

# A Companion to Heidegger

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## Dasein

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Well into its seventh decade, Heidegger scholarship in America has yet to reach a firm consensus on what Heidegger's main topic was. But we cannot understand Dasein without first getting clear on the central issue of Heidegger's thought – what he called “the thing itself” (*die Sache selbst*). Therefore, this chapter investigates “the thing itself” as a way of coming to understand Dasein. That may seem like a roundabout approach. But no, it is a straight path to our theme – because Dasein is the thing itself.<sup>1</sup>

Or is it? Many scholars still insist that the central topic of Heidegger's work was “being” or “being itself” (*das Sein, das Sein selbst*) despite Heidegger's unambiguous assertion that it was not. In 1962 (Wednesday morning, September 12, to be exact) Heidegger declared emphatically that once we get beyond metaphysics' dispensations of being (*Seinsgeschichte*) and begin to think within *Ereignis* – from that moment on, “being [*das Sein*], rooted as it is in those dispensations, is no longer the proper topic of thinking.”<sup>2</sup>

Heidegger made the same point seven years later, on September 11, 1969, during an informal seminar at Le Thor, Provence. First he reiterated his threefold distinction between beings (*das Anwesende*), being itself (*das Anwesen*), and that which gives being itself (*das Lassen des Anwesens*). Then he declared that at that third level – which is proper area of his own thought – “there is no longer room for even the word ‘being’.”<sup>3</sup>

If “being” or “being itself” is not Heidegger's central topic, what is? The first page of *Being and Time* makes it clear that Heidegger's basic question was not about being but about the meaning of being, *der Sinn von Sein*.<sup>4</sup> The distinction between being and the meaning of being is utterly crucial – much more important, for example, than the ontological difference.<sup>5</sup> It is the clue to distinguishing Heidegger's thought from both traditional metaphysics and Husserlian phenomenology. It is key to unlock *die Sache selbst*. Yet it is frequently, and disastrously, overlooked in Heidegger scholarship.

In studying Heidegger, everything depends on the presuppositions one brings to the task. What inform the present essay are the Aristotelian and Husserlian presuppositions that Heidegger says he brought to his own work.<sup>6</sup> This chapter begins by locating Heidegger's topic in contrast to Aristotle's metaphysics and Husserl's phenomenology, and then explains the role Dasein plays in that topic. The goal is to show that Dasein is the answer to the question about the meaning of being.

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We begin by distinguishing Heidegger's own work from classical metaphysics in the objectivist form that Husserl called "ousiology" and that Aristotle called "wisdom," "first philosophy," or simply "the science we seek."<sup>7</sup>

## Aristotle's Ousiology

### *Field and focus*

For Aristotle, the field or subject-matter of first philosophy is everything real – whatever is not nothing, whatever is in being. Aristotle expressed that as *to on* (whatever-is), which Heidegger translates by the German neologism *das Seiende* ("beings" or "any being"). Moreover, Aristotle's specific focus on that subject matter, the formal aspect under which he studied it, was nothing less than its condition of being real, its *realness*. Aristotle called this realness the *ousia* (is-ness or being) of whatever-is – which Heidegger renders as the *Seiendheit* of *das Seiende*. As an inquiry into *ousia*, Aristotle's metaphysics is an ousiology. It studies the realness of whatever-is-real, the is-ness of whatever-is, the being of whatever-has-being.<sup>8</sup>

### *Two moments*

On the assumption that being/*ousia* is what makes things real, Aristotle's metaphysics asks two questions about such being: What is its nature? and What is its ultimate source? These questions structure the two moments of Aristotle's metaphysics. When it considers the *nature* of being, metaphysics is ontology; and when it studies the *ultimate source* of being, it is theology (natural as contrasted with revealed theology).

<p><b>Aristotle's metaphysics/ousiology</b></p> <p><b>The theory of the <i>being</i> of whatever-is-real</b></p>	
<p>THE FIRST MOMENT: ONTOLOGY</p>	<p>THE SECOND MOMENT: THEOLOGY</p>
<p>The nature of the being of the real is <i>energeia</i>.</p>	<p>The ultimate source of the being of the real is perfect <i>energeia</i>.</p>

### First Moment: Ontology

The nature of the being of things has been understood differently by different philosophers. Plato, for example, considered the nature of *ousia* to be *idea* or *eidos*, Aristotle

took it to be *energeia* or *entelecheia*, and Aquinas understood it as *esse*. But the different expressions aside, there is a convergence on the core issue. Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas agree on calling a thing “real” if it *is* and is *something*, i.e. if it *exists* and has a *form* or *essence*. To say that anything “has being” means that it “is-in-a-form” or “has-existence-with-essence.” For these three philosophers, the question “What makes anything real?” is answered formally by “being” (*ousia*) and materially by *eidōs*, *energeia*, or *esse*.

Granted the general agreement that “being” is what explains the real, why specifically does Aristotle understand “being” as *energeia*? Aristotle considers existing-in-a-form (*ousia*) dynamically and teleologically: a thing’s form is its *ideal* way of being, it is what that thing is *supposed* to be. The governing metaphor here is athletic and ascetic. The Greek noun *athlon* means “the prize to be won in a contest”; and the verb for “to contend for a prize” is *athleo*. But contending for the prize requires that the athlete continuously work out (*askeo*) in order to get in shape. Being an athlete entails being an ascetic, someone who constantly works to get in form and stay in shape.

To apply the metaphor to Aristotle’s ousiology: the only thing that is perfectly in shape is the divine, which truly is its ideal form and perfectly is what it is supposed to be. Everything else is still striving for its ideal so that, short of God, to be real does not mean *being* in one’s form so much as *becoming* one’s form.<sup>9</sup> Human beings, for example, have not yet reached their ideal goal (*telos*) and hence are not yet completely *entelecheia* (“in-one’s-*telos*”) or perfectly *en-erg-eia* (in one’s finished form, like a completed work of art). Human being is not perfect (*teleion*) but imperfect (*a-teleos*), still on-the-way-to-the-goal. On this view, therefore, being-real can mean one of two things: either still becoming one’s ideal form or already being it; either still moving to perfection (*kinesis*) or already at rest with one’s fully achieved self (*stasis*).<sup>10</sup>

## Second Moment: Theology

The first moment of Aristotle’s metaphysics explains *to on* – and thus is an *onto*-logy – by laying out the teleological structure of the being of whatever-has-being. But his second and ultimate question asks: What is the source of all being? Presumably that source is the divine, insofar as God is the perfect instance of achieved *energeia*. One says “presumably” because Aristotle did not thematically ground his ontology in his theology. Others, however, have done the job for him. Professor Joseph Owens, for example, has reconstructed a plausible grounding of Aristotle’s ontology in his theology by focusing on the essence-moment of essence-and-existence, and then locating the highest instance of being-in-a-form in the perfectly self-coincident Aristotelian God, the ground or cause of lower forms of *ousia*.<sup>11</sup> Aquinas, on the other hand, constructed his own onto-theology by focusing on the existence-moment of essence-and-existence. He interpreted worldly existence as a finite instance of the “act of being” (*esse*), and then traced finite *esse* back to an infinite act of *esse* that freely bestows finite *esse* in creation.<sup>12</sup>

For Heidegger, however, all such efforts merely identify (in God) the highest entitative instance of the real, even if the essence of that supreme entity is pure self-subsistent existing (*ipsum esse per se subsistens*). Whether it is based on essence or on existence, metaphysics gives an ontic answer to the question about being: it explains *to*

on by *ousia*, but then explains *ousia* by yet another *on*, the highest one. Aquinas, for example, explains any *ens* (i.e. any *habens-esse*) by the *ens supremum* (the *maxime-habens-esse*), without thereby explaining what *esse* is in and of itself.<sup>13</sup>

## Heidegger's Phenomenology

### *Field and focus*

The entry-level difference between Heidegger and Aristotle consists in Heidegger's employment of a phenomenological attitude and method in his work. Heidegger's shift from an objectivist to a phenomenological framework entailed a radical change in what he took to be the field and the focus of philosophy. Aristotle's material object was the real (*to on*), and his formal focus was on the realness of the real, *ousia* understood as independent of the human subject. By contrast, Heidegger's material object is the meaningful (*to alethes* or *to par-on*), and his formal focus is on the meaningfulness of the meaningful (the *aletheia* of the *alethes*, the *parousia* of the *par-on*) in correlation with human interests and purposes.<sup>14</sup> That is, Heidegger abandons an object-focused theory of being (ousiology as *Seinslehre*) for a correlation-focused theory of meaning (parousiology as *Bedeutungslehre*) – in a word, phenomenology.

Phenomenology as a *Bedeutungslehre* or theory of meaning investigates the correlation between objects and their intentional constitution. Heidegger's mentor here was the early Husserl, whose *Logical Investigations* (1900–1) had argued that the focal topic of philosophy was neither objects allegedly meaningful in themselves (the "independent-of-my-mind-out-there-now-real") nor subjectivity as either the Cartesian ego separated from the world or the psychological ego embedded in nature. Rather, phenomenology focuses on the *a priori* correlation between *things-as-meaningful* and the *constitution of their meaningfulness*, where "constitution" refers to the bestowal of sense upon objects (*Sinngebung*).

<b>The subject matter of phenomenology: the <i>a priori</i> correlation between</b>		
THE MEANINGFUL	<i>and</i>	ITS CONSTITUTION
what appears in understanding	<i>and</i>	what allows it to appear
the meaningful as it shows up	<i>in</i>	the understanding of its meaning

What finally separated Heidegger's phenomenology from Husserl's was their disagreement over the constitution of the meaningfulness of the meaningful. After the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl took a neo-Kantian and Cartesian turn and claimed that *transcendental subjectivity*, in intentional correlation with its objects, was the source of

all meaning-giving. Heidegger, on the other hand, argued that the *lived context or world* within which things are encountered – the matrix of intelligibility structured by correlative human interests and purposes – was the source of meaning.<sup>15</sup>

One of the challenges in interpreting Heidegger is to remember that when he uses the language of “being,” he means “being” as phenomenologically reduced, i.e. as meaningfulness. When he says *das Seiende* he means not just beings (*to on*) but beings as intelligible (*to alethes*), not “what is out there” but what is meaningfully present (*to paron*) within a human context. In his first lecture course after the First World War Heidegger made the point by pressing his students on what it is they first encounter in their lived experience. Is it things? Objects? Values? No, he insisted, it is:

the meaningful [*das Bedeutsame*] – that’s what is primary, that’s what is immediately in your face without any detour through a mental grasp of the thing. When you live in the world of first-hand experience, everything comes at you loaded with meaning, all over the place and all the time. Everything is embedded in a meaningful context, and that context is what gives it meaning.<sup>16</sup>

Heidegger makes the same point by interpreting *ousia* as *parousia*, and *Sein* as *Anwesen*. Being as presence (*Anwesen*) does not refer to a thing’s spatio-temporal presence “out there.” *Anwesen* means *meaningful* presence in correlation with the understanding of that meaning. When Heidegger, as he frequently does, interprets *parousia* or *Anwesen* as “nearness,” that nearness is not spatial but a metaphor for significance. The “near” or meaningful thing, he says, is present *within our concerns* even though it “can be far away in terms of distance.”<sup>17</sup>

In summary: (a) Heidegger’s shift away from classical metaphysics consists in his taking a phenomenological turn from the being of whatever-is-in-being to the meaningfulness of whatever-is-meaningful; from the classical *Sein des Seienden* to the phenomenological *Anwesen des Anwesenden*. (b) In turn, Heidegger’s shift away from Husserlian phenomenology to his own hermeneutical phenomenology consists in identifying the world as the source of all meaning. *Die Welt weltet*<sup>18</sup> – the function of a world is to enworld things, the essence of a context is to contextualize things, i.e. to constitute the meaning of the things found within it, by providing the medium whereby they make sense.<sup>19</sup>

### Two moments

Heidegger’s phenomenological theory of being-as-meaning asks two questions about the meaningfulness of the meaningful: What is its nature? And what is its ultimate source? We may call these two questions, respectively, the “lead-in question” and the “fundamental question.” They provide the two structural moments of Heidegger’s thought from *Sein und Zeit* all the way up to his last essays.

Every theoretical question seeks an answer or explanation which, Heidegger and Aristotle agree, is the *aitia* or *arche* or *logos* of (the cause of, source of, or reason for) whatever is being investigated.<sup>20</sup> What Heidegger investigates is not meaningful *things* but their *meaningfulness* – not classical *Sein* but phenomenological *Anwesen*. The meaningfulness of things is the *Anwesen* of the *Anwesendes*, the *aletheia* of *to alethes* or the

*parousia* of *to paron*. The nature of that meaningfulness is the subject of Heidegger's lead-in question, just as its cause or source is the subject of his fundamental question.<sup>21</sup>

<b>Heidegger's phenomenology</b>	
<b>A theory of the meaningfulness of whatever is meaningful</b>	
<b>THE FIRST MOMENT</b>	<b>THE SECOND MOMENT:</b>
The structure of meaningfulness is <i>presence</i> (analysis of world)	The ultimate source of meaningfulness is <i>pres-absence</i> (analysis of movement)

Before treating the two moments in detail, we may note in summary-form the structural parallels and material differences between Aristotle's problematic and Heidegger's.

The starting point:

*Aristotle*: things insofar as they are real, that is, the realness of the real (*to on hei on*, that is, *ousia*).

*Heidegger*: the meaningful insofar as it is meaningful, i.e. the meaningfulness of the meaningful (*to alethes hei alethes*, that is, *aletheia*; *to paron hei paron*, that is, *parousia*).

The lead-in question:

*Aristotle*: What is the realness of the real? What is *ousia*? (Answer: *energeia*, as what constitutes reality.)

*Heidegger*: What is the meaningfulness of the meaningful? What is *parousia* or *aletheia*? (Answer: world, as what constitutes meaning.)

The fundamental question:

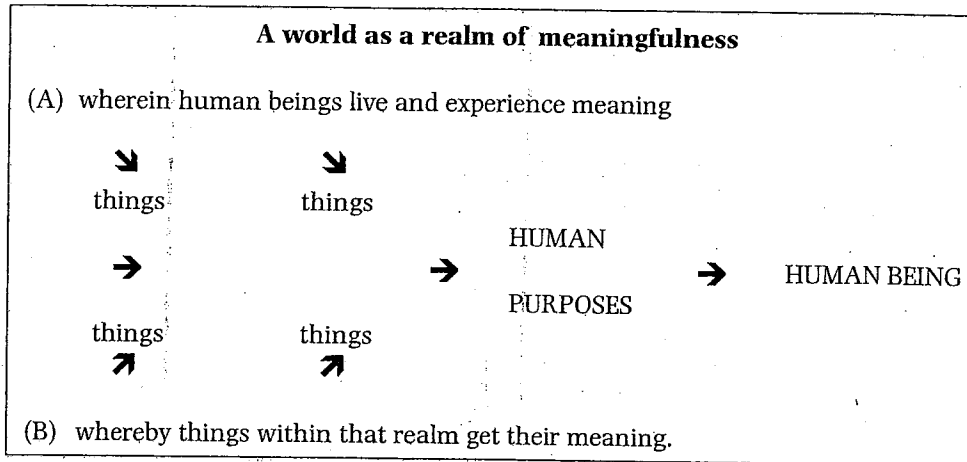
*Aristotle*: What is the ultimate source or *Wesen* of *energeia*? (Answer: absolute *energeia*.)

*Heidegger*: What is the ultimate source or *Wesen* of any world? (Answer: radical finitude.)

### The First Moment: The Structure of Meaningfulness

Heidegger begins with the "wonder of all wonders," the fact that things are full of meaning, indeed that there is meaningfulness at all.<sup>22</sup> On that basis, his first question seeks the cause of and explanation for that meaningfulness. Heidegger's answer is "world," and the process of arriving at that answer is his "world-analysis."<sup>23</sup>

*Being and Time* begins with the everyday lived experience of using things to carry out tasks, but it quickly shifts from the *things* that are meaningful to *how they get* their meanings. That is, Heidegger prescind from the things that participate in meaningfulness, and focuses instead on their meaningfulness of and by itself (*aletheia* in itself, *parousia* in itself, *das Sein selbst*). When things are meaningful, where does that meaning come from? What is responsible for it? Heidegger's response: what constitutes the meaning of things is the context of human involvement within which those things are met, the matrix of human purposes ordered to human interests and ultimately to human survival – that is, a world.



Each human world opens up or un-locks (*a-letheuei*: dis-closes) the meanings that can accrue to the things found within it. It does so by providing, and indeed being, a set of possible relations in terms of which things get their significance. In the context of a downpour, for example, a piece of rough canvas has a different significance than it might in an elegant living room. Of course human beings live in many distinct worlds at the same time. A father, for instance, makes business phone calls from home while rocking his child to sleep. Each of those worlds – his job, his parenting, his need to stay dry in the rain – has the function of providing the range of possible sense-making within its specific region.

In the chapter entitled “The Essential Structure of World,” *Being and Time* examines the lived world of practical activity in order to derive the general structure of any world at all. That is, Heidegger’s description of particular worlds of praxis (the worlds of the carpenter, the writer, the tailor, and the shoemaker) is only for the purpose of demonstrating the *common structure* of those worlds, the “worldhood” of any world.<sup>24</sup> As Heidegger defines its structure and function, a world is both (a) the “place wherein” human beings live out their interests and purposes, and (b) the “relations whereby” things within that realm get their meaning. A world is the range of human possibilities in terms of which anything within that context can have significance. All such possibilities are ultimately (i.e. teleologically) ordered to human being, by way of fulfilling

human purposes. The world, therefore, is what-constitutes-meaning (*to aletheuein*) insofar as it is the relational context, ordered to the final cause of human fulfillment, that lets things make sense.<sup>25</sup>

Heidegger sees a fundamental distinction within meaningfulness, between the meaningful *thing* and its *meaning*, i.e. between any instance and its class, or (in the language of being) between *das Seiende* and its *Seiendheit*.<sup>26</sup> Things do not come with their meanings built in but get *constituted* as meaningful. Discursive meaning occurs only in a synthesis, and synthesis presumes a prior distinction between the elements that will get synthesized into a meaningful whole.<sup>27</sup> Affirming that so-and-so is a philosopher assumes that she does not exhaust the class "philosopher" – she and the class are distinct – even though she can be identified, in a synthesis, as being one member of that class. Heidegger's world-analysis shows how the structure of synthesizing and distinguishing is intrinsic not only to discursive *acts* of making-sense (e.g. the assertion "She is a philosopher") but above all to the *world itself* within which such acts are performed. He argues that the world's very structure as synthesis-and-differentiation is the condition of all discursive sense-making.

"World" is what Heidegger means by "being" (*das Sein*),<sup>28</sup> and he uses many terms and metaphors for this meaning-constituting structure. Each of the terms has both a *static-intransitive* and a *dynamic-transitive* meaning. For example, "world," when viewed statically and intransitively, is the *place* of meaningfulness. But viewed dynamically and transitively, it is the *placing* of things in meaning, the enworldling and contextualizing of them within a set of possibilities that makes things able to be known and used in terms of those very possibilities. Likewise "being," when taken intransitively, indicates "presence," but when taken dynamically and transitively, it names the "presenting" of things, the act of *allowing* them to be meaningfully present.<sup>29</sup> Heidegger's other names for world include the following.

1 *The open that opens things up (das Da, das Offene)*.<sup>30</sup> Heidegger draws this and cognate terms from Aristotle's description of the human soul as the *topos eidon*, "the place where meaning shows up."<sup>31</sup> The world is the self "writ large" or "opened out," with no "inside" where it might take refuge.<sup>32</sup> Read statically and intransitively, this *Da* or *Offene* is the open field (*die Gegend*) in which all forms of meaningfulness (all instances of "being") occur. Read dynamically and transitively, this open *opens things up* for possible use and appropriation, i.e. makes them accessible and significant to human comportment. (In the language of being, the world lets beings *be*, sc. meaningful.)<sup>33</sup>

In Greek philosophy, which always hovers in the background of Heidegger's work, the condition of being-open indicates imperfection. For Aristotle, closure (self-closure upon oneself, i.e. realization of all one's possibilities) means perfection, completion, accomplishment – the achievement of the *telos (en-tel-echeia)*. Therefore, by describing the meaning-giving world as "open" rather than "closed," Heidegger is indicating that the game is not over yet – there is still time to play, and room to maneuver (*Zeitraum, Spielraum*). The goal of full intelligibility may be near and even impending, but it never completely arrives. As open, the world – which is human being – is always incomplete and finite. That is why everything it constitutes – every form of meaning or being that appears within it – is also ineluctably finite.

2 *The arena of difference and tension, of in-between-ness and mediation (Unterschied, diaphora; Austrag, polemos; das Zwischen, die Vermittlung, die Mittelbarkeit)*.<sup>34</sup> That the

world and the meanings it makes possible are always finite is evidenced by the fact that making-sense always consists in partially synthesizing the never-completely-synthesizable. Difference and distinction always outride efforts at unification (*diairesis* > *synthesis*, *diaphora* > *henotes*), and the structure of world is responsible for that fact. Meaningfulness requires mediation, relations that connect, for example, these tools to that task. But the prerequisite for mediation is a *medium*, a field of possible relations within which the connections can be made. Read statically and intransitively, the world is the medium (the *id quo*) of intelligibility. Read dynamically and transitively, the world as medium *mediates* tools and tasks (as well as subjects and predicates) *to each other*, with the result that sense occurs.

Meaningfulness for human beings is not, and can never be, gathered into perfect unity with itself, as always already is the case with Aristotle's self-coincident God, the thinking that immediately thinks of nothing but itself as thinking.<sup>35</sup> Thus the "open" as what makes meaning possible is never a self-coincident unity but is always "drawn out" (cf. *Austrag*), always a tension (*polemos*) between togetherness and apartness, unity and separation, synthesis and difference. The world is a "setting apart" (*Aus-einander-setzung*, *Gegen-setzung*) that also holds the separated elements into a tentative unity of sense.<sup>36</sup> That is why our acts of sense-making approach unity but never achieve it. The assertion "Socrates is an Athenian" (i.e. *one* Athenian) indicates that he does not exhaust the category. The same for tools and tasks – they never perfectly coincide. This hammer can do the nailing, but if all else fails, I might use this rock for the job.

3 *The "free" that frees things; the power that empowers them (das Freie, das Machtende, das Tauglichmachende).*<sup>37</sup> Read intransitively, the "free" is an open and empty space, and "power" is a reserve of untapped energy. But read transitively, the free *frees* things within the world, and power *empowers* their significance. Insofar as the world is the realm of relations between, for example, tools and their possible utility, it *liberates* those tools from their "just-there-ness" by revealing their aptitude (*Bewandtnis*) for fulfilling this or that purpose.<sup>38</sup> As a dynamic matrix of relations that orients things to human purposes, the world enables things to be significant. In that regard Heidegger compares "world" to what Plato's *Republic* calls "the good." Heidegger translates *agathon* as *das Tauglichmachende*, the "empowering," insofar as, for Plato, it makes intelligibility possible, both the person's ability to understand and a form's ability to be understood. So too the world as the constituting source of intelligibility *empowers* the things within that world to be understood, and *enables* human beings to understand them.<sup>39</sup>

4 *The opening that clarifies things; the unfolding that lets them appear; the birthing that brings them forth (die Lichtung; aletheia; physis).*<sup>40</sup> The original meaning of *Lichtung* is any static opening (e.g. a window) that lets in the light.<sup>41</sup> But read actively and transitively, that opening *brings clarity* to things in the room by letting light shine on them and show them as this or that. In another image, the world is *aletheia* – intransitively, the self-unfolding of world itself; and transitively, the unfolding of things (*to aletheuein*) by bringing them into meaning. In yet another image, the world is *phyein* or *physis*: intransitively, the world's "arising" or self-emergence; transitively, the birthing that brings things forth into the open, where they can appear as this or that.<sup>42</sup>

These last two terms for world have a specifically kinetic sense, and Heidegger claims that Parmenides and Heraclitus, by naming "being itself" with such terms as *aletheia*

and *physis*, revealed their implicit understanding of this movement-character of world. The word *aletheia* indicates "emergence from hiddenness," and the verb *aletheuo* means "to bring from hiddenness."<sup>43</sup> The verb *phyo*, which underlies *physis*, means "to arise" (middle voice) and "to give birth to" (active voice). These terms, Heidegger argues, show that Heraclitus and Parmenides understood that every sense-constituting world is somehow an emergent movement (intransitive moment) that in turn moves things into meaning (transitive moment). Thus Heidegger paraphrases *physis* as the "movement of appearance" (*die Bewegung des Erscheinens*), where the *des* indicates a double genitive: (a) the world's own movement into presence and appearance (intransitive moment) and (b) the world as *moving things* into their present appearance (transitive moment).<sup>44</sup>

But what is this movement, and what *causes* it? Parmenides and Heraclitus got no further than the intimation that world is kinetic. They did not take the next step and ask what Heidegger calls the "fundamental question" (*die Grundfrage*). If the world is somehow "moved into position," what is the source of that movement? What causes the emergence of any meaning-giving context?

### The Second Moment: The Source of Meaningfulness

The first moment of Heidegger's work examines the world as *Lichtung* – the open that opens things up, the clearing that clarifies them, the ever-present presence that allows things their current meaning.<sup>45</sup> But his final aim is to move beyond the nature and function of world so as to discover the ultimate source of world: the *arche* of all forms of *aletheia*, the *aitia* of any mode of *parousia*, the *Wesen* of *das Sein selbst*. We noted above that "world" is what Heidegger means by "being" (*das Sein*).<sup>46</sup> But his final goal is not being or world but the *meaning* of being, the *source* of world.<sup>47</sup> Hence his fundamental and final question is: "*Woher und wie gibt es die Lichtung?*"<sup>48</sup> Where does world come from? What causes or "gives" any world as a meaning-constituting context? In the language of being: what is the *Wesen* of *Sein*?

Whatever answers to that question will be the thing itself. And Heidegger's response is clear: the ultimate source of world is *the ontological movement of human being that opens the clearing*. The answer, in short, is *Dasein*, and Heidegger's process of arriving at that answer is his *Dasein*-analysis.

*Dasein*'s world-opening movement is what Heidegger calls *Ereignis*, a term that covers the three moments of a unified process: *Dasein*'s ontological condition of (a) *being-opened-up* so as to (b) *come-into-its-own* and thus (c) *finitely appearing* – emergence, fulfillment, appearance.<sup>49</sup> The key to understanding *Ereignis* – and therefore *die Sache selbst* – is Heidegger's notion of movement, which he retrieved from Aristotle's analysis of *kinesis*.<sup>50</sup> But Heidegger calls *kinesis* "the most difficult thing Western philosophy has had to ponder in the course of its history."<sup>51</sup> Given the difficulty, our discussion will have to take several steps through Aristotle's thought. Perhaps nowhere else is Heidegger's admonition more relevant: "You would be advised to postpone reading Heidegger for the time being and first study Aristotle for ten or fifteen years."<sup>52</sup>

The following discussion of movement is focused not on just any entity but on the exemplar entity, *Dasein*. As Heidegger puts it in the opening words of *Being and Time*, "we ourselves (which always means 'I') are the entity to be analyzed."<sup>53</sup> The point of

what follows is not to reduce Heidegger to Aristotle or to confuse *Ereignis* with Aristotelian *kinesis*. Heidegger always takes distance from Aristotle's thought to the degree it is metaphysical. However, he also adapts Aristotle's proto-phenomenological insights to his own ends, and frequently uses Aristotelian terms as "limit-ideas," background against which he formulates his own thinking. The point, then, is to find out where Heidegger's thought came from and how he retrieved *Ereignis* from *kinesis*.

## Movement as Being-opened-up and Coming-into-one's-own

### *Perfection*

Heidegger's understanding of movement is informed by Aristotle's teleological view of *kinesis*, which in turn flows from Greek philosophy's "top-down" understanding of being. Aristotle shares the classical Greek conviction of the normativeness of the ideal, the perfect, and the whole. In this view, philosophy reads reality "backwards," as it were, from the *de jure* perfect to the *de facto* imperfect, from the *a priori* to the *a posteriori*—rather than "forwards" from the imperfect to the perfection it strives for. Philosophy begins with a sense of the ultimate and perfect (how else would it know anything as imperfect?) and then works down from the ideal to the real, from the fully achieved to what is still on-the-way, from the whole to what participates in it.<sup>54</sup>

By perfection (*to teleion*) Aristotle means self-possession. A thing is perfect and complete when "it possesses its *telos*," i.e. "when not the least part of the thing can be found outside of it."<sup>55</sup> Such perfect self-possession is also called "wholeness" or "ownness" (*to holon*). Something is whole and its own, Aristotle says, when "it lacks no part of what belongs to it by its essence."<sup>56</sup> These ideas converge in Aristotle's key terms: *en-tel-echeia*, "being-wholly-fulfilled," and *en-erg-eia*, "being a finished work." To be perfect means to have arrived at one's essence, to have come into one's own. And since, for Aristotle, "perfection," "wholeness," and "ownness" are not univocal but analogous terms, we must say that every entity is perfect *to the degree* that it has come into its own.

### *Movement is measured by perfection*

Such normative perfection gives Aristotle the high ground from which he works down to a definition of imperfection and movement. If the perfect is a finished work already at rest in itself, the imperfect is what is still striving to fulfill its essence. But what is still on the way to its goal is bivalent. On the one hand, it *participates* in the goal without entirely possessing it. (You speak *some* Italian even if not *perfect* Italian.) On the other hand, participation without full possession is inherently deficient or *a-teles*, still coming into its own.

Aristotle combines these two moments into his notion of "participation-as-deficient-perfection." That, in fact, is what he means by movement: *energeia ateles*, the perfecting of the imperfect, or partial perfection striving for complete perfection, or participation on the way to plenitude.<sup>57</sup> Movement, in short, is the state of becoming, and in Aristotle's words, "becoming is the transition to being," indeed, "becoming is *for the sake of being*."<sup>58</sup>

*Telos as mover and as the "giver-of-presence"*

In this dynamic vision of reality, the *telos* of a thing *actively moves* the thing by drawing it towards its own fulfillment. The *telos* is not up ahead somewhere, but always *within* the thing. In Aristotle's view, every being wants itself, wants to become and finally be its own. Thus everything in Aristotle's universe is either telic or erotic, either already itself or desiring to be itself. In the former case, the *telos* is wholly present, informing and fulfilling the entity. In the latter case, the *telos* is still drawing the entity, from within, not to anything outside of itself but to its own self-fulfillment.<sup>59</sup> Self-fulfillment is what Aristotle means by "the good." It is the ultimate reason why anything is at all (*to hautou heneka*), and it is what everything desires. *Kinei hos eromenon* – the *telos* moves us by being desired. Our very being, insofar as it is imperfect, draws us on to ourselves, because self-fulfillment is what we long for.<sup>60</sup>

What then is a moving entity? And what is Dasein as a "self-moving" entity? Answer: a moving entity is actually a "moved" entity (drawn on by its *telos*), and Dasein is "self-moved" insofar as it is drawn on by its own desired fulfillment.<sup>61</sup> Any moved entity – and especially Dasein as self-moved – is defined by its relative *absence-from-perfection*, which is equally its erotic *presence-to-perfection*. In shorthand: ABSENCE (relative rather than absolute absence, since the unfulfilled but desired *telos* draws us to ourselves) GIVES (i.e. lets be, allows for, is the source of) PRESENCE. Dasein's movement is pres-abs-ence; our imperfect presence is the gift of our presence-bestowing absence.

This ontological condition of Dasein is evidenced in its ontic comportment.<sup>62</sup> Alison, for example, is studying for the doctorate: that is her *raison d'être* at the moment. The doctorate is relatively absent yet, as desired, gives Alison her presence, the world of meaning in which she currently lives, that of "being-a-graduate-student." The relatively absent desideratum – still unattained but proleptically present in the desire for it – bestows presence. It gives world. *Es gibt Sein*.

## Movement as Bestowing World

### *Perfect imperfection*

But exactly what kind of presence does Dasein's relative self-absence bestow? We mentioned that Heidegger both takes distance from Aristotle and frequently transforms Aristotle's notions to his own ends. We can see how Heidegger radically differentiates his own idea of Dasein's movement from Aristotle's notion of natural movement by considering three analogous meanings of becoming and perfection.

- 1 Perfectly perfect. In the case of God, perfection means having already attained perfection and indeed having always been there. The divine has always-already come into its own. There is no becoming in God.<sup>63</sup>
- 2 Imperfectly perfect. An artifact under construction (e.g. wood being assembled into a table) participates in its future perfection, but possesses it only deficiently. It is still being moved towards its fulfillment, and once it reaches it, the movement of becoming-a-table will stop.

- 3 Perfectly imperfect. Dasein – the human essence – is whole and complete *in its incompleteness*. Its ontological perfection is to be imperfect, with no prospect of achieving an ideal perfection in the future. Like God, Dasein has always-already come into its own, but its own-ness is its human finitude. Ontologically Dasein is “frozen” in its movedness or becoming (even though ontically it is always becoming this or that).

Let us contrast Dasein with the other two entities mentioned above. (a) Dasein and the table-under-construction are both instances of becoming (coming-into-its-own) but with this difference: in the case of the table, the becoming will cease once the construction reaches its goal, whereas Dasein’s becoming is always an end in itself rather than a step towards a further goal. (b) Dasein and God are both instances of perfection, but with this difference: whereas the divine is always whole and perfect in its state of unending rest, Dasein is always whole and perfect in its state of mortal finitude. Ontologically Dasein is going nowhere – because it always already is where it is supposed to be: in the state of coming-into-its-own. Dasein’s unique ontological movement is neither diachronic progression over time (as in change of place, quality, or quantity) nor ontological transformation into something it essentially was not before (as in the case of substantial change). Rather, Dasein’s perfection is to be imperfect.<sup>64</sup>

#### *Meaningfulness is measured by perfection*

The kind of perfect imperfection that characterizes Dasein tells us what kind of presence Dasein’s absence bestows upon it. In the Greek view of being, reality is not only a matter of perfection (coming-into-one’s-own), and but ultimately a matter of “shining forth” and “appearing” – being present and accessible, i.e. meaningful both to oneself and to other entities. Being and meaningfulness, or perfection and intelligibility – *einai* and *aletheia* – are interchangeable.<sup>65</sup> Therefore, the greater an entity’s degree of being, the greater its degree of meaningfulness, in the double sense of intelligence (ability to know itself and others) and intelligibility (ability to be known by itself and others). But meaningfulness – like being, perfection, and wholeness – is analogous: it comes in different degrees at different levels of perfection. The most perfect entity is all light and no darkness – pure knowing and knowability – whereas an imperfect entity is *chiaroscuro*, only partially knowing and knowable.

For Aristotle, knowing is a matter of *being one* with the known. (God’s perfect self-knowledge is the paradigm.) But since “knowing” is also an analogous term, a knower is one with the known *to the degree* that the knower is perfect. God, as perfectly self-coincident, is entirely one with the proper object of its knowledge (namely itself).<sup>66</sup> But with imperfect beings, it is the degree of their *presence to their relatively absent telos* that gives them their measure of intelligence and intelligibility. The relatively absent goal, to the degree that it is proleptically present as desired, gives the moving entity its degree of ability to make sense of things. Dasein, the perfectly imperfect intelligent entity, is structurally a finite knower – it never has the immediate relation to the known that God has. Dasein knows mediately, by bonding the knowable to itself via a matrix of mediating relationships. Dasein makes sense of itself and of others only by way of world.<sup>67</sup>

In short: Dasein's *imperfect* being engenders an *imperfect* locus of meaning: the world as the dynamic-transitive realm of mediation. With that, Heidegger has reached his goal. He has grounded the theory of meaning in ungroundable Dasein, the theory of presence in the ontology of absence.<sup>68</sup>

### Conclusion: *Ereignis*

Dasein has always already come into its own, and its own is its perfectly imperfect finitude. Human being, therefore, is ontologically bivalent. (a) Insofar as it is *imperfect*, it is a lack; but that lack is also a longing (a desire), and a belonging – even if there is nothing to belong *to*, and no “something else” to long *for*. This means that human being is off-center, eccentric, a protention that is going nowhere – Dasein is essentially self-absent. (b) But insofar as it is *perfect*, Dasein, also has presence, although a radically finite presence: not self-coincident but distended; not a unity but parts-outside-of-parts; not a pure mind but a self-concerned body. Yet for all its distension, human being is held together in a tension of difference and synthesis. In fact, it is that tension. This self-concerned, self-aware body, this distended tension that ultimately intends itself, is the *world* engendered by human being. In fact it is human being itself.

The early Heidegger called this state of affairs “being thrown open” (*Geworfensein*), whereas the later Heidegger called it “being drawn out into its own” (*Ereignetsein*).<sup>69</sup> But whether interpreted as *thrown* into its openness or *pulled* into its openness, it is the same movement of human being. Dasein is (a) opened-up into openness and thereby (b) comes-into-its-own-perfect-imperfection and (c) appears as the self-intending distended tension that it is – world. These three moments constitute *Ereignis*, the unique ontological movement that is Dasein.

- 1 As drawn out and opened up by its own imperfection, Dasein opens up the mediating realm that frees things from unintelligibility, the clearing that clarifies them, the unifying-of-difference that draws them into tentative aggregates of sense.
- 2 This draw-out, opened-up, and mediating state of imperfection constitutes Dasein's ownmost perfection, its always-having-come-into-its-own.
- 3 Having always already come into its perfect imperfection, Dasein appears as what it is: not just the *topos eidon* – the place where meaning appears – but above all the *eidon eidon*,<sup>70</sup> the very appearing of appearance, the wellspring of meaning, the *aitia*, *arche*, and *logos* – the cause of, source of, and reason for the wonder of all wonders: that there is appearance at all, meaningfulness at all, “being” at all.

And each of us does this not as a modern subject or metaphysical ground but only in utter poverty and in spite of ourselves. In fact, we cannot properly say “we” do it. Rather, it is “done unto” us: we *are moved* by our perfect imperfection in such a way that world occurs. This happens without us being fully ourselves, and not because we spontaneously “become” ourselves, but rather because we *have* to become ourselves: we are “pulled” by our own self-absence. We are the *opened-up* opening of meaning, the

empowered empowering of sense. Always approaching but never arriving, we are – as Stephen Daedalus puts it – “almosting it.” We are always – in Heraclitus’ word *agchibasis* – “getting near without ever arriving.”<sup>71</sup> And the outcome is meaningfulness.

### Notes

This chapter is dedicated to Professor Richard M. Capobianco of Stonehill College, Massachusetts, whose questions about “being” (summer 2003) woke me up from a long dogmatic slumber.

- 1 (a) By “Dasein” I mean human being as the *essence* of human beings. (b) In the following notes “GA” abbreviates Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1975ff), and “SD” abbreviates Martin Heidegger, *Zur Sache des Denkens* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1969). Citations in this chapter usually refer to texts by page and line, separated by a period. (The line-count does not include the “header” at the top of the page or any empty lines on the page, but it does count the lines of section titles.) Thus, for example, “SD 44.4–7” means “*Zur Sache des Denkens*, page 44, lines 4 to 7,” and GA 15: 365.17–18 means “*Gesamtausgabe*, volume 15, page 365, lines 17 and 18.” Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.
- 2 SD 44.4–7.
- 3 GA 15: 365.17–18: “Wenn die Betonung lautet: Anwesen *lassen*, ist sogar für den Namen Sein kein Raum mehr.” Cf. SD 40.18–31.
- 4 GA 2: 1:9–10.
- 5 GA 77: 245.1–3: “Aber anfänglicher denn dies [the difference between Being and beings] ist das *Seyn*, auf das die Unterscheidung von Sein und Seiendem . . . nicht anwendbar ist.”
- 6 Martin Heidegger, “Vorwort” to William J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, 4th edn (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003; originally The Hague: Nijhoff, 1963), ix.21–xiv.17. Also GA 8: 78.8–9, 99.16–19, and SD 87.11–20.
- 7 (a) Re Husserl: Edmund Husserl, *Vorlesungen über Ethik und Wertlehre, 1908–1914*, Husserliana XXVIII, ed. Ullrich Melle (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988), Beilage XIV, p. 377: “Die reale Ousiologie behandelt die Wesenslehre realer Gegenständlichkeit in allgemeinsten Allgemeinheit.” (b) Re Aristotle: wisdom, *Metaphysics* I 1, 981b 28–29, I 2, 982a 5–6; first philosophy, VI 1, 1026a 16, 24, 30; XI 4, 1061a 19; the science we seek, I 2, 983a 21; III 1, 995a 24; XI 1, 1059a 35 and 1059b 22. Aristotle refers to “theological” science or philosophy at *Metaphysics* VI 1, 1026a 19 and XI 7, 1064b 3.
- 8 *Metaphysics* VII 1, 1028b 2–4 taken with IV 1, 1003a 20.
- 9 Hence Pindar’s *genoi’ hoios essi* (“Become what you are”). Pythian Odes, II, 72, in *The Works of Pindar*, ed. Lewis Richard Farnell (London: Macmillan, 1932), III, 56. Cf. GA 2: 194.3 (“werde, was du bist”) and GA 56/57: 5.34 (“werde wesentlich”).
- 10 *Nicomachean Ethics*, VII 14, 1154 b 27: *energeia kineseos* and *energeia akinesias*. Thomas Aquinas reiterates the point in *Summa Theologiae* I–II, 31, 2, ad 1: actus imperfecti, actus perfecti. Re *telos*: The word indicates consummation (not end or cessation), i.e. entrance into a complete and perfect state. *Telos* retains the sense of a “circling round” (hence “completion”); both *telos* and “circle” are derived from the Indo-European root *kwel-*, to revolve, to move in a circle, to dwell. Cf. Richard Broxton Onians, *The Origins of European Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951, 1988), pp. 442–3. Aquinas reads the *finis* (*telos*) as that on which a thing is dependent for its whole existence. *De Veritate* 21, 1, ad 4 (ad fin.). The Greek word *entelecheia* means “being in or at one’s fulfillment” and is paralleled by,

- but not etymologically connected to, the Latinate word "accomplish," from *ad + con + plere*: to be at the point of complete fullness. "Perfect" means etymologically "completely or thoroughly done" (*per + factum*).
- 11 Joseph Owens, *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian "Metaphysics"* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, third revised edition, 1978), pp. 455–73. Aristotle specifically did not ground *Metaphysics* VII–IX in *Metaphysics* XII, but there are indications of that possible connection. At *Metaphysics* XI 7, Aristotle declares the object of a unified onto-theology to be *on hei on kai choriston* (1064a 29), thereby intimating that the real, in its true realness is separate and immobile being (*choriston, akineton*: a 33–4). "And if there is any such *physis* among beings, it must be there where the divine is, and it must be the first and most noble principle" (1064a 36–1064b 1).
  - 12 Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *In metaphysicam Aristotelis commentaria*, ed. M.-R. Cathala (Turin: Marietti, 1926), p. 102 (no. 296, re *Metaphysics* II, 1, 993b 29–30): "necesse est ut omnia composita et participantia reducantur in ea, quae sunt per essentiam, sicut in causas." ("All things that are composite and that participate [in being] necessarily have as their [final] causes things that have being by their very essence.") On creation cf. Thomas Aquinas, *De Potentia Dei* (c.1259–68), q. 3, a. 3, sed contra, ad fin: "creatio nihil est aliud realiter quam relatio quaedam ad Deum cum novitate essendi." ("Creation is nothing else in reality than a certain relation to God, with newness of being.")
  - 13 Re ipsum esse subsistens: Thomas Aquinas first established this characterization of the divine, c.1252, in his commentary on the *Sententiarum libri quatuor* of Peter Lombard: *Scriptum in IV Libros Sententiarum: In I Librum Sententiarum* (distinctio. 8, quaestio 1: "divina essentia per hoc quod exercitae actualitati ipsius esse identificatur, seu per hoc quod est ipsum esse subsistens . . ."). He reiterates it in his *Summa Theologicae* (1265ff), I, 4, 2, c: "Deus est ipsum esse per se subsistens," and I, 13, 11, c: "cum esse Dei sit ipsa eius essentia . . ."
  - 14 Just as *on* is the neuter singular present participle of the very *eimi, einai*, so too *paron* (*para + on*) is the same participial form of the verb *par-eimi, par-einai*, "to be present." Hence *to paron* means "the present" in the sense of "something-that-is-present." See below for Heidegger's understanding of "the present" as "the meaningful," and "presence" as "meaningfulness."
  - 15 In the first edition of *Logical Investigations* Husserl declared he was unable to find a pure ego behind intentional experiences, but in the second edition (1913) he reversed himself and declared he had found it. See Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, trans. J. N. Findlay (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), pp. 43, 549 note ("I have since managed to find it . . ."), and 551. I am indebted to Professor Robert Sokolowski of Catholic University of America for this information on *Logical Investigations*. On the disagreement of Husserl and Heidegger see Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenological and Transcendental Phenomenology and the Confrontation with Heidegger (1927–1931)*, ed. Thomas Sheehan and Richard Palmer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1997).
  - 16 A free but faithful translation of GA 56/57: 73.1–5. Heidegger repeats the negative point (not things, not values) at GA 2: 91.33–92.2.
  - 17 GA 8, 241.14–18. The idea of "meaningful" as "near" goes back at least to *Sein und Zeit*: GA 2: 137.3–7, etc.
  - 18 On "Die Welt weltet" see GA 5: 30.30–1. Also GA: 9, 219.31–2 ("welten" as expressing the "Wie des Seins") and 164.10; GA 7: 181.15; 183.27. In each case, "welten" refers both to the *intransitive* "coming-to-be" of world and to the *transitive* activity of the world as constituting the significance of things (GA 7: 181.14–15: "Welt west, indem sie weltet"; cf. also GA 52: 64.25).
  - 19 GA 9, 157.1–3: "Welt . . . 'ist' . . . das, aus dem her das Dasein sich zu bedeuten gibt, zu welchem Seienden und wie es [Dasein] sich dazu verhalten kann." That is: world or lived

- context is that whereby or that in terms of which (*id quo*) Dasein is able to make sense of what is encountered.
- 20 In spelling out the structure and function of theoretical questioning, Heidegger takes a very traditional Aristotelian approach (GA 2: 7.3–20). For Aristotle, knowing something means grasping the constitutive proximate causes that explain it (*Posterior Analytics* I 2, 71b 9–12; *Metaphysics* I 3 983a 24–6) – where “cause” (*aitia* or *aition*, *to dia ti* [*Physics*, II 3, 194b 19] or *to dioti* [*Metaphysics* I 1, 981a 28]) does *not* have the sense of one thing exerting a quasi-mechanical effect on another (GA 9: 245.31–2). Aristotle understands the cause to be the “source” of the thing in question (*Metaphysics*, V 1, 1013a17), and Heidegger calls such a source the “*Wesen*” of the thing – not “essence” in the traditional sense but rather “the empowering source,” that which makes possible, lets be, constitutes, enables, allows for, is responsible for, and explains something (see SD 40.21, 30; GA 4: 53.11; GA 9: 114.26–7 and 228.8, 24; GA 24: 405.13; GA 68: 51.5). On *logos* as *arche* see Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IV 6, 1011a 9 and 1011a 12. The cause or empowering source of a thing, insofar as it can be understood and articulated by human beings, is called the *logos* (Latin, *ratio*, English *reason*) of and for the thing. In Greek a *logos tinos* is the *explanans*, the explanation or account of something, and giving such an account is called *logon didonai tinos*: Plato, *Sophist* 230a 5, *Republic* 344d 4–5, *Protagoras* 336c, *Gorgias* 465a 3–5. When used of the *explanandum*, *logos* refers to the thing’s essence, structure, reason, or ground insofar as it can be grasped by human understanding.
- 21 Heidegger designates the lead-in issue as the “Anwesenlassen [des Anwesenden]” (SD 40.5, 8), i.e. “letting-things-make-sense” by “placing-them-into-context” (“freigeben ins Offene,” *ibid.*, 40.13; cf. “ins Offene . . . eingelassen,” 40.15). He designates the fundamental issue as “Anwesenlassen” (SD 40.6, 18–24), “allowing-the sense-making-world-to-emerge.”
- 22 GA 52: 64.24–5: “[das Wunder] nämlich, daß überhaupt eine Welt um uns waltet . . .,” i.e. that “a meaning-giving context constitutes the meaning of everything around us.” Cf. also GA 9, 307.23–2: “das Wunder aller Wunder: daß Seiendes ist,” i.e. “the fact that things are meaningful.”
- 23 GA 2: 116.35–117.1: “die Bedeutsamkeit . . . ist . . . die Struktur der Welt.” 164.35–165.1: “die Bedeutsamkeit, d.h. die Weltlichkeit.” Also GA 2: 116.25–6: “Den Bezugscharakter dieser Bezüge des Verweisens fassen wir als *be-deuten*” and William J. Richardson’s commentary on these texts is exactly right: “The relational character of the relations within the matrix [context or world] will be said ‘to give meaning’ (*be-deuten*), namely it is the relations which constitute the purposefulness of the instruments. The entire matrix of these relations will be called ‘Meaningfulness’ (*Bedeutsamkeit*), and it is this which constitutes the structure of the World.” Richardson, *Heidegger*, 57.1–6.
- 24 GA 2: sections 15–18. The carpenter’s world shows up all over GA 2: sections 15–16. The writer’s world gets next billing (GA 2: 92.25–7), and the tailor and cobbler receive only a nod or two at, respectively, GA 2: 92.10 (Nähzeug), 94.14 (Schuh, Schuhzeug), and 94.25 and 32 (Leder, Faden, Nägel).
- 25 More fully, Heidegger defines a world as the togetherness of (a) a “wherein” (*das Worin*) that focuses on human beings and (b) a “whereby” (*das Woraufhin*) that focuses on the things found within a world. (a) The “wherein” designates a world as a place-of-our-concerns wherein we live our lives for the sake of our purposes and ultimately for the sake of the survival of our own being. Thus, human being is the ultimate “goal for the sake of which” we live (the *telos hou heneka*. On life and its happiness as *praxis teleia* – an act that is an end-in-itself – see *Metaphysics* IX 6, 1048b 22–3 and 8, 1050a 36–1050b 2; *Nicomachean Ethics* I 7, 1097b 20–1: *autarkes* . . . *telos*.) (b) That *telos hou heneka*, in turn, serves as that whereby or in-terms-of-which (*das Woraufhin*) the things we meet within that world get their meaning. In using those things for our purposes, we use them ultimately for the sake of

- human being (and its survival), which therefore is *that-in-terms-of-which* they get their significance. Putting the two together: the world as (a) the place wherein we are directed to our final goal is also (b) the set of relations that directs tools to tasks for the sake of that same final goal. Heidegger brings the two together at the culminating sentence of his world-analysis, GA 2: 115.34–116.1: “*Das Worin . . . als Woraufhin . . . ist das Phänomen der Welt.*” This conjunction of the *Worin* and *Woraufhin* is Heidegger’s phenomenological reformulation of Aristotle’s position on the sameness (cf. *to auto*) of knower and the known in knowing: *De Anima* III 5, 430a 19–20 and 7, 431a 1–2; and *Metaphysics* XII 7, 1072b 18–21.
- 26 This is the *metaphysical* difference (see GA 77: 244.19–245.3). By contrast, Heidegger designates the difference between “Welt” and “Ding” as the *ontological* difference GA 12: 21.27–22.2.
- 27 GA 2: 211.14–20; also GA 4: 53.22–4.
- 28 See Richardson, *Heidegger*, 167, note 15: “World is equivalent to Being . . . the equivalence is genuine. . . [Eventually] the term ‘Being’ replaces the term ‘World’.” Also op. cit., 36, note 21: “the problem of World becomes more and more explicitly the problem of Being.” On the equivalence of *Sein*, *Welt*, and *Geviert* in the essay “Das Ding” (GA 7: 167–87) see Richardson, 571–2, esp. 571.23–5 taken with 572.14–15.
- 29 GA 15: 363.27–9: “der tiefste Sinn von Sein [ist] das Lassen. Das Seiende sein-lassen. Das ist der nicht-kausale Sinn von ‘Lassen’ in ‘Zeit und Sein.’”
- 30 On “open”: Martin Heidegger, *Zollikoner Seminare. Protokolle-Gespräche-Briefe*, ed. Medard Boss (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1987), 9.6–9: 156.35–157.1; 157.30–2; 188.14–15. GA 5: 40.1. GA 9: 184.11, 184.25, 185.29, 187.32, 188.21–2, 201.30–2. GA 49: 56.20, 27–8, 31–2. GA 65: section 205, 328.28; 331.23. Also Heidegger’s “Lettre à Monsieur Beaufret (23 novembre 1945),” in Martin Heidegger, *Lettre sur l’humanisme*, ed. Roger Munier, (Paris: Aubier, 1957), 184.3.
- 31 *De Anima*, III 4, 429 a 27–8. Cf. GA 15: 335.16–18. On *eidos* or *idea* as a name for *ousia*, i.e. the form-*qua*-intelligibility: GA 45: 172.16–17 and GA 9: 301.20–22.
- 32 In calling the world “the self writ large,” I do not intend either (a) the analogical and comparative sense that Plato employs in *Republic* II, 368b 7–369a 3, or (b) the notion that the self has any other possibility than *to be* the world – that is, there is no alternative “inner” self, “writ small,” as it were. Rather, being-the-world (*Lichtung-sein*, GA 69, 101.12; a.k.a. *Welt-sein*, a.k.a. *In-der-Welt-sein*) is the ontological-existential status of human being. The self is world-as-such.
- 33 GA 2: 137.32. The noun “Gegend” is related to the preposition “gegen” and indicates the “open country that lies before one.” Cf. Latin *contra*, “over against,” and Late Latin *contrata*, “the land opposite.” (In the Left Coast’s Bay Area that would be “Contra Costa County.”) Early on Heidegger called this “das Entgegen,” GA 9: 184.8. Later he employs the archaic term “Gegnet,” GA 77: 114.12–13.
- 34 (a) For *diaphora*, *Unter-schied*, *Unterscheidung*, *Zwischen*, and *Austrag*, see GA 12: 22.1–23.11; GA 49: 97.16–20. (b) For *polemos*, GA 40: 66.8, 16, etc. (c) For *Vermittlung* and *Mittelbarkeit*, GA 4: 61.15–23.
- 35 *Metaphysics*, XII 9, 1074b 34–5; also 1075a 4–5 with the premises laid at XII 7, 1072b 18–21.
- 36 GA 4: 53.22–4. Cf. GA 15: 289.29–31: “Hierzu erinnert Heidegger daran, daß das Denken von seinen Anfängen an in der Dimension der *Einheit* denkt.”
- 37 (a) *Das Freie*: GA 8: 137.21; GA 77: 114.1; *Zollikoner Seminare*, 9.9; and Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1961), II, 412.18. (b) *Machtende*: GA 4: 53.11.
- 38 GA 2: 111.21 (*freigeben*) and 107.13 and 112.12 (*Bewandtnis*). On “*Bewandtnis*” as “aptitude” (*dynamis*) see GA 22, 174.24–30 and 202.13–16.

- 39 GA 9: 228.10; cf. 227.32–3. For other expressions of the same notion, see SD 40.21, 30; GA 4: 53.11; GA 9: 114.26–7 and 228.8, 24; GA 24: 405.13; GA 68: 51.5.
- 40 For *aletheia*, GA 9: 201.32, etc. For *physis*, GA 40: 16.23 ff.
- 41 Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1854–1960), 16 volumes, vol. VI (L, M), 1885: s.v. "Lichtung," p. 893: "Öffnung oder Ausschnitt in einer Thür zum einlassen des Tageslichtes" and p. 877, s.v. "Licht," II, 18-a: "Fenster."
- 42 In addition to the four sets of terms already discussed, other formulations for "world" include: (a) *logos* (i.e. *synthesis-diaphora*) as the "house" of meaning: GA 9: 313.13–14. (b) "Entwurfsbereich," i.e. the region wherein meaning is opened up: GA 9: 201.31. (c) Time ("die Zeit als der Vorname für die Wahrheit des Seins": GA 9, 376.11; and "Zeit als Vorname des Entwurfsbereichs der Wahrheit des Seins. 'Zeit' ist . . . Lichtung des Seins selbst": GA 49: 160.1–4). All of these name what Heidegger calls *das transcendens schlechthin*: GA 2: 51.9.
- 43 GA 15: 331.5–6.
- 44 GA 15: 343.24–5: "Bewegung des Erscheinens." Cf. GA 15: 331.7. As regards the phrase "the world's own movement into presence," see SD 40.23–4: "in das zugelassen, wohin es gehört."
- 45 "Current meaning" translates "Anwesenheit." On "all-present" (allgegenwärtig, die Allgegenwart) see GA 4: 52.11, 20, 24; 53.8, 18–19. On *Welt* and *Da* as *Lichtung*: GA 65: section 193, 316.27 and section 204, 327.14–15. GA 9: 325.20–1. See "Lichtung . . . erbringt . . . Anwesen (Sein)": Heidegger, "Vorwort" to Richardson, *Heidegger*, pp. xxi.29–30. Also Heidegger's re-interpretation of the phrase "Zeit und Sein" as "Lichtung und Anwesenheit," SD 80.23–4.
- 46 See note 28 above.
- 47 See GA 9: 201.30–3: "Die entscheidende Frage (*Sein und Zeit*, 1927) nach dem *Sinn*, d.h. (*S.u.Z.* S. 151) nach dem *Entwurfsbereich*, d.h. nach der *Offenheit*, d.h. nach der *Wahrheit des Seins*, und nur nicht des Seienden" (emphasis added). At GA 2: 201.21–2 (= *S.u.Z.* 151) Heidegger defines "Sinn" as the "id quo" of intelligibility: "das Woraufhin des Entwurfs, aus dem her [= aus dem Woraufhin] etwas als etwas verständlich wird." Meaning is the means whereby, and thus the reason why, things show up and can be related to by human beings. This is a formal definition that can be applied to either *things* or *world*, to either *Seiendes* or *Sein*. In each case the question "why" asks for the "because" (*das Woraufhin*), and the answer supplies the "that-because-of-which." In the first case: Q. Why do things show up as intelligible? A. The meaning-giving region held open by Dasein's aheadness is that because of which (*to hou heneka*, *das Woraufhin*) things are understandable. (2) In the second case: Q. Why do worlds show up as meaningful and meaning-giving? A. Because of Dasein's relative absence (finite being) that issues in relative presence (finite worlds).
- 48 SD 80.25. Or in another formulation at SD 40.16–17: "von woher und wie es 'das Offene' gibt."
- 49 In GA 71, *Das Ereignis* (1941–2), which, as of this writing, is still unpublished, Heidegger spells out this meaning of *Ereignis* (ms typed by Fritz Heidegger, page 100) by way of his glosses on the Grimm brothers' etymology of "*Ereignis*" and cognate terms in their *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, III (1862), 699, 784–5. See Thomas Sheehan, "A Paradigm Shift in Heidegger Research," *Continental Philosophy Review*, 34 (2001), 183–202, especially 196–8.
- 50 On "retrieval" (Wiederholung) see GA 3: 204.3–16.
- 51 GA 9: 283.25–6.
- 52 GA 8: 78.7–8. Of course he said "Nietzsche" rather than "Heidegger."
- 53 GA 2: 56.5–6, with Heidegger's footnote "je 'ich.'"
- 54 See GA 9: 244.32–5 and more generally 244.12–35 on *epagoge*.
- 55 Re *teleion* and *holon*: *Metaphysics* V 16, 1021b 12–13, 23–5, and 31–2.
- 56 *Metaphysics* V 26, 1023b 26–7.

- 57 *Energeia ateles*: *Physics* III 1, 201a 10–11 and 27–9; 201 b 4–5; III 2, 201 b 31–2. At *De Anima* III 7, 431 a 8 Aristotle calls movement *tau atelous energeia* (“the current perfection of what is on-the-way-to-perfection”). The Latin is “actus imperfecti”: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I–II, 31, 2, ad 1; *In IV Sententiarum*, 17, 1, 5, solutio 3, ad 1; *De Veritate* 8, 14, ad 12.
- 58 *De anima*, III 9, 432b 15–16; *Topics* VI 2, 130b 20; *On the Parts of Animals*, I 1, 640a 18–19. I am grateful to Professor Peter Maxwell of Loyola University Chicago for directing me to the first of these three references. Whereas Aristotle understands *genesis* as getting fulfilled in *ousia*, Plato radically contrasts them: *Republic* VII, 525b 5–6.
- 59 Thomas Aquinas makes this Aristotelian point quite well when he discusses the twofold “moving power” of the *telos*: the *telos* (= *finis vel bonum*) is an active moving power (*virtus motiva*), and there are two ways of understanding it (*alia ratio*). It actively moves an entity (a) when that *telos* is completely present and informing the entity (in which case it makes the entity rest in itself); and (b) when that *telos* is still imperfectly achieved and therefore relatively absent (in which case it makes the entity be moved *unto* itself): “Est autem alia ratio virtutis motivae ipsius finis vel boni, secundum quod est realiter praesens, et secundum quod est absens: nam secundum quod est praesens, facit in seipso quiescere; secundum autem quod est absens, facit ad seipsum moveri”: *Summa Theologiae* I–II, 30, 2, c.
- 60 Re *to hautou heneka*: see *Platonis opera*, ed. John Burnet (Oxford: Clarendon, 1907), V, *Horoi*, 413a 3. Re *kinei hos eromenon*: *Metaphysics* XII 7, 1072b 2. Aristotle is referring here specifically to the first mover, but the principle applies analogously to other *tele*.
- 61 For the soul as self-moving (*psyche to hautou kinoun*) see: *Platonis opera*, V, op. cit., 411c 7. Heidegger generally prefers “moved-ness” or “being-moved” (*Bewegtheit*) rather than “movement” (*Bewegung*): GA 2: 461.16, 495.30–1; GA 9: 283.17ff. He employs that former term to emphasize that the movement is teleological and that its moving source is the *telos hou heneka*.
- 62 This is in keeping with the overarching methodological principle that governs all of Heidegger’s work: *operatio sequitur esse*. He states the principle, for example, at GA 4: 65.27–8: “während es [= ein Jegliches] doch in Wahrheit je nur das leistet, was es ist.”
- 63 But see GA 9: 284.15–21.
- 64 (a) Re God: *Nicomachean Ethics* VI 3, 1139 b 22–6 on God as maximally necessary, eternal, ungenerated, and incorruptible, as well as VI 14, 1154 b 26–7: *energeia akinesias v. energeia kineseos*. (b) Re Dasein: SD 58.26–9: “[Endlichkeit] nicht mehr aus dem Bezug zur Unendlichkeit [Gottes], sondern als Endlichkeit in sich selbst gedacht wird: Endlichkeit, Ende, Grenze, das Eigene – ins Eigene Geborgensein.”
- 65 *Metaphysics* II 1, 993b 30–1.
- 66 *Metaphysics* XII 9, 1074b 26 1074b 34–5 (divine knowing as immediate self-knowing); and *Metaphysics* I 2, 982b 1–2 (most knowable); cf. *Nicomachean Ethics* VI 3, 1139b 26 (*matheton*).
- 67 (a) Re Dasein, no immediate relation to the known: see *De anima* III 8, 431b 21 and III 5, 430a 14–15. Also GA 3: 280.30–1. (b) Dasein bonds the knowable to itself via world: GA 2, 201.12–14: “Wenn innerweltliches Seiendes mit dem Sein des Daseins entdeckt, das heißt zu Verständnis gekommen ist, sagen wir, es hat Sinn” (first italics added). That is, entities have meaning only to the degree they are discovered *along with* – i.e. *within* – the world that is the being of Dasein.
- 68 (a) Dasein engenders world: GA 2: 483.22–3, 25–7: “Sofern Dasein sich zeitigt, ist auch eine Welt. . . Die Welt . . . zeitigt sich in der Zeitlichkeit.” That is, insofar as a human being is becoming itself, a world is. Worlds are generated from out of the human being’s movement “into the future.” (b) Theory of meaning: GA 2: 220.29–30: “Die Bedeutungslehre ist in der Ontologie des Daseins verwurzelt.”

- 69 *Geworfensein*: GA 2: 449.30 and 453.20. A comparison of these two texts shows that *Geworfensein* is the same as *Geworfenheit*. The equivalence of “*geworfen*” and “*ereignet*” is clearly indicated at GA 65: s.122, 239.5, s.182, 304.8, and s.134, 252.24.
- 70 *De anima*, III 7, 432a 2.
- 71 (a) Re opened-up opening, see GA 27: 135.13: erschließend erschlossenes. (b) Re “almost-ing it”: James Joyce, *Ulysses*, New York: The Modern Library (new edition, corrected and reset), 1961, (Episode 3, “Proteus”), 47.6; cf. “homing” at 51.6 (ad fin.). (c) Re getting near/*agchibasie*: The late tenth-century Greek lexicon *Suda* or *Suidas* (the title is from a Latin loan word for “fortress”) is the first to record the term *agchibasie*, cited without context, as a word of Heraclitus: *Suidae Lexicon*, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1854, in one volume), p. 20a, s.v. *agchibatein*; also in the series *Lexicographi Graeci*, of which volume one in five parts is *Suidae Lexicon*, ed. Ada Adler (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1928–38; reprinted Stuttgart: Teubner, 1967–71), Pars I (1928), p. 41, number 398. The word is noted in Hermann Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 6th rev. edn, ed. Walther Kranz (Berlin-Grunewald: Weidmann, 1951), 3 volumes, I, 178.6–7, number 122. *Agchibasie* is related to *agchibateo*, “to draw near,” from *agchi* (poetic for *eggus*): *nigh* + *baino*, to move, step, go. The *Suda* claims (a) that *agchibateo* was an Ionic usage for *amphisbateo*, “to go asunder,” hence “to disagree,” and by implication (b) that *agchibasie* is the Ionic form of *amphisbetesis*, “dispute, argument, stand-off.” However, in *Les Présocratiques*, ed. Jean-Paul Dumont, Daniel Delattre, and Jean-Louis Poirier (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), Dumont translates *agchibasie* as “rapprochement” (p. 173) and comments (p. 1242), “Ce mot ne se retrouve pas ailleurs chez Héraclite. S’agirait-il d’un *rapprochement* des contraires? Rien ne l’atteste.” Heidegger uses the word as the title of the first fictional dialogue in GA 77 and indicates therein at 152.18ff the meaning we employ above. *In sabbato sancto* 4.10.04.