

HEIDEGGER

THE MAN AND THE THINKER

Edited by

Thomas Sheehan

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Martin Heidegger

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Introduction: Heidegger, the Project and the Fulfillment

Thomas Sheehan

Bergson has written that every great philosopher thinks only one inexhaustible thought and spends his whole life trying to express it: *Et c'est pourquoi il a parlé toute sa vie.*¹ Over the half-century of his professional life, Martin Heidegger liked to insist that his thought was focused on one topic only and that this topic was utterly simple. But defining and articulating that simple topic, *die Sache selbst*, has proven to be no easy matter for either Heidegger or his commentators.

It is a truism to say that the subject matter of Heidegger's thought is the "question of Being" (*die Seinsfrage*), but like most truisms this is both correct and potentially misleading. Indeed, it could be argued that we might enhance the explanation of Heidegger's subject matter by retiring the terms "Being" and the "question of Being" from the discussion.

For one thing, the phrase "the question of Being" is a condensation (its earliest form reads: the question of the meaning of Being), and for another, the full form of the phrase underwent changes throughout Heidegger's career (the question of the *meaning* of Being → the question of the *truth* of Being → the question of the *place* of Being). Furthermore, the word "Being" (*Sein*) has two distinct but easily confused meanings in Heidegger, with the result that Heidegger himself, in order to specify *his* meaning of the term, resorted in his later writings to such stratagems as spelling it archaically (*Seyn*) crossing it out (~~Sein~~), and finally dropping it from his lexicon. There is the added problem that the word (especially when capitalized in English) seems to suggest a metaphysical super-entity, which is anathema to Heidegger's intentions. And

when we read about Being "hiding itself" or "sending itself" to man, we find it hard not to think that Heidegger has lapsed into theology or metaphysical anthropomorphism. Moreover, talk of Being "itself" can easily lose sight of the analogical character of Being. Heidegger was not after a univocal something that subsists on its own. Over and above the Being of man, the Being of implements, nature, artworks and ideal objects, there is no second level of "Being itself." Rather, the "itself" refers to the analogically unified meaning of Being (in Aristotelian terms, its *pros hen* unity) which is instantiated in all cases of the Being of this or that.

Moreover, there is the problem of Heidegger's audacious claim that the question of Being has been entirely forgotten by the Western philosophical tradition. Apropos of this, Helmut Franz tells an anecdote about a philosophy conference in 1958 at which Heidegger had discussed this fate of metaphysics. A Protestant participant asked Heidegger whether it were not the case that at least Martin Luther was an exception to this charge. Heidegger quipped: Would you care to guess how many Catholics ask me the same thing about Thomas Aquinas?²

Let us pose this as a test case. After the painstaking work of Étienne Gilson and others, is it not the legitimate claim of the neo-Thomist that Aquinas raised metaphysical questioning to a new and creative level by his thematization of the primacy of *esse*, the existential act of Being, over essence? Whereas Aristotle's philosophy was still one of form as highest actuality, Aquinas compared form to *esse* as potency to a higher actuality. "Being [*esse*] is the actuality of every form or nature" (S.T., I, 3, 4, c); "Being itself [*ipsum esse*] is the most perfect of all; indeed, it is compared as act to everything. For nothing has actuality except insofar as it is. Thus Being itself is the actuality of all things" (S.T., I, 4, 1, ad 3). And since in God there is nothing potential, it follows that at the apex of reality essence is existence: "The divine essence is Being itself" (S.T., I, 12, 2, ad 3). "God is Being itself subsisting per se" (S.T., I, 4, 2, c.). Surely there is no forgetfulness of Being here! And indeed, the various attempts to rescue Aquinas from Heidegger's indictment generally consist in demonstrating—irrefutably, as far as I can see—that in Aquinas *existentia* or *ipsum esse* has primacy over *essentia*, indeed that *essentia* is reducible to *esse*.³

Far from being ignorant of Aquinas' metaphysical revolution and of its rediscovery in this century, Heidegger freely grants this achievement while still maintaining that in Thomas, as much as in Plato or Nietzsche, "Being" is forgotten. Clearly Heidegger's "Being" means something different from Aquinas' *ipsum esse* or *actus essendi*. As a preliminary and merely formal indication of the difference, we may say that Heidegger is asking for the possibilizing condition of what Aquinas calls *esse*, and that from this viewpoint all the ultimate ontological principles of the tradition—whether Plato's *eidōs* or Aquinas' *esse*—are on the same plane.

One way to get at the simple topic that commands Heidegger's thought is to distinguish the two meanings of "Being," the one that is the sole and exclusive topic throughout the history of metaphysics, and the other which is the prerogative only of a pre- or post-metaphysical thinking. In the first sense "Being" refers to the highest ontological or theological principle discoverable by traditional metaphysics. This we shall call generically "beingness" (*Seiendheit*). In the second sense "Being" refers to a pre-ontological principle undiscovered and undiscoverable by metaphysics: the prior event whereby beingness can "be" at all. And by this Heidegger does not mean creation but, in the most general terms, the happening of the world of sense in which man lives and moves and is. Let us not yet give a name to this, other than to say it is "Being" in Heidegger's sense of the term.

"BEING" AS BEINGNESS

The problematic of metaphysics is that constellation of questions that ultimately reduces to one: What is the "core" of each and every thing that exists? That is: What is a being insofar as it is at all? This is the question of beings *as being* (Greek: *on hei on*). Aristotle articulates this clearly: "The ever-puzzling question that has always been asked and is still being asked today—namely, 'What is a being?'—comes down to this question: 'What is being-ness?'" (*Metaphysics*, Z, 1, 1028, b 2). Explanation: The uniqueness of a properly philosophical question is that it looks away from and beyond the obvious dimensions of things in order to ask about the "-ness" dimension of things, beyond virtues to virtue-ness as in Plato's *Meno*, beyond pious acts to piety, as in the *Euthyphro*, beyond particular men to manhood as in the *De Anima*. The philosophical question is, in the broadest sense, the question of the "essence" or "X-ness" of X. And the highest form of philosophy is not to ask about the "essence" of particular regions of things (the X-ness of all Xs, the Y-ness of all Ys), but to ask about the "is-ness" of all that is. In Aristotle's framework, this is the question which defines "first" philosophy as contrasted with regional disciplines within philosophy: the question of each and every being insofar as it is at all, beings with regard to their "is-ness."

Now, to designate this "is-ness" or state-of-being which characterizes beings as beings, Aristotle took over from popular usage of his day the noun *ousia*. It is derived from the present participle of the verb *eimi*, *einai*, "to be," and specifically from the feminine singular, *ousa*, just as the neuter of that participle supplies the word for "beings" (*on*, *onta*). The noun *ousia* in its popular meaning referred to that which is properly one's own, one's present possessions or holdings, one's property or substance. When taken up by Aristotle as a philosophical term, it came to mean that which is the "essential property" of beings: their "is-ness" or state-of-being. It was eventually translated into Latin as *essentia* and into English as "substance" or "essence." But lest we be tempted

to understand *ousia* as referring exclusively to “essence” as contrasted with “existence” (as Heidegger shows, the Greek word includes both)⁴, let us translate it simply as “beingness,” that which characterizes a being insofar as it is at all and is what it is. Thus Aristotle can say that the question which defines First Philosophy — What are beings as beings? — comes down to the question: What is beingness?

For Heidegger, the whole history of metaphysics, from Plato through Nietzsche, is structured by this same question, the search for the analogical unity of beingness as the substantial ground and cause of actual beings, regardless of the particular interpretations of beingness that emerge in the tradition. In Professor Werner Marx’s phrase, the history of metaphysics as a whole and in each of its parts is an “ousiology” or doctrine of *ousia*/beingness, where beingness has the double sense of what-things-are and that-they-are. Regardless of whether whatness or thatness is given priority, metaphysics still and always moves within the parameters of the doctrine of *ousia*. One may wish to claim that certain forms of beingness are improvements over others (for example, Aquinas’ “existential” beingness over Aristotle’s form-centered beingness), but specific differences within the genus “beingness” remain instances of that genus.

Moreover, metaphysics works out the beingness of beings in a twofold pattern that makes up a unified science. The question “What is a being as being?” asks about the entity’s ontological constitution in general and about the beingness of the highest entity, the divine. In Heidegger’s telling, all metaphysics is onto-theo-logical: ontological in that it transcends beings to their beingness, and theological in that it seeks ultimate cause or ground (*theion*). Heidegger goes so far as to say: “Even Nietzsche’s metaphysics as *ontology* is . . . at the same time theology.”⁵

So far, our discussion of “Being” as beingness has led to these conclusions: (1) The exclusive prerogative of traditional metaphysics is the question of the beingness of beings, the whatness or thatness of whatever is under discussion. (2) The tradition’s name for the “beingness of beings” is the “Being of beings” under a variety of nomenclatures: the *idea* of beings, the *energeia* of beings, the *esse* of beings, and so forth. But thus far Heidegger’s discussion of beingness has gotten no further than discovering the unity of the metaphysical tradition in the most general terms. There is a second step in his reading, whereby he uncovers a first level of the hidden meaning of that unity.

Beingness in all its historical forms conceals, in the broadest sense, a certain relation to man. The beingness of beings is not something “out there” in beings but rather is the meaningful relatedness, the intelligible presentness, of things to and for man. Beingness always includes this implicit referredness, even if it is suppressed or forgotten. Beingness means “intelligible disclosure” or “revealedness,” in Greek: *aletheia*. When we speak of intelligibility, we mean it

in the broad sense of “meaningful accessibility,” not just theoretical knowability. And the peculiarity of the Greeks as the spiritual forefathers of the West consists in the fact that in a unique way their culture — their poetry, drama, sculpture, thought — understood implicitly and celebrated at large this openness or revealedness, this up-front-ness, of things. The word *eidōs* — the visible shape or meaningful appearance of things — summarizes and typifies this Greek vision. It says that the world of things is open, accessible, present to man. To be is to appear. To be sure, the “to-ness” or relatedness to man is not thematized (and if it were, it would not denote any kind of objectivity before a subject). The implicitness of it all constitutes the beauty and enchanting naïveté of the Greeks. Man is “all eyes” and therefore caught up in seeing the world as just “there.” No subjectivity, no anthropocentrism, only captivation by the openness of things.

Thus the word *ousia*, which we initially and very blandly translated as beingness, in fact has overtones of “thereness” or “presentness” (*parousia*) and “openness” (*aletheia*), indeed of “emergence into appearance” (*physis*). All of these really mean the same thing. By pushing the problematic of *ousia* (beingness) back to the problematic of *parousia* (presentness, openness), Heidegger has located the proper issue of Greek philosophy in the disclosive bond (*logos, legein*) between man and beingness: the appearance or openness of things in conjunction with the essence of man as allowing that appearance to happen.

Heidegger is making no claim that this togetherness of beingness/openness and man was explicit and thematic in Greek philosophy (in fact, the first task of his deconstruction and retrieval of the Greeks is to uncover this dimension). But neither can he claim that this conjunction was unknown to the tradition.⁶ From its beginnings in Parmenides, philosophy has sought to clarify beingness by reflecting upon the thinking (*noein*) of beingness (cf. Fr. 3). In Plato the disclosure of the Ideas takes its bearings from the soul’s monologue (*logos*) with itself (cf. *Sophist*, 245e). In Aristotle the categories of beingness are connected with the assertoric knowledge of *logos*. In Aquinas we find the problematic of the agent intellect as revelatory excess towards beingness. In Descartes First Philosophy is explicitly founded on the *res cogitans*. In Kant, “The conditions of the possibility of experience in general are at the same time conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience.” In short, the proper subject matter of philosophy has always implicitly been the bond between beingness and man, between the openness and presence of things and the essence of man.

We may now add two more conclusions to those already made concerning the explanation of “Being” as beingness: (3) The problematic of beingness is implicitly *phenomenological*: beingness is the appearing (openness, presentness) of things. (4) The problematic of beingness is implicitly *phenomenological*: it implies that man is essential to the event of the appearing of things. And if we pull all four conclusions into a unity, we have a clear, if general, definition of

metaphysics: it is the ontological-theological search for the beingness of things (their ultimate what-ness and that-ness), one which unfolds historically in various modes of beingness, all of which are implicitly modes of the presence or appearance of things in necessary conjunction with man's essence as allowing that appearance.

Now, if Heidegger is willing to concede that much to the traditional notion of "Being" as beingness, what is left over as the topic for his own thinking? What could possibly have been forgotten in metaphysics?

Answering this question will require intermediate steps. But for now, a formal indication of the direction in which Heidegger moves. Beingness is the intelligible presence of beings, it is that which allows beings to show up in the specifically human world. Beingness, therefore, is the possibilizing condition of *beings* showing up. But the prior question which Heidegger asks is: what brings it about that *beingness itself* shows up, what puts beingness into action in the specifically human world? Let us ask the question another way: If beingness is the presence of beings, what occasions the presence of presence? Or one last way: If beingness is the "essence" (in the broad sense, including what-ness and that-ness) of beings, what is the "essence of essence"?

All such ways of putting Heidegger's initial question indicate a shift of focus from beings towards beingness itself. Of course, metaphysics already is aware of beingness, but only in terms of how it allows beings to be meaningfully present. Heidegger seeks to become aware of beingness in and for itself, while of course never forgetting that beingness is always and only the beingness of *beings*. But the question remains: What brings about beingness? And since, as the tradition implicitly knew, beingness is necessarily tied into man's essence, what about man in his unique relation not to beings but to the happening of beingness? Clearly Heidegger is going to focus on the nature of the *disclosive bond* between man and beingness, a bond which is operative wherever man is and beingness appears, but which gets covered over both in everyday life and in the thematic science called metaphysics. To look ahead we may say: This bond is *proper* to man, indeed he is *appropriated* unto it willy nilly; and, to truly be what he in fact already is, he must *personally re-appropriate* his state of being already appropriated unto this bond. Moreover, the fact that he is appropriated unto this bond is the possibilizing condition for beingness to happen at all and thus for beings to appear to man. That is, the appropriation of man unto beingness *discloses* beings. Heidegger is trying to thematize this appropriation as the primordial disclosive event; thus he calls his topic "*das Ereignis*," the event of appropriation whereby disclosure happens.

But these formal indications of Heidegger's topic require more concrete demonstration, and that means an intermediate step. If metaphysics has always asked about the presentness of present beings, or equally, about beings in their beingness, Heidegger's new question, which claims to be *the*

phenomenological question *par excellence*, is: What about presentness or beingness as such? What allows *it* to be present? What is the "Being" of beingness? Now, if phenomenology is about the immediate appearance of things, and if the above questions are to be answered phenomenologically, then beingness itself must become a phenomenon, something seen as immediately showing itself to man. Concretely this means focusing on the unique correlation between man and beingness and, more concretely yet, freeing beingness from its traditional imprisonment in the copula of sentential logic. These services were performed for Heidegger by Edmund Husserl's groundbreaking work, *Logical Investigations*.

HUSSERL: PHENOMENOLOGICAL ACCESS TO BEINGNESS

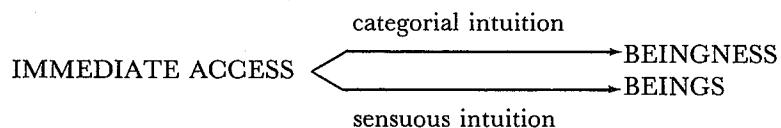
From out of such questions as the above, Heidegger came to the text of Husserl's which was to remain the most important for him: *Logical Investigations* VI, chapter 6, "Sensuous and Categorical Intuitions."⁷ Although he began reading this work as early as 1909 when he entered Freiburg University, it was some years before its import for his own question about the "meaning of beingness" became apparent. The title of this chapter at one and the same time points towards and away from Kant. Whereas the general theme of the Second Part of the Sixth Investigation, "Sense and Understanding," certainly recalls Kant, the specific title of chapter six in that section already heralds a revolutionary break with Kant: "Sensuous and *Categorical* Intuitions." For Kant, categorical intuitions are impossible, since the categories of the understanding function merely to bring the hyletic data into categorical form, such that the object known is posited in a synthesis of intuition and concept. But Husserl's chapter seeks to broaden the range of intuitive givenness beyond Kant's limitation of intuition to the realm of the senses and sense data. Husserl's aim in this Investigation is phenomenological clarification of truth or true knowledge by means of a phenomenological analysis of the identity-synthesis, specifically by analyzing how categorical as well as sensuous meaning-intuitions are fulfilled. But for such a *phenomenological* clarification, the categorical content itself must become a phenomenon, an immediate and intuitable given, analogous to the immediate givenness of sense data. And since intuition bespeaks an "immediate presence to . . .," then the dimension of the categorical must enter presentness.

What is this dimension of the categorical? It is the tradition's name for beingness, that which makes a thing accessible to understanding as what and how it is. Both Kant and Husserl stand within the long tradition wherein the doctrine of beingness (*Seinslehre*) is a doctrine of categories (*Kategorienlehre*). In the tradition, beingness is always — explicitly or not — correlative to a revelatory enunciation (*logos*) and specifically to a categorical-predicative one (*logos apophantikos, apophansis*). To that degree, ontology is the

theoretical revealing of beingness-as-categorial. (To be sure, in this sixth chapter Husserl is not explicitly elaborating the categories as metaphysics from Aristotle to Hegel does, but is only establishing the analogy between sensation and categorial intuition. Thus, although the categorial intuition appears in the *Investigations*, it does not become an explicit ontological thematic.)

Husserl discusses the phenomenological presentness of the categorial dimension in terms of a “surplus” (*Ueberschuss*) of meaning over and above the perceptual sensuous presentation. For Kant, only the sense data are given, and the category (e.g., “substance”) is simply a form for organizing that data. Husserl, however, demonstrates how the propositional categorial form of a statement can attain to intuitive fulfillment. When one says, “The sea is rough” or just “rough seas,” he knows the sea *as* rough. The entrance of the “as-factor” indicates the surplus of meaning beyond the sense intuition. The sea is a sea which *is* rough. But there is nothing in sense perception corresponding to form-words like “is.” Rather, the surplus of meaning here requires another act, the categorial, in order to be seen. This categorial act, to be sure, is founded on sense perception, but it also lets the sensuously appearing object be manifest *as* what and how it *is*, i.e., in its *beingness*-dimension beyond the purely formal beingness of the copula. And since for Husserl intuition is the model of knowledge (because true knowledge must have the character of fulfillment and identity), then we will have to broaden intuition beyond that of individual objects to include general and categorial objects in a categorial intuition. The object of categorial intuition is “what is universal, what is merely documented in [sensuous] intuition” (*Logical Investigations*, p. 778).

As far as Heidegger is concerned, this discovery of the surplus of intuitable categorial meaning and the rendering of this surplus as equally present as is sense data, marks the major achievement of the chapter. Beingness is given to a categorial intuition in a way analogous to how the sensuous being is given to sense intuition. Beingness—that whereby I know a thing as what and how it is—is not derived from the Table of Judgements as it is in Kant, but is *given as a phenomenon*. There are two levels of givenness, and man has immediate access to both. Husserl’s discovery, his rendering present of the beingness-dimension of beings, may be roughly diagrammed as follows:



With this discovery of beingness as the presentness of beings, itself immediately present, Heidegger now had a clue for returning to Plato, Aristotle, and the whole tradition, and for reading beingness in terms of temporality. To say something “is” is to say it “is-present-now.” All of metaphysics

implicitly reads beingness in terms of one moment of time, the present. But Husserl’s discovery also opened up for Heidegger the question which his master did not pose. Now that Husserl had broken the stranglehold of the apophantic assertion in ontology, now that he has rescued beingness from the copula and had rendered it present for itself as an immediately intuitable phenomenon, Heidegger could ask how *it* is given. If beingness is the givenness of beings, and if this givenness-of . . . is itself given, then it too can be treated as a phenomenon and questioned as to the “how” of its becoming present. To use language that Heidegger developed in his earliest courses after World War I, Husserl had uncovered the *Bezugssinn* operative in ontology, the sense of relation between man and beingness; but the *Vollzugssinn* remained to be settled, the sense of the “how” in which the *Bezugssinn* is carried out. For Heidegger that *Vollzugssinn* essentially has to do with man’s temporality: his presence-by-absence, his having of himself and his world by being out beyond himself in self-absence. That dimension of *absence* into which man is *appropriated* lets happen the *presence* or beingness of all that is.

With his reading of *Logical Investigations* Heidegger had found the clue to transcending the problematic of the beingness-of-beings so as to ask the question of the meaning of beingness itself. For all his lack of regard for the tradition, Husserl had brilliantly uncovered its major premise, unspoken since the Greeks, that the true field for philosophy was the correlation between *eidos* and *logos*, between the appearance of beings and man’s essence as necessary to and bound into that appearance. Husserl read that correlation in terms of immediate phenomenological presentness. He freed the beingness-issue from its captivity in Kantian formalism and opened the way to the promised land of the question about the possibilizing condition of beingness. But he was refused access by his self-restriction to the issues of consciousness and objectivity. It was Heidegger’s privilege to enter that land and to chart its topology. And he did so by pushing the *eidos-logos* correlation of immediacy and presentness back to the prior question of the *kinesis* or movement which is the very enactment (*Vollzug*) of the bond between man and beingness. Since *kinesis* is primarily a matter of presence-by-absence (in Aristotle’s terms: *energeia* that is still bound up with *dynamis*), Heidegger entered the promised land by reawakening the question of absence (future, past) as the condition of beingness (presence).

THE “KINETIC” MEANING OF BEINGNESS

It is well known that *Sein und Zeit* (hereafter: *SZ*) was projected in two Parts, the first of which was to determine, on the basis of a new understanding of man as temporality, the time-character of beingness in general and of its possible variations, while the second Part would use this time-character of beingness to reduce the traditional ontology to its underlying temporal content. The second Part would confirm by historical “deconstruction” what the first

Part had established by phenomenological "construction": the new doctrine of the analogical unity of all modes of beingness. Unlike the traditional report that claimed that "beingness as stable presentness" exhausted the meaning of beingness, Heidegger would show that the absential moments of temporal movement (no longer, not yet) are what allow beingness as presentness: the meaning of beingness would be read in terms of time. Each of the two Parts had three projected Divisions, but the work got no further than Part I, Division 2.

Part I as a whole is entitled "The Interpretation of Existence in terms of Temporality [= Part I, Divisions I and 2] and the Explication of Time as the Transcendental Horizon for the Question of [the meaning of] Beingness [= Part I, Division 3]." *SZ* I.1 would establish that the structure of man's existence is "care" (*Sorge*); *SZ* I.2 would interpret the meaning of care as temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*); and *SZ* I.3, the unpublished Division entitled "Time and Being," would show how *Zeitlichkeit* in its horizon-forming function called *Temporalität*, determines the analogically unified temporal meaning of beingness.

The complexity of the analysis of *SZ* can tend to block a clear view of the overarching movement of the whole work. To state it simply: Man as "excess" (ahead of himself and already in a world) holds open the area of access to (or intelligibility of) beings. As an "excess" which makes possible "access," man is the "Da," the "there," the open area of intelligibility — where "intelligibility" is not to be taken to mean theoretical knowability but rather "accessibility of beings in meaningfulness" in the broadest sense.

SZ I.1 reads human beings as constituted by three moments. (1) Existentiality: man's existence is ahead of itself; (2) Facticity: man is ahead of himself by being already in a world of meaning; (3) Being among (*Sein bei*): man's already-ahead-ness holds open the realm of intelligibility within which man has access to, and in everydayness is "fallen into," the things of his concern. These three moments are in fact reducible to two: (1) Existence is already projected possibility, (2) which yields possible encounter with things. Excess possibilizes access, and the whole is called "transcendence."

Part I, Division 2, "Existence and Temporality," first shows *what* it is that existence is ultimately already-out-towards, viz., its most proper possibility of dying; and secondly shows *how* man is called to take over and accept that aheadness, viz., in conscience and resolve. Then it spells out the temporal meaning of the whole structure. In the excess-dimension lie the two moments of aheadness and alreadiness. (1) As ahead of itself, existence is *becoming* its most proper possibility. This becoming or "coming towards" (*Zu-kommen*) is man's proper "future" (*Zukunft*). (2) But what man ultimately comes towards is that which he already and essentially is, his own aheadness, his own finitude, concretized in his dying. Here is the temporal dimension of "what-man-already-essentially-is" or, more briefly, "alreadiness," *Gewesenheit*, which unites

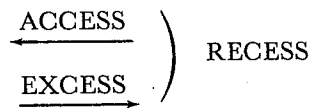
the meanings of "already-having-been" and "essence" (*Wesen*). This "alreadiness" is not a past which lies behind man (*Vergangenheit*), but an essential condition, always already operative, which structures his present and future. The excess-dimension, therefore, is structured as a dynamic of possibility: *becoming* what one *already* is. As excess, man holds open the horizon within which he can "make present," or render accessible in meaning, the beings he meets. The structure of care (being ahead of oneself, already in a world, and among beings) finds its ground or meaning in the structure of temporality as self-transcendence. Human existence is nothing other than this self-transcendence: letting things have access by becoming what one already is. Very roughly:

ACCESS ←	(letting beings be meaningfully present)
EXCESS →	(becoming what one already essentially is)

After *SZ* I.2 had shown that primordial time is the unified structure of man's self-transcendence (and here it is called "temporality," *Zeitlichkeit*), the next but unpublished Division, I.3, was going to specify and work out what was implicit in the foregoing, namely, that transcendence as excess-access forms the analogical unity of the intelligibility of whatever is intelligible. In this horizontal function, primordial time is called the *Temporalität* or time-character of beingness. But what is this "time"? It is not the linear *chronos* (i.e., the number of motion according to before and after) which the West has known explicitly at least since Aristotle. For Heidegger, "time" is the much more original *movement* constitutive of human existence, the movement whereby the domain of intelligibility is opened up. This unique *kinesis* (which is already found implicitly in the Pre-Socratic notions of *aletheia* and *physis* and which is echoed in Aristotle) is the dynamic structure of intelligibility as such, the event or "coming-out" of the meaningful presentness (disclosure) of anything at all, an event which happens only on the basis of man's appropriation unto excess. The e-vent of intelligibility (*a-letheia*) in its specifically kinetic structure (*Ereignis*) is the topic of Heidegger's thought.

Therefore Division 3 of Part I was to look away, as it were, from the excess-access structure of human being in order to focus on the movement of intelligibility itself in its analogical unity. Regardless of which kind of thing is revealed in its meaningful presence, the same process is at work. Just as in motion privativeness allows presentness (a moving being is present *as moving* only because it has *not yet* arrived at its essential completeness: Aristotle's *energeia ateles*), so likewise a meaningful being is present as what it is only on the basis of the privative self-absence (excess) of man. We might speak of a "background" that remains in the background (in recess) in order that beings may emerge into the foreground of meaningfulness. Indeed, man's excess

holds open that recessive background-dimension; it is, in fact, his *proper* dimension, he is *appropriated unto* it. In order properly to be what he already is, man must re-appropriate his excessive appropriation unto recess, not in the sense of overcoming and controlling it but in the sense of accepting it *as* recessive. Only because man is already appropriated unto this excess-recess dimension (*Ereignis*: the event of being appropriated unto absence) can he acquiesce in his condition and re-appropriate what he properly is, i.e., achieve “authenticity” (*Eigentlichkeit*: properness). To describe man’s condition as appropriated unto the recess-dimension, Heidegger sometimes speaks of man as “called forth” or “tuned in” or “drawn out.” But of course there can be no hypostasizing of the recess-dimension as if it were someone or something that calls or tunes or draws. The receding is known only as it is registered in man’s ineluctable exceeding of himself. The sameness of excess and recess is equally described as *Ereignis* and *Enteignis*: man’s ownness consists in not being his own; he is appropriated into his disappropriation. We may further specify the earlier diagram:



The unity of excess-recess on the one hand and access on the other is captured by the fundamental Greek noun *aletheia* or verb *aletheuein*. At the heart of the word is “recess” or “hiddenness” (*lethe*)—not a complete and absolute hiddenness but a withdrawal. This recess is itself present in a unique way, viz., as registered in and held open by man’s excess, and experienced, for example, in his being-towards-death. We may equally say: it is present by calling man forth into his excess. In either way, it is present *privately*. And on the basis of this recess, the arena is cleared for beings-in-their-beingness, the accessibility of things as what and how they are. Recess possibilizes access, and *aletheia* bespeaks: the revealment, manifestness, beingness, of some particular being on the basis of a prior withdrawal; the meaningful presence of a being on the basis of a privative absence; or equally, a privative absence that is “present” in man’s excess or self-absence. “In *aletheia*, what essentially becomes present is *lethe*; yet this *lethe* recedes in favor of a being which becomes manifest [in its beingness].” The topic for thought is this “pre-ab-sence.”

The uniqueness of Heidegger’s “question of Being” vis-à-vis the tradition comes into full view. The phrase is to be expanded into (1) the question of the *temporal meaning* or *kinesis* of beingness: Pre-ab-sence is the appropriation of man as excess by the dimension of intrinsic recess such that access can happen; or (2) the question of the *truth* or *aletheia* of beingness: Pre-ab-sence, i.e., presence by withdrawal, allows the revealedness of things; or (3) the question

of the *place* or *topos* of beingness: Pre-ab-sence is the “clearing” of the domain in which beings can be meaningfully present.

CONCLUSION

The simplicity of Heidegger’s topic is the legacy of his thought, a legacy which he himself inherited from the tradition which preceded him. In a poem from his youth he wrote that:

... the yield to me of shining summer day
Rests like heavy fruit—
From long eternities
A burden beyond sense—
For me in the gray desert
Of a great Simplicity.⁸

In a very real sense there is no “content” to that topic and legacy, only a “method.” But “method” must not be taken here to mean a technique or procedure for philosophical thinking. In that sense there is no “method” in Heidegger as there is, for example, in Husserl. Rather, the topic of Heidegger’s thought and the pursuit of that topic, the “what” and the “how,” are one and the same simple thing. Heidegger writes, “*Alles ist Weg*,”⁹ “Everything is way,” and man’s Being is to be on-the-way (Greek, *meta tei hodoi, methodos*), i.e., in essential movement. Hence there is no method which could show us for the first time the topic of philosophy or lead us to the place of thought. Rather, we are already there, in our essence we are the topic and *topos*, and the point is not to be led there so much as to come to know what we already know and to become what we already are. In the words of the poet,

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.¹⁰

Notes

1. Henri Bergson, *Oeuvres*, Edition du centenaire, ed., André Robinet, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1970, p. 1347. I am grateful to Professor James Felt, S.J., for pointing out this reference to me.
2. Helmut Franz, “Das Denken Heideggers und die Theologie.” in *Heidegger und die Theologie*, ed. Gerhard Noller, Munich: Kaiser, 1967, p. 262f.
3. On Heidegger and Aquinas, cf. J. B. Lotz, “Das Sein selbst und das subsistierende Sein nach Thomas von Aquin,” in G. Neske, ed., *Martin Heidegger zum seibzigsten*

- Geburtstag*, Pfullingen: Neske, 1959, pp. 180-194; also John N. Deely, *The Tradition via Heidegger*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971; John P. Doyle, "Heidegger and Scholastic Metaphysics," *The Modern Schoolman*, 49 (1972), 201-220. On the reduction of essence to *esse*: K. Rahner, *Geist in Welt*, Munich: Kösel, 1957, pp. 166-172; English translation: *Spirit in the World*, New York: Herder and Herder, 1968, pp. 156-162.
4. Martin Heidegger, *The End of Philosophy*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, New York: Harper and Row, 1973, pp. 1-10.
 5. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Pfullingen: Neske, 1961, II, 348.
 6. Cf. Martin Heidegger, "The Idea of Phenomenology, with a Letter to Edmund Husserl (1927)," trans. Thomas Sheehan, *Listening* 12, 3 (Fall, 1977), 111.
 7. For this section, cf. Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, trans. J. N. Findlay, London: Routledge, Kegan, Paul, 1970, pp. 773-802; Martin Heidegger, *Vier Seminare*, trans. Curd Schwadt, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1977, pp. 110-128; Jacques Taminiaux, "Heidegger and Husserl's Logical Investigations," in *Radical Phenomenology: Essays in Honor of Martin Heidegger*, ed. John Sallis, New York: Humanities Press, 1978.
 8. Martin Heidegger, "Eventide on Reichenau" (1917), trans. William J. Richardson, S.J., in Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1963, p. 1.
 9. *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, Pfullingen: Neske, 1954, p. 198.
 10. T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding," V, (*Four Quartets*) in Eliot, *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot*, London, Faber and Faber, 1969, p. 197.

Geburtstag, Pfullingen: Neske, 1959, pp.180-194; also John N. Deely, *The Tradition via Heidegger*, The Hague: Nijoff, 1971; John P. Doyle, "Heidegger and Scholastic Metaphysics," *The Modern Schoolman*, 49 (1972), 201-220. On the reduction of essence to *esse*: K. Rahner, *Geist in Welt*, Munich: Kösel, 1957, pp. 166-172; English translation, *Spirit in the World*, New York: Herder and Herder, 1968, pp. 156-162.

4. Martin Heidegger, *The End of Philosophy*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, New York: Harper and Row, 1973, pp. 1-10.
5. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Pfullingen: Neske, 1961, II, 348.
6. Cf. Martin Heidegger, "The Idea of Phenomenology, with a Letter to Edmund Husserl (1927)," trans. Thomas Sheehan, *Listening* 12, 3 (Fall, 1977), 111.
7. For this section, cf. Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, trans. J. N. Findlay, London: Routledge, Kegan, Paul, 1970, pp. 773-802; Martin Heidegger, *Vier Seminare*, trans. Curd Ochwadt, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1977, pp. 110-128; Jacques Taminiaux, "Heidegger and Husserl's Logical Investigations," in *Radical Phenomenology: Essays in Honor of Martin Heidegger*, ed. John Sallis, New York: Humanities Press, 1978.
8. Martin Heidegger, "Eventide on Reichenau" (1917), trans. William J. Richardson, S.J., in Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1963, p. 1.
9. *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, Pfullingen: Neske, 1954, p. 198.
10. T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding," V, (*Four Quartets*) in Eliot, *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot*, London, Faber and Faber, 1969, p. 197.