to consider whatever we mean by existence as a *process*, as something permeated by dynamic, nonstatic movement. Examples of the figures who illustrate process philosophy and, if I may coin a term, process literature, would be, aside from Heidegger: Whitehead, Bergson, Sartre, Proust, Joyce. What I would like to discuss here is the fundamental question of *why* this emphasis on time and process comes about and why time comes to be linked so intimately with existence, more specifically in Western thought, *human* existence. In order to sort out these difficult questions of time, being, existence and human existence, let us begin with the most difficult one: *time*.

Time is a word which everybody is familiar with and perhaps no one really understands, not even--or perhaps especially not--the philosophers who have wrestled with it for 2,000 years. First of all, when we speak of time, if we do at all, we usually mean what Heidegger calls "clock time," keeping track of time in order, for instance, to get to an appointment "on time." Here we can see that the word time creeps into our language without our even being aware of it, for what do we really mean when we say to be "on time." To be punctual, to arrive somewhere at a certain numbered "point in time." But with the phrase "in time" we are already getting at the heart of the question of time. Leaving aside the valid, but

derivative, question of calculating time with a clock or watch, we are aware, if only vaguely, that everything is somehow *in time*. Stones are in time; plants and animals are in time. And man is in time. Everything is in time, but not in exactly the same way. Stones are in time in a minimal way. Plants, on the other hand, participate more fully in time in that they grow, bloom and fade away. The animal participates still more fully in time in that it sleeps, it wakes, and has a certain dynamic life pattern. What about man? Man is the most time-related being of all, especially in the Western tradition beginning with Aristotle, who states that time is measured by the "numbering soul," i.e. man.

These are very general preliminary remarks. Let us turn now to the topic thinker of this discussion--Martin Heidegger. In doing so, we shall implicitly relate him to Buddhism as we go along and finally point out the differences between Heidegger and Buddhism.

Heidegger is perhaps the first Western thinker to place finitude at the very core of man's being. Of course, man's finitude has always been acknowledged in Western thinking; but that finitude was couched within the framework of some ontological security, either the ultimate immortality of the soul (Plato) or some promise of everlasting life (Christianity). One could call the finitude which Heidegger speaks of a *radical* finitude; i.e. a *root* finitude, unmitigated or alleviated by a guarantee of ontological security. And when Heidegger speaks of finitude, he means *human* finitude, just as when he speaks of existence, he means *human* existence. In Heidegger's terminology, the beings which we mentioned before--stones, plants and animals--*are* (in time), but they do not *exist*. To exist means literally to stand outside of oneself; and that means, in simple English, to be conscious--of the world, of one's self and, ultimately, of the supreme significance of one's own death. Man is the only being who *knows* that he will die. Whatever obvious negative implications follow from this, Heidegger does *not* simply mean: man knows that he has a limited life span, that his death is certain, and that the time of his death is absolutely uncertain. Heidegger's emphasis on finitude and death is that it makes it possible for the human being to realize his own true possibilities. By way of interpretation, I would say that the time structures constituting man's anticipation and espousement of death make his very unique *consciousness*

possible. To explain this, I must attempt to elucidate Heidegger's understanding of time, and I shall forcibly limit myself to that. Otherwise, we shall get lost in the specific scope of this discussion.

For Heidegger, clock time, with which we are all familiar and without which we could not function in everyday life, is derivative of the time structures of human consciousness. Two things must be mentioned at this point. One, I am deliberately putting Heidegger into a more conventional language, rather foreign to him, at the risk of flattening him down, but with the hope of making him comprehensible. And, two, we must bear in mind that with the term human consciousness, nothing subjective nor even *familiar* to us is meant. It is perhaps one of the most fundamental and significant insights of *all* of Heidegger's thinking, early and late, that we *do not know what or who man is*. This simply cannot be emphasized strongly enough.

To return to the time structures of "human" consciousness. Consciousness is, after all, an uncanny thing. The only reason that we seldom realize this is that we take it for granted. We are so oriented toward the world of everyday business that we hardly reflect on how it is that we are *aware* of anything. This Heidegger attempts to explain. How is it that man has a certain open dimension which makes him able to anticipate next week, to remember his childhood, suddenly to be aware that he *is there* in the present? A dog cannot make a luncheon date for next Thursday. Nor can he wonder why he is doing something. The animal has a relationship to its world which is strange and unintelligible to us. This becomes evident when we observe his *expression*. The animal *is*, in some way, its world; it is not *in* its world in the way that man is since it has no possibility of distancing itself from that world.

What about man? According to Heidegger, man is future-oriented; he anticipates and thinks about what is to come, about his real possibilities for the sake of which he exists. His consciousness stretches forward into the future, and that future comes to meet him, so to speak. In doing so, he is brought back to his past, the ground upon which he stands, and when future returns to past, the present is engendered. Thus, a certain dimensionality and openness is constituted which makes his consciousness possible. If he could not anticipate his true possibilities and the most

extreme possibility of his life, his death, his consciousness would, so to speak, stretch forward into a limitless nothingness, never to return to the past and, thus, never to experience the full present. It is the extreme limit and possibility of death which makes a closed structure with the openness of awareness possible. All of this is too brief and inadequate to be really clear, and we can perhaps return to it in discussion.

What I would like to point out here by way of anticipation of a *difference* between Heidegger and Buddhism is precisely the quality of making *possible*. Time, these time structures, makes consciousness possible. Here, Heidegger is still basically within the Kantian framework: the condition of the possibility of consciousness or knowledge; more simply, the question: How can I know something? As far as I can see, this is quite foreign to Buddhism. Buddhism does not share this primary concern of Western philosophy which asks the question: How is that I can *know* something? One might say that the kind of "knowledge" which Buddhism is interested in has to do, not with finding out facts and conditions of knowing those facts, but with a *realization* of something which is already there. Only something already there can be *realized*. I suppose the joke of Emerson belongs here, who, when he bumped into a tree (almost as bad as the proverbial Thales falling down the well because he was too busy looking at the heavens), said: "I saw the tree, but I didn't realize it."

To return to our remarks on Heidegger, we still have to say something about existence and its relation to time and then turn to Buddhism. As we said before, existence for Heidegger is uniquely *human* existence. To ek-sist is literally to stand out, to be outside one's self. The word "ecstatic" has the same basic meaning as the world for existence; to be outside of oneself, provided that we keep the popular, rather silly, connotation of that word, ecstatic, at a distance. To put it in somewhat oversimplified, non-Heideggerian language, *consciousness* is a being outside of oneself, outside in the "world"--not the measurable, objective world of science or physics, but closer to the usage of the world which we mean when we say that someone lives in his own "world." To ek-sist is to be aware of self and world, of self-in-the-world. Only the human being has this kind of awareness. One of Heidegger's examples for this is that a desk can never

touch a wall. The desk might be physically smack up against the wall, but it can never touch that wall in the way a person can touch it.

To conclude on Heidegger, only the human being has awareness, exists in time, spinning, so to speak, the stuff and form of consciousness in and as time, timing.

Now, what about existence and time in Buddhism? Since to speak about Buddhism in general makes about as much sense as to speak about Western philosophy in general--far to vast a subject--I shall limit myself to speaking and, above all, *asking* about Dogen. Dogen lived in the 13th Century, at a time when scholasticism was in its prime in the west. Dogen speaks of existence-time, and one might well be tempted to compare him with the title of Heidegger's classic, major work: *Being and Time*. Undoubtedly, there is a relation. But far from inquiring into the relation of existence or being (I am using these terms synonymously here) to the question of how we know, Dogen focuses totally on the relation of existence-time to practice-enlightenment. And to fuss a bit, there is no "and" for Dogen between existence and time; there is a hyphen. I might add that, at least for me, Dogen is so difficult that Heidegger sometimes looks like mere ontological child's play in comparison. But this, undoubtedly, has to do with my greater familiarity with Heidegger.

Dogen shares with Heidegger the emphasis on the radical finitude of man, a finitude unshielded by a creator God or a realm of guaranteed personal immortality. Together with this emphasis on finitude and, of course, ultimately bound up with it, Dogen stresses, as does Heidegger, the impermanence of existence. Existence is shot through with impermanence, change, and the untenability of everything. Here, Dogen is even more radical than Heidegger, especially the later Heidegger. These two things the thinkers share. Then, however, there are at least two basic differences between them. Although Buddhism regards man as a privileged being--it is very difficult and rare to be born a human being and it is precisely the human being who alone has the opportunity to gain enlightenment--still Buddhism does not have the Western conception of man as the rational animal, the animal with a kind of second floor reason superimposed on his animality. Thus, for Buddhism, existence is not sheerly *human* existence and time is not limited to a constitutive function of human consciousness.

All sentient beings are finitely existent and *everything* is time, although even Buddhism would probably be able to say that man has a distinctive relation to time without having an exclusive claim upon it.

The second distinction between Heidegger and Dogen is more technical, and has to do with their understanding of time as such. However innovative Heidegger's analysis of time may be--and I believe that it is innovative--he shares with the whole Western Christian and secularized Christian tradition (for example, Karl Marx) the emphasis on the *future* as the meaning of history. Man, and humanity in general, is profoundly directed toward the future. Reality does not lie in the past as it did for Plato, for whom what is real has nothing to do with time and is to be known by recollection, remembering a vision of absolute justice or absolute good. Rather, for the post-Greek Western tradition, reality lies in the future. Something is to be attained in the future through the process of history, whether it be the overcoming of sin and evil through redemption and the last judgment, or whether it be the attainment of a classless society through the abolishment of class distinction. Whereas Heidegger would accept neither of these two goals of history or, for that matter, any of the other traditional Western goals, there is still a very definite eschatology in his philosophy of Being, particularly in the later works. Heidegger envisions a possible *rapprochement* or belonging together of man and Being if we do not get completely stuck in the essence of modern technology.

And Dogen? The crucial mode of time for Dogen is the *present*. Not just any present "now" of ordinary clock time, but what he calls the "absolute present." This needs to be clarified. Insofar as we understand it at all, most of us--particularly anyone familiar with medieval philosophy--will be inclined to picture an absolute present as something lifted out of time, as a *nunc stans* or a standing now which is timeless. Here the word "absolute" has to mean ab-solved or detached from time, outside of time, "eternal" in the sense of what is everlasting.

A few quotes from Dogen will show that he cannot mean this at all. The word "absolute," and thus the phrase absolute present, and the meaning of the word "present" in general, must be something quite different. In the light of what I understand of Dogen's emphasis on

practice (sitting) and the inseparability of practice and absolute present, it would seem to me that the absolute present would be a dimension of transient time itself, *not* a moment lifted out of it, and that this absolute present would be primarily realized in human action. This would fit in with Dogen's de-emphasis on enlightenment as a single, momentary final experience and his emphasis on practice and sustained exertion right at this moment.

> Man will find the proof of eternity by throwing himself into this present and that present and by living up his whole existence in this present.
>
> When time is not thought of as coming and going, this moment is absolute time for me . . . it appears to be passing, but it is now . . . Do not regard time as merely flying away, do not think that flying away is its sole function. For time to fly away there would have to be a separation (between it and things). Because you imagine that time only passes, you do not learn the truth of being-time. In a word, every being in the entire world is a separate time in one continuum. And since being is time, I am my being-time. Time has the quality of passing, so to speak, from today to tomorrow, from today to yesterday, from yesterday to today, from today to today, from tomorrow to tomorrow. Because this passing is a characteristic of time, present time and past time do not overlap or impinge upon one another. . . since you and I are time, practice--enlightenment is time.[1]

The apparent contradictions for our conceptual minds in these passages are enormous. But, beginning with Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, and even in a different way, Hegel, philosophy is beginning no longer to find contradiction so objectionable. For Kierkegaard, for instance, the truth of Christianity is an absolute paradox incomprehensible to reason; namely, that God became man, that eternity entered time. Thus, we must not lose patience or throw up our precious arms in indignant despair if Dogen does not conform to the expectations of our comfortably rational minds.

What is Dogen saying? He is saying that the flying away and passing by of time is not so central as we are prone to take it. This very preoccupation with the flying away of time is precisely what prevents us from understanding the truth, the *meaning* of being-time. If I *am* time, time cannot just fly away from me. It is the abstracting and separation of myself from time which blinds me to my identity with it. What could I be if I am not in time? Where could anything exist if it were not (in) time?

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[1] Cited in *The Three Pillars of Zen*, ed. by Philip Kapleau, Boston: 1968.

The other point that Dogen seems to be really making in these passages quoted supports the former point, although on the surface it seems to contradict it. Having said that we are too preoccupied with the flying away of time, Dogen turns around and states that time has the quality of passing, so to speak, from today to tomorrow, from today to yesterday, from yesterday to today, from today to today, from tomorrow to tomorrow. Yes, time moves; but it moves in no way intelligible to our conceptual understanding of it. From today to today? What kind of flying away is this? What is important about the movement of time here is not its flying away, its robbing us of our possessions, desires and experiences; but, rather, its quality of non-obstruction and non-hindrance. It allows things to be without getting in the way of each other.

Whereas the Western standing now is lifted out of time and is, therefore, timeless, excluding past and future, Dogen's absolute present includes all time--past, present and future--in the sense that there is *nothing outside of it*. If something is not now, when is it? Dogen's absolute present is not only presence, but complete fullness. In contrast to the timeless standing now which negates time and is unable to relate to time, Dogen's absolute present is, so to speak, the sheer occurrence of time itself. This is what I take to be the meaning of Dogen's rejection of abrupt, final enlightenment. There is no absolute present of *satori* which settles everything once and for all because such a once and for all, such a finality, is not possible in finite existence. If enlightenment is in the middle of birth and death, we cannot just take ourselves straight out of existence and bask complacently in that enlightenment. After the moment of enlightenment comes another moment, and again and again other moments. The sustained exertion in practice of which Dogen speaks would mean the realization of the incessant, non-obstructing occurrence of time and the impossibility of some final moment which we can cling to as a much-cherished, idolized moment. It seems to me that Dogen is not really so much saying that enlightenment is gradual; but that, ultimately, there is nothing to be *attained*, but everything to be *realized*, in actual practice.

A Western thinker perhaps closer to Buddhism than even Heidegger would be Meister Eckhart. Eckhart states that "The *nunc* (now, eternity) is a taste of time, is a tip of time, and an end of time." This is a truly

non-conceptual description of time and eternity. You cannot *taste* clock time. Clock time can only be calculated and reckoned with, but not tasted.

What Eckhart is saying, what Heidegger is saying, and in the most radical way, what Dogen is saying about time, is that we should not conceptualize it as something separate from ourselves or anything else and that we should not chop it up into the disparate images of the past, present and future. In doing so--and we all do it--we cut ourselves off from what we are and fall prey to a dread of something that does not exist in this manner. What have not our poets, Shakespeare, Goethe, etc., written about the ravages of time. This is, again, a preoccupation with the flying away of time as if it were something separate from us, a preoccupation which shuts us off from any possible experience of Dogen's absolute present. If we fear to lose existence to the flying away and ravages of time, and if we cling to an idea of existence apart from time, how can we ever realize the identity of our existence with time? We should perhaps learn to experience the absence of the "and" of *Being and Time* and perhaps even of the hyphen between existence-time.

Chapter 6

Time, Finitude, and Finality

In this chapter I should like to compare briefly some Eastern and Western ideas on the problem of time and its relation to finitude and finality. The relation of time to finitude appears to be fairly self-evident, since time has been called the principle of finitude, the mythical Chronos who devours his own children. The relation of time to finality, on the other hand, appears at first to be less evident.

What I wish to attempt in these remarks is not exactly a comparison of theories of time in East and West--I am not qualified to do that--but to see how the West has related time to the question of finitude, and how the East has ultimately related time to the question of finality.

It has almost become a hallowed tradition when one speaks on the problem of time to quote Augustine who stated that if you did not ask him what time was, he knew; but if you did ask him, he no longer knew. I should like to proceed further to quote Immanuel Kant, who stated that time was so very difficult a problem because it "yields no shape." It was Kant who truly grasped the absolutely intangible nature of time, the impossibility of externalizing, objectifying, or representing it in any way. Even our everyday language and experience where we constantly refer to "time" hardly has any image capable of adumbrating time. The watch or clock is solely an instrument for *measuring* time; it is, by no means, an image for it.

At the same time, it was also Kant who first understood the intimate relation between time as the form of inner sensibility, and consciousness or the self.

By the phrase, "form of inner sensibility," Kant meant that not only must all of our outer, objective experience be in space, but all of our inner experience, which includes the outer as well, must take place in the stream of successive moments in time. The link between time as the inner

form of all thoughts, feelings, and experience, and the person having these experiences was so close that Kant believed that time and the self were somehow inseparable without being identical. Thus Kant saw that time was the intangible core of existence itself. He was a major link on the way from thinking time as the framework in which things occur toward thinking of time as this occurrence itself. Before Kant there was a tacit philosophical assumption that things were somehow "in" time in a way parallel to the way they were "in" space. The nature of this temporal "in" was left unclarified, even unquestioned. Kant still thinks of time as a *form*, the form of inner sensibility, but he linked it so closely to the "I think," which must be able to "accompany" consciousness, that the word *form* could no longer be understood as an external framework.

Kant's line of questioning was "transcendental"; that is, he was interested in the problem of time with regard to the way it made inner experience--and thus, ultimately, all experience in general--possible. His sole concern with time lay precisely in this analysis of the manner in which the spontaneous flow of "time" miraculously ever springing-up in our consciousness "created," so to speak, the occurrence of our consciousness. Kant links time indissolubly with the self, but he did not link it to the *finitude* of the *individual* self. The self for Kant is the self in general, the self as the transcendental, and that means, of necessity, the universal subject of knowing.

It took Western philosophy hundreds of years to cease thinking about time as an objective framework of nature, although it never thought of time without a relationship to some kind of "numbering soul" (Aristotle), and to discover the intimate relation of time to the self. The German Idealists continued to further Kant's insight, but retained his fundamental conception of a universal, not an individual, self; and, of time as transcendental time, what makes experience possible.

It was Martin Heidegger who first and most decisively related time to the individual "self," thus bringing it into a radical relation to finitude, which now brings me to the substance of this chapter. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger accomplished at least three things with regard to the problem of time, which seem to me to be new. First of all, in relating time to the finite, existing individual (*Dasein*), he stresses the irreversibility and

directedness of time in *Dasein*'s being-toward-death, thus grasping the true nature of the finitude of time, which lies not in the limited amount of time allotted to the individual, but in this very irreversibility and directedness itself. Thus, finitude loses its former sheerly quantitative meaning of "not *enough* time," a kind of pre-philosophical meaning which "went along" with the philosophical idea of things being "in time" without ever really being integrated with it. The fact that something is in time is incapable of explaining why it should be finite, why it should ever cease to be in time. Finitude acquires the more profound meaning of the realization of the inherently indissoluble relation of life and death. Life and death are inseparable from each other. For man, life includes suffering primarily because an awareness of death is present in it, and man is aware of death because it is present in life. Death is not a medically definable event terminating physical existence. It is, rather, an awareness permeating and transforming life, not in the sense of some morbid preoccupation with dying, but in the sense of radically individualizing and authenticating us. In Buddhist terms, it makes us aware of the problem, the *task* implicit in the solution of life and death. The concept of "endless life" is a thoughtless, shallow one, which precludes any true understanding of the nature of life and death.

Secondly, Heidegger removes time from its transcendental context of the knowing subject in general, and relates it to the individual. Strictly speaking, Heidegger talks neither of the universal nor the individual, but always of what is "in each case mine" (*Jemeinigkeit*). Heidegger's *Dasein*, human being, is neither an individual nor a subject in the traditional sense of these words. It eludes the dichotomy of individual-universal, partly through emphasizing the radical relation of man to time. Man is the time-producing, the temporalizing being. Finally, Heidegger not only dispenses with the traditional understanding of time as "in time," he even tries to explain what this "in," what any possible "being in," means. "Being in" means for Heidegger the way in which the human being exists as his "there" and constitutes it through understanding of himself-in-the- world together with a certain attunement of himself-in-the-world. Contemporary slang expresses this idea of being attuned to or in tune with the world

quite well by speaking of "wavelengths" which people are on and the "vibrations" which they give off.

Heidegger is perhaps the first major Western philosopher to place human finitude at the core of his philosophy, human finitude unmitigated by a doctrine of the soul's immortality (Plato) or of some form of afterlife. He is also the first to say, roughly speaking, that man *is* time. Time is not something in which man finds himself. His very manner of being is being *in*, so to speak, temporalizing and timing, not in the sense of clocking, but of engendering time, spinning out the temporal stuff of consciousness.

To turn now to what I understand of Eastern conceptions of time, I should like to relate the Buddhist ideas of existence-time (*uji*) and instantaneous being (*ksanikatva*) to the questions of being "in time" and finitude discussed earlier, and then inquire into the relation of time and finality. This attempt will, of necessity, have to be rather sketchy, and at times even speculative, since my knowledge of this subject falls far short of my interest in it.

Existence-time and instantaneous being are historically and geographically rather far apart, the first being a Japanese conception and the second an Indian Buddhist one. But since the doctrine of instantaneous being is one of the few ideas common to *all* forms of Buddhism, Hinayana and Mahayana alike, it must be at least commensurate with, if not indigenous to, the later idea of existence- time.

How, then, does Buddhism relate existence to time, and what is its fundamental *question* with regard to time? Whereas the concept of time prevalent in Western thinking is almost exclusively oriented toward continuity and duration, the doctrine of instantaneous being emphasizes the radical discontinuity and absolute lack of duration in time. By relating the question of time not to the stretching out, to the extension and extent of continuity, but rather to perishing and arising, to actual occurrence itself, Buddhism attempts to explain how anything at all is able to happen, take place, and change. It seems to me that the arguments "proving" the doctrine of instantaneous being have at least in part the function of explaining occurrence. In other words, these proofs are not only reminding us in a doctrinaire fashion of the transitory nature of things, but perhaps serve also to explain transition and change itself.

The fundamental tenets of Buddhism--emptiness, dependent origination, etc.--are not primarily theoretical or descriptive, but rather intensely practical; that is, they serve to indicate the *possibility* of a profound change, the transcendence of the cycles of life and death. Indicating this *possibility* would be tantamount to a "how-to" instruction, if such possibility could be objectively communicated, which it cannot. I shall discuss these arguments briefly.

The Buddha taught that all things are transitory, impermanent, perishable, and finite (*anitya*). (I prefer the somewhat awkward term "perishable" to the term "finite" because it expresses a verbal process, whereas finite is apt to be construed as a static spatial limitation, a concept totally incompatible with the Buddhist view.) But by impermanence or perishability, he meant not the limited duration of things which the West links with the idea of finitude; but, rather, precisely the never-finished quality and incessant restlessness of the cycle of birth and death (*samsara*). It is the inability to achieve rest or finality which characterizes the so-called finitude of existence. Finitude or impermanence does not mean ceasing to be, but the impossibility of attaining anything once and for all. This can be formulated as a paradox by stating that finitude consists in a kind of *endlessness*, in the inability to achieve self-containedness.

The doctrine of instantaneous being or instantaneity seems to be a philosophical development and radicalization of the Buddha's general statement that all things are impermanent. All things are impermanent, not only in the sense that they cannot endure forever, things are impermanent in every instant of their existence. They arise and perish each instant at a rate which defies measurement and makes it irrelevant.

I call the doctrine of instantaneous being a *philosophical* development of the general statement about impermanence, because it is hardly the kind of idea that everyday common sense would ever hit upon. It is the most radical formulation of impermanence possible and certainly sounds, at least to Western ears, very strange if not implausible.

To sketch out briefly what I know of the development of the idea of instantaneous being, it is discussed by a Buddhist school called the Sarvastivadins, the "everything exists" school. This school claims that all

three times exist--the past, the present, and the future. All are *real*. The past and future persist in a kind of endless, static duration, whereas the present moment is the brief flash of appearance emerging from the totality of persisting time. It did not take long until a later school, the Sautrantikas, denied the reality of such a static, persisting past and future, asserting that nothing exists except the instantaneously recurring present. *All* being is instantaneous. Two different proofs for instantaneous being are discussed: (1) in terms of perishing, and (2) in terms of "being" or existence.

(1) *The argument in terms of perishing.* In accordance with the Buddhist principle that nonbeing cannot be the effect of a cause, perishing, which is after all a form of nonbeing, cannot have an external cause. Otherwise, perishing, nonbeing, would be the effect of a cause, and this is impossible. Yet we know, empirically and otherwise, that perishing is a reality. Therefore, all things must have perishing as their very nature. Everything that exists perishes of itself immediately with no delay in every instant. If it persisted at all even for a moment, it could never leave this state, could never change or perish. All being is instantaneous being.

(2) *The argument in terms of "being" or existence.* Whatever exists is instantaneous. "To be" means to be capable of meaningful action or producing an effect (*arthakriya*). Only something which is instantaneous can produce an effect. Anything else that is not instantaneous is either always existent and thus incapable of action because the initiation of action would require a change, so to speak, a break in existence, or else never existent and thus even less capable of action. Following the definition of being or existence as capability for action, whatever *is*, must be instantaneous. This particular argument may have in the background the two extremes which the Middle Way strives to avoid: the extremes of always existing, eternality (*sasvata*); and of never existing, nihilism (*uccheda*). Neither of these two extreme states is capable of anything. When the implications of this are thought through strictly to the end, it is only instantaneous being which can allow for anything to happen at all.

Whereas the first argument states that whatever is instantaneous must perish of itself immediately, the second argument states that whatever is instantaneous is what truly exists, is capable of bringing about an effect.

If one collates these two statements, one gets the highly remarkable principle that the meaning of existence or being is perishing. This position is the radical direct opposite of the Western tradition, beginning with Plato, which separates never-changing, eternal Being from the realm of change and becoming. Thus, it would seem that the doctrine of instantaneous being provides the philosophical foundation for the later idea of existence-time (*uji*). Existence *is* time, it does not take place *in* time. To exist means to be one's time, if I may use the verb "to be" in a transitive sense similar to Sartre's use of "exist," when he says, "I exist my body." To quote Dogen: "Do not regard time as merely flying away; do not think that flying away is its sole function. For time to fly away there would have to be a separation (between it and things). Because you imagine that time only passes, you do not learn the truth of being-time."

To return to the question asked earlier: what is the fundamental question with regard to time for Buddhism? It seems that this question has little to do with time as a principle of finitude, finitude understood as limited time, as not enough time. It even seems that the question of time that I am trying to elucidate is not primarily bound up with the endlessness of continuous, recurring cycles from which the individual wishes to escape, as is the case with early Buddhism and with Indian thought in general. In keeping with the de-emphasis of any kind of continuity--be it the substantial continuity of the soul which is replaced by a self constituted by groups of impersonal psychophysical components (*skandhas*), or be it the idea of any substance whatever which is replaced by "causality," by the theory of dependent origination--time, too, is thought as something discontinuous and disparate. The question about time *shifts* from that of how to escape the continuous, recurring cycles of birth and death in which we are caught, to the question of how something significant can *occur*. As long as we are caught in the cycles of birth and death, nothing of any lasting significance can happen which is not superseded and swallowed up by the overwhelming flux of events constantly assaulting us and, so to speak, *undoing* the reality we thought we had attained. We are trapped in the endlessness of *samsara* where no finality is possible. When, however, time is thought and experienced as discontinuous and instantaneous, it

gains a "vertical" dimension which is lacking in the horizontally conceived cycles of recurrence.

This brings me by way of conclusion to the third topic of these remarks, the topic of finality. Buddhism does not have a "positive" concept of eternity comparable to that developed in the West. Whereas the West opposes a concept of eternity to the finitude of time, Buddhism--especially early Buddhism--"opposes" *nirvana* to the endlessness of samsaric time. Western thinking developed at least four concepts of eternity: endless time; timelessness; the simultaneity of past, present, and future; and the *nunc stans* or eternal present. These concepts are interrelated. Most of them seek a prolongation of the durational time or at least some form of continuance. Buddhism, however, seeks a finality, whether the finality of nirvana, the cessation of endlessness of finitude, or *satori*, the awakening of insight which nothing can ever take away or jeopardize. *Satori* is "absolute" in that nothing can remove it. It is final in the sense that nothing coming after it can have a negative effect on it. Most of our life experiences fade away with time and ever newly arising experiences. Some of our more intense life-moments resist this tendency toward the loss of vivid immediacy. The finality of *satori* consists partly in that it is not an experience in any ordinary sense of that word and, thus, does not conflict with or give way to succeeding experiences. On the contrary, the finality of *satori* seems to vault right out of and back to everyday experience so that Mahayana Buddhism can say that there is not a hair's breadth difference between *samsara* and *nirvana*.

To conclude, Western thinkers came to center upon time as transcendental, as what makes experience in general possible. Alongside of the inquiry into time, the whole of the tradition, insofar as it inquired into the meaning of eternity at all, thought eternity as something outside of and apart from time, negating or overcoming the finite character of time. Buddhism, in spite of some elements seemingly akin to Kant, was never interested in the transcendental problematic, but rather in the possibility of a *transcendence* of endlessness--a transcendence which, if it were to occur at all, had to occur within time itself, more explicitly, had ur as time itself and the possibility of transforming the quality of t. here and now.

Part IV

God

Chapter 7

Heidegger on Schelling on Human Freedom

Of the three great German Idealists, Fichte, Hegel and Schelling, Schelling is surely the least known in this country simply because very little of his work has been translated into English. The book that Heidegger wrote on, *The Treatise on Human Freedom*, is again available in translation at the Open Court Press. There is an old translation of *The Ages of the World* to be found only in libraries and there is now a translation of *The System of Transcendental Idealism*. That, to my knowledge, is all.

Hegel is known for his rich treatment of history, Fichte for his theory of a moral world order. What does Schelling have to contribute to philosophy that is important and unique? Schelling deals with at least two important themes that have either been sorely neglected or else neatly fitted into a rationalist schema by the philosophical tradition. Those two themes are nature and evil. After the Greeks, the philosophical tradition as a whole has shown little or not interest in nature. Nature was regarded as the handiwork of God or, with Descartes, was relegated to the domain of *res extensa*, of extended things. There are, of course, Jakob Boehme and, in a way, Spinoza who spoke of God *or* nature. For Hegel, nature was just raw, brute material that did not yet bear the stamp of Spirit.

In our treatise, Schelling's interest in nature takes the form of inquiring into the "system," that is, the necessary lawfulness connecting the world. Heidegger calls this inquiry into the system the questions of beings as a whole. For Schelling, the supreme question then becomes that of the relation between necessity and freedom. Heidegger states:

> Philosophy is intrinsically *a strife between necessity and freedom*. . . . Schelling wants to say we are not philosophizing "*about* necessity and freedom, but philosophy is the

most alive "*And*," the unifying strife between necessity and freedom. He does not just 'say it,' he *enacts* this in the treatise.[1]

What does this mean? Philosophy is the "*and*," the unifying strife between necessity and freedom. We now have the topics before us that we wish to discuss in this paper: necessity, freedom, pantheism and evil.

We begin with the relation of necessity and freedom, by far the most crucial issue in Heidegger's book on Schelling and, for Schelling, *the* philosophical question *par excellence*. This issue is still very familiar to us today, often in a non-theological context, as the problem of free will and determinism. These two factors, free will and determinism, are conceived as mutually exclusive alternatives: *either* we have free will *or* we are determined. The either-or here is, in Latin, an *aut-aut*, either this or else that, but not both; not a *vel-vel*, could be this or that, or anything. These could be called a strong either-or and a weak either-or. An example of a strong either-or might be the ultimatum to a child: either you eat your supper or you go to bed. An example of a weak either-or would be: On Saturday afternoon I could take a walk or I could go to the movies.

Many of our contemporaries, philosophers and otherwise, seem to feel that we are pretty much determined. By what? Not necessarily by the will of God, which is the issue for Schelling, but by circumstances, heredity, environment. My parental background and my social milieu are going to set the limits of what I can do and what I can become. My heredity determines whether I have an aptitude for science and mathematics, for languages, for the arts or for none of the above. The genes are inexorable. Psychologists have put these two factors, heredity and environment, on the balancing scales and shifted more weight sometimes to the environment, sometimes to heredity. They have placed identical twins in different environments and different babies in the same environment. When the question is asked in this manner, the results must be inconclusive because there is no alternative dimension. Of course, heredity and environment are factors in human lives, but neither one of them alone nor even both of them together in some inscrutable way is going to "explain" the entire human being. Nietzsche pointed to an alternative dimension when he said

[1] *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985), p. 58.

something like "You have told me what you are free *from*; now show me what you are free *for*. Show me your *right* to be free."

Free will versus determinism is a popular formulation of the problem of freedom that cannot get anywhere because it assumes a certain conception of freedom that is trivial. This conception believes that to be free means that you can do anything you want. But Schelling is writing about the *essence* of *human* freedom, to which he contrasts, not determinism, but necessity. We are not gods who can do anything they please nor are we the rats in Skinner's box. Schelling inquires into the essence of human freedom, and in so doing he also inquires into the nature of will. He does not assume the nature of either freedom or will, but attempts to see what they are. We may recall that Spinoza, who exerted a powerful influence on Schelling and on German Idealism in general, had stated that the opposite of being free is being compelled from without and that freedom and necessity are the same.

What, for Schelling, constitutes a limit to or possible denial of human freedom? Schelling operates within a Christian theological context, although perhaps less orthodoxically so than Hegel. Like all German Idealists, he conceived the world as a *system*, as a kind of unified organism. Thus he is talking about the world *as a whole* and not just about isolated parts of it. Talking about the world as a whole in a systematic theological context tends to bring the thinker to the "undesirable" position of pantheism or fatalism. Schelling, and with him Heidegger, devotes a long discussion to this position of pantheism, which seems to have been condemned by just about everyone. Pantheism has become a pejorative term. What is pantheism?

Pantheism means that all things are God or are in God. To say that all things are God does amount to a rigid fatalism that is idolatrous toward the things of the world. Schelling follows the second formulation that all things are *in* God. This was already upheld by Spinoza who is repeatedly mislabelled a "pantheist." Schelling states the problem of human freedom in relation to pantheism very clearly.

> Most people, if they were honest, would have to admit that in terms of their ideas, individual freedom seems to be in contradiction to almost all attributes of a Highest being; omnipotence, for instance.[2]

If God has all the power, there would appear to be no room for individual human beings to have any power. Divine omnipotence and human freedom are incompatible. But Schelling, and with him Heidegger, is trying to show that pantheism, correctly understood, precisely demands human freedom, albeit a finite freedom.

Strangely enough, Heidegger makes no explicit distinction between the statements "all things are God" and "all things are in God." He begins with the formulation "all things are in God" and, when he wishes to discuss it in detail, moves to the formulation "all things are God." We shall not worry about this too much since in his discussion of pantheism he pretty well covers all possible interpretations. He gives us three possible meanings of the statement "all things are God."

1) everything is God

2) every individual thing is God

3) all things are nothing.

We shall briefly discuss these three meanings and then move on to the question of the possibility of evil.

None of these three interpretations of pantheism will work. In seeing what is the matter with them, we shall be able to gain some insight into what the kind of pantheism is that demands freedom.

1) Everything is God. This view makes God into nothing. It adds up all the things in the world and equates their sum total with God. But even if the number of things were endless, we could never arrive at God by adding them up. Multiplying the finite will never get us to the Infinite (God), but only to the endless finite or what Hegel calls "bad infinity." God is primordial. The primordial constitutes a dimension that cannot be reached by endlessly adding up what is finite and derivative.

2) Every individual thing is God. This view, too, denies God. Heidegger states:

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

> Every body, every thing, is a 'modified God.' In this interpretation of pantheism, it is only a step further to equating it with the grossest fetishism of savages who choose an ostrich feather or a tooth as an object of reverence. In this 'insipid' interpretation of pantheism, one fails to understand that already with the determination of a 'modified,' 'derived' god, the god has been denied, and what is meant by this has been put back in the place of the finite thing.[3]

3) All things are nothing. Heidegger is not as clear on this point as he was on the first two. This interpretation seems to be saying that if all things are nothing and have no share in God, the *pan*, the "all" (things) in pantheism is expunged and the whole term pantheism comes to nothing.

Heidegger chooses another formulation of pantheism as the most fruitful one: God is everything. Why is this one better? What is the difference between saying that everything is God and saying that God is everything? Heidegger does not say too much about what it means to reverse subject and predicate here, but rather concentrates on the "is." This is in keeping with his fundamental question of Being. Also in keeping with his question of Being, Heidegger subtly shifts the formulation from God or the ground of all beings and all beings to that of God and man. It is man who has access to all beings and to God, and who comes to stand for "all things."

We might say that the reason the statement "God is all beings" is more appropriate is that an understanding of the nature of God might lead us to an understanding of the nature of man; but taking man as the point of departure is likely to lead to an "anthropological" conception of God. God is the more appropriate "subject" of the sentence.

Heidegger's interest in the "is" in the statement "God is man" leads him to say that the "is" expresses the identity of God and man. Since for Heidegger identity can never be mere identicalness, a flat equation, it must be understood as the uniting of the belonging together of what is different.

Heidegger now introduces the concept of freedom.

> If God is the ground and if God himself is not a mechanism and a mechanical cause, but rather creative life, then what he has brought about cannot itself be a mere mechanism. If God as the ground reveals *himself* in what is grounded by him, he can

[3] *Ibid*, p. 73.

> only reveal *himself* there. What is dependent must itself be a freely acting being, just because it depends on God.[4]

Heidegger then lists seven concepts of freedom. We shall mention them all, but discuss only the one he takes up, the sixth.

1) Freedom as capability of self-beginning;

2) Freedom as not being bound to anything, freedom *from* (negative freedom).

3) Freedom as binding oneself to, *libertas determinationis* freedom *for* (positive freedom).

4) Freedom as control over the senses (inappropriate freedom).

5) Freedom as self determination in terms of one's own essential law (appropriate freedom), formal concept of freedom. *This includes all of the previous determinations.*[5]

6) Freedom as the capability of good and evil.[6]

7) Freedom as complete indeterminacy, *libertas indifferentiae* (again a negative concept of freedom).[7]

Heidegger pursues the concept of freedom as the capability of good and evil, later pointing out that the other six concepts are not thereby displaced but incorporated to form one single structure of human freedom. The six were merely partial, one-sided aspects of the totality of freedom.

Heidegger stresses emphatically the point that freedom is not to be free for good *or* evil, but for good *and* evil. Good and evil are inseparably connected. As we all know, no one or almost no one is totally good or totally evil; we are all some mix of the two.

We are now dealing with an old philosophical and theological problem: the problem of evil. The seventeenth century rationalist philosophers made short shrift of this problem, asserting either that evil was merely a lack of good or that it contributed to the variety and perfection of the whole. In general, the theologians have argued that God created man in his image

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 88.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

as a free being, hence free not just to choose the good (which would not be free at all), but to choose the evil as well. God is not responsible for evil.

Schelling is more subtle and also takes the problem of evil more seriously than his predecessors. Evil, he says, is grounded in God, but God is not the "cause" of evil. This means that there is something in God that, when transformed, could lead to the possibility of evil. To understand these statements, we need to look at Schelling's analysis of the "structure" of any being whatsoever, be it of God or of the human being.

> Briefly, Schelling says that in every 'being' its existence and the ground of its existence must be distinguished. . . . 'Ground' always means for Schelling foundation, substratum, 'basis,' thus not ground in the sense of *'ratio,'* not with the counterconcept 'consequence' insofar as the *ratio* says why a statement is true or not true. . . . Schelling uses the word existence in a sense which is closer to the literal etymological sense than the usual long prevalent meaning of 'existing' as objective presence. Ex-sistence, *what emerges from itself* and in *emerging reveals itself.* . . . 'Ground' as what forms the substratum, 'existence' as what reveals itself.[8]

Every being that is, including God, has the structure or, as Heidegger calls it, the jointure of ground and existence. Since all primal being is Will, Schelling relates the two principles of ground and existence to the Will and also speaks of them as the particular will or self-will and the universal will. In God ground and existence or particular will and universal will are united by a necessary band; their relation is inalterable.

> God as *the existing one* is the *absolute* God, or God as he himself--in brief: God--*himself.* God considered as the ground of his existence 'is' not yet God truly as he himself. But, still, God 'is' his ground. It is true that the ground is something distinguished from God, but not yet 'outside of' God. The ground in God is that in God which God himself 'is' not truly himself, but is rather his ground *for* his selfhood.[9]

This is Heidegger's version of Schelling's highly innovative rendering of the traditional philosophical definition of God as *causa sui*, as cause of himself. As far as I know, philosophers have merely taken this definition for granted; no one before Schelling ever tried to interpret it and say what

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 107.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

it means. Schelling attempts to convey a sense of God not as a static concept, but as a *life*.

The relation of ground and existence or the particular will and the universal will is different in man. The two are joined not by a necessary band, but by a *free* one. This is the condition of the possibility of evil.

> Because self-will here is a selflike spiritual will, in the unity of human willing it can put itself in the place of the universal will. Being spiritual, self-will can strive to be that which it is merely by remaining in the divine ground also as creature. As separated selfhood it can will to be the ground of the whole. Self-will can elevate itself above everything and only will to determine the unity of the principles in terms of itself.This ability is the faculty of evil.[10]

Man is a unique creature. The self-will of the animal, its craving, merely serves the universal of the species. It never comes to itself, never attains self- or reflective consciousness. Thus animals have no history. But the self-will of man is raised to the light of the understanding. His self-will wants to elevate itself to the position of the universal will and to *be* that will. Thus the jointure of Being is turned into a disjointure by man. The ground elevates itself to existence and puts itself in the place of existence. Schelling likens this process of evil to dis-ease.

> But man is that being who can turn his own essential constituency around, turn the jointure of Being of his existence into a dis-jointure. He stands in the jointure of his Being in such a way that he disposes over this jointure and its joining in a quite definite way. Thus, the dubious advantage is reserved for man of sinking beneath the animal, whereas the animal is not capable of reversing the principles. And it is not able to do this since the striving of the ground never attains the illumination of self-knowledge because in the animal the ground never reaches either the innermost depth of longing or the highest scope of spirit.
>
> Thus the ground of evil lies in the primal will of the first ground which has become revealed. Evil has its ground in the ground independent of God and is nothing other than this ground, this ground as the selflike primal will which has emerged to the separate selfhood of created spirit and stepped into the place of the universal will.[11]

The ground in God, that which God is not but which nevertheless cannot be outside of him, here in man asserts itself over the universal will and commits evil. Evil is finitude elevated to the dominance of self-will.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 144-45.

One could perhaps characterize it as the particular trying to be the universal, as man trying to be God.

This gives the structural possibility of evil, what makes evil possible, what has to be in order for evil to come about. Heidegger's next question is: how does this possibility of evil become actual, become real? How does it come about that man wants to be the Absolute itself? Why does he *want* this?

This question involves the transition from being a faculty to the actual exercise of that faculty. To throw light on what a faculty is, Heidegger gives the example of wood having the possibility of burning up. This possibility of burning up is not a faculty of the wood.

> Burning can only be caused in the wood by something else. Wood has the quality of consumability, but it does not have the faculty of consumption.
>
> In contrast, a faculty is a being able to relate itself to a possibility of itself. . . . Possibility is something which a faculty has at its disposal, not only generally, but as something in which a faculty finds itself when it brings itself about. The possibilities of the faculty are not arbitrary for it, but they are also nothing compelling. In order to be itself, however, a faculty must cleave to its possibilities. Oriented in its attraction to these possibilities, it must incline toward them. An inclination to its possibilities always belongs to a faculty.[12]

This transition from being able to do something to actually doing it is the most difficult thing to understand. In fact, Kant said that the fact of freedom is incomprehensible. But Heidegger, following Schelling, tries to describe the transition. The question is not so much whether or not he succeeds, but to what extent.

A faculty must be attracted to its possibilities; it must incline toward them; it must "like" them. Heidegger is playing on the common root of the words *Vermögen*, faculty, and *Mögen*, to like. The etymology goes in the reverse direction from Heidegger's actual interpretation. Etymologically, *mögen*, to like, in its heightened form is *Vermögen*, faculty or ability. The prefix "ver" in this case means to like thoroughly, to the end. Liking leads to an ability. Heidegger starts with the faculty, *Vermögen*, traces it back to a liking, *mögen*. Thus for him a faculty, an ability, which is potential, leads to a liking, an actuality.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 148. Cf. also *The End of Philosophy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973, trans. Joan Stambaugh), pp. 42-44.

But all of this still does not explain the *transition*. How can we *explain* an inclination, a liking, craving, falling in love? Why does some one fall in love, some one else get addicted to drugs, some one else develop the inclination to be an artist or a physician? One might say heredity, environment, circumstances. But these are not explanations. They are derivative descriptions of the obvious.

There seems to be no explanation for evil or for good. Heidegger emphasizes throughout the book that, although Schelling mostly talks about evil, freedom is the faculty for good *and* evil. In his treatise on human freedom, Schelling does not develop the thought explicitly that there is something that cannot be explained. Nor, for that matter, does Heidegger in his book on Schelling either. Both thinkers seem to have developed this thought in later works; Schelling in *The Ages of the World* and in *The Philosophy of Mythology* and *The Philosophy of Revelation*; Heidegger in *Der Satz vom Grund* and other works. Heidegger's position can be summarized in the verse of the Baroque German poet that he frequently quotes:

The rose is without a why.
It blooms because it blooms.
It does not pay attention to itself,
Does not ask whether one sees it.

But let us get back to what Schelling and Heidegger have to say, not explain, about the transition from possibility to reality or actuality.

> Where does the inclination to evil in man come from, man who originates from the Absolute as creature?
>
> This question must be answered to make the transition comprehensible from the possibility of evil to its reality. The inclination to evil must precede the decision. The decision as such is always that of an individual man. This evil to which inclination is inclined in general can thus be neither evil which is already real not the evil of an individual man.
>
> It must be evil in general, in general, but not yet real, still also not nothing, but that which can be evil in general, fundamentally can and wants to become it and yet is not real.[13]

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 149.

The evil of which Schelling speaks cannot be evil that is already real nor can it be the evil of an individual man. It must be evil in general, that is, evil that is everywhere in all creatures wanting to become real, about to become real.

> The will of the ground is everywhere what arouses self-will and drives it beyond itself. Wherever it shows itself, it is indeed not an evil itself which appears, but a prefiguration of evil. We find such prefigurations in nature: the strange and chance element of organic formations and deformations, what incites horror, the fact that everything alive is approaching dissolution. Here something appears which has been driven out into selfish exaggeration and is at the same time impotent and repulsive. But since it is not yet something spiritual, it can only be a prefiguration of evil as something selflike dominant in nature.
>
> But in the realm of spirit, too, evil does not just emerge automatically. However, here it does not just offer a prefiguration as in nature, but announces itself as the spirit of discord.[14]

Schelling characterizes the announcement of evil in man as the attraction of the ground. The craving of the ground strives within creatures to make itself the dominant principle instead of just remaining the ground. We finite creatures never gain complete control over the ground; it becomes most powerful of all in man.

One can compare these attempts to describe freedom's transition to evil with Kierkegaard's description of the loss of innocence in *The Concept of Anxiety*.

> One may liken anxiety to dizziness. He whose eye chances to look down into the yawning abyss becomes dizzy. But the reason for it is just as much his eye as it is the precipice. For suppose he had not looked down.
>
> Thus anxiety is the dizziness of freedom which occurs when the spirit would posit the synthesis, and freedom then gazes down into its own possibility, grasping at finiteness to sustain itself. In this dizziness freedom succumbs. Further than this psychology cannot go and will not. That very instant everything is changed, and when freedom rises again it sees that it is guilty. Between these two instants lies the leap, which no science has explained or can explain.[15]

We have gone about as far as we can in clarifying freedom's transition to evil. To conclude this chapter, we must take a final look at the relation

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 149-50.

[15] S. Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), trans. Reidar Thomte, p. 61.

of freedom to necessity. As we pointed out earlier, Spinoza had said that necessity and freedom were the same in contradistinction to being compelled from without, which is being unfree. What kind of "necessity" is at stake here that can coincide with freedom?

Heidegger points out that the necessity we are talking about here is not simply one of the three "modalities": possibility, reality and necessity. A thing can be possible or real or necessary. Kant said that necessity is the synthesis of the real and the possible. Rather, necessity must be conceived here in a manner appropriate to the state of the being in question, man. Man's necessity is an *inner* necessity. Finding his own inner necessity is man's true freedom, a freedom that escapes the sterile alternatives of arbitrariness and mechanical determinism. If someone, for example, writes a poem or paints a picture, his true freedom lies in finding the inner necessity of that poem or painting. He must get it "just right," with neither too much nor too little. His freedom does not lie in "expressing himself" or in doing just anything he wants. And who can say what the necessity is of something that never existed before? That is the mystery of creativity.

Heidegger seems to be moving rather tentatively in the direction of these remarks.

> True freedom in the sense of the most primordial self- determination is found only where a choice is no longer possible and no longer necessary. Whoever must first choose and wants to choose does not yet really know what he wants.[16]

We could almost say that it is not we who choose the poem or the painting, but it is the poem or the painting that chooses us. That is necessity which is true freedom.

Heidegger's book on Schelling's treatise culminates in an attempt to describe this coalescence of freedom and necessity in the Moment of the decisive experience of human being, of who we truly are.

> Thus where temporality truly presences in the Moment, where past and future come together in the present, where man's complete essence flashes before him as this his own, man experiences the fact that he must always already have been who he is. . . . Necessity is freedom here and freedom is necessity. . . In the Moment of the decisive fundamental experience of human being we are, as in no other experience of self, protected from the vanity of self-overestimation and the self-righteousness of self-deprecation.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 154.

In this experience, we do not "comprehend" something in the ordinary sense of that word; rather, we "become" it, we *are* it.

> Freedom's incomprehensibility consists in the fact that resists com-prehension because freedom transposes us into the occurrence of Being, not into the mere representation of it. But the occurrence is not a blind unfolding of a process, but is knowing perdurance in beings as a whole, which are to be endured. This knowledge of freedom is certain of its highest necessity because it alone makes that position of receptivity possible in which man stands, and is able as a historical being to encounter a destiny, to take it upon himself and to transcend it.

Freedom is incomprehensible. This means that we cannot grasp it in intellectual representations and concepts; we cannot explain why it is or calculate where it will lead us. We do not *need* to comprehend freedom. We are closer to it than comprehension. We are freedom. Freedom is that in which we move and live and have our being.

Chapter 8

The Question of God in Heidegger's Thought

Preamble

This essay ventures upon a topic so vast and difficult that I would like to compare myself to a piano tuner, tuning the instrument for someone else to play. We would need an ontological Schnabel to play the actual sonata.

The topic of this essay is in some ways inappropriate to Heidegger's thought, and yet it is not totally illegitimate. It is a topic which can be explored with a justified hesitation, but surely not "solved." A "solution," if there were one, would go against Heidegger's whole philosophical intent, and there is also little foundation in his writings for anything like a final solution to any problem, let alone this one. As Heidegger repeatedly says, he is a *questioning* thinker; the force of his inquiry lies in the *question*, not in the so-called answer. An answer of this sort would have to be a metaphysical answer, formulated in the language of metaphysics. Following Leibniz and Schelling, Heidegger again takes up the question, Why is there anything at all, and not far rather nothing? and shows that the meaning of this question lies in the sheer fact of *wonder* that anything at all exists. Heidegger is not alone in this understanding of the *meaning* of a question. He has in this his contemporaries and his predecessors, although they are few and far between. I should like to cite two of them as a way of concluding this general preliminary discussion.

A contemporary. In the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Wittgenstein states: "Not *how* the world is, is the mystical, but *that* it is."[1] And farther on: "The solution of the problem of life is seen in the vanishing of this

[1] Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* 6.44.

became clear after long doubting, were then unable to say wherein this meaning consisted?)"[2]

A predecessor. Meister Eckhart said:

> Whoever should speak to a good man as follows: "Why do you seek God?"--"Because He is God!"--"Why do you seek the truth?"-- "Because it is the truth!"--"Why do you seek justice?"--"Because it is justice!" These men speak correctly. All things which are in time have a why.
>
> Whoever, for example, should ask a man: "Why do you eat?"-- "To gain strength!"--"Why do you sleep?"--"For the same purpose!"--And so it is with all things which are in time. But whoever should ask a good man: "Why do you love God?"--"I don't know, for God's sake!"--"Why do you love the truth?"--"For the truth's sake!"--"Why do you love justice?"--"For justice's sake!"--"Why do you love goodness?"--"For goodness' sake!"--Why do you live?"--"Ah, I do not know! But I am fond of living [*ich lebe gern*]."[3]

These questions end in a kind of reflexive, reflective "circle," until with the final question there is no answer but a *response* which is an *existential statement.*

Why is the question of God in Heidegger in some ways inappropriate, yet not totally illegitimate? It is inappropriate in that the question is, so to speak, a prefabricated one, a question with a long, momentous tradition circumscribed by the possibility of its own history. In other words, Heidegger is unable to ask this question as it has been asked before in terms of an either-or of the existence of God. When Nietzsche states that "God is dead," this does not amount to saying, "There is no God," nor does it mean, "There is a God." These alternatives are too globalistic and, for this kind of thinker, simply inappropriate for our present situation. When Heidegger speaks of "alternatives" with regard to God or the gods, it is not in terms of his or their existence or non-existence but in terms of his or their presence or absence, and this presence and this absence do not exclude each other. Rather, they absolutely *belong* together. The question of God has shifted to a new dimension and a new way of thinking, or attempting to think, God, insofar as this is possible. For Heidegger is constantly attempting to push back the boundaries of what we can

[2] *Ibid.*, 6.521.

[3] Meister Eckhart, Sermon 49.

experience, think, and say, boundaries which can never be entirely eliminated and which have nothing to do with the mere limitations of our knowledge as they did for Kant.[4]

Perhaps the best way to facilitate our inquiry might be twofold: (1) to select some of the few sparing statements about God from Heidegger's later writings, and particularly those on the poets, and (2) in conclusion to map out tentatively a sort of crude "topology" of possible ways to think about the godlike and, in a brief summary, to see more clearly "where we are." This topology will be forced to be a *via negativa* which, at best, illumines the problem by showing what it is not. But this, after all, was the old meaning of the word *argument* in the "arguments" for God's existence: to throw light (*argos*, "white," "silver") on how we might think about God.

Perhaps Heidegger's most simple and fundamental "statement" about God is to be found in the question, How can we talk about God if we don't even know what Being is?[5] Throughout all of his writings, if Heidegger speaks of God at all, his attitude is one of extreme *reticence.* Unlike Nietzsche he is never polemical about the *religious relationship* to God which he considers a genuine possibility of human existence. When he is polemical, it is toward the *philosophical concept* of God as the *causa sui* or the highest being (*summum ens*).[6] Heidegger's reticence stems from his penetrating awareness that, if the philosophical conception of Being, of what-is and the world, has gotten stuck in the idea of "reality" as objective presence (*Vorhandenheit*), the path is simply blocked to thinking of God in any other way as something which *is.*

[4] Cf. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *Poetry, Language, and Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 53.

[5] I am unable at present to find this extremely important "quotation." It may even have occurred in a conversation. I remember it so well because of its succinctness. But the "substance" of that quotation can be found in the "Letter on Humanism," in *Wegmarken* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976), p. 351, cited later on.

[6] Cf. "The Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics," in *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & row, 1969).

This thought is articulated at the end of *Being and Time*, in the context of a discussion of the "now" (*Jetzt*) versus the "present" (*Gegenwart*), a discussion which leads Heidegger to ask how we might think the supreme presence, the *nunc stans* of eternity, if it is not oriented toward the vulgar understanding of time: "If the eternity of *God* could be philosophically 'constructed,' it could be understood only as original and 'infinite' temporality. Whether or not the *via negationis et eminentiae* could offer a possible way remains an open question."[7]

Given Heidegger's fundamental concern with finitude and time, the basic question here is that of the meaning of infinity as related to eternity. But this is a question which Heidegger never pursued in this context. Instead, he later turned primarily to the poets, in particular Hölderlin, whom he considered the only poet or thinker in Western history who does not fall within the realm of "metaphysics," with the possible exception of the so-called Pre-Socratics.

For Heidegger it is Hölderlin alone who is uniquely able to name the holy, the presence and the absence of the holy. The word "holy" is at the very core of Heidegger's interpretations of the poets. It is precisely the *poet* who offers a greater freedom, a new dimension for thinking, a dimension not engulfed by the problems posed by the history of philosophy, i.e., ontotheology. For the poet is not only the one who is *able* to name the holy but also the one who *has named* it. Thus the poem embodies a kind of "givenness," a true inroad to the holy for the thinker able to pursue that trace of a path.

At the risk of oversimplification, but for the sake of clarity, let us try to elucidate the "stages" on this inroad in some of Heidegger's writings on Hölderlin (and Rilke). By "stages" I do not mean chronological developments in Heidegger's thought, but rather, so to speak, "topological" possibilities on the inroad to the godlike, or the holy.

First of all, there is a certain ambiguity in Heidegger with regard to the holy itself. On the one hand he speaks of it predominantly as a sort

[7] *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 499. This translation is mine.

of *harbinger* of God or the gods. On the other hand, the holy is what is ultimate, beyond any possible god or gods.

Bearing that ambiguity in mind, we may select the following stages, which are, of course, not completely separable:

1. The holy as *harbinger* of the gods
2. The holy as the *dwelling place* of the gods ("spatial")
3. The holy as the *interim* of the presence and absence of the gods (temporal and nontemporal)
4. The Holy as the *ultimate*

These "stages" must seem at first rather unintelligible. They appear to be disparate, not neatly systematic, in a way loosely reminiscent of Jakob Böhme's theosophical and alchemistic description of the elements of fallen nature as sour, bitter, anguish, and fire. But perhaps the lack of system speaks for the genuineness, and also the genuine helplessness, of thinking here.

First, a preliminary remark about the apparent interchangeability of terms usually sharply differentiated. Heidegger uses the words "the god," "the gods," "the godlike," and "the godhead," along with other less traditional designations, such as "the joyous one," "the serene," "the ether," without much discernible consistency about their separateness of meaning. In other words, there is probably not much to be gained by keeping them neatly apart in categories; i.e., "the gods" would come under the label "polytheism," "the god" under "monotheism," and the godhead under the all-encompassing, abstract unity of the trinity. For all practical purposes it would seem that the plurality of terms originates more from the variety of approaches to the same question than from any substantive distinction.

I. *The Holy as Harbinger of the Gods*

This stage is closely related to the third stage except that it speaks only of the present lack or absence of the gods (*Fehl Gottes*) in relation to their possible future coming. It does not mention the withdrawal of the gods (epitomized by Nietzsche's statement that God is dead) and therefore

is not, strictly speaking, a stage of interim. It might be characterized as the stage of pure waiting.

This stage is characterized in the essay "Homecoming," with a quote from Hölderlin's hymn "Patmos," which begins:

> Near and difficult to grasp is the god. / But where there is danger, there also grows what saves.[8]

What is perhaps most striking in these lines is the "and" at the beginning. Hölderlin is saying not that the god is near *but* that he is difficult to grasp. It is his very nearness that makes him difficult to grasp. Heidegger recognized this idea and made it central in many of his writings. It is developed perhaps most explicitly and intriguingly--in the scope of our inquiry limited to the question of God--in his essay "As on a Holiday," which we shall speak of in connection with the fourth stage.

The central statement in this essay can be summed up in two short sentences: "True, the holy does appear. But the god remains distant."[9] Here the holy is a sort of foreboding aura, a preliminary abode of the god. The poet experiences this preliminary abode and, at the same time, the "absence" of its inhabitant, the god. Thus, he can "sing" of the holy but is unable to name the god. His hope is "to name the High One himself, ... to cause the High One himself to appear in words, not only to say his dwelling place, the serene, the holy, not only to name him preliminarily with reference to his dwelling place."[10]

II. *The Holy as the Dwelling Place of the Gods*

The transition from stage one to stage two is an easy one. In fact, it is hardly a transition at all, since the *hope* of the poet to name the god himself already tells of his inability to do so, of his waiting in the realm

[8] *Existence and Being* (Chicago: Regnery Press, 1949), p. 175. This translation is mine.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

[10] *Ibid*, p. 26.

of the dwelling place. "He who lives in the serene can now be named only with reference to his dwelling place."[11]

The question to be raised with regard to our second point is a difficult one and is at best only partly answerable. The question is, What is meant by a dwelling place?

To begin tentatively, a dwelling place is where one *belongs*, where someone lives. The profound meaning of a dwelling place is only "spatial" in a figurative or analogical sense. This is brought out very clearly, for example, in Plato's *Phaedo*. When Socrates is speaking of what happens to the immortal soul after death, he states: "But the soul, the invisible part, ... goes away to a place that is, like itself, glorious, pure and invisible .... It departs to that place which is, like itself, divine, immortal, and wise."[12]

The adjectives which Socrates uses here to describe "the place" of the soul clearly indicate its mysterious, definitely nonspatial quality. A physical place can hardly be wise, immortal, divine, or invisible. The fundamental meaning of the soul's place is that of where it belongs. It is for this reason that the soul wanders and is reborn until it has found or realized its own place. It cannot rest until it is profoundly "at home." This is, of course, an idea also fundamental to most Eastern thought. The soul, or self, wanders until it finds ultimate peace and rest in the union with Brahman or in nirvana.

Finally, this unique conception of place is discussed by the theologian Paul Tillich:

> Not to have a space is not to be.... No finite being can rely on space, for not only must it face losing this or that space because it is a "pilgrim on earth," but eventually it must face losing every place it has had or might have had. As the powerful symbol used by Job and the Psalmist expresses it: "Its place knoweth it no more."[13]

In Heidegger's discussion of dwelling place there are explicit overtones reminiscent of his essay "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," in which dwelling

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[12] Plato, *Phaedo* 80d-81a.

[13] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), 1:194-95.

plays the predominant role, and, most important of all, is reminiscent of the belonging together and mutual appropriation (*Ereignis*) of man and Being. Here we have Heidegger's fundamental insight, pervading all of his later writings, often expressed as the fourfold of sky, earth, mortals, and divinity, that the *relation* between man and Being is what is most primordial of all, more fundamental than either of the constituents of that relation.[14] And if, on the foundation of Heidegger's thought, anything is to be said about God, it would have to take this idea of the priority of *relation* into account. Heidegger himself never explicitly went in this direction, but the indicator is there for anyone who wants to follow it.

III. *The Holy as the Interim of the Presence and Absence of the Gods*

This problem is highly complex. We are asked, on the one hand, to think of an interim as a temporal process, an interim between "the time of the gods who have fled *and* the god who is to come."[15] The interim is "the time of *need*, because it stands under a double lack and a not: the no-more of the gods who have fled and the not-yet of what is to come."[16]

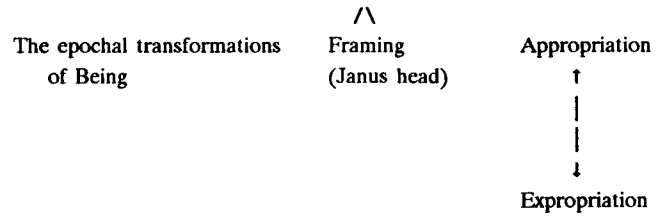
On the other hand, this "interim" is not only a stage in a temporal process but, more fundamentally, an absolutely nontemporal *Between* of presence (unconcealment) and absence (concealment), or, in another formulation, of Appropriation and Expropriation.

In my brief introduction to *The End of Philosophy*, I attempted in a preliminary, clumsy fashion to formulate the "relation" between the temporal and the nontemporal aspects of this Between. This formulation was put to Heidegger in the form of a question which he said had "answered itself." I shall quote my own question and try to become a little clearer on something which I am just barely capable of understanding.

[14] Cf. also my introduction to *Identity and Difference*, p. 12.

[15] *Existence and Being*, p. 313.

[16] *Ibid.*, "What is to come"--*des Kommenden*.



> Is not Appropriation (*Ereignis*) already in itself a double relation: (1) A "separable" relation in that through possibly overcoming Framing (*Gestel*) by the step back the epochal transformations of Being would be absorbed in Appropriation; and (2) an "inseparable" relation: Appropriation and Expropriation can never be separated from each other, but rather constitute a relation which is what is most original of all? ... Between the epochal transformations of Being and Appropriation reigns the relation of giving (*Es gibt*), but not even this can be said of the relation Appropriation-Expropriation.[17]

Without going into the complexities of what Heidegger means by "Framing," which would of necessity involve a discussion of his concept of the essence of technology and of nihilism, I shall restrict my remarks to the temporal and nontemporal aspects of the Between.

On the one hand, the Between is the temporal interim between the greatness of the gods of the past--for Heidegger the Greek and the Judeo-Christian tradition--and the future possible belonging-together of man and Being in a way which overcomes the history of metaphysics, the history of the oblivion of Being. This Between has the character of process. On the other hand, the Between is the nontemporal--if you like, "eternal"--tension inherent in the very nature of "Being," between its unconcealing and concealing itself, its revealing, sending, giving of itself, and its refusing, withholding, and keeping to itself (*Ansichhalten, epoche*). Without the second element of withdrawal Being would, so to speak, exhaust itself in its own epochs of history and end in barren nothingness. Its plenitude would be irretrievably squandered. One could say that there is a temporal Between between Being and its historical epochs and a nontemporal Between in the very nature of Being itself. The word "epoch"

[17] *The End of Philosophy*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. xiv.

thus has the double meaning of incalculably successive epochs (destinings, sendings) of history and of the *epoche*--keeping to itself--in Being itself. The relation of these two meanings appears to be inscrutable or at least unthought.

Astonishingly enough, this idea of the Between has its roots back in *Being and Time*:

> But in that case, what else is presented with this phenomenon than the objectively present *commercium between* an objectively present subject and objectively present object? This interpretation would come closer to the phenomenological content if it said: *Da-sein* is the being of this "Between."[18]

A passage from *Time and Being* might document the nontemporal aspect of the Between before we turn to the fourth and final stage of the Holy:

> The sending in the destiny of Being has been characterized as a giving in which the sending source keeps itself back and, thus, withdraws from unconcealment . . . .
>
> Denial and withholding exhibit the same trait as self-withholding in sending: namely, self-withdrawal . . . .
>
> Appropriating makes manifest its peculiar property, that Appropriating withdraws what is most fully its own from boundless unconcealment. Thought in terms of Appropriating, this means: In that sense, it Expropriates itself of itself. Expropriation belongs to Appropriation as such. By this Expropriation, Appropriation does not abandon itself--rather, it preserves what is its own.[19]

IV. *The Holy as the Ultimate*

With this final discussion of the Holy, we come full circle back to our first stage, the holy as harbinger of the gods. At the same time this discussion will lead us straight into the second main path of our essay, a tentative "topology" of possible ways to think about the godlike. This path is not separable from the first, that of attempting to interpret some of Heidegger's statements on the poets. Thus, instead of being a separate

[18] *Being and Time*, p. 170. My translation.

[19] *Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 223.

discussion, it will be a kind of short recapitulation of what has been attempted here.

Bearing in mind that Heidegger predominantly thinks of the holy as a prefigurative dwelling place of the god, I should like to interpret one passage which gives a new insight into the nature of the Holy as what is ultimate. Before I do this, let me cite by way of review another passage which gives the most elaborate statement of his predominant view:

> Only from the truth of Being can the nature of the holy be thought. Only from the nature of the holy can the nature of the godhead be thought. Only in the light of the essence of the godhead can we think and say what the word "God" is supposed to name. Or must we not first be able to understand and hear carefully all these words if we as human beings, i.e. as existent beings, are to be allowed to experience a relation of the god to man. For how should the man of present world history even be able to ask seriously and rigorously whether the god is nearing or withdrawing when man omits to think first of all toward the dimension in which alone that question can be asked? But that is the dimension of the holy which already remains closed to us even as a dimension if the Open of Being is not opened out and close to man in its opening.[20]

We turn now to the other passages in which the Holy is considered as the ultimate. Two distinctively original points are contained in them: one, the question of *immediacy*, and, two, strangely enough, the question of "envelopment" *Umbefaengnis*).

Immediacy. The context here is a comment on Hölderlin's reflection on his own translation of a fragmentary verse from *Pindar*, which he entitled "The Highest." This essay, "As on a Holiday," is perhaps one of the most powerful things Heidegger ever wrote:

> The immediate omnipresence is the mediator for everything which is mediated and that means for what can be mediated. The immediate itself is never something which can be mediated; however, the immediate is, taken strictly, mediation, i.e., the possibility of the mediation of what can be mediated, because it makes what can be mediated possible in its nature.[21]

Hölderlin's proximity in his reflection to the terminology and problematic of his German Idealist contemporaries Hegel and Schelling is

[20] "Letter on Humanism," in *Wegmarken*, pp. 351-52. My translation.

[21] "As on a Holiday," in *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlin's Dichtung* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1952), p. 60. My translation.

unmistakable. But Heidegger's intention here goes in a different direction from the German Idealist problematic of the mediation of the immediate, i.e., the ongoing development from thesis to antithesis to synthesis. What Heidegger is saying is that the Holy *can never be mediated, grasped in experience*. It is unapproachable for a god or man. One of the basic meanings of the Holy (*das Heilige*) is that it is inviolably complete and whole (perhaps comparable to Parmenides' well-rounded sphere of Being), granting wholeness to every being but itself unapproachable.

How, then, do we know anything about it? Through the poet. The Holy sets the poet outside himself, in *ek-stasis*, or ecstasy, which is the primordial meaning of existence. The Holy literally draws the poet into Itself, and thus he knows It. He "knows" It not because It has been mediated to him (for it is unmediatable); nor does he know It in the direct manner of the mystic. The poet knows the Holy by *divining (ahnen)* It, as a dream or vision. Instead of *receiving (empfangen)* It in the manner of the mystic, he is *surrounded*, so to speak, embraced by It. This embrace is "gentle"; it does not overwhelm the poet and destroy his nature. We are reminded here of Hölderlin's verse, often quoted by Heidegger, that "King Oedipus has one eye too many perhaps," which Heidegger relates directly to the fate of Hölderlin's madness. Hölderlin, perhaps, saw too much.

Thus the nature of the poet is grounded not in the reception of the god but rather in the embrace of the Holy. How is he then able to *name* the Holy?

> Someone higher, who is nearer to the Holy and yet still beneath it, a god, must cast the lightning flash into the soul of the poet, leaving a spark in that soul. Thus the god takes that which is "above" him, the Holy, to himself and brings it, gathered, in a keenness and in the one stroke of the unique ray by which he is "directed" to man in order to grace him.
>
> Because neither man nor gods can ever bring about the immediate relation to the Holy of their own accord, men need the gods and the heavenly ones need the mortals.[22]

There is much more in this essay than it is possible to go into here. By way of moving toward some kind of conclusion, suffice it to say that Heidegger characterizes the Holy here as that which "suffers." This sounds

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 66

strange. But Heidegger explains that by the word suffering he means the intimacy (*Innigkeit*), thought as a continual beginning, with which the Holy embraces the poet while remaining fast in its own beginning. The kind of perduring presence thought here is "the eternal." Thus Heidegger takes up a position which is identical neither with the "rational" problematic of mediation of German Idealism nor with the experience of immediacy of the mystic in his "union," becoming one with the god.

Now to return in conclusion to the question of a "topology," of the Holy, let us ask in a crude fashion what kind of "thing" the Holy might be. It cannot be the god of philosophy thought as the most universal, the cause of itself *causa sui*) and the highest being *summum ens*). It cannot be a being at all. Neither can it be the highest part of the traditional triad God, soul, world, since this is metaphysical speculation and thus inimical and inappropriate to Heidegger's way of thinking. It is also not, strictly speaking, a "process" akin to Schelling's attempts to think a becoming within the nature of God himself. Nor is it a "place" similar to the "soul place" of which Socrates spoke. Rather it is a dynamic sphere or realm generating possibilities of unconcealing process by virtue of remaining fast within Itself. And that is a characterization, in the language of the Holy, of the belonging-together of man and Being, Appropriation.

Part V

After Metaphysics

Chapter 9

Heidegger, Taoism and the Question of Metaphysics

The two themes in Heidegger I would like to talk about that seem to me to have a definite Taoist flavor are those of Way (*Weg*) and releasement (*Gelassenheit*). In the course of inquiry into these themes, it will become increasingly clear that they are almost impossible to separate. Nevertheless, I shall attempt to start with the Way as the more basic theme that determines or attunes releasement. Strictly speaking, the two are not concepts belonging to metaphysical thought; they are themes of post--metaphysical or non-metaphysical reflection. The question of the relation of both Heidegger and Taoism to metaphysics will be taken up briefly at the end of this paper. If we were to consider these two themes in a traditional metaphysical manner, the Way would represent the objective side of a relationship and releasement would represent the subjective side. We want to try and understand that and how neither Heidegger nor Taoism do this.

Way (*Weg, Tao*). In contrast to releasement, which has implicit precursors in *Being and Time* but really gets developed only in Heidegger's later thought, the theme of the Way is explicitly present in *Being and Time* and runs throughout all of Heidegger's writings. Thus, in *Being and Time* we are told that *Dasein* is always underway and that standing and remaining are only limit cases of this directional "underway." And at the very conclusion of the book Heidegger states: "One must seek a *way* of illuminating the fundamental question of ontology and then *go* this way. Whether this is the *sole* or *right* way can be decided only *after one has gone along it.*"[1] The central importance of the way and being underway or on the way stands out in the titles of at least three subsequent works: *Woodpaths,*

[1] *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1953, p. 437. Translation mine.

On the Way to Language and *The Fieldpath*. One thinks also of *Wegmarken*, a volume reprinting many works.

Unlike Lao Tse who begins by saying that the Way or Tao that can be told of (literally, that can be wayed) is not the eternal Tao, Heidegger has a good deal to say about the Way. What finally could not be told of for Heidegger was Being. In the foreword to the collection of essays entitled *Holzwege* or *Woodpaths*, we read:

> Wood is the old name for forest. In the wood are paths that mostly wind along until they end quite suddenly in an impenetrable thicket.
> They are called "woodpaths."
> Each goes its particular way, but in the same forest. Often it seems as though one were identical to another. Yet it only seems so. Woodcutters and foresters are familiar with these paths. They know what it means to be on a woodpath.[2]

As D. F. Krell points out in his general introduction to the anthology, *Basic Writings*, the meaning of the colloquial German expression, 'to be on a woodpath,' does not coincide with the philosophical meaning Heidegger gives the phrase. The popular expression means to be on the wrong track, to be on a path that does not go anywhere. This popular meaning finds its way into the title of the French translation of *Holzwege*: *Chemins qui ne menent nulle part*, ways that lead nowhere. Now we could say that woodpaths do lead somewhere or other, but where they lead us is something incidental. The function of woodpaths, which the woodcutters leave behind them as they cut and gather wood, is not to lead someone from one point to another; rather, the path is almost a necessary byproduct of the woodcutter's activity. For those of us non-woodcutters walking in the forest, we do not know where the woodpaths are leading and if our primary aim were to arrive at some fixed destination in the shortest amount of time, we would not be on a woodpath. Thus, the *philosophical* meaning of being on a woodpath is not so much that it does not go anywhere but that the meaning of being on it is not to arrive at a known or predetermined destination. One does not necessarily know at the outset where one is going. For Heidegger, woodpaths express the fact that thinking is thoroughly and essentially questioning, a questioning not to be stilled or "solved" by any answer, a questioning that cannot calculate in

[2] Quoted in *Basic Writings*, ed. D. F. Krell. New York: 1977, p. 34.

advance the direction in which it will be led, let alone the destination at which it will arrive.

We need to ask what Heidegger means by way. Following his own tactic and that of many thinkers before him, we might best begin by saying what way does *not* mean for him. First of all, he brings his own conception of way into sharp contrast with the way or method (*methodos*, way) of the sciences.

> To the modern mind, whose ideas about everything are punched out in the die presses of technical-scientific calculation, the object of knowledge is part of the method. And method follows what is in fact the utmost corruption and degeneration of a way.
>
> For reflective thinking, on the contrary, the way belongs to what we here call the country or region. Speaking allusively, the region is that which regions, is the clearing that sets free, where all that is cleared and freed, and all that conceals itself, together attain open freedom. The freeing and sheltering character of this region lies in this way-making movement which yields those ways that belong to the region.[3]

The topic of the sciences and in general of technology is far too vast to go into here and is, moreover, not essential to this inquiry. Suffice it to say that Heidegger's conception of way has nothing to do with the uncanny and threatening usurpation of the objects of knowledge by the calculative procedures and methods of technology that, as Heidegger says, represent the utmost corruption and degeneration of what he means by way.

If, then, it has essentially nothing to do with scientific and technological method, what kind of way is Heidegger talking about? Two other possible conceptions remain to be discussed and ultimately rejected. The first is the obvious, literal meaning of a way or path leading from one place to another. Although most of the connotations belonging to this conception are inappropriate for what Heidegger is after, the "literal" meaning of way is very germane to what he is saying and is not to be sacrificed in favor of some kind of abstract symbolism. The Way is not to be taken in an abstract, symbolic sense, a literal path standing for some kind of royal road to the Absolute. This would be sheer metaphysics. The whole schema of something concrete and sensuous symbolizing something abstract and non-sensuous very definitely belongs to a metaphysical kind of thinking that Heidegger always sought to avoid, particularly in his work

[3] *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz. New York: Harper & Row, 1971, p. 91, with minor changes.

on the Pre-Socratics and the poets. Thus, we are to retain something of the "literal" meaning of a path. But, in keeping with Heidegger's whole constant polemic against *Vorhandenheit*, against objective presence, presence at hand, a way for him is not something lying there all finished, leading from one point in the parameters of space to another. Heidegger's understanding of space, and later of time when he gains some distance from his earlier, fundamentally Kantian conception, is quite close to the Taoist conception. I shall have something to say on this and some other points of similarity between Heidegger and Taoism in my concluding remarks on the question of metaphysics.

For Heidegger, the way is of such a nature that it originates with the movement of walking on it. Strictly speaking, one could almost say that the way *is* this movement.

> Thinking itself is a way. We respond to the way only by remaining underway . . . . We must get on the way, that is, must take the steps by which alone the way becomes a way. The way of thinking cannot be traced from somewhere to somewhere like a well-worn rut, not 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. This movement is what allows the way to come forward.[4]

At least two things are striking here. First of all, the way is not already there for us to follow, but comes into being as we go along it. Since it is not already stretched out in space, this also means that it has no initial point of departure and no final goal. Besides stressing the fact that it does not lead anywhere, one should also emphasize that it does not begin anywhere either. We are always already underway and remain so as long as we dwell on earth.

Secondly, the way is essentially a way of *thinking*. This points forward to our imminent discussion of releasement and can form a sort of transition to it. We had remarked at the beginning that way and releasement would be difficult, if not impossible, to separate. If the way is a way of thinking, does this not mean that we produce the way, that the way is something subjective? I shall come back to this second point about the way after discussing the first point further.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

Perhaps the most fundamental characteristic of Heidegger's way is that it allows us to *reach* something, to reach something not as a final goal to be possessed, but as an ongoing reach*ing* that belongs to what it reaches.

> Within language as Saying there is present something like a way or path.
>
> What is a way? A way allows us to reach something.[5]

The way allows us as we listen to attain language and thus belong to Saying. We are able to attain language only because we already belong to Saying. What is it that the way allows us to reach here? For Heidegger, the term Saying points to the way in which we respond to what happens. Saying is not simply linguistic; it includes poetic and artistic kinds of human response as well as silence. Saying is a kind of showing what happens. What happens is Appropriation, the primordial relation, the belonging-together of man and Being. This relation, thought by Heidegger under both aspects of identity and difference, is more fundamental than the "elements" in it. The elements, man and Being, do not constitute the relation; the relation constitutes the elements.

It is the way which is the "how" of the happening of Appropriation. The way is how Appropriation does what it does, better expressed, lets happen by making its own, appropriating.

The way to language belongs to Saying determined by Appropriation. Within this way, which belongs to the reality of language, the peculiar property of language is concealed. The way is appropriating.[6]

This passage leads us right into the heart of Heidegger's later thinking. The central themes of Appropriation, language and Saying are now brought into relation with the way. The passage continues and introduces a further qualification of the way that seems to be Heidegger's utmost effort to make an initially somewhat indeterminate thought, the way, as concrete as possible.

> To clear the way, for instance across a snow-covered field, is in the Alemannic-Swabian dialectic still called *wegen* even today. This verb, used transitively, means: to form a way and, forming it, to keep it ready. Way-making understood in this sense no longer

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

means to move something up or down a path that is already there. It means to bring the way. . . forth first of all, and thus to *be* the way.[7]

The totality of what Heidegger has to say about the way gets crystallized in this word from the Alemannic-Swabian dialect, *Bewëgung*. Without the umlaut, the word is the common designation for movement. Peter Hertz translates it as way-making. Literally, it means waying. To try once more to place it in relation to Appropriation, language and Saying, we might try to say that way-making is how Appropriation (the belonging--together of man and Being) appropriates by bringing Saying to language, to unconcealment.

I would like to note that in the following passage Heidegger's turning (which could be expressed here as the turning from man on the way to Being to Being on the way to man) is very clearly stated with regard to language.

> Appropriation appropriates man to its own usage. Showing as appropriating thus transpires and Appropriation is the way-making for Saying to come to language. This way-making puts language (the essence of language) as language (Saying) into language (into the sounded word). When we speak of the way to language now, we no longer mean only or primarily the progression of our thinking as it reflects on language. The way to language has become transformed along the way. From human activity it has shifted to the appropriating nature of language. But it is only to us and only with regard to ourselves that the change of the way to language appears as a shift which has taken place only now. In truth, the way to language has its unique region within the essence of language itself. But this means also: the way to language as we first had it in mind does not become invalid; it becomes possible and necessary only in virtue of the true way which is the appropriating, needful way-making. For, since the being of language, as Saying that shows, rests on Appropriation which makes us humans over to the *releasement* in which we can listen freely, therefore the way-making of Saying into speech first opens up for us paths along which our thinking can pursue the authentic way to language.
>
> The formula for the way: to bring language *qua* language to speech, no longer merely contains a directive for us who are thinking about language, but says the *forma*, the *Gestalt*, in which the essence of language that rests in Appropriation makes its way (literally ways itself, moves).[8]

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

Stated as simply as possible, what Heidegger wants us to do is to stop representing language as a system of information and begin to reflect. To reflect (*sinnen*) means for him not the absolute reflection of German Idealism (the bending and shining back into itself of absolute Spirit), but entering into the movement of waying. This could tie in nicely with the literal meaning of the English word experience, which means to go through.

Finally, in the lecture series entitled *What Calls for Thinking*, Heidegger ruminates on the meaning of the word "call" (*heissen*) and brings calling into relation with the way.

> In the widest sense, 'to call' means to set in motion, to get something underway--which may be done in a gentle and therefore unobtrusive manner, and in fact is most readily done that way. In the older Greek version of the New Testament, Matthew 8:18, we find: "Seeing a large crowd around him, he called to them to go to the other side." (*Idon de ho Iesous ochlon peri auton ekeleusen apelthein eis to peran*). The Greek verb *keleuein* properly means to get something on the road, to get it underway. The Greek noun *keleuthos* means way. And that the old word "to call" means not so much a command as a letting-reach, that therefore the "call" has an assonance of helpfulness and complaisance, is shown by the fact that the same word in Sanskrit still means something like "to invite."
>
> The meaning of the word "call" which we have described is thus not altogether unfamiliar to us. It still is unaccustomed as we encounter it in the question "what is called thinking--what does call for it?" When we hear that question, the meaning of "call" in the sense of "instruct, demand, allow to reach, get on the way, convey, provide with a way" does not immediately occur to us.[9]

The last passage to be quoted that speaks of the way is the one where Heidegger has the most to say explicitly about Tao itself.

> The word "way" probably is an ancient primary word that speaks to the reflective mind of man. The key word in Laotse's poetic thinking is *Tao*, which "properly speaking" means way. But because we are prone to think of "way" superficially, as a stretch connecting two places, our word "way" has all too rashly been considered unfit to name what *Tao* says. *Tao* is then translated as reason, mind, *raison*, meaning, *logos*.
>
> Yet *Tao* could be the way that gives all ways, the very source of our power to think what reason, mind, meaning, *logos* properly mean to say--properly, by their proper nature. Perhaps the mystery of mysteries of thoughtful Saying conceals itself in the

[9] *What is Called Thinking*, trans. Fred D. Wieck and J. Glenn Gray. New York: Harper & Row, 1968, p. 117.

> word "way," *Tao*, if only we will let these names return to what they leave unspoken, if only we are capable of this, to allow them to do so. Perhaps the enigmatic power of today's reign of method also, and indeed preeminently, stems from the fact that the methods, notwithstanding their efficiency, are after all merely the runoff of a great hidden stream which moves all things along and makes way for everything. All is way.[10]

Surely the terms supposed to "translate" *Tao* that Heidegger mentions here are woefully inadequate, if not outright distortions. Heidegger's main point seems to be that Tao is the *source* of what we call reason, mind and which we *assume we understand*. This is somewhat analogous to thinking Being as a being. We fail to think the source; more stringently, perhaps, it fails to "think" us.

We turn back now to the second point we made about way, that it is a way of *thinking*. This will lead us into the second theme of our chapter, releasement. To put this back into Heidegger's own language, if the Tao belongs more on the "Being" side of the belonging-together (*Ereignis*) of man and Being, then releasement belongs more on the side of man, although it is nothing that he does or accomplishes. To anticipate, we could say tentatively that thinking is a kind of "waying" through which the Way, Tao, comes to presence.

In an essay interpreting a poem from Trakl, Heidegger discusses the word for madness (*Wahnsinn*), saying that a madman has a different mind or way of sensing from other people; not that he has a mind filled with senseless delusions, but he senses differently. Then Heidegger tells us that "*Sinnan*," sensing, originally meant to travel, to strive after. . . to take a certain direction; the Indo-Germanic root *sent* and *set* means way.[11] Thus, to sense, or, in Heidegger's special use of the term, to think, means precisely to be on the way. In answer to our previous question whether the fact that the way was a way of thinking meant that the way was something produced by us, and thus totally subjective, we can say that thinking, sensing, being on the way is about as far removed from subjectivity as you can get. The change from all subjectivistic, reifying representational thinking to the kind of thinking or sensing Heidegger is trying to convey

[10] *On the Way to Language*, p. 92.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 53. Omitted from the English translation as are many of the passages dealing exclusively with the etymology of the German.

occurs through releasement (*Gelassenheit*). The Taoist equivalent for releasement is, of course, *wu wei* (at times best rendered as non-interference).

Now, *Gelassenheit*, or releasement, is, of course, not a term originating with Heidegger, but is, for example, a central term in Meister Eckhart. It even has a kind of precursor in the Stoic conception of *apatheia*, a term designating freedom from strong and turbulent emotions. *Gelassenheit* is often translated as detachment, which can be misleading if it implies mere indifference, an attitude of not caring about anything. In order to distance his own conception from this negative one, Heidegger states that releasement lies outside the distinction of activity and passivity.[12] It definitely has nothing to do with willing and yet it is not just a passive doing nothing. Heidegger characterizes *Gelassenheit* as a kind of waiting. In contrast to expecting which has an object, which is an expecting something, waiting does not have an object and is closer to keeping oneself *open* without having anything definite in mind. Heidegger is here in an area where there is nothing spectacular, nothing excitingly or dramatically metaphysical to say. The phenomenon is so simple that it eludes us. Instead of being describable in terms of what one is doing or supposed to do, *Gelassenheit* means rather to *stop* doing all the things we constantly do. One is reminded of Nietzsche's poem, "Sils-Maria":

> Hier sass ich wartend, wartend,--doch auf nichts,
> jenseits von Gut und Böse, bald des Lichts
> geniessend, bald des Schattens, ganz nur Spiel,
> ganz See, ganz Mittag,
> ganz Zeit ohne Ziel.
>
> Here I sat waiting, waiting--yet for nothing,
> beyond good and evil, sometimes enjoying light,
> sometimes shadow, completely only play,
> completely lake, completely noon,
> completely time without goal.

[12] *Discourse on Thinking*, trans. John M. Anderson & E. Hans Freund. New York: Harper & Row, 1966, p. 61.

Like the way, *Gelassenheit* has some roots in *Being and Time*, for example, when Heidegger speaks of *letting* the real Self act. Less obvious, but certainly equally important, is his emphasis on resolve (*Entschlossenheit*) which he uses in the unusual, literal sense of being unlocked, of being open for something. In later works, the conception of letting-be is quite prevalent. The root of the word *Gelassenheit* is *lassen*, letting, allowing; it is a conception that becomes more and more central in Heidegger's later works.

Heidegger moves this word specifically into a *philosophical* framework, that is, he is not talking so much about the way we should lead our everyday lives as about what the philosopher should stop doing in order to get out of metaphysics. There are three things the philosopher should "let go of": (1) the subject-object dichotomy where the human being becomes an ego and things become objects for that ego; (2) and (3) he should desist from representing the relation of *Gelassenheit* to what it lets be, for example, that which regions (*die Gegnet*) as (a) any kind of causal connection (*Wirkungszusammenhang*) and as (b) a horizonal-transcendental connection. The statement that the relation of *Gelassenheit* to that which regions cannot be thought of as any kind of causal connection means that the relation cannot be thought as an ontic one. The statement that the relation of *Gelassenheit* to that which regions cannot be thought of as a horizonal-transcendental connection means that the relation cannot be thought as an ontological one. With this, Heidegger has left behind one of the most fundamental distinctions, not only in *Being and Time*, but throughout all his writings, the distinction ontic/ontological, things/Being, the ontological difference. *Gelassenheit* simply enables us to step out of the realm of that distinction.

We might briefly consider the relation of *Gelassenheit* to the will before going on to see its relation to thinking. In other words, seeing what it is that Heidegger wants us to let go of will bring us closer to the kind of thinking that may be able to lead us back to the direction of Being. For Heidegger, the will is perhaps the most insidious ingredient of metaphysics culminating in the will to will, or technology. The delicate question of what it is we are "doing" in *Gelassenheit* if we are not willing and are not also totally passively idle leads Heidegger to speak of *Gelassenheit* as "the

release of oneself from transcendental re-presentation and so a relinquishing of the willing of a horizon. Such relinquishing no longer stems from a willing, except that the occasion for releasing oneself to belonging to that which regions requires a trace of willing. This trace, however, vanishes while releasing oneself and is completely extinguished in releasement."[13]

This is tricky business. But anyone familiar with any kind of "meditation" will recognize what Heidegger is trying to deal with here. We cannot will not to will, will to relax, calm down or be enlightened, and yet we will not get there by doing nothing at all. We cannot simply drop into the lap of Being. Here Heidegger brings in another word to intimate the kind of "doing" he has in mind. The word is *Inständigkeit*, indwelling, and points to the same phenomenon designated by perdurance (*Austrag*). This phenomenon is related to the kind of thinking Heidegger calls *Andenken*. It is a kind of waiting, not a passive waiting, but a very attentive, intense one. Perhaps as not too apt examples we could cite the solo musician who is about to begin his recital, collecting and gathering himself in an intense con-centration, a centering. Or even a baseball player at bat as he waits for the pitch. One could adduce many such examples. Each one would fall short and fail in one way or another, but perhaps they could point us in the right direction. *Inständigkeit* or perdurance is a kind of intensely receptive sticking something through, sticking it out, perhaps something akin to what we do when we try to recall something we have forgotten. It reminds me of what the Buddhist thinker Dogen called "sustained exertion." A kind of non-willing (not unwilling) *exertion* distances *Inständigkeit* from all flabby passivity. To use the more familiar word, when we endure something, we are not willing it, but we are not passive either. What we endure could be either something greatly painful or greatly joyful. Even the way we read a great and important book could be characterized by *Gelassenheit* and *Inständigkeit*. If I read the book in an unfocused way, I will only get a diffuse picture of it. I must have something in mind I want to find, the way I read when I am going to teach or write something

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

on the book; and yet I must be open and receptive to something of which I perhaps have no idea.

A final mundane "example" might be found in the phrase "I am growing carrots and peas." There is no way on earth that I can grow carrots and peas or anything else; all I can do is *let* them grow by providing the proper conditions of water, good soil, etc.

The concluding section of this chapter will concentrate on the question of metaphysics and of Heidegger's and Taoism's relation to it. I shall be asking to what extent Heidegger, who started out wanting to do fundamental ontology, succeeded in extricating himself from metaphysics. I shall contend that Taoism was never metaphysical at all, at least not in Heidegger's sense of that term. Of course, it all depends on how you define metaphysics, so perhaps it is best to begin with that. One of my main intents will be to show that the way out of metaphysics does not lead back to some kind of naive empiricism, nor can it lead "beyond" metaphysics which would again be a sort of super-metaphysics, or, better, a hyper-metaphysics. Heidegger's phrase is to step back out of metaphysics, leaving it as it is.

Heidegger's definition of metaphysics is clear and univocal. Metaphysics begins with the separation of essence and existence, of the "what" and the "that." This occurs explicitly with Plato. Nietzsche saw this separation occurring in Plato as the separation of the true world from the apparent world, the world of Being (the Forms) from the world of becoming. Heidegger defines essence as what is possible and what makes possible. If there is going to be a tree, treeness makes that actual tree possible; the tree becomes a tree by participating in treeness. The actually existing tree is then the real, reality. Essence thus has to do with possibility, existence with reality.

This is undoubtedly Heidegger's fundamental conception of metaphysics. This conception later broadens to what he calls onto-theo-logic. Christian Wolff, a contemporary of Leibniz, had divided metaphysics into general metaphysics and special metaphysics. General metaphysics was the equivalent of ontology, the science of being; special metaphysics was then divided into three sectors: rational psychology, dealing with the soul; rational cosmology, dealing with the world; and rational theology, dealing

with God. Heidegger takes the entire content of general and special metaphysics and gives it the label of onto-theo-logic, the logic of being and of God. Metaphysics thinks the Being of beings as *summum ens* and *causa sui*, as the highest being and as the cause of itself.

The whole of metaphysics with its separation of essence and existence belongs on one side of another, more fundamental division: the ontological difference, the difference between Being and beings. The separation of essence and existence occurs within the realm of beings; it is not applicable to the division of Being and beings. The significance of the ontological difference in Heidegger's later works is not without some ambiguity. He is trying to work his way out of a metaphysically tainted conception of the ontological difference to a conception more appropriate to his direction of the step back out of metaphysics. In at least one of his latest formulations (in one of the Thor seminars), the enterprise of the ontological difference is said to be ultimately untenable.[14]

We shall try to characterize briefly as best we can Heidegger's way out of metaphysics and where it led him. In conclusion, we shall then make a few general remarks about a basic compatibility of this realm of thinking with that of Taoism. More we cannot do within the scope of this chapter. The topic is vast, and we have barely scratched the surface.

For starters, the title of the essay, "Overcoming Metaphysics," is somewhat misleading. It sounds as if we, we human beings, were able, if we wanted to and decided to, to set about getting rid of metaphysics by surmounting or transcending it to a "higher" point of view or position. Heidegger often used the far less common word for overcoming, "*Verwindung*," to indicate that we cannot simply do away with metaphysics by our own efforts; rather, we can learn to live with it by not paying excessive heed to it or getting obsessed with surmounting it. Basically, Heidegger is saying that metaphysics is where we *are* right now, the reality oppressing us in the form of the will to will, of framing, of the essence of technology. To think that we can change this by some kind of *fiat* is a sheer pipe-dream. All attempts at overcoming anything, not just metaphysics, are inextricably caught in the fatal net of this will to will, of the *Ge-stell*

[14] *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper & Row, 1972, p. 40.

(framing). Metaphysics is with us, and there is no way that we can assert with any degree of certainty that it will not stay with us. The wish for this degree of certainty is itself already a consequence of the modern gestalt of metaphysics, the Cartesian desire for clarity and certainty, for an unshakeable foundation (*fundamentum inconcussum*).

Basically, there is nothing whatever we can "do;" the doing is part of the problem, if not its source. All "doing" is itself metaphysical, is a kind of production that finds the epitome of its expression in Karl Marx. "If one believes that thinking is capable of changing the place of man, this still represents thinking in accordance with the model of production."[15] No wonder when asked in the *Spiegel* interview what philosophy could do to save us in our present situation, Heidegger answered quite simply: nothing. His much-touted statement that only a god can save us is only another way of saying the same thing.

Put as succinctly as possible, Heidegger is waiting for, is attentive to, the possibility of a shift from the history of metaphysics as the history of the Being of beings to the entry into Being as Being, which has no history, certainly not in the metaphysical sense in which Heidegger has interpreted philosophy from Plato to Nietzsche. This leaves him with the non-metaphysical "experiences" (I avoid the term "concept"), partially prefigured and even present in *Being and Time*, of *Lichtung* (opening, clearing, unconcealedness, "truth"), *Ereignis* (Appropriation, belonging-together) to which belongs difference (no longer the metaphysically thought ontological difference, but the *perdurance* (*Austrag*) of the difference between Being and beings) and, in slightly different contexts, the fourfold (*das Geviert*) of earth and heaven, immortals and mortals.

To sum up, apart from the two fundamental thoughts of the Way and releasement which I have attempted to touch upon in this chapter, there are other more pervasive, less easily specifiable non-metaphysical affinities between the later Heidegger and Taoism which I would state as follows:

1. Taoism is basically outside the Aristotelian categories of predication. (Example: yin and yang cannot be pinned down either as substances or as forces); Heidegger is trying to move outside of them. (Example: Being is

[15] *Vier Seminare*, Frankfurt am Main, Klostermann, 1977, p. 128.

certainly not a noun, a being or thing; but saying that it is a verb, an activity or process, does not solve much either). Similarly, the genus-species classification is lacking in Taoism and is rejected by Heidegger.

2. There is no emphasis on causality. Instead of a succession of phenomena in the relation of cause and effect, Taoism sees rather changes of aspect; Heidegger moves from the "why" of things to their "because" (Silesius' poem: The rose is without a why; it blooms because it blooms).

3. Thinking is neither representational nor abstractly conceptual nor calculative. A correlate of this kind of thinking (*Andenken*, thinking *toward*, in the direction of something instead of representing it as something over against us--ob-ject) is that space and time are not thought in terms of parameters and measurement. Again, in Taoism they never were, and Heidegger always distanced himself from the outset from looking at the world in terms of objective presence or presence at hand (*Vorhandenheit*), reifying objects in Newtonian container-space and conceiving time as the Aristotelian series of now- points.

These points are all so interconnected that they can barely be discussed in isolation. Finally, the Tao has been described, I think rather aptly, as "the rhythm of the space-time structure," as "an uncircumscribed power ruling the totality of perceptible givens, itself remaining inaccessible to any specific actualization."[16] This is not exactly Heidegger's language, but surely the true spirit of his thought.

[16] Marcel Granet, *La Pensee Chinoise*. Paris: 1934.

Chapter 10

The Two Kinds of Thinking in Heidegger

From the period of *Being and Time* on, Heidegger has consistently polemicized against a certain kind of thinking that views everything within its ken as "objectively present" (*vorhanden*). This kind of thinking does not see things in their usefulness and contextuality (*zuhanden*), but objectifies them as Cartesian isolated, static, extended things. In the later works, this gets developed into calculative thinking, the thinking of technology whose root is metaphysics. In the course of his later writings, Heidegger develops an alternative kind of thinking that he calls *Besinnung* and *Andenken*, commonly translated as meditative thinking and remembrance. These two kinds of thinking reflect the two possible constellations of Being: *Gestell*, Framing and *Ereignis*, Appropriation. This chapter will take a brief look at representational, calculative thinking and then attempt the more difficult task of inquiring into "meditative" thinking.

With regard to the two kinds of thinking, we shall try to do two things, and only two things. We begin by asking (a) *how* does each kind of thinking "work," how does it proceed? and (b) *what* does it think? These two questions correspond to the traditional distinction of "form" and "content." We shall see that, in very different ways, the distinction will ultimately fail to hold up in both cases.

Calculative Thinking

At least there does not appear to be any substantive problem with translation in the case of calculative thinking. *Das rechnende (planende, kalkulierende) Denken* and *das vorstellende Denken* can be quite adequately rendered in English by calculative and representational thinking. Another term, used primarily in the lecture course *What Calls for Thinking* is

one-track thinking (*das eingleisige Denken*)). This is used primarily to designate our contemporary thoughtlessness with regard to language found in abbreviating everything. Heidegger's examples are less familiar to the English reader. English examples might be P.C. (personal computer), IRS (needs no comment), bio (biography). The list could be continued indefinitely.

In general, with the possible exception of Hölderlin and two or three Presocratics, Heidegger's claim is that *we do not think yet*. This means that the whole of Western thought beginning with Plato has been metaphysical. Thus the only kind of thinking that has been actualized in Western history is the metaphysical, representative and calculative kind of thinking. As for the second kind, we shall have to look to Heidegger himself to see in what direction it might lie.

What are the general characteristics of thinking up to now, that is, representational thinking, and how is it related to metaphysics? In *What Calls for Thinking*, Heidegger attempts to show the primordial Greek meaning of the terms *legein* and *noein*, a meaning that they retained up through Aristotle. Heidegger translated *legein* as letting-lie-before-us, *noein* as taking-into-heed. The two are mutually interpenetrating. In order to "perceive" something, we must let it lie before us. This letting is not simply passive behavior, but involves refraining from any kind of interference. We do not grasp, order, categorize or distort in any way; we simply let something lie before us. In so doing, however, we are already taking it into heed. The taking of taking-into-heed is not a grasping, which it will later become as *capio*, concept and *Griff, Begriff*; but allows what lies before us to arrive, to come to presence. Meanwhile, the *legein*, which has not ceased its activity but steadily interacts with *noein*, gathers together and preserves what *noein* takes into heed.

This is Heidegger's bold attempt at something enormously difficult if not altogether impossible: to describe the "simplest" thing in the world: preconceptual experience. In some ways it sounds strange; in other ways it sounds simplistic. In order to be able to understand what Heidegger is trying to get at, we ourselves have to try in some way to arrive at that way of perceiving. Heidegger gives an example of the sea. We may perhaps be less likely to categorize and conceptualize the sea than most things. To

some extent, most of us are capable of just listening to its rhythmic sound and looking at its incessant movement without injecting any logical categories or, worse yet, any subjective, "romantic" (again, a category) feelings and "interpretations" into it.

To understand this primordial structure of *legein* and *noein* is to understand what thinking was for the Greeks. Heidegger says that for a brief time this structure brings about the revealing of truth, *aletheuein*: to unconceal and keep unconcealed what is unconcealed. (The fact that Heidegger later retracts this attribution of truth to the Greeks and acknowledges it as his own need not overly concern us here. We are more interested in the phenomenon than in accurately placing it historically.)

But what happens to the structure of *legein* and *noein*, to thinking? Thinking becomes the *legein* of *logos* in the sense of the proposition and *noein* in the sense of perceiving through reason. Propositions and reason then become *ratio* for the Romans. Thinking becomes the rational and *legein* has become logic propositions and judgment; *noein* has become reason. Heidegger claims that in the dawn of the West thinking was not a grasping, a conceiving; thinking was not conceptual.[1]

The first kind of thinking thus has the following characteristics that all belong together and are interconnected: representational, calculative, logical, rational, conceptual and one-track. We can rephrase these characteristic as objectifying, reifying, substantializing and conceptualizing. Briefly stated, this kind of thinking distorts and manipulates what is. It perpetrates the activity of Framing. Our understanding of the world is metaphysical; everything is ordered and interpreted in the schema of cause and effect. The metaphysics of Christianity extends this schema and has it culminate in the idea of God as cause of the world. Predestination and fate are similarly thought as a kind of "cause." Only the holy, this central element in Hölderlin's poems, manages to escape this metaphysical schema of cause and effect; it is difficult to think of the holy as "cause."

After this brief characterization, we turn to the second kind of thinking. But here we run into a rather serious problem of translation.

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[1] *Das Denken ist kein Begreifen. In der hohen Frühe seiner Wesensentfaltung kennt das Denken nicht den Begriff. Was Heisst Denken* (Tubingen: Niemeyer, 1954), p. 128.

Heidegger has two words to characterize this kind of thinking, neither of which has an exact equivalent in English. Those words are *Besinnung* and *Andenken*, usually translated as meditative thinking and remembrance. I am critical of these translations, but must confess that I do not have a better alternative.

Besinnung

The translation "meditative thinking" is headed in the right direction in that meditative thinking certainly presents a contrast with representational, calculative thinking. But "meditation" will not do for what Heidegger has in mind. First of all, there are many different forms of meditation. Some forms attempt to concentrate on one thing; others on nothing; still others on following the breath, and many more. One dictionary, probably not a very good one, has as a first definition: to plan in the mind, think with a view to planning or acting. This sounds closer to calculative thinking than to *Besinnung*.

Most forms of meditation involve some kind of "turning within." This is true of Eastern forms as well as the forms of Marcus Aurelius, Descartes and Husserl in very different ways. But Heidegger's *Besinnung* does not coincide with a "turning within."

One might think that "contemplation" would do the trick. But in *Wissenschaft und Besinnung* Heidegger discusses the Roman translation of *theorein* and *theoria*, which reads *contemplari* and *contemplatio*. Heidegger states that this translation obliterates the meaning of the Greek words.

> *Contemplari* means to put something into one section and fence it in there. *Templum* is the Greek *temenos* that comes from a completely different experience from *theorein*. *Temnein* means to cut, to divide. The indivisible is the *atmeton*, *a-tomon*, atom.[2]

So we see that this will not do either.

"Reflective thinking" might be somewhat better if we could distance the meaning of this word in the German tradition from Kant to Hegel. Heidegger himself, however, is quite firm in stating that he is not talking about *Reflexion*.

[2] *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1954), p. 54.

> We are not talking *about* thinking. We remain outside of mere reflection that makes thinking its object. Great thinkers, first Kant and then Hegel, recognized what is unfruitful about this reflection. Thus they had to attempt to reflect themselves out of this reflection.[3]

These are not merely problems of translation; they are questions of *meaning*.

The term "*Besinnung*" is not a technical philosophical term, for example, out of German Idealism. It is a common, everyday term with a rich variety of possible meanings. It has its roots in both the mental and the physical sphere. The root noun "*Sinn*" has both significations of "meaning" and of "sense," as in the senses (*die Sinne*). Thus *Besinnung* is really a kind of "sensing" that includes the whole being, body and mind.

Pursuing the primordial meaning of the word *noein*, Heidegger states:

> *Noein* implies a perceiving which never was nor is a mere receiving of something. The *noein* perceives beforehand by taking to mind and heart. The heart is the wardship guarding what lies before us, though this wardship itself needs that guarding which is accomplished in the *legein* as gathering. *Noos* and *nous*, therefore, do not originally signify what later develops into reason; *noos* signifies the minding that has something in mind and takes it to heart. Thus *noein* also means what we understand by scenting--though we use the word mostly of animals, in nature.
>
> Man's scenting is divination (*Ahnen*). But since by now we understand all knowledge and all skill in terms of the thinking of logic, we measure "divination" by the same yardstick. But the word means more. Authentic divination is the mode in which essentials come to us and so come to mind, in order that we may keep them in mind. This kind of divination is not the outer court before the gates of knowledge. It is the great hall where everything that can be known is kept, concealed.[4]

The preposition "*an*" as the root of "*Ahnen*" establishes the connection with *An*denken. We shall return to this later.

Human *Wittern* (scenting) is *Ahnen* (divination). It is not introspective. Rather, it is directed toward what comes toward us, to the "future" in Heidegger's sense of that word. Wild animals *wittern* (scent); they sense something coming, usually possible danger. They do not meditate, contemplate or reflect. With all senses alert, they "know" something is

[3] *Was Heisst Denken* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1954), p. 9.

[4] *What Calls for Thinking?* trans. Fred D. Wieck and J. Glenn Gray (New York, Harper and Row, 1968), p. 207.

coming. We humans have almost totally lost our ability to sense. We do not sense that a storm is coming; the weather report has already informed (or misinformed) us of that. As far as our sense organs go, we rely almost entirely on our sense of sight in orienting ourselves to the world. If we live in large cities, we have lost much of our senses of hearing and smell simply out of self- defense. We still may just be able to sense how another person who is close to us feels. Not only do we not have a "sixth" sense, we do not even use the five that we have.

After a last quotation from *Wissenschaft und Besinnung* on *Besinnung*, we shall move on to *Andenken*. The conclusion of this chapter, which will not "conclude" anything, will take up the question: how does it come that we do not think and what, if anything, we can "do" about it?

> To take a direction that a matter has already taken of itself is called in our language *sinnan, sinnen*. To enter into meaning (*Sinn*) is the essence of *Besinnung*. This means more than simply making oneself conscious of something. We are not yet in *Besinnung* when we are in consciousness, *Besinnung* is more. It is the releasement to what is worthy of question.[5]

Besinnung is not ordinarily consciousness. It is the releasement from representational, calculative thinking. What it releases for is less easy to name or even anticipate. Anticipation, after all, is only another form of calculation. When I say that I have anticipated an emergency, this means that I am prepared and have planned for it, taking certain measures to ensure safety.

Andenken

Let us go back to what was said in *What Calls for Thinking* about *Ahnen*. Its root is the preposition "*an*", to, toward. One might think of the song of Beethoven, *An die Ferne Geliebte*, to the beloved. The song expresses an intense turning toward the beloved who is far away, one might say a kind of *Andenken*. *Andenken* for Heidegger is not to be confused with the tourist's use of the word when he buys, for example, a Black Forest cockoo clock, a souvenir, an *Andenken* that he can look at in his home in New

[5] Op. cit., p. 68.

Jersey and thus recall his summer vacation. For Heidegger, *Andenken* is not even primarily related to the past at all, at least not in the ordinary sense of that word.

Appealing to the older, impersonal use of *ahnen* in the constructions "*es anet mir*," "*es anet mich*," Heidegger distances the idea that *I* think toward something by reversing the direction: *it* comes *to* me, comes over me. Any "subjective" element, which, after all, is a feature of representational thinking, is excluded.

Any time I think of a past event and remember it, I am re- presenting it. This is not what Heidegger means by *Andenken*. At the end of the book on Hölderlin with that title, he states:

> What is poetized in the poem "*Andenken*" is the presencing and the essential time-space of a thinking that must remain unknown to all traditional doctrines of thought. Re-collecting (*andenkend*) thinking thinks of the festival that has been by thinking ahead to what is coming. But this re-collection backwards and forwards thinks before both [the festival and what is coming] toward destining (*das Schickliche*). Thinking toward destining belongs to destiny. Such 'thinking' belonging-to (*Angehören*) is the originating coming-to-presence of re-collection (*des Andenkens*).[6]

This is one of the fullest, most complex (and virtually untranslatable into non-barbaric English) statements about *Andenken*. But there are other simpler, more perspicuous ones.

> The conversation itself is the thinking of destining. And because the conversation is remembrance (*Erinnerung*), this thinking is an "*Andenken*." Because this thinking thinks re-collectingly (*andenkend*) and never only represents what is objectively present, it must at the same time think towards what is coming.[7]

Although what Heidegger has to say about *Andenken* is most at home and embedded in Hölderlin, we want to stay out of that complex and rich context as much as possible in order to concentrate on our question: the two kinds of thinking. We take leave of the book *Andenken* with one last quotation.

> But that is one of the mysteries of "*An-denken*" that we otherwise call "remembrance." This thinking-toward (*Hindenken*) what has been comes at the same time in the opposite direction toward the one who is thinking-toward (*den Hindenkenden*). But not

[6] *Hölderlins Hymne "Andenken"* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1982), p. 194.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 165.

> just to stand still as a kind of present, as the present of what is represented. If we totally allow what is remembered its presencing and nowhere disturb its prevailing, we experience how what is remembered does not at all stop in the present when it returns, as something re-presented, in order to be only an ersatz for the past. What is remembered swings past our present and suddenly stands in the future. It comes toward us. . . . But this thinking of (*Darandenken*) and thinking-toward (*Andenken*) does not get lost in something past. Thinking-toward is more mysterious in its thinking. Perhaps "thinking" is really always "thinking-toward." Perhaps thinking is something completely different from that formation about which "logic" as the "rules of thinking" reports.[8]

We can see here a certain modification of the temporal structures in *Being and Time*. In that work there was projection toward the future that came back to what has been, thus engendering the present. Here there seems to be an initial movement toward what has been that swings past the present (which would have to be conceived as a re-presented ersatz for the past, thus no real present at all) and comes toward us out of the future. Again, we want to stay with out topic of the two kinds of thinking and not delve into the question of temporality. Temporal analyses show, so to speak, how thinking "comes about." They are a more structurally oriented way of looking at the same phenomenon.

But one crucial point needs to be made here. Re-presenting places an image, object or concept before us that *stands for* (represents) what is not present. In contrast, Heidegger's thinking-toward or -back literally *reaches into* (measures through, *durchmisst*) the dimensions of "future" and "past" and allows them to arrive in the present, not as images, objects or concepts standing for what is not present, but as constituting the full dimensionality and presence of the present.

Gedachtnis. Before getting to our concluding question of why we do not think, we must briefly examine what Heidegger has to say about "memory" (*Gedächtnis*). Just as *Andenken* is not at all restricted to the past, neither is "memory." The English "memory" comes from the Latin *memor*, to be mindful. Thus even the English term does not have the exclusive emphasis on the past that it has come to have in common parlance.

Heidegger treats the term "*Gedächtnis*" as the "non-universal" unity of all thinking, similar to the way in which *Gestell* (Framing) is the unity of

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 54-5.

all the various activities of "*stellen*." The analogy in everyday language that he appeals to is *das Gebirge*, the mountain chain as the non-universal, non-subsumptive unity of a group of mountains (*die Berge*).

Heidegger brings in the old word for thought (*Gedanc*, an earlier form of *Gedanke*) and relates thinking (*Denken*) to thanking (*Danken*).

The root or originary word says: the gathered, all-gathering thinking that recalls.[9]

Heidegger is using the word "*Gedächtnis*" in a way almost synonymous with "*Gemüt*." Far from relating exclusively or even primarily to the past, memory encompasses everything essential that we "keep in mind," which certainly includes the present and also the future.

> But the word "*the thanc*" does not mean only what we call a man's disposition or heart, and whose essential nature we can hardly fathom. Both memory and thanks move and have their being in the *thanc*. "Memory" initially did not at all mean the power to recall. The word designates the whole disposition in the sense of a steadfast intimate concentration upon the things that essentially speak to us in every thoughtful meditation. Originally, "memory" means as much as devotion: a constant concentrated abiding with something--not just with something that has passed, but in the same way with what is present and with what may come. What is past, present and to come appears in the oneness of its own *present* being.[10]

Why do we not think and what can we do about it?

The first thing to ask in the context of the question why we do not think is: what is it that we are supposed to think and fail to do so? Heidegger has three closely related terms for this, three variations of one word: *das Bedenkliche* (the thought-provoking), *das Bedenklichste* (the most thought--provoking), and *das zu-Denkende* (what is to be thought). *Das Bedenkliche* is what invites and attracts us to think. *Das Bedenklichste*, the superlative of the adjective, is the extreme form of what attracts us to think in its

[9] *What Calls for Thinking?* p. 139. "Das anfänglische Wort der 'Gedanc' sagt das gesammelte, alles versammelnde Gedenken. 'Der Gedanc' sagt soviel wie das Gemüt, der muot, das Herz."

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 140.

present manifestation of our not thinking. *Das zu-Denkende* is used in a double sense: (1) in its ordinary meaning of what is to be thought, what needs to be thought (*participium necessitatis*) and (2) in Heidegger's special, literal meaning of what is thinking itself toward us. With this one word, *das zu-Denkende*, Heidegger has expressed the "identity" (belonging--together) of man and Being, named in the context of the terminology of thinking.

How does it come that we fail to think *das zu-Denkende*? This kind of question is always a bit tricky in Heidegger. Fundamentally, man has no "control" over Being; if he fails to think it, this failure belongs to the destiny of Being and is not the doing of man. And yet man is not a puppet. He has "freedom," a freedom that lies outside the fruitless, shopworn dichotomy free-will/determinism. We cannot go into the extremely important issue of freedom here in any detail. But a few brief remarks must be made to the extent that freedom, after all, is an unavoidable issue in the question of what we can do about the situation that we do not think.

Most discussions of freedom take place within the framework of free *will* and determinism. These two factors, free-will and determinism, are conceived as mutually exclusive alternatives: *either* we have free will *or* we are determined. The either-or here is, in Latin, an *aut-aut* either this or else that, but not both; not a *vel-vel*, could be this or that, or anything. Many contemporary discussions, philosophical and also those that represent general opinion, favor some brand of determinism, perhaps best exemplified by the Skinnerian Box. Man is pretty much the same as the rat or as Pavlov's dog. The law of cause and effect is inexorable. Science, the unquestionable tribunal, has taught us this. But it is precisely the scientists who have begun to see that there is much that cannot be calculated and that does not fit the predictable framework of cause and effect, most notably beginning with Heisenberg.

Heidegger does not speak of free will, but of freedom. His whole discussion of freedom, most of which can be found in his book on *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, does not take place within the context of the will. The concept of the will belongs thoroughly to the modern period of subjectivity going back to the medieval thinkers,

getting crystallized in Descartes and culminating in Schelling's statement: all primal being is Will.

What, then, is freedom if it is not free will? Before attempting to respond to, not answer, this question, let us first ask why man is not *determined*. Determined by what? Not by circumstances, by heredity or environment, by "fate," but by Being. For if Being alone is what truly *is*, one might think that man is determined by Being and subject to it.

We are not going to be able to work this question out to any satisfactory degree, not because of lack of space or time, but because we are unable to "go beyond" what Heidegger was able to say on this subject. In fact, we are probably unable to go as far as he did, to follow the few intimations he gave us.

"Being itself" intrinsically has nothing to do with the will, Schelling to the contrary. The forgottenness of Being does culminate in the metaphysics of absolute subjectivity and finally in the "will to will," which Heidegger attributes to Nietzsche but which might be more appropriately suited to Schopenhauer. But this is not Being itself. Although he eventually had to relinquish the ontological difference in its original form, Heidegger never ceased to uphold some kind of "distinction" between Being and beings, however it is to be thought outside of the framework of metaphysics and ontology.

Being is not a cause. Thus it is not the cause of man either and cannot determine him. But there is, of course, an absolutely central relation between man and Being. One of the ways Heidegger has consistently (from *Being and Time* on) characterized this relation is "attunement," a word chosen from the realm of hearing, not of sight.

> Under-standing in the fundamental mood. Under-standing in standing-within. Ex-perience of *Da-sein*. Mood--being attuned-- to hear the attunement. To be able to hear: *calls* of the stillness of Being. What tunes, attunes, but has no "effect." (1941-43)[11]

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[11] *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985), p. 189. "Ver-ständigung in die Grund-stimmung. Ver-ständigung in die Inständigkeit. Er-fahrung des Da-seins. Stimmung--Gestimmtheit--die Stimmen hören. Hörenkönnen: Zurufe der Stille des Seyns. Das stimmende be-stimmt, aber 'wirkt' nicht."

To stay within the sphere of hearing for a moment, we might ask what happens when we hear a piece of music. The relevance of this example will, of course, depend upon the aural sensitivity of the listener; some people, often very intellectual and intelligent people, have little or virtually no sensitivity to music. One could say that a piece of music creates or produces a certain feeling or mood. It is possible to interpret anything in this causal manner, and indeed with hardly any exception we seem to do just that. But this is not what happens when I truly listen to the music. When I really listen, I am not thinking about anything, not even about the music. My consciousness goes along with, "follows" the music, not *behind* it but simultaneously. The music inhabits my consciousness; I dwell in the music. There is no distinction. The moment I stray from it and think about something, a bifurcation, a lapse occurs and the music is lost. Most concert-goers are familiar with this experience. We are all too easily distracted.

In true listening, "cause" and "effect" coalesce. There is no gap into which a causal schema could be inserted.

If we are not "determined" by anything, not even by Being, wherein lies the dimension of our freedom? Human freedom, says Heidegger, is the faculty of good and evil. Without going into the question of good and evil here, let us concentrate on the word "faculty." A faculty is a capability, an ability. Heidegger states that an inclination to its possibilities always belongs to a faculty.

> Freedom in the sense of being truly free includes the fact that the faculty has become a liking.[12]

For our limited purposes, this means that our freedom is a capability for liking, for being attracted to Being. Man can also distort that attraction in the self-will of metaphysics. The name for Being in the context of a discussion of thinking is *das zu-Denkende*, what is to be thought.

> *Das Bedenklichste* (what is most thought-provoking) shows itself in our *bedenklichen* (thought-provoking) time in that we do not yet think. We do not think yet because *das zu-Denkende* (what is to be thought) has turned *away* from man and not at all because man does not sufficiently turn *toward* what is to be thought. What is to be thought turns away from man. It withdraws from him by withholding itself from him. But what is withheld is always held before us. What withdraws in the manner of withholding does not disappear. . . . What withdraws denies arrival. But withdrawal is not nothing. Withdrawal is withholding and is as such Appropriation. . . . It draws us along and attracts us in its way. . . . What withdraws presences, namely in such a way that it attracts us, whether we notice it at all or not. What attracts us has already granted arrival. When we enter into that drawing of withdrawal, we are on the way in the draft to what attracts us by withdrawing.[13]

[12] The play on words is lost in the English. *Vermögen* is faculty, *mögen* is to like or be drawn and attracted to something.

We cannot go further into this fundamental structure of Heidegger's thinking: attraction-withdrawal, unconcealment-concealment. One of its most important implications is that the alternatives of presence-absence are not sufficient to express what he has to say. We think that a thing is either there or it is not there. This kind of either-or is not existential (Kierkegaard); it is metaphysical, rooted in representational thinking. Durational objective presence (*Vorhandenheit*) and empty absence are concepts stemming from our metaphysical way of objectifying, substantializing and reifying things.

Heidegger's sentence from *Gelassenheit* gives us one of the many formulations that he suggests as alternatives to metaphysical thinking.

> *Die Inständigkeit in der Gelassenheit zur Gegnet wäre darnach das echte Wesen der Spontaneität des Denkens.* (Standing-within releasement to the region could then be the genuine presencing of the spontaneity of thinking.)[14]

Our true spontaneity in thinking lies in an openness and receptivity to what attracts in its withdrawal, to what still presences in its absence.

Metaphysical thinking can only think objective presence or the absence of objective presence. It objectifies and conceptualizes everything. If we remain open to the possibility of another kind of "thinking," we might be able to come to experience things as they are. One of Heidegger's most fruitful efforts to think things non-metaphysically as they are can be seen, for example, in the thing as the meeting-place of the fourfold of earth, heaven, immortals and mortals. Another way of non-metaphysical, non-conceptualizing experience lies in the realm of art. There are

[13] *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, pp. 134-5.

[14] *Gelassenheit* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1960), p. 62.

non-metaphysical ways of experiencing already at work if we will just pay heed to them, allow for their possibility and, above all, for their reality.

One of the few *genuine*, not pseudo, affinities Heidegger has with Buddhism lies in distinguishing different kinds of thinking. We are shown three kinds of thinking in the following *mondo* (question and answer exchange), not originated, but developed by Dogen (thirteenth century).

> After sitting, a monk asked Great Teacher Yuëh-shan Hung-tao: "What are you thinking of in the immobile state of sitting?" The master replied: "I think of not-thinking." The monk asked: "How can one think of not-thinking?" The master replied: "By nonthinking."[15]

All thinking (*Shiryo*) objectifies. Not-thinking (*Fushiryo*) objectifies and negates the process of thinking itself. Nonthinking (*Hishiryo*) alone is without reflective objectification and allows things to presence as they are.

It was Nietzsche who said:

> Abstract thinking is arduous for many people,--for me, on good days, a festival and an intoxication.[16]

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[15] *Flowers of Emptiness*, trans. Hee-jin Kim (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellon Press, 1985), p. 157.

[16] Die Unschuld des Werdens, *Kröners Taschenausgabe*, Vol. 82, p. 367.

Chapter 11

Nihilism and the End of Philosophy

The title of one of Heidegger's later essays reads: The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking. The phrase, "the end of philosophy" takes on increasing importance in the later writings so that the thoughtful reader begins to ask himself what Heidegger really means by that phrase. Does he mean that philosophy is "over," finished, done with? Is he making a statement similar to that of Hegel who says (in the Lectures on Aesthetics) that the time for art to express the highest reality, absolute Spirit, is past, that art is no longer capable of adequately expressing absolute Spirit and is, thus, essentially, a thing of the past? In contrast to Schelling who thought that art was the highest expression of all since it synthesized both nature and Spirit, Hegel meant by his statement that art is a thing of the past that absolute Spirit had developed beyond the level of any kind of sensuousness to the pure concept; since art always necessarily involves some element of sensuousness, it was not longer capable of expressing absolute Spirit at its developmental stage of the pure concept. Does Heidegger mean something like this? Has the history of Being progressed to some stage of development where philosophy is no longer adequate to express it, to express what is going on in the world today? If he did mean this, what would be the adequate expression of the reality of today? Are we to go "back" to art or poetry or literary criticism, or find a new religion, maybe Taoism or Zen Buddhism? Or is nothing adequate to express the reality of today; are we supposed to give up the idea of "expressing" anything at all? What is the "philosopher" supposed to do short of consigning himself to the ontological ashheap whence, unlike the phoenix, he shall never emerge? Is the philosopher to stop thinking?

Obviously not. The title of the essay named above reads: The End of Philosophy *and* the Task of Thinking. The end of philosophy sends us precisely to a new task of philosophy that comes *only* after the end of

philosophy, or at least when the end of philosophy has set in. So we must first ask what exactly Heidegger means by this phrase, "the end of philosophy."

"Philosophy" in the phrase, "the end of philosophy" means unequivocally metaphysics. For Heidegger, the history of Western philosophy from Plato to Nietzsche has been metaphysics, even and especially when it has called itself by such names as empiricism, positivism, Marxism, names that would like to deny any meta-physical reality whatsoever. Thus, it is metaphysics that is at an end, not every possible kind of "philosophy" and certainly not thinking as such.

Having said this, we must ask the more difficult question, what Heidegger means by end. We may recall that already in *Being and Time* Heidegger discussed the term 'end' in his phrase, being-toward-the-end and distinguished it from being-at-an-end. Being-at-an-end means that something is over, something stops or ceases. The road ends, it stops; the rain ends, it ceases. Heidegger does not mean to say that philosophy or metaphysics stops or ceases; on the contrary, it is still with us. In fact, Heidegger says somewhere that the end of metaphysics can "last" longer than its previous history.

Thus, end does not mean cessation or stoppage. Well, then, can it mean aim or goal, *telos*? Again, obviously not. Heidegger's thinking has never been teleological, and he has never conceived of the history of philosophy as progressing toward a *telos*. This clearly distinguishes him from Hegel. Then, if end means neither cessation nor goal, what can it mean?

Heidegger intends the term end in the sense of *Voll-endung*, the complete and total end, completion, the most extreme possibility.

> The old meaning of the word "end" means the same as place: "from one end to the other" means: from one place to the other. The end of philosophy is the place, that place in which the whole of philosophy's history is gathered in its most extreme possibility. End as completion means this gathering.[1]

Now that we have some idea of what Heidegger means by end, let us see what it is that is completing itself, gathering itself in its most extreme possibility: metaphysics as the history of Being. We stop short. Does

[1] *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 57.

Heidegger not say that metaphysics has precisely *not* been a history of Being, that metaphysics is the history of the *forgottenness* of Being?

Metaphysics claims to think Being, but it always thinks the Being *of beings*; it has never been able to think Being as Being, without regard to it as the ground of beings. Indeed, metaphysics does not even catch sight of a problem or anything worthy of question here. Metaphysics busies itself exclusively with beings while tacitly assuming that it thereby has Being in its grasp. Stated most succinctly, metaphysics always represents Being as a being. In distinguishing essence or whatness from existence or thatness, metaphysics focusses on *what* a being is on the side of essence, thus thoroughly entrenching itself in the realm of beings. On the side of existence, it focusses on *the fact that* something is. Both elements of the fundamental distinction constituting all of metaphysics, essence and existence, fail to get out of the realm of beings. Essence emphasizes *what* something is, existences the *fact that* something is; both fail to see the *is*.

This brings us to the *ground* of metaphysics, the ontological difference. This distinction has its roots in *Being and Time* as the distinction between the ontic and the ontological. It is explicitly named as such in *The Essence of Ground*. Fundamentally, it is a distinction Heidegger held on to for most of his philosophical life, finally stating in one or two places that it, too, should be relinquished.[2] The ontological difference pays heed to the distinction between Being and beings and, insofar as it does this, it is a distinction that Heidegger always attempted to think. The difficulty lies, again, in the tendency of metaphysics to distort the ontological difference. Instead of preserving the difference of Being from beings, metaphysics, in representing Being as the existing ground of beings (a phrase Heidegger adopts from Nietzsche in his discussion of nihilism), subjugates it to beings. In other words, the ontological difference, too, winds up falling prey to metaphysics, to onto-theo-logic. Thus, in the Thor seminars, Heidegger calls the ontological difference "the most dangerous matter for

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 33, 37.

thinking because it always represents Being in the horizon of metaphysics as a being."[3]

The closest Heidegger gets to persevering in his attempt to preserve the ontological difference is when he thinks the difference not as a distinction (from *distinguo*, to separate this from that), but literally and verbally as difference (from *dif-fero*, *diaphora*, to carry apart). This is the fundamental meaning of the term perdurance, *Austrag*.

> For world and thing do not exist next to each other. They traverse each other. In so doing, the two measure through a middle in which they are unified. As thus unified they are intimate. The middle of the two is intimacy. Our language names the middle of two the Between. The Latin language says *inter*. The German *"unter"* corresponds to it. The intimacy of world and thing is not a melting together. Intimacy holds sway only where what is intimate, world and thing, separate purely and remain separate. In the middle of the two, in the Between of world and thing, in their *inter*, in this *unter*--the separation holds sway.[4]

The difference is thought not as two elements, world and thing, separated from each other, but as the measuring out of the Between (gen. subj. and obj.) which first lets world and things be.

> The dif-ference of its own accord holds the middle apart toward which and through which world and thing are intimate with each other. The intimacy of the difference is the unifying element of *diaphora*, of perdurance, carrying through. The dif- ference carries world in its worlding, carries out things in their thinging. Thus carrying them out, it carries them toward each other. The difference does not mediate afterwards by connecting world and things through a middle added on. The dif- ference as the middle first mediates world and things to their essence, that is, in their toward-each-other whose unity it carries out.[5]

Heidegger rejects the terms of distinction and even relation to characterize world and things, preferring the word dimension which literally means measuring through, meting out. Again, he is trying to get away from the representation of two objectively present "elements," world and thing, separated by an objectively present "area." Put as directly as possible, these "factors" are not only not reified objects, they are not even "there"; they

[3] *Vier Seminare* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1977), pp. 45, 47, 84.

[4] *Unterwegs zur Sprache* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1959), p. 24, translation mine.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

come to presence only in the "activity" of perduring the Between, of being held toward each other and apart from each other by the difference.

World and things have become the terms for Being and beings in this attempt to think the ontological difference in a non-metaphysical way. Anyone who has read *Being and Time* will find it impossible to think "world" as any kind of object whatsoever; and anyone who reads the essay, "The Thing," will be led to think the thing as the "meeting place" of the fourfold, of earth and heaven, immortals and mortals.

Thus Heidegger gives up the metaphysically thought ontological difference in favor of re-thinking the very essence of what difference as such is, and that means at the same time of what identity is.

> The main difficulty lies in the fact that from the perspective of Appropriation it becomes necessary to free thinking from the ontological difference. From the perspective of Appropriation, this relation shows itself as the relation between world and thing, a relation which could in a way be understood as the relation of Being and beings. But then its peculiar quality would be lost.[6]

So much for the ontological difference at this point. We shall return to the question of difference and identity when we discuss Appropriation. But first we want to return to the question of how metaphysics can be the history of Being when it is precisely the history of the *forgottenness* of Being.

The history of metaphysics as the history of the forgottenness of Being does not mean that, apart from all the epochs of the history of metaphysics (the Being of beings as *idea*, *energeia*, etc.), Being as Being is "there," but does not show itself. Being as Being remains absent, and this absence is totally what Being as Being "is."

> Being's remaining absent is Being itself *as this remaining absent*. Being is not somewhere separated by itself and then remains absent, but Being's remaining absent as such is Being itself. In remaining absent Being hides itself with itself. This veil disappearing into itself, as which Being itself presences in remaining absent, is the nothing as Being itself.[7]

There is, so to speak, no "place" or "room" for Being as Being to "be" outside of its remaining absent. This goes a step further (or back) from

[6] *On Time and Being*, op. cit., p. 37.

[7] *Nietzsche II* (Pfullingen: 1961), pp. 353-4, translation mine.

merely saying that Being cannot be represented as a being. Heidegger is saying not that Being is somehow "there" (where?) off by itself, only it does not appear, remaining absent from view. Being's remaining absent is what there "is" and that is all. The question then obtrudes itself if Being as Being is ever to come into its own, where does it come from if all that is is its remaining absent? Heidegger does not seem to get into this question; certainly Being's coming into its own cannot be thought as the actualization of some potential germ. Perhaps the term *remaining* absent (*Ausbleiben*) is somehow outside of the stark alternatives of presence (objective presence, *Vorhandenheit*) and absence (*das nichtige Nichts*).

This leads us to the question of nothing and nihilism which, in its turn, involves the relation of remaining absent to leaving out (*Auslassen*). In the passage just cited, Heidegger speaks of Being's remaining absent as this veil disappearing into itself, the nothing. Already in *What is Metaphysics?* Heidegger had spoken of nothing as the veil of Being. The veil is thus no arbitrary metaphor. A veil covers or conceals something, and this points into the dimension of concealment so essential to Being. To Being as such belong both unconcealment and concealment. Heidegger's favorite Heraclitus fragment, "Nature loves to hide," is absolutely central here. Nature does not just "come out to play;" its play is essentially a hiding, a kind of hide-and-go-seek.

Of course, the term "nothing" is appropriate to what Heidegger is trying to say in that it does not refer to a being: no thing. But beyond that, we want to see what more it can have to say to us.

A distinction is made in the section of the second Nietzsche volume entitled, "The Determination of Nihilism in Terms of the History of Being," that harkens back to *Being and Time* with its well- known distinction of authenticity and inauthenticity. That distinction now somehow reappears as the distinction between true (*eigentlich*) and untrue (*uneigentlich*) nihilism. In other words, there is a nihilism which is genuine or true, and one that is not. In our present context we shall then be forced to re-question what these terms authentic, real, true, genuine and inauthentic, untrue can possibly mean. In other words, we are, among all sorts of other things, trying to deal with the question of how nihilism can be "inauthentic."

Undoubtedly, it was Nietzsche who moved Heidegger to reflect on nihilism. Heidegger states that for Nietzsche nihilism is the history of the devaluation of the highest values (God is dead, etc.) and that nihilism is thus a history in which something happens to beings.[8] Since for Heidegger Nietzsche conceived Being as a *value*, he remains stuck within the framework of subjectivity and nowhere gets near the dimension of what Heidegger calls Being. Nietzsche wanted to *overcome* nihilism by "affirming" life; Heidegger claims that Nietzsche *completes* nihilism (by conceiving Being as value and thus entrenching himself in the unconditional dominance of beings without the remotest possibility of questioning Being). Thus, Heidegger takes nihilism a step further to mean not merely that with regard to beings there is nothing (Nietzsche's position), but that with regard to Being there is nothing.

> When there is nothing with regard to beings one can find nihilism, but one does not meet up with its *essence* that only appears where the nothing concerns Being itself. The essence of nihilism is the history in which in regard to Being there is nothing.[9]

The question of nihilism is not a simple one. Nietzsche had already distinguished between two kinds of nihilism (both foreshadowed by the pessimism of Schopenhauer), active and passive. As the terms themselves suggest, one form (the passive) is a kind of surrender to nihilism, while the other (the active) offers the possibility of a way out of nihilism. These positive and negative "evaluations" of nihilism are central for Nietzsche; Heidegger, as is often his wont, attempts to abstain from value judgments insofar as this is possible at all with something like nihilism which almost seems to have negativity built into it. As we said before, Heidegger distinguishes between true and untrue nihilism, and our problem now becomes that of trying to understand what he means by this. At least in *Being and Time*, the issue of authenticity-inauthenticity was quite clear; it concerned the human being and represented the more "existential" aspect of the early Heidegger. But nihilism primarily concerns Being itself and human being only in a "derivative," never an originary sense. To restate

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[8] *Nietzsche II*, p. 337.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 338.

this in a less misleading way, nihilism concerns Being itself, and thus the *essence* of man as the "there" (*Da-sein*), the "place" (*Ortschaft*) of Being.[10]

Coordinated with the terms true and untrue nihilism, Heidegger uses the terms essence and dis-essence of nihilism. The two phenomena, true nihilism and the essence of nihilism, and untrue nihilism and the dis-essence of nihilism belong together. This is a very subtle and complex thought that we want to try to clarify. True nihilism is synonymous with metaphysics since in metaphysics with respect to Being there is nothing.

> The thinking of metaphysics does not concern itself with Being because it has *already* thought Being, namely, as a being insofar as it, a being, is.[11]

Heidegger states that we have to experience true nihilism or the essence of metaphysics from Being itself.

> The essence of true nihilism is Being itself in the remaining absent of its unconcealment that, as its own, it itself is and in remaining absent determines its "is."[12]

The situation that with regard to Being there is nothing, what Heidegger calls true nihilism, has two aspects or factors: (1) that Being remains absent, and (2) that thinking leaves out, omits, neglects to pay heed to this remaining absent. It seems that an element intrinsic to Being, its concealing itself as counterpart to unconcealing itself, "takes over" so that, instead of remaining still and quasi-dormant as the "self-preserving" factor, this element of concealing goes into the extreme of withdrawal. Being then presences as this withdrawal, remaining in view as the Being of beings. We, and with us beings, are never totally without Being for beings could not be without Being. Being is never simply totally absent. And yet it withdraws, it remains absent. We are abandoned by Being. Here again the traditional alternatives of presence or absence are not adequate for what Heidegger is trying to say. But he has in a sense a precursor in Schelling with his will of the ground. The will of the ground is supposed to remain just that, ground, foundation, basis. When, however, that will seeks to assert itself and strike out on its own independent of the will of the understanding, the essential relation between the two wills gets thrown

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 357-8.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 350.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 356.

out of kilter, balance is lost and evil arises. However, the context and problematic of Schelling's inquiry and the factor of will are completely foreign to Heidegger's own thought; there is only a certain *structural* affinity with concealment-unconcealment transmuting into withdrawal.

I am perhaps pushing Heidegger beyond what he is willing to say so that these and the following remarks will have to remain somewhat tentative. We return to the question of true and untrue nihilism and to the relation of remaining absent and leaving out. True nihilism means that with regard to Being there is nothing. Being keeps to itself and withdraws. Leaving out pertains to man, although ultimately it is occasioned by Being.

> But insofar as this remaining absent occurs in metaphysics what is appropriate (true) is not admitted *as* what is proper and appropriate to nihilism. Rather, remaining absent as such is left out precisely in the thinking of metaphysics in such a way that metaphysics also leaves out this leaving out as its own doing. Through this leaving out, remaining absent is left to itself in a veiled way. What is appropriate (true) to nihilism, just by happening, *is not* what is appropriate. How so? Nihilism as metaphysics occurs in what is inappropriate to itself. But this inappropriate element is not a lack of the appropriate, but rather its completion insofar as it is Being's remaining absent itself and Being wants its remaining absent to remain completely what it is. What is appropriate to nihilism occurs historically in the form of what is inappropriate which brings about a leaving out of the remaining absent by yet leaving out this leaving out and in all of this with all of its affirmation of beings admits and can admit nothing that could concern Being. The complete essence of nihilism is the primordial unity of what is appropriate and inappropriate to it.[13]

The unity of what is appropriate and inappropriate to nihilism is basically an expression for the fact that the inappropriate, so to speak, feeds off the appropriate; it cannot exist independently by itself. It is a bit like the "evil" of the seventeenth century rationalists in that it is basically a privation, but for Heidegger it hardly contributes to the variety and perfection of the whole.

Inappropriate nihilism, which properly belongs in the unity with appropriate nihilism, consists in leaving out, in omitting the remaining absent of Being. Appropriate or true nihilism consists in the remaining absent of Being; this remaining absent is the way Being arrives or presences in the shelter (*Unterkunft*) of the essence of thinking. Heidegger is attempting to express something here which does not coincide with mere

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 360-361.

presence (*Vorhandenheit*) or mere absence (*das nichtige Nichts*). The question is perhaps not so much whether or not this can be done, but to what extent it can be done. Every great thinker pushes back the boundaries of what cannot be said a little further.

Although leaving out is predominantly occasioned by Being, Heidegger at one point calls it "the work of human thinking."[14] We have left out the remaining absent of Being. What should we do? Nietzsche's claim to have overcome nihilism leaves Heidegger cold, if not downright allergic. To attempt to overcome nihilism would be a far worse lapse into what is inappropriate in the essence of nihilism, into what distorts the appropriate in nihilism. Instead of leaving *out* Being (*auslassen*), we should leave or let it *be* (*lassen*). This means at our juncture in the history of Being that we should let the remaining absent of Being be, not omit it and leave it out. We have to experience appropriate or true nihilism, the remaining absent of Being. Although Heidegger oscillates between saying that all of this is our doing and saying that everything is completely "up to Being," it is ultimately pretty much Being's ballgame. Part of our trouble lies in our looking to one side or the other to call the shots, to Being or to man, whereas the *essence* of man lies in being the "there" of Being, lies in some fundamental identity that includes difference conceived not as a distinction but as the perdurance (*dif-fere, dia-phorein*), the relation of man and Being. Heidegger most consistently characterizes this relation as Being needing and using thinking for the shelter of its arrival.

We must take the step back out of leaving out. In so doing, we allow Being's remaining absent to arrive. In this remaining absent, the uncon-cealedness of Being conceals itself, and indeed as the presencing of Being itself.[15] We take the step back from the leaving out of Being to the remaining absent of Being. Again, the first genitive, the leaving out of Being, is closer to an objective genitive, whereas the second genitive, the remaining absent of Being, is closer to a subjective genitive. In the first case, Being is what is left out; in the second, Being is what "does" the

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 367.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 368.

remaining absent. But we know that, while Heidegger makes fruitful use of this distinction, he is not going to want to get stuck in a subject-object relation of whatever sort either.

What Heidegger is talking about when he speaks of nihilism is beyond the distinction of positive or negative that belongs to the subjectivity of value judgments. Yet we can still say that what is potentially a danger in nihilism lies in the leaving out, lies in inappropriate nihilism. In the history of its remaining absent, Being keeps to itself with its unconcealed-ness.

> *Being itself presences as this keeping to itself.* This presencing of Being, however, does not occur behind and above beings; rather, if the idea of such a relation be permitted, *before* beings as such.[16]

In remaining absent, Being promises itself in its unconcealment.

> Being's remaining absent is the withdrawal of itself in keeping to itself with its unconcealment that it promises in its refusing self-concealment. Thus, Being presences as promising in withdrawal. But withdrawal remains a relation as which Being itself lets the shelter of itself come to itself.[17]

Without Being, there is nothing at all (in the sense of *das nichtige Nichts*). Thus, even in its self-concealment and withdrawal, Being remains in relation to us. Even the "letting loose" (*Loslassung*) into beings or beingness, the total dominance of metaphysics that threatens to strangle and refuse the opening out of the Origin's originating, is a letting loose of *Being* (again, a subjective and objective genitive).

It is not possible to systematize Heidegger neatly. If it were, he would have done it himself. But then, this is true not only of Heidegger. With this in mind, I should like in the remainder of this chapter to focus on two questions. As usual, I cannot solve or answer them but only try to stake them out and perhaps clarify them. The two questions are both related to the question of the end of philosophy, that is, what can we do or hope for now, what is the task of thinking now? The two questions have to do with a problem, and then with a thought that to my knowledge has not been dealt with as thoroughly as other issues in Heidegger. I shall start with the problem to which is connected a brief personal story.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 382.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 390.

The problem is perdurance (*Austrag*). Simply stated, perdurance occurs in Heidegger both as a process and as a structure. The terms difference (*Dif-ferenz*, *Unter-Schied*) and *Inständigkeit* all refer to the same phenomenon. The brief personal story is as follows. The very first time I met Hannah Arendt was at a SPEP conference in New York in 1969 where she was giving a lecture. After the lecture, I was introduced to her by Glenn Gray, and we naturally fell to discussing Heidegger. The conversation for some reason eventually got around to the meaning of *Austrag* and the question of how to translate it. Hannah conceived of *Austrag* as a process; after all, her example, *ein Kind austragen* (to carry a child to term, to give birth), is very definitely a process! But I had a Heraclitus fragment in mind (the one about being carried apart and carried together) where the image is more that of a tensed bow (and arrow), thus, a structure. Hannah and I had a wonderfully rollicking argument which we enjoyed immensely with neither about to back down. When Glenn Gray joined forces with Hannah, saying that she was right, I had a bit of trouble holding my own against this awesomely illustrious pair, so I went to the source: I wrote to Heidegger. The reply was dramatically in my favor: *Sie haben die einzig richtige Auslegung.*

But the issue is not one of who was right. Hannah was right, too; we both were. For example, in the essay, *Language*, *Austrag* is conceived primarily as a process.

> *Die Dinge tragen, indem sie dingen, Welt aus. Unsere alte Sprache nennt das Austragen: bern, bären, daher die Wörter "gebären" und "Gebärde." Dingend sind die Dinge Dinge. Dingend gebärden sie Welt.*[18]

I, on the other hand, had been struggling with the essay, "On the Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics," where *Austrag* is conceived as what I call, for lack of a better word, a structure.

> The perdurance (*Austrag*) of that which grounds and that which is grounded, as such, not only holds the two apart, it holds them facing each other. What is held apart is held in the tension of perdurance in such a way that not only does Being ground beings as their ground, but beings in their turn ground, cause Being in their way.[19]

By its very nature, a tension does not and cannot go anywhere while still remaining a tension.

As with the subjective and objective genitive mentioned before, the problem here, too, lies with language and, in this instance especially, with grammar. Being totally innocent of linguistics, I can proceed here with outrageously naive aplomb. Already in *Being and Time* Heidegger was trying to get away from the conception of the world as a static container full of reified static things by stressing the relations *between* things, an endeavor that finally culminated later in the "thinging of the thing." The relations between things are expressed by connectives and prepositions, and *Being and Time* abounds with them. To name a few: in order to, for the sake of which, what for, being in, being with; and, most importantly, the linguistically somewhat clumsy expression of the Care structure in prepositional form: ahead-of-itself-already-together-with-being-in-the-world.

Wittgenstein accepts the *usage* of grammar, finding that it expresses perfectly adequately what we want and need to say. For him, *grammar works*. Heidegger, however, is straining at the bit of grammar; he wants somehow to break through it. Here again, the question is not who is right. Of the two thinkers, Wittgenstein was the more "consistent" (*konsequent*); he adhered strictly to the last statement of the *Tractatus*. From a Wittgenstein viewpoint, Heidegger would probably seem to be trying to square the circle, sometimes in quite a convoluted way at that. But, in partial defense of Heidegger, we could say that he was rather trying to circle the square. He was using the hermeneutic, not the vicious, circle to circle around the square, the fourfold of earth and heaven, immortals and mortals. I am not taking sides here. Both of these two great thinkers were after something very similar (Heidegger would want to say the same, not the identical) in quite different ways. I believe it was the word grammar, so foreign to Heidegger, that set me off on these side remarks.

What I am trying to say is that Heidegger could not find his viable solution or way in grammar or language. When he finally weighs the

[18] *Op. cit.*, p. 22. By thinging, things carry out world. Our old languages calls such carrying *bern*, *bären*--Old High German *beran*--to bear; hence the words *gebären*, to carry, *gestate*, give birth, and *Gebärde*, bearing, gesture. Thinging, things are things. Thinging, the gesture--gestate--world. (*Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 200.

[19] *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 68.

possibility that the step back out of metaphysics to Appropriation may never come about, he begins to question tentatively whether language as the house of Being is not perhaps a metaphysical building after all. In speaking of the difficulty through which the step back must pass, he says:

> That difficulty lies in language. Our Western languages are languages of metaphysical thinking, each in its own way. It must remain an open question whether the nature of Western languages is in itself marked with the exclusive brand of metaphysics, and thus marked permanently by onto-theo-logic, or whether these languages offer other possibilities of utterance--and that means at the same time of a telling silence.[20]

While conceding that Western languages bear the bulk of the difficulty, it is surely at least a question whether *any* language, Chinese, Japanese, Tibetan or whatever, is not fraught with difficulties in expressing what has often been called inexpressible. One of the thinkers who went the furthest in this attempt to express the inexpressible was the Japanese Buddhist, Dogen. But I am sure that his difficulties were not all neatly solved because he was writing in an Eastern language.

To return to our question of *Austrag*, *Austrag* seems to be both a structure, an expression for the tension constituting the element of difference, of holding apart, as well as a process, a carrying out and carrying to fruition. There is a related problem with regard to the relations of (a) the epochal transformations of Being to (b) Appropriation and (c) Expropriation which was formulated in the introduction to *The End of Philosophy* as follows:

> Isn't Appropriation already in itself a double relation: (1) a "separable" relation in that through possibly overcoming Framing by the step back the epochal transformations of Being would be absorbed in Appropriation; and (2) an "inseparable" relation: Appropriation and Expropriation can never be separated from each other, but rather constitute a relation which is what is most original of all (but not original in the sense of being a cause)? Between the epochal transformations of Being and Appropriation reigns the relation of giving (*Es gibt*), but not even this can be said of the relation Appropriation-Expropriation.[21]

Bearing this in mind, one would have to think anew the relations to one another of the "dark" or "negative" sides of Being: Expropriation

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 73.

[21] *The End of Philosophy*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. xiv.

(*Enteignis*), Concealment (*Verborgenheit*), Withdrawal (*Entzug*), and keeping to oneself (*Ansichhalten, Epoche*). They would seem to contribute to, if not constitute, duality in the heart of Being. At the risk of doing Heidegger a gross injustice, I am going to hazard a brief speculation as to how they could be thought. As such, it is merely that, speculation.

Epoche--Keeping to oneself suggests a self-containedness, a staying together. Here, Appropriation and Expropriation are polar opposites forming an indissoluble unity. Should this unity or equilibrium, which is not simple, but has a structure--that of polarity--be disturbed and somehow thrown off balance, something is set in motion that cannot be recalled or stopped until it has played itself out. Thus, *epoche* becomes epoch; the structure of keeping to oneself becomes the process of the epochs of the history of Being as metaphysics. On the one hand, the relation of Appropriation- Expropriation (identity-difference) is indissoluble; we are not talking about simple, static identity. On the other hand, this relation has somehow gotten dissolved and we have a series of epochs in the history of Being. *Epoche* becomes epoch, structure generates process (You cannot quite say that structure becomes process because it does not relinquish itself and turn into process. However absent it may remain, Appropriation does not dissolve into process. It is "there," exists in the mode of absence.)

This dif-ference, corresponding to what has traditionally been called a duality, lies at the very heart of Being; it *is* Being, it "ises" Being.

> What has been named with "opening," "arriving," "keeping to oneself," "refusing," "unconcealing," "concealing," is the Same and the One Presencing: Being.[22]

From this passage we can see that Heidegger's own non-metaphysical attempts to name the one and sole "object" of his whole philosophical quest evince a duality. Being is not simple, it is not simply One. We shall look at a final passage from the second Nietzsche volume to see how he thinks this duality, here formulated as a peculiar kind of presence and absence.

> What we are asking about here and what is to be experienced in its simplicity has already been inadvertently named when we set out to characterize the remaining absent "of" Being as a trait (*Zug*) of Being itself. We said that Being itself doesn't stay

[22] *Nietzsche II*, p. 389.

> separately somewhere. From what could Being ever separate itself? Not from beings that rest in Being, although Being remains in the difference from beings. Not from Being, as which Being itself "is" Itself. But in remaining absent the relation (*Bezug*) to something like place presences, away from which remaining absent remains what it is: the remaining absent of unconcealment as such. This place is the abode (*die Bleibe*) in which the remaining absent of unconcealment essentially remains. However, if precisely concealment remains in the remaining absent of unconcealment as such, then the remaining of concealment too, retains its essential relation to the same place. The remaining absent of unconcealment as such and the remaining of concealment presence in an abode (*Bleibe*) that is already the shelter for the appropriate essence of both. But the remaining absent of unconcealment and the remaining of concealment do not first look around for a shelter in retrospect, but the shelter presences with them as the arrival that Being itself is. This arrival is in itself the arrival of their shelter. The locality (*Ortschaft*) of the place of Being as such is Being itself. But this locality is the essence of man.[23]

This passage is one of the most concentrated expressions of the duality in the heart of Being, of Heidegger's version of "dialectic." It is closer to a Heraclitean dialectic than to anything else in Western thought; it is not a Hegelian dialectic at all. In *Being and Time* Heidegger called dialectic "the embarrassment of philosophy" and he often referred to that remark, indicating that he never changed his mind.

The remaining absent "of" Being (again the quotation marks around the "of" indicated a subjective and an objective genitive) is a trait (*Zug*, a pulling, drawing movement as in *Entzug*, withdrawal) of Being itself. (In addition to using the phrase, "Being as Being," to characterize Being without reference to beings, the later Heidegger uses "Being itself" for the same purpose, using the "itself" in much the same way as Plato when talking about the Forms, particularly about Beauty in the *Phaedo*.) Remaining absent remains absent *away from* something like place. In this place is the shelter where the remaining absent of unconcealment and the remaining of concealment meet, perhaps coalesce. Which is presence, which is absence here? The remaining *absent* of *un*concealment, the *remaining* of concealment. *Un*concealment (*a-lethia*) which is wrested from concealment (*lethe*) remains *absent*. Concealment remains, it stays. I do not quite know how to reformulate that, but it is one of Heidegger's most adequate statements *of*, not about, Being. The place or locality (*Ortschaft*)

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 357.

where this happens is the essence of man. Here we can see clearly why Heidegger repeatedly kept saying that we do not know what or who man is. Anthropological, psychological, subjectivistic and philosophical categories all completely fail to see man's "essence," essence in Heidegger's special sense of what is happening, of what is happening in man.

I turn now to my last topic, the thought that has not received as much attention as other issues in Heidegger as far as I know. This thought has to do with *letting* (*lassen*). Letting has its roots in *Being and Time* where Heidegger speaks of *letting* the real self act. Less obvious, but equally important, is the emphasis on resolve (*Entschlossenheit*) which is used in the unusual, literal sense of being unlocked, of being open for something. Later, *lassen* (letting) gets developed into a central term of Heidegger's thought, *Gelassenheit* (releasement). Although Heidegger states that *Gelassenheit* is beyond the distinction of active and passive,[24] still the emphasis is on man; stated in an oversimplified way, on man's being admitted (*eingelassen*) to Being. But in the Thor seminars Heidegger begins speaking about *lassen*, letting, with regard to Being itself. The context is a discussion about "nothing," but not about *das nichtige Nichts*. Heidegger states that what is essential to the participial form negating (*nichtend*) is

> that the participle indicates a certain *activity* of Being through which alone beings *are*. One can call it source (*Ursprung*) if all ontic and causal associations are excluded: it is the Appropriation of Being as the condition of the arrival of beings: Being lets beings presence. The most profound meaning of Being is *letting*. Letting-be beings. This is the non-causal meaning of "letting" in *Time and Being*. This "letting" is fundamentally different from "making". The text *Time and Being* undertakes the attempt of thinking this "letting" more primordially as "giving."[25]

Heidegger states that giving can be understood in two ways: (1) ontically, so that the emphasis lies on the *fact* of Being. (This has always been Heidegger's polemic against the traditional understanding of existence: existence has been conceived solely as the fact that something is.); and (2) with regard to letting (we cannot call this ontological, thus it remains unnamed). Re (1) Heidegger says:

[24] *Gelassenheit* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1960), p. 35.

[25] *Op. cit.*, p. 101.

> One is tempted to understand "it gives" in the sense of "it lets presence." And the giving in "it gives" is conceived ontically due to the emphasis on letting-presence. Thus when I say in French: there are (*es gibt*) trout in this brook, the "*il y a*" is understood with regard to the presence of beings, with regard to their presencing (*Anwesung*)--and the "letting presence" is understood in a way bordering on "making presence." Heard in this way, the "it gives" is conceived ontically so that the emphasis lies on the fact of Being.[26]

Re (2) Heidegger continues:

> But if "it gives" is thought with regard to an interpretation of letting itself, then the emphasis shifts. Presence is no longer emphasized, but *letting* itself. "It gives" then has the exact meaning of "*letting*-presence." Now the presence of beings no longer draws our attention at all, but That by which that presence becomes independent in that it covers It over. Letting itself, the gift of "giving" that only gives its gift, yet in such giving conceals and withdraws itself.[27]

Letting is here conceived not just as letting be in the sense of leaving alone, but more as letting go, releasing, somewhat akin to Hegel's monumentally problematic statement at the end of the *Logic* that absolute Spirit releases itself into Nature. But the letting or releasing thought by Heidegger gives only its gift; its very self is concealed and withdrawn. This letting appears to contain two fundamentally diverse possibilities in itself: it can let itself *loose* into beings and mere beingness (*loslassen*, and this is Framing, technology, *Gestell*) or it can release itself into its own (*lassen, entlassen*), and this is Appropriation (*Ereignis*).

The Thor seminars give us a final attempt to express letting by distinguishing three senses of Letting: (1) Letting beings be. This is on an ontic level. (2) The emphasis is placed less upon *what* is given than upon presencing itself. This is the metaphysical (ontological) interpretation of Being. (3) The emphasis is placed upon *letting*- presence, *releasing*-presence. Here the *epoche* of Being is stressed. Whereas the giving in "it gives" contains the image of reaching out, offering, extending a gift, letting points rather to the keeping to oneself, to letting go. There is no doing whatever in the ordinary sense of the word. In the third sense of letting, we stand face to face with Being as Being and no longer with one of the forms of its destinies. Finally, Heidegger states here that it is not possible to think

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[27] *Ibid.*

Appropriation with the help of the concepts of Being and the history of Being. Thus, while he often retains the term Being, preserving a continuity throughout the course of his thought, in a deeper sense Being is supplanted by the term Appropriation. Ultimately, the term Being just carried too much historical metaphysical baggage to be able to embody what Heidegger was trying to say.

In one of his virtually untranslatable plays on words, Heidegger calls Being *das Un-ab-lässige* what never lets up, what never ceases, never de-sists. I am not going to comment on that. I only want to mention it.

In conclusion, I want to make a final remark about what I called in none too felicitous or original fashion "the duality in the heart of Being." Duality should not be confused with *dualism*. Certainly Heidegger does not have the Cartesian dualism of *cogitans* and *extensa*, of thinking and extension; nor does he have the dualism Nietzsche sought to transcend, the dualism of good and evil. The duality for Heidegger is the difference without which identity would just be flat, stale, sterile, monotonous sameness. An *example* for this kind of *complementary*, not antagonistic, duality (polar opposites) would be the Chinese yin and yang. However, unlike the Way and *Gelassenheit* (releasement) which do have their counterparts in *Tao* and *wu wei*, something akin to yin and yang is totally lacking in Heidegger. I have mentioned them only as examples of a complementary duality. Of the formulations of this duality: un-concealment-concealment, opening (*Lichtung*)-keeping-to-oneself (*epoche*), giving and especially letting, releasing might seem to be the most apt term to designate what lets this duality function. With giving and letting, releasing, Heidegger has given us a non-metaphysical formulation of "Being itself." This formulation has nothing to do with causality or any kind of causal connection (*Wirkungszusammenhang*) including conditions of possibility and the *a priori*, nor is it the horizonal-transcendental connection of the early Heidegger himself. Being is neither the cause of itself nor the highest being nor the unifying One. The participial form of nothing, *nichtend*, indicates an activity of Being through which beings are. That non-causal activity is *lassen*, letting, releasing, setting beings and man free in their freedom. A much earlier thinker said something perhaps obliquely related to this. A thinker whom Heidegger was somehow reluctant to mention

often, Meister Eckhart, said that "*man muss Gott um Gottes willen lassen*," one must let go of, release God for the sake of God.

Index of Names

Index of Topics