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UEBERWINDUNG as Concreteness in M. Heidegger's Philosophy.

Francesco Vivona

A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Philosophy

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

February, 1988

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ABSTRACT

UEBERWINDUNG as Concreteness in M. Heidegger's Philosophy.

Francesco Vivona

At the beginning of Being and Time Heidegger stresses the need for the reformulation of the question of Being and in order to do so he finds it justified to propose a "Destruction" of traditional ontology.

In his later writings, however, he no longer speaks of a "Destruktion", but of an "Ueberwindung", i.e., an overcoming of metaphysics, which has a less radical connotation. Indeed, on the basis of what we read in the Preface to the fifth printing of his lecture "What is Metaphysics?", published twenty years after Being and Time, a radical "Destruktion" of the whole metaphysical tradition does not seem to constitute Heidegger's real intention.

My thesis is that Being and Time, correctly understood, already contains Heidegger's later position, namely the Overcoming of metaphysics rather than its radical destruction.

Since Heidegger's main concern is to overcome over-conceptualization, I shall substantiate my claim by arguing that, within the metaphysical tradition, neither Plato nor Aristotle can be the primary target of the "Destruktion", precisely because conceptualization is not as radical in them as it will be in subsequent ontology. It will be argued that Heidegger's fundamental ontology, as laid out in Being and Time, is to be interpreted as a rehabilitation of Plato and

IV

Aristotle because their metaphysics contains the seeds of that CONCRETENESS which is also the leitmotif of Heidegger in Being and Time.

Indeed, at the very beginning of this work he states:

Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the question of the meaning of Being and to do so CONCRETELY. (It. ours) (S Z .1, B.T. 19)

Concreteness will therefore be also the leitmotif of my thesis: metaphysics is to be OVERCOME, not destroyed, through a return to its long forgotten concreteness.

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I also wish to thank my typist, Sandi Patterson, for her patience and skill in coping with a language and a terminology which are not within a typist's everyday experience.

Last but not least, I also wish I could make good for the inconvenience suffered by my wife Danh during five long years on account of my philosophical pursuit. But this is perhaps next to impossible.

AI MIEI GENITORI E A MIO FIGLIO ENRICO

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ABBREVIATIONS

Throughout this thesis the abbreviation SZ stands for Heidegger's work Sein und Zeit and the pagination referred to is that of the eighth German edition of the treatise.

B. T. stands for the title of the English translation of SZ (Being and Time) by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. The corresponding pagination is also indicated next to the one of SZ.

The only other abbreviations used are:

MFL: "The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic"
by M. Heidegger.

VWG: "Vom Wesen Des Grundes"
(The essence of reasons)
by M. Heidegger

INTRODUCTION

Heidegger says at the beginning of Being and Time that an inquiry into Being has traditionally seemed unnecessary since Being was considered the most universal and the emptiest of concepts, a self-evident notion which has ultimately left Being meaningless. This loss of meaning had also been coupled epistemologically with a sharp distinction between subject and object and with a view of knowledge in causal terms.

The fallacy of traditional ontology is epitomised by Descartes, whom Heidegger makes responsible for the impoverishment of man's world due to his notion of "res extensa". Heidegger stresses, therefore, the necessity to reformulate "the question of the meaning of Being".

The fundamental change he proposes consists in the reversal of the question itself, that is, we must not inquire into what an entity is, but, rather, into what Being or the Being of an entity is. This leads to the investigation of phenomena through the phenomenological method in which Dasein plays an all-important role as the intermediary between Being (Sein) and entities (Seiende):

Phenomenology (he states) is our way of access to what is to be the theme of ontology, and it is our way of giving it demonstrative precision. (SZ 35, B.T. 60)

This is why Heidegger categorically stresses the necessity of DESTROYING traditional ontology.

No doubt, if "behind" the phenomena of phenomenology there is essentially nothing else..." (SZ 36, B.T. 60), Heidegger is justified in

Being and Time, he expressly states in the Preface to the 5th printing of the lecture "What is Metaphysics?" that

The thinking attempted in Being and Time (1927) sets out on the way to prepare an OVERCOMING (it. ours) of Metaphysics. (1)

The new term "Overcoming" is a translation of the German word "UEBERWINDUNG". Overcoming has a less radical connotation than Destruction, which implies the annihilation of metaphysics. This can be interpreted as a softening of Heidegger's position and leaves the door open for a partial incorporation of traditional metaphysics into his new ontology.

The purpose of the present thesis is to demonstrate that for Heidegger the metaphysical tradition before Descartes still retains some validity, in spite of its non-phenomenological approach, on account of certain elements which have been ignored or repudiated by Descartes. Traditional metaphysics can be truly overcome, in the positive sense, only by disclosing the meaning of Being which has hitherto remained obscure. To this effect the remedy proposed by Heidegger can be expressed in one word: CONCRETENESS. This is indeed what one reads in the definition of the task which M. Heidegger sets for himself at the very beginning of Being and Time:

Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the question of the meaning of BEING and to do so CONCRETELY. (it. ours) (SZ 1, B.T. 19)

Concreteness will be, therefore, also the leitmotif of this thesis.

(1) M. Heidegger: The Way back into the Ground of Metaphysics W. Kaufmann's transl. From: Philosophy in the XXth century: an anthology, Vol. III, p. 209. , W. Barrett/H.D. Aiken ed., New York: Random House, 1962.

holding that the tradition was wrong precisely because it presupposed that Being can be posited in terms of essences. Yet I wonder whether, in the light of the treatment of the question of Being in Being and Time, the term "DESTRUKTION" should not be taken in a less radical sense: not as an indiscriminate rejection of the whole metaphysical tradition, but only as a critique of the distortion exemplified by Descartes.

Granted that the notion of "Res extensa" is fallacious, a "DESTRUKTION" of traditional ontology would be justified if and only if it can be demonstrated that "Res extensa" is a natural, direct consequence of the conceptual bias inherent in traditional ontology. That such a conceptual bias existed (perhaps not necessarily in Plato and Aristotle, but in the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition) is undeniable. Yet neither do I think that the whole of our philosophical tradition before Heidegger is to be rejected simply on account of its conceptual approach, nor do I believe that Heidegger held such an extreme view.

If the practice of philosophy has sometimes resulted in extreme conceptualization and in the estrangement of man from the concrete dimension of his existence as lived experience, this is less true of ancient philosophy than of the more recent anti-metaphysical schools, such as logicism and linguistic analysis. Indeed, Plato's quest for the nature of Goodness, Virtue, Justice, Love, Beauty, etc. was far from being for him a matter of purely academic, abstract concern: it presupposed, on the contrary, a deep, concerned involvement with life and the world similar to the one demanded from Dasein by Heidegger.

That the real intent of Heidegger was something far less radical than an outright destruction of traditional ontology can also be evinced by the fact that in 1949, i.e. twenty years after the publication of

CHAPTER ONE

THE SETTING OF THE PROBLEM: THE "ONTIC-ONTOLOGICAL" DISTINCTION AS THE GROUND FOR THE "DESTRUCTION" OF TRADITIONAL ONTOLOGY.

In the introduction of Being and Time Heidegger states the necessity of reformulating the question of Being in radically new terms:

If we are to understand the problem of Being, our first philosophical step consists in not MUTHON TINA DIEGHEI-STHAI, in not "telling a story" -that is to say, in not defining entities as entities by tracing them back in their origin to some other entities, as if Being had the character of some possible entity. Hence Being, as that which is asked about, must be exhibited in a way of its own, essentially different from the way in which entities are discovered..., essentially contrasting with the concepts in which entities acquire their determinate signification. (SZ p.6; B.T. 26)

In this statement Heidegger explicitly contrasts his newly proposed formulation of the question of Being to the one put forth by traditional ontology. In the course of his subsequent analysis he explains the difference between the two approaches in terms of a new distinction between the "ONTIC" vs "ONTOLOGICAL" formulation of the problem of Being. It is therefore important to understand why this distinction is introduced and what it means. Since the above statement contains all the essential terms of the question I will take it as a point of departure, bearing in mind, however, that, given the introductory nature of the present chapter, the explication of the statement will not go beyond a generic outline of the essential problematic bearing directly upon the destruction of Metaphysics. The main objective here is to follow Heidegger's own path of questioning. First, in saying that he does not

intend to approach the question of Being either by "telling a story" or by defining entities in terms of other entities or by building upon concepts, Heidegger clearly manifests his intention of abandoning the essentialism of traditional ontology which indeed, by operating strictly with concepts and definitions within the genus/species/differentia framework, had arrived at the notion of Being as the highest concept (the summum genus): a notion which is the emptiest and most abstract one could possibly envisage. Furthermore, in assuming that Being is no more than the highest conceptual essence, traditional ontology ultimately acquiesced in its utter indefinability: an idea which, one expects, should have made the Greeks rather uneasy, given their rational bent, and therefore should have pushed them to inquire further, if not to change their approach altogether. On the contrary, lured by the seeming self-evidence of Being, the ancient metaphysical thinkers and, on their wake, all the subsequent western tradition, were all too quick to abandon any further inquiry and to forget the real problem of Being. In fact, if Being is not definable, this is precisely because it is not an entity. Therefore we do not have to take the indefinability of Being as the final stage of our inquiry, but as the starting point:

The indefinability of Being does not eliminate the question of its meaning; it demands that we look that question in the face. (SZ 4, B.T. 23).

For Heidegger the self-evidence of Being only gives an "average" type of intelligibility which hides A PRIORI an enigma:

The very fact that we already live in an understanding of Being and that the meaning of Being is still veiled in darkness proves that is necessary in principle to raise this question again. (SZ 4, B.T. 23)

Looking at the question "in the face" means therefore to go beyond self-evidence to the core of this enigma.

The fact that Being is not an entity entails, as Heidegger says in the opening statement, that "...Being...must be exhibited in a way of its own..." which has nothing to do with the way entities are discovered and with the concepts under which they are categorised. Instead of an ontology of essences a phenomenological ontology is required. Indeed "Only as phenomenology is ontology possible". (SZ 35, B.T. 61). We thus arrive at a first broad qualification of the ONTIC as that which constitutes the horizon of traditional ontology, inasmuch as it dealt with the problem of Being within a context of essences. What ONTIC means will become clearer as we gain a better understanding of Heidegger's fundamental ontology.

Secondly, if we revert again to the opening quotation, we notice that Heidegger refers to Being as "...that which is asked about...". (SZ 6, B.T. 26) This supplies us with a second link in the chain of questioning. Indeed, the fact that it is all too obvious that "Being is that which is asked about" makes us immediately aware that the assertion is not pleonastic. We must therefore find the reason why it is there. This can be understood by reading the above statement in conjunction with the statement in SZ p.5, where Heidegger says that

...in addition to what is asked about, an inquiry has that which is interrogated. (ein Befragtes). (SZ 5, B.T. 24)

This brings Heidegger to the next fundamental step: if Being is always the Being of some entities and if, therefore, on account of this, ontology has to be put on new foundations, the question of Being cannot be formulated in abstraction from the concrete Being of one entity or

another. The question becomes, then, one of which entity must be interrogated first.

And, indeed, he asks :

From which entities is the disclosure of Being to take its departure? Is the starting-point optional, or does some particular entity have priority when we come to work out the question of Being? (SZ 7, B.T. 26)

Once more, this question remained hopelessly outside the horizon of ancient ontology. Not only did this, as mentioned earlier, take Being and existence for granted (because of their seeming self-evidence), but it didn't see the fundamental difference between the Being of man and the Being of all the other entities of the natural world. And precisely because it did not see this difference, traditional ontology remained "ONTIC".

What is this fundamental difference?

Dasein is an entity which does not just occur among other entities. Rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, that Being is an issue for it. Understanding of Being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein's Being. Dasein is ontically distinctive in that it is ontological. (SZ 12, B.T. 32)

Furthermore, Heidegger says that

Inquiry as a kind of seeking must be guided beforehand by what is sought. So the meaning of Being must be available to us in some way. (SZ 5, B.T. 25)

For him Being ONTOLOGICAL means

...being in such-a way that one has an understanding of Being. (SZ 12, B.T. 32)...Out of this understanding arise both the explicit question of the meaning of Being and the tendency that leads us towards this conception. (SZ 5, B.T. 25).

This brings out a third aspect of the meaning of "ONTOLOGICAL":

fundamental ontology, as distinguished from the merely "ONTIC" approach of traditional ontology does not proceed in linear, conceptual thinking, but in a circular fashion. This is the meaning of the "hermeneutical circle", which is not a "circulus vitiosus" precisely because thinking does not move from concepts to concepts, but goes around the phenomena of the world:

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 the 'IS' signifies. We do not even know the horizon in terms of which that meaning is to be grasped and fixed. BUT THIS VAGUE AVERAGE UNDERSTANDING OF BEING IS STILL A FACT. (SZ 5, B.T. 25)

Here Heidegger employs the term "Fact" precisely in contradistinction to conceptual understanding.

In what then, does the facticity of this understanding of Dasein consist and why must the inquiry about Being be an interrogation of Dasein in the first place?

Looking at something, understanding and conceiving it, choosing access to it, all these ways of behaving are constitutive for our own inquiry and therefore are modes of being for those particular entities which we, the inquirers, are ourselves. Thus to work out the question of Being adequately, we must take an entity, the inquirer, transparent in its own Being. (SZ 7, B.T. 26)

But in what else does our existence consist if not, precisely, in that infinite multiplicity of comportments through which we "look at something, we understand, conceive, choose etc."? Dasein's priority lies therefore in the fact that it "exists":

Dasein always understands itself in terms of its existence. (SZ 12, B.T. 33)

In that Dasein's existence is characterized by understanding, it has and ONTICAL priority over all the other entities. However it also has

an ONTOLOGICAL priority in that its understanding of the world is pre-determined by certain a priori structures wherein its very existence is primordially constituted. I will not enter at this point into a discussion of Dasein's basic constitution since this would bring us beyond the scope of the present introduction. I shall take it for granted on the basis of Heidegger's analysis in SZ, DIV. ONE, CH. V and VI.

I will limit myself, therefore, before concluding, to the bearing of the Ontic-Ontological distinction upon the notion of existence. Heidegger instantiates this distinction in terms of "EXISTENTIELL" vs "EXISTENZIAL":

Only the particular Dasein decides its existence
 ...The question of existence never gets straightened out except through existing itself. The understanding of oneself which leads along this way we call "existentiell". The question of existence is one of Dasein's ontical "affairs".
 (SZ 12, B.T. 33)

On the other hand by EXISTENZIAL (existentiality) "We understand the state of Being that is constitutive of those entities which exist". (SZ 13, B.T. 33), hence it follows that for Heidegger "so far as existence is the determining character of Dasein, the ontological analytic of this entity always requires that existentiality be considered beforehand".
 (SZ 13, B.T. 33)

Therefore he concludes:

Fundamental ontology, from which alone all other ontologies can take their rise, must be sought in the existential (EXISTENZIAL) analytic of Dasein.
 (SZ 13, B.T. 34)

In sum, traditional ontology is ONTIC, for Heidegger, to the extent that it has failed to carry out an adequate investigation of those A PRIORI structures making up Dasein's existentiality. More specifically,

this distinction has also been characterized as the distinction between:

1. The CONCEPTUAL and the FACTUAL (Phenomenological) approach.
2. The ABSTRACT and the CONCRETE approach.
3. The LINEAR and the CIRCULAR "logic" (Hermeneutical).
4. The "EXISTENTIELL" and the "EXISTENZIAL"

We should now be in a position to deal with the question of the "DESTRUKTION" of ontology under the heading of "ONTIC SELF-EVIDENCE vs ONTOLOGICAL DISGUISE. The following quotation will allow us to enter Heidegger's path (WEB):

...something which was ontically self-evident in the traditional way of treating the "problem of knowledge" has often been ontologically disguised to the point where it has been lost sight of altogether.
(SZ 132, B.T. 170-171)

CHAPTER TWO

THE "DESTRUKTION" OF TRADITIONAL ONTOLOGY: -THE QUESTIONING OF THE CARTESIAN NOTION OF SELF-EVIDENCE.

I. THE ONTOLOGICALLY UNCLARIFIED PRESUPPOSITIONS OF TRADITIONAL ONTOLOGY.

...something which was ONTICALLY (it. ours) self-evident in the traditional way of treating the "problem of knowledge" has often been ONTOLOGICALLY (it. ours) disguised to the point where it has been lost sight of altogether.
(SZ 132, B.T. 170-171)

This statement is thematic. It expresses Heidegger's central concern of Being and Time in the contrast between two all-important notions: Ontical Self-evidence and Ontological disguise. I will therefore take it as the hermeneutical guidepost in order to elucidate the meaning of Heidegger's "DESTRUKTION".

What was ONTICALLY self-evident in the traditional way of treating the question of Being? According to Heidegger the question of Man and Being was formulated at the onset in the wrong terms by presupposing 1) the existence of a substance-bound external world independent from consciousness and 2) that this world has to be brought into it in order to be "known". This led to the framing of the question of Being in epistemological terms, namely:

1. How does the Subject know the Object, viz. the external world?
2. Can the Subject have a TRUE knowledge of the external world?

It is precisely the above two presuppositions which constitute for Heidegger the ontically self-evident but ontologically disguised assumptions at the root of western metaphysical thinking.

In what sense, then, more precisely, are they only ontically self-evident, while supposedly disguising ontologically something far more important? What has been forgotten or passed over to require a radical "DESTRUKTION" of traditional ontology and epistemology?

We must demonstrate that Reality is not only one kind of Being among others, but ontologically it has a definite connection in its foundations with Dasein, the world and readiness-to-hand... (SZ 201, B.T. 245)...to Dasein, Being in a world is something that belongs essentially. (SZ 13, B.T. 33)

In the light of this radically new insight Heidegger therefore denounces the tradition which, by appealing only to "ontical self-evidence",

...blocks our access to those primordial "sources" from which the categories and concepts handed down to us have been in part quite genuinely drawn. (SZ 21, B.T. 43)

The task is, then, one in which "by taking the question of Being as our clue, we are to "destroy" the traditional content of ancient ontology until we arrive at those primordial experiences in which we achieved our first ways in determining the notion of Being..." (SZ 22, B.T. 44)

Significantly, those "primordial sources" which Heidegger intends to bring to light are EXPERIENCES as opposed to categories and concepts. These experiences are primordially constituted within Dasein's consciousness as PHENOMENA and they are, therefore, ontologically prior to any categories. It should be noted, however, that Phenomena do not constitute for Heidegger the mere APPEARING of something, as opposed to an allegedly more authentic Being which remains hidden behind. Contrary

to Kant's view, Reality is and cannot be other than APPEARANCE;
 "Behind the phenomena of phenomenology there is essentially nothing
 else..." (SZ 36, B.T. 60)

The outcome of such a radical position is that the relationship
 between man and the world had to be re-written. In this light Heidegger
 continues:

Our first aim is to bring into relief PHENOMENALLY
 (it. ours) the unitary primordial structures of Dasein's
 Being, in terms of which its possibilities and the ways for
 it "to be" are ontologically determined. (SZ 130, B.T. 169)

Considering the perspective of this thesis, which is not primarily
 expository, but hermeneutical, I shall not at this point embark directly
 upon a detailed exposition of the "Analytic of Dasein" by fully
 explicating the above statement. I shall rather continue to dwell on the
 inner development of the PROBLEMATIC itself.

II. THE CARTESIAN FALLACY.

I have so far brought out in general terms the presuppositions of
 ancient ontology and epistemology within the Platonic-Aristotelian
 tradition and contrasted them with the different and radically opposed
 presuppositions of Heidegger. This is not, however, sufficient, for the
 meaning of Heidegger's "Destruction" of traditional ontology cannot be
 adequately grasped without bringing it to bear upon the Cartesian view of
 the world. Indeed, if there is already disagreement between Heidegger
 and Plato and Aristotle on certain essential points, this disagreement
 reaches its climax only with Descartes. I shall therefore proceed now to
 outline Heidegger's critique of Descartes and to show how in Heidegger's

eyes the French philosopher played havoc with the tradition he inherited by combining its presuppositions with his own novel perspective, while at the same time emasculating the very same tradition of its most valid and essential metaphysical notion of the FORM. Indeed, by doing so, Descartes has made the gap between Heidegger and the ancient tradition unbreacheable.

While I am aware of the controversy surrounding certain aspects of M. Heidegger's interpretation of Descartes, I shall not attempt to bring into my thesis the criticisms which have been levelled against Heidegger. This, I think, would be beyond the scope of my concern, which is to provide an interpretation of M. Heidegger's metaphysics of concreteness and not an analysis of Descartes' epistemology and ontology in general. The basic implications of Descartes' notion of res extensa, as M. Heidegger saw them, are inescapable. It is not necessary, in my view, to go beyond them in order to understand what the German philosopher meant by concreteness and how this idea imparts unity of meaning to the whole of Being and Time.

In SZ Heidegger states that for Descartes

The only genuine access to them (entities in the world) lies in knowing, *intellectio*, in the sense of the kind of knowledge we get in mathematics and physics. (SZ 95, B.T. 128)

This brings forth the essence of the Cartesian turn, namely the priority of the ONTIC over the ONTOLOGICAL, which is expressed concretely by the epistemological turn in ontology. From now on knowledge is to be modeled after the exact sciences. Hence it becomes restricted to CERTAINTY. Unlike the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition, anything short of certainty, or at least this type of mathematical certainty, can no longer lay claim to true knowledge.

At the same time Descartes retains the traditional notion of Substance, not without running, in this respect, into some fundamental inconsistencies. In fact he applies, as expected, the methodological criterion of certainty to the properties of Substance, thereby concluding that the only property which can be known is EXTENSIO. At the same time he does not apply his criterion of true knowledge to Substance itself. Far from this, he assumes its existence as a necessary substratum of attributes, instead of rejecting it, as he should, on his own premises and on the strength of his explicit admission that Substance, indeed, is not given to consciousness:

Verumtamen non potest substantia primum animadverti
ex hoc solo quod sit res existens, quia hoc solum nos
non afficit. (Descartes, cit. in. SZ 94, B.T. 126)

This aporia in Descartes did not escape Heidegger's attention. He explicitly points out that for the French philosopher not all the attributes belong primordially to Substance; but only

...those satisfying in the purest manner that meaning of "Being" and "substantiality" which has still been tacitly presupposed: to the SUBSTANTIA FINITA as RES CORPOREA, what must be "assigned" ("Zuweisung") is the EXTENSIO. (SZ 94, B.T. 127)

And this is precisely for Heidegger the tragedy of the Cartesian view: the world is no more than RES EXTENSA, which means that its only significance to man is and ought to be determined by its measurability and explainability in strictly quantitative terms.

The notion of RES-EXTENSA is fundamentally wrong, for Heidegger, because in positing the world as no more than an entity measurable and definable solely in mathematical, geometrical or physical terms, Descartes ignores its qualitative aspect which is the most enriching, meaningful and existentially relevant. It is the aspect which M.

Heidegger terms "Readiness-at-hand", as opposed to the mere "Presence-at-hand" of the Cartesian world. The former means the understanding of the world by Dasein as a totality of significance or of POSSIBILITIES OF SIGNIFICANCE for it. It is a world which, far from being outside Dasein and constituting an object facing it within a spatial dimension, is already A PRIORI within Dasein's consciousness by means of that primordial ontological structure which Heidegger calls "CONCERN".

The other notion, Presence-at-hand, means exactly the opposite: it is an objectified (reified) world, utterly estranged from and constituted outside the qualitative dimension of human existence. I shall examine more in detail the notions of Presence-at-hand and Readiness-to-hand in the next chapter.

Not only the world as RES EXTENSA thus emerges as significantly impoverished, but conversely, the Self, delivered to the vacuous self-evidence of the "clear and distinct ideas", is reduced to a void abstraction, forever cut off from its primordial experiential grounds: ultimately man becomes meaningless to himself. This follows directly from Heidegger's presupposition that "the unitary primordial structure of Dasein's Being" (SZ 130; B.T. 169) is Being-in-the-World. Heidegger's central thesis is that the primordial ontological ground of existence (the Cartesian "SUM") is not substantiality, but significance. Existence is rooted in meaningfulness in the sense that to exist means for Heidegger to be bathed in a continuous CONCERNFUL understanding of the world seen as a totality of significance and of POSSIBILITIES of significance for Dasein. On this ground the "DESTRUKTION" appears as nothing less than the turning around of the Cartesian cogito. Instead of deducing existence from the empty self-evidence of the cogito, we have to

start from what is phenomenally closest to us, i.e. that we exist (EX-Sist)(1); only after asserting "SUM" (and, indeed, only because we can assert this), we can proceed to the hermeneutical task proper of uncovering the content of the "cogitationes" which constitute the horizon of our very existence and of our Self. We cannot, like Descartes, proclaim "cogito ergo sum" in complete abstraction from its experiential content.

The realization that Being is rooted in existence and that therefore the meaning of Being cannot be understood in abstraction from the concrete horizon of feelings and thoughts through which each individual Dasein relates to the world is indeed the first step towards the overcoming of the Cartesian ontic self-evidence. It does not, however, mean that the PHENOMENON of existence is truly ONTOLOGICALLY disclosed ipso facto.

If Dasein can become transparent to itself only by fulfilling to the widest possible extent the intentionalities of its thinking-existence, it can do so, for Heidegger, only because the latter is rooted in certain primordial, a priori structures which are ONTOLOGICAL and ontologically prior to existence as EXISTENTIELL. Just as representational thinking would be neither possible nor understandable in its essence without the categories, so the world could not be present to Dasein's consciousness as the intentional object of "cogitationes" of any kind, if it was not for those a priori structures of existence, which Heidegger calls

(1) Heidegger follows the etymological spelling in order to bring out the intentional aspect of existence as a meaning-bestowing activity, as opposed to the merely substantive connotation of existence as a "Present-at-hand" entity.

the "EXISTENZIAL" and which he identifies with VERSTAENDNIS (Understanding), BEFINDLICHKEIT (States-of-mind) and SORGE (Care-Concern).

The interpretation of Dasein's Being as existence, at the ONTICAL level, must therefore be preceded by an adequate analysis of those ONTOLOGICAL structures. From this perspective, to the extent that EXISTENTIALITY is the ground of existence-thinking (cogitationes), the new direction of Heidegger's thought can be viewed as the turning around of the Cartesian "cogito": from "cogito ergo sum", therefore, to "sum ergo cogito", bearing in mind, however, that the conjunction "ergo" does not express a logical inference between two concepts, but the order in which the phenomenological analysis proceeds towards the disclosure of the meaning of the Self and the world therein constituted.

In the light of the above it should have become clear by now why Heidegger says that the Cartesian fallacy consists in the fact that

~~By taking his basic ontological orientation from traditional sources and not subjecting it to positive criticism, he made it impossible to lay bare any primordial ontological problematic of Dasein; this has inevitably obstructed his view of the PHENOMENON of the world... (SZ 98, B.T. 131)~~

III. THE POSITIVE ELEMENTS OF THE PLATONIC-ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION.

The question to be asked now is to what extent, if at all, the fall of Descartes entails "ipso facto" for Heidegger also the fall of the whole tradition before Descartes.

Given the fact that Descartes' fallacy, however compounded by the injection of his own novel presuppositions and methodology, is still rooted in the essential presuppositions of ancient ontology, it would

seen at first sight that neither Plato nor Aristotle, as the ones who first laid out those presuppositions, should stand. Certainly neither of them came substantially any closer to Heidegger than Descartes himself in the sense of formulating a theory of Being along existential-phenomenological lines. Yet, it may be maintained that Heidegger's Destruction of ontology is not directed against them. It is, instead, an all-out attack on Descartes. Do we have to think that Heidegger felt Plato and Aristotle more congenial to himself than Descartes and that therefore he was able to look upon them with more sympathy in spite of their common "errors"? If so why?

It is symptomatic that Being and Time begins with a quotation from the Sophist stressing Plato's growing perplexity vis-à-vis the nature of Being as formulated so far by him:

For manifestly you have long been aware of what you mean when you use the expression "being". We, however, who used to think we understood it, have now become perplexed. (Plato, "The Sophist", cit. SZ 1, B.T. 19)

If in the earlier dialogues (cf. the "Phaedo") Plato had come to the conclusion that only the Ideas have true Being, while sensible objects, although participating in them, do not have Being, this view is questioned in the later dialogues, particularly the "Parmenides" and the "Sophist", where Plato seems to become increasingly aware that there is perhaps not much sense in attributing true Being only to the Ideas to the exclusion of sensible objects. Indeed, what is the purpose of positing, e.g., the Idea of Beauty or Goodness if one has to downgrade all that is beautiful or good in the sensible world to the level of non-being, therefore to the level of something which is intrinsically without value? In the light of this problematic Plato is therefore led to mitigate his transcendent view of Being by recognizing that sensible things, too, far

from being a mere shadow of the only true reality of the Ideas, are possessed of their own deeply relevant Being.

Significantly, in the "Sophist" the Being of sensible things comes to be formulated for the first time in terms of a mutual relational context and thus in a more concrete way: a thing IS in the identity with itself and in the difference from the "other". Being and non-being are no longer defined in absolute terms, as mutually exclusive, by taking the Idea as the only valid standard, but they mutually interpenetrate. From a perspective of substantiality Plato is now moving towards a perspective of meaningfulness:

Whereas we have not only proved that things which are not ARE, but we have shown what form of Being non-Being is; for we have shown that the nature of the other IS and is distributed over all things in their relations to one another and whatever part of the other is contrasted with Being, this is precisely what we have ventured to call not-being... and (we have shown) that there is a communion of classes and being and difference and the other traverse all things and mutually interpenetrate, so that the other partakes of being and by reason of this participation IS and yet is NOT that of which it partakes, but OTHER, and being other than Being it is clearly a necessity that non-being should be. (Plato, "The Sophist", 258)

The above interpretation, so I believe, individuates one of the possible reasons why Heidegger regarded Plato with more sympathy than Descartes. It does not purport, however, to be an account of Heidegger's own explicit view on Plato. Indeed Heidegger is rather elusive regarding Plato, all the more so if we consider his thoroughgoing treatment of Descartes. But if one compares this elusiveness with the explicitness and the length of the critique of Descartes, then the quasi-silence on the Greek philosopher becomes very eloquent and calls for an attentive listening beyond the written word. In this sense, in order to understand

why the attack on traditional ontology is directed against Descartes and not Plato, my interpretation could not avoid a certain amount of extrapolation.

In conclusion I have, indeed, to think that Heidegger knew well the new direction of the later Plato and sided with it. Therefore, by beginning Being and Time with a quotation from the "Sophist", he wanted to pay tribute to the Greek philosopher for having been able to raise anew the question of Being from a perspective which comes rather close to his own (1). Even though Heidegger is aware that Plato remained ultimately unable to develop his new approach to the question of Being to the point of extricating himself completely from the perspective of representational thinking, this could not after all matter too much to him, knowing his deep conviction that in philosophy proper questioning is more important than the answers.

If the emphasis on a more concrete approach to Being (with the accompanying notion that Being and non-Being belong equally to entities in the world and are to be grasped in terms of interrelatedness and contextuality) constitutes the point of arrival of Plato in the later dialogues, ARISTOTLE moves already within this perspective right from the beginning:

The individuals comprised within a species such as Socrates or Choriscus are the REAL beings. (De partibus animalium, A, 4, 644a, 23-27)... Primary Being is thought to belong most evidently to BODIES. (Meta., 1027b, 30)

(1) M. Heidegger's essay: Plato's Doctrine of Truth provides a detailed account of the points of convergence between the Greek philosopher and Heidegger.

Indeed, by positing the notion of Substance as INDIVIDUAL and comprised not only of Form, but also of Matter, Aristotle carries over and consolidates the more concrete approach to Being already present in the later Plato.

What is the meaning of Being when it is posited as SUBSTANCE? This term which, it should be emphasized, does not correspond etymologically to the Greek word OUSIA used by Aristotle, seems to entail the idea that SUBSTANCE stands before the knowing subject as some sort of an object. Moreover, since SUBSTANCE is a particular entity, a "This" or "That" belonging to bodies, the temptation is rather strong to conclude that Aristotle has somewhat reified Being into a material entity. Furthermore, in its function, however derivative, as subject of predication and substratum of accidents, the term SUBSTANCE may assume the connotation, among other things, of a locus.

If one looks, however, at the spirit more than at the letter of the Aristotelian doctrine (which, in its richness and complexity, may indeed, at times, partially justify the above interpretation), one has reasons to believe that Aristotle did not commit himself to such a reified view of Being when he speaks of it in terms of OUSIA. In fact Being, in the hylomorphic conception, emerges less as an entity than, in a sense, as a referential relationship, a process of interaction between Matter, Form and the knowing subject. More than that, if it is matter, it is matter formed and ever formed by the intervention of an efficient cause and under the direction of a final cause. All of these elements are to this extent such an integral part of Being that to hold that Substance is for Aristotle primarily only an "object" of thought seems unjustified.

If there is necessarily a material component in substance, it is derivative, as Aristotle himself explicitly admits by saying that "Material Being comes to be out of the immaterial." (Meta., 1032b, 12) As to the possibility that Substance ought to be interpreted as a subject, this is also explicitly rejected by him:

Substance is neither asserted of a subject, nor is it the subject. (it. ours) (Cat. 11a, 11)

Finally, in order to do full justice to Aristotle, these words should also be remembered, because they contain the seeds of that notion of Being as Meaning and Significance which Heidegger will fully develop two thousand years later:

The world is not such that a thing is unrelated to another, but it is also a definite something.
For all things are ordered around a common center.
(it. ours) (Meta., 1075a, 12)

There is, however, an even more important element of affinity between the tradition and Heidegger: the notion of Form. Although this concept was first formulated by Plato, Aristotle in taking it over from him gave it a significant twist of meaning which could not fail to strike a responsive chord in Heidegger.

In fact, while retaining the Platonic concept of Form, Aristotle was led to see it not so much as a transcendent model to which sensible things conform as, rather, a structuring principle of order inherent in individual sensible objects and which makes them be what they are, with constant shapes and characteristics allowing them to be known and individuated according to their specific function as members of various genera and species. In other words the Form, as a structuring principle, is what makes nature invariably manifest itself according to pre-set shapes and modes of functioning. These are numerous indeed but Nature,

so it must have seemed to Aristotle, never goes beyond them or makes exception to them unless there is a forceful disruption of the natural order causing episodic aberrations.

What is the relevance to Heidegger of the notion of Form which is, after all, a genuine metaphysical principle? Should Aristotle not fall, on account of it, under the axe of the DESTRUKTION of ancient ontology advocated by Heidegger? Indeed, there is no mention of Form in Heidegger's theory of Being. Given his thoroughgoing methodological concern for not injecting into the system any conceptual presupposition per se (even less, building a system on any such presuppositions), there is no reason for him to explicitly uphold a metaphysical notion of this nature. True, Heidegger exhorts us to "listen" to the meaning of the things and this "meaning" may present on the surface a certain similarity to the Form. However Heidegger rules out explicitly such an analogy by stating that meanings, from his perspective, are in no wise ENTITIES, either "floating above" (as for Plato) or "lying behind things" (SZ 151) (as for Aristotle).

Yet, considering the overall drift of his thinking, especially in the light of some of the later essays (see the "Question concerning technology"), one wonders whether it may not be precisely some of the implications of the notion of Form, in terms of man's attitude towards Nature, which make Heidegger substantially more receptive towards the pre-Cartesian metaphysical tradition than towards Descartes himself. To believe in the Form in the Aristotelian sense as the ancients did, was to believe in a higher principle of order and purposiveness inherent in the world. Because of the Form it was widely felt among the ancients that the world is, in its diversity and striking complexity, as it SHOULD be,

according to a blueprint which is not of man's making and which it is not therefore up to man to subvert or destroy. The idea of Form was consequently one that ultimately fostered a deep respect for Nature and the desire to live in harmony with it rather than in an unrestrained frenzy to dominate and alter it.

Even though Descartes cannot be held individually and solely responsible for all the profound transformations of the scientific era, both in its positive as well as negative aspects, the breadth of his genius made him a powerful catalyst of the new emerging attitudes. In his wake, with the demise of the notion of Form there arose a triumphant science for which Nature was not an object of intrinsic respect but primarily an "object" of thought in the most crude and anti-Heideggerian sense. It was an object to be manipulated by reason, altered and subverted, often in the most gratuitous and unethical manner, even against man's own dignity. As a consequence of the Cartesian outlook the world has come closer to destruction in the three centuries following Descartes than it has ever been since the time of Aristotle, in spite or perhaps because of its scientific achievements.

In the light of the preceding considerations we begin to see why Heidegger's DESTRUKTION cannot be taken as a sweeping, total rejection of the tradition, but rather as a rejection of Descartes. Indeed, if the dualism already inherent in the pre-Cartesian tradition has made it impossible to bring into relief the "unitary primordial structures" of Being, this failure reaches with Descartes its extreme point because it is precisely from the sharp epistemological rift between Subject and Object (ensuing the abandonment of the Form) that the idea of Res Extensa could arise. With this notion the "unitary PHENOMENON" of Dasein and its

world has become truly split asunder to the point where RES COGITANS and RES EXTENSA become two merely "Present-at-hand" entities.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PATH OF "CONCRETENESS": FROM "PRESENCE-AT-HAND" TO "READINESS-TO HAND."

At the beginning of Being and Time Heidegger states:

Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the question of the meaning Being and to do so concretely.
(it. ours) (SZ 1, B.T. 19)

As we have seen earlier, the later work of Plato (cf. the "Sophist"), in recognizing that sensible reality, too, is possessed of its own deeply relevant Being, is slowly moving away from that abstract view of Being characterizing his theory of the Forms. Indeed, to come to the realization that the world of sense cannot, after all, be confined to the rank of non-Being and thus ignored, already constitutes a first major step towards concreteness.

This approach is subsequently consolidated with Aristotle through the notion of Substance. Here concreteness consists in Matter being posited as equiprimordially constitutive of Being, together with the Form. If, however, the notion of Substance constitutes in this respect a further step forward from Plato in terms of concreteness, we are still faced in Aristotle with a predominantly abstract view. True, Being is for him grounded in individual, material substances and can be apprehended only inasmuch as it is necessarily disclosed through the entities of the sensible world befalling our senses. However, in my view, this seeming concreteness is in the end obscured by the fact that since the individuation of Being goes no farther than the apprehension

of what is common, (viz. the Form), the genuine, concrete individuality of each single entity within a given class remains still fundamentally undisclosed. Furthermore, the seeming concreteness of Matter itself recedes on closer scrutiny into unintelligibility. Far from being itself physically apprehensible, Matter remains, as Potency, a cause which cannot be apprehended per se without being actualised or clothed, as it were, under a Form.

In sum, even though Substance is posited by Aristotle as INDIVIDUAL and MATERIAL, both its constitutive elements point away from a genuine, concrete individuation: Matter without a Form remains unindividuated, therefore an abstract principle. On the other hand Form itself does not add to the individuation of reality because it is common to many individuals. Aristotle's formulation of Being thus could not reach beyond the numerical individuation of the entities within the world according to their common Form.

If one of the main parameters of concreteness is intelligibility, then Aristotle's Being is indeed abstract at bottom precisely because it is unintelligible. The view that Aristotle's Being is inherently unintelligible, in spite of the seeming concreteness of his notion of SUBSTANCE, is also shared by E. Gilson, who states:

Nothing is more important to remember in Aristotle's philosophy of Being and yet nothing is more commonly overlooked: in their innermost reality substances are UNKNOWN (it. ours). All we know about them is that, since they exist, they are, and they are acts. (1)

As we have seen earlier Aristotle had affirmed that Socrates and Choricus are indeed the real beings and not their common essence "man".

(1) E. Gilson: Being and some philosophers, 2nd ed., Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1952, pp. 44 ff.

But he also went on to say that since they both share this common FORM, it suffices, in order to know them "once for all", to state the universal attributes of their species. This "once for all" casts Aristotle's Being in its true light, that of a perduring abstraction. In this respect I cannot once more but concur with E. Gilson when he qualifies this "once for all", so innocently uttered by Aristotle, as "DREADFUL", because it amounts to saying that since the Form is one for all the entities within the same species, things are in reality all alike and therefore our knowledge of reality is exhausted "once for all" by knowing the Form through one of the members of the same species.

In proclaiming this Aristotle implicitly pronounced the death-sentence for all those positive sciences of observation which he himself had so happily fostered. If taken literally Aristotle's exhortation would indeed impoverish the meaning of the world beyond recognition. To use once more E. Gilson's phrasing, we would be left with a "poverty-stricken world."

Thomas Aquinas retains Aristotle's hylomorphic doctrine and he explicitly states that the principle of individuation is "Materia signata quantitate." However he goes beyond Aristotle in attempting to probe deeper into the seeming self-evidence of existence: he aims at disclosing the ontological ground for the individuation of Being as actualised matter "signata quantitate". He then comes to the fundamental distinction between ESSENCE and EXISTENCE. Even though the line of questioning followed by Thomas Aquinas in arriving at the notion of EXISTENTIA is not explicitly laid out, I believe I am not too far from the truth in saying that Thomas Aquinas' fundamental question is:

// "What kind of Being underlies 'Materia signata quantitate' as the principle of individuation? By virtue of what does the Being of Matter allow the concrete individuation of the particular members of the same class beyond their common Form, i.e., as this or that man, this or that flower? Obviously if Matter is to be retained as the principle of individuation, it must be on the account of a mode of Being other than the Essence because the latter is after all 'common to many individuals. For Thomas Aquinas what 'truly individuates Socrates from Choriscus, beyond their being two numerically different embodiments of the same Form "Man", is that they both 'exist', existence forming the visible, concrete core around which the accidents of their substance gather and disclose themselves." While for Aristotle "One man and an existing man are the same Being as a man." (Meta., 1003b, 26), for Thomas Aquinas "Esse per se consequitur Formam creaturae....(S.T. 1a, 104, 1)....Ipsum esse est actualitas omnium rerum et formarum." (S.T.I, 8, 1). Significantly, if the Form is, as it was for Aristotle, the actualization of Matter, Esse is in turn, for Thomas Aquinas, the further, necessary actualization of the Form: concreteness is carried one more step forward.

Having reached however this fundamental insight, Thomas Aquinas too was ultimately unable to develop the notion of existence in an ontologically adequate manner. In the end, if Aristotle had taken existence for granted and did not differentiate it from essence, Thomas Aquinas took the concrete meaning of 'existence for granted and did not venture to explore its primordial constitutive structures. He sidestepped the issue by enquiring about existence from a CAUSAL perspective. Instead of asking "What is existence?" he simply asked "What is its cause?"

To conclude, ancient ontology, from the later Plato through Aristotle to Thomas Aquinas, has been steadily, albeit somewhat obscurely, moving towards an increasingly CONCRETE view of Being conceived as EXISTING FORMED MATTER. This dawning concreteness was, however, unable to dispel the overall abstraction inherent in the ancient view of Being. It remained a still-born concreteness.

As we have seen in the opening statement above, Heidegger's inquiry is purportedly to be carried out in the name of concreteness too, a new concreteness, however, which is meant to overcome the insufficiency of the traditional view of Being as Substance.

In order to better elucidate the meaning of this new concreteness I shall refer to the following passage:

The kind of Being which belongs to entities within-the-world is something which they themselves might have been permitted to present; but Descartes does not let them do so. Instead he prescribes for the world its "real" Being, as it were, on the basis of an idea of Being whose source has not been unveiled and which has not been demonstrated in its own right—an idea in which Being is equated with constant presence-at-hand. (SZ 96, B.T. 129)

Although the "concreteness" of the Heideggerian approach is not explicitly defined in the above passage, it emerges implicitly, by contrast, through the critique of Descartes. He did not permit things themselves to disclose their kind of Being. He blocked off the "phenomenon" of the world through a "dogmatic" superimposition of an unclarified idea. For Heidegger, therefore, concreteness means precisely to let the world disclose itself, beyond concepts. At the same time, however, this new concreteness is not viewed by Heidegger as a radical departure from the tradition, but as a reaching into its very ground.

In fact it is significant that in the above passage he denounces the idea of the world as CONSTANT Presence-at-hand, not simply as Presence-at-hand. This seems to imply the recognition on Heidegger's part that the world can indeed have Presence-at-hand as a no less real mode of Being. If this is true, then the tradition cannot deserve indiscriminate rejection simply on account of its notion of Being as Substantiality. Quite to the contrary, the destruction of traditional epistemology and ontology

...is just as far from having the negative sense of shaking off the ontological tradition. We must, on the contrary, stake out the positive possibilities of that tradition, and this always means keeping it within its limits. (SZ 22, B.T. 44)

Presence-at-hand constitutes that "LIMIT" containing the "positive" possibilities to be "staked out" hermeneutically. Far from being rejected, it must be retained as the stepping stone to reach beyond it, that is, to OVERCOME it. (UEBERWINDUNG)

The task is not to replace the traditional view of Being as Presence-at-hand (Substantiality) with another perhaps radically different notion, but to show how Presence-at-hand itself is grounded on a more primordial Being which is already pre-understood when facing the world as space-bound substance. The Present-at-hand is to be ontologically grounded. From this a new notion of EXISTENCE will emerge and with it a new Being, the "Ready-to-hand."

At the same time Heidegger's concreteness is such as to defy any charges of subjectivism: it is the disclosure of things themselves which constitutes their "Truth", not what we predicate about them. If we remain tuned to "phenomena" we cannot fail to be possessed by an objective order of meaningfulness, rooted in a quasi-logical necessity, the logic of

implications, which steers the questioning (and the answers) in one inescapable direction.

In this respect Heidegger raises indeed a rhetorical question, when he asks

But with these criticisms, have we not fobbed off on Descartes a task altogether beyond his horizon, and then gone on to "demonstrate" that he has failed to solve it?
(SZ 98, B.T. 131)

His answer confirms his conviction:

In controversy over principles, one must not only attach oneself to theses which can be grasped doxographically; one must also derive one's orientation from the objective tendency of the problematic (it. ours) even if it does not go beyond a rather ordinary way of taking things. (Ibid)

What follows will make increasingly clear how, by remaining tuned to the "objective tendency of the problematic", i.e. to phenomenological evidence, rather than by building upon conceptual presuppositions, Being can emerge under a truly concrete dimension, that of the world as "Ready-to-hand."

Given the reciprocal relation of Dasein and the world, the Ready-to-hand cannot be explained without adequately clarifying the meaning of Dasein's existence. Not to do so would mean to run again into the dead-end of Being-Substance.

I shall therefore examine the emerging of the "Ready-to-hand" from two parallel, correlative perspectives:

1. Dasein (traditionally the "subject").
2. The "world" (traditionally the "object").

From the first perspective, the thematic question which sets the direction of the inquiry is

...in criticizing the Cartesian point of departure, we must ask which kind of Being that belongs to Dasein

we should fix upon as giving us an appropriate way of access to those entities with whose Being as "extensio" Descartes equates the Being of the "world". (SZ 95, B.T. 128)

The answer is:

The 'essence' ("Wesen") of this entity lies in its "to be" (Zu-sein). Its Being-what-it-is (Was-sein) (Essentia) must...be conceived in terms of its Being (Existentialia). But here our ontological task is to show that when we choose to designate the Being of this entity as "existence" (Existenz), this term does not and cannot have the ontological signification of the traditional term "EXISTENTIALIA"; ontologically, existentialia is tantamount to BEING-PRESENT-AT-HAND, a kind of Being which is essentially inappropriate to entities of Dasein's character. To avoid getting bewildered, we shall always use the Interpretative expression "Presence-at-hand" for the term "Existentialia", while the term "existence", as a designation of Being, will be allotted solely to Dasein. (SZ 42, B.T. 67)

This passage introduces a fundamental distinction between Dasein's Being as EXISTENZ (Zu-sein) and the Being of the other entities of the world as EXISTENTIALIA (Presence-at-hand). To identify Dasein's EXISTENZ with Zu-sein (Being-towards) immediately points to the fact that existence (Existenz) can only be conceived as grounded A PRIORI in the world, as the intentional "objective" correlate of Dasein's consciousness. Thus EXISTENZ, as Being-in and towards the world, assumes a first connotation of concreteness in striking contrast with the abstractness of the Cartesian "SUM".

Towards the beginning of SZ, Heidegger explicitly lays out his fundamental hermeneutic guide-line:

we have no right to resort to dogmatic constructions and to apply just any idea of Being and actuality to this entity, no matter how "self-evident" that idea may be. (SZ 16, B.T. 37)

The question is now to establish in what sense the notion of EXISTENZ

is neither a dogmatic construction nor a merely "subjective" idea, if an "Idea" at all.

While it is undeniable that Heidegger's interpretation of existence as EXISTENZ, as opposed to EXISTENTIA, is after all an idea, to say that it responds to an "objective tendency of the problematic", implies that it not only comes FROM Heidegger, but it comes TO him. The question is then: where does this IDEA come from? Wherein is it primordially constituted? In what sense, if at all, is it possible to speak of an "objective" source of an IDEA beyond its psychological source?

For Heidegger the truth is, the EXISTENZ is not a dogmatic construction precisely because it is rooted in the concrete immediacy of LIVED EXPERIENCE. Much in the same way as the appearing of the world to consciousness under an almost infinite multiplicity of modes of sensation, is an "objective", factual datum, as such beyond proof or disproof, so EXISTENZ, as Being-in, is beyond proof or disproof: Dasein can conceive existence as EXISTENTIA only because it is already primordially constituted in EXISTENZ. In however many different ways one may attempt to define existence, such conceptualizations are possible only because Dasein is already related A PRIORI to the world in understanding and concern. (1)

(1) Even when Dasein's understanding is not authentic (i.e. Dasein understands itself in terms of the "they" world), which is ontically "not true", this lack of understanding is only possible because of a primordial projection of Dasein into the world. This projection is already an understanding of the world as that which can make sense. Heidegger's assumption is that POSSIBILITY and not ACTUALITY is primordially constitutive of Being.

Herein lies the "objectivity" of Heidegger's interpretation of existence.

But there is a second and no less important dimension to this objectivity. This is related to Heidegger's view of LANGUAGE.

The conventional view is that language is no more than the carrier of subjectively constructed ideas. It would be the means through which we convey these ideas to other people. There would be no more to language than what we put in. In a way language would be essentially an INSTRUMENT at our disposal, albeit a very complex one.

Heidegger's view is strikingly different: before being the instrument through which we articulate and disclose to others the content of our consciousness, language is that wherein Reality as a phenomenon is primordially disclosed to our consciousness. To the extent that we can hear the wind only through the rustling of leaves, this is in a way the wind itself. It is the appearing of the wind. In much the same way language is, for Heidegger, "the house of Being". Anthropological research may well explain "scientifically" the complex mechanisms through which conventional language has supposedly emerged from the primeval cries of the first Homo Sapiens, as an intelligent act of creation, in order to convey an increasingly complex and abstract web of meanings.

Such a scientific explanation would still not, however, obviate the fact that these meanings towards whose expression language has been "created" and which supposedly form its primordial "raison d'être", imply a prior possibility, for Dasein, to understand and, for the world, to be understood. This possibility is ontologically prior to Dasein, the world and language itself. Even if this possibility is necessarily actualized and disclosed only through language, it is not coeval with the supposed "creation" of the latter by man. If he can, to a certain extent, create

a language as a conventional system of sounds and symbols, he cannot create the inner logos underlying meaningfulness. He can only find it or miss it.

There is a certain affinity here with Plato: just as the "creation" of Reality by the Platonic Demiourgos amounts to no more than arranging and embodying pre-existing Forms, which have their own "objective" Being, so the infinite multiplicity of meanings that man can indeed project upon Reality according to individual, contingent perspectives, is ultimately grounded upon an "objective" order of meaningfulness pervading Reality at the phenomenological level. Thus the fact that "man", "existence", "life", "reality" can assume different meanings, according to whether we take the perspective of biology, sociology, science, philosophy, theology or religion, does not imply, for Heidegger, that a more fundamental, "objective" truth is hopelessly beyond reach. For him not only does this "truth" exist, but we are already primordially constituted, in it: "truth" is that primordial phenomenological disclosure of Being as a possibility of meaning and to the extent that language bears the concrete imprint of this disclosure, it is truly the "House of Being". How does language provide the "objective" phenomenological ground for viewing existence as Being-in/existenz?

In SZ 54 Heidegger ventures to speculate, on the authority of two articles by the linguist Grimm, that the primordial phenomenological disclosure of Being (Sein) as Being-in (in-sein) is mirrored in the German language itself. This would constitute a further indication that the notion of EXISTENZ, precisely because it is phenomenologically grounded in language, is not a subjective conceptualization, but it possesses the "Truth" of a phenomenon.

The argument is that the first person of the present indicative of the German verb Sein (Ich bin-I am) is phonetically close to the preposition "bei" meaning "alongside", "by", the inference being that "ich bin" was originally perceived as "I am, I dwell alongside (supposedly the world):

"Being-in" is thus the formal existential expression for the Being of Dasein, which has Being-in-the-world as its essential state. (SZ 54, B.T. 80)

Dasein's Being, as Being-in, has Concern as its original constitutive mode. In other words, Dasein's existence discloses itself only in the possibility of a concernful relation to the world, which exists, in turn, for Dasein, only inasmuch as it is or can be understood as a hub of significance.

The "objective tendency of the problematic" leads to a second, correlative question: if CONCERN is the primordial constitutive mode of Being of Dasein inasmuch as it is "in" an "for" the world, what is the Being of the world in its Being "for" Dasein? How is the world experientially constituted in Dasein? How does the world "appear" to a Dasein which is A PRIORI related to it through concern?

The world must be disclosed, in its Being for Dasein, not theoretically, on the basis of a derivative conceptual representation, but "concretely", viz. as the result of a genuine "letting appearing" of the world itself.

Dasein's facticity is such that its Being-in-the-world has always dispersed itself (zerstreut) or even split itself up into definite ways of Being-in: ...having to do with something...making use of something...All these ways of Being-in have concern as their kind of Being... (SZ 56/57, B.T. 83)

Such "definite" ways of Being are possible because the world

discloses itself not theoretically as Substance, but **CONCRETELY** as **EQUIPMENT**. Indeed,

In the domain of the present analysis, the entities we shall take as our preliminary theme are those which show themselves in our concern with the environment. Such entities are not thereby objects for knowing the "world" theoretically; they are simply what gets used, what gets produced, and so forth. (SZ 67, B.T. 95)

Within such an ENVIRONMENT, things lose their traditional material concreteness, as space-bound substances, to assume, instead, a new concreteness, the LIVING concreteness of existential significance.

In this connection Heidegger refers once more to language in order to prove that this new notion of "thinghood" corresponds to a primordial phenomenological disclosure, rather than being an arbitrary definition. This disclosure is imprinted in the ancient Greek word for "thing": "PRAGMA" is derived from the verb PRASSO, PRASSEIN, to do. Language, indeed, bears witness for Heidegger, that the things of the world appear primordially not as abstract RES EXTENSAE, unknowable beyond their geometrical properties, but as possible objects of concerned dealings. They are always understood, therefore known in the true sense, in terms of what we can or cannot do with them.

With the notions of EQUIPMENT and THINGHOOD ontologically rooted in Dasein's EXISTENZ, we have reached a truly concrete vision of the world: from merely "Present-at-hand" (VORHANDENE), it now emerges as "Ready-to-hand" (ZUHANDENE):

The kind of Being which equipment possesses—in which it manifests itself in its own right—we call "Readiness-to-hand" (Zuhandenheit)...If we look at Things just 'theoretically' we can get along without understanding readiness-to-hand. But when we deal with them by using them and manipulating them, this activity is not a blind one; it has its own kind of sight, by which our manipulation is guided and from which it

acquires its specific Thingly character. (SZ 69, B.T. 98)

I shall now proceed, before concluding, to clarify the relationship between Presence-at-hand and Readiness-to-hand. This is necessary, in my view, if we are to understand the relationship between "Destruktion" and "Ueberwindung", ultimately between Heidegger and the tradition. The latter term is to be understood, in the Heideggerian context, not only in the diachronic sense of a body of philosophical doctrines historically preceding Heidegger (classical realism, Cartesian rationalism), but also in the synchronic sense of current well established perspectives (idealism or other) which have failed to frame the question of Being in onto-phenomenological terms.

Ontologically, "world" is not a way of characterizing those entities which Dasein essentially is not; it is rather a characteristic of Dasein itself. This does not rule out the possibility that when we investigate the phenomenon of the "world" we must do so by the avenue of entities-within-the-world and the Being they possess. (It. Ours) (SZ 64, B.T. 92)

If the Being these entities possess, as distinct from Dasein's Being, is Presence-at-hand, and if they are to provide the phenomenological point of access (the "avenue") to Being-for Dasein (Readiness-to-hand), then Presence-at-hand is the necessary ONTICAL ground of Readiness-to-hand. Indeed, if Being is meaning, it can only be so as the meaning of entities-within-the-world.

But at the same time Heidegger states that

If one understands Nature ontologico-categorically, one finds that Nature is a limiting case of the Being of possible entities within-the-world. Only in some definite mode of its own Being-in-the-world can Dasein discover entities as Nature. This manner of knowing them has the character of depriving the world of its worldhood in a definite way... (SZ 65, B.T. 94)...The Presence-at-hand of entities is thrust to the fore by the possible breaks in that referential totality in which circumspection

"operates"...(it. ours) (SZ 76, B.T. 107)

This means that, conversely, the ontical possibility of the world as Presence-at-hand is always understood in terms of the ontologically prior possibility for it to exist as Readiness-to-hand. In other words Presence-at-hand is grounded in Readiness-to-hand because it can be understood only as a break-down of that "referential totality" in which Readiness-to-hand is constituted and sustained.

The relationship between Presence-at-hand (Nature) and Readiness-to-hand thus emerges not as one of mutual exclusion, but of implication, although at different levels: Presence-at-hand is the ONTICAL ground for the possibility of the Ready-to-hand, but in turn it is ONTOLOGICALLY rooted in Readiness-to-hand because it is only when the entities-within-the-world are not "discovered proximally", i.e. when they are apprehended "theoretically", without concern, that they fall back into the mode of NATURE/PRESENCE-AT-HAND. What is important to retain is that the ONTICAL reality of the world as Presence-at-hand is not denied by Heidegger. It is only the question of its ground that is raised by him.

Not unlike a river to be explored, the "world" has been investigated by traditional ontology by entering it too far downstream. By doing so its source, i.e. its primordial ontological structures, have been missed. Thus the fundamental task was to secure the right point of access to it and we have seen how and why Dasein constitutes the privileged point of access. At the bottom, the real meaning of Heidegger's attack on Descartes is that his interpretation of the world as "RES EXTENSA" was not deprived of its own truth, but it was only shortsighted, because it could not reach what lay ahead, i.e. the disclosure of the PHENOMENON of the world. Indeed:

Neither the ontical depiction of entities within-the-world nor the ontological Interpretation of their Being is such as to reach the phenomenon of the 'world'. In both of these ways of access to "Objective Being", the "world" has already been "presupposed", and indeed in various ways.
(SZ 64, B.T. 92)

In much the same way as, for example, Kant's Transcendental Idealism had attempted to blend Empiricism and Rationalism in order to overcome their insufficiencies, so Heidegger's phenomenological ontology, through the notion of "Readiness-to-hand", attempts to overcome the insufficiency of both Realism and Idealism, while retaining, admittedly, part of their substance.

After saying that "Along with Dasein as Being-in-the-world, entities within-the-world have in each case been 'disclosed.'" (SZ 207, B.T. 251) Heidegger goes on to say that "this existential-ontological assertion seems to accord with the thesis of realism that the external world is Really present-at-hand. In so far as this existential assertion does not deny that entities with-in-world are present-at-hand, it agrees-doxographically, as it were-with the thesis of realism in its results."
(SZ 207, B.T. 251)

The point, however, at which Heidegger's analysis "leaps over" Realism is where the latter: "...tries to explain Reality ontically by Real connections of interaction between things that are Real...." (ibid). and "...holds that the Reality of the 'world' not only needs to be proved but also is capable of proof." (ibid.) In this sense Heidegger explicitly recognizes that his view also "...differs in principle from every kind of Realism." (ibid.). Indeed the world, as intentionally constituted in Dasein, does not need to be "proved". The very asking of the question of the "Reality" of the world already presupposes that

Dasein is in a "world" and that the latter is already disclosed to it as a possibility of significance. This is what makes Heidegger affirm that:

The "scandal of philosophy" is not that this proof has yet to be given, but that SUCH PROOFS ARE EXPECTED AND ATTEMPTED AGAIN AND AGAIN. Such expectations, aims and demands arise from an ontologically inadequate way of starting with SOMETHING of such a character that independently OF IT and "outside OF IT" a "world" is to be proved as present-at-hand. (SZ 205, B.T. 249)

Similarly, Heidegger retains the fundamental insight of Idealism that there is no other Being than what appears to consciousness. For him Idealism expresses the (true)

...understanding of the fact that Being cannot be explained through entities. But-he continues-as long as idealism fails to clarify what this very understanding of Being means ontologically, or how this understanding is possible, or that it belongs to Dasein's state of Being, the Interpretation of Reality which idealism constructs is an empty one. (SZ 207, B.T. 251)

His conclusion is even that

As compared with realism, IDEALISM, no matter how contrary and untenable it may be in its results, has an advantage in principle, provided that it does not misunderstand itself as "psychological" idealism. (it. ours) (SZ 207, B.T. 251)

In the above I have attempted to clarify the distinction between the VORHANDENE and the ZUHANDENE. I have also stressed how Heidegger sees this distinction not as an arbitrary, conceptual one, but as one responding to the inner, "objective" necessity of the problematic itself, in the light of that "Logic of questioning" which he considers as the metaphysical matrix of ordinary logic.

The distinctive meaning of Heidegger's CONCRETENESS is, in broad terms, EXISTENTIAL significance. This new dimension does not offset the traditional concrete reality of the Present-at-hand, but it constitutes

its ontological ground. Even though the traditional epistemological rift between Subject and Object has been narrowed beyond recognition, the external world as Nature has not been dissolved, but only ontologically clarified. In this sense the tradition has not been destroyed, but "leaped over". It has been opened up in its possibilities.

The full meaning of "concreteness" will emerge in the next chapter, in connection with the treatment of the notion of truth.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE END OF PHILOSOPHY AND ITS NEW BEGINNING.

In the later Heidegger, and especially in the commentaries on his work, we often encounter the term "End of Philosophy". This notion can be misleading unless we see it in relation to a NEW BEGINNING to which it points.

The "End of Philosophy" points to the necessity of returning to the origins of thought, to its primeval long-forgotten concreteness, expressed by the indissoluble unity of PHYSIS and LOGOS.

In the "Introduction to Metaphysics" Heidegger says that the beginning of the end of Greek philosophy originated in the secession of PHYSIS from LOGOS occurring for the first time in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, even though he concludes that

...this beginning of the end of the great beginning, the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, remains great... (1)

By these words Heidegger clearly rehabilitates traditional ontology. As I shall explain in the forthcoming exposition, the separation of PHYSIS and LOGOS is not as radical in Plato and Aristotle as it will be in subsequent ontology. By advocating the "End of philosophy" Heidegger intends less to destroy traditional ontology, indiscriminately, than to remind all of us that philosophy must remain anchored in the indissoluble

1 M. Heidegger: An Introduction to Metaphysics, transl. by R. Manheim. New Haven: Yale U.P., 1968, P.179.

unity of PHYSIS and LOGOS as it once was. This unity was at the heart of the pre-Socratic vision of Being. Ultimately, Truth itself, as ALETHEIA, was for the pre-Socratics primordially constituted in this unity. Since this is also Heidegger's view, it is important to understand the meaning of unity of PHYSIS and LOGOS, which is the meaning of TRUTH.

The next section will provide a brief outline of the pre-Socratic notions of PHYSIS, LOGOS, NOOS and ALETHEIA. Such an outline will be based on M. Heidegger's own interpretation. However, since the German philosopher has been frequently accused of doing violence in his interpretations to the Greek text of the pre-Socratics, I have attempted to assess the plausibility of his version through an independent re-reading of some of the passages of Heraclitus and Parmenides cited by him. In siding with M. Heidegger I have also drawn on the textual exegesis of classical philologists.

In the following sections "concreteness" as the "new beginning" of philosophy will be explicated in direct relation to the notion of TRUTH.

It will be shown how TRUTH was concrete for the pre-Socratics, as a unity of PHYSIS and LOGOS, how this concreteness somewhat faded away (although it did not completely disappear) with Plato and Aristotle and how it finally re-emerged with Heidegger.

I. THE DAWN OF TRUTH; THE PRE-SOCRATIC VISION OF BEING.

The history of western metaphysics unfolds around the concepts of NATURE, TRUTH, REASON, the GOOD, LOGICS and the "LOGICAL". Our current understanding of these words follows the semantic shift occurring with the Platonic turn. Furthermore, the original Greek meanings of PHYSIS,

LOGOS, ALETHEIA and TO AGATHON have been even more dramatically distorted by their Latin translations as NATURA, RATIO, VERITAS and BONUM, respectively.

These Latin words, throughout the history of western ontology, have acquired the following meanings:

NATURE (Lat. Natura): the world-totality of existing things, as objects of sensory perception.

REASON (Lat. Ratio): that faculty in man which governs thinking according to the basic laws of logic, under the sway of the principle of non-contradiction.

TRUTH (Lat. Veritas): the conformity between a statement and reality. TRUTH is a property of statements.

GOODNESS (Lat. Bonum): what conforms to a superior standard of intrinsic worth and should as such provide a basis for our conduct. Within a religious perspective the will of God provides the justification for the goodness of the standard.

Indeed, these traditional meanings are so engrained in us, that we can hardly imagine that those words ever meant anything different, let alone anything of the kind Heraclitus and Parmenides suggest.

The analysis of PHYSIS, LOGOS, ALETHEIA, NOOS and TO AGATHON will make clear the extent to which the traditional connotation of these terms, in their Latin as well as English translation, does not reflect for Heidegger their original meaning in the Greek language. (1)

I shall begin with PHYSIS, Lat. NATURA.

These two words are not parallel: NATURA derives from NATUS, the past participle of the verb NASCOR, NASCI, to be born. In Latin it means the extant totality of what has come into being, createdness, the existing world. NATURA points to Being as Substance. In science we use the term "nature" interchangeably with the "Physical World". But, needless to say, the term "physical" as that which is opposed to the living, the animated, the psychic or the spiritual, does not reflect for Heidegger the original meaning of PHYSIS, which, indeed, encompassed both the animate and the inanimate, mind and body, spirit and matter. (2)

PHYSIS derives from PHUD, which means to beget, to generate. In the passive voice it also meant to be born, (Lat. NASCI). Yet a closer look at the etymology of PHYSIS, PHUEIN points to a more primordial experiential connotation of the term birth. In fact it has occurred to me that PHYSIS bears a phonetic resemblance to PHOOS (light). This points to a process of "coming to light", as the possible, original connotation of PHYSIS.

As the links of Physis with LOGOS, ALETHEIA and NOOS will make more readily apparent, I tend to agree with M. Heidegger, that PHYSIS was BEING in its birth to the LIGHT of the UNDERSTANDING, as

(1) op. cit, p. 13

(2) op. cit, p. 16

intelligibility and meaningfulness. PHYSIS was the primordial mode of disclosure (ALETHEIA) of BEING as PHOOS (Light), the LIGHT which truly makes reality a PHAINOMENON, i.e. what shines in intelligibility.

Being is also referred to by the pre-Socratics as LOGOS. This word entered the philosophical vocabulary seemingly for the first time with Heraclitus.

LOGOS (from LEGEIN, meaning "to say", but also "to gather") was used by the pre-Socratics precisely in the sense of an act or a state of gathering, coming together, and not of speech or word.

In Fr. 114 Heraclitus says that the LOGOS is XUNOS, while Parmenides in Fr. 8 uses the etymologically related word SUNECHES to characterize Being.

These two terms, sharing etymologically the meaning of "holding together", even though XUNOS formally means "common", further strengthen the thesis that the primordial meaning of LOGOS itself was that of a "gathering", as Heidegger himself holds.

Being was then for the pre-Socratics LOGOS, as that which manifests itself (PHYSIS) in a gathering, holding itself together: PHYSIS was LOGOS and its primordial appearance (PHAINESTHAI) was the gathering of reality into the unity of intelligibility, "comprehensio", i.e. the grasping together of parts into a whole referential totality.

The sense of "togetherness" as the fundamental characteristic of LOGOS is radicalized by Heraclitus, who sees the self-gathering unity of Being-Logos as a "coincidentia oppositorum":

...disease makes health pleasant and good...
(FR. 111) (1)

(1) cit. in Kirk, G.S. and Raven, J.E. : The Pre-Socratic Philosophers... . p. 189. London: Cambridge U.P., 1957

and

There would be no right without wrong (FR. 23) (1)

Heraclitus' example of Justice, whose "Being" would be equiprimordially constituted in a simultaneous evoking of what it is not, i.e. in a constant receding into the very darkness of its non-being, (viz. injustice), illustrates what was for him and for the pre-Socratics the nature of PHYSIS: unconcealment and concealment, ultimately unconcealment THROUGH concealment, a glittering light. This is the meaning of Heraclitus' Fragment 123:

"PHYSIS KRUPTESTHAI PHILEI"

which M. Heidegger translates as:

Being (emerging, appearing) inclines intrinsically to self-concealment (2)

The same primordial experience of an "unconcealment" is what underlies the word ALETHEIA. In fact this term, the standard acceptation of which is TRUTH, derives etymologically from the verb LANTHANO (to be concealed, to escape notice) through the verbal stem LATH. With the initial privative "A", A-LETHEIA as a noun literally stood for unhiddenness. (3)

(1) op. cit., p. 190

(2) M. Heidegger: An Introduction to Metaphysics, op. cit., p. 114

(3) Alexander P. Mourelatos (The route of Parmenides, New Haven: Yale U.P., 1970, p. 63) as well as other classical philologists such as H. Baader, W. Luther and E. Heisch endorse Heidegger's interpretation of ALETHEIA as UNCONCEALEDNESS.

There remains one last concept to be examined before proceeding to the Platonic turn: NOEIN, NOOS and its relation to Being, for indeed Parmenides says

TO GAR AUTO NOEIN ESTIN TE KAI EINAI
commonly translated as:

"Thinking and Being are the same thing" FR.5

and

CHRE TO LEGEIN TE NOEIN T'EON EMMENAI
commonly translated as:

"One must say that Thinking and Being ^{are} are". FR.6

Heidegger translates FR. 6 as follows:

It is useful (CHRE) that the letting-lie-before-us
(TO LEGEIN) and the taking-to-heart (NOEIN) be a
being present, too. (1)

~~This rendering sounds very hermetic, indeed. In all fairness to~~
Heidegger, however, we must admit that the common translation as

One must say that Thinking and Being "are".

is not an outstanding example of clarity, unless one is willing to take for granted that Parmenides is uttering a platitude. Indeed, that thinking "is" (presumably in the sense that it exists, as an activity) is so obvious that I see no reason why Parmenides should emphatically proclaim it. As to proclaiming that Being, too, "exists", in addition to "thinking", I equally see no reason for individuating the one from the

(1) This translation is gleaned from M. Heidegger's step-by-step analysis of the Fragment as contained in his work What is called Thinking?, p. 182 ff. Cf especially pp. 233, 237, 239.

other explicitly, since Being, after all, encompasses thinking and this could not possibly have escaped Parmenides.

In Fr. 6 Heidegger translates Noein not as Thinking, but as Taking-to-heart and Eon not simply as Being, but as Being-present. Taking-to-heart suggests that Noein has for Heidegger a pre-conceptual connotation of "beholding" or "seeing through", at least in the early Greek language. Such an interpretation is also confirmed by the classical philologist Alexander P. Mourelatos who draws on the authority of K. von Fritz. (1)

But taking-to-heart also suggests that Noein has for Heidegger a deeper possibility of meaning, which he, indeed, explicitly acknowledges in another context and which, I maintain, was already within the current acceptance of this term in the Greek language. In fact, in the Introduction to Metaphysics (2) he states that

apprehension is not a function that man has as an attribute, but rather the other way around:
apprehension is the happening that has man. (it. ours)

If man can apprehend, it is only because Being itself has Noein, i.e. the state or quality of being intelligible as its fundamental characteristic. Being is a Noein, a being meaningful, in whose light Dasein stands.

Now, it should be noted also that the Liddell-Scott Greek-English

(1) Alexander P. Mourelatos: op. cit., p. 68-69

(2) M. Heidegger: An Introduction to Metaphysics, op. cit., p. 141

Dictionary acknowledges, under the entry Noein, that this verb was employed in the current Attic usage also in the sense of "to mean", as, for example, when one asks "What does it mean?". As far as the translation of Eon (being) as Being-present is concerned, this rendering finds justification, in my opinion, in the fact that Presence implies manifestness and this was, indeed, for the pre-Socratics, the common denotational core of both Aletheia and Physis, which ultimately constituted the meaning of Being itself.

In view of the above I think, therefore, that M. Heidegger's translation of Parmenides' Fragment #6 is correct. It seems to be consistent with the drift of pre-Socratic thought as well as linguistically plausible. It may perhaps be phrased more clearly as:

The self-gathering (Legein) of Being and its being-meaningful, i.e., its appearing to consciousness (Noein), are by necessity (Chre) in the form of an original phenomenal Presencing (Eon).

I think that the same meaning underlies even more succinctly Parmenides' Fragment #5 which could then be translated more clearly as:

Being (Einai) is in fact the same (To gar auto esti) as a being-meaningful, a being-for-consciousness (Noein).

Indeed, the word same does not express in my view a conceptual identity, but the coalescence of two ontologically inextricable aspects of Being: its "self-gathering" (Legein) into a unity of meaning and its appearing to consciousness (Noein). (It is well known how the latter aspect was completely ignored by subsequent metaphysics.)

In conclusion, for the pre-Socratics PHYSIS, LOGOS and NOEIN were not only indissolubly related, but ultimately interchangeable with "Being". In addition, since Being was being-for consciousness, hence an APPEARING (PHAINOMENON), it was A-LETHEIA, disclosedness in the purest

etymological sense of the word. The TRUTH of BEING, not yet bound to the principle of non-contradiction because of its phenomenological nature, was constituted in a "coincidentia oppositorum". Heraclitus' insight that

PAN PLEON ESTIN OMOU PHAEOS KAI NUKTOS (Fr. 9)

(Everything is a mixture of light and darkness)

echoes in Heidegger's saying: "TRUTH IS UNTRUTH".

II. THE PLATONIC TURN

With Plato the concepts of Being and Truth change drastically. This change is concomitant with a shift in the meaning of LOGOS and NOOS, NOEIN, a new understanding of PHAINOMENON and the emerging of the EIDOS as the standard of Truth.

The seed-bed of these changes is the Allegory of the Cave, in Book VII of the Republic, where Plato, referring to the prisoner having escaped from the cave, addresses the following question to his interlocutor:

What do you think he would say if someone told him that what he had formally seen was meaningless ILLUSION (it.ours), but now, being somewhat nearer to REALITY (it.ours) and turned towards more real objects, he was getting a TRUER view?.....Is it at all strange that one who comes from the contemplation of divine things to the miseries of human life should appear awkward and ridiculous, when, with eyes still dazed and not yet accustomed to the DARKNESS, he is compelled, in a law-court or elsewhere, to dispute about the shadows of Justice..... or to wrangle over the notions of what is right in the minds of men who have never beheld Justice itself...?

....The soul of every man does possess the power of learning the Truth and the organ to see it withand just as one might have to turn the whole body round in order that the eye should see light instead of darkness, so the entire soul must be turned away from this changing world, until the eye can bear to contemplate reality and the supreme splendour which we have called the 'Good....They must be made to climb the ascent to the vision of Goodness, which we called the highest object of knowledge. (Republic, VII, 517 D ff)

Two major points emerge from the above passage:

1. While for the pre-Socratics Being was SUNĒCHES (all one, "holding together", a "gathering"), a LEGEIN and a NOEIN (being, for consciousness), Plato sets up a rift between Being and the PHAINOMENON. The latter is no longer Truth, but illusory perception, while Truth itself begins to emerge as correctness (ORTHOTES), a conformity (OMOIOSIS, "adaequatio") between a subjective apprehension and the Idea, which is ontologically prior to it and constitutes the standard for its correctness.
2. Being is no longer in and for consciousness. It exists independently from it, outside its sphere. It is hidden from the common mortals and in order to grasp it the soul must be trained in a special art, PAIDEIA. A dichotomy now arises between the subject (or the mind) and the object.

With the breach of the pre-Socratic bond between LOGOS, PHYSIS, PHAINOMENON and ALETHEIA, not only the meaning of ALETHEIA and PHAINOMENON changes, as seen earlier, but also that of LOGOS. The latter becomes for Plato WORD, SPEECH, as the chief expression of the

faculty of REASON (TO LOGISTIKON) under the yoke of the principle of non-contradiction. Ultimately, ALETHEIA becomes a contingent property of speech, which can indeed be TRUE as well as FALSE, according to whether what is affirmed or denied is in conformity with a genuine apprehension of the IDEA(S).

Aristotle's interpretation of LOGOS and ALETHEIA is formally parallel to Plato's: LOGOS is speech, word, judgment and TRUTH is a property of LOGOS as judgment. However the absence of the CHORISMOS, i.e. the positing of the Form not ABOVE, but IN sensible objects, paves the way for a re-surfacing of a pre-Socratic strain.

Somewhat unexpectedly, because of our modern notion of PHYSICS and the PHYSICAL, it is not so much in the METAPHYSICS that Aristotle thrusts the roots into the ground of the earlier pre-socratic thinking, but in the PHYSICS.

For him PHYSIS is

That...which abides throughout it all; holding itself together through everything it (the thing) "undergoes." (1)

Moreover, PHYSIS is HE MORPHE KAI TO EIDOS TO KATA TON LOGON, i.e. the visual, pre-conceptual APPEARING of that which is the ground of the statement. PHYSIS is EIDOS and the LOGOS, as statement, can be true only inasmuch an EIDOS has revealed itself. The LOGOS, as a statement, points beyond itself to a primordial pre-rational disclosure constituting its

(1) This is M. Heidegger's translation of Aristotle's Physics B, 193 a, 9, cit. in M. Heidegger's article: On Being and the concept of Physis in Aristotle's Physics B. Transl. by Thomas J. Sheehan. Man and World, 9, 1976, p. 242 ff.

Although this passage of Aristotle is taken out of context, I have referred to it because Heidegger's translation summarizes well his own notion of Being as Physis.

phenomenal ground. This pre-rational disclosure is precisely A-LETHEIA, in the pre-Socratic sense. (LOGOS is expressly defined by Aristotle in the "De interpretatione", as "REVELATORY" (APOPHANTIKOS).)

Aristotle's affirmation that

"The false and the true are not in things, but in the judgment." (Meta. E. 1027b)

cannot be taken at face value as the proof that the pre-Socratic A-LETHEIA is ignored by him, for, in inquiring about truth and falsity, he also says:

We must inquire into what we mean by this. For it is not because we truly hold you to be white that you ARE white, but it is because you are white that we who assert this hold the truth. (ibid. 1051b)
We know a truth only by knowing its cause."
 (ibid., A less, 993b)

Thomas Aquinas, in his Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics, will explicitly link the AITIA, i.e. the Cause of Truth, with NATURA and bring to light the fact that this NATURA is the FORMA, which, in combination with MATERIA, makes possible the individuation of the essent as a member of a given class. This categorization is the ground of the very possibility of speech:

...the truth and falsity found in speech and in thought must be traced to a thing's disposition (NATURA) as their cause. Now, when the intellect makes a combination, it receives two concepts, one of which is related to the other as a FORM. (1)

The recognition of a CAUSE of TRUTH, which is itself an ante-predicative truth, emerges even more forcefully in the SUMMA, where

(1) Thomas Aquinas: Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics, IX, LII, c, 1898.

Thomas Aquinas, in admitting with Aristotle that truth is primarily in the intellect, also says that everything is true "secundum quod habet propriam formam suae naturae." (1)

Subsequent ontology, in neglecting this primordial ante-predicative truth, has fallen into a total "oblivion" of Being culminating with Descartes. Because of his belief in the complete unreliability of the senses and the rejection of the Form, he restricted the notion of Truth to CERTAINTY.

The richness of the pre-Socratic PHYSIS, disclosing itself in the wealth of sensory data, is lost to Truth. Through the reduction of the world to Res Extensa, the demise of A-LETHEIA is complete. In sum, the primordial experiential CONCRETENESS of A-LETHEIA yields with Descartes to the ABSTRACTION of a Truth reduced to the empty certainty of the formal structures of thought.

This obliteration of A-LETHEIA is the loss of the very heart of Metaphysics: Fr. L. M. Régis quite aptly depicts the history of ontology as the "Odyssey of Metaphysics" in search of its lost homeland. (2)

The journey back to A-LETHEIA will be undertaken by Heidegger, but through a different, original route. This will be the theme of my next and last section.

(1) Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologica, 1a, 16, 2, c

(2) Fr. L. M. Régis: "L'Odyssée de la métaphysique." Montréal: ed. Institut d'études médiévales, 1949.

III. DASEIN AS TRUTH: THE EPITOMIZATION OF CONCRETENESS.

In SZ 22 ff (B.T. 43 ff) Heidegger envisages the task of DESTROYING (DESTRUKTION) the history of traditional ontology. The term DESTRUKTION seems quite appropriate in view of the fact that the tradition, after the pre-Socratics, has indeed strayed from the path of A-LETHEIA, reaching with Descartes' notion of RES EXTENSA a total forgetfulness of Being.

Yet in 1949, i.e. twenty years after the publication of BEING AND TIME, Heidegger expressly states in the Preface to the fifth printing of his lecture "What is metaphysics?" that

The thinking attempted in Being and Time (1927) sets out on the way to prepare an OVERCOMING OF METAPHYSICS. (it. ours) (1)

The term "OVERCOMING" is a translation of the German "UEBERWINDUNG". Since I must assume that in philosophy the choice of words is determined by the most strict criteria of precision for any given context, in order to avoid ambivalence and empty generalities, there must be a reason why Heidegger employs the term "UEBERWINDUNG" rather than "DESTRUKTION". In fact the latter term refers explicitly to the "history of ontology", while the former refers simply to "Metaphysics". (2) If there is a

(1) M. Heidegger: The Way back into the Ground of Metaphysics. W. Kaufmann's transl. From: Philosophy in the XXth century: an anthology. Vol. III, p. 209. W. Barrett/H.D. Aiken ed., New York: Random House, 1962.

(2) For the purpose of my interpretation of M. Heidegger's metaphysics of concreteness I shall consider the terms Ontology and Metaphysics as interchangeable. Whether or not we ought to consider this distinction and whether or not M. Heidegger himself acknowledges it, it is less important, in this context, than his distinction between Ontology (or Metaphysics) and the history of the same. What M. Heidegger means is that the historical-doxographical approach to Being (history of ontology) has obscured ontology itself, i.e. the fundamental question of the ground of Being.

reason for "destroying" the history of ontology, the context of the Heideggerian thought rules out that ontology itself must be destroyed. Indeed, as we shall see later, the purpose of Heidegger's fundamental ontology is to restore METAPHYSICS in its most genuine and primordial meaning. But this can be done only by DESTROYING, ~~the~~ i.e. rejecting the merely doxographical treatment of METAPHYSICS inherent in the historical approach. UEBERWINDUNG then is not destruction, just as the term OVERCOMING does not strictly mean destruction or annihilation, but something less extreme. Joan Stambaugh, one of the most perceptive translators of Heidegger says that

Although Heidegger uses the familiar word UEBERWINDUNG for "overcoming", he means it in the sense of the less familiar word VERWINDUNG.....When something is overcome in the sense of being VERWUNDEN, it is, so to speak, incorporated. For example, when one "overcomes" a state of pain, one does not get rid of the pain. One has ceased to be preoccupied with it and has learned to live with it. (1)

That the UEBERWINDUNG does and cannot mean DESTRUCTION finds justification, in my view, in Heidegger's assertion that "Language is the house of Being." Indeed, if by language is meant the ordinary, inevitable language of representational thinking, of which METAPHYSICS is an expression, then I think Heidegger could never advocate the destruction of metaphysics, for there would remain, then, nothing to GO BEYOND. We could never reach the other side of a river if we took away the stepping stones which allow us to cross it.

What lies beyond metaphysics is nothing but its ground and in order to reach it we have to go through metaphysics, in the traditional sense.

(1) The end of philosophy-M Heidegger . Translator's note to the essay Overcoming Metaphysics , p. 84

Significantly Heidegger says that, if Metaphysics is forgetfulness of Being, nevertheless

The forgetfulness of Being belongs to the essence of Being. (1) ...Forgetfulness is EREIGNIS (event), not ERROR...(2)

Therefore

Metaphysics cannot be abolished like an opinion. One can by no means leave it behind as a doctrine no longer believed and represented... Metaphysics overcome...does not disappear. It returns transformed and remains in dominance as the continuing difference of Being and beings. (3)Such thinking which recalls the truth of Being, is no longer satisfied with mere metaphysics, to be sure, but it does not oppose and think against metaphysics either....Metaphysics remains the basis of philosophy....When we think of the truth of Being Metaphysics is overcome.....But this "Overcoming of Metaphysics" does not abolish metaphysics. (4)

In view of the above, therefore, I think that UEBERWINDUNG should perhaps be translated more appropriately as LEAPING OVER or GOING beyond Metaphysics.

The following exposition will bear out more fully, I hope, my interpretation.

(1) M. Heidegger: Holzwege, p. 336, cit. T.A. Fay: Heidegger: the Critique of Logic. The Hague: ed. M. Nijhoff, 1977.

(2) M. Heidegger: The Way back into the Ground of Metaphysics, op. cit. p. 207

(3) M. Heidegger: Overcoming Metaphysics, J. Stambaugh's translation, op. cit., p. 85

(4) M. Heidegger: The Way back into the Ground of Metaphysics. W. Kaufmann's tr., op. cit., p. 208

The rather extensive treatment of the pre-Socratic thought in the preceding section was motivated by the primordial importance of the concept of A-LETHEIA in Heidegger. Indeed, A-LETHEIA constitutes the point of departure and, in a sense, the point of arrival of Heidegger's fundamental ontology. In one important respect, however, the Ueberwindung is not only the going beyond Descartes and Plato, but beyond A-LETHEIA itself, for Heidegger's Truth emerges in a new, transcended form, that of CONCRETENESS.

The story of the Ueberwindung and its goal (Truth) is indeed the unfolding of that ideal of concreteness which Heidegger sets as the dominant theme of his inquiry at the beginning of Being and Time:

Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the question of Being and to do so concretely. Our provisional aim is the Interpretation of time as the possible horizon for any understanding whatsoever of Being. (SZ 1, B.T. 19)

In explaining the notion of "Readiness-to-hand" in the preceding chapter I have alluded to the fact that this concept instantiates the CONCRETENESS of Heidegger's approach, as opposed to the ABSTRACTION of the "Present-at-hand". I must now provide a more complete explanation of this term.

If, for Heidegger, concreteness is to be the interpretative framework for the question of Being throughout the whole of Being and Time, the meaning of concreteness must be articulated more specifically, both in relation to TRUTH and to the main thematic structures of the second division of Being and Time.

In "The way back into the ground of Metaphysics" Heidegger summarizes the necessity of going beyond Metaphysics as follows:

Due to the manner in which it thinks of Being, metaphysics almost seems to be, without knowing it, the BARRIER (it. ours) which keeps man from the original involvement of Being in human nature. (1)

Indeed, for traditional metaphysics

...the nature of truth always appears in the derivative form of the truth of knowledge and the truth of propositions which formulate our knowledge. (2).

Metaphysics, then, has constituted a BARRIER between Man and Being. This barrier can be expressed as the epistemological rift between Subject and Object. A CONCRETE truth, therefore, must be construed as one which unveils the primordial coming together of Man and World, in a genuine "CUM-CRESCERE". We shall now follow this "coming together" in Heidegger's analysis of Truth.

In SZ 229 (B.T. 272) Heidegger states that

The ideas of a 'pure "I"' and of a 'consciousness in general' are so far from including the A PRIORI character of 'actual' subjectivity, that the ontological characters of Dasein's facticity and its state of Being are either passed over or not seen at all.

The concreteness of Heidegger's approach begins to emerge in the explicit contrast between the A PRIORI CHARACTER OF "ACTUAL" SUBJECTIVITY and those IDEAS OF THE "PURE I" which have seemingly hitherto covered it.

Heidegger's subjectivity is ACTUAL consciousness, not consciousness "IN GENERAL", and it is A PRIORI. ACTUAL consciousness points, by contrast, to the traditional epistemological dualism which posited the

(1) M. Heidegger: The Way back into the Ground of Metaphysics. W. Kaufmann's transl. op. cit., p. 210

(2) id., op. cit., p. 209

world as existing OUTSIDE consciousness, in its own right, as an object of true or false knowledge. This world was ABSTRACT because "drawn away" (abs-trahere) from consciousness.

How does the A PRIORI CHARACTER of ACTUAL SUBJECTIVITY manifest itself in relation to TRUTH?:

Truth, understood in the most primordial sense, belongs to the BASIC CONSTITUTION (it. ours) of Dasein."
(SZ 226, B.T. 269)

I have first to explicate what is TRUTH for Heidegger and what is the "basic constitution" of Dasein.

Heidegger does not just work out another concept of Truth under his own presuppositions, following the abandonment of the traditional ones. His approach is, on the contrary, HERMENEUTICAL in the most genuine sense: instead of ignoring the theory of "adaequatio", he takes it as a point of departure, with the insight that, by probing deeper beneath its surface, by an adequate questioning, a more primordial meaning of Truth will emerge, which will not be the negation (destruction) of ADAEQUATIO, but its very ground, a true UEBERWINDUNG.

Heidegger's understanding of the problem of Truth is expressed in SZ 225:

Yet that which is last in the order of the way things are connected (1) in their foundations EXISTENTIALLY (it. ours) and ONTOLOGICALLY (it. ours) is regarded ONTICALLY and FACTICALLY (it. ours) as that which is first and closest to us. (SZ 225, B.T. 268)

This is a reiteration of the concept of ONTICAL SELF-EVIDENCE vs ONTOLOGICAL DISGUISE earlier referred to as one of the central themes in

(1) viz. the relation of agreement between assertion and its object.

Heidegger. The problem, is therefore one, once more, of identifying, in connection with Truth, what is ONTOLOGICALLY FIRST in the way things are connected.

It is precisely the questioning of the meaning of "Relation" that guides Heidegger on the "path" towards Truth: every relation presupposes an A PRIORI perspective, which provides an essential context of meaning. For instance, the relation of two juxtaposed objects presupposes SPACE, PREMISE and CONCLUSION presuppose the structure of an ARGUMENT or PROOF, the relation of FATHER and SON presupposes a FAMILY and a numerical relation such as $20 - 10 = 10$ presupposes NUMBER.

In taking the traditional concept of TRUTH/ADAEQUATIO as his point of departure, then, the first and essential question he raises is:

In the 'adaequatio' something gets related; what is that with regard to which it agrees?.....With regard to what do intellectus and res agree?..... In what way is this relation possible as a relation between intellectus and res? What else is tacitly posited in this relational totality of the adaequatio intellectus and rei? (SZ 215, 216, B.T. 258, 259)

In construing Truth as a property of judgments, traditional ontology has rightly seen two constitutive elements in the judgment, namely:

1. The ACT of judging by a SUBJECT.
2. The OBJECT judged about.

It overlooked, however, a third, all-important element: the assertion "John is a white man", if true, is still grounded on an "ADAEQUATIO", but this is in turn expressible as an assertion only because of the facts that John IS white and appears as such to consciousness. The appearing of John's whiteness is the third element

which has been overlooked (to the exception of Aristotle), by the traditional notion of Truth/Adequatio. (Heidegger's example of the picture hanging askew on the wall is well known).

The radically new conclusion is, therefore, that

... 'truth' signifies the same as 'thing', ("Sache"), something that shows itself (SZ 213, B.T. 256)... Assertion is not the primary 'locus' of Truth (SZ 226, B.T. 269)... TRUTH, UNDERSTOOD AS AGREEMENT, ORIGINATES FROM DISCLOSEDNESS." (SZ 223, B.T. 266)

Here Heidegger clearly returns to the pre-Socratic notion of ALETHEIA. It is, however, at the same time, a going back and beyond it, for Heidegger does not only say that Being is a DISCLOSURE and necessarily a disclosure IN and FOR consciousness (LEGEIN, NOEIN) but also that Dasein can be "uncovering" i.e. Truth-disclosing only because it is already A PRIORI constituted as TRUTH. Dasein IS Truth:

Being-true, as Being-uncovering, is a way of Being for Dasein... The most primordial phenomenon of truth is first shown by the existential-ontological foundations of uncovering. (SZ 220, B.T. 263)

The notion of Truth takes up the last part of Div. 1 of Being and Time dealing with the "Preparatory fundamental analysis of Dasein.", yet Heidegger says that

...the phenomenon of truth has already been one of the themes of our earlier analysis, though not explicitly under this title. (SZ 213, B.T. 256)

Given the fact that the theme of the preceding analysis to which Heidegger refers was, in broad terms, Dasein as "Being-in-the-world" and the "Worldhood of the world", the above quotation underscores, once more, the extent to which Heidegger's analysis is HERMENEUTICAL and proceeds within the HERMENEUTICAL CIRCLE: what is last shown as the ground of Truth, i.e. phenomenological disclosedness, is not itself a new

conclusion drawn from previous conceptual premises, following a logico-demonstrative process, but is pointed at as something which was already implicitly understood as the primordial meaning of Being-in-the-world, TRUTH. Indeed, Truth is, in this sense, the BASIC CONSTITUTION of Dasein.

How do both Dasein and the world emerge in the light of this UNCOVERING? They become TRANSCENDED and UNITED in a bond of ontological complementarity. As opposed to traditional epistemological transcendence, operating within a dualistic framework, phenomenological transcendence is not a stepping beyond the boundaries of consciousness in order to apprehend a world which is constituted outside it and which may well exist in its own right without Dasein. Transcendence means, rather, the turning of the world from Substantiality to Meaningfulness, or, in Heideggerian terms, from "Presence-at-hand" to "Readiness-to-hand". It is precisely because of this transcending of Substantiality that Heidegger's phenomenology still remains a Metaphysics, although one of FINITENESS:

'There is' truth only insofar as Dasein is and so long as Dasein is. (SZ 226, B.T. 269)...That there are 'eternal truths' will not be adequately proved until someone has succeeded in demonstrating that Dasein has been and will be for all eternity. (SZ 227, B.T. 270)

Dasein's transcending of the world into meaningfulness is, however, possible only because the world is already accessible to him A PRIORI as a possibility of meaning(s) and as an object of CONCERN: Dasein is already PROJECTED a priori in the world, as indicated earlier, in the light of those existential-ontological perspectives called "Understanding" and "States-of-mind."

In Transcendence the ontological bond of complementarity between Dasein and the world assumes a twofold expression:

1. Dasein forms the world (according to the A PRIORI existential structures listed above):

'Dasein transcends' means that the essence of its being is such that it FORMS THE WORLD.... (1)

2. In turn the world becomes constitutive of Dasein's Self:

Dasein in its concerned absorption understands itself in terms of what it encounters within-the-world.
(SZ 225, B.T. 268)

This transcendence of the world, which ultimately becomes Dasein's Self, discloses the fundamental meaning of "Actual subjectivity of consciousness":

That Being which is an issue for this entity in its very Being, is in each case MINE (it. ours). Thus Dasein is never to be taken ontologically as an instance or special case of some genus of entities as things that are present-at-hand. (SZ 42, B.T. 68)

In this ACTUAL subjectivity of Truth as MINENESS, the world does not emerge as "Consciousness in general", but only and exclusively as the world of and for my own, individual and unique Self: it becomes "ERLEBNIS", lived experience.

A first, essential dimension of concreteness has thus been more specifically identified: by shifting the meaning of Being from substantiality to existential significance, Being is made co-extensive with consciousness, no longer an abstract metaphysical essence, but a real presence continuously sustained through Dasein's interpretation. The intentional nature of Heidegger's Being casts ontology in an entirely new light, signifying an unprecedented involvement of man in ontology. Once Being is posited as Being-for-consciousness, Dasein becomes

(1) Martin Heidegger: The Essence of Reasons . transl. by Terrence Malick. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969, p. 89

primordially constitutive of it and Being, in turn, becomes CONCRETELY disclosed to Dasein as

...that by means and in terms of which Dasein gives itself to understand what beings it can behave towards and how it can behave toward them. (VWG, 85)

The next step consists in bringing to bear the notion of concreteness upon CARE and TIME. In the course of this analysis concreteness will be further interpreted in terms of a striving towards the disclosure of a "PRIMORDIAL, UNITARY PHENOMENON" which grounds the TOTALITY of Dasein's Being-there in its fundamental existential articulations.

In SZ 9 ff, under the heading "The ontological priority of the question of Being" Heidegger explains that a "CONCRETE" approach to any question is one which lays the foundations of the subject-matter under investigation.

To lay the foundations means to bring to light the "Basic concepts" of a particular science or field of knowledge. "Basic concepts" are those which "determine the way in which we get an understanding BEFOREHAND (it. ours) of the area of subject-matter underlying all the objects a science takes as its theme, and all positive investigation is guided by this understanding... (SZ 10, B.T.30)...The 'basic concepts' which thus arise remain our proximal clues for disclosing this area CONCRETELY (it. ours) for the first time." (SZ 9, B.T. 29)

In the "Metaphysical foundations of logic" M. Heidegger will explicitly link concreteness with Being-as-a-whole:

Real metaphysical generalization does not exclude concreteness but is in one respect the most concrete, as Hegel had seen, though he exaggerated it.
(M. F. L., p. 140)

Here the term "metaphysical generalization" means leaping over the individuality of each particular essent by positing it not as self-grounded in its Being, but as a part of a totality from which it draws its meaning.

The idea that Being is primordially a structured whole of significance which grounds the meaning of the parts and without which the parts would be unintelligible, emerges forcefully in the following passages:

Being-in-the-world is a structure which is primordially and constantly a whole (SZ 180, B.T. 225)...it is beyond question that the TOTALITY (it. ours) of the structural whole is not to be reached by building it up out of elements.....The Being of Dasein, upon which the structural whole as such is ontologically supported, becomes accessible to us when we look all the way through this whole to a single primordially unitary phenomenon which is already in this whole in such a way that it provides the ontological foundations for each structural item in its structural possibility.
(SZ 181, B.T. 226)

In the first division of SZ¹ Heidegger has shown how TRUTH, as disclosedness, is the basic constitution of Dasein. This disclosedness is phenomenologically interpreted as TRANSCENDENCE or "Being-in-the-world", which articulates itself in two (1) basic modes or structures, namely:

1. Understanding
2. States-of-mind

The task of a truly "concrete" interpretation of Dasein's Being is to identify that "primordial, unitary phenomenon" which grounds "a priori" the above existential structures. Moreover, this phenomenon must be ATTESTED from within Dasein's LIVED EXPERIENCE, which excludes

(1) M. Heidegger posits a third structure: Discourse-Language. I shall not, however, expand on it because it does not have a direct bearing upon the central theme of my thesis and it is ultimately derivative on Understanding.

interpreting Dasein in terms of ideas or conceptual presuppositions of any kind:

Only when such an attestation has been found will our investigation suffice to exhibit (as its problematic requires) an authentic potentiality-for-Being-a-whole, existentially confirmed and clarified-a potentiality which belongs to Dasein. (SZ 301, B.T. 348)

The first insight is that Understanding and States-of-mind are equiprimordially grounded in the possibility for Dasein to RELATE a priori to the world. Dasein's existence is constituted in a world which is at all times understood as something which is to make sense, which elicits affections and which constitutes the "other", as the non-I enabling Dasein to perceive its own selfhood.

In "Understanding", the world, as a relational possibility, is always disclosed in advance as that "for-the-sake-of-which" Dasein always comports itself. On Dasein's side the ontological correlate to the "for-the-sake-of" is an existential structure called "Being-ahead-of-itself".

States-of-mind is grounded upon and discloses Dasein's relation to the world as that into which it is THROWN at birth and out of which it will be thrown at death. In "States-of-mind" the world, as a relational possibility, is disclosed as that which is always, ineluctably, "already there" for Dasein and from which it cannot escape. States-of-mind can be understood, for Heidegger, only on the basis of Dasein's "Being-already-in".

Understanding-States-of-mind (VERSTEHENDE BEFINDLICHKEIT) can be authentic or inauthentic. Inauthenticity is what M. Heidegger also calls "Fallenness". The latter, too, is a structure of Dasein's existence, because Dasein in its everyday life is completely absorbed by the world, to the point of forsaking its own Self and its possibilities of authentic

Being. In "Fallenness" the relationship between Dasein and the world is expressed by M. Heidegger as "Being-alongside".

The above relational structures (viz. "Being-ahead-of-itself", "Being-already-in" and "Being-alongside") constitute what Heidegger calls the phenomenon of CARE. Indeed,

The FORMALLY (it. ours) existential totality of Dasein's ontological structural whole must therefore be grasped in the following structure: the Being of Dasein means ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in (the world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world). This Being fills in the signification of the term Care. (SZ 192, B.T. 237)

Having thus defined Dasein's existential totality as a structured whole in terms of care, Heidegger points to ANXIETY as the primordial mood which provides an existential attestation of how care, hitherto a neutral relational structure, concretely discloses itself to Dasein in its everydayness.

Care, as ANXIETY, is constitutive of Dasein's Being and as anxiety it provides a truly concrete disclosure of Dasein's Being, i.e., in the totality of its structured whole. Indeed,

...anxiety...provides the phenomenal basis for explicitly grasping Dasein's primordial totality of Being. (SZ 182, B.T. 227)

I have to sketch briefly how anxiety gathers around itself all the structures which constitute "Dasein's primordial totality of Being.":

1. Anxiety and thrownness.

Anxiety is that "...uncanniness which lies in Dasein...as thrown Being-in-the-world..." (SZ 189, B.T. 234). Anxiety is the primordial disclosure of thrownness.

2. Anxiety and fallenness.

Falling, as a turning away, is always a fleeing in the face of one's own anxious Being-in-the-world. Thus falling discloses anxiety as its ground:

The turning away of falling is grounded rather in anxiety...
(SZ 186, B.T. 230)

3. Anxiety and understanding

Anxiety makes manifest in Dasein its Being towards its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-that is its BEING-FREE FOR the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold of itself. Anxiety brings Dasein face to face with its BEING FREE FOR (PROPENSIO IN...) the authenticity of its Being... (SZ 188, B.T. 232)

The authenticity-revealing function of anxiety consists in that

Anxiety thus takes away from Dasein the possibility of understanding itself, as it falls, in terms of the "world" and the way things have been publicly interpreted.....Anxiety individualizes Dasein for its ownmost Being-in-the-world. (SZ 187, B.T. 232)... and makes it manifest to it that authenticity and inauthenticity are possibilities of its Being. (SZ 191, B.T. 235)

In the first paragraph of SZ Div. 2 Heidegger summarizes the preceding analysis of CARE-ANXIETY by stating that

By working out the phenomenon of care, we have given ourselves an insight into the CONCRETE (it. ours) constitution of existence-that is an insight into its equi-primordial connection with Dasein's facticity and its falling. (SZ 231, B.T. 274)

Admittedly this CONCRETENESS is not yet, however, a full-fledged one. A few lines below, in fact, Heidegger wonders:

Are we entitled to the claim that in characterizing Dasein ontologically QUA care we have given a PRIMORDIAL Interpretation of this entity? (SZ 231, B.T. 274)

If a primordial, therefore truly concrete, interpretation is one in which the totality of Dasein's possibilities of Being is disclosed, then

Care-Anxiety does not constitute, yet, this primordial interpretation of Dasein, because so far Care has enhanced only the perspective of Dasein's fallenness. Dasein has to be disclosed also in its possibility of authentic Being: this is why Death enters Heidegger's "path":

As long as Dasein is, there is in every case something still outstanding, which Dasein can be and will be. But to that which is thus outstanding, the "end" itself belongs. The "end" of Being-in-the-world is DEATH (it. ours). This end, which belongs to the potentiality-for-Being-that is to say, to existence limits and determines in every case whatever totality is possible for Dasein. (SZ 233, 234. B.T. 276, 277)

Death is not to be approached, however, in an ontical manner, i.e. merely as something still outstanding, as a not-yet-present-at-hand-event. Death must be, instead, investigated phenomenally and existentially, as a possible MEANING within the horizon of Dasein's existence. Since such a horizon has been shown to be that of CARE, primordially, Death must be interpreted in terms of the fundamental ontological signification of CARE as "AHEAD-OF-ITSELF/ALREADY-IN-THE-WORLD/BEING-ALONGSIDE entities." This means that Death must be interpreted as Being-towards-death. As such Death concretely fills the meaning of the "Ahead-of-itself" structure of Care. Thus "Being-towards-death" is the existential meaning of Dasein's "ek-sistence" in the most primordial sense: Dasein's projective understanding upon its ultimate and most real possibility, that of its eventual non-being.

Similarly, in Care as "Anxious Being-towards-death" Dasein's thrownness is revealed in the most imperative and unequivocal manner, as the impossibility for Dasein to "outstrip" death, to which it is delivered by the very fact of its existence.

Fallenness, too, is interpreted in terms of Death, as inauthentic Being-towards-death:

Our everyday falling evasion in the face of death is inauthentic Being-towards-death? (SZ 259, B.T. 303)

"But", Heidegger continues, "inauthenticity is based upon the possibility of authenticity." (SZ 259, B.T. 303) Therefore, in order to disclose Dasein's Being in a truly concrete manner, i.e. in its TOTALITY of possibilities, it has to be shown how Being-towards-death grounds and reveals Dasein's possibility of AUTHENTIC EXISTENCE.

Anxious Being-towards-death is termed by Heidegger as "Anticipatory resoluteness". This means, in a nutshell, that Dasein, in the anticipation of death has reached the existentially confirmed certitude of death as ITS OWN death. In resolving to face the possibility of its own death, Dasein has once and for all rescued itself from its everyday lostness into the "they": Being-towards-death has brought Dasein face to face with its ownmost, therefore, most authentic possibility of Being, that of its non-Being:

Death does not just belong to one's own Dasein in an undifferentiated way; death lays claim to it as an INDIVIDUAL (it. ours) Dasein... It makes manifest that all Being-alongside the things with which we concern ourselves, and all Being-with Others, will fail us when our ownmost potentiality-for-Being is the issue. (SZ 263, B.T. 308)

But if Care, as "Anxious Being-towards-death" is the phenomenon which can provide a truly unitary ontological ground for all the structures of Dasein's Being, (both in the key of Authenticity and Inauthenticity), is it possible to look for a further phenomenon in terms of which Care itself can be even more primordially interpreted and in which the "Being-ahead-of-itself" of Understanding, the "Being-already-there" of Thrownness and the Being-alongside of Fallenness can be equiprimordially disclosed?

For Heidegger, it is TIME which constitutes the ultimate phenomenon of Dasein's Truth, both in the sense that in the understanding of ALL the structures of Dasein's Being-there time is always pre-understood and in the sense that the world is constituted in Dasein's consciousness as an ongoing process of temporalization. To understand how time underlies and brings together in a unity of meaning all of Dasein's existential structures is ultimately to understand the full meaning of Heidegger's concreteness.

I shall therefore conclude by illustrating how Time is revealed as the most primordial constitutive element of Being.

1. Temporality and Understanding.

Anticipatory resoluteness, when taken formally and existentially,...is BEING TOWARDS one's ownmost, distinctive potentiality-for-Being....This letting-itself-come-towards-itself... is the primordial phenomenon of the FUTURE (it. ours) (SZ 325, B.T. 372)...When one understands oneself projectively in an existentiell possibility, the FUTURE (it. ours) underlies this understanding, and it does so as a coming-towards-onself out of that current possibility as which one's Dasein exists....Projection is basically futural. (SZ 336, B.T. 385)

2. Temporality and Thrownness/States-of-mind.

Dasein's Being is always pre-understood within the horizon of a "having-been-thrown", which is always already there for Dasein to face: it can neither undo its past nor escape its ultimate future. Even when Dasein chooses to flee in the face of its thrownness, by living inauthentically, its possibilities of Being remain always factically limited by its being thrown between birth and death:

Existentially, "BEING-thrown" means finding oneself in some state-of-mind or other. One's state-of-mind is therefore based upon thrownness...(SZ 340, B.T. 389) Understanding is grounded primarily in the future; one's state-of-mind, however, temporalizes itself primarily in having been." (SZ 340, B.T. 390)

3. Temporality and Fallenness.

Just as understanding is made possible primarily by the FUTURE (it. ours), and moods are made possible by HAVING BEEN (it. ours), the third constitutive item in the structure of care-namely, FALLING-has its existential meaning in the PRESENT. (SZ 346, B.T. 396,397)

FALLING is for Heidegger an inauthentic present, i.e. a present which is forgetful of the HAVING BEEN of thrownness, while leaping away from that "authentic coming-towards-itself" occurring in the anticipation of death:

Having been thrown into Being-towards-death, Dasein flees-proximally and for the most part-in the face of this thrownness...The Present leaps away from its authentic future and from its authentic having been ...The "leaping away" of the Present-that is, the falling into lostness-has its source in that primordial temporality itself which makes possible thrown Being-towards-death. (SZ 348, B.T. 399)

CONCLUSION

The object of the present thesis was twofold:

1. To interpret Heidegger's concept of Being as a Metaphysics of concreteness.
2. To show that the UEBERWINDUNG is not a DESTRUCTION of traditional Metaphysics, but their INCORPORATION and that the UEBERWINDUNG was necessary in order to disclose the BASIC CONSTITUTION of Dasein as TRUTH.

Regarding the first point, I shall now summarize the foregoing by saying that Heidegger's ontology is one of concreteness for the following reasons:

1. Abandonment of the traditional ontology for a new ontology in which Being is no longer posited in terms of substantiality, but in terms of significance for Dasein. This new perspective witnesses an unprecedented, concrete involvement of Dasein in ontology. Dasein becomes an integral part of the meaning of Being. Indeed, it becomes truly constitutive of Being.
2. The categories of traditional ontology were formal conceptual presuppositions of an epistemological nature. Moreover they could not be experientially attested from

within Dasein's lived experience, inasmuch as any experience already presupposes the operation of the formal categories in order to be understood. In this sense the being of traditional ontology remained indeed an abstract conceptual entity, precisely because beyond the concrete dimension of Dasein's lived experience.

Heidegger's ontology, on the other hand, is concrete not only because it aims at disclosing the a priori structures of Dasein's Being-existence (and not those of knowledge), but also because these structures emerge through and through as being phenomenologically attested from within Dasein's lived experience, in its everydayness. In fact (1) in taking as his point of departure Dasein's existence in the variety of its moods and comportments (Fear, Anxiety, Guilt, Curiosity, Idle talk, -Anticipation of death), (2) in describing them in terms of the existentials of CARE and (3) in finally proceeding towards the disclosure of TIME as the primordial phenomenon in which the meaning of Being-care is grounded and revealed, Heidegger NEVER goes beyond the horizon of Dasein's concrete possibilities of existence. If there are any presuppositions in Heidegger, they are all phenomenologically attested: Dasein exists as an entity which understands, (authentically or inauthentically projected towards possibilities of Being to be realized within the limits of its facticity) and it always exists in a variety of affective moods (states-of-mind) some of which, like

Anxiety and Being-towards-death, are the hallmark of its humanity. And certainly TIME, too, is within the concrete horizon of Dasein's existence, because Dasein always exists in the awareness of TIME.

3. Finally, Heidegger's concreteness can also be interpreted in a sense which is true to the etymological meaning of the word, that of a "growing or coming together" (lat. cum-crescere).

Given Heidegger's notion of Being as a TOTALITY, a structured whole of significance ("Being-in-the-world is a structure which is primordially and constantly a whole." SZ 180) which founds a priori the being of the parts, Heidegger's ontology is concrete precisely in its fundamental aim of disclosing that "primordial, unitary phenomenon" which truly brings together all of the existential structures in which Dasein's Being is articulated.

As we have seen, TIME is that primordial phenomenon and it constitutes the epitomization of concreteness because it founds all the existential structures of Dasein in such a primordial way that they all fall together in time, as modes of temporalization.

Concerning the relation between Heidegger and the tradition in the light of the UEBERWINDUNG, I have already stressed in Chapter Two how the following elements constitute the main points of convergence,

allowing the possibility of a constructive dialogue between Heidegger and the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition:

1. The notion of Form, phenomenologically transmuted into "Meaning" and "Meaningfulness".
2. The later Plato's recognition that the sensible world, too, has Being, no longer in the strict sense of PERMANENT SUBSTANTIALITY, but in the sense of a possibility of meaningfulness, within a context of interrelatedness among individual essents.
3. Aristotle's definitive abandonment of the CHORISMOS by anchoring Being in the concreteness of the individual substance of the sensible world.
4. Thomas Aquinas' distinction between ESSENCE and EXISTENCE and his emphasis on the latter as an all-important dimension of Being.

It remains now to make an overall assessment of how Heidegger's metaphysics, as a result of the UEBERWINDUNG, relates to and incorporates the metaphysical tradition.

The essence of the metaphysical tradition can be summarized in the medieval saying that

"UNUM, BONUM ET VERUM CONVERTUNTUR CUM ENTE."
(The ONE, the GOOD and the TRUE are interchangeable with BEING.)

While I have to acknowledge, for obvious reasons, that Heidegger's ontology can no longer be understood in terms of the above equation, I wonder whether a parallelism between Heidegger's formulation of Being and that expressed in the above statement does not in fact exist.

It is undeniable that Heidegger's phenomenological stance represents an irreversible break-away from the traditional view of Being. Nevertheless, as his early theological background attests, Heidegger was formed in that tradition and in many of his writings he manifests a profound respect for it as well as an uncommon knowledge of it. I cannot therefore discount that he may in fact be closer to the tradition than his avowed intention of "destroying" it may at first suggest.

As we have seen, for Heidegger, too, Being is Truth, although in the ante-predicative sense of manifestness. I have to stress that this seemingly new sense is not however incompatible with the predicative sense of truth because Truth-Manifestness is already implied in predicative Truth as its phenomenological ground.

Regarding Being (Truth) as UNUM, on one hand I have to grant that this is not the case for Heidegger, because for him the disclosure of Being as Meaningfulness can never be univocal: each Dasein is faced with its own possibilities of Being to realize and they are not one but many, depending on the interpretative stance which Dasein adopts from time to time.

Moreover, even if the same situation or concrete event in life could elicit the same comportment, understanding or mood (according to a conceptual definition) for ALL the existing Daseins, their existential meaning could never be univocal, in qualitative terms, given the individuality and uniqueness of each Dasein's lived experience. For

example, no two Daseins alike could possibly face anxiety and live the meaning of their Being-towards-death in a univocal way, from a "qualitative" standpoint.

In this sense the Truth (disclosure) of, for instance, Being-towards-death cannot be ONE, in absolute terms.

Yet I think there is a sense in which for Heidegger, as for the tradition, Being is ONE: in however many and however widely different ways Being may concretely disclose itself to Dasein, there could never be such a disclosure if Being did not come into a unity of intelligibility in Dasein. This self-gathering of Being into the unity of intelligibility attests that ONENESS is the primordial ontological possibility of Being, its ground.

In "Being and Time" Heidegger has shown that TIME is that unitary phenomenon in which, through which and as which all the structures of Dasein's Being are disclosed and made intelligible. Therefore, if Being is TIME and the latter is the ground of unity, can't we say that for Heidegger, too, Being is ONE?

As far as Being as BONUM is concerned, there is no explicit reference to any moral implications of Being in Heidegger's analysis. But this ought not to mislead us. In the Greek language the adjective "AGATHOS" was not primarily an attribute expressing the conformity of persons or deeds to a standard of moral conduct. Neither was the substantive "TO AGATHON" such a standard. The main connotation of AGATHON seems, rather, to have been that of usefulness or instrumentality and at the same time of visual luminousness akin to beauty. In fact the "Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue Grécque" by P. Chantraine explicitly acknowledges under the entry "AGATHOS" that the two senses

of "CHRESTOS" (useful) and "KALOS" (beautiful) coalesce in the ordinary Attic usage of this term. (1)

Plato did not deviate from this ordinary usage. In the Republic he describes the GOOD ("TO AGATHON") as:

"TOU ONTOS TO PHAINOTATON" (Rep. 518, c, 9)

("Of what exists the most luminous")

While he defines the "Idea of the Good" as:

"PANTON ORTHOON TE KAI KALOON AITIA" (ibid).

("The ground of all that which is correct and beautiful.")

The aesthetic connotation of "AGATHOS" is evident.

Furthermore, Plato says of the "Idea of the Good" that it is

"KURIA ALETHEIAN KAI NOUN PARASCHOMENE." (ibid. 517, c, 4)

("Sovereign of the intelligible world and the parent of intelligibility and truth.")

This time it is stressed that the GOODNESS of the "AGATHON" resides in its causing the world to appear in its highest degree of intelligibility and phenomenal clarity. Moral goodness does not seem, therefore, to be the primary connotation of the platonic "GOOD".

To the extent that Heidegger's Being is akin to "PHYSIS", as the shining of the primordial light which permits things to APPEAR in meaningfulness, it can be maintained that for him, too, Being is not only

(1) P. Chantraine: "Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue Grécque." Paris: ed. Klincksieck, 1968, vol. 1.

ONE and TRUE, but it is also "AGATHON" (Bonum); that which bears within itself a supreme worth, as the ground of intelligible existence (which means ultimately the ground of EXISTENCE, since for Heidegger there is no other existence than "Ek-sistence").

I shall therefore conclude by saying that Heidegger's notion of Being-Truth presents significant points of contact with the tradition. I may venture to say that Heidegger's UEBERWINDUNG is indeed not entirely a DESTRUCTION of traditional ontology but its new original synthesis at a different level: phenomenological concreteness.

THE END

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