

THE HERMENEUTICS OF DASEIN:  
HEIDEGGER AND WESTERN METAPHYSICS

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## ABSTRACT

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This thesis consists of three chapters the first of which deals primarily with an exposition of the essence of Dasein as the unique being in which Being comes to pass. The analysis is based heavily on Martin Heidegger's Being and Time.

In the second chapter an investigation is made into the a priori grounds, that is, the ontological mechanism which allows for the relation of Dasein to entities and to their Being. The analysis is based primarily on Kant et le problème de la métaphysique.

The final chapter examines Heidegger's interpretation of how the Greeks understood Being, when the latter first revealed itself to them. What I find most untenable in Heidegger's overall hermeneutical phenomenology is his unjustified reduction of Being or the World to "Greek."

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## INTRODUCTION

There is a great deal of truth in asserting that Martin Heidegger is the last of Western metaphysicians. In saying this, I do not mean to give rise to the suspicion that other conscious metaphysical efforts on the part of many a living thinker are wanting. Indeed, one has only to think of Peter Strawson's Individuals to find there a classic metaphysics of the first order. But in straightforwardly proffering that Heidegger may well be the last Western metaphysician, I simply mean that he, more than any one else within my ken, has urgently essayed to reconsider the colossal question with which Aristotle so strenuously grappled in Metaphysica, that is, "What is being qua being?"

In his maverick style Heidegger has emerged with an unusual answer to that question. Being, accordingly to him, is the "Not" to beings. This "Not", which is not the simple negativity of human intellection or the negation in logical reasoning, is the very ground of any negating at all. In expounding his position, Heidegger introduces the phrase "ontological difference" to indicate the relation between Being and beings. To be sure, Being is always the Being of beings or things, and things are always of Being. But there is a special being in whom Being reveals itself, i.e., Dasein.

Now within the Heideggerian corpus there is a confusion concerning the said locus. Anaximander was the first thinker to whom Being revealed

itself. What is not clear, however, is whether this thinker "apprehended" by means of reflexion qua philosopher or, being himself a man (Dasein) merely "received" Being. If it is the latter, then it would be extremely taxative to assert that he was the "first", since there were men (Dasein) before him. If it is the former, then Being can only reveal itself to those who make the effort to think about Being. And such a position would undermine Heidegger's philosophy as a whole. However, as will become apparent in what follows, there is, in Heidegger's thought, an unresolved state of tension between the ontological and the historical frameworks.

Despite these shortcomings, however, I must admit that Heidegger, as a philosopher, has his worth. His attempt to clarify in what way Dasein cannot be a substance, for example, is enough to situate him in the highest rank of Western thinkers. How he understands Being, however, is still controversial and as such I have opted to leave it moot.

This thesis consists of three chapters the first of which deals primarily with an exposition of the essence of Dasein as the unique being in which Being comes to pass. The analysis is based heavily on Martin Heidegger's Being and Time.

In the second chapter an investigation is made into the a priori grounds, that is, the ontological mechanism which allows for the relation

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgement. . . . .	i
Introduction . . . . .	ii
Chapter	
1.HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPTUAL SCHEME . . . . .	1
The Ontological Difference and Being-in-the-world	
Being-in-the-world	
A Phenomenological World	
11.THE HORIZON OF TRANSCENDENCE . . . . .	28
Finite knowledge and Freedom	
Knowledge and the Finite Knower	
Freedom and the Overtness of Dasein	
111.HEIDEGGER AND THE GREEKS . . . . .	50
Hermeneutical Phenomenology	
Being and the Greeks	
IV.BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	66

## CHAPTER 1

### HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPTUAL SCHEME

#### The Ontological Difference and Being-in-the-World

The thought of Heidegger is preponderantly directed toward the question which gave rise to Western metaphysics, to wit, "τί τὸ ὄν?" (what is being?). "There is a science", wrote Aristotle, "which takes up the theory of being as being and of what 'to be' means, taken by itself."<sup>1</sup> To unravel the being of things, to have access to being qua being (τί τὸ ὄν ᾗ ὄν?), is accordingly the task of metaphysics. Where other sciences have as their objects of study different things, metaphysics will pursue not anything in particular, but that by which things are what they are: being. It is obvious, then, that Aristotle was quite aware of the distinction that must be made between a thing and the thing's being. For if the thing is by virtue of being, then it follows

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<sup>1</sup> Ἔστιν ἐπιστήμη τις ἢ θεωρεῖ τὸ ὄν ᾗ ὄν καὶ τὰ τούτῳ ὑπάρχοντα καθ' αὐτό. METAPHYSICA, Γ1003<sup>a</sup> 21.



that the latter cannot itself be a thing. Heidegger refers to this distinction as the "ontological difference", the elucidation of which will be the immediate task of the present chapter.

1

Being-in-the-World

Now granted that there is a difference between things and their being, how does one go about recognizing the difference? In other words, who can note the difference? The answer that Heidegger offers is well known: it is that entity who, "in its Being, has a relationship towards that Being - a relationship which itself is one of Being. And this means further that there is some way in which *Dasein* understands itself in its Being."<sup>2</sup> *Dasein*, then, will be the privileged entity whose very existence is to understand its being.

There is no doubt that what has just been said is not without some haziness. But because what is being propounded is as old as metaphysics itself, the same proposition may be clearer once viewed from an older perspective.

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<sup>2</sup>M. Heidegger, Being and Time, (New York: trans. Macquarrie and Robinson, 1962), p. 32.

And it is in Aristotle that this ontological fact is best expressed. Heidegger's thesis, it should be remembered, is that Dasein discovers entities as they are by virtue of his relation to their Being. Indeed, his existence is to relate to Being in just this way. But, Heidegger argues, if entities can be discovered qua entities, then it is impossible, on this view, that what discovers entities is in any way like them. He does grant that Dasein is an entity, but the essential difference lies in the fact that it is Dasein himself who takes other Daseins and himself as mere entities. However, in his essence, Dasein is sheer understanding of Being. He is unlike entities in that it is through him that entities manifest themselves at all. And in thus comporting himself, in understanding Being, Dasein "goes beyond" entities. He transcends them. That is why, in Heideggerian parlance, "understanding" and "transcendence" are one and the same thing: they designate Dasein's existence.

There is, apparently, a difference between entities and Dasein. This fact, however, is not emergent with Heidegger. Aristotle had long ago chimed it. In the De Anima, he writes:

It is necessary then that mind, since it thinks all things, should be uncontaminated ... in order that it may be in control, that is, that it may know; for the intrusion of anything foreign hinders and obstructs it. Hence the mind, too, can have no characteristic except its capacity to receive. That part

of the soul, then, which we call mind (by mind I mean that part by which the soul thinks and forms judgments) has no actual existence until it thinks.<sup>3</sup>

It is true that here Aristotle merely gives a negative characterization of the mind; it is not a thing (has no actual existence), it merely receives things. Its existence is understanding things. Note that mind here is in no way identical with, or resemblant to, its object. Aristotle does not even give it determination or essence. He is shrewd not to have done so, since he construed the mind to be that which reveals objects as determinations. Hence, it cannot itself be of a determinate nature. What is to be lamented, however, is that the Stagirite did not put enough emphasis on this difference between the mind and its object. For it is of this very difference, mutatis mutantis, that Heidegger makes so much heavy weather. His introduction of the term "Dasein" to replace Aristotle's "mind" emphasises the relation of the human being to being itself. For the "Da" of "Dasein" stands for the locus of "sein", that is, being. It now remains to show just how Dasein "is" the "place" where Being "is".

It is Heidegger's contention that Being is understood by every man. Without this "understanding", the very question of the meaning of Being would not be raised. But because man in almost all his

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<sup>3</sup>De Anima, 429a18-24.

activities manifests an "understanding" (Heidegger calls this implicit understanding "pre-ontological" to distinguish it from cognition or knowledge obtained by discursive reasoning) of what it is to be, he somehow understands the meaning of being.

We do not know what 'Being' means. But even if we ask, 'What is "Being"?' we keep within an understanding of the 'is', though we are unable to fix conceptually what that 'is' signifies ... But this vague average understanding of Being is still a Fact.<sup>4</sup>

Heidegger is dwelling on a banality reflected in language. People shout, "Fire!" when they observe a blaze. They need not even say, "There is fire", because they understand the "is". This pre-ontological understanding of Being (and Being is always the Being of an entity) has convinced Heidegger that the only reason why man raises the question of Being at all is because he has a familiarity with Being itself.

But Heidegger presses his point even further. Not only does human Dasein raise the question of Being, but he is himself the being in question. "The very asking of this question is an entity's mode of Being; and as such it gets its essential character from what is inquired about - namely, Being."<sup>5</sup> Being, from what has been said,

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<sup>4</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 27.

is only accessible, is present to, Dasein. Why? The answer is already latent in the characterization of Dasein as "understanding", where this term was said to be synonymous with "transcendence". And by "transcendence, we understand the passage beyond beings to Being."<sup>6</sup> Dasein's existence, therefore, consists solely and primordially in going beyond entities toward their Being. But this is just another way of saying that Dasein is the domain where the Being of entities resides. He is the region where Being reveals entities, and if entities are revealed for what they are by their Being, it is because "the function of Being is to en-light-en beings."<sup>7</sup>

Here a major distinction must be made. Being is not identical with entities. Being is the enlightening of entities, which lightening-process takes place in Dasein, whose existence consists in accommodating, as it were, the revelation of entities. This is what Heidegger means by the picturesque statement, "Der Mensch ist der Hirt des Seins" (Man is the shepherd of Being). Well, it is clear that Being has a shepherd, but it is not yet apparent whether Being is a goat. Heidegger is quick to say what Being is,

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<sup>6</sup>W. Richardson, Through Phenomenology to Thought, (The Hague: 1963), p. 230.

<sup>7</sup>Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 207.

L'Etre- ce n'est ni Dieu, ni un fondement du monde. L'Etre est plus éloigné que tout étant et cependant plus près de l'homme que chaque étant, que ce soit un rocher, un animal, une oeuvre d'art, une machine, que ce soit un ange ou Dieu. L'Etre est ce qu'il y a de plus proche.<sup>8</sup>

As if to elucidate these solemn pronouncements of his sacred master, Henri Birault comes to the fore, proffering that Being is, "Ce qui permet d'être à tout ce qui est, sans être pourtant rien de ce qui est."<sup>9</sup>

So far the description of Being has been rather negative, save for some tautologies and tortuous locutions. But there is a lot to this negative stride in approaching Heidegger's Being. Indeed, that is what the ontological difference is all about: that Being is not entities.

Nothingness is the Not of being and thus is Being experienced from the point of view of being. The Ontological Difference is the Not between being and Being. Yet Being, as the Not to being, is no more a Nothingness in the sense of a nihil negativum than the Difference, as the Not between being and Being, is merely a distinction of the intellect (ens rationis).<sup>10</sup>

Being en-light-ens things, which means that it is hidden in things and in en-light-ening them does not itself appear for what it is.

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<sup>8</sup>Heidegger, Lettre sur l'Humanisme, (Paris: Aubier, 1946), p. 73.

<sup>9</sup>Birault, "Existence et Vérité d'après Heidegger", Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale, Vol. 56; 1951, p. 40.

<sup>10</sup>Heidegger, The Essence of Reason, Terrence Malick, trans. with German text, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p.3.

For if, in unfolding things, Being itself unfolded, then it would have the nature of a thing. But this is what Heidegger strenuously hammers against. I will shelve, however, the positive characterization of Being for a while. In treating the correlation Dasein-World, I shall make, following Heidegger himself, "Being" and "World" logically equivalent, at least as these two terms are employed in Being and Time.

So far it has been shown that the entity in which the meaning of Being is disclosed is Dasein, that is, the entity whose existence is the quest for its Being, whose essence lies in its existence. As this preparation for the analysis proper progresses, it becomes obvious that the inquirer is himself the inquired-about, for it is about his Being that he queries. The inquirer is transparent in his own Being, writes Heidegger.<sup>11</sup>

Undoubtedly, because the surest way of going about the pursuit of Being is via that entity whose existence "is the question about the meaning of Being", it goes without saying that Dasein is the appropriate candidate.

In other words, the inquiry will start with that very being whose existence is an issue for itself, whose being is in question. And to

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<sup>11</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 27.

be sure, Dasein questions what it is for an entity to be. In so doing he manifests an unequalled power in his understanding of Being. For to ask a question is to hint at the answer, a fact that fascinated Plato's Meno. If what is questioned were out of the questioner's reach, how, granted that the answer were found, could he know that it is the precise answer sought? This indicated that a question presupposes at least nominal acquaintance with the questioned. Dasein always has an understanding of Being, even though this fact is hardly even patent. In his daily rounds about him, however, Dasein displays this foreknowledge; he knows, for example, that the bread "is" stale, that there "is" a sale at the store, that it "is" raining. He understands what it is "to be", regardless of the vague manner in which he does so. But precisely because this understanding is not explicit or articulate knowledge, that is, Dasein does not acquire it through excogitation or discursive reasoning, it is pre-ontological understanding. It is not Dasein's doing: it is, on the contrary, the condition required for theorizing and ontically construing anything at all. "It is pre-ontological because it is neither 'ontic' (a knowledge of specific beings) nor properly ontological (explicit knowledge of what it means to be) but the source of both."<sup>12</sup>

Pre-ontological understanding, then, is of the essence, enters into the very ontological structure of Dasein. Moreover, in thus understanding the Being of things, Dasein likewise understands himself,

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<sup>12</sup>W.B. Macomber, The Anatomy of Disillusion, (Evanston: 1967), p. 77.



since his being is to understand Being. Heidegger writes, "Dasein is ontically distinctive in that it is ontological."<sup>13</sup>

Now in terms of Heidegger's own definitions, to know that which is, to be an understanding of Being means "to stand in the openness of Being."<sup>14</sup> But to stand in the openness of Being further means to be in a certain 'existential' environment into which Dasein was thrown. And once in such an environment, Dasein finds himself with different possibilities about which he has to do something: he does whatever he wants with them, but whatever he does with himself, he has to do something about his situation.

On the face of it, the fact that he was thrown hardly seems bizarre. However, if this fact is further perpended, a heap of posers is bound to arise. For example, why is Dasein simply thrown?; who or what throws him? What is the reason for this event? And granted that he is thrown, why thrown into an environment? Very roughly the reply to these questions would run as follows: Dasein is the place where Being discloses itself at all. But Being, because it dominates Dasein, "dictatorially" sends itself unto its "There",

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<sup>13</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup>V. Vycinas, Earth and Gods, (The Hague: 1961), p. 26.

so much so that Dasein cannot but be the locus of Being.<sup>15</sup>

In less cryptic terms, Dasein's mode of being consists singularly in being the region where Being reveals itself. It is not the case, however, that there was first Being, then a "place", and finally the act of selecting the appropriate nook most pleasing to Being's whims. In Heidegger's account of the Being-issue, there are no such autonomous and monadic existents at all. In disclosing itself, Being is already in its locus, and the locus "is" by virtue of accomodating, as it were, the disclosure. There is actually one process involved, and this process manifests itself in multiple ways.

Given the fact, however, that Dasein is thrown into an environment wherein he encounters the possibility of himself as opposed to the things which are simply "balanced and centralized in themselves",<sup>16</sup> what does he do then? He cannot but "be", he "has to be", he must exist; Levinas is exact: "Exister, c'est se préoccuper de l'existence, exister c'est se soucier de l'existence."<sup>17</sup> This fact of having to exist in his environment, which may be termed more appropriately

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<sup>15</sup>W. Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 20.

<sup>16</sup>Levinas, Earth and Gods, p. 30.

<sup>17</sup>E. Levinas, En découvrant l'existence avec Husserl et Heidegger, (Paris: 1967), p. 79.

"being-in-the-world", is the first "existential", the word Heidegger reserves to designate the ontological structure of Dasein's essence in distinguishing it from tradition's "category", apt only for things.

Of course, in attempting to understand the phrase, "being-in", it ought to be borne in mind that this "in" is not identical with the "in" suggested by reference to mere ontic beings. It is quite legitimate to speak of the apple as being "in" the basket, where what is meant is the space occupied by the apple. Dasein, however, is not simply an ontic being. Structurally he exists-in, and this "in" cannot be construed in the same way that the "in" of the apple is understood. The "in" of the apple is that of "category", because it designated the place where the substance (the apple) is. Dasein, on the other hand, exists-in, and because he is not a substance, the "in" of his existence has an existential connotation: it designates his standing out of himself into the world. And as will become apparent by-the-by, "world" and "Being" are not infrequently used synonymously in Being and Time. That is why Heidegger is able to say that "the 'out' ought to be understood in terms of the openness of Being itself. The stasis of the ecstatic consists- strange as it may sound- in standing in the 'out' and 'there' of unconcealedness in which Being itself is present."<sup>18</sup> The implication here is that the environment is not

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<sup>18</sup> Heidegger, "The Way Back into the Ground of Metaphysics," in Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, ed. W. Kaufman, (New York; 1957), p. 214.

temporally prevenient to Dasein's advent on the scene, as it were. Indeed, Dasein itself, as the meaning of authentic care, is prior to it. In existing, Dasein has an environment. This means that the environment cannot be prescindend from Dasein. But if that is the case, what does "being-in" mean?

First, to say that Dasein exists is to imply that "Dasein is an entity which in each case I myself am. Mineness belongs to any existent Dasein, and belongs to it as the condition which makes authenticity and inauthenticity."<sup>20</sup> In the plain language of men of baser clay, there is always an "I" to every Dasein. And this "I", which carries its "am" with it, is always "along side" the world, that is, it resides along side the not-I, without which there could not possibly be an "I" at all. The not-I is passably the world concomitant with Dasein. Writes de Waelhens,

L'inhérence du Dasein au monde, telle qu'elle se marque dans l'In-der-Welt-sein, énonce que l'existence humaine ne se conçoit que par un rapport de nature à l'autre, à du non-sci. Sans ce non-soi organisé qu'est le monde, aucun Dasein n'est en état d'exister. Lorsqu'on prétend que le Dasein est

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<sup>20</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 78.

dans le monde, on dépasse infiniment la  
constatation d'une simple situation  
de fait.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, this basic characteristic of Dasein's being-in-the-world must not be construed as a "quality" that can be distinguished from other qualities that "inhere" in Dasein. It is not something that Dasein possesses over and above its existence. Were Dasein simply a thing, the ascription of such predicates would be legitimate. However, the least that can be said of Dasein at this stage is that it is a "self", not properly a subject or substance, not even a thinking substance.

But an explicit account of the self's constitution is forthcoming, so I shall shelve for the moment Dasein's non-substantiality. Being-in-the-world, then, is no more than existence itself; an existence, moreover, that is a relation, a being which related to other beings. But not only does Dasein relate to things: he is equally in relation to himself. What does this mean? In relating to himself, he is essentially "concerned" about himself, because unlike mere things, which are simply there balanced and centralized in themselves, Dasein "has to be". And this having-to-be, this transcending into the world - which is his manner of being - is what Dasein is so concerned

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<sup>21</sup>A. de Waelhens, La Philosophie de Martin Heidegger,  
(Louvain: 1942), p. 36.

about, because it is he who must be thus. No other being can be for him. So fundamental is this self-relation to Dasein that Heidegger readily calls "Care" the essence of Dasein. As Koyre puts it,

C'est parce qu'il est essentiellement 'souci' que les rapports du Dasein avec les autres étants seront, généralement parlant, des modes du 'se soucier de' (besorgen) ce qui veut dire que, dans son existence besogneuse et soucieuse, le Dasein aura à se soucier d'un tas de choses 'en vue de lui-meme', c'est-à-dire en vue de son propre être.<sup>22</sup>

Why, it may now be asked, does Dasein "care" so much about himself? What is the concern all about? On the face of it, it is because Dasein is himself his own foundation, because he "has to be," that he so much cares about himself. Another way of putting it is that Dasein is an "issue" for himself. "Dasein is an entity which does not just occur among entities. Rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that in its very Being, that Being is an 'issue' for itself."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>A. Koyre, "L'évolution philosophique de Heidegger", Critique, 1946 (1), p. 78.

<sup>23</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 32.

But clearly, the fact that he is an issue for himself requires a reason for the issue itself. There is an issue, true; and this issue is his. The explanation given for the issue was briefly that it is due to the fact that Dasein is his own foundation, hence he has to carry out his task, he must exist. Nonetheless, what has been said so far does not explain the reason for the issue.

Granted, however, that Dasein is his own foundation, why is this fact an issue? This is a better way of posing the question. The answer: because Dasein is, in his understanding of Being, finite. "L'existence comme mode d'être est en soi finitude et, comme telle, n'est possible que fondée sur la compréhension de l'être."<sup>24</sup>

So far it has been shown that Dasein's specific mode of being consists in understanding Being. In thus comporting himself, he transcends the things of whose being he is the understanding. And this transcendence is not a volitional act of Dasein's. In other words, he did not "choose" to be the transcendence that he is. Rather, Being simply sends itself unto its "there" in which things themselves as they are. This mastery of Being over Dasein (Richardson

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<sup>24</sup>Heidegger, Kant et le problème de la métaphysique (Paris: 1953), p. 284.

calls this ontological thrust Being's "mittence") is the first testimony to the latter's finitude.<sup>25</sup> Dasein goes beyond things, but in so doing, he likewise transcends himself; he is forever ahead of himself. Indeed, he ek-sists in transcending himself. Writes Koyre, "il est en se transcendant".<sup>26</sup> The fact that Dasein comports himself in the midst of things, continually understanding them, is precisely what makes him finite. For this relation that he has with things is so essential to Dasein that without them he himself would not be at all. In more specific terms, Dasein is "referentially dependent" upon things.<sup>27</sup>

So structured ontologically is Dasein that he cannot by any of his ontic powers become the master of things.

Dans son comportement à l'égard de l'étant qu'il n'est pas lui-même, L'homme découvre l'étant comme ce par quoi il est porté, à quoi il est ordonné et que, au fond, sa culture et sa technique ne lui permettent jamais d'asservir. Ordonné à l'étant qu'il n'est pas, il n'est pas non plus fondamentalement maître de l'étant qu'il est lui-même.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 20.

<sup>26</sup>A. Koyre, "Heidegger", p. 78.

<sup>27</sup>Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 37.

<sup>28</sup>Heidegger, Kant et le problème de la métaphysique, p. 284.



## II

### A Phenomenological World

Up to now what has been said is essentially that Dasein is intrinsically being-in-the world. In discovering himself, he is aware of an environment. But in understanding his being as essentially a relation, that is, a being-toward, he equally understands himself as being the categorical structure which renders the discovery of things possible at all. His essence forms the "horizon" through which things appear. In point of fact, Heidegger is being most phenomenological here. The point at issue is that the "appearance" of an object presupposes a background against which such an object can show itself as it is. And if it thus shows itself, it is because far from being isolated, it is integrated with other objects into an environment which is ontologically prior to any one object. De Waelhens, expounding Husserl, rightly says,

... Toute saisie d'objet quelconque est nécessairement précédée d'une affection- et cette affection ne nous vient jamais d'un objet isolé, mais d'un objet intégré à un milieu qui s'impose à nous sans effort ou intérêt particuliers de notre part. Ceci revient à reconnaître qu'antérieurement à toute activité positive de connaissance et lui préjudant, s'annonce déjà un monde qui forme le sol où s'ancre notre croyance universelle et passive en l'être.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> De Waelhens, Phénoménologie et Vérité, (Paris: 1965), p. 46.

Such a world, then, is not constituted, is not built from individual objects or from man's subjective impressions or ideas (sense-data) of particular objects; quite on the contrary, his impressions of objects are based on an ontologically prior "horizon", a world. The world so construed is the condition sine qua non for the encounter of innerworldly beings. That is why, it may now be clear, Heidegger places so much emphasis on things as well as on Dasein. For the object, like Dasein, *mutatis mutandis*, is being-in-the-world.<sup>30</sup>

Indeed, Dasein's existence is nothing over and above the preoccupation with those entities that are "proximally given", that is to say, "that which one has to do with in one's concerned dealings (*πρᾶξις*)."<sup>31</sup> *Πράγματα* as useful things become in Heidegger's language "equipment". And "equipment is essentially something in-order-to". What is being discussed here is the difference between "thing" and "equipment" or "instrument", or even better, how a thing is factually something to be used. And in Heidegger's vocabulary, it is impossible to posit the used without noting the user, because an instrument is referential, that is, refers to

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<sup>30</sup>De Waelhens, La Philosophie de Martin Heidegger, p. 41.

<sup>31</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time. p. 96.

other instruments, and all such entities have their ultimate reference in the one for whose purpose the instruments are at all. For example, the pen refers to writing, the writing to the writer, the writer to the world in which the reader will find food for thought. And the thought is the writer's.

Granted, however, that an instrument is not a thing, since the latter is generally construed as an independent being, how does Dasein discover an instrument? Not, of course, by merely looking at it. A hammer, for instance, is at best a hammer - that is - is maximally itself, when it is applied to the nail. And if I want to know what a hammer is, a simple definition resulting from theoretical knowledge will not properly disclose the hammer's being to me at all. It might give me an "idea" of what a hammer looks like, or how it may be handled. But actually "using" it is the surest way of assessing the hammer's being. It is, accordingly, activity or use that divulges to Dasein what a utensil is. Use reveals utility.

This novel way of considering things in relation to man is, to say the least, revelatory. It is an implicit plea to discard the naive belief in things "existing in themselves". For man's

involvement with things conditions the thing as such, and this latter is meaningful only insofar as it is "for man". On this view, the original, sole meaning of "thing" is as the Greeks understood it, namely as *πράγματα*, practical items.

The functional being of an instrument, of an innerworldly entity, then, is constituted by belonging to a system of relations which surpasses the entity itself. To be sure, this fact is not always evident; the relational system is more often than not lost from view. However, there are occasions when the truth of the matter comes to the fore, as when the car breaks down. The driver peers assiduously into the engine, impatiently "questioning" it, shoots a gaze at his watch, reflects uneasily upon his destination, ponders his project, starts considering alternative actions just in case the present one does not work, and all this within the same system of relations, in the same world. In fine, one instrument reflects a multitude of other relationally grafted together. And since this global system is precisely what is meant by "world", it follows that both things (*πράγματα*) and Dasein are in-the-world. Another way of putting it is that "world" is correlative with Dasein, who in turn is nothing over and above a constant preoccupation with things.

Hence, the being of the instrument is characterized by its reference beyond itself. Its ontological structure consists in being-destined, and "that whereunto the instrument is destined will depend, of course, upon the pattern into which it is inserted (Bewandtnisganzheit), and this pattern will in turn be inserted into a larger one". Richardson pursues his thought,

For example, the hammer will have its immediate destination in hammering, the hammering in a nailing, the nailing in the building of a house. But the process does not continue indefinitely. The house is destined for There-being. There-being is the term of all destinations - and this, not because of a banal 'ego-centricity' of its own (a purely ontic conception of There-being), but because of its ontological structure, sc. the Being of instruments is to-be-destined to another, but the Being of There-being is to be concerned with its own Being and cannot therefore be referred beyond itself.<sup>32</sup>

But allied to instrumentality is subjectivism, or, the question of Dasein's selfhood. That is why it is generally agreed that in Heidegger's philosophy the theme of the worldhood of the word "belongs" to the very structure of subjectivity: "L'homme est en tant qu'il est l'être existant brut (Seiendem) en général."<sup>33</sup> This fact is not difficult to see. For the coming-to-pass of transcendence, that is, Dasein's going beyond things, is manifestly expressed in his being-in-the-world.

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<sup>32</sup> Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 55.

<sup>33</sup> De Waelhens, La Philosophie de Martin Heidegger, p. 49.

But because in everydayness Dasein's preoccupation is with innerwordly entities and the Dasein-with, the meaning of his "Self" is initially hidden. The Self is undoubtedly there, in the world, but it is lost in the "They", Das Man. And in every-day-being, "Everyone is the other, and no one is himself."<sup>34</sup> Evidently the relation of the "they" of publicness and the "self" of Dasein is central. So much so that, as Ricoeur puts it, "il n'est pas possible d'avancer dans la question du qui sans introduire le problème de la vie quotidienne, de la connaissance de Soi, de la relation à autrui - et finalement la relation à la mort."<sup>35</sup>

The "self", on this count, first appears as anonymous, as the "they". The problem is to rescue the authentic Self from the inauthentic "who" of the "they". In other words, how will Dasein, wrapped up as it is in the everyday-being of the impersonal "they", find its ownmost Self? Obviously, when the individual Dasein sets out for the pursuit of his authenticity, it is because he is somehow in contact with that authentic self. Differently put, Dasein is its potentiality-for-Being-its-Self. In being "summoned" to his self, Dasein is being true to himself.

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<sup>34</sup> Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 165.

<sup>35</sup> P. Ricoeur, Le conflit des interprétations, (Seuil: 1969), p. 230.

That is why Heidegger says that "Nothing gets called to (zu gerufen) this Self, but it has been summoned to itself - that is, to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being."<sup>36</sup>

Accordingly, an access to authenticity will be provided by the "they" of average existence. For it is in his preoccupation with things and other Daseins that Dasein "forgets" his "self". Yet, "the 'they' is an existentiale; and as a primordial phenomenon, it belongs to Dasein's positive constitution."<sup>37</sup> And if it belongs to Dasein's constitution, then the "they" is in the world "alongside" every individual Dasein. That is why de Waelhens is right: " ... s'il n'y a pas de moi sans monde, il n'y a pas non plus de moi sans autre moi."<sup>38</sup> Buried, therefore, in the world in whose average everydayness every Dasein is no one in particular, Dasein himself as potentiality-for-being his ownmost authenticity, may disentangle himself from the "real dictatorship of the they" by heeding "the call of conscience."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 318.

<sup>37</sup> Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 167.

<sup>38</sup> De Waelhens, La Philosophie de Martin Heidegger, p. 65.

<sup>39</sup> Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 312.

And this "call", it must be noted, does not come from without the called, indeed, it "asserts nothing, gives no information about world-events, has nothing to tell."<sup>40</sup> What calls, who is called, and about what it calls, is no other than Dasein himself. "In conscience, Dasein calls itself." But to do what?

The answer to this question can be formulated only if it is remembered that the structure of Dasein is bidimensional; besides being ontic, by which manner of being he is continually engaged with the things of whose being he is an understanding, he is likewise ontological, i.e., is an issue for himself as the locus of Being. But so busy is he with things and the way things are used that Dasein, "caught in the vortex of onticity", forgets his ontological primacy. Owing to the fact that he is ontological, however, Dasein is "summoned" to deliver himself from his ontic entanglement. And this he does not by withdrawing from the ontic (how can he?) but by simply recalling the ontological, or what comes up to the same thing, by heeding the call of conscience. The call of conscience, of course, is the ontological displaying itself for what it is, and as such is not an added "something" of which Dasein arbitrarily takes stock. That which calls, and what is called, are one and the same: Dasein.

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<sup>40</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 318.



But it would be incorrect to suppose that because the caller and the called are the same, there is therefore no difference between them. Indeed, were there no difference, there would be no call at all. What obviates the call, however, is the fact that in his everyday kind of being Dasein is the "they" of publicness, and in so being, he is not truly himself, for the simple reason that the they is no one in particular.

Heidegger clarifies:

Ontologically, it is not enough to answer that Dasein is at the same time both the caller and the one whom the appeal is made. When Dasein is appealed to, is it not 'there' in a different way from that in which it does the calling? Shall we say that its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-Self functions as the caller?<sup>41</sup>

In other words, without being antithetically opposed to everydayness as a way of being, Dasein's potentiality-for-Being-its-Self is the kind of being which is daily covered up and forgotten but is not lost. When conscience summons everyday Dasein to its authentic Self, it is a testimony to Dasein's structural unity under the heading of "care". For he is daily inauthentic but authentic in himself, and these unlike ways of being are unique to Dasein. What conscience

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<sup>41</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 320.

does is to "remind" Dasein of his bidimensional structure: his ontico-ontological existence. That is why Heidegger insists that Dasein as a whole is expressed by "care", his concern about his having-to-be, now that he has been "thrown". And once thrown, he must be, and because he is his own foundation, there is no one to whom he may revert for help. His existence as sheer possibility undoubtedly weighs against him especially when he apprehends his ownmost possibility, namely, death. Death is something Dasein "has to be", since it is, "the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein."<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the fact that no one can die my death, though someone may die for my sake, shows that my death is my having to be. It cannot be bastardized or covered up by the public, anonymous "they". The possibility of the impossibility of ever comporting himself towards anything is Dasein's innermost index to his own authenticity.

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<sup>42</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 294.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE HORIZON OF TRANSCENDENCE

#### Finite Knowledge and Freedom

In the preceding exposition I have delineated the essence of Dasein to serve as a propedeutic to a more elaborate study of the philosophy of Heidegger, with the intention of situating him in terms of philosophia perennis. Such a task, prima facie, is not so strenuous, especially since the recurrent theme in Heidegger is the very question with which metaphysics itself is nascent, viz., "what is being qua being?". Indeed, this ontological predilection on his part would readily juxtapose Heidegger with Aristotle (whose treatment of the question the former meticulously examines and finds wanting) were it not for the fact that Heidegger himself is bent on the destruction of the history of ontology. The conviction that such a demolition is exigent grafts no qualms in the mind of Heidegger. For ever since Western man "thought" of being, from the unadulterated thinking of the presocratics, through Aristotle's putative mishandling of the problem and its perpetuation by the Schoolmen, down to Hegel who "defines 'Being' as the indeterminate

immediate" but nonetheless "keeps looking in the same direction as ancient ontology, except that he no longer pays heed to Aristotle's problem of the unity of Being as over against the multiplicity of 'categories' applicable to things"<sup>1</sup>, he has not yet given Being its proper due.

Too often has Being been viewed, however inadvertently, from the standpoint of mere entities. The very attempt to grasp it by means of definition, and the resultant complaint that it is too universal to be definable at all, is an indication of tradition's proclivity to treat Being as something of ontic status. For if an entity is definable, and "definitio fit per genus proximum et differentiam specificam", then, Heidegger proffers, the Being of such an entity cannot fall under the same heading." Précisément parce que l'être n'est pas un étant, il ne faut pas le saisir 'per genus et differentiam specificam' ".<sup>2</sup> However, that Being eludes definition is not sufficient reason to waive the effort of its apprehension as daft or otiose. Indeed, the very fact that man, in his every-day kind of being, manifests an "understanding" of Being "proves that it is necessary in principle to raise this question again".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Levinas, Husserl et Heidegger, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup>Levinas, Husserl et Heidegger, p. 23.

Accordingly a positive characterisation of "ens qua ens", that is, the being of entities, should be the task of this chapter. However, because Heidegger conceives Being to be identical with Nonbeing and makes of the latter "the ground" of entities, it will be necessary to show how entities can emerge from Nonbeing. Which means that instead of simply appraising "ens qua ens", I must likewise consider the proposition that "ex nihilo omne ens qua ens fit". What is more, the implication of this proposition is that Dasein is the being who founds the world or, to put it otherwise, that finite understanding is the horizon of transcendence. Indeed, were it not for the addendum "ex nihilo ... fit", Heidegger's metaphysical enterprise would not differ one iota from Aristotle's

In thus essaying to establish the precise manner by which Dasein transcendently founds the world, it will be of utmost relevance to make an excursus into four important Heideggerian works, namely, Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, The Essence of Reason, What is Metaphysics?, and On the Essence of Truth. Although the language of these shorter essays somehow differs from that of Being and Time, as for example, whereas in the latter Heidegger will refer to "Dasein" as the locus wherein entities manifest themselves as they are, in Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics he designates the

same locus by "transcendental imagination" and in On the Essence of Reason, the term becomes "opening." Nonetheless, terminological differences aside, Heidegger maintains such a uniformity of concept and a consistency of thought, at least in this regard, that to accuse him of conceptual tortuosity would be unjust.

I

Knowledge and the Finite Knower

Dasein transcends ontic entities. This is the principle around which what follows must revolve. And this transcendence is all Dasein is, provided of course, that the "all" be construed not in a quantitative sense (as if Dasein were a balloon which continually expands with the increasing input of air) but in an ontological sense. Which means that Dasein's manner of being is such that it is referentially dependent upon entities, since "understanding" them is what he is. The question required for a lucid explanation of the relation of Dasein (as Transcendence) to entities is, "How can an entity be the understanding of entities?" As will become manifest by-the-by the question implicitly intercalates with Heidegger's emphatic dictum that "ex nihilo omne ens qua ens fit." Without having to question Heidegger's justification for allocating so privileged a status to Dasein as the locus where entities become manifest,

one can save one's energy and time by simply examining the process in which this "privilege" happens. That Dasein is the being who, by essence, reveals Being, therefore, will here be taken as axiomatic. If now one opts to commence this inquiry by way of knowledge, that is, if one wishes to begin his journey into the transcendental horizon by posing the object (to-be-known) as opposed to the knower, then instead of retaining the term "Dasein", it will be convenient to relinquish it for the nonce and employ instead "transcendental imagination". And with this agreement, one is prepared to observe how Heidegger is able to obtain so much from Kant in his effort to rethink metaphysics. The book, then, is open: Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics. Let it not be lost from view, though, that what needs to be dragged into the light of day is always how the world "emerges" from Nonbeing.

According to Heidegger's reading of the first edition of the Critique of Pure Reason, the task of Kant was to affirm "the unity of apperception, showing that finite intuition is possible only because of the unity of conception and sensible intuition."<sup>4</sup> This contention is opposed to certain post-kantian commentators who understood the deduction of categories as asserting the primacy of the transcendental logic over transcendental aesthetic. Since Kant's attempt to lay the foundation for metaphysics was "an effort to determine the nature of the ontological synthesis of the human

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<sup>4</sup>Thomas Langan, *The Meaning of Heidegger*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 73.

mind, sc. that pre-ontic comprehension of Being-structure which renders it possible for a finite reason to know the beings of experience"<sup>5</sup>, he did well to have commenced with intuition, to which any form of knowledge is reducible.

And here "intuition" is to be understood as the immediate self-giveness of the being-to-be-known to the individual knower. But in the case of the human mind (as opposed to divine intuition) cognition alone does not suffice; for knowledge, equally required is "judgment", in which process the being-to-be-known is determined as it is, in its individuality. Furthermore, it is so determined by virtue of the individual being's self-presentation "in general". However, in so offering itself in a general way, its universal character is not given thematically; rather, what happens is that "with the universal character in view, the knower adverts to the individual and determines it accordingly."<sup>6</sup> Kant calls this universalized presentation "representation by concepts" (representatio per notas communes) and is affected by the "understanding", which is the power of judging. Moreover, the process itself in which a presentation is universalized is called, in Kantian parlance, "thought".

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<sup>5</sup>Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 107.

<sup>6</sup>Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 107.



Human knowledge, then, is brought to pass by two components, viz, intuition and thought: the former houses the singularly given, and the latter, the accompanying universal. However, intuition and thought are not on the same cognitive footing. "Connaître est premièrement intuitionner. Il devient déjà manifeste par là que l'interprétation de la connaissance comme acte de juger (penser) fait violence au sens décisif du problème kantien."<sup>7</sup>

But granted that any knowledge is essentially intuition what is there in human knowledge that determines it precisely as human. Obviously, not intuition, since this latter is what knowledge amounts to, finally. According to Heidegger's hermeneutics, then, knowledge is human in that it is finite. And the finitude of human knowledge means, in negative terms, that the cognizing subject (the human knower) does not create the object known.

L'intuition finie de l'étant n'est pas capable de se donner, d'elle-même, un objet. Elle doit consentir à ce qu'il lui soit fourni. Ce n'est point toute intuition en tant que telle mais seulement l'intuition finie qui est réceptive.<sup>8</sup>

But now, in order for the knower to be affected by the object-to-be-known, he must have the proper instruments with which to receive the object, namely, the senses. So much

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<sup>7</sup>Heidegger, *Kant et le Problème de la Métaphysique*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1953), p. 83.

<sup>8</sup>Heidegger, *Kant*, p. 86.

so that human intuition is finite not because it receives its object through the senses, rather the converse is true, that is, that Dasein is finite by virtue of its existing in the midst of an entity which already is and to which Dasein is abandoned, and once thus abandoned, Dasein has to "know" the entity. The organs are therefore necessary in order that the entity be able to announce itself to Dasein. "L'essence de la sensibilité se trouve dans la finitude de l'intuition."<sup>9</sup>

Intuition, however, is not alone finite in human knowledge, according to Heidegger's Kant. That other component which above was called "thought" is even more finite. For if knowledge is considered as a whole, it will be noticed that thought has access to its object only via intuition.<sup>10</sup> Not only that, but it has been said that thought "must" universalize; the representation of thought orients itself toward the general, so that a given individual object may be determined as that individual against the background of the many. This inexorable need to universalize, then, can be construed as the surest indication of the finitude of understanding.

Cet acte de représenter sous l'aspect de la "généralité", essentiellement au service de l'intuition, rend plus présent (vorstelliger). Ce qui est représenté par l'intuition, en ce

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<sup>9</sup> Heidegger, Kant, p. 87.

<sup>10</sup> Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 109.

est représenté par l'intuition, en ce qu'il comprend une diversité sous une unité et, par cette compréhension, "est valable pour plusieurs."<sup>11</sup>

At this juncture Heidegger shifts his attention from what goes on in knowing to the object of knowledge. It has hitherto been shown, one remembers, that knowledge in its two components is essentially finite. The question that now arises is: What can a finite knower know? Heidegger gives a hint: "Si la connaissance finie est une intuition réceptive, il faut que l'objet connaissable se montre de lui-même."<sup>12</sup> In other words, that which gives itself is already there for intuition, and it offers itself to the knower as it appears. This is the entity commonly called "object", for it stands over and opposed to the knower; indeed, the latter is ordered toward that which stands opposed to it. In such ontological "state of affairs", the knower cannot but permit the object to appear as it is. Accordingly what the finite knower knows is being-as-it-appears, or in Kantian technicality, phenomenon.

At this point what must be remembered is that the terms "object", "being-as-it-appears", and "phenomenon" are one the same thing: they represent what the finite knower knows. They

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<sup>11</sup>Heidegger, Kant, p. 88.

<sup>12</sup>Heidegger, Kant. p. 91.

are terms applicable only to finite knowledge as opposed to infinite or divine cognition. For object implies a chasm - a distance - between the knower and the known, a relationship that the notion of infinity, understood in this exact context, excludes. For the intuition in divine cognition does not, like human knowledge, receive the object that already is and stands opposed to it, but rather, intuitio originarius gives rise to "the-being-to-be-known", creates it. Writes Heidegger, "La connaissance infinie est un acte d'intuition qui, comme tel, crée l'étant lui-même."<sup>13</sup>

If then, finite cognition is correlated with object, infinite knowledge has as its correlate what Heidegger calls Ent-stand.<sup>14</sup> By this terms Heidegger understands Kant's "thing-in-itself". Hence, the dichotomy between "Ding an sich" and "Erscheinung" (appearance) that one finds in reading the Critique of Pure Reason discovers a different hermeneutic in Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics. For, Heidegger writes,

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<sup>13</sup>Heidegger, Kant, p. 92.

<sup>14</sup>James Churchill, in his translation of Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik employs the rather cumbersome term, eject for the correlate of absolute cognition. While agreeing that e-ject does help to facilitate differentiating between the correlates of finite and infinite cognition respectively, I certainly maintain that the term "creation", adopted by de Waelhens and Biemer in the French translation, is more elucidating and less pedantically technical.

L'étant qui 'se présente comme phénomène' est le même étant que l'étant en soi, et ne peut être que celui-ci. Ce dernier seul peut, en tant qu'étant, s'offrir comme objet, encore qu'il ne le puisse que pour une connaissance finie. Il se manifeste alors conformément au mode et à la portée du pouvoir de réceptivité et de détermination dont dispose la connaissance finie.<sup>15</sup>

The thing-in-itself and appearance are one and the same being? Beyond doubt! Some Kantians will undoubtedly find Heidegger downright crazy if not impudent. But neo-Kantians may kill one another on their enlightened reading of their master. One thing is certain, Heidegger does whatever he wants with Kant; he may, as Marx claimed he did to Hegel, turn him upside down and right side up; or simply try to put a bit of what Descartes calls "bon sens" into the highfalutin wording and chimeric content of the Critique of Pure Reason. Be that as it may, Heidegger maintains that "L'étant en tant que création (Ent-stand) et le même étant comme objet (Gegenstand)."<sup>16</sup> Such a position, of course, calls for some elucidation. What, in fact, is Heidegger trying to convey?

There is a difference between the thing-in-itself and the appearance. But the difference does not lie in the "object", for "la chose en soi n'est pas un autre objet mais une autre relation (respectus) de la représentation à l'égard du même

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<sup>15</sup> Heidegger, Kant, p. 92.

<sup>16</sup> Heidegger, Kant, p. 93.

objet."<sup>17</sup> If this is the case, then what does Kant mean when he refers to the "thing-in-itself" as standing "behind the appearance"? Earlier it was said that in finite knowledge the knower permits, lets the object present itself; what was purposely omitted is this: that in thus allowing the object's self-manifestation, finite knowledge concomitantly conceals the object in such a way that the thing-in-itself is not, indeed, cannot be assessed at all.

In this respect, what is behind the appearance is the same being as the being-as-it-appears. However, because the latter manifests itself only as object, "il lui est principiellement impossible de laisser voir ce même étant sous forme de création."<sup>18</sup> On this view, to say that finite cognition knows what simply appears should not be understood in a pejorative or deprivative sense. For what is essentially meant is that a "being grasped by a finite knower can never be known in an infinite way."<sup>19</sup> And a human knower, discovering that he cannot know in the same manner as an infinite or divine knower should not, for aught I know, be demoralized! Let gods know what they will!

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<sup>17</sup>Heidegger, Kant, p. 93.

<sup>18</sup>Heidegger, Kant, p. 94.

<sup>19</sup>Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 113.

Now in everything that has been said so far, there is one remarkable idea that is not as apparent as would seem desirable, namely, that the thing-to-be-known is, as it were, "outside" of the knower. As the creation (e-ject) of divine intuition the thing-in-itself is completely inaccessible to the finite knower, and as the object, i.e., being-as-it-appears, it is outside the knower in the sense that it stands opposed to the latter himself.

What is known and who knows are unlike, and the latter indeed finds himself as not being the former. Heidegger, his ontological penchant looming, writes, "Notre connaissance n'est pas créatrice dans l'ordre ontique, elle ne peut de soi se proposer l'étant."<sup>20</sup> Which means, of course, that if the finitude of human existence does not create the object of its knowledge, then the implication to be drawn is that the object is already there for and with, human Dasein.

Indeed, is not precisely this that Heidegger fundamentally means when he writes that "notre existence est finie- existente au milieu de l'étant qui est déjà et auquel elle est abandonnée."<sup>21</sup> Dasein, then, relates himself to the beings which he himself is

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<sup>20</sup>Heidegger, Kant, p. 130.

<sup>21</sup>Heidegger, Kant, p. 87.

not, and this he does only because the being, of its own accord, as it were, comes forward to be met by Dasein. Heidegger clarifies, "Un être (Wesen) fini connaissant n'est pas capable de se rapporter à un étant qu'il n'est pas lui-même et qu'il n'a pas non plus créé, que si cet étant, déjà présent, peut de soi s'offrir à être rencontré."<sup>22</sup>

## II

### Freedom and the Overtness of Dasein

Human knowledge is therefore not creative. It simply lets the being that lies before it manifest itself as object. The problem that now begs solution is the explanation for the very possibility of an object's accessibility to a knower. There is, supposedly, a structure in the knower himself that renders possible this accessibility of the object's self-manifestation. For it has been conceded that a distance lies between the two beings involved, viz., the knower and the known. Was it not after all posited that the object by essence stands opposed to human Dasein? And if this be the case, then it follows that between these two beings lies an open domain in which the confrontation is rendered actual. The access of knower-to-known

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<sup>22</sup>Heidegger, Kant, p. 129.



is called "experience" and the domain will be termed, as earlier promised, "transcendental imagination", or simply "transcendence".

In this respect, transcendence is not just the "bridge" which allows the passage from the object to the knower, but rather the structure responsible for rendering possible the very meeting of knower and known. It is here that pre-ontological understanding, which phrase is current in Being and Time, finds expression in a different language, namely, transcendence. Transcendence, from now on, will accordingly be used interchangeably with pre-ontological understanding, for they are the same:

Un être (Wesen) fini connaissant n'est capable de se rapporter à un étant qu'il n'est pas lui-même et qu'il n'a pas non plus créé, que si cet étant, déjà présent, peut de soi s'offrir à être rencontré! Mais pour que ce dernier puisse être rencontré comme l'étant qu'il est, il doit préalablement avoir déjà été "reconnu" comme étant, c'est-à-dire dans sa structure d'être (Seinsverfassung). Cela implique que la connaissance ontologique qui, en l'occurrence, est toujours pré-ontologique, conditionne la possibilité pour un être (Wesen) fini, de s'ob-jeter, en général, quelque étant. ...Tout être fini a besoin de cette faculté fondamentale qui consiste à se tourner vers... (s'orienter vers...) en laissant s'ob-jeter."<sup>23</sup>

On this view transcendence may be defined as "the construction in its very origins by the finite knower of an open domain

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<sup>23</sup>Heidegger, Kant, p. 129.

within which other beings can be encountered."<sup>24</sup> Elsewhere transcendence is called by Heidegger "Nonbeing", where this latter is said to be the ground of entities. This is essentially what he means by the cryptic proposition, "Omne ens qua ens ex nihilo fit", that an entity cannot come from itself or from any other entity. Out of Nonbeing therefore is achieved the fundamental act or encounter which Dasein has with the entities in whose midst he is:

The essence of Nothing as original nihilation lies in this: that it alone brings Dasein face to face with what-is as such... Only on the basis of the original manifestness of Nothing can our human Dasein advance as Dasein naturally relates to what-is, as that which it is not and which itself is, Dasein qua Dasein always proceeds from Nothing as manifest...Dasein means being projected into Nothing.<sup>25</sup>

Through the gap that Dasein opens between himself and entities, thereby letting the entities-that-are manifest themselves as objects - the objectivating encounter with them - he finds the transcendental horizon. Heidegger is quick to clarify himself:

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<sup>24</sup>Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 114.

<sup>25</sup>Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" in Existence and Being, (Chicago: ed. Werner Brock, Regnery, 1949), p. 339.

Ce n'est que si cette ob-jectivation s'expose au néant et se tient en lui que l'acte de représenter peut, au sein de ce néant, nous laisser rencontrer ce qui, au lieu d'être le néant, est non-néant, c'est-à-dire l'étant. Cette rencontre se réalise dès que l'étant se manifeste empiriquement.<sup>26</sup>

And whatever is empirical (ontic) can be rendered such as it is by the ontological, maintains Heidegger.

In all this, it ought to be maintained that Nonbeing, Transcendence, and Freedom are synonymous in Heidegger's conceptual scheme. For transcendence is the Open by which objects present themselves as objects to Dasein. And what of Freedom? "La liberté vis-à-vis de ce qui se révèle au sein de l'ouvert laisse l'étant être l'étant qu'il est. La liberté se découvre à présent comme ce qui laisse-être l'étant."<sup>27</sup>

Indeed, Dasein in "recognizing" the entity as entity surpasses the latter, that is, is not himself just an entity. In letting the entity be what it is, Dasein manifests himself as the opening to which an open entity reveals itself for what it is. That is why only a being that is open can be free, and freedom is opening, because out of Nonbeing an entity is open for the opening which is Dasein's specific mode of being.

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<sup>26</sup>Heidegger, Kant, p. 131.

<sup>27</sup>Heidegger, De l'essence de la vérité, (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, trans. de Waelhens and Biemel, 1948), p. 83

Etre dans l'Ouvert, constituer l'étant  
comme étant, se décrocher au donné, pou-  
voir imaginer et être dans la vérité sont  
des expressions synonymes, ou plutôt elles  
font toutes références, plus ou moins im-  
médiatement, à un mouvement qui est instau-  
ratif de notre conscience comme humaine: ce  
mouvement est la liberté, identique à la  
compréhension de l'être.<sup>28</sup>

Freedom is therefore understanding of Being, that is, the  
process by which Dasein distances himself from ontic beings,  
thereby letting-them-be, freeing them in the sense that without  
the aperture which is the understanding of Being, beings would  
not manifest themselves at all. However, this movement is  
paradoxical. For not only does Dasein keep himself at a  
distance from the entities whose being he renders manifest, but  
he himself in letting the entities show themselves, thereby  
destroys the distance which separates him from them. This  
reciprocal motion - where the entity presents itself to Dasein  
and the latter himself becomes manifest - is achieved in a  
certain "clarity". Birault, undoubtedly one of the ablest  
commentators on Heidegger, explains,

Si l'homme, en effet, se tient toujours  
ouvert (ist offenstehend) pour un existant  
lui-même ouvert (zum Offenbarren) c'est  
parce que l'un et l'autre, quoique chacun  
à leur manière, se tiennent toujours à  
l'intérieur d'un Ouvert (innerhalb eines  
Offenen) dont l'ouverture (Offenheit) n'est  
pas leur fait.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> De Waelhens, Phénoménologie et vérité, p. 89.

<sup>29</sup> Birault, Existence et Vérité, p. 59.

So much that a "true" assertion "shows" the entity such as it is. And if a statement or assertion is able to unveil the thing as it is, it is because in his theoretical and practical attitudes Dasein is already "open" to entities, is in contact with, and somehow communicates, with them. From this, Heidegger argues, it follows that the "opening" which forms the very possibility of (true) judgments has a more original right to be considered as the "essence" of truth itself. Truth, once again, is identical with Freedom. Both "let" the entity be what it is, and do not act upon it; they simply "divulge" it. And in so doing Truth (Freedom) withdraws at once so as not to be concealed, and this characteristic of unconcealedness (Unverborgeheit) is what, according to Heidegger, the Greeks understood by the term  $\alpha\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$  :

Freedom, such as it has just been characterized, cannot be regarded as a faculty or quality which belongs to Dasein over and above his being. First of all, "belongs to" is a locution proper to a discourse on "substance". Since, however, the notion of substance as applicable to Dasein was sharply discarded in the first chapter, it would be an "offense to the laws of thought" to relegate the above mentioned locution to it. Consequently freedom, like understanding and existence,

must be construed to mean Dasein's being itself. "Le laisser-  
être, c'est-à-dire la liberté, est en lui-même ex-position  
à l'étant, il est ek-sistant."<sup>30</sup>

Dasein's non-substantiality, his mode of being - that is, the being that "founds" beings- undoubtedly renders a discourse on him circular. For not only is it impossible to say of Dasein that he is first, then that he acquires such and such qualities, but to say that he is already implies a difference in the use of "is". So much so that the propositions, "Dasein is freedom", "Freedom is Dasein", "Dasein is understanding", "Understanding is freedom", are essentially one and the same proposition. That is why in the process of freedom, i.e., the letting-be of entities, Dasein understands, hence transcends entities; and in so doing, founds the world toward which he transcends. The world, it will be remembered, "reveals itself to Dasein as the actual totality of what exists 'for the sake of' Dasein". Furthermore, "that which produces and must produce the 'for the sake of...,' throwing forth the 'for the sake of...'" in projecting, we call 'freedom'.<sup>31</sup> The founding of the world, on this count, which is actualized, as it were, in the transcendental imagination, is freedom. And freedom is the letting-be by Dasein of the beings of things. Furthermore, this "exhibitio originaria" creates its "figuration freely, this creation is

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<sup>30</sup> Heidegger, De l'essence de la vérité, p. 84.

<sup>31</sup> Heidegger, The Essence of Reason, (Evanston: 1969), p. 103.

ontological, i.e., exstatic and horizontal, and therefore, sense-giving."<sup>32</sup> Phenomenological hermeneutics is becoming more apparent.

In other words, to follow the consecution of Heidegger's ideas concerning the founding of the world is to broach ultimately his interpretation of what Being meant to the Greeks. For the very process of transcendently founding the world is what Heidegger means by Freedom. Dasein ek-sists, that is, he projects himself towards the things that are. And it is in thus going beyond himself that he lets things be, simply because he is their "raison d'etre," as it were. They are "for Dasein."

But a little attention will quickly divulge the fact that things are, for Heidegger, items of use; they are utensils. They are meaning-ful, and the meaning of anything refers ultimately to Dasein, the user.

Here, the Greek notion of *πράγμα* comes to mind. However, in the present context it is the Greek concept of *Ἀλεθεία*, Truth, which is of immediate and utmost relevance. For what relates Truth to Freedom is the concept of unconcealedness. In unconcealing things, Truth ipso facto withdraws, so as not

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<sup>32</sup>Langan, Meaning of Heidegger, p. 75.

to be concealed; for only things can be concealed. Hence, "to be free" is identical with "to be true", and it is of interest to observe how Heidegger construes the Greek notion of Being, which is after all Truth in its unconcealedness. This can be effected if a closer look is taken at his hermeneutical phenomenology.



## CHAPTER 3

### HEIDEGGER AND THE GREEKS

#### Hermeneutical Phenomenology

Heidegger's primary interest as an "essential" thinker is the destiny of Being in the West. Indefatigably he burrows into the history of Western philosophy, lingering scrutinizingly around those to whom Being historically first announced its homecoming. Then, convinced that Being from the very beginning was destined to be "forgotten" due to the note of ambiguity in "presensing of the present" of the Pre-Socratics, he messianically took upon himself the herculean task of rescuing the West, rather Being, by raising this question again, namely, "What is Being?"

The history of Being or its self-revelation actually began, Heidegger confesses, with Anaximander. However this "announcement" found its brightest moment in both Heraclitus and Parmenides. In Plato, who understood Being in terms of "idea", the phenomenal oblivion of Being began, and this forgetfulness was to mark the birth of Western metaphysics, the foundation of European thought.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Heidegger, What is Philosophy?, (New Haven: College and University Press, trans. William Kluback and Jean Wilde, 1956), p. 55.

Then came Aristotle, "in whom the original vision in some ways flashed out again, even while 'metaphysics', turned away from Being and busy with the truth of beings, is taking shape, Greek thought comes to its great end."<sup>2</sup> With the advent of Cartesian philosophy there emerged the total withdrawal of being, which Heidegger calls "nihilism", and this tendency is embraced, however inadvertently, by Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche.<sup>3</sup> As against all these Heidegger means to bid "farewell to the essent as such, on the way to preserving and cherishing the favour of Being." What remains to be seen is how he comports himself once in the seraphic neighbourhood of Being.

The general tenor of Heidegger's thought is that Being is somehow eschatological. Upon this point I shall dwell at length. He does not cease to reiterate that being "reveals" itself, "sends" itself. And as was clearly divulged in the two preceding chapters, Being's chosen locus is Dasein, even though Anaximander seems to be "the" Dasein, since he was the first to whom Being announced itself at all in Being's chosen land, namely Greece. On this point I am not at all sympathetic with Heidegger.

To be sure, the complaint that Heidegger thrusts against Western philosophy is that ever since its natal day ontology has busied

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<sup>2</sup>J. L. Mehta, The Philosophy of Martin Heidegger, New York, 1971, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Heidegger, What is a Thing?, (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, trans. W. B. Barton, Jr. and Vera Deutsch, 1967), 98ff.

itself not with Being, but with the thing as such, thinghood, or the essence of the thing. Although the pre-Socratics meant to "listen" to Being itself, they somehow got carried away by beings themselves.

From the very start, even in the thought of the great pre-Socratic thinkers, being was destined to be forgotten. For there is a fundamental note of ambiguity to be found among the pre-Socratics themselves. Being was characterised by the early Greek thinkers, says Heidegger, as the "presenting of the present (Anwesen des Anwesenden). And the whole of the history of Western metaphysics might be said to be nothing but the destiny of this "twofold" (Zweifalt).<sup>4</sup>

What Heidegger will do, he promises, is re-think, essentially, the meaning of Being, and the meaning of Being is the disclosure of Being.<sup>5</sup> In so doing he would have presumably "escorted" Being, whose eschatological nature demands the full attention, the complete existence of Dasein. The two objections that I levy against Heidegger is first, that even with his hermeneutical phenomenology, he does not move one step out of the general trend of Western metaphysics. For what abidingly characterizes European thinking is just this mania for the "understanding" of whatever is.

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<sup>4</sup>George Seidel, Martin Heidegger and the Pre-Socratics, Lincoln, 1964, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup>Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics, (New York: Doubleday and Company, trans. Ralph Manheim, 1961), p. 70.

And whatever is may be the universe considered as mechanical framework activated by God, as in Newton; the world as the natural abode of every animal as contrasted with Heaven, the residence of gods, cherubim and seraphim, angels such as Gabriel, and some such creatures; or the world as the correlate of transcendental subjectivity, so densely proffered by Husserl. What is noticeable here is the loud presence of dichotomies. Indeed, the entire history of European thought attests to this fact. Hence, one will hear of subject and object, substance and accident, body and soul, mind and matter, being and Nothingness, the particular and the universal, concrete and abstract, this and that, here and there. The list, of course, is endless. This "splitting", for aught I know, is what Western philosophy is all about. And Heidegger is deeply enmeshed in this tradition, even when he tries to slip out of its glutinous quagmire.

He seriously elaborates how Being dictatorially sends itself to Dasein, which latter is the "understanding" of the former. (The dichotomy is present). Now even when Heidegger attempts to make the distinction between two kinds of thinking, namely, "representative" and "meditative", he proceeds with the stamp of Europe heavy in his head. "Thinking brings something before us, represents it... And in representing we think of what is represented and think it through by dissecting it, by taking it apart and putting it together again."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 100.

This procedure, says Heidegger, is the one adapted by Western metaphysics. He, however, opts for "meditative" or "essential" thinking, that is, "thinking which is open to its content, open to what is given... Meditative thinking begins with an awareness of the field within which these objects are, an awareness of the horizon rather than of the objects of ordinary understanding."<sup>7</sup> As is quickly discerned, Heidegger is here referring to the phenomenological world which has already been treated in the second part of the first chapter. Now, had Heidegger abandoned the itch to "understand" or "think", albeit meditatively, then he would have escaped the stamp of Western metaphysics. For however he tried, Heidegger uses terms and categories which have served as conceptual tools for the West. "Being". "Essence", "beings", are all terms with which metaphysics has built itself. And just because Husserl came along and somehow "inspired" him, does not wrench him from the Occidental approach at all. In point of fact Husserl himself, with all his phenomenological re-enforcements, is as full of Plato and Descartes as is Heidegger with Aristotle and Kant. What is being said here in general terms become obvious if the two preceding chapters have been properly understood. But in order to have a better assessment of Heidegger's contribution to, or place in, philosophy, it would be scholarly indeed to appraise the method he employed for the statement of his stance. This method he calls "hermeneutical phenomenology", presumably to distinguish himself from Husserl, who

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<sup>7</sup>Heidegger, Discourse on Thinking, (New York: Harper and Row, trans. John Anderson and E. Hans Freund, 1966), p. 24.

inaugurated the method. The second objection is against his contention that Being first revealed itself to the Greeks.

What, then, is phenomenology? I will waive Husserl's definition of the word in order to facilitate entry into Heidegger's understanding of the method itself. With his characteristic penchant for Greek, Heidegger jabs his attention to Attic etymology, emerging with the "maverick" contention that "Phenomenology means ἄπο φαίνεσθαι τὰ φαινόμενα - to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself. This is the formal meaning of that branch of research which calls itself phenomenology. But here we are expressing nothing else than the maxim... "To the things themselves."<sup>8</sup>

The phenomenon, then, is that which makes itself manifest, shows itself in itself. τὰ φαινόμενα will accordingly mean the totality of that which can be divulged, of that which unveils itself. And the method of research by which τὰ φαινόμενα will be assessed by posing anew the question of the meaning of Being is phenomenology. Phenomenology, on this count, is novel in that it is concerned with the "how" of the object of philosophical research as contrasted with the "what".<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the important feature of this method is that it takes into account, almost with philatelic care, the "position",

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<sup>8</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 58.

<sup>9</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 51.

so to speak, of "that which shows itself", for Heidegger indicates, with professorial emphasis, that which shows itself "in itself". Notice, in all this, that there is a twofold definition of the phenomenon. On the one hand, it is defined as that which makes itself manifest, and on the other, as that which can be divulged. However,

Il n'y a pas une contradiction entre ces deux définitions du phénomène, mais en tout une antithèse. 'Ce qui peut être dévoilé' met l'accent sur le Dasein qui dévoile l'étant; 'Ce qui se montre soi-même' met l'accent sur l'étant qui se dévoile au Dasein.<sup>10</sup>

Without doubt, what is noticeable here is that in his chef d'oeuvre, that is, Being and Time, Heidegger stresses the fact that the revelation of the phenomenon takes place in and through Dasein. However, in a work like Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics or De l'essence de la vérité, the emphasis is shifted towards the self-manifestation of entities themselves, "et en dernier ressort sur l'auto-dévoilement de l'être comme tel."<sup>11</sup>

How, then, does τὰ φαινόμενα stand with the Greeks? What, for them, are phenomena? Φαινόμενον, Heidegger points out, is derivative of the verb φαίνεσθαι, which signifies "to show itself". Then with a daring self-confidence, and listless of academic scruples

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<sup>10</sup> Bernard Delfgaauw, "La phénoménologie chez Martin Heidegger", Les études philosophiques, IX (1954), p. 53.

<sup>11</sup> Delfgaauw, La phénoménologie, p. 53.

Heidegger hazards that φαίνεσθαι, itself a middle voiced form, derives from φαίνω, that is, to bring to the light of day, to put in light. Moreover φαίνω itself springs from the stem φα-, "like φῶς, the light, that which is bright - in other words, that wherein something can become manifest, visible in itself."<sup>12</sup>

On this count, phenomena "are the totality of what lies in the light of day or can be brought to the light - what the Greeks sometimes identified simply with τὰ ὄντα (entities)."<sup>13</sup>

But now, a phenomenon, besides being that which shows itself for what it is, can also show itself for what it is not. In other words, that which shows itself is at once concealing and unconcealing. Indeed, "only when the meaning of something is such that it makes a pretension of showing itself - that is, of being a phenomenon - can it show itself as something which it is not; only then can it 'merely look like so-and-so'."<sup>14</sup> In the language of men of baser clay, as C. D. Broad would say, being and appearing are structurally interconnected, that is, what appears "is", otherwise how would it at all "appear"? Indeed, it must "be" in order to show itself, to glow. Of course, this hermeneutic of phenomena is based on Heidegger's understanding of what being meant to the Greeks. For them, "the essence of being is physis. Appearing is the power that emerges. Appearing

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<sup>12</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 51.

<sup>13</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 51.

<sup>14</sup>Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 51.



Makes manifest. Already it is known that being, appearing, causes to emerge from concealment. Since the entity (essent) as such is, it places itself in and stands in unconcealment, aletheia."<sup>15</sup> At the same time Einaí, being, means a certain coming to stand (Zum Stand kommen), an emergence which is not without a trace of endurance. According to Heidegger, this emergence-endurance implies the notion of the finitude of being. For the Greeks, Einaí has an end. It is finite; after all, being means "Anwesenheit", that is, presence. Einaí means to be present. In point of fact the true being of being present is profoundly hidden "in the earliest names of Being. Moreover, "in being present there moves, unrecognized and concealed, present time and duration- in one word, Time. Being as such is thus unconcealed owing to Time."<sup>16</sup>

Coming-to-stand and "staying around for a while", this "twofold", is what most characterises, as it were, Being as Time. For in coming to stand, that which so emerges comes forth into the light, and is a standing presence. *Φύσις* accordingly is structurally related to *φαίνεσθαι*. For the emergence which is the former erupts by virtue of the latter, and the whole "twofold" "takes place" in Dasein. In their roots, therefore, Being and Time are one and the same. The appearance

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<sup>15</sup> Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 86.

<sup>16</sup> Heidegger, "The Way Back into the Ground of Metaphysics," in Walter Kaufmann, ed. Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre. New York: Meridian, p. 957, p. 216.

of being is the presencing of the present. Once more, the appearance or emergence of being is Time. Now since being appears, it must have somehow been in the darkness. And if it was thus concealed, the implication is that in appearing it "is". This "is" ( $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\iota$ ) is what Heidegger understands by primordial Time. Not only that, but due to the fact that the presencing of the present is Dasein's understanding of being, it goes without saying that Time or Being is finite. For what comes to stand establishes its boundaries, forms its own limit ( $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha\varsigma$ ). Indeed, "a being is that which comes to stand on its own in abiding fashion by revealing itself in the light of truth." Which means that to take up a stand in just this way is to "define the limits", that is, to "be" finite. Being restricts itself to its own self-established confines, "by which it is what it is in distinction from what is not a being."<sup>17</sup> Or again, "La différence ontologique est antérieure à la différence ontique en tant qu'elle est manière de distinguer un étant de l'autre: elle est distinction de l'étant et de son être, dans laquelle seulement un étant se dégage en tant qu'étant."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Richardson, Through Phenomenology, p. 265.

<sup>18</sup>Otto Poggeler, La pensée de Heidegger, (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, trans. Marianna Simon, 1967), p. 203.

## II

### Being and the Greeks

Now it is to be remarked that in this original conception of Physis there is an endurance, a certain solidity, "Standigkeit", Heidegger calls it: permanence. In emerging, Physis takes stand. It is an "emerging holding away". It is permanent presence. This twofold of Being is what, in the beginning of the present chapter, is referred to as constituting the ambiguity of "presencing of the present". Heidegger sheds some light,

Let us thing of Being according to its original meaning, as presence. Being is present to man neither incidentally or only on rare occasions. Being is present and abides only as it concerns man through the claim it makes on him. For it is man, open toward Being, who alone lets Being arrive as 'presence'.<sup>19</sup>

But now, even though Being historically arrived as "presence", its arrival was not merely "as presence". It was a presencing of the present. According to Heidegger the Pre-Socratics understood Being in just this way. However, what Aristotle and Plato did was to convert Being into one aspect of the twofold, namely, the presence of the present. This solidity or permanence then became *ὄσις*. From the

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<sup>19</sup> Heidegger, Identity and Difference, (New York: Harper and Row, Joan Stambaugh, 1969), p. 31.

point of view of appearing, also, the later Greek thinkers lost track of the twofold insofar as they no longer apprehended the appearing-appearance as the emerging-out of concealment, but rather took the mere look or appearance of the thing as its being. This look they then called <sup>3</sup>εἶδος . Jean Wahl expatiates:

Le logos qui était le rassemblement, qui était physis, devient le lieu des catégories. Par le même mouvement par lequel on a été de la physis à l'idée, on a été du logos authentique à catégorie. Le logos appartient au domaine du Zunanden (organon). La physis devenue idée, le logos devenu jugement, se sont séparés de l'antique physis.<sup>20</sup>

Here began the historic forgetfulness of Being by the Occident which Heidegger in his own way has undertaken to "recall". Has he succeeded? Hardly, is my rejoinder.

By virtue of the twofold the destiny of Being was meant to be forgotten in just the way it happened. Being eschatologically sends itself, indeed, it "dictatorially" sends itself to *basein*. In a historical context, however, Being can be said to have sent itself prejudicially to Anaximander hesitatingly, and completely to Heraclitus and Parmenides. This way of construing Heidegger would undoubtedly entitle these three Greeks to the status of prophets or messians, thereby juxtaposing them with Isaiahs, Jeremiahs, and Jesus Christ, save of course, that the latter are Hebrews and chosen not by Being

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<sup>20</sup>Jean Wahl, "L'introduction à la métaphysique de Martin Heidegger", Revue de métaphysique et de morale, LXL (1956), p. 123.

but by Jahweh. Garulli might be right after all, "Bien qu'exprimant une réalité absolue, l'être heideggérien n'est ni immanent, ni transcendent, mais exprime à la fois un caractère mystique et rationaliste, humain et divin."<sup>21</sup>

Now much as I would like to do justice to Heidegger's metaphysical energy and erudition, I cannot help but maintain that his thought is infected by gross assumptions that cannot even bear the weight of their logical consequences. His grass-roots philosophic conviction is that Man (Dasein) is the being in whom Being reveals itself. In other words, it is through human Dasein that entities are what they are. "L'homme est, et il est homme, pour autant qu'il est existant. Il surgit dans l'ouverture de l'Être, cette ouverture qui est l'Être lui-même."<sup>22</sup> Or what amounts to the same, that "Man in his essence is the memory of Being, but of Being."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Enrico Garulli, "L'unité idéale de la pensée heideggérienne", Revue de métaphysique et de morale, 72 (1967), p. 125.

<sup>22</sup> Heidegger, Lettre sur l'humanisme, p. 127.

<sup>23</sup> Heidegger, The Question of Being, (New Haven, Conn.: Twane Publishers, Inc., trans. William Kluback and Jean Wilde, 1958), p. 83.

What is to be noticed in all this is that "Man" and "Dasein", defined as that being in whom Being is present (the memory of Being), are used interchangeably. In this case one would naturally, if not logically draw the conclusion that Heidegger is referring to Man, i.e., without ethnical considerations. However, this is not the case at all. For when Heidegger refers to the being in whom Being is present, he means the Greek. "The Greek language, and it alone, is logos."<sup>24</sup> But what is "logos" if not the "togetherness in the essent, the togetherness in all essents, that which gathers; everything that happens, i.e., that comes into being, stands there in accordance with this permanent togetherness."<sup>25</sup> This logos, in essence, is nothing other than the physis which, awhile ago, was said to be Being. Logos is physis, physis is Being. Logos is Greek. But is Man Greek?

Moreover, Being is the World, as was expressly shown in the first chapter. Palmer can help elucidate:

The terms 'world' in Heidegger does not mean our environment, objectively considered, the universe as it appears to a scientific gaze. It is closer to what might be called our personal world. World is not the whole of all beings but the whole in which the human being always finds himself already immersed, surrounded by its

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<sup>24</sup>Heidegger, What is Philosophy?, p. 45.

<sup>25</sup>Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 108.

manifestness as revealed through and  
always pregrasping encompassing understanding.<sup>26</sup>

Heidegger is more lucid and relevant to the equation I just  
now mentioned. Writes he, "Le mot 'monde' ne designe aucun étant  
particulier, mais l'ouverture de l'Être."<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, Being is Time, as has just been explained.  
Can it be justifiably maintained that the World is Greek, that  
Time is Greek? Indeed, there is no answer to that question  
in Heidegger.

But what is of critical importance in Heidegger's hermeneutical  
phenomenology as it has been herein treated, is the presence of  
an unresolved ambiguity in the ontological locus of Being. On  
the one hand, it is Dasein, which term is freely used interchangeably  
with Man, and on the other hand, that same locus is Anaximander,  
Heraclitus and Parmenides. After all, Heidegger maintains that  
it was to the Greeks, specifically to the above-mentioned pre-  
Socratics, that Being first revealed itself. Now my point is  
that it is folly to suppose that Anaximander was the first man  
"in the world". My contention continues that Heidegger has yet  
to reconcile this state of tension between his ontological

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<sup>26</sup>Richard Palmer, Hermeneutics, Evanston, 1969, p. 132.

<sup>27</sup>Heidegger, Lettre sur l'humanisme, p. 127.

and historical frameworks. Not until this is done can it truly be said that Heidegger's thought enjoys a systematic unity. For while it is true that Anaximander is Dasein, it is false that Dasein is Anaximander.

Moreover, if (and the general tenor of Heidegger's thought suggests it) the pre-Socratics are collectively or individually the chosen locus of Being, then Heidegger has a monumental task yet to undertake, which is to justify Being's choice of these Greeks. "Being sends itself" implies or suggests an autonomy of will on the part of Being. But why, one is forced to ask, did Being choose those three thinkers? Why not Confucius or Mark Twain? Heidegger has not dealt with this crucial implication of his assumptions. Because of this inconclusiveness in his philosophy and the unresolved state of tension between the pre-Socratics and Dasein as the locus of Being, I conclude that Heidegger's thought is lacking of systematic unity desired by logical reflexion.



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