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HEIDEGGER'S READING OF ARISTOTLE:

*PRAXIS* AND THE ONTOLOGY OF MOVEMENT

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*Zῆ πρακτικὴ τοῦ λόγου ἔχοντος ist das Wesen des Menschen.  
Der Mensch ist das Lebewesen, das gemäß seiner Seinsart die  
Möglichkeit hat, zu handeln.*

*Heidegger, Die Grundbegriffe der antiken Philosophie.*

*Wir vermeiden den Terminus 'Handeln' absichtlich.*

*Heidegger, Sein und Zeit.*



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## ABSTRACT

### HEIDEGGER'S READING OF ARISTOTLE: *PRAXIS* AND THE ONTOLOGY OF MOVEMENT

Heidegger perceives a naivety at the heart of Greek metaphysics to which he believes philosophy has remained prey throughout its history. This consists in having taken the understanding of being appropriate to the activity and experience of production [ποίησις] as the basis for understanding being in general. What such an interpretation lacks above all is a conception of human being as that which, distinct from the work, engages in productive activity. Only if such a conception were secured in contradistinction to the understanding of being derived from the work could, in Heidegger's view, ontology itself be placed on firm footing. By way of a response, Heidegger undertook a critical appropriation of Aristotle's practical philosophy and of the concept of *πρᾶξις* in particular. This was to provide the basis of an account of Dasein. However, the outcome of the appropriation was problematic in two respects.

First, Aristotle's own presentation of *πρᾶξις* as the horizontal structure of teleological activity is dogged by incoherencies arising precisely from the influence exerted on the language of metaphysics by the experience of *ποίησις*. Indeed, the extent of this influence renders the language of metaphysics intrinsically ill-suited to the articulation of *πρᾶξις*. Heidegger's appropriation of the figure of the end-in-itself must therefore be accompanied by an attempt to wrest it from the dominant conceptual structures of production.

Second, insofar as the terms in which Heidegger couches the ontological determination of Dasein are taken from the language of practical philosophy, there arises a formal parallel between the transcendence of Dasein and possible structures of activity. Such a parallel invites the supposition that Dasein's transcendence may be enacted or accomplished in its comportment in and towards the world.

Although I shall be concerned primarily with the first of these problems, the second remains a constant consideration and recurs explicitly at several junctures. Drawing on Heidegger's reading of *Metaphysics* Θ, I argue that he sought to secure an ontological interpretation of *κίνησις*, *δύναμις* and *ἐνέργεια* from which the influence of production had been displaced. Specifically, this hinges on the idea of finite appropriation as the essence of *δύναμις*. In addition, Heidegger emphasises the way in which each potentiality is related to the manner of its accomplishment. As an activity that is an end in itself, *πρᾶξις* is therefore understood as an activity of finite appropriation whose end is the very movement of appropriation itself. As such, it constitutes a repetition of the essence of *δύναμις* and of the transcendence of Dasein insofar as it is understood to be constituted by *δύναμις*.



### Abbreviations of Works Cited

- AE J Barnes, M Schofield, R Sorabji, *Articles on Aristotle Vol.3: Metaphysics.*
- AOF J Taminiaux, 'Ποίησις et πράξις dans l'articulation de l'ontologie fondamentale.'
- AQM R Brague, *Aristote et la question du monde.*
- ATM T Engberg-Pederson, *Aristotle's Theory of Moral Insight.*
- DA Aristotle, *De Anima.*
- DAP F Volpi, 'Dasein as *praxis*: the Heideggerian assimilation and radicalisation of the practical philosophy of Aristotle.'
- ECP Volpi, 'L'assistenza come *praxis*. Le radici aristoteliche della terminologia di «Essere e tempo».'
- EM Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik: An Introduction to Metaphysics.*
- ENT R A Gauthier & J Y Jolif, *L'Ethique a Nicomaque: traduction et commentaire.*
- FDP R Bernasconi, 'The Fate of the Distinction Between *Praxis* and *Poiesis*.'
- GA19 Heidegger, *Platon: Sophistes.*
- GA20 *Prologomena zur Geschichte des Zeitsbegriffes: The History of the Concept of Time.*
- GA22 *Die Grundbegriffe der antiken Philosophie.*
- GA24 M Heidegger, *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie: The Basic Problems of Phenomenology.*
- GA26 *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz: The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic.*
- GA29/30 Heidegger, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik. Welt - Endlichkeit - Einsamkeit.*
- GA31 Heidegger, *Vom Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit.*
- GA33 Heidegger, *Aristoteles Metaphysik Θ 1-3: Von Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Kraft.*
- GA34 *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit. Zu Platons Höhlengleichnis und Theätet.*
- GA54 Heidegger, *Parmenides: Parmenides.*
- GA61 Heidegger, *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung.*
- GA63 *Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität).*
- HA Volpi, Heidegger and Aristotle.
- HC H Arendt, *The Human Condition.*
- HDP Bernasconi, 'Heidegger's Destruction of Phronesis.'

- HW Heidegger, *Holzwege*.
- LHP G Nicolaci, 'La Lettura heideggeriana della praxis.'
- LOF Taminiaux, *Lectures de l'ontologie fondamentale: Essais sur Heidegger*.
- Met Aristotele, *Metaphysics*.
- NE Aristotele, *Nicomachean Ethics*.
- PEA P Aubenque, *Le problème de l'être chez Aristote*.
- PIA Heidegger, 'Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation).'
- QCT Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*.
- RR Heidegger, 'Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität': 'The Self affirmation of the German University.'
- SJP *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* (1989) Vol. XXVIII, Supplement.
- SZ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit: Being and Time*.
- VA Heidegger, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*.
- VWB Heidegger, 'Vom Wesen und Begriff der φύσις in Aristoteles Physik B, 1': 'On the Being and Conception of ΦΥΣΙΣ in Aristotle's Physics B 1.'
- VWG Heidegger, 'Vom Wesen des Grundes.'
- WM Heidegger, *Wegmarken*.

N.B. References in the text are given by the abbreviation followed by two numbers, indicating the page numbers in the original language text and the translation respectively.

All quotations are have been presented in their original language, followed by a translation. Wherever possible, I have used existing translations, and in the remainder of cases I have translated the passages myself.

## Introduction

### NAIVE ONTOLOGY AND THE QUESTION OF PRAXIS

We not only wish to but must understand the  
Greeks better than they understand  
themselves.

Heidegger<sup>1</sup>

Blanchot once described Heidegger as a thinker "bereft of naivety."<sup>2</sup> If, as Heidegger supposed, all genuine questions harbour a challenge to the one who poses them, naivety may be said to consist in withholding oneself from such a challenge, or in a failure even to recognize that such evasion has occurred. One forgets oneself, loses oneself, precisely insofar as one is beyond question. However, it is not simply a matter of self-understanding. For such naivety will have wider repercussions, curtailing the scope and radicality of the question posed. When Descartes, for example, neglected to supplement the *cogito* with a consideration of what it means to say 'I am,' he left the very basis of his philosophy uninterrogated. However, in passing over the connection between his own existence and the question of being, Descartes was, in Heidegger's view, simply reiterating a naivety that had already dominated philosophy for a long time.



In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger considers the extent to which modern philosophy has remained uncritically bound by the distinction between essence and existence as it was formulated in medieval philosophy [GA24 §§10–11]. Essence was expressed in several ways, each corresponding to a different aspect of the basic experience of a thing as such.<sup>3</sup> A clue as to how this experience itself was framed is given by the concept of existence, which on its part was understood in terms of *actualitas*, that is, on the basis of a working, effecting or operating [GA24 122–123:87]. This reference back to an acting on the part of an indefinite subject already suggests that the concepts of essence and existence

*sind einer Interpretation des Seienden mit Rücksicht auf das herstellende Verhalten entwachsen.* [GA24 147:105]

are an outgrowth from an interpretation of beings with regard to productive comportment.

Yet it is also clear that medieval philosophy was unable to make this interpretation explicit. For within the context of medieval philosophy, finite existence was of course understood as the condition of the *ens creatum*, whereupon the agent responsible for such existence was identified as God and the character of a thing, its essence, was understood to lie primarily in its createdness. However, the appeal to a divine origin effectively sent the medieval interpretation into a "blind alley," halting any further investigation into a series of sacrosanct metaphysical terms and concepts. As a result, the source of metaphysical language in human experience was covered over. Moreover, since *all* things were thought

to have been created by God, the concepts of essence and existence were understood to apply without discrimination to human beings, animals and inanimate things alike. This thesis was never explicitly questioned in medieval philosophy; nor could it be, given that it follows from the belief in a creator God.

Without the constraints of scholastic theology, Heidegger proposes a form of genealogical analysis in which the traditional content of ontology is gradually pared back to reveal the source experiences from which our initial determinations of being arose. This "destruction of the history of ontology" leads him back to the Greeks and to the terms from which medieval philosophy drew its inspiration.<sup>4</sup> Here, Heidegger offers an interpretation of the way the concepts of essence and existence, and all the terms in which they are expressed, arose as formalisations of the experience of production and of handling the work thus made. Εἶδος, ἰδέα, μορφή, ὕλη, ὑποκείμενον, ὀρισμός, γένος and οὐσία are all shown to have their basis in such an experience.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the kind of sight constitutive of θεωρία is itself shown to have evolved from the way one looks towards the end, conceives the image of what has yet to be made or regards the work in its completed form.<sup>6</sup> The importance of this can hardly be overstated: the basic concepts of metaphysics, the determination of a thing and manner of its apprehension, the sense attributed to being and the very structure of metaphysical thinking itself are all fundamentally informed by the experience of production.<sup>7</sup>



If the conception of a finite being is linked to human rather than divine artifice, it follows that the necessity and basis of such a perspective will be made accessible to questioning. Taking up this possibility, one will be able to establish the extent of the domain in which the concepts of essence and existence are applicable; for it is by no means obvious that language inspired by the work will be appropriate to nature or indeed to the 'worker.' At issue, then, are precisely the foundation and limits of the concepts and forms of thought habitually used to account for all beings.

Even ancient ontology left the matter unexplored and did not address these questions in a systematic way [GA24 155:110]. It seems, therefore, that it too was naive inasmuch as it did not engage in an explicit reflection on the source of its conceptuality in a specific region of its own experience. However, Heidegger warns against supposing that the absence of an explicitly (self-) reflective moment means that there is no reflection whatsoever. On the contrary, even naive ontology is always and necessarily reflective insofar as "*it seeks to conceive beings with respect to their being by having regard to the Dasein (ψυχή, νοῦς, λόγος)*" [GA24 155:110]. Nonetheless, reference to the comportment of Dasein may be implicit, beyond the declared scope of the question.

*Die Ontologie ist dann nicht insofern naiv, als sie überhaupt nicht auf das Dasein zurückblickt, überhaupt nicht reflektiert - das ist ausgeschlossen -, sondern insofern, als dieses notwendige Zurückblicken auf das Dasein über eine vulgäre Auffassung des Daseins und seiner Verhaltungen nicht hinauskommt und somit diese - weil sie zur Alltäglichkeit des Daseins überhaupt gehört - nicht eigens betont. Die*



*Reflexion verbleibt in den Bahnen der vorphilosophischen Erkenntnis. [GA24 156:110]*

Ontology is naive, then, not because it does not look back at all to the Dasein, not because it does no reflecting at all - this is excluded - but because this necessary looking back toward the Dasein does not get beyond a common conception of the Dasein and its compartments and thus - because they belong to the Dasein's general everydayness - does not expressly emphasize them. Reflection here remains within the rut of pre-philosophical knowledge.

The pre-philosophical knowledge in question is the understanding of being derived from the experience of making. For insofar as this is uncritically applied to the being of Dasein, not only will Dasein itself be inadequately conceived, but the very experience of making in which Dasein engages is also set on a partial basis. And as long as reflection is allowed to remain in this "rut," ontological enquiry will, for all the virtues of naivety, be incomplete and ill-founded. The task, as Heidegger sees it, is therefore to remove the blind spot he perceives at the heart of Greek ontology by placing the productive compartment of Dasein itself under scrutiny.

*Es muß gefragt werden: Welche Funktion hat das herstellend-gebrauchende Verhalten im weitesten Sinne innerhalb des Daseins selbst? Die Antwort darauf ist nur möglich, wenn zuvor die Seinsverfassung des Daseins überhaupt in den Grundzügen ans Licht gestellt, d.h. die Ontologie des Daseins gesichert ist. [GA24 165:117]*

We must ask, What function does the action of producing and using in the broadest sense have within the Dasein itself? The answer is possible only if the constitution of the Dasein's being is first brought to light in its general basic features, that is, if the ontology of Dasein is made secure.<sup>8</sup>

Heidegger found the basis for the ontology of Dasein he was looking for in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle describes five

distinct ways in which the soul attains truth, that is, ways in which beings are disclosed in and through Dasein's comportment towards them [1139b15-16]. In the light of this account, θεωρία and ποίησις are thrown into relief as possibilities that exist alongside others. Here, then, we are presented with an account in which productive comportment is, if not explicitly placed in question, certainly thematised in such a way as to demonstrate its limits. For ποίησις, as a form of activity whose end lies beyond itself, is shown by Aristotle to be incapable of securing its own basis [Ch.1.I & V]. Rather, it is dependent upon, and indeed governed by, πράξις, i.e. activity that is an end in itself. Moreover, in addition to denoting a specific form of comportment alongside others, πράξις emerges as a fundamental determination of human life. Accordingly, it seems to challenge the hold that the experience of production exerted over the Greek conception of being, offering instead a determination of Dasein that seeks to articulate itself otherwise than in terms taken over from the work. The central concern of this thesis will be the manner in which such a determination of Dasein as πράξις enters Heidegger's thinking.

\*

The importance of Aristotle for Heidegger has been well known for a long time. However, it is only with the publication of many of Heidegger's early lecture courses in the last ten or twelve years that a more considered understanding of the *Auseinandersetzung* between them has begun to emerge. It is probably Franco Volpi who has



done more than anyone to document Heidegger's reading of Aristotle.<sup>9</sup> His book, *Heidegger e Aristotele* (to my knowledge the only book that expressly deals with the presence of Aristotle in Heidegger's work) is a comprehensive account of Heidegger's reading of Aristotle from his earliest encounter with Brentano's work on the manifold senses of being through the Marburg years to the interpretation of φύσις offered in his final essay on Aristotle (written in 1939). In addition, Volpi has since published a series of papers developing a broad and finely argued account of Heidegger's critical appropriation of Aristotelian practical philosophy.<sup>10</sup> In particular, he shows how Heidegger assimilated the conception of πρᾶξις as a fundamental determination of human existence as a whole into his own account of the ontological structure of Dasein and goes on to detail a series of direct correspondences between the terms in which Aristotle elaborates πρᾶξις and those which Heidegger adopts in his presentation of Dasein in *Being and Time*.<sup>11</sup> Although such unequivocal translations may sometimes be hard to defend, there is no doubt that the high profile accorded to Aristotle's practical philosophy in the development of Heidegger's interpretation of Dasein is wholly justified.<sup>12</sup> Whilst we remain indebted to Volpi for the extent to which Heidegger's proximity to Aristotle is understood, we may wish to build upon Volpi's achievement by concentrating further on those points at which Heidegger's interpretation appears most problematic. For not only is it the case that his interpretation stirs problems that had hitherto lain dormant in Aristotle's text, but the nature of the translation from Aristotle's discourse into Heidegger's own

itself generates profound difficulties. This translation is essentially from the register of practical philosophy to that of ontology. What is involved in such a change?

Volpi describes Heidegger's interest in Aristotle's practical philosophy as stemming from a desire to counter the excessively theoretical bias of modern philosophy in general and the phenomenology of Husserl in particular.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, he adds, there was a need to free the fundamental intuitions of Aristotelian practical philosophy from their "metaphysico-anthropological" trappings. Expanding on this theme, Volpi notes that whereas Aristotle's conception of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  was articulated in a well-defined metaphysical and anthropological frame, Heidegger eschews such support:

*ogni sostegno sostanziale, in vigore nella tradizione metafisica, è considerato ormai come derivato e difettivo rispetto a quell'agire originario che è la  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  e che costituisce l'essere dell'esserci; quest'ultimo deve essere compreso a partire da se stesso, al di fuori di ogni prefigurazione e predeterminazione, di qualsiasi tipo essa sia. [ECP 238]*

every substantial point of support in the metaphysical tradition is now considered to be derivative and defective with respect to that originary activity that is  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  and which is constitutive of the being of Dasein [being-there]; the latter must be understood from itself, independently of any prefigurement and predetermination whatsoever.

Two fundamental problems emerge from this. 1. What consequences does the translation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  into the ontological register have for Heidegger's understanding of activity? 2. What difficulties for the articulation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  are created by Heidegger's own recognition of



the determinative influence of production on the conceptuality of metaphysics? These questions will serve as the basis for a survey of the way Heidegger's appropriation of *πρόξις* has been understood by some of those who have written most perceptively on the matter, namely, in addition to Volpi himself, Jacques Taminiaux, Robert Bernasconi and Giuseppe Nicolaci.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, I shall situate the approach taken in this thesis vis-à-vis their respective readings.

As a result of its translation into the ontological register, *πρόξις* no longer designates a possibility that Dasein can take up or set aside at will, but acquires the status of a fundamental determination of Dasein: it is no longer a matter of what Dasein can *do*, but of what or how Dasein *is*. A parallel is thereby created between the language of activity and the language of being that remains a point of uncertainty in Heidegger's thought. For whilst the distinction between the ontological determination of Dasein and its existentiell possibilities is a necessary one, at times it seems hard to sustain.<sup>15</sup> And these are the times when Heidegger's ontological discourse seems closest to forgetting itself in a programme of political action. I say 'closest' in order not to protect Heidegger's discourse behind its own veil of naivety. For fixed deeply in Heidegger's thinking at this time, there is an alignment between ontology and activity that found its expression in Heidegger's engagement with National Socialism.<sup>16</sup>

Volpi himself does not pursue the issue of the relation between Heidegger's ontological reading of *πρᾶξις* and his political interventions further than noting its contribution to "a kind of heroic solipsism" [ECP 239]. As he recalls, Hannah Arendt saw in Heidegger's interpretation of *πρᾶξις* an inversion of the Aristotelian conception of an essentially public form of activity. More recently, this critique has been taken up by Jacques Taminiaux. He argues that Heidegger's distinction between authenticity [*Eigentlichkeit*] and inauthenticity [*Uneigentlichkeit*] represents a recovery of the Aristotelian distinction between *πρᾶξις* and *ποίησις*. However, he goes on to suggest that Heidegger's account of authentic Dasein uproots *πρᾶξις* from its characteristic dimension of *δοξα*, ambiguity and pluralism; that is, from the dimension of politics [LOF 174, 182, 186]. He thereby regards Heidegger's recovery of Aristotle as counterbalanced, if not outweighed, by a Platonic bias in favour of the *βίος θεοπετιχος*. In my view, however, simply to oppose the Aristotelian and Platonic elements - good and bad respectively - within Heidegger's work to one another is to oversimplify the matter. For such a gesture assumes that what belongs to Aristotle or to Plato in Heidegger's text can be easily identified. Yet the identity of a thinker is rarely so well-defined. Moreover, to interpret the loss of the overtly public or political dimension of *πρᾶξις* as its eclipse by a Platonic conception of activity is to suppress the possibility that Heidegger's understanding of the term may proceed directly from his reading of Aristotle. Ultimately, as we shall see, it is to



underestimate the transformation that the concept of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  undergoes on its passage into Heidegger's text.

We have already seen that this passage takes the form of a translation from the register of practical philosophy to that of ontology. In addition, if the naivety of Greek ontology is to be dispelled, not only must Dasein be interpreted explicitly in terms of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ , but, as Volpi put it, both concepts "must be understood from themselves, independently of any prefigurement and predetermination whatsoever." Insofar as the language of metaphysics has been fundamentally determined by the experience of making, one is therefore required to understand Dasein and  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  independently of this experience. Yet precisely insofar as the language of metaphysics has been thus determined, there seems little possibility of framing a fresh interpretation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  that does not revert to the idiom of production. We owe our understanding of this predicament above all to Bernasconi, whose sensitivity to the radical implications of Heidegger's genealogy of metaphysical language leads him to suggest that the eclipse of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  lamented by Arendt and Taminiaux is a fate inscribed in the very origin of metaphysics itself, and not a merely contingent feature of modernity.<sup>17</sup> The translation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  into the ontological register is clearly rendered more complex by this. For in addition to the changes forced upon it by its newly acquired ontological role, the very terms in which it is to be conceived must themselves be recovered from the experience of production - an experience whose terms are inappropriate to the determination of Dasein as  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  precisely insofar as production is itself delimited

by πράξις. Whilst Taminiaux is right, therefore, to be concerned over a loss of the public and pluralistic elements of πράξις, his account is not sufficiently responsive to the predicament brought to light by Heidegger's destruction of the history of ontology and to the kind of response for which it calls. A straightforward recovery of πράξις in its earlier form - even at the ontological level - will inevitably precipitate a repetition of the very problem one sought to remedy.

Bernasconi presents Heidegger as having realized the impasse in which any 'recovery' of πράξις as such will inevitably be caught. He goes on to suggest that, in response to this predicament, Heidegger sought to develop an interpretation of activity indifferent to the distinction between ποίησις and πράξις precisely insofar as it represented their common root. As he points out, the difficulty lies in sustaining such an interpretation without falling back into a generalized *modern* idea of activity that would of course reinstate the subordination of πράξις to ποίησις. To avoid this, writes Bernasconi, one must continue to think "in remembrance of the distinction" [FDP 130]. His reading of Heidegger's 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking' and the 'Letter on Humanism' shows Heidegger engaged in just such a commemoration of ποίησις and πράξις. By moving directly to these later texts, Bernasconi delineates a response from a period in Heidegger's work subsequent to that in which the problem itself was first articulated. Yet if, as Bernasconi rightly insists, any conception of πράξις recovered from the hegemony of ποίησις will be radically altered, we know that Heidegger announced such a radicalization at least as early as 1928 in the guise of thinking the



transcendence of Dasein [pp.81-86]. In the present study, I shall concentrate on this earlier stage of Heidegger's work with the aim of showing that a recovery was already underway. Furthermore, as such a recovery was contemporaneous with the project of fundamental ontology, the relevance of Heidegger's interpretation of *πρᾶξις* to that project will emerge as a recurrent theme throughout the work.

Giuseppe Nicolaci has written one of the most acute and stimulating analyses of Heidegger's appropriation of *πρᾶξις* to have appeared to date.<sup>18</sup> He too is aware of the danger of *πρᾶξις* being eclipsed by the conceptual structures of *ποίησις*, but differs from Bernasconi in the way he frames the problem. For the focal point of his account is primarily the aporia Aristotle faces in the attempt to present *φρόνησις* and *πρᾶξις* in the context of a theoretical treatise when they are by definition not amenable to theory. The language of *ποίησις* offers no such resistance, for reasons we have already touched upon [pp.1-2]. To expand upon what was said earlier, however, the problem turns on the issue of sight and representation. For whilst there is a noetic moment within *πρᾶξις* (no form of activity is blind), the kind of sight involved is inseparable from the act and from its situation, and therefore does not acquire a purely theoretical form [Ch.3.II]. In spite of acknowledging the conformity of *πρᾶξις* and its end, however, Aristotle's ethical discourse finds itself trying to set out

la struttura e le condizioni della ἀρετή, i momenti del percorso attraverso il quale si raggiunge una tale conformità; così, esso riproduce astrattamente l'itinerario di sviluppo della φρόνησις e guarda la πρόξις dalla prospettiva del movimento immanente per il quale essa perviene a se stessa. [LHP 247]

the structure and the conditions of ἀρετή, the stages along the route by which it reaches such a conformity; in this way, it gives an abstract reproduction of the line of development of φρόνησις and regards πρόξις from the perspective of the immanent movement by which it comes to itself.

The pressure to represent the unrepresentable prises open what Nicolaci calls a "virtual space" in Aristotle's discourse - the space in which πρόξις is thematically articulated. He adds that Heidegger was one of those who knew best how to interpret this space [LHP 250]. It is my view that, in line with the proposed recovery of πρόξις, Heidegger actually sought to expose this interior to the world, that is, to present it as the space or site of Dasein itself. Such an idea brings us to what Nicolaci calls the *immanent movement* by which πρόξις comes to itself. Although he notes the importance of the link between such a movement and λόγος, he does not elaborate on the form it could take [p.63]. By contrast, the question of how Heidegger's discourse sought to understand such a movement will feature prominently in the present work.

We know that from at least as early as 1921 Heidegger regarded Aristotle's *Physics* as the fundamental text of Western philosophy and that his interest was above all in Aristotle's account of movement.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, Heidegger's early essays on the hermeneutics of facticity are directed towards securing an account of the fundamental movement



[*Grundbewegtheit*] of Dasein's factual life. Given Heidegger's ontological interpretation of Aristotle's practical philosophy, the form of movement in question could only be that which belongs to *πρᾶξις*.<sup>20</sup> The scene of Heidegger's appropriation of Aristotelian practical philosophy thereby shifts to the problem of movement. But in order for the form of movement characteristic of *πρᾶξις* to provide an interpretation of Dasein adequate to what is required, it cannot proceed from the experience of production. On this reading, then, Heidegger is committed to framing a conception of movement that precedes the formalization of the experience of production that issues in the vocabulary of metaphysics.<sup>21</sup> Of course, this is not to say that such a conception need be entirely independent of the experience of production, as if one could simply switch ground altogether. Rather, it is a matter of arriving at a determination of the sense of movement that implicitly underlies the experience of production. Such a sense clearly cannot proceed from that experience, whereupon for the determination of Dasein as *πρᾶξις* to shake off the dominance of production, Heidegger must reach an interpretation of the movement by which Dasein comes to itself otherwise than as a linear progression towards an external end.

Given this exigency, Heidegger's appropriation of Aristotle's practical philosophy cannot be understood in isolation from his reading of *κίνησις*, *δύναμις* and *ἐνέργεια* in Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics*. The account of movement Heidegger develops in this reading provides the basis for understanding Dasein as *πρᾶξις* in such a way as to displace the experience of production from its previously

unassailable position. Accordingly, Heidegger sets in train a recovery of *πρᾶξις* that takes into account its hitherto subordinate position with respect to *ποίησις*. As the reading I undertake shows, this recovery issues in an interpretation of Dasein's existence as *πρᾶξις* that is distinct from the conceptuality of production not by virtue of being wholly other, but simply insofar as it denotes the form and movement of existence as such.

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In this study, I shall present the problems inherent in Aristotle's formulation of *πρᾶξις*, Heidegger's inheritance of these problems as the conception of *πρᾶξις* enters his own work, and the response he launches via his interpretation of *κίνησις*, *δύναμις* and *ἐνέργεια*. The resulting determination of *πρᾶξις* will be seen to consist in a movement of finite appropriation.

Chapter One deals with the place of *πρᾶξις* in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, beginning with an outline of the problems implicit in understanding *πρᾶξις* in a teleological framework (I). The sense in which the final end bestows cohesion on human activity is then considered in the light of the *πρὸς ἓν* relation and the question of the unity of being (II-III). Having shown, via the 'ἔργον argument,' that the final end must take the form of *πρᾶξις*, this is seen to be a designation of activity as such (IV). However, in spite of the gains made, the question raised earlier regarding the relation between

activity and the final end remains unresolved (V). At bottom, the difficulty stems from the fact that the relation between activity and the final end is dominated by the language of production. As such, the figure of *πρᾶξις* is necessarily translated into an inappropriate idiom.

**Chapter Two** is concerned with Heidegger's appropriation of *πρᾶξις* and with marking out the direction it will take. As a preliminary consideration, it is argued that the term *πρᾶξις*, where it appears as such, may be read as a formal-ontological designation (I). However, Heidegger's appropriation of *πρᾶξις* is often too discreet to advertise itself so directly. Thus, the Aristotelian distinction between *ποίησις* and *πρᾶξις* is shown to underlie the analysis of equipmentality and world in *Being and Time* (II). But insofar as Heidegger adopts this distinction, he is seen to inherit the incoherencies that dog the articulation of *πρᾶξις* in Aristotle (III). Moreover, Heidegger's concern with the constitution of world as a totality is a transcendental problem. Turning to *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, we pursue the connection between *πρᾶξις* and transcendence and encounter the first indication of how Heidegger will seek to develop a reading of *πρᾶξις* by radicalizing the unity of *νοῦς* and *ὄρεξις* as they are understood to constitute human being as an *ἀρχή* of activity (IV). In Aristotle, this unity is seen to depend on the conception of *ἔξις* as a dispositional relation to virtue [*ἀρετή*] (V).



Chapter Three takes a step to one side in order to introduce Heidegger's reading of movement and to place it in relation to his interpretation of Dasein. It opens with a look at Heidegger's conception of a hermeneutics of facticity, showing that this is linked from very early on to the destruction of the history of ontology (I). Moreover, not only is it directed towards securing a better grasp of the Greek understanding of being in terms of production, but Heidegger states that the fundamental text for achieving this is Aristotle's *Physics*. Before pursuing this clue any further, the ground is prepared for a more thorough appreciation of the relation between *πρᾶξις* and the conception of movement Heidegger will develop in his interpretation of Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics*. This is achieved by approaching the hermeneutics of facticity in terms of the *Nicomachean Ethics* VI and entails above all an appraisal of the relative importance of *φρόνησις* and *σοφία* in Heidegger's reading (II). At this stage, the charge that Heidegger undermines his appropriation of *πρᾶξις* by passing on a Platonic bias towards *θεωρία* is rebutted, primarily by noting that access to the Good via *σοφία* is seen to be fundamentally inseparable from Dasein's existence as *πρᾶξις*. However, there is also a marked connection between *σοφία* and *θεωρία* and the Aristotelian conception of divine being (III) and the radicalization required to make this connection is essentially a radicalization in the conception of *ἐνέργεια* informed by the experience of the work (IV). A preliminary consideration of Aristotle's account of *δύναμις* and *ἐνέργεια* reveals the importance of avoiding such a radicalization if one is to achieve

a satisfactory interpretation of movement. Moreover, by insisting on an interpretation of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια that remains fundamentally rooted in the experience of κίνησις from which the terms arise, Heidegger opens the possibility of displacing both the ontology and the philosophical anthropology arising from the establishment of the flawed interpretation of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια in scholastic philosophy.

Chapter Four turns to Heidegger's 1931 lectures on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Θ (1-3) and traces his interpretation of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια. Heidegger's approach to reading *Metaphysics* Θ as a whole is seen to confer upon it a coherence missing from Ross's more customary interpretation (I). A consideration of the danger of allowing an established theory of causality to inform the account of movement in terms of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια is followed by Heidegger's reading of Met.Θ.1 and the determination of the essence of δύναμις in terms of appropriation and loss (II). With this, the thematic development of the thesis begins to wheel back to the end of Chapter Two and the importance of ἔξις, a cognate of ἔχειν, the verb for 'have.' Heidegger's reading of Met.Θ.2 deals with δύναμις μετὰ λόγου as the form of potentiality specific to human being (III). The relation of the λόγος to the end is described in terms of desire [ὄρεξις], which is in turn understood in terms of having [ἔχειν]. It follows that the soul comes to be understood as itself a dynamic play of appropriation and loss. Finally, Heidegger's reading of Met.Θ.3 focusses on the way in which the actual existence of δύναμις depends on an individual's having potentiality. The preceding account of the essence of δύναμις

in terms of ἔχειν is thereby carried forward and Heidegger goes on to interpret ἐνέργεια as the being of movement, where this is itself understood in terms of appropriation. In this way, the fundamental movement characteristic of the existence of Dasein as πράξις is seen to be that of finite appropriation (IV).



## Chapter One

### PRAXIS AND THE STRUCTURE OF TELEOLOGICAL ACTIVITY

#### I

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* begins with the inscription of human activity within what seems to be a plainly teleological framework:

Every art and every investigation, and similarly every action and pursuit, is considered to aim at some good. Hence the Good has been rightly defined as 'that at which all things aim.' [1094a1-3]<sup>1</sup>

This opening gives form and direction to the whole of Aristotle's text. Yet, as we shall see, the framework of teleology it sets in place is never entirely satisfactory. Indeed, the limitations and problems to which it is subject are woven into the fabric of the text to such an extent that it would be unrecognizable were they somehow to be eradicated. Moreover, they are assembled in the very first chapter of Book I.

Having announced the teleological form of human activity in the very first lines of the text, Aristotle immediately adds the following qualification:

Clearly, however, there is some difference between the ends at which they [every action and pursuit] aim: some are activities and others results distinct from the activities.

Where there are ends distinct from the actions, the results are by nature superior to the activities. [1094a5-7]

A distinction is made between activities whose ends are external and activities whose ends are inseparable from the activities themselves. Although Aristotle refrains from naming these two kinds of activity, one can already recognize the distinction between ποιήσις [making] and πράξις [doing] that is not formulated explicitly until much later, in Book VI [1140a1ff]. The fact that Aristotle anticipates this distinction so early on testifies to its importance not only for the determination of the structure of human activity set out in Book I, but for the treatise as a whole. Moreover, the textual proximity between the specific form of πράξις presented in the second passage and that of teleology announced in the first emphasises the thematic inter-relation between the two motifs: the uneasy alliance between teleology and the figure of πράξις is a recurrent feature of Aristotle's account.

In the first paragraph of Chapter Two, Aristotle returns to the necessity that there be a single end to all activity:

If, then, our activities have some end which we want for its own sake, and for the sake of which we want all the other ends - if we do not choose everything for the sake of something else (for this will involve an infinite progression, so that our aim [ὄρεξις] will be pointless and ineffectual) - it is clear that this must be the Good, that it is the supreme good. [1094a19-23]

It is often said that this is a poorly constructed argument for the existence of a single end, for it seems that Aristotle proceeds from the point (in the second part of the protasis) that any chain of

choice must stop *somewhere* to the claim (in the first part of the protasis) that there must be a *single* end to all such chains. However, the supposed fallacy depends on the 'single end' being understood as a determinate point or conclusion. In my view this is mistaken and masks the true significance of the passage, which is to spell out the implicit conditions of the nature of 'choice' itself [προαίρεσις].

Προαίρεσις, a combination of νοῦς and ὄρεξις [1139b5-7] rooted in the λόγος [1139a32-36], must be directed, that is, must have a determinate end. The error is in assuming the same determinacy to be reproduced in the first part of the protasis. In this respect, I am in agreement with Engberg-Pedersen's reading. He understands the notion of 'final end' at this stage of Aristotle's text, and even after its identification as εὐδαιμονία, to be quite *indeterminate*.<sup>2</sup> It is, so to speak, a formal specification whose detail has yet to be filled in by the activities that are eventually chosen. A single, indeterminate, point of all choice is required, Engberg-Pedersen argues, "in order to make sufficiently rational sense of the idea of stopping *particular* chains of choice each at its own particular place" [ATM 31]. If choices are to be rational, it must be possible at least in principle to identify the specific ends they have in view. In itself, however, this is not enough to head off the threat of futility and arbitrariness that accompanies an endless regression, for one must still account for why any particular end was chosen. In other words, there must be a stage at which there is no prospect of further justification, at which there is no longer even the



possibility of seeking an ulterior end. The final end, though still indeterminate, must be inaccessible to interrogation.

This may be clarified by taking the argument a step further: if the rationale for stopping any particular chain of activity at any particular place depends on there being a final end, and if προαίρεσις must in each case have a specific end in view, the very possibility of προαίρεσις as such depends on there being a final end of the kind just described, which then becomes the horizontal condition for the possibility of particular acts.<sup>3</sup> Understood *formally*, that is, as still indeterminate, it is the condition for the possibility of all activity, that is, of activity as such.

The fact that the final end can be treated as formal and indeterminate distinguishes it from specific ends (and defuses the objection that 'all roads lead somewhere' does not imply that they all lead to the same place). However, the precise sense of this indeterminacy is still unclear. Engberg-Pedersen sees it as a requirement of Aristotle's theory, but also as essentially provisional, since it will receive full determination with the choices made. The reading I am proposing treats the indeterminacy of the final end as every bit as necessary, but as more problematic. Perhaps the principal difficulty introduced by the notion of indeterminacy is that of unity: what sense of unity is appropriate to the indeterminacy of the final end and how is it established? In essaying a response to this problem, I shall go on to explore the extent to which the formal character of the final end and its

foundational role with regard to human activity are linked to an understanding of human existence as such. Initially, however, one can see that the question of the form taken by the final end is inseparable from the further question of the nature of the hierarchical totality of different pursuits and ends and of the relations obtaining between its different elements, for these factors will be decisive for the understanding of human life that emerges from the account as a whole. This is brought sharply into focus by Aristotle's acknowledgment that, although the ends of the directive arts are to be preferred in each case to the ends of the subordinate arts:

it makes no difference whether the ends of the actions are the activities themselves or something apart from them...  
[1094a16-18]

Contained in this passage are the seeds of many of the most obstinate problems that Aristotle's text presents to the reader. However, a full discussion of it would be premature at this stage [cf. Ch.1.V], and I shall merely point out that it is far from obvious how activities that are ends in themselves and carried out *for their own sake* may be ordered hierarchically.

From this preliminary survey, it is already clear that two problems are outstanding. The first regards the formal determination of the final end and the second that of the apparently hierarchical relations obtaining between the totality of different ends constituted by that final end. They are brought together in Aristotle's identification of the final end as the Good [*ἀγαθόν*].

## II

Aristotle reports that "the word 'good' is used in as many senses as the word 'is'" [1096a24]. Given this correspondence between the various senses of 'good' and those of 'being,' let us conjecture that the nature of both the final end and the relations giving cohesion to the totality it underpins may be informed by or parallel to the form of unity understood to exist amongst the significations of being. Some insight is therefore required into the conflicting demands of unity and multiplicity that traverse Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and the problems to which this conflict gives rise.

If being is said in many ways [πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον], how can it be the object of a single science? Wherein does its unity lie? This is the problem that Aristotle poses in the *Metaphysics*. The most promising response comes at the beginning of Book Γ, where he declares that:

There is a science which investigates being as being and the attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own nature. [1003a21]<sup>4</sup>

To the objection that a single science could not satisfactorily deal with the entire range of being, Aristotle responds here that whilst such a science would address all regions of being, it would deal solely with the question of being "as being." The perspective is thereby shifted from the being of a thing *qua* thing of a particular kind, to the being of a thing *qua* being, and it is by virtue of this shift that Aristotle can go on to say that such a science "is not the same as any of the so-called special sciences; for none of these others treats universally of being as being."<sup>5</sup> By this change in the



perspective of the enquiry, he provides an initial indication of how the science of being may have a coherent object without necessarily compromising its plurality. However, the indication is far from comprehensive. If being is to be investigated qua being, the meaning of 'qua' must be determined before anything is gained. In other words, to the declaration that the attributes of being are investigated only "in virtue of its own nature" must be added an understanding of this nature.

Different usages of the term 'being' are manifestly not synonymous. Yet the only alternative to synonymy recognized by philosophy prior to Aristotle was homonymy, which describes the accidental conjunction of distinct senses in the same word (e.g. the word κλεις denotes both 'key' and 'clavicle' [1129a30]). Steering a course between the necessity of synonymy (which demands a univocal sense) and the contingency of homonymy (which allows for plurality of senses at the expense of any relation between them), Aristotle draws attention to the case where a term may have a variety of senses that are linked by a single sense to which they each bear a different relation [1003a33ff]. He cites the case of different things that are healthy being related to one another insofar as they are all related to health: thus medical treatment, diet, exercise, a body etc., may all be called healthy without insisting that one is thereby saying exactly the same thing in each case. This is what Aristotle names the πρὸς ἓν relation and elements linked by it are said to be πρὸς ἓν λεγόμενον.<sup>6</sup> Applying this structure to the question of the unity of being, Aristotle then writes:

there are many senses in which a thing is said to be, but all refer to one starting point; some things are said to be because they are substances, others because they are affections of substances, others because they are a process towards substance, or destructions or privations or qualities of substance, or productive or generative of substance, or of things which are relative to substance, or negations of these things or of substance itself. [1003b5f]

Having identified substance [οὐσία]<sup>7</sup> as the focal point to which all other senses of being refer, Aristotle is confident that it is the proper object of the science of being:

everywhere science deals chiefly with that which is primary, and on which the other things depend, and in virtue of which they get their names. If, then, this is substance [οὐσία], it will be of substances that the philosopher must grasp the principles and the causes." [1003b16f]

But if the πρὸς ἓν structure shows a way forward, the unity of the science of being is still far from secure. Although Aristotle's examples of health and the art of medicine present a model for understanding the study of being qua being as a single science, some doubt remains over whether οὐσία is suited to the part it is required to play. First, if οὐσία is itself multiple (in terms of variety of kind and number), the problem of the unity of a study of being is effectively repeated with regard to οὐσία [997a34ff, 1089a32ff].

Aristotle contains the multiplicity of οὐσία by dovetailing a series of orders of priority within the general structure of the πρὸς ἓν relation.<sup>8</sup> First, οὐσία emerges as the primary characteristic of things and therefore most properly the object of the science of being qua being. Having identified three basic kinds of οὐσία,<sup>9</sup> actuality is given priority over potentiality, thereby leading to a priority of



οὐσίᾳ in the sense of form, insofar as it corresponds to actuality as opposed to potentiality and actuality is said to be prior to potentiality [1049b4f]. Finally, οὐσίᾳ as the eternal, immovable first mover, or divine being rises above the rest to a position of overall preeminence [1071b12f].

In effect, the problem of identifying the object of ontology, and thereby establishing the form of the science of being qua being, leads to an increasingly detailed determination of this object, with a new hierarchy emerging at each stage. However, rather than simply narrowing the field of study at each turn, as one might expect, this is understood to extend its scope toward the universality necessary in a science of being. This twist receives its most forceful expression in a passage from Book E.

If there is an immovable substance [οὐσίᾳ], the science of this must be prior and must be first philosophy, and universal in this way, because it is first. [1026a29f]

Although Aristotle claims that first philosophy so understood corresponds to the study of being qua being announced at the beginning of Book Γ, it bears scant resemblance to the earlier formulation. Where Book Γ rejected those sciences which "cut off a part of being and investigate the attribute of this part," Book E sees precisely such a delimitation as the key to universality. How is this possible?

To respond to this question adequately would require a comprehensive study of the whole of the *Metaphysics*, with particular reference to the ontological and theological currents that oppose and, some

believe, complement one another throughout the work. Commentators have sought by various means to defuse the tension of this opposition. Some have ascribed each branch of the theory to different periods in Aristotle's development,<sup>10</sup> others have achieved a coherent interpretation at the expense of recalcitrant parts of the text,<sup>11</sup> a few have eschewed the reductive techniques of biography and surgery in an attempt to preserve the dynamic tension of the whole,<sup>12</sup> and many have seen the theological commitment of Book E as the inevitable conclusion to the application of the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma \ \epsilon\upsilon$  structure to the ontological problem outlined at the beginning of Book  $\Gamma$  (as though Aristotle were deceived by his method into following a path not of his own choosing).<sup>13</sup> Leaving aside the first two reading strategies (which are patently motivated more by the fear of inconsistency than the challenge of thinking), the third regards the two currents as incompatible yet complementary and the final one regards the accomplishment of ontology to lie in its own eclipse. Common to *all* these readings is the view that 'universal' in Book  $\Gamma$  does not mean the same as 'universal' in Book E and that the two meanings are incompatible with one another. (This is true even of the final reading, which regards the introduction of the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma \ \epsilon\upsilon$  structure in E.2 as correcting the provisional formulation of ontology in  $\Gamma$ .1 and precipitating a change in the sense of 'universal' from that in  $\Gamma$ .1 to that found in Book E.) But is this necessarily so? The key to the issue is the equation in E.1 of universality and priority: how is it that what is first is *therefore* universal? This question directs us back to the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma \ \epsilon\upsilon$  relation and calls for clarification of the manner in which the first element is related to each of the remaining



elements. In the context established in Book E, this could easily become a question of the relation between the sublunar and divine worlds, and indeed the theory of analogy was expanded in scholastic philosophy to address precisely this problem. However, such an approach already assumes too much, in the sense that it begins by conceding the conversion of ontology into theology. Yet this occurs only on the basis of a certain understanding of priority. At this point, however, it would be wrong to concede any determinate sense of priority, for it is precisely the relation between the first element and the remaining elements that is in question. Without accepting Aristotle's own solution to this problem (which could barely be considered satisfactory, as the range of interpretations we have just outlined suggest), one is led rather to the quite formal question: what does 'prior' mean? Aristotle defines what he understands by 'prior' at 1018b8ff and develops the notion with regard to actuality at 1049b4ff. However, I shall not rely on these accounts as such. Instead, the enquiry shall be led by formal demands of the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  relation, whose logic is by no means obviously compatible with Aristotle's declared understanding of priority. In this way, the enquiry intends less to 'reconstruct' Aristotle's reading than to probe its limits. Above all, then, what conception of priority is implied by the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  relation?

Pierre Aubenque has grave misgivings about the introduction of the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  relation as a response to the problem of unity (and hence universality): "*cette reponse,*" he asks, "*est-elle autre chose qu'un nouvelle forme de la question?*" Is this response anything more than a



new form of the question?" [PEA 194].<sup>14</sup> Of the problems Aubenque raises, perhaps the most significant for the issue of the 'good' which prompted this discussion of the *Metaphysics* concerns the compatibility of Aristotle's example with the case it was intended to inform. Οὐσία, the term by relation to which the other categories signify being, is accorded priority because it is recognized as being par excellence, the highest form of being, as I have already noted. Yet it is itself a category.

*Elle est le premier terme d'une serie, c'est-à-dire d'un ensemble où il y a de l'antérieur et du postérieur et auquel elle appartient elle-même: le fondement est ici immanent à la serie. [PEA 195]*

It is the first term of a series, that is, an ensemble where there is a prior and posterior and to which it itself belongs: the foundation here is immanent to the series.

If οὐσία is itself one of categories of being whose unity it is supposed to explain, the same cannot be said of health.

*il est clair que la santé, terme de référence, n'est pas lui-même l'une des significations du 'sain': le fondement est ici transcendent à une serie qui n'est autre que la serie de ses propres modalités. [PEA 196]*

It is clear that health, the focal term, is not itself one of the significations of 'healthy': the foundation here is transcendent to the series, which is nothing but the series of its own modalities.

Whilst οὐσία is different from other categories insofar as it has priority over them, it is no less distinct from being *qua* being by virtue of the fact that it is a category. If the case of being were to follow faithfully the example of health, the sense of being to which all the categories refer should *not* itself be a category. This would leave the question of the meaning of priority wide open. Yet

this is not what happens. Instead, οὐσία is accorded priority in such a way as to suggest its conflation of being [1028b4], and this is sanctioned by what is strictly speaking the *misapplication* of the πρὸς ἓν structure.<sup>15</sup>

The orthodox reading of the πρὸς ἓν relation focuses upon οὐσία as the term which confers unity on the multiplicity of being. Yet in doing so it exposes the further problem: how can what is apparently a special region of being unify being as a whole through its identification as being *qua* being. In other words, an explanation of 'priority' has been given at the expense of an understanding of 'universality.' One is bound to ask how οὐσία can be both a category of being and being as such without entailing a reduction of being to the status of a category. An adequate response to this question must first clarify the meaning of 'category,' and it is to this question that I shall turn now.

For the remainder of this section, I shall concentrate on Heidegger's reading of this problem, distinguishing wherever possible between Heidegger's reading of Aristotle and his response to the Aristotelian problematic in his own work.

At the beginning of Book Θ, Aristotle writes:

We have treated of that which *is* primarily and to which all the other categories of being are referred - i.e., οὐσία. For it is in virtue of the concept of οὐσία that the others are said to be - quantity, quality and the like; for all will be found to involve the concept of οὐσία, as we said in the first part of our work. [1045b27-32]



In his 1931 lecture course on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*  $\Theta$  1-3, Heidegger comments on this passage at some length.<sup>16</sup> Referring to the second sentence in particular, he writes:

*Wir finden in diesem Satz [1045b27-32] dreimal: λόγος, λέγεται, λεγόμενον. Die Hin- und Rückbeziehung der übrigen Kategorien auf die erste, von der Aristoteles spricht, spielt sich ab im λόγος. [GA33 5]*

In this phrase [1045b27-32] we find thrice over: λόγος, λέγεται, λεγόμενον. The reference to which Aristotle refers of the remaining categories back and forth to the first takes place in the *logos*.

Heidegger describes the categories as 'rooted' [*beheimatet*] in λόγος [GA33 7], which articulates the relation between οὐσία and the remaining categories. The fact that the λόγος plays this fundamental role, he writes, has facilitated a simplification of the matter in question whose consequences extend well beyond the theory of categories itself into the heart of modern philosophy.

So far, I have referred only to the problems that attend Aristotle's attempt to bring unity to the several categorial senses of being. However, to appreciate Heidegger's complaint over this matter, it is important to remember that there is a further sense in which being is πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον, one that includes the more specific multiplicity articulated by the categories. In *Met.E.2*, Aristotle names four senses in which something is said to be; i) as accidental [*κατὰ συμβεβηχός*]: ii) as true false [*ὡς ἀληθές*]: iii) according to the categories [*κατὰ τὰ σχήματα τῆς κατηγορίας*]: iv) as potential and actual [*κατὰ δύναμιν ἢ ἐνέργειαν*] [1026a33-1026b2]. Over and above its several categorial significations, being is πολλαχῶς in this



wider sense, that is, as τετραχῶς. Most interpretations of Aristotle treat the four senses of being mentioned above as themselves dependent upon the categories. Because οὐσία is the primary category, it is therefore understood to unify the wider sense of multiplicity of being, as well as the categorial sense. Such a reading will clearly tend to view the conflation of οὐσία and being sympathetically. Heidegger certainly opposed a reading of this kind. Without disputing the singular place of οὐσία within the categories of being, he rejected the view that all the senses of being should be drawn back to it as the primary category (in the way this is customarily understood). In his opinion, such a reading, already prevalent in medieval commentaries, encouraged the modern reduction of being, possibility and actuality to the level of categories, culminating in the Kantian theory of categories. In basing the categories of logic on the table of judgements, Kant delivered the fundamental structure of Aristotelian metaphysics over to a typology of linguistic forms and, in Heidegger's view, this represented an impoverishment of the λόγος. He regarded such a reading as blind to an ambiguity by virtue of which the categories also play a foundational role with regard to what can be said about beings

*Man übersieht vor allem einen Grundcharakter der Kategorien, wie Aristoteles sie versteht. Und dieser Grundcharakter der Kategorien ist gerade an unserer Stelle eigens genannt: κατηγορία τοῦ ὄντος, 'kategorien des Seienden.' Was ist damit gemeint: Kategorien, die sich auf das Seiende als ihr 'Objekt' beziehen (genitivus objectivus), oder Kategorien, die dem Seienden als 'Subjekt' angehören (genitivus subjectivus)? Oder ist beides gemeint? Oder keines von beiden? Wir müssen das offenlassen. [GA33 7]*

Above all, one overlooks a fundamental characteristic of the categories, as Aristotle understands them. And this fundamental characteristic is named deliberately at the very

point under discussion: κατηγορίαι τοῦ ὄντος, 'categories of beings.' What is meant by this: categories that relate to the being as their object (genitivus objectivus), or categories that belong to the being as their subject (genitivus subjectivus)? Or are both meant? Or neither of them? We must leave this open.

Although Heidegger's emphasis on the double genitive is unusual amongst readers of Aristotle, he is not alone in attributing two senses to 'category.' Aubenque draws attention to the problem as well, suggesting that it arises from Aristotle's equivocal use of the term 'ὄν' - being: passages where 'ὄν' is presented as a noun promote a view of the categories as 'objective' divisions, whilst passages where 'ὄν' functions as the infinitive 'to be' suggest that

*les catégories sont moins les divisions de l'étant que les modalités [πρώσεις] selon lesquelles l'être signifie l'étant. Elles ne répondent pas à la question: En combien de parties se divise l'étant? mais à cette autre: Comment l'être signifie-t-il? [PEA 184]*

the categories are not so much divisions of beings as modalities [πρώσεις] according to which being signifies beings. The question to which they respond is not 'in how many parts is the being divided?,' but rather 'how does being signify?'

Aubenque rejects the first alternative, embracing the reading of the categories as modalities of the signification of being (subjective genitive).<sup>17</sup> Heidegger, on the other hand, insists on preserving both possibilities alongside one another (though not without conceding the obscurity to which one is committed by their co-existence<sup>18</sup>). In fact, Heidegger's double reading of 'category' corresponds to his presentation of the ontological difference, inasmuch as he describes the objective genitive reading as an ontic use of the term and the subjective genitive reading as an ontological use of the term. In



spite of his insistence that both senses be retained, the emphasis Heidegger placed on what he regarded as the neglected ontological significance of the categories is reflected in his translation of οὐσία, the primary category, by *Seiendheit* and *Anwesenheit*, which denote ways of being, not regions of being.<sup>19</sup> Heidegger draws attention to the fact that οὐσία was an everyday term for possessions, property, things at one's disposal (like the modern German '*Anwesen*'), and understands the ontological sense of οὐσία as the 'presentness' of things which are extant to be derived from this pre-philosophical sense. In support of this interpretation, he quotes a passage from Plato's *Theaetetus*:

There are those who believe nothing exists [*vorhanden*] unless they can grasp it with their hands; everything else does not belong in the realm of οὐσία, of being objectively present [*Vorhandensein*]. [155e4ff] [GA26 145:183].

As the primary category, οὐσία denotes that which distinguishes a being not as any particular kind, but simply as such. Understood in the strictest possible sense, οὐσία determines neither what a thing is nor the manner in which a thing is, but simply *that* it is: or rather, it names that kind of being which the Greeks took as the reference point for saying merely that a thing is.

Elucidating the repercussions of Heidegger's translation of οὐσία as *Seiendheit* on his approach to the unity of being, Volpi implies that Heidegger's ontological interpretation of οὐσία as the character that an entity has simply qua entity means that even if the plurality of being is taken in the sense of the τετραχῶς, οὐσία could still serve as the primary point of reference without entailing that the three



other senses of being are reduced via the categories to an ousiology as customarily understood.<sup>20</sup> As the first category, οὐσία names that which a being - any being - is simply inasmuch as it is a being. This peculiar form of primacy confers a sense of universality upon οὐσία that distinguishes it from other categories: it is 'first' yet insofar as it is not identified with a specific region of being it cannot be the object of a special science. Described in this way, it seems indeed to provide the proper focus of the science of ontology as Aristotle presents it in Book Γ.1.

What conclusions can be drawn from all this? In order to prevent the many senses of being splintering into an aggregate of terms related by accident alone, Aristotle sought the key to their unity in a single primary sense to which each remaining sense referred back. However, the πρὸς ἓν structure which he described is faced with a dilemma. If the primary sense is identified as one of the categories whose unity is at stake, then it seems that it can no longer be recognized as the determination of being qua being that Aristotle has declared to be the proper object of ontology (ontology having been traduced into theology). On the other hand, if it is allowed to be a sense of being transcendent to the remaining individual senses, it is by no means clear what sense it could have (given that it cannot take the form of a genus to which the remaining senses belong). The problem is focussed on the issue of priority and, echoing the end of Section I, leads to two basic questions: i) how is that which is prior to be understood?; ii) how are the remaining senses related to this prior term?

Although I have been able to do no more than raise these issues in the most perfunctory manner, a provisional response may be made to each of the questions. First, the primary term is not a specific sense at the head of a series of similar terms. For a being to have the determinate form which it in each case possesses, it is necessary simply that it be. In this sense, οὐσία, beingness, is a condition of possibility for the existence of determinate beings. Yet beingness cannot precede the articulation and dissemination of being into specific forms (not only throughout the categories, but also throughout the other three principal forms of being). The rival demands of universality and primacy are thereby reconciled without sacrificing the original multiplicity of being.

Second, the question of what is meant by 'priority,' which amounts to the question of how each of the categories and forms of being are grounded, is itself still open. To be sure, οὐσία is not prior in any naive temporal sense. To say that it is logically prior would be more accurate, since the reference of each of the subordinate categories back to οὐσία is rooted in and articulated by the λόγος. However, one would first have to reconsider the meaning of 'logical,' since its form and its place in modern metaphysics depend upon what has emerged as a questionable reading of the very matter which one would have it determine. Whatever form this relation is eventually understood to take, it is not one that is readily described by language generally at our disposal.



### III

To return now to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle addresses himself initially to the meaning of the term 'good' in general. If the meaning of 'good' were encapsulated in a single idea, those things customarily regarded as good in themselves (wisdom, sight and certain pleasures and honours), would be emptied of any significance. Yet if, on the contrary, the idea of the good were internal to those classes of things, it would impose a single universal sense upon all classes, destroying the manifest multiplicity of senses attributed to the term 'good.' Aristotle therefore rejects the possibility that 'good' corresponds to a single idea [1096a12-1096b26]. Instead, the remark that "things are called good in as many senses as they are said to exist" [1096a24] leads directly to the conclusion that the multiplicity of 'good' is translated via the doctrine of categories from that of being. However, we should refrain from any precipitous assumptions about the nature of this translation, since the manner in which the influence of the problems and analyses of the *Metaphysics* is transmitted to the *Nicomachean Ethics* is by no means clear.

In the wake of Aristotle's opening declaration [1094a1-4, p.21], the multiplicity of senses belonging to the term 'good' would appear to present a serious problem. Surprisingly, perhaps, Aristotle does not seem to be overly concerned, speculating only briefly on the unity of the good in general before dismissing the problem as irrelevant to the present enquiry:

even if the goodness predicated in common is some one thing or has a separate existence of its own, clearly it cannot be



realized in action or acquired by man. Yet it is precisely that sort of good that we are looking for now. [1096b30-38]

Aristotle recalls that the investigation is not aimed at knowledge of an abstract ideal. But what is meant by the appeal to the 'practicable good'? It may be that Aristotle intends nothing more than to restrict the scope of the discussion to human activity as such and as a whole. In this case, the form of the question would be the same as that of the 'good in general,' but on a slightly smaller scale. In addition, however, it seems likely that Aristotle's rejection of the 'absolute' reading of the good, is linked to his insistence that "the end of this science is not knowledge but action" [1095a6]. One could understand this to mean that although the immediate end of the enquiry is knowledge of the practicable good, its ultimate end is the application of this knowledge to the field of human action. Alternatively, the two passages could, and indeed should in my view, be read as more intimately complementary, such that the practicable good is itself one with the action that constitutes the end of the enquiry.<sup>21</sup> The inherent unity of the different senses of the good therefore concerns the unity of human activity, and not subsequently or by way of its application. Insofar as it deals with the relation of each individual sense of good to the unity inherent in activity, it concerns what might be called the 'logic' of human activity, that is, the manner in which it is grounded. Consequently, the problem of unity by no means disappears when the notion of an ideal Good is set aside in favour of the practicable good or the "Good of man" [1094b8]. Rather, it is repeated as the question of how the field of human activity is

constituted as a unity: ultimately, at stake is nothing less than the determination of human being.

In view of this, the hypothetical solutions that Aristotle offers to the problem of unity with regard to *all* significations of the term good, like the attempts at a solution to the problem of the unity of being, will indeed be relevant, although a note of caution should be sounded: it is nonetheless possible that the form of unity proper to the practicable good and human activity will differ from that which belongs to the solutions mooted to the other *theoretical* problems. This can only be settled after an examination of the practicable good, which follows in Sections IV and V.

Aristotle's speculation on the manner in which all senses of 'good' are constituted as a unity is brief:

But in what sense, then, are ... [different] things called good? Because they do not seem to be accidental homonyms. Is it that all goods derive from or contribute to one good? Or is it rather than they are good by analogy: as sight is good in the body, so is intuition in the mind, and so on?  
[1096b26-30]

The first possible explanation of the homonymic character of the term 'good,' namely that it is simply accidental, may be satisfactory for other examples of homonymy, but it can explain neither that of 'good.' nor that of 'being.' The second is a more serious candidate. Aristotle considers the idea of a  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma \ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  relation similar to that which is presumed to obtain in the case of being. The third hypothesis is that of analogy,<sup>22</sup> and its origin lies in mathematics: a is to b as c is to d, etc.. Reversing the form of the previous



explanation, the many senses ascribed to the term 'good' are unified not by referring them to a single 'good,' but rather by identifying a single invariant relation holding between each 'good' and a corresponding signification of being.

Opinion is divided over which of these views is Aristotle's own. Burnet sees no alternative to the analogical argument.<sup>23</sup> Aubenque, too, is confident that the homonymy of 'good' may only be explained by analogy with the multiple significations of being.<sup>24</sup> Gauthier and Jolif, however, are less convinced by the case for the analogical argument.<sup>25</sup>

In considering the rival claims of the  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  and analogical hypotheses, one is struck by the fact that they emphasise different usages of the term 'good.' The analogical explanation, focussing upon the invariant relation between categories of being and determinations of the good, emphasises the *relational* character of the term: as Aubenque writes, "*le Bien en tant que bien est précisément ce qu'il y a d'égal entre ces différents rapports: the Good as such is precisely that which is constant amongst the different relations*" [PEA 203]. By contrast, if unity is established by the  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  relation, then different *things* which are good are all related to a single good thing: thus, Aristotle refers to "*the Good of man,*" "*the practicable good*" etc..

The two alternatives clearly deploy the term 'good' in different ways, but the difference seems to be primarily grammatical. There is an equivocation between an adjectival usage, which relies on a



correspondence between examples of good things and the categories of being to which they belong, and a substantive usage, where what 'is good' corresponds to the recipient of the predicate in the analogical explanation. Of course, grammatical differences may articulate profound metaphysical disjunctions. However, they may also create the illusion of differences that have little or no basis outside the entrenched expediency of grammatical form. In the present case, the different usages of 'good' employed by the alternative theories of unity may be more compatible than is generally supposed.

It seems reasonable to assume that, as the analogical explanation has it, 'good' only signifies insofar as on each occasion it names the relation between a category of being and its preeminent instantiation. Those who defend the analogical explanation stop there. But if there is a direct correspondence between things identified as 'good' and the categories of being, then the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma \ \epsilon\upsilon\nu$  structure which unifies the multiple senses of being should be reflected in the order of things identified as 'good.' The  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma \ \epsilon\upsilon\nu$  structure holds with regard to the good *because* of the analogy with being, not in place of it.

Consequently, there should also a substantive sense of 'good' corresponding to the primary signification anchoring the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma \ \epsilon\upsilon\nu$  structure in the case of being. Is this the case, and if so, why have the two alternatives been pitted against one another as rivals?

The two approaches have been regarded as incompatible because the theory appealing to the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma \ \epsilon\upsilon\nu$  relation has relied upon a reading of

the problem of unity with regard to being that reduces being to οὐσία understood as one of the categories in the most traditional sense. Consequently, the highest good, corresponding to the highest category, is the highest form of οὐσία: in general this is divine being, and in the case of humanity it is νοῦς.<sup>26</sup> By contrast, the analogical theory of unity with regard to good is compelled to take into consideration all instances of the term, drawing unity from the form of the common relation to which they give a name. Rather than isolating a single region of human being, the notion of the human good arising from the analogical reading is therefore more likely to conform to the so called 'inclusive' reading, which regards *all* human activity as contributing (in some uncertain fashion) to the final end of εὐδαιμονία. But if the primary term of the πρὸς ἓν relation with regard to being is understood to be οὐσία not as ordinarily understood, but rather as outlined in Section II, then the influence of the πρὸς ἓν relation on the problem of the good will not result in the privilege of one region of being over the rest and may leave open the possibility of an inclusive reading not unlike that which emerges from the analogical account.

If the primary sense of being is οὐσία understood as *Seiendheit* or *Anwesenheit*, as the minimal condition of beingness that somehow (for precisely how is still obscure) precedes the further determination of the being in question, then what is the corresponding sense of good? Although mindful of the difficulty of this matter and of the caution it demands, one might venture that, just as οὐσία denotes that which a being has insofar as it is, regardless of *what* it is, so the good



will be that which characterises a good simply insofar as it is good. Whilst the primary sense of good is that in virtue of which a specific good is good, this does not entail its independence from that which it grounds: if it is to correspond to the primary sense of being, it will be an immanent condition.<sup>27</sup>

#### IV

The narrative now returns to the end of Section I, where two problems were identified with regard to activity and the final end: the formal determination of the final end and the nature of the apparently hierarchical relations obtaining between the totality of different ends constituted by that final end. However, the points raised in Sections II and III also insist upon a hearing. The proximity that emerged there between Aristotle's conception of the good and the interpretation of being as irreducible to a single category implies the possibility of a similar link between such a conception of being and the practical or human good. If this were indeed the case, we should find a conception of εὐδαιμονία, the final end, that is not distinct from the referential teleology it makes possible.

Aristotle presents his definition of 'εὐδαιμονία' in the passage known as the 'ἔργον argument.' The standard English translation of ἔργον is 'function,' but this only captures part of what is intended. Although the primary sense of ἔργον may be that of 'product' or 'work,' it is not linked solely with the purpose or end of an



activity, but also connotes the activity by which something comes to be, and this is the predominant sense here. Above all, ἔργον is intended to convey the activity by which something or someone may be defined, e.g. a flautist plays the flute, a builder builds, the eye sees etc.. Hence some have argued for alternative translations, such as "characteristic activity,"<sup>28</sup> "that which we do which makes us what we are"<sup>29</sup> and "defining capacity or activity."<sup>30</sup> The good of human kind, Aristotle argues, may be established by identifying the ἔργον of human kind [1097b26-29]. For just as the good of a flautist or carpenter resides in the felicitous practice of their own vocation, so the good of human kind will be associated with the activity proper to it. Aristotle then allows himself to express the slightest of doubts: "assuming that man has an ἔργον." The possibility that humanity may lack a definitive activity, that is, lack a definition, an identity, a form, is dismissed on the strength of a brace of analogies. The first likens human life as such to the activity of carpenters and shoemakers, arguing from their possession of an ἔργον to the existence of an ἔργον of human kind in general. The second makes a similar step from the activities proper to the various parts of the human body to the activity proper to the human being as a whole.

Even if one leaves aside certain features that complicate the examples to which he appeals here,<sup>31</sup> Aristotle's reasoning still appears somewhat exorbitant. Is there any justification for arguing from the existence of a form of activity proper to a craftsman to the existence of a form of activity proper to humanity as such? Does the

fact that a part of the human body performs a specific role entail that the whole person, body and soul, is similarly well directed? In spite of the suspicion such a claim may arouse at first, Aristotle's reasoning here is both clear and consistent with the basic framework of the text as a whole.

A spurious reading of the passage might run like this. To be a carpenter is to have the capacity to work wood. To be a shoemaker is to have the capacity to make shoes. What does one have to be able to do to be human? Its mistake would lie in the assumption that the ἔργον of human being will be of the same order as those of the carpenter and the shoemaker. But just as 'human being' is of a different order from 'artisan,' so the activity definitive of human being is not of the same order as carpentry and shoemaking. Aristotle asks whether it is not right to assume that human being has an ἔργον "over and above" those of individual people or the groups to which they belong.<sup>32</sup> This "over and above" announces a shift to a new level of questioning. Just as in *Metaphysics* Γ Aristotle rejected those sciences that study being in virtue of one or other of its attributes, calling rather for an enquiry into being qua being, so here he sets aside considerations of human beings qua workers of wood, sighted animals, etc., and questions the nature of human being qua human being. 'Over and above' specific forms of activity, the activity definitive of human being is activity in general or as such. Aristotle proceeds towards such a determination by excluding those activities common to plant and animal life in order to delimit the



ἔργον of humanity as the active exercise of the soul's faculties in accordance with λόγος [ἔργον ἀνθρώπου ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατὰ λόγον]. Definitively human activity is thus an ἐνέργεια. But is this a determination of activity per se or of that which is most human in all that humans do? Elsewhere, Aristotle identifies human life as an ἐνέργεια [1175a12-13 and 1048b25-29], and this seems to favour the former view. Yet the passage to which we are referring here implies that the definitively human ἐνέργεια is no more than a region of possible activity. The characteristically human relation to λόγος seems to be presented as the crowning glory of an otherwise animal existence. Indeed, one could regard this view as supported by the well known definition of the human being as the ζῷον λόγον ἔχων, the animal endowed with λόγος. However, one need not regard λόγος as an additional property. Aristotle argues that since human beings share the capacity for αἴσθησις [perception] with animals, αἴσθησις cannot feature in a determination of human being [1098a1-3]. Yet αἴσθησις may not be the same in the cases of both animal and human life. Might not the relation to λόγος lead to a modification in the very nature of αἴσθησις? Is seeing something to which λόγος is added, or is it not always suffused and mediated by λόγος? Certainly, Heidegger took the latter view, insisting that "*Das Wahrnehmen [αἴσθησις] des Tieres ist ... von Grund aus anders als das des Menschen: Animal perception [αἴσθησις] is ... fundamentally different from that of man.*"<sup>33</sup> Heidegger's reasons for taking this view concern the relations between αἴσθησις, νοῦς and ultimately ἀλήθεια. Although we cannot enter into this matter fully here, the implications of such a reading



are important for our own enquiry and are worth noting. It suggests that the ἔργον of human being should not be regarded as a piecemeal addition to a residual or substantial animality, but should be seen rather as a comprehensive determination embracing regions of human life beyond those ordinarily associated with reasoning or the expression of ideas through language. On this reading, the determination of human life does not have a biological basis. Remi Brague draws our attention to a precedent for such a reading in Aristotle himself, remarking upon his surprising tendency to "*[faire] passer le qualifié avant la substance, ce qui n'est pas de bonne logique: give priority to the qualified case over the substance, which is not good logic.*"<sup>34</sup> Commenting specifically on the reference to life as an ἐνέργεια found in Met.Θ.6:1048b25-29, he adds:

*Faire précéder le simple 'vivre' d'un 'vivre qualifié, c'est montrer qu'il n'est pas question ici d'une vie biologique, mais de la vie que nous vivons effectivement et qui, comme telle, est toujours vécue dans des conditions déterminées qui la rendent plus ou moins bonne, plus ou moins heureuse.*  
[AQM 474-475]

To allow a qualified 'to live' to precede a straightforward 'to live' is to show that it is not a matter of biological life, but rather of the life that we actually live and that, as such, is always lived under determinate conditions that render it more or less good, more or less happy.

Like λόγος, 'good' does not remain extrinsic to the form of life that it qualifies, but rather determines it from the very beginning. If this seems surprising, let us remember that the whole of the ἔργον argument is premised on the existence of an intrinsic link between the good of an activity and that activity itself. Having established the ἔργον of human being, Aristotle invokes this link in order to

derive a determination of εὐδαιμονία. The argument is simply this: the ἔργον of an individual and that of a good individual are generically the same. Thus, for example, if the ἔργον of a harper is to play the harp, that of a good harper is to play the harp well [1098a8-13]:

if we assume that the ἔργον of man is a kind of life, viz., an activity or series of actions of the soul, implying a rational principle [δὲ ψυχῆς ἐνέργειαν καὶ πράξεις μετὰ λόγου]; and if the ἔργον of a good man is to perform these well and rightly; and if every ἔργον is performed well when performed in accordance with its proper excellence: if all this is so, the conclusion is that the good for man is an activity of soul in accordance with virtue [τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ἀγαθὸν ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια γίνεται κατ'ἀρετήν]. [1098a13-17]

Aristotle's argument hinges on the intrinsic link between the performance of an activity and the performance of that activity well, that is, between an activity and its virtue. In the context of the argument, the link allows Aristotle to pass from 'ἔργον' to 'εὐδαιμονία.' Yet the direction may also be reversed. One could have no conception of playing the harp without *some* idea of what it is to play the harp well. Similarly, to take the important intellectual virtues outlined in Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, one could not engage in ποίησις [making] without τέχνη [know-how] or perform ethico-political πράξεις without the ability of φρόνησις to disclose the situation aright. The formal determinations of activity would have no sense independently of or prior to their alliance with virtue and thereby a sense of what it would be to perform them well. An activity performed badly may not display the virtue with which it is associated, but it is not without relation to that virtue: it is



precisely *lacking* the virtue it requires for the activity to be performed well. Even before virtue is acquired, then, the activity in question will be characterized negatively with regard to that virtue, as a deficient mode.

Two points of particular significance for our present study emerge from all of this. First, is the fact that the ἔργον of human life is not confined to a particular region or identified as a specific activity. What Aristotle calls the ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατὰ λόγον is not what human beings do at times, in contrast to other possibilities or in addition to their animal existence: it is simply what they do do, inescapably and at all times, prior to or irrespective of any determination or choice. Second, even if one fails to realize one's potential to act in conformity with virtue, that is, even if one fails to live *well*, the ἐνέργεια of one's faculties in connection with λόγος is nonetheless determined with a view towards the *good* life.

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Let us conclude by returning to the question that has served as a refrain for the whole of this chapter: what is the relation between activity and its end - above all the final end identified as εὐδαιμονία?

We have seen that Aristotle's conception of human activity is governed by the sense of the good conveyed by the prefix εὖ-. And we



have seen that the activity definitive of human being is an ἐνέργεια. If we grant the formal equivalence of ἐνέργεια and πράξις in the context of practical philosophy, these two indications are brought together in a vital passage in Book VI (to which we shall return in Section V):

whoever makes something always has some further end in view: that which is made is not an end itself, it is relative and for someone. Whereas that which is done [τὸ πρακτόν] is an end in itself, since doing well [εὐπραξία] is the end, and what desire aims at. [1139b2-5]<sup>35</sup>

This is the point at which Aristotle first makes explicit the distinction between ποίησις [making] and πράξις [action] to which he alluded in the opening paragraphs of Book I. From the beginning it seemed that the distinction had been introduced to delimit human activity and thereby avert the threat of an infinite regress. The role of πράξις in such a delimitation is now stated plainly; if the end of ποίησις is in each case converted into the means towards some further end, then the form of activity associated with the final end, εὐδαιμονία, can only take the form of πράξις. Clearly, this is not to suggest that the final end of all activity is a specific act. Rather, πράξις should be understood here as describing the motif of the whole of life, not only in the sense that it must embrace all forms of act, but also in the sense that it is congruent with the whole of a life (this follows directly from Aristotle's stipulation that the ἐνέργεια associated with εὐδαιμονία must last a complete lifetime [1098a18]). Moreover, the good at which all things aim does not lie beyond life, or properly speaking even at the end of life. For life is an activity

which is an end in itself; as *πρᾶξις*, it is one with its end - a conjunction conveyed succinctly by the term equivalent to *εὐδαιμονία*, namely, *εὐπράξια* [1098b21-22]).

Looking back over the ground covered so far, Section III raised the possibility of a parallel between the good and the sense of being outlined in Section II. Such a parallel would require the good operative in the account of human activity to be that in virtue of which a specific good is good, yet not such as to be independent of the order it grounds. The convergence of *εὐδαιμονία* and activity in general or as such in the figure of *πρᾶξις* seems to promise precisely this.

## V

On first inspection, there is a marked discrepancy between the alternative forms of unity to which Aristotle refers, albeit briefly, at 1096b26-30 and the apparently teleological structure announced in the opening lines of the text. Despite calling for some comment, this matter is seldom addressed directly. Of course, Aristotle himself sets a most respectable precedent in this respect, making little or no attempt to demonstrate the relevance to human activity of the *πρὸς ἕν* relation (or any of the other alternatives). Strictly speaking, however, to characterize the problem as a discrepancy between the *πρὸς ἕν* relation as it is said to apply to the good and the teleological relation in terms of which human activity is described



is to misrepresent the issue. For, as I stated at the beginning of this chapter, the teleological terms in which the account is apparently lodged are themselves never satisfactory. This has now been brought into relief by the determination of the final end as  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  and as co-extensive with the whole of a life. In the light of this, we must seek to clarify the apparent discrepancy between the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma\ \tilde{\epsilon}\nu$  and teleological structures, that is, we must return again to the question of the relation between individual activities and the final end by which they are constituted as a totality.

At the end of Section I, I referred to Aristotle's declaration that the subordinate ends pursued for the sake of the final end may be either ends distinct from the activity which produced them or activities that are ends in themselves [1094a16-18]. As a preliminary indication of the issues at the heart of the sections to follow, I then drew attention to the difficulty in understanding how activities that are ends in themselves may also be for the sake of the final end. For Gauthier and Jolif, the suggestion that activities which are ends in themselves are also for the sake of a further end marks a "fundamental incoherency" in Aristotle's account which arises from the failure of Aristotle's analyses to match the originality of his insight into the distinctive form of ethical activity [ENT 7]. Whilst Aristotle recognizes the distinctively absolute form of ethical activity as that which is an end in itself,

*il applique à l'action morale des analyses conçues pour rendre compte de la production, et s'il se trouve par là amené à l'expliquer en termes de relativité: au lieu d'être*



*sa fin à elle-même, l'action morale devient un moyen de faire autre chose qu'elle-même, le bonheur.* [ENT 7]

he applies to ethical action the analyses conceived in order account for production, and is thereby led to explain it in relative terms. Instead of being an end in itself, ethical action becomes a means to make something other than itself, namely, εὐδαιμονία.

Yet εὐδαιμονία itself has the form of πρόξις and cannot be the product of an anterior activity. If Gauthier and Jolif are right, the terms in which Aristotle's discourse is couched will prejudice the articulation not only of the specificity of ethical activity and the relation of such activity to the final end, but also of the form of the final end itself. (As the analyses in Section IV have shown, this in turn will place doubts over the conception of human being that arises out of Aristotle's account.) Ackrill, commenting on Gauthier's and Jolif's reading of this passage, suggests that the sentence in question be taken as an invitation

to think of a kind of subordination which makes it perfectly possible to say that moral action is for the sake of *eudaimonia* without implying that it is a means of producing ("*faire*") *something other than itself*. [AE 20]

In itself, this is an entirely laudable proposal. Indeed, as we shall see shortly, far more hangs on it than Ackrill seems to realize. However, if activities that are ends in themselves are also to be for the sake of the final end, and if the final end is not to be a thing made, then coherency alone demands that the relation of activities to the final end must be understood otherwise than in terms of production - whereupon the apparent teleology announced at the outset will be released from its narrow linear track. Ackrill himself is

unconvincing in his response to the invitation, understandably proving more adept at saying what is not the case than of giving a positive account. Rightly, he insists that εὐδαιμονία is not the result of a lifetime's effort. Correctly, he adds that various bits of a life must be complete in themselves and not "just means for bringing about subsequent bits." But his own offering is less surefooted:

That the primary *ingredients* of *eudaimonia* are for the sake of *eudaimonia* is not incompatible with their being ends in themselves; for *eudaimonia* is *constituted* by activities that are ends in themselves. [AE 19]

This is clearly of help only insofar as the meaning of 'constitution' is shown to be distinct from that of production. Similarly, ingredients are customarily understood to be used in making compounds of some kind. Yet later in the same essay, Ackrill remarks that the very idea of constructing a compound end may arouse suspicion: yet if the compound is not to be a mere aggregate of subordinate ends, what is the "unifying plan"? Setting aside for another time the task of a full response to this question (the question which has occupied us throughout this chapter), Ackrill suggests that the manner in which subordinate ends are related to the final end should be understood in the light of Aristotle's discussion of the self-sufficiency of the final end [1097b8-20]. Like Burnet and Gauthier and Jolif, he understands the self-sufficiency of εὐδαιμονία to mean that it "includes" all other good things. However, little is gained thereby, since no attempt is made to elaborate an alternative to the language of parts and wholes which is expressly ruled out by Aristotle in the



very same passage and which actually conforms to the model of production [1097b17-20]. Indeed, Ackrill quotes Gauthier and Jolif approvingly; "*il est en effet lui-même la somme qui inclut tous les biens*: in effect, it is the *sum that includes* all goods" [AE 22: ENT 53 My emphasis]. This merely veils the question of how 'inclusion' is to be understood.<sup>36</sup> When 'includes' is used with the subject 'sum,' it is difficult to avoid the idea of aggregation that has already been declared inadequate.

The ease with which Ackrill and Gauthier and Jolif inadvertantly deploy the very structure they proposed to avoid testifies, perhaps, less to their negligence than to the pervasiveness of this trope, which seems to confront one at every turn. Aristotle's own articulation of the relation of ποίησις and πρόξις suffers from the same problem. In the previous section, I quoted the following passage from Book VI:

Thought alone moves nothing, but only thought for-the-sake-of something and concerned with action. This indeed governs ποίησις also, since whoever makes something always has some further end in view: that which is made is not an end in itself, but it is relative and for someone. Whereas that which is done [τὸ πραχτόν] is an end in itself, since doing well [εὖπραξία] is the end, and what desire aims at. [1139a35f]

As I noted before, this tells us that the final end has the form of πρόξις, whereby πρόξις is elevated to a position of priority over ποίησις, in its capacity as the form of the final end which grounds the totality of all activities and pursuits. However, the priority is neither clear cut nor conclusive. Commenting on this passage,



Bernasconi asks what is meant by the claim that productive activity is governed by purposive and practical thought, that is, thought 'for the sake of' something. Aristotle uses the term ἀρχή to describe this relation, which is to be understood in reference to his doctrine of the four causes. More precisely, writes Bernasconi, "the practical is construed as the final cause of ποίησις" [FDP 116]. This helps to explain the foundational role of πρᾶξις, but in so doing it raises a profound problem.

Πρᾶξις may bear its own end in itself, but how can it be the cause of ποίησις without being conceived as an external goal? And if we grant to Heidegger that the doctrine of the four causes has its source in the experience of making, then Aristotle's reference of πρᾶξις to causality ... places it within the referential teleology of ποίησις. In this way πρᾶξις - at the very time it is privileged over ποίησις - comes to be interpreted in the light of ποίησις. [FDP 117]<sup>37</sup>

If πρᾶξις is the final cause and external goal of all activity, then it is cemented in a structure determined by production, the very form of activity over which it is ostensibly accorded priority. The distinction between ποίησις and πρᾶξις is not an original axis about which Aristotle's text turns, since it is made within a framework that belongs entirely to one of the terms of the opposition, namely, ποίησις. The hegemony this guarantees to ποίησις ensures that πρᾶξις can never be articulated in its own terms and is always subordinate to ποίησις.<sup>38</sup> As Bernasconi concludes, "the transformation πρᾶξις undergoes in being assimilated into the language of Aristotle's metaphysics, and the distortion it suffers when it is integrated into a structure which postpones it in favor of ποίησις, better shows the problem of sustaining a recognition of πρᾶξις than it shows πρᾶξις

itself" [FDP 117]. Moreover, the subordination of *πρᾶξις* to *ποίησις* has not been without effects. Its legacy has been the gradual eclipse of the specificity of practical reason and action by instrumental reason and activity, culminating in the impoverishment of both activity and reason which Horkheimer and Arendt, amongst others, identify as a malaise of the modern age.<sup>39</sup> As Arendt writes, "The issue at stake is, of course, not instrumentality, the use of means to achieve an end, as such, but rather the generalization of the fabrication experience in which usefulness and utility are established as the ultimate standards for life and the world of men" [HC 157]. The danger inherent in such a generalization stems from the fact that "utility established as meaning generates meaninglessness" [HC 154]. Aristotle detected the same danger in the infinite procession of means and ends that threatened to render all desires futile and sought to avert this procession by appealing to the figure of an end in itself, articulated as *πρᾶξις*. However, its capacity to do this remains compromised by its dependence upon the structure of productive activity it ostensibly grounds. The drift of productive activity into meaninglessness can only be checked by the articulation of *πρᾶξις* at the limits of production.

Can *πρᾶξις* be understood otherwise than as the external goal of all activity, and would this be sufficient to wrest it free from the influence of production? Our association of *πρᾶξις* with the *ἔργον* of human being understood as activity in general or as such seems promising in this respect, insofar as the final end as *εὐπραξία* is thereby understood not as something to be attained only at the end.



For *πρᾶξις* is the form of the totality of activity as such, and whilst it is determined from the very beginning by the possibility of its accomplishment as *εὐπραξία*, this is a necessarily intrinsic moment of activity itself and not a future goal. As a result, we can say that for *πρᾶξις* to be understood otherwise than as an external end, it is less a matter of breaking with its determination as a final cause than of understanding the final cause otherwise than as an external end. Of course, its success in sidestepping the condition of externality depends on its ability to disengage from the format of production - in favour of a form of relation modelled on that which emerged from our treatment of the problem of unity with regard to being in the *Metaphysics*.

The tendency to impute a referential teleology to an activity which is an end in itself bears witness to a lacuna in the very conception of *πρᾶξις*. This is expressed succinctly by Nicolaci, who warns against the reading for which:

*la πρᾶξις non sarebbe ποίησις solo perché sarebbe, in realtà, quella ποίησις che non rinvia a nessun'altra.*  
[LHP 245]

*πρᾶξις* would *not* be *ποίησις* only because, in reality, it would be *that* *ποίησις* which does not refer on to any other.

Such an understanding commits a travesty of *πρᾶξις*, delivering the relation of activities to the final end into the terms of production. Accordingly, the key to any advance in understanding the manner in which individual acts are related to activity in general or as such lies in avoiding this travesty of *πρᾶξις*, that is, as I have said



before, in articulating the form of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  otherwise than in terms derived from the experience of production.

On his part, Nicolaci begins by referring back to the passage where Aristotle rejects the prospect of an infinite procession of means and ends. The end that is desired for its own sake cannot, he writes, be understood as the final term in a linear series of actions wished for the sake of something else.

*Al contrario, esso definisce l'ambito a partire dal quale la serie stessa puo essere pensata nelle sue condizioni di possibilità e ricompresa secondo un ordine più interno: quello secondo cui si schiude, si rende originariamente possibile la divaricazione del bene-strumento e, così, la dimensione del rinvio. [LHP 244]*

On the contrary, it defines the region on the basis of which the series itself may be thought with regard to its conditions of possibility and understood according to a more internal order: that which makes possible the original opening out of the instrument-good and thereby the dimension of referral.

In recognizing the role of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  - as the form of that which is wished for its own sake alone - in making the whole series possible, Nicolaci's reading recalls what was sketched out initially in Section I. And insofar as  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  is said to open the dimension in which productive activity takes place, it is situated on a different level to that which it grounds. Emphasising this separation, Nicolaci goes some way towards withdrawing  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  from  $\pi\omicron\iota\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , if only into the "virtual space" in which he situates the articulation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  [p.16-17].

*Solo perché la sua condizione specifica di esistenza si colloca su quel livello nel quale si definisce in generale la possibilità del  $\pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\upsilon\nu$  e non già sullo sfondo di una tale*

*possibilità, la πρᾶξις può essere pensata come qualcosa di diverso per genere dalla ποιήσις e non già come una sorta di ποιήσις suprema. [LHP 244]*

Only because its specific condition of existence is situated on the level where the possibility of ποιῆν in general is defined, and not against the background of such a possibility, can πρᾶξις be thought as something *generically* different to ποιήσις and not merely as a kind of *supreme* ποιήσις.

Nicolaci's reading strikes a chord with the interpretation explored in Section IV in the light of the preceding account of οὐσία and its role in securing the unity of being. Just as πρᾶξις was understood there to denote activity in general or as such, so Nicolaci rightly objects to πρᾶξις being treated "as though it were an alternative possibility of human comportment" and proposes, in the light of the ἔργον argument [1097b1ff], that it be understood as the activity "proper to man *qua human being*" [LHP 251]. Nicolaci describes this as essentially the capacity to comport oneself in and with regard to the world by virtue of one's possession of the λόγος. It is important to see, however, that λόγος is the "manner and not only the object of ἔχειν" [LHP 253], that is, it fundamentally determines the nature of the relation between the elements in question:

*λόγον ἔχειν per l'uomo, non significa appropriarsi della parola come modo di rapportarsi a se stesso bensì rapportarsi a se stesso al modo proprio del λόγος, della parola. [LHP 256]*

for human being, λόγον ἔχειν does not mean *appropriating the word* as a way of relating to oneself, but rather relating to oneself in the way *proper to the λόγος*, the word.

If the πρᾶξις characteristic of human being is determined by the possession of the λόγος, then the form of πρᾶξις itself will depend



directly on the nature of the relatedness "proper to the λόγος." Nicolaci goes on to give an insightful account of this problem, taking as his point of departure Heidegger's reading of the λόγος as *Kundschaft* and *Kundgabe*.<sup>40</sup> However, his description of the form of *πρᾶξις* to which this gives rise runs into difficulty when trying to express the form of self-relatedness at issue. In the passage quoted above, Nicolaci distinguishes between two such forms. The first, according to which human being deploys the λόγος in order to achieve a relation to itself, corresponds to a view determined by production, insofar as it describes an intentional and linear progression from beginning to end by means of an intermediary. The second, according to which the relation of human being to itself occurs by virtue and in the manner of the λόγος, describes a form of self-relatedness that seems to break with the model of production, since the relata do not precede the relation between them. Exploring this possibility, however, Nicolaci is compelled to resort again and again to terminology more appropriate to the unfavoured alternative and uses the expressions "*rapportarsi a se stesso*" [relate to oneself] and "*raggiungersi*" [reach or come to oneself] indifferently with regard to the mode of relatedness specific to the λόγος and the mode of relatedness based upon productive comportment.<sup>41</sup> The distinction has once more been announced, but not carried through and articulated.

The task of setting out the relation to the final end otherwise than in terms of production is constantly frustrated in general by the dominance of conceptual forms belonging to production and in particular by the fact that the conception of 'end' is itself drawn



from the discourse of production. All the efforts made in this chapter to expose the incoherencies attendant upon the hegemony of the language of production and to trace the possibility of an alternative approach ultimately founder on this point and exhaust themselves in a series of negative determinations. A positive characterization of the structure and relation in question remains out of reach.

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The two problems highlighted at the end of Section I have been addressed, directly or obliquely, throughout the subsequent four sections of the chapter. Whilst this has led to a better appreciation of the significance and complexity of the matter, it has done little to resolve it. In short, the two problems are still outstanding. The first of these is the relation of activity to the final end. If  $\pi\acute{o}\iota\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$  is not to preserve the dominance of the discourse of activity that leads to the incoherency of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ , the 'for the sake of' relation must be articulated without reference to the general framework of production. Acting 'for the sake of' the final end cannot be the same as acting 'in order to produce' the final end. This problem was given a new twist in Section IV with the association of the final end with activity in general or as such. This itself is enough to prevent  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  being treated as the *external* goal for all activity and goes some way towards demonstrating the inapplicability of relations of production. However, the form of relation which actually obtains still remains obscure. In turn, and here we come to

the second problem, this points to the difficulty in articulating the form of πράξις itself, whether in the sense of a specific act or in the sense of activity in general or as such. Until these problems can be resolved, the recovery of a conception of πράξις that might secure the basis of an ontology that is not naive - a recovery that requires a determination of the specificity of Dasein - will fail insofar as such a conception will continue to be determined by the experience of ποίησις in ways over which it has no control.

## Chapter Two

### TRANSCENDENCE AND THE RADICALIZATION OF *PRAXIS*

We saw in the Introduction that Aristotle's practical philosophy presented Heidegger with a means of dispelling a perceived naivety in Greek ontology. In setting out to assess the impact of Aristotle's conception of  $\pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  on Heidegger's understanding of Dasein, my point of departure will be the account in *Being and Time* §§15-18 of Dasein's everyday concern. The view Heidegger is concerned to resist in this account is that which regards things primarily as 'mere things' that are only subsequently invested with value and purpose. As we have already seen, the understanding of being presupposed by such a view, now firmly enshrined in the metaphysical tradition and exemplified above all in the interpretation of substance as matter (and arguably reflected even in the Kantian *Ding-an-sich*), grew initially out of the experience of production and above all of the work. It is, however, not only a highly one-sided view of the work that suppresses the important fact that works are only ever made and handled in a pre-constituted context of needs and possibilities, but it is also an incomplete reflection of production as a whole, passing over the movement of disclosure to the fixed point of its conclusion in the work.



The problem arises with the elevation of theoretical intuition to a position of unwarranted priority over other forms of comportment towards things. Whilst this tendency may have manifested itself first in Greek thought, it was nowhere more evident than in the phenomenological theory of Heidegger's contemporary and teacher Husserl. Yet Heidegger also found in Husserl the insights he required to counter the problem. Turning Husserl's suspicion of the naturalistic standpoint on its head, Heidegger eschewed the reduction of human experience to a supposedly presuppositionless basis in cognitive consciousness and extended the structures of intentionality developed by Husserl himself beyond consciousness to the everyday activity of Dasein.<sup>1</sup> The fundamental connection between Dasein's comportment towards things in the world and their ontological determination means that Heidegger's account of Dasein's everyday concern is considerably more than a typology of human activity. Equally, it goes far beyond a superficial revision of the existing order of priority between practical and theoretical activity (for which reason, the term 'pragmatism' may only be applied to Heidegger with the utmost caution). As Heidegger explains in the Introduction to *Being and Time*, Dasein is ontically distinct in that it has a pre-ontological understanding of being which provides the possibility of access to the question of being and ultimately of its elevation to a thematic level. The phenomenological description of Dasein as being-in-the-world and as for the most part absorbed in everyday concern amounts, therefore, to a preliminary delineation of the structural features of this pre-ontological understanding of being. In view of these considerations alone, it is clear that the analyses offered by

Heidegger in these sections cannot be understood in isolation. Yet their renown sometimes so far precedes an acquaintance with *Being and Time* as a whole that they are taken out of context, as though their phenomenological character were a license to treat them as somehow self-contained empirical descriptions. Any such reading of these sections is destined to misconstrue them, for, as we shall see, they must be understood not only with reference to the form of ontological enquiry set out in the Introduction to *Being and Time*, but above all in connection with the ontological character of Dasein as transcendence developed in the second division of the text.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, it is only in the light of its influence on Heidegger's ontology that we can begin to gauge the significance of Aristotle's practical philosophy on the question of activity in Heidegger. Of course, it is not enough simply to trace positive similarities with Aristotle's presentation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Insofar as Heidegger appropriates this conception of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ , he risks inheriting also the difficulties attendant upon Aristotle's presentation of the concept. We shall therefore ask whether Heidegger's analyses succumb to the same problems and what response he has in store.

## I

Dasein is described as for the most part absorbed in its everyday dealings. Amongst the many paths of concern [*Besorgen*] in which such dealings are always dispersed, the "closest to us" is "that kind of concern which manipulates things and puts them to use" [SZ 67:95].



The preliminary theme of the enquiry is therefore "what gets used, what gets produced, and so forth" [SZ 67:95]. Recalling Aristotle's observation that what is produced [τὸ ποιητόν] itself becomes the means towards a further end [1139b1f, p.237 n.35.], one might suspect that Heidegger has τὸ ποιητόν in mind, but this is not so.

*Die Griechen hatten einen angemessenen Terminus für die »Dinge«: πράγματα, d.i. das, womit man es im besorgenden Umgang (πρᾶξις) zu tun hat. [SZ 68:96-97]*

The Greeks had an appropriate term for 'Things': *pragmata* - that is to say, that which one has to do with in one's concerned dealings (*praxis*).

In fact, *πράγματα* is the usual Greek term for things and not a deliberate philosophical choice on Heidegger's part. Accordingly, one should be wary drawing any quick conclusions about Heidegger's understanding of *πρᾶξις* from this passage alone. Provided that one proceeds with caution, however, it can serve as a helpful guide. Two possible interpretations immediately suggest themselves, both of which fail to recognize what is at issue. According to the first, Heidegger's endorsement of *πράγματα* as a term for things in general would attest to his so-called pragmatism, which on its part amounts to a demonstration that knowledge is founded on everyday practice. Whilst it is true that Heidegger integrates the determination of things in the world with our comportment towards them, there is more to this than the first reading appreciates. To begin with, the reading is indifferent to the distinction between *ποίησις* and *πρᾶξις*, repeating the reduction of the latter to the former symptomatic of the very naivety Heidegger is engaging. Instead, it takes the main issue in Heidegger's analyses to be the relation between theory and



practice. This is mistaken. For the theory-practice distinction belongs to the understanding of activity arising from the very dominance of ποιησις that is in question. Insofar as its horizons are restricted to this distinction, such a reading therefore fails to broach the question of προξις at all. By contrast, raising the more fundamental question of the relation between ποιησις and προξις will implicitly demand a reconsideration of the significance attached to theory and practice.<sup>3</sup>

The second such reading approaches Heidegger's text with the distinction between ποιησις and προξις very much in mind, but regards the broad and inclusive sense in which Heidegger apparently refers to προξις in this passage as a reflection of his failure to address the issue of its specificity vis-à-vis ποιησις. However, simply to champion the cause of προξις in opposition to ποιησις inevitably underscores the existing demarcation between them and thereby restricts the scope for change. By tacitly endorsing the framework of the distinction, this reading commits itself to an unchanged conception of προξις that remains in complicity with its own eclipse by a similarly unchanged conception of ποιησις.<sup>4</sup>

Alternatively, Heidegger's reference to προξις in the context of an account of goal-oriented activity might be read less as a repudiation of the specific sense of προξις than as a discreet reminder of how far beyond its designated sphere of application the influence of production extended through Greek thought. Thus, in a veiled allusion to the naivety with regard to Dasein that he perceives in Greek ontology, Heidegger immediately adds:

*Sie ließen aber ontologisch gerade den spezifisch »pragmatischen« Charakter der πράγματα im Dunkeln und bestimmten sie »zunächst« als »bloße Dinge«. [SZ 68:97]*

But ontologically, the specifically 'pragmatic' character of *pragmata* is just what the Greeks left in obscurity; they thought of these 'proximally' as 'mere Things.'

What does Heidegger mean by "the specifically 'pragmatic' character of *pragmata*"? The temptation is to understand the meaning of *πράγματα* on the basis of the relatively familiar sense of 'pragmatic'. Indeed, Heidegger seems positively to encourage this view elsewhere. In *Die Frage nach dem Ding* (1936) he describes *πράγματα* as

*die Dinge, sofern sie überhaupt solche sind, womit wir zu tun haben, sei es, daß wir bearbeiten, verwenden umgestalten oder nur betrachten und durchforschen - πράγματα auf πράξεις bezogen, πράξεις hier ganz weit genommen weder in dem engen Sinne der praktischen Anwendung (vgl. χρῆσθαι) noch im Sinne der πράξις als Handlung im Sinne der sittlichen Handlung; πράξις ist alles Tun und Betreiben und Aushalten, was auch die ποίησις einschließt.*

things insofar as we have to do with them at all, whether we work on them, transform them, or whether we only look at and examine them - *pragmata* with regard to *praxis*: here *praxis* is taken in a truly wide sense, neither in the narrow meaning of practical use (*kresthai*), nor in the sense of *praxis* as moral action: *praxis* is all doing, pursuing, and enduring, which also includes *poiesis*."<sup>5</sup>

*Πράγματα* are referred to *πράξεις*, which is said to be activity in the widest sense, inclusive also of *ποίησις*. This may seem perfectly straightforward, but the matter is by no means as simple as the passage might suggest at first. Understanding *πράγματα* on the basis of pragmatism or activity "in a truly wide sense" is only satisfactory if one *knows* what is meant by pragmatism or activity. Yet this is precisely what is in question here. To assume that the meaning of *πράγματα* could be settled in this fashion would be to



revert to a position much like the former of the two weak readings outlined above. If we are not to refer the character of πράγματα to pragmatism, the meaning of 'pragmatic' must itself be seen to depend on the eventual determination of πράγματα. Let us look more carefully at this term. It is presented as a name for "things insofar as we have to do with them at all." Does this mean that it is a name for things *in general*? What would 'in general' mean here? Similarly, πράξις is said to 'be' all doing and to 'include' ποίησις. How are we to understand 'include' and can we be confident that Heidegger understands πράξις as a *generic* term for activity?

A clue as to how we might approach this problem arises later in the account of Dasein's everyday concern, in §17 on reference and signs. Heidegger introduces three designations, namely relation, reference and indication. Every indication is said to be a reference, but not every reference an indication; similarly, every reference is a relation, but not every relation a reference. One's initial expectation is therefore that relation is the genus to which reference and indication belong in order of increasing specificity. However, Heidegger explicitly rules out this interpretation, saying of relation that it "is something quite formal which may be read off directly by way of 'formalization' from any kind of context, whatever its subject matter or way of Being" [SZ 77:108]. To support this view, a footnote directs us to Husserl's *Ideas*, where we find §13 devoted to the difference between generalization and formalization.<sup>6</sup> In contrast to the gradual movement from the particular to the general, the process of formalization involves the reduction of what



has material content to a "purely logical" form. Thus, for example, the reduction of space to a Euclidean manifold or that of a specific inference to a logical form have nothing whatsoever to do with generalization. By way of illustration, Husserl appeals to the reader's intuition that, unlike the general term 'red' with regard to various possible shades of red, logical forms do not 'lie within' the material content with which they are associated.<sup>7</sup>

Heidegger, too, attached great importance to 'formal' designations, which he drew initially from Husserl. Indeed, it would be interesting to trace the contribution of this notion to Heidegger's own understanding of ontology in more detail. Such a task, however, would require an account not only of Heidegger's reading of Husserl on this matter, but also of his response to Kant's presentation of transcendental logic and therefore lies beyond the scope of this work.<sup>8</sup> However, Heidegger's 1921-22 course on Aristotle includes a brief consideration of the meaning of formal definitions that shed some light on the matter at hand. Heidegger contrasts the meaning of 'formal' sharply with that of 'abstract,' on the basis that abstraction presupposes a grasp of what is concrete. On the contrary, he suggests, we cannot assume in advance to have understood either *what* is concrete (the object), nor even the sense of concreteness itself.<sup>9</sup> A 'formal' definition is therefore not a representation of a thing, but rather an as yet empty designation indicating the direction, manner and conditions of its own fulfillment.

*Der definitorische Gehalt ist so, daß er verweist zum Wie der eigentlichen Begegnung, Bestimmung, Formung, Bildung.... »Formal«, das »Formale« ist ein solcher Gehalt, daß es die*

*Anzeige in die Richtung verweist, den Weg vorzeichnet.*  
[GA61 34]

The definitional content is such as to refer to the manner of the genuine encounter, determination, shaping, formation... 'Formal,' the 'formal,' has such content in that it gives direction to the indication, shows the way.

When Heidegger describes πράγματα as "things insofar as we have to do with them at all," their "specifically 'pragmatic' character" may justifiably be understood as their purely logical form. In this way, it would designate not the *genus* of all objects indiscriminately, but rather the structural characteristics of what is to count as a thing. Indeed, Husserl understood the formal categories (as he described them) to contribute to an ontology of the object [ID 61n]. In turn, reading πράγματα as a formal definition leads directly to the issue of πρόξις itself. Heidegger's identification in *Being and Time* §15 of πρόξις with Dasein's concerned dealings is by no means incompatible with its reduction to a 'logical form' - not 'activity in general' but the structure of activity as such. At the very least, then, we should be prepared for the apparently *general* determination of πρόξις to assume a *formal* significance. Indeed, in aiming at the disclosure of the ontologico-existential structures of Dasein, Heidegger's phenomenological analyses are bent towards the derivation of precisely such 'logical forms' [SZ 10-11:30-31]. Accordingly, when in *Being and Time* §15 Heidegger identifies πρόξις with Dasein's concerned dealings *tout court*, this does not rule out the possibility of the motif recurring as an ontological determination of Dasein's comportment towards things. Moreover, on this reading, the manner in which πρόξις 'includes' all forms of activity does not



depend on its being used in the general sense: the formal definition of activity as such could be based on the specific reading of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  as an end in itself.<sup>10</sup>

Taken together these considerations lend credibility to the view that, far from representing a missed opportunity to address the problem of activity with regard to  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ , Heidegger's account of world and of Dasein as being-in-the-world may conceal a more studied interpretation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  than his somewhat cursory reference to the term might suggest. Having said this, it would nonetheless be a mistake to rely solely on those passages where the term actually appears. The translations and transmutations a term will undergo in the course of Heidegger's reading make it hard to determine with confidence whether it is being cited in its original guise or used in its modified form.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the force of Heidegger's reading will often depend on there being some ambiguity in this respect, for in this way Heidegger's language remains at once continuous and discontinuous with its textual source. In addition, and we shall see this to be the case with  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ , the motif may be uncoupled from the word itself and continue to appear in Heidegger's text unannounced. Accordingly, our insight into passages where the term  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  actually appears will for the most part only point the way forward, showing the path along which the less conspicuous traces left by its translation into the body of Heidegger's work may be discovered.



## II

Turning now to the analyses themselves, Heidegger links πράγματα with the experience of instrumentality and production by calling those entities encountered in concern 'equipment' [*das Zeug*]. Dasein's concern with equipment is not directed towards it as a thing in its own right, but only insofar as it is 'good' for something.<sup>12</sup> Accordingly, its being is described by Heidegger as readiness-to-hand [*Zuhandenheit*], where this denotes the being of that which presents itself as essentially "'something in-order-to..." [*etwas um-zu...*]" [SZ 68:97]. Equipment never occurs singly, but always in the context of a totality of equipment "constituted by various modalities of the 'in-order-to,' such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability" [SZ 68:97]. By way of example, Heidegger describes the interconnection of ink-stand, pen, ink, paper, blotting pad, table, lamp, furniture, windows, doors, room. These items belong together and each is encountered only against the horizon of the total context, which is apprehended *in advance* (by Dasein's pre-ontological understanding of being). In the case of the present example, this means that the room is discovered as a "totality of equipment" before any individual item of equipment shows itself. However, the room can serve only as a provisional horizon for such things to show themselves, since it is itself encountered as "equipment for residing" [SZ 68:98], that is, in the same terms as that which is found in the context it frames. Accordingly, the question could be put again: to what totality of equipment does the room itself belong? As a first response, one might point to the way

that ready-to-hand equipment effaces itself for the most part, allowing Dasein's concern to devolve upon the work that is to be produced at the time, which is itself described as the "'towards which'" [Wozul]. In turn, the in-order-to character of each work refers beyond itself to a public world and ultimately a natural environment. However, even nature is thought to have "some definite direction": the covered platform of a railway station takes account of bad weather, street lights take account of darkness and thereby the passing cycles of the sun. The interpenetration of artefacts and the natural environment means that the latter shares the being of the former and is itself ready-to-hand and 'in-order-to' [SZ 71:101]. Clearly, this re-admits the question of the horizon in view of which the natural environment, and everything else along with it, is discovered. Something is missing from the analysis.

*Welt haben wir bei der Interpretation dieses innerweltlich Seienden doch immer schon »vorausgesetzt«. Die Zusammenfügung dieses Seienden ergibt doch nicht als die Summe so etwas wie »Welt«. [SZ 72:102]*

In Interpreting these entities within-the-world, however, we have always 'presupposed' the world. Even if we join them together, we still do not get anything like the 'world' as their sum.

Quite simply, an aggregate does not amount to a totality and the world is more than the sum of its parts.<sup>13</sup> In what sense more? How does world exceed the concerns of Dasein? Bearing in mind the problems we have already come across, if nested contexts of equipment are not to give way to an indefinite number of successively larger contexts (as in Heidegger's example of the writing material, the



desk, the room...), the ultimate referential totality, world, must be constituted in advance.

Heidegger explains that to describe the ontological structure of what is ready-to-hand as reference or assignment [*Verweisung*] is to say that "it has in itself the character of having been assigned or referred [*Verwiesenheit*]" [SZ 83-84:115]. This tells us that the referential character of equipment depends on a prior act or event. As though to explain the nature of such an act or event, Heidegger introduces the term 'involvement' [*Bewandtnis*] to describe the ontological character of a thing that *has been* referred, whereupon the prior act or event is said to consist in "letting something be involved" [SZ 84:115]. *Dasein* is described as going beyond the world of its everyday concern to a possibility of its own being "for-the-sake-of-which" it acts and in the light of which involvements can take place. Heidegger expands on this crucial relation in the following passage, to which I shall return later.

*Die Bewandtnisganzheit selbst aber geht letztlich auf ein Wozu zurück, bei dem es keine Bewandtnis mehr hat, was selbst nicht Seiendes ist in der Seinsart des Zuhandenen innerhalb einer Welt, sondern Seiendes, dessen Sein als In-der-Welt-sein bestimmt ist, zu dessen Seinsverfassung Weltlichkeit selbst gehört. Dieses primäre Wozu ist kein Dazu als mögliches Wobei einer Bewandtnis. Das primäre »Wozu« ist ein Worum-willen. Das »Umwillen« betrifft aber immer das Sein des Daseins, dem es in seinem Sein wesentlich um dieses Sein selbst geht. [SZ 84:116-117]*

[T]he totality of involvements itself goes back ultimately to a 'towards-which' in which there is no further involvement: this 'towards-which' is not an entity with the kind of Being that belongs to what is ready-to-hand within a world; it is rather an entity whose Being is defined as Being-in-the-world, and to whose state of Being, worldhood itself belongs. This primary 'towards-which' is not just another 'towards-this' as something in which an involvement is possible. The primary 'towards-which' is a 'for-the-sake-

of-which' [*Worum-willen*]. But the 'for-the-sake-of' always pertains to the Being of *Dasein*, for which, in its Being, that very Being is essentially an *issue*.

The parallel with Aristotle is striking from the first. Indeed, this passage seems to have been modelled on the first two chapters of *Nicomachean Ethics* I, where purposeful activity is directed towards and grounded by a final end that does not refer beyond itself. The delimitation of the referential series in Heidegger follows precisely the same pattern, with the final 'link' being distinguished from the overtly referential structure (towards...) leading up to it. In Chapter One, however, we defended a reading of the *Nicomachean Ethics* that identified the activity characteristic of human being, and thereby associated with the final end, with  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ . On the strength of the analogy, therefore, we might expect to find *Dasein* display a similar structure, above all here, where the question is one of grounding purposeful activity. And this is precisely what we find, for it is by virtue of *Dasein*'s relation to a possibility of its own being that the referential totality is brought to an end and thus constituted as a totality. Accordingly, this constitutive ending is by no means a contingent breaking off and the referential series does not simply come to a stop with the for-the-sake-of-which. Rather, it is the relation of *Dasein* to a possibility of its own being that first 'lets-something-be-involved' and thereby opens the teleological dimension of its everyday concern.<sup>14</sup> *Dasein*, then, is fundamentally an activity that is for-the-sake-of-itself: a motif taken directly from that of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ .



### III

In Chapter One, however, we discovered the presentation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  in the *Nicomachean Ethics* to be shrouded in difficulty. A twofold problem remained outstanding. First, it was recognized that the relation of activity to the final end (which has the form of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ ) could not be presented in terms of production, yet no coherent alternative emerged. The difficulty was mitigated, though not removed, by drawing on the account of the  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma \tilde{\epsilon}\nu$  relation in the *Metaphysics* and linking the final end with  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  as activity in general or as such, over and above individual acts. Finally, we saw that the difficulty penetrated to the heart of the formulation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  itself, since the dominant influence of production on the language of metaphysics in general, and that of activity in particular, renders a determination of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  in terms that are not derived from its ostensible opposite elusive or impossible. If Heidegger has drawn heavily on the account of the fundamental structure of human activity given in the *Nicomachean Ethics* I, what has become of these problems? Has Heidegger resolved them in some way, or are they reproduced in his own text?

Dasein's everyday concern is manifestly instrumental, that is, productive, in character and, as in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the figure of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  is invoked in order to provide a basis for that activity. Dasein is for-the-sake-of-itself, and it is to the being of Dasein that the referential totality ultimately goes back. Consequently, it is the 'for-the-sake-of' relation that must be interrogated: is this relation thought on the same basis as the

relations that obtain in the referential totality itself, namely, relations characteristic of productive activity? Let us remind ourselves what is at stake in this matter for Heidegger.

If Heidegger presents the for-the-sake-of relation in terms that are drawn from the referential teleology characteristic of production, then his appropriation of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  will do little or nothing to break the dominance of production over ontological conceptuality; the understanding of being appropriate to the work will continue to permeate even the ontological determination of Dasein on which it should *depend*. As a result of such a failure to think Dasein in terms distinct from those applied to things, Heidegger would fail to secure adequate access to the question of being, since this access depends on the ontological specificity of Dasein.

When Heidegger describes the chain of purpose that links the hammer to making something fast to the construction of shelter and ultimately to the protection which is a possibility of Dasein, he specifies that "this protection is for the sake of [*um-willen*] a possibility of Dasein" [SZ 84:116]. Is this final and crucial link in any way distinctive? Earlier, I cited the following passage:

*Das primäre »Wozu« ist ein Worum-willen. Das »Umwillen« betrifft aber immer das Sein des Daseins, dem es in seinem Sein wesentlich um dieses Sein selbst geht. [SZ 84:116]*

[The] primary 'towards-which' is a 'for-the-sake-of-which.' But the 'for-the-sake-of' always pertains to the Being of *Dasein*, for which, in its Being that very Being is essentially an *issue*.



Up to this point in Heidegger's text, the towards-which has designated exclusively the being of a work which, as ready-to-hand, is in turn used as equipment for some further end.<sup>15</sup> By contrast, the "primary" towards-which is a for-the-sake-of-which "in which there is no further involvement." In this way, the for-the-sake-of-which is presented as a form or modification of the towards-which, of the work, distinguished solely by virtue of its privileged position. This hardly represents a radical demarcation between the being of Dasein and that of the work. By the same token, if the for-the-sake-of-which is described as the "primary" towards-which, then the relation designated by 'for-the-sake-of' appears to be simply a special case of the 'towards' relation obtaining between items of equipment. To this extent, the relation to the final end will be distinguished solely by virtue of its having been extrapolated from its proper sphere of application - *within* a referential series - to a point where its usual significance has been suspended.<sup>16</sup>

The words themselves give no clear sign of how these two relations may be distinguished from one another, pointing rather to their inter-connectedness. The German *zu* is predominantly a preposition of direction and movement and the appearance of '*wozu*' here in connection with the 'in-order-to' structure suggests that it can safely be understood in this sense.<sup>17</sup> The preposition '*um*' is more problematic. Its primary meaning is 'around' or 'about' [cf. *Umsicht*, *Umwelt*, *Umgang*]. In addition, however, it frequently signifies 'towards,' although this connotation is generally boosted by the very term to which it is contrasted here; as in Heidegger's own use of *um-*

zu. It thereby remains ambiguously placed between an overtly kinetic or directional sense and a more diffuse spatial sense. Such ambiguity might be regarded as particularly apt in the case of the *umwillen* relation, since it allows a sense of purpose to be conveyed whilst halting short of plain instrumentality.<sup>18</sup> The difference between *um-zu* and *um-willen*, though fixed in everyday usage, is nonetheless slight. Moreover, Heidegger makes little or no attempt to accentuate the distinction, in spite of its importance for him. On the contrary, we find the '*um-willen*' [for-the-sake-of] relation paraphrased throughout *Being and Time* by expressions containing the preposition 'zu' [towards]. Thus, for example, Dasein's being for-the-sake-of-itself is glossed as its "being towards itself."<sup>19</sup>

All this suggests that the problems inherent in Aristotle's presentation of the relation between individual acts and *πρᾶξις* as the final end are indeed repeated in Heidegger's text. Still as potentially disruptive, they pose a threat to Heidegger's account of the basis of the referential totality in the being of Dasein. Moreover, Heidegger's appropriation of *πρᾶξις* as the formal basis of the ontological structure of Dasein also seems to have inherited the problems that surround the coherence of *πρᾶξις* itself as a form of activity. Heidegger insists on the ontological specificity of Dasein. Yet the description of Dasein in terms so narrowly distinguished from those used to describe the being of equipment not only admits the incoherencies noted in Chapter One, but on Heidegger's own terms jeopardizes the distinctiveness of Dasein that is crucial to the project of fundamental ontology.



#### IV

With the recognition that Dasein exceeds the instrumental world of its own concerns and in so doing somehow participates in the constitution of that world, the account makes an important advance. From an analysis of the work-world of Dasein and the natural environment insofar as it is implicated in that world it broaches the question of *how* that world is constituted. As I suggested at the outset of this chapter, this is an aspect of Heidegger's account of everyday concern that is sometimes set aside, as though it were simply a theoretical frame to the real message contained in these sections. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Perhaps the most telling rebuttal of readings that fail to engage this question is to be found in a footnote to 'On the Essence of Grounds':

*Wenn man gar den ontischen Zusammenhang der Gebrauchsdinge, des Zeugs, mit der Welt identifiziert und das In-der-Welt-sein als Umgang mit den Gebrauchsdingen ausgelegt, dann ist freilich ein Verständnis der Transzendenz als In-der-Welt-sein im Sinne einer »Grundverfassung des Daseins« aussichtslos. [VWG-WM 155n:81n]*

If we somehow equate the ontical system of useful things (of tools) with the world and explain Being-in-the-world as traffic with useful things, we then abandon any understanding of transcendence as Being-in-the-world in the sense of a 'basic constitutive feature of Dasein.'<sup>20</sup>

It is therefore not simply 'world' that must be addressed, it is above all the *transcendental problem of world*. Indeed, Heidegger goes so far as to insist that "the sole intention" of the analysis contained in *Being and Time* §§14-22 is to prepare the way for the transcendental analysis of world. However, whilst this declaration should be taken with the utmost seriousness, it should not be

understood to mean that the account of Dasein's everyday concern can be set aside once it has served its purpose. If we are to discover the locus of Heidegger's thinking, we must attend to the manner in which the transcendental problem of world and Dasein's everyday concern border upon, and indeed implicate, one another. This is a complex matter, and one that must be allowed to resurface gradually over the course of the rest of the present work.<sup>21</sup>

\*

In *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* Heidegger describes the principal sense of world in essentially the same terms as in *Being and Time* [SZ 65:93], but then links this indication of "the metaphysical essence of Dasein as such" [GA26 232:180] directly to the theme of transcendence.<sup>22</sup> In order to elucidate this connection, Heidegger returns to Plato's doctrine of ideas and the sense of transcendence contained therein. However, in spite of the thematic link he discerns between the doctrine of ideas and transcendence, and from transcendence to world, he recognizes that the doctrine of ideas itself could never attain the concept of world as he intends it, since the relation to ideas is entirely dominated by theoretical intuition. Moreover, this correlation of the idea and intuition led to transcendence being conceptualized in terms of looking and ultimately as the relation between subject and object. It was in order to avert the consequent reduction of the problem of transcendence to a matter of epistemology that Heidegger sought in Aristotle's practical philosophy a more broadly based account of the diversity of human activity. This is reflected in the following



passage - along with a warning that the impulse to arrive at a conception of transcendence via a formalization of everyday experience, of whatever kind, is a perilous one.

*So wenig man der Transzendenz, weil sie eben kein ontisches Verhalten ist, der Anschauung im theoretischen oder ästhetischen Sinne aufbürden kann, sowenig auch dem praktischen Verhalten, sei es im Sinne der handwerklich-gebrauchenden, sei es sonst eines. Die zentrale Aufgabe ist gerade, in der Ontologie des Daseins hinter diese Scheidungen der Verhaltungen in die gemeinsame Wurzel zurückgehen; eine Aufgabe, die freilich nicht einfach zu sein braucht. Transzendenz liegt vor jeder möglichen Verhaltensweise überhaupt, vor der νόησις, aber auch vor der ὄρεξις. [GA26 235-236:183]*

One cannot pack transcendence into intuition, in either the theoretical or the aesthetic sense, because it is not even an ontic activity. Even less can it be packed into a practical compartment be it in an instrumental-utilitarian sense or in any other. The central task in the ontology of Dasein is to go back behind those divisions into compartments to find their common root, a task that need not, of course, be easy. Transcendence precedes every possible mode of activity in general, prior to νόησις, but also prior to ὄρεξις.

The rejection of a Platonic emphasis on intuition is plain. What follows, however, is particularly interesting. Attentive to the ease with which one might turn from intuition to practical activity as an alternative basis for thinking transcendence, Heidegger immediately closes off that avenue, setting his sights on the common root of both intuition and practice. Is Heidegger's concern therefore to establish the connection between theory and practice? Yes, but there is more. Heidegger would have been well aware that one already finds in Aristotle an awareness that practical activity of whatever kind is in each case wedded to thought [1139a36-1139b2]. In looking for the common root of intuition and practice, Heidegger is not simply

seeking the common ground of distinct forms of activity. Above all, he is aiming to achieve a more radical understanding of the already complex structure constitutive of our practical comportment towards things. The key to the problem lies in the reference to νόησις and ὄρεξις in the final two lines of the passage, to which we shall return shortly.

First, the fact that transcendence is to be the common root of both intuition and practice, of what ever kind, presents a formidable problem of access. In Heidegger's initial diagnosis of the naivety of Greek ontology, he criticized their inattendance to the everyday experience of activity that served as the basis for philosophical determinations. In order to place Greek ontology on a more secure footing, he proposed that enquiry reflect explicitly on the comportment of Dasein towards things in the world in order that the contribution of this comportment to the ontological determination of the things themselves may not pass unnoticed. Accordingly, it seems that the ontological determination of Dasein must pay heed to the manner of its comportment towards things in the world. Yet here Heidegger insists that neither theoretical nor practical activity can provide an adequate access to transcendence and unequivocally denies that transcendence can be situated in any form of ontic activity. But if the thought of transcendence cannot be modelled on an ontic form, how can it maintain a basis in Dasein's everyday activity?

Following another explicit declaration that the problem is the common root of both θεωρεῖν and πράξις, Heidegger adds an apparently surprising remark:



Obwohl die Transzendenz bei Plato nicht in ihrer eigentlichen Verwurzelung aufgesucht wurde, kommt unter dem unausweichlichen Zwang der Phänomene gleichwohl der Zusammenhang zwischen dem mit der idea vermeinten Transzendenten und der Wurzel der Transzendenz, der  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ . [GA26 237:184]

Though in Plato transcendence was not investigated down to its genuine roots, the inescapable pressure of the phenomenon nevertheless brought to light the connection between the transcendent intended by the idea and the root of transcendence,  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ .

How is it that Heidegger can refer to  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  as the root of transcendence, having just repudiated practical activity as an appropriate basis for such a determination? Does Heidegger mean something different by  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  here? The fact that Heidegger has already linked (however inadequately) transcendence to the Platonic conception of ideas and hence theoretical intuition suggests that  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  as the root of transcendence should not be understood as a general signification of practical activity *in opposition* to theoretical intuition. Rather, it must somehow comprise theoretical intuition, no less than practical activity. Accordingly, when ' $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ ' appears in the passage above, it does indeed have a different sense to that which Heidegger gave it a moment earlier in declaring the aim to be the common root of both θεωρεῖν and  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ . So what does  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  mean here? In what sense is  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  the root of transcendence?

With regard to Plato, Heidegger has so far referred only to transcendence in terms of ideas. But there is a more primordial transcendence, namely, that which occurs with regard to the idea of the good beyond being [ἐπέχειν τῆς οὐσίας]. Rejecting the common

interpretation of the good in terms of value, Heidegger encourages us to see in the *ιδέα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ*

*der Charakter, den Plato und vor allem Aristoteles als οὐ ἕνεκα bezeichnen, das Umwillen, das worumwillen etwas ist bzw. nicht ist, so bzw. anders ist.* [GA26 237:184 Initial emphasis mine]

the characteristic described by Plato and particularly Aristotle as the *οὐ ἕνεκα*, the *for-the-sake-of-which* [das *Umwillen*], that on account of which something is or is not, is in this way or that.

By alluding to the Aristotelian reading of the *οὐ ἕνεκα*, Heidegger introduces an ambiguous new note to the account. Since he has already voiced clear reservations with the Platonic view of transcendence, one might suppose Aristotle's entry into the text to be the cue for Plato's departure. However, whilst there is some adverbial evidence in favour of Aristotle ("particularly"), the passage is understated to the point of equivocality. If, as it seems, therefore, Heidegger intends to divert the Platonic theory of the good beyond being through the Aristotelian reading of the *οὐ ἕνεκα*, we should not assume that Plato has been wholly superseded. Indeed, references later in the same paragraph to the theory of ideas and the transcendental form of world speak against this. Rather, the uncertainty surrounding the precise source and target of Heidegger's thought here is an example of the way in which he deploys Aristotle not so much to counter as to supplement and problematize the Platonic transcendental discourse.<sup>23</sup> This can, of course, lead to ambiguity. Indeed, we shall come across a particularly significant case later in this chapter in connection with Heidegger's interpretation of the



ἀγαθόν [pp.100-102], a matter that will be considered in more detail in Chapter Three, Part II.

The Aristotelian sense of οὐ ἔνεχα favoured by Heidegger in connection with the Platonic ἰδέα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ implicitly re-introduces the theme of πρᾶξις - albeit in a sense that remains almost entirely obscure at this stage. However, ambiguity over the *fact* of this reintroduction in *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* is mitigated by a parallel (and nearly contemporaneous) discussion in 'On the Essence of Grounds' [VWG-WM 160-161:93-95]. In this text, Heidegger denies that the ἀγαθόν - *at least not as it appears in Plato* - can be interpreted as the transcendence of Dasein. It cannot, because it represents merely the tip of a more profound and "concrete question regarding the basic possibility [*Grundmöglichkeit*] of the existence of Dasein in the πόλις" [VWG-WM 160:93]. The possibility that Heidegger regards as fundamental is not to be equated with specific possibilities open to Dasein. Rather, it comprises the elements of truth, understanding and being that, taken together, amount to the

*ursprünglich-einigen Grunde der Möglichkeit der Wahrheit des Verstehens von Sein.* [VWG-WM 160:93]

the primordial, unified ground of the possibility of the truth of the understanding of Being.

The concrete question concerning the basic possibility of the existence of Dasein in the πόλις is for Heidegger concerned precisely with transcendence. Moreover, Heidegger then explicitly links transcendence and πρᾶξις by describing this understanding as "*die*

*Urhandlung menschlicher Existenz*: the primordial activity of human existence" [VWG-WM 160:93 trans. modified].

It seems, therefore, that Heidegger regarded Plato as having diminished the radicality of the question of transcendence by severing it from its roots in the concrete situation of Dasein's primordial activity and confining it within the realm of theoretical intuition: that is, by isolating transcendence from the πόλις as the site of historical being.<sup>24</sup> Opposed to such a withdrawal, Heidegger implies that the "concrete question" of transcendence should be traced *within* the πόλις. We cannot enter here into a full consideration of what Heidegger understand by the πόλις.<sup>25</sup> But given that it is not self-evident, we should avoid the temptation of either simply allowing the customary sense to prevail or of suspending that sense entirely in order to refer Heidegger's understanding of the πόλις to the eventual determination of transcendence. The link Heidegger proposes between transcendence and the πόλις is not an inference of any kind, for both terms are in question at once. Accordingly, if the sense attached to the πόλις will depend in part on the understanding Heidegger reaches of transcendence, it is also true that the very proposal of such a link already contributes to thinking the problem of transcendence by raising its political significance; that is, by signalling that the respective questions of transcendence and politics are essentially connected with one another.

At this point, one might wish to pose a question that haunts the whole of Heidegger's implicit reading of πράξις: by linking πράξις to



transcendence, does Heidegger not lapse into a confusion of registers, and moreover one that is dangerously compounded by the association of transcendence with the political realm? This is, in effect, the fundamental question of what it means for Heidegger to 'translate' the language of Aristotelian practical philosophy into the idiom of ontology.

The suspicion that Heidegger may have been seduced into pursuing an errant line of thinking by the deployment of language outside its proper sphere of application is credible and deserves to be taken seriously, even if, as I believe to be the case, it ultimately needs to be articulated in a more sophisticated manner. Everything depends on what is considered to be the situation of activity. If it were the ontic realm of Dasein's everyday concern, the suspicion would be well founded, since transcendence exceeds this region by definition. Similarly, there would be grounds for suspicion if it were the ontological realm, insofar as this is understood to provide the basis for Dasein's engagement with things in the world and so could not be susceptible to Dasein's initiative. However, each of these possibilities betray an essential conservatism in their tendency to regard the ontic and ontological as distinct 'realms,' rather than as intrinsically linked ways of addressing the same situation (a tendency that reiterates the drift of Aristotelian metaphysics into theology as the enquiry into other-worldly divine being). But what if it is precisely the delimitation of these two 'realms' that is in question? This would point towards a more profound re-evaluation of the sense attached to 'activity' - a re-evaluation, it must be said,

that is a prerequisite for defusing the suspicion that activity (or *πρᾶξις*) is deployed in the 'wrong' register. Heidegger's warning against taking ontic activity as the model for understanding transcendence might be taken as evidence of his being alert to this danger. However, the association of transcendence with language of activity, i.e. *πρᾶξις*, does comport a risk to which Heidegger is not wholly immune, namely, that of promoting the impression that Dasein can simply enact the movement constitutive of its ground [pp.205-206].

To place this back in the context of the passage under consideration, how are we to understand the *Urhandlung* (*πρᾶξις*) that Heidegger associates with the transcendence of Dasein in the *πόλις*? In short, we still face the problem of how to gain access to a conception of *πρᾶξις* that is not modelled on an ontic form of activity - and indeed of understanding what such a conception could mean. Heidegger expressly rejected such an approach in the passage to which we referred earlier [p.87]. As I suggested then, the key to what Heidegger is doing here lies in the final two lines. We are now in a position to appreciate their significance.

*Transzendenz liegt vor jeder möglichen Verhaltensweise überhaupt, vor der νόησις, aber auch vor der ὄρεξις.*  
[GA26 236:183]

Transcendence precedes every possible mode of activity in general, prior to *νόησις*, but also prior to *ὄρεξις*.

This remark seals the claim that Heidegger is addressing himself above all to Aristotle here, for it is an unmistakable reference to Aristotle's discussion of the nature of choice [*προαίρεσις*] in the



*Nicomachean Ethics* [1139a32–1139b7]. Having described choice as "the ἀρχή of action [πράξεως]," Aristotle concludes:

διὸ ἢ ὀρεκτικὸς νοῦς ἢ προαίρεσις ἢ ὄρεξις διανοητική, καὶ [ἢ] τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ ἄνθρωπος.

Hence choice is either appetitive intellect or intellectual appetite; and man is a principle of this kind.

Human being is understood here as an ἀρχή, a principle of change, defined by the conjunction of intellect and desire, of νοῦς and ὄρεξις.<sup>26</sup> More precisely, human being is the ἀρχή of activity, which is to say, activity is born out of the union of νοῦς and ὄρεξις [DA.III.10:432b27–433a32]. To understand activity, therefore, one must understand not only νοῦς and ὄρεξις, but also the nature of their conjunction. Heidegger, however, asks not 'how are νοῦς and ὄρεξις to be united?' but rather 'what is the source of their belonging together such that they may be thought as a unity?'<sup>27</sup> In his account of transcendence, then, Heidegger seeks to radicalize the understanding of human being as ὀρεκτικὸς νοῦς [intellect related to desire] and/or ὄρεξις διανοητική [desire related to intellect] in order to arrive at a determination of the original unity of νοῦς and ὄρεξις *prior* even to their separation. If we recall the problem of access outlined earlier, we can now see that there are in principle two possible senses in which πᾶξις may be understood as the root of transcendence. First, there may be a conception of πᾶξις that conveys the "concrete question concerning the basic possibility of the existence of Dasein in the πόλις" in a more original manner. However, as we have seen, such a conception will be so distorted by the tradition in which it is embedded that it may not be accessible

at all. (Indeed, if, as Bernasconi suggests, the language of metaphysics is *fundamentally structured* by its suppression of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ , then such a conception will never have been accessible as such and will only ever have appeared as a trace [FDP 117].) Yet, and this is the second point, if Heidegger is to recover a more original sense of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  in connection with his thought of transcendence, then the point of departure must be - can only be - the conception  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  as it appears in the tradition. The radicalization of this conception will then lead back through the tradition, in the manner Heidegger describes as the "destruction [*Destruktion*] of the history of ontology" [SZ §6 & GA24 §5]. However, this does not mean that Heidegger's conception of transcendence will be modelled directly on an ontic form of activity. Rather, the 'ontic' conception of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  is merely the point of departure for the radicalization of its  $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta$ , the conjunction of  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  and  $\delta\rho\epsilon\xi\iota\varsigma$ .<sup>28</sup> If we are to identify a conception of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  proper to Heidegger's own thinking, it will therefore be associated with the outcome of this radicalization, that is, with transcendence, with what Heidegger describes as the "primordial activity [*Urhandlung*] of human existence" [p.91]. Clearly, everything will depend on the nature of the radicalization itself. Before turning to consider how it takes place in Heidegger's texts, however, let us look briefly at the point from which it must depart, namely, the conjunction of  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  and  $\delta\rho\epsilon\xi\iota\varsigma$  as Aristotle understands it.



Although Aristotle defines human being as a conjunction of *voũς* and *ὄρεξις*, it is important to realize that they are by no means always in concordance with one another. On the contrary, for the most part they are not, if only because there generally co-exist conflicting desires whose joint realization would be impossible and only one of which will correspond with the course indicated by the rational part of the soul [DA.III:443b5;433a26-28]. With uncompromising disdain, Aristotle characterizes those who decline to bring *voũς* and *ὄρεξις* into conformity with one another as slavishly "preferring what is only a life for cattle" [NE.I:1095b19-22]. To transcend a bovine existence, one must constantly strive to overcome this ongoing conflict, and what is more one must do so with some measure of success: being 'fully' human is a task that is before us at all times. Strictly speaking, however, one might prefer to say that for Aristotle being human is characterized by the *capacity* to accomplish one's existence in this way. Thus, even the most ruminative amongst us are potentially human in a sense entirely beyond even the most aspirant of our dumb companions.<sup>29</sup> This highlights the importance of avoiding a crude yet prevalent misconception, namely, that the characteristically human relation to the *λόγος* simply overlies a fundamental animality. The relation between *voũς* and *ὄρεξις* is altogether more intimate.

In what does this intimacy consist? As Aristotle describes it, the soul is not simply split into two parts, one associated with *λόγος* and the other not. In addition, Aristotle recognizes a third

possibility, which is initially introduced as a subdivision of the part that is independent of λόγος.

But there seems to be another element of the soul which, while irrational [ἄλογος εἶναι], is in a sense receptive of reason. [1102b13-14]

This part of the soul is the seat of ὄρεξις, and it participates in λόγος inasmuch as it is not indifferent to λόγος and can take account of it. Indeed, Aristotle declares himself prepared to allocate this faculty to the part of the soul that has λόγος in the stronger sense.

If, however, one should speak of the appetitive part of the soul as rational too, it will be the rational part that is divided in two: one rational in the proper sense of the word and in itself, the other in the sense that a child pays attention to its father. [1103a1-4]<sup>30</sup>

ὄρεξις is therefore an intermediate and indeed indeterminate faculty, defined primarily by its capacity to hear, follow or pay attention to λόγος - but equally by its capacity to depart from or disregard λόγος (for to be unresponsive to the λόγος is not the same as having no relation to it whatsoever).<sup>31</sup> It would undoubtedly be fruitful to explore further the various analogies of hearing and filial obedience by which Aristotle describes the co-ordination of νοῦς and ὄρεξις. However, the *fact* of such co-ordination alone betokens a common formation or horizon.

If we consider the example of choice [προαίρεσις] in which the conjunction of νοῦς and ὄρεξις was initially articulated, it requires of course that each faculty affirm or pursue the same object [1139a21-32]. The conjunction of νοῦς and ὄρεξις therefore hinges

above all on their mutual object, namely, that which is to be done, the ὀρεκτὸν πρακτὸν λεγόμενον [GA33 152]. Ultimately, it is that for-the-sake-of-which one acts, the οὐ ἔνεχα, the final end. Yet this, of course, is εὐδαιμονία or εὐπραξία [1139a35-1139b5], whereupon we strike the fundamental horizon. For προᾶξις, and therefore προαίρεσις, in which νοῦς and ὄρεξις are united, is always to be understood from the perspective of doing well. The basis for the conjunction of νοῦς and ὄρεξις lies in the 'εὐ' of 'εὐπραξία,' that is, in virtue, ἀρετή.

Aristotle defines ἀρετή as a ἔξις, a fixed disposition by virtue of which one has the potential to act consistently in a particular manner, namely, well [1106a12 & 1106b36-1107a2]. The conjunction of νοῦς and ὄρεξις whose principle we have been tracing is not brought about by the mere existence of ἀρεταὶ: rather, these must be cultivated and assimilated by the individual so that they come to form her character. Once the individual may be ascribed the various ἔξεις, the ethical ἀρεταὶ will channel her desires towards whatever form the Good takes within the parameters of the situation disclosed by the intellectual ἀρεταὶ, and νοῦς and ὄρεξις are thereby brought into conjunction with one another.<sup>32</sup> In this way, whilst the horizon for this conjunction remains the Good, the conjunction itself actually occurs by virtue of the ἔξεις.

It may be objected that the account so far has conspicuously neglected to consider *how* the conjunction of νοῦς and ὄρεξις is related to the final end. After all, our initial question concerned precisely the relation to the οὐ ἔνεχα and is this not determined by the manner in which νοῦς and ὄρεξις themselves relate to their



respective objects? Have we not therefore digressed unnecessarily? The question is indeed an important one that cannot be overlooked. However, there is good reason for having taken the route we have. Effectively, one could say that we have identified two forms of relation to the 'end': that of the conjunction of νοῦς and ὄρεξις to the οὐ ἔνεχα, and that of ἔξις to the ἀγαθόν. Having done so, runs the objection, we seem then to have neglected the former in favour of the latter. However, such a view fails to recognize two important points. First, the οὐ ἔνεχα and the ἀγαθόν are equivalent to one another, and may both be defined as εὐδαιμονία or εὐπραξία. Consequently, the two relations are linked by their common end. Second, insofar as the conjunction of νοῦς and ὄρεξις depends on ἔξις, the former relation is grounded in the latter. Accordingly, we have by no means gone astray. On the contrary, the account has moved towards a more profound grasp of the relation between activity and the final end.

Given that the key to this conjunction lies in ἔξις, we should therefore be able to find reference to the term in Heidegger's own account of transcendence. Heidegger does indeed make such a reference - in the course of the very passage from 'On the Essence of Grounds' to which we have already referred [p.91]. We found there that Plato's presentation of the ἀγαθόν led Heidegger to the question of the possibility of the truth of the understanding of being, which we associated with transcendence. This understanding was then described as the "*Urhandlung* of human existence" at the root of all existing in the midst of beings, on the basis of which we linked discerned a link

between transcendence and *πρᾶξις*. At that point we broke off our reading of the passage. It concludes:

*Das ἀγαθόν ist nun diejenige ἕξις (Mächtigkeit), die der Möglichkeit von Wahrheit, Verstehen und sogar des Seins mächtig ist und zwar aller drei in Einheit zumal. [VWG-WM 160:93]*

Thus the *agathon* is that *hexis* [Mächtigkeit] which is master of the possibility of truth, understanding, and even of being, indeed of all three together at once.

By equating the *ἀγαθόν* directly with *ἕξις*, Heidegger condenses the Platonic formulation of the *ἀγαθόν* as "the most objective of objects" [VWG-WM 161:95] to which one must then have a relation, and, taking his cue from Aristotle's practical philosophy, implies that the *ἀγαθόν* is essentially nothing but this relation:

*Das Wesen des ἀγαθόν liegt in der Mächtigkeit [ἕξις: Trans.] seiner selbst als οὐ ἕνεκα - als das Umwillen von... ist es die Quelle von Möglichkeit als solcher. [VWG-WM 161:95]*

The essence of the *agathon* lies in its mastery [hexis: Trans.] of itself as *hou heneka*; as the *for the sake of...* it is the source of possibility as such.

Perhaps nowhere else in Heidegger's writing do the Platonic and Aristotelian paths of thought meet one another in so crucial a fashion. The fact that this passage occurs in the course of a discussion of Plato's theory of ideas demands that we take *ἀγαθόν* in its absolute sense and not as the *ἀγαθόν πρακτὸν*. Yet the reservations that Heidegger has already raised with respect to Plato's treatment of transcendence and moreover the role played by *ἕξις* in Aristotle's account of the conjunction of *νοῦς* and *ὄρεξις* that lies at the root of Heidegger's own interpretation of transcendence strongly suggest that *ἀγαθόν* cannot be read in its

absolute sense, at least not unequivocally so. Rather, it would seem that the references to ἔξις and the οὐ ἕνεκα add an Aristotelian perspective and ἀγαθόν must accordingly be taken as the ἀγαθόν πρακτὸν. Yet not only is this too far removed from the context of the discussion to be plausible, but in addition the sense of ἔξις as mastery is not attributed to the individual but to the ἀγαθόν itself and is therefore irreducible to the strictly Aristotelian notion of a human disposition. As the οὐ ἕνεκα, the for-the-sake-of-which, the ἀγαθόν consists in our relation to it. Yet at the same time, it is not something that is possessed in one's existence. Rather, the οὐ ἕνεκα is the source of all possibility, that is, the source of all our possibilities, including the possibility of the truth of the understanding of being that we have called transcendence. Indeed, it is precisely because the ἀγαθόν is that which lets beings appear that Heidegger, rejecting any construal of it as itself a being, idea or value, describes it in terms of mastery or power. Thus, in his 1931/32 lectures on Plato, Heidegger writes:

*Das Gute, das ἀγαθόν, ist demnach die Ermöglichung von Sein als solchem und Unverborgenheit als solcher. Besser gesagt: was das Sein sowohl wie die Unverborgenheit zu ihrem eigenen Wesen ermächtigt, dieses Ermächtigende nennt Platon das Gute (ἀγαθόν)....<sup>33</sup>*

The Good, the ἀγαθόν, is therefore the making possible of being as such and of uncoveredness as such; in other words, what masters being, like uncoveredness, in their proper essence, and Plato names this mastering the Good (ἀγαθόν)....

The interpretation of the ἀγαθόν with regard to ἔξις thereby concerns neither simply a disposition of Dasein, nor simply a characteristic of the ἀγαθόν as absolute. If anything, it would be



more correct to say that ἔξις names not our acquisition of virtue, but rather our relation to ground.

\*

We have seen that Heidegger's interpretation of προξις as the root of transcendence depends on a radicalization of the manner in which νοῦς and ὄρεξις are united in the relation to the final end. Given that in Aristotle, this unity is cemented by ἔξις (as an ethical disposition), it is not surprising that the concept of ἔξις should itself become the focus of Heidegger's attention. However, the full meaning of Heidegger's interpretation is still somewhat obscure. We shall return to the issue of ἔξις in Chapter Four, where its connection with potentiality or power will be traced in more detail. First however, we must pass by way of the radicalization of προξις. Indeed, only once the course of that radicalization has been examined and carried through will the occurrence of ἔξις in the passage we have just been discussing become clear. In the next chapter, therefore, we shall look at Heidegger's understanding of movement as a determination of the factual existence of Dasein. Moreover, our consideration there of the relative priority accorded to σοφία and φρόνησις will shed light on what appears to be a convergence of Aristotelian and Platonic lines of interpretation in Heidegger's reading.

## Chapter Three

### *PHRONESIS, SOPHIA AND THE MOVEMENT OF FACTICAL EXISTENCE*

If one were to seek an Aristotelian precedent for the hermeneutics of facticity Heidegger presents in Division One of *Being and Time*, it would be tempting to suppose that one need look no further than the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Whilst in no way diminishing the importance of this text for Heidegger, it would, however, be more accurate to regard it as the focal point of an interpretation that also draws on resources from further afield. Indeed, and this is the implicit and generally neglected message of Heidegger's reading, Aristotelian practical philosophy can only be adequately understood if it is approached via the *Physics* and *Metaphysics*. We have already seen in Chapter One that themes from the *Metaphysics* can illuminate or problematize the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Moreover, we discovered in the previous chapter that Heidegger inherits a fundamental incoherency affecting the Aristotelian conception of *πρᾶξις*. In the present chapter I shall argue that the distinctiveness of Heidegger's response to this problem lies in the way his reading of the *Nicomachean Ethics* approaches the text via Aristotle's account of movement and change in the *Physics* and *Metaphysics*.

One of the most important questions raised by Heidegger's reading of NE.VI is that of the relation between *φρόνησις* and *σοφία*. Readers who

have been led to Heidegger's interpretation of Aristotle by their interest in Gadamer or Arendt tend, with some justification, to be dismayed by the emphasis Heidegger places on σοφία at the expense of φρόνησις. Does this not preclude the recovery of a radical understanding of ethical and political πράξις by reinstating the primacy of theory? Clearly, given our own emphasis on the importance of πράξις for the ontological determination of Dasein, we cannot afford to ignore this problem and I shall devote Section II of this chapter to a review of the concerns aroused by Heidegger's apparent indifference to the claims of πράξις and φρόνησις. In response, I shall try to distinguish the various impulses of Heidegger's reading and to show how a positive recovery of πράξις is not incompatible with the priority of σοφία. Indeed, Heidegger is led necessarily to repeat that priority by his own strategy of 'destructive' reading and, as we shall see in Sections III and IV, this reading of σοφία is of twofold significance for his overall recovery of πράξις as a determination of Dasein. First, the relation of σοφία to φρόνησις is given a new level of complexity, causing the form of priority enjoyed by σοφία to be significantly qualified. In addition, the recovery of σοφία provides a means of offsetting the influence of scholastic anthropology on later, modern, views of human being.

## I

Heidegger's early (pre-1925) texts envisage philosophy as inseparable from a hermeneutics of facticity.<sup>1</sup> The expression 'facticity' denotes



the ontological character of Dasein as that being which "*ist ihm selbst da im Wie seines eigensten Seins*: is itself there in the manner of its ownmost being" [GA63 7]. Dasein's relation to its own existence is encapsulated in the manner of its being-*there*, and this concerns the way in which factual life is actually lived; "*Sein - transitiv: das faktische Leben sein!*: being - transitive: being factual life!" [GA63 7]. The task of the hermeneutics of facticity is thus to follow the articulation of factual life "*im jeweiligen Wie des Angesprochen- und Ausgelegtseins*: in the way it is in each case addressed and interpreted" and to trace existential categories according to which such an articulation takes place.

*Das heißt, die Philosophie ist als Ontologie der Faktizität zugleich kategoriale Interpretation des Ansprechens und Auslegens, das heißt Logik. [PIA 247]*

As an ontology of facticity, philosophy is thus the categorial interpretation of being-addressed and being-interpreted, i.e. logic.

The ontology of facticity, logic, is directed towards working out the structures of factual life. Yet where, indeed how, is it to begin? The hermeneutic of facticity is every bit as circular as the question of being as Heidegger describes it in *Being and Time* [SZ 7-8:27-28]; for must it not have already reached an understanding of 'life' in order to begin deciphering its logic? Yes, indeed it must, although the understanding with which it begins is imprecise and unreliable. If it is to be improved, hermeneutic enquiry must remain vigilant to its presuppositions, and above all this means that it must maintain a critical relation to the *history* of its presuppositions.

To take the present case, the term 'life' has a long history embracing many variations of meaning. Indeed, so ramified and confused has that history become that we have all but lost track of the term's genealogy. Even, and perhaps especially, where it seems most obvious, the *Lebensauslegung* moves in a context of fundamental concepts, questions and explanations that we no longer fully understand [PIA 249]. However, if the sense attached to 'life' is today uncertain, in the 1922 'Introduction' Heidegger is clear at least about the formative influences that must be re-traced:

*Die Philosophie der heutigen Situation bewegt sich bei der Ansetzung der Idee des Menschen, der Lebensideale, der Seinsvorstellungen vom menschlichen Lebens in Ausläufern von Grunderfahrungen, die die griechische Ethik und vor allem die Christliche Idee des Menschen und des menschlichen Daseins gezeitigt haben. [PIA 249]*

With regard to the idea of man, the ideal of life and the representation of the being of human life, philosophy today stands at the fringes of fundamental experiences fostered by Greek ethics and above all the Christian idea of man and of human Dasein.

Expanding on this, Heidegger goes on to say that the philosophical anthropologies of Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel all drew on a theology rooted in the reformation, which itself did scant justice to the "immanent possibilities" of Lutheran teaching. In turn, Luther was inspired by his reading of Paul and Augustine and his critique of late-scholastic theology (Duns Scotus, Occam, Gabriel Biel, Gregor von Rimini). Looking still further, late-scholastic theology deploys a conceptual vocabulary almost entirely inherited from Aquinas and Bonaventure and thus ultimately from Aristotle. In spelling out this history, Heidegger does not claim to be doing anything new. On the

contrary, he acknowledges that it is widely recognized. Yet in spite of the familiarity of this history, he adds, it has never been worked through with the care it deserves and, as a consequence, the problematic of facticity has been allowed to dwindle into that of a commonplace or worse.<sup>2</sup> In order to remedy this situation, Heidegger proposes that the hermeneutic of factual life be carried out in conjunction with the strategy of reading the history of philosophy he calls "de-construction" [*Abbau*] or "destruction" [*Destruktion*]. This strategy is presented most completely in *Being and Time* [SZ §6] and *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* [GA24 §5]. Indeed, so firmly is it associated with these texts that readers sometimes neglect the fact that Heidegger outlined the strategy much earlier. Thus, in the 1922 'Introduction' he proposes that the hermeneutic of factual life aim to break down or open up [*aufzulockern*]

*die überkommene und herrschende Ausgelegtheit nach ihren verdeckten Motiven, unausdrücklichen Tendenzen und Auslegungswegen... und im abbauenden Rückgang zu den ursprünglichen Motivquellen der Explikation vorzudringen. Die Hermeneutik bewerkstelligt ihre Aufgabe nur auf dem Wege der Destruktion. [PIA 249 My emphasis]*

the traditional and dominant interpretative form, releasing its hidden reasons, implicit tendencies and directions of interpretation... and push forward de-constructively back to the original sources of the explication. *The hermeneutic achieves its task only by way of destruction.*<sup>3</sup>

As we have already discovered, Heidegger believed these sources to lie primarily in Aristotle, whose significance for the hermeneutic of factual life he regarded as overriding.<sup>4</sup> Yet, for Heidegger, the textual sources to which he intends to return are by no means openly accessible. Rather, they have been covered over by the very tradition



to which they gave rise and the task is one of recovery, an archeology of decisive moments in philosophical history that have remained unthought.

The significance Heidegger attaches to Aristotle could therefore be said, somewhat schematically, to have a twofold basis. In the first place, Aristotle stands at the beginning of a long tradition of philosophical anthropology that has continued to move almost entirely within parameters set by his analyses and an adequate understanding of that tradition requires as firm a grasp of its sources as one can achieve. To this extent, it is simply a matter of returning to first principles. However, Heidegger is also prepared to challenge the customary understanding of those principles. At times this may even bring him into conflict with Aristotle's own text as he discovers resources within it left untapped or worse by other parts of the text. As regards our present problem, we shall see that Aristotle's influence on philosophical anthropology is not to be sought in his works on ethics, politics and the soul alone.

In the 1922 'Introduction' Heidegger includes an early statement of Heidegger's claim that the Greek understanding of being was established on the basis of the experience of production; "*Sein besagt Hergestelltsein*: being means being-produced" [PIA 253]. But on this occasion Heidegger also makes an additional and very important step. For if the fundamental structures of 'human life' are rooted in the experience of production, they arise

*auf dem Weg einer Forschung, die das durch eine Grunderfahrung in die bestimmte Vorhabe gebrachte Seinsfeld in bestimmte Hinsichten nimmt und es in diesen artikuliert.*

*Die Forschungen also, deren Gegenstand erfahren und vermeint ist im Charakter des Bewegtseins, in dessen Was im Vorhinein mitgegeben ist so etwas wie Bewegung, müssen den möglichen Zugang zur eigentlichen Motivquelle der aristotelischen Ontologie vermitteln. Solche Forschung Liegt vor in der »Physik« des Aristoteles. [PIA 253-254]*

in the course of an enquiry that takes and articulates in specific respects the field of being [*Seinsfeld*] brought to a particular fore-having [*Vorhabe*] by way of a fundamental experience. The enquiries, whose object are intended and experienced as a being-moved [*Bewegtseins*] in which from the outset something like movement is also given, are therefore to provide the possibility of access to the motivational sources of Aristotelian ontology. Such an enquiry is to be found in Aristotle's *Physics*.

Heidegger exposes the form and influence of the experience of production to criticism by referring the ontological structures of factual life directly back to the phenomenon of movement, or rather to the central phenomenon addressed by the *Physics*; "*das Seiende im Wie seines Bewegtseins*: the being in the manner of its being-moved" [PIA 251]. The significance of the phenomenon of movement for the history of philosophical anthropology, and thereby for the hermeneutics of facticity engaged by it, is in Heidegger's view enhanced by the fact that the phenomenon has never been thought through radically. We shall begin to assess the influence of the *Physics* and *Metaphysics* in Sections III and IV, but first let us turn to Heidegger's reading of *Nicomachean Ethics* VI and to questions arising from the place of  $\varphi\rho\nu\nu\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$  and  $\sigma\omega\phi\acute{\iota}\alpha$  within that reading.

Factual life consists in the *Angesprochenseins* and *Ausgelegtseins* characteristic of the things with which Dasein is concerned, that is, in the way things are addressed and interpreted by Dasein. The ontological account of facticity therefore amounts in the first place to an explicit articulation of the modes of disclosure specific to Dasein. If we recall Heidegger's understanding of truth in its original sense as unconcealment, the problem of facticity thereby emerges as intimately bound up with the question of truth, and this brings us to Heidegger's reading of *Nicomachean Ethics* VI. In that book, Aristotle describes five intellectual dispositions [ἑξείς] by which the mind attains truth [1139b15-18]. These are said to be distinct *Verwahrungen*, where the primary meaning of 'securing or taking into care' is supplemented by the connotation of truth conveyed by the stem '*wahr*' to suggest ways of 'securing truth.' Accordingly, the various intellectual dispositions are understood as distinct ways in which things are given to Dasein via Dasein's own disclosive comportment towards them. Heidegger translates the five dispositions as follows:

τέχνη	- <i>verrichtend-herstellendes Verfahren</i>
ἐπιστήμη	- <i>hinsehend-besprechend-ausweisendes Bestimmen</i>
φρόνησις	- <i>fürsorgliches Sichumsehen (Umsicht)</i>
σοφία	- <i>eigentlich-sehendes Verstehen</i>
νοῦς	- <i>reines Vernehmen [PIA 255].<sup>5</sup></i>

Of particular interest here are the last three of these. Heidegger's reading of *Nicomachean Ethics* VI departs from the predominant



reading, initiated by Aquinas, according to which there are five intellectual virtues, identified with the five dispositions by which truth may be attained. Instead, Heidegger adheres to the less common view that there are only two virtues, φρόνησις and σοφία, corresponding to the division of the rational part of the soul into the calculative or practical faculty (concerned with things that admit of variation) and the scientific faculty (concerned with things that are invariable) [1139a5-15, 1143b15-17].<sup>6</sup>

Φρόνησις is the disposition that ensures sound reasoning "in relation to things that are good and bad for human beings" [1140b7]. Moreover, it is concerned not with a single region of one's activity, but with the well-being of Dasein as a whole [τὸ εὖ ζῆν ὅλως], that is, with εὐπραξία [1140a28]. In Heidegger's idiom, it denotes Dasein's relation to the totality of its existence. Though a form of self-relation, φρόνησις is not reflexive in the manner that we have come to regard as usual and which is essentially a modification of one's relation to objects, that is, of the relation that obtains in the case of τέχνη. The ἀρχή of τέχνη is the image that is held in advance by the agent and which must then govern the formation of the raw material into the τέλος, the actual result. One could therefore describe τέχνη as a form of knowledge that relates the individual agent to the work he or she sets out to produce. This model is adapted to the case of self-relation simply by treating oneself as at once the raw material and the finished article. Because τέχνη treats its object primarily in isolation from its context, such an approach leads to a piecemeal and essentially exclusive relation (hence models

of consciousness that begin with a conception of self-consciousness based on this form of relation are inevitably dogged by the problem of solipsism). By contrast, φρόνησις does not depend on the capacity to impose one's designs and, which amounts to the same thing, it does not begin with the agent as such. This is because both its ἀρχή and its τέλος lie within the situation of activity itself [1140b17] and φρόνησις has in each case to be accomplished in and through the act of choice [προαίρεσις] and its articulation in activity, in πράξις.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, φρόνησις does not have the distance from its object characteristic of the representational relation proper to τέχνη and above all does not precede activity - a point worth bearing in mind when reading Heidegger's translation of Aristotle's definition of φρόνησις [1140b20]

*Die φρόνησις ist eine ἔξις des ἀληθεύειν, »ein solches Gestelltsein des menschlichen Daseins, daß ich darin verfüge über die Durchsichtigkeit meiner selbst«.* [GA19 52]

Φρόνησις is a ἔξις of ἀληθεύειν, "a having-been-set-in-place [Gestelltsein] of human Dasein in which I hold sway over my self-transparency."<sup>8</sup>

Dasein's self-transparency arises only insofar as φρόνησις "*eine Handlung in sich durchsichtig macht*: makes an activity transparent in itself" [GA19 53] and the transparency of an activity itself depends upon the capacity of φρόνησις to make the *situation* of activity accessible by securing the οὐ ἔνεχα or final end, which is of course the 'εὖ' or the ἀγαθόν πρακτὸν itself.<sup>9</sup> Securing the ἀρχή of activity in this way, Dasein sees how to accomplish the disclosure [ἀληθεύειν] proper to φρόνησις, by which it is at the same time delivered over to itself in a moment of individuation [GA19 150].<sup>10</sup> Φρόνησις,



therefore, designates a relation to the totality of one's own existence that is not mediated so much as precipitated by the situation in which one finds oneself.

Aristotle's most complete account of σοφία is to be found not in the *Nicomachean Ethics* but in the *Metaphysics*, where it is introduced by way of comparison with experience and knowledge [980b25ff]. Those whose acquaintance with a certain field of activity is restricted to theoretical knowledge alone will generally be at a disadvantage with respect to those whose ability derives instead from experience. This is because theoretical knowledge deals with universals, whereas the experienced eye picks out the individual cases, and "the physician does not cure *man*, except in an incidental way, but Callias or Socrates or some other such individual name, who happens to be a man" [981a17-20, cf. also NE.VI:1141b18-22]. Σοφία comprises both knowledge and experience. Accordingly, master craftsmen were commonly thought to be wise precisely because they could tell not only what was to be done but also *why*.<sup>11</sup> In effect, Aristotle extends the scope of this common conception from specific pursuits to the widest possible horizons, and this comprehensiveness serves as a point of departure from which Aristotle sets out four features that mark σοφία off from the other forms of knowledge [982a8f]; i) the σοφός knows all things, though without having a detailed acquaintance with each of them: ii) the σοφός can learn things that are difficult and does not rely on the senses alone: iii) the σοφός has a more fundamental grasp of things and is better able to teach their causes: iv) σοφία is desirable on its own account and not on account of its results.



The first of these does not mean that the σοφός apprehends things case by case in a feat of obstinate encyclopaedic passion (the Autodidact in Sartre's *Nausea* is not a paragon of Aristotelian sagacity). Apart from the somewhat dull and impracticable nature of such an undertaking, it presupposes that the particular can be grasped fully in and of itself. However, the primary mode of access to things is αἴσθησις, which, as Heidegger emphasizes, "trägt nichts oder wenig vom Seienden bei sich: conveys nothing or little of beings themselves" [GA19 84, 1029b8]. For αἴσθησις discloses only the particular [ἕκαστον], whereas:

*Der Weg auf dem das Seiende in der Eigentlichkeit seines Seins aufgedeckt wird, geht also vom καθ' ἕκαστον, durch dieses hindurchschreitend, μεταβαίνον, zum καθόλου.*  
[GA19 86]

The path along which the being in the authenticity of its being is uncovered goes thus from the καθ' ἕκαστον, across this traversal, μεταβαίνον, to the καθόλου.

The term 'καθόλου' is usually rendered by 'universal.' However, Heidegger deliberately avoids this expression, presenting instead a reading of καθόλου as at once the totality disclosed via the λόγος [ὄλον λεγόμενον] and the integral character conferred upon a thing by its involvement in that totality [GA19 88-89]. With this, we are brought back to a recurrent theme of this study. In Ch.1.II, 'universality' was discussed in connection with the notion of primacy in first philosophy and linked with σοφία understood as *Seiendheit*. This approach was reflected in the interpretation of the ἔργον of human being as activity in general or as such, and further underlined in Ch.2.I by the reading of πρᾶξις as a *formal* designation. At

bottom, this abiding concern with totality arises from Heidegger's central interest in world, and more especially in *the transcendental problem of world*. In the present context, if Dasein is to gain an understanding of all things, it must overcome an inherent tendency to remain entranced by the spectacle of whatever is before its eyes and turn its attention to the totality of beings as such. That this requires a positive and even strenuous effort accounts for the difficulty attached to σοφία (second point). However, if the impulse to go beyond the particular begins with what, in Heidegger's translation of the Greek πρόχειρα, openly "*vor der Hand liegt: lies to hand*" [982b13, GA19 126], it soon leads Dasein away from its everyday concern to "greater things."<sup>12</sup> Returning to the particular from the horizon of the totality of beings, the σοθὸς is able to see things not as they proximally appear, but according to their first principles and is thus better able to pass on knowledge of what they are (third point).

Explication of the fourth point requires a closer look at the nature of the ἀγαθόν and the way in which it becomes accessible to knowledge. In this regard, Heidegger applauds Aristotle for having shown

*daß das ἀγαθόν nichts anderes ist als eine Seinsbestimmung des Seienden, das durch das τέλος bestimmt ist. Sofern ein Seiendes in seinem τέλος fertig geworden ist, ist es so, wie es sich gehört, εὖ. [GA19 123]*

that the ἀγαθόν is nothing but a *determination of the being of a being* via the τέλος. Insofar as a being reaches completion in its τέλος, it belongs to itself and is εὖ.



By endorsing a reading of the εὖ as rooted firmly in teleology and the relation of beings to change, Heidegger underlines that the ἀγαθόν as absolute is not extrinsic to the totality of beings it grounds and as such is contrasted with the Platonic *idea* of the good as a distinct and separable form in itself.<sup>13</sup> However, if the ἀγαθόν is distinguished from the Platonic idea of the good, this is not to say that it is assimilated to the ἀγαθόν πρακτικόν associated with πράξις [1096b30f]. For the ἀγαθόν is constant and unchanging and therefore cannot be acted upon, whereas the object of πράξις is contingent and thus susceptible to the influence of Dasein (the criterion for distinguishing πράξις and φρόνησις from θεωρία and σοφία is primarily time [GA19 164]).<sup>14</sup> Hence the ἀγαθόν is not susceptible to φρόνησις as such, but is rather the object of θεωρία and apprehended in σοφία. Indeed, if, as Aristotle proposes, the ἀγαθόν is understood to be an ἀρχή, it is disclosed in θεωρία simply as ἀρχή and not as the ἀρχή of a specific act or form of knowledge, as in the case of activity. This contributes to the detachment of the ἀγαθόν from the world of human affairs and thereby determines that knowledge of it in the form of σοφία cannot be put to practical use and must be sought for its own sake alone (the fourth point).

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The determination of human being in terms of φρόνησις and σοφία inevitably leads to the question of their priority: which of them is the highest or most fundamental determination? If the problem were as straightforward as this, it would probably have exercised commentators less. But, as we shall see, the difficulty is



exacerbated in the first place by the fact that what is 'highest' and what is 'most fundamental' are not equivalent to one another.

There is little doubt that Aristotle regarded σοφία as superior to φρόνησις [NE.VI:1143b33], and indeed that precisely by virtue of its superiority it transcends what is 'most human' and shares in a measure of divinity. By contrast, φρόνησις may be a less exalted virtue, but it is more fundamentally *human* [1178a10f]. Aristotle's rejection of the Euripidean view that mortals should have mortal thoughts and his enjoinder to live in accordance with what is highest in human being is perhaps contentious in itself. Yet we should beware of engaging the question at face value, for it is of course more complex than a straightforward choice between exclusive alternatives and there is no guarantee that the traditional categories of 'human' and 'divine' will be adequate parameters for the elaboration of what Heidegger calls a hermeneutics of facticity.<sup>15</sup> In spite of the tendency of commentators and readers of Aristotle to line up behind one position or the other by either recognizing the priority of σοφία or by promoting φρόνησις over it, that is, by identifying human being with either the highest or the most fundamental of its possibilities, this complexity may very well be unavoidable. Moreover, if this is at least to some extent the case when reading Aristotle's text on its own terms, so to speak, it is very much more the case when approaching that text via Heidegger. As we shall see shortly, acknowledging the irreducibility of such a complexity at once challenges those who would find in Heidegger a retrieval of practical

reason and rescues them from the unwelcome spectacle of Heidegger endorsing the priority of contemplation.

Although Heidegger entertains the view that φρόνησις may have priority on account of the fact that it is concerned with the τέλος of the existence of Dasein itself and as a whole [GA19 §19], he also recognizes that φρόνησις is compromised by this same point. As he underlines:

*Für Aristoteles und die Griechen wie auch für die Tradition ist das eigentlich Seiende das, was immer ist, was ständig schon da ist. [GA19 137]*

For Aristotle and the Greeks, as indeed for the tradition, the authentic being is that which always is and which is constantly already there.

By contrast, the τέλος of human existence is, like that existence itself, finite and temporal. Ultimately, the matter is settled by this simple fact and σοφία is accorded priority on account of the ontological priority of the being with which it is concerned.<sup>16</sup>

It has been persuasively argued that in recognizing σοφία as the supreme virtue over and above φρόνησις, Heidegger complies with a tendency to 'Platonise' or even 'hyper-Platonise' Aristotle and thereby fails to exploit the more radical possibilities present within Aristotle's own text. Taminiaux, for example, contends that Heidegger's insistence on the primacy of σοφία undermines the pluralism of the political dimension implicit in the Aristotelian conceptions of πρᾶξις and φρόνησις [LOF 186]. Over and above the contextual, ambiguous and essentially public character of such activity, Taminiaux sees Heidegger set the private, monological world



of the science of being, in which disclosure and individuation are secured by a retreat from the πόλις or rather take on the taciturn anonymity characteristic of the artisan, as the Athenian πόλις is transformed into Plato's workshop-republic. In Taminiaux's view, Heidegger's appropriation of πράξις reflects a rejection of the Aristotelian resistance to Plato.

*Dans l'ontologie fondamentale, tout se passe comme si le βίος θεωρητικός dévorait et régissait la πράξις tout entière. [LOF 175]*

In fundamental ontology, it is as if the βίος θεωρητικός consumed and governed πράξις entirely.

Taminiaux has a good case. Heidegger is frequently unequivocal in championing the practice of fundamental ontology over πράξις in the specifically Aristotelian sense and, by the same token, it is plainly not his intention simply to pit Aristotle against Plato. Yet even so, the extent to which Heidegger appropriates motifs from the *Nicomachean Ethics* does raise expectations of a recognizably Aristotelian, that is anti-Platonic, accent. Such an expectation is certainly shared by Bernasconi, who reflects on the apparent tension between Heidegger's referral of ποίησις and τέχνη to πράξις and φρόνησις on the one hand and his endorsement of the priority Aristotle accords to θεωρεῖν and σοφία on the other [HDP 139].

For his part, Bernasconi seeks to mitigate the problem by highlighting the difficulty of establishing the effective authorship of any part of Heidegger's text. Insofar as Heidegger allows a hidden resource within Aristotle's text to speak against the declared direction of the text itself, it is impossible, argues Bernasconi, to



attribute the trajectory of a reading unequivocally to either thinker and this indeterminacy accounts for the apparently contradictory strains within Heidegger's text. For whilst Heidegger's direct commentaries apparently endorse the priority of σοφία, the deeper structure of his text presents a retrieval of φρόνησις achieved via the destruction of the history of ontology. Having recognized this indeterminacy, however, Bernasconi apparently wishes to promote the retrieval of φρόνησις, whilst playing down the references to the priority of σοφία. Yet this would be precisely to *disown* Heidegger's direct commentaries in the name of the co-authored outcome of the destruction of the history of ontology. Such an approach may fail to confront the full ambiguity of the text. For although I agree with Bernasconi that "it is essential to the destructive enterprise that the question of who owns the words remains open" [HDP 139], the matter is hardly resolved thereby (after all, Taminiaux's quarrel is surely with the text and not its author). In short, the indeterminacy of authorship should not dull our sensitivity to an indeterminacy in the text itself. Whoever the signatory may be, the manifest recognition of the priority of σοφία cannot simply be passed over in favour of the covert retrieval of φρόνησις, however important an element it may be in Heidegger's writing. Nowhere is this bind more pressing than where Bernasconi throws a Euripidean gloss on Heidegger's remarks concerning the proper scope of a mortal's thought, claiming the view that mortals abandon their aspirations to the divine as Heidegger's own [HDP 143]. Admittedly, Heidegger writes:

*Sofern der Mensch jedoch sterblich ist, sofern er der Erholung und Abspannung in wietestem Sinne bedarf, ist ihm der ständige Aufenthalt beim Immerseienden, das letztlich angemessene Verhalten zum Immerseienden, versagt. [GA19 171]*

Insofar as man is nonetheless mortal, insofar as he needs rest and recuperation in the broadest sense, he is prohibited from dwelling alongside perpetual beings in the comportment towards them that is ultimately most appropriate.

Yet this 'insofar' seems a slight basis on which to overturn Heidegger's repeated endorsement (with Aristotle) of the priority of σοφία. If anything, it should alert us to the danger of supposing any simple order of priority to be genuine; surely 'insofar' conveys measure and proportion rather than all or nothing. Heidegger's endorsement of σοφία as the highest virtue should not be received as a trojan horse concealing the 'real' itinerary of the reading (whoever it belongs to). Rather, the priority traditionally accorded to σοφία must itself be transformed by the destruction of the history of ontology by which the retrieval of φρόνησις is effected. Thus, whilst it is important to distinguish between Heidegger's direct commentaries and the less overt readings that are the outcome of his critical appropriation via the destruction of the history of ontology, one should not renounce the former in order to support the latter. Indeed, to do so would be grossly reductive.

A point of fundamental importance hangs in the balance. To what extent is the characterization of Dasein in terms of πρᾶξις tempered by the recognition of θεωρεῖν as the highest possibility of existence? Is Taminiaux's account of Heidegger's complicity in the eclipse of πρᾶξις and φρόνησις the end of the story?



We have cast the problem as a tussle for supremacy between φρόνησις and σοφία, but this is only true up to a point. Moreover, once the limitation of this view is recognized, the charge that Heidegger suppressed the distinctively Aristotelian formulation of political activity falters. In the first place, we should acknowledge a fundamental respect in which Heidegger clearly does side with Aristotle against Plato. For Plato, φρόνησις signified knowledge about what is good for human beings. But this 'practical' knowledge was grounded in knowledge of the absolute good, whereupon φρόνησις also served as a name for philosophy as such. φρόνησις and σοφία were equivalent, sharing not only a common basis but, particularly significant here, a common structure, namely, that of science. By distinguishing φρόνησις from σοφία, Aristotle withdrew political activity from the domain of science and established it as an autonomous region of experience with a structure and form of reasoning of its own. In Aristotle, then, φρόνησις is not *directly* subordinated to σοφία and, whilst Aristotle may be persuaded that contemplation of the heavens is ultimately more rewarding, the vicissitudes of life in the πόλις are left to themselves. Insofar as Heidegger adopts Aristotle's definitions of φρόνησις and σοφία, the same anti-Platonic current runs through his own readings. Taminioux's fears are therefore misplaced - for whilst they reflect an unmistakable trend in Heidegger's writing, this trend does not amount to the fundamental subordination of φρόνησις to σοφία. On the contrary, placing φρόνησις and σοφία as the sole virtues at the head of their respective branches of the soul speaks against their being ordered in this way; the fact that σοφία is 'higher' than φρόνησις



does not imply the subsumption of political *πρᾶξις* under the auspices of theory. The problem is rather one of assessing the coordination of two relatively autonomous concepts, between which there is no direct order of dependence.

No *direct* order of dependence, yet if Aristotle disengaged *φρόνησις* from *σοφία*, the *ἀγαθόν πρακτὸν* from the *ἀγαθόν* in its absolute sense, this disengagement was by no means total - and the question of the relative weight attached to *φρόνησις* and *σοφία* not only in Aristotle but above all in Heidegger turns on the extent and manner in which the two designations intersect one another.

To begin with Aristotle, we have already seen that he argues against the existence of a single idea of the good over and above its particular significations:

for even if the goodness predicated of various things in common really is a unity or something existing separately and absolute, it clearly will not be practicable or attainable by man; but the good we are now seeking is a good within human reach. [1096b32]

By denying the separate existence of an idea of the good, Aristotle opposes Plato. But how? It is easy to suppose that by diverting our gaze away from a putative absolute towards those goods relative to 'concrete activity,' Aristotle is insisting on the demarcation between the human and the divine. In this way, Aristotle is often said to have tailored ethics to a human proportion. Yet by insisting on a rigid demarcation between the human and divine fields of possibility, one invites the very elevation of the divine over the human that advocates of Aristotelian practical philosophy deplore.

Such a reading effectively launches its opposition to Plato on the basis of the very residual Platonism it seeks to expunge; the insulation of the human from the divine in the name of anti-Platonism unwittingly hands power back to the very philosopher-king it would depose. And as we have already seen, whilst Aristotle distinguishes here between the divine and the human, he is quite prepared to blur the distinction elsewhere by admitting the presence of divinity in man [1177b25, 1178a21f] and by exhorting human beings to pursue a divine science [982b27ff]. Rather than trying to disentangle the human from the divine in an attempt to delimit the 'properly' human, identified as a kernel of Aristotelian radicalism within the trappings of a Platonic science, we should challenge such a reading by acknowledging the ambiguity in Aristotle's text and probing its source.

Discreetly, such an ambiguity has already entered our reading. In the first place, we noted that the ἀγαθόν in its absolute sense does not take the form of a Platonic idea and is rather inseparable from the order it grounds [p.117]. However, we have also said that it is precisely by virtue of its detachment from the world of human affairs (as indeed from the natural world) that σοφία is accorded priority. How are we to reconcile the apparently conflicting demands of inseparability and detachment? In fact, the problem only arises insofar as we continue to deploy a *regional* conception of detachment. Rather than understanding σοφία as the study of a specific region of being (unchanging ἀρχαί), we have already presented it as concerned with the καθόλου, with the totality. Accordingly, the detachment of



σοφία derives not from the exclusiveness of the ἀγαθόν, but rather from the fact that it concerns the ἀρχή of the totality as such and is not circumscribed within any specific region. It is independent because it concerns the whole and not because it is cut off from the whole. Consequently, the ἀγαθόν as absolute is not other-worldly, but should be thought in connection with the totality of beings as such.<sup>17</sup> Moreover this concern with the totality is itself linked to the distinctively Aristotelian withdrawal of ethical and political activity from the range of theory. Nicolaci sheds valuable light on the matter as he rebuts the customary reading, arguing that to regard Aristotle's departure from Plato as an attempt to 'humanise' ethics would be an unwarranted simplification. For when Aristotle denies that the good is an independent absolute, he is not rejecting a conception of the good beyond being as such, but qualifying the notion of its *independence* along the lines we traced out above:

*se il bene, secondo questo suo apice di assolutezza, fosse disponibile astrattamente come un universale e come qualcosa di separato, non sarebbe - come è - quel che è da sempre, originalmente, posto in causa dalla parte dell'uomo... L'insegnamento dell'Aristotele dell'Etica Nicomachea è che non possiamo contemplare astrattamente l'ἀγαθόν secondo l'intero, come universale, perché da sempre, fra l'universale e il nostro desiderio di teoria si interpone, ha parte, l'intero dell'uomo. Questa interposizione ha la forma dell'ἔργον τοῦ ἀνθρώπου: la praxis. [LHP 260]*

if the good in its highest sense as absolute were accessible in the abstract as a universal and independent, it would not be placed in question - as it is - *by man* from the very beginning... Aristotle's teaching in the *Nicomachean Ethics* is that abstract contemplation of the ἀγαθόν as a *whole* and as universal is impossible, because from the first between the universal and our *desire for theory* there is interposed [ha partel] the *whole* of man. This interposition takes the form of the ἔργον τοῦ ἀνθρώπου: praxis.



Access to the ἀγαθόν - even as absolute - cannot proceed from nowhere, or from some Archimedean point beyond the existence of that being for which it is a question. For the question is but a possibility of Dasein and as such takes its place within the horizon of Dasein's being-for-the-sake-of-itself. Of course, this is not to say that the ἀγαθόν itself is reducible to an object of Dasein's concern. It simply means that the question cannot circumvent the ground of its possibility. Pursuit of the ἀγαθόν (i.e. for Heidegger, the horizon for the meaning of being) does not permit, still less entail, that the existence of Dasein be left behind.

The ultimately unsurpassable character of Dasein's existence is encapsulated in Heidegger's recognition of the ontic foundation of ontology. The idea is not Heidegger's innovation as such and in modern times is found in the recourse to the subject. However, Heidegger points out that it pre-dates Descartes, and is articulated first in Aristotle's formulation of philosophy as at once ontology and theology.<sup>18</sup> Heidegger takes up the idea in terms of the relation between fundamental ontology and the existential analytic.

*Philosophie ist universale phänomenologische Ontologie, ausgehend von der Hermeneutik des Daseins, die als Analytik der Existenz das Ende des Leitfadens alles philosophischen Fragens dort festgemacht hat, woraus es entspringt und wohin es zurückschlagt. [SZ 38:62]*

Philosophy is universal phenomenology, and takes its point of departure from the hermeneutic of Dasein, which, as an analytic of existence, has made fast the guiding line for all philosophical inquiry at the point where it arises and to which it returns.

The purpose of the existential analytic is to secure the ontic foundation of the enquiry into the meaning of being by making Dasein ontologically transparent in its very facticity [SZ 404:456]. But can the existential analytic reach a definitive formulation of the structure of Dasein's factual existence? How complete a presentation of Dasein's factual existence can it achieve? How confident can Heidegger be in anticipating that this foundation will have been "made fast"? There are at least two reasons for thinking that he may be a little over-optimistic.

In the first place, as Heidegger himself acknowledges, the enquiry is inevitably informed by a "factual ideal" that eludes the grasp of the analysis [SZ 310:358]. Such an imposition is even described as a "*positive necessity*." Philosophy's task is therefore gradually to extend its borders, mapping its own hinterland, unfolding "with more and more penetration both the presuppositions and that for which they are presuppositions" [SZ 310:358]. This is an ongoing task and the enquiry into being must return again and again to the existential analytic in order to re-elaborate its own basis.

But if the task of the existential analytic is to secure the ontic foundation of the enquiry into being, in *what* is the guiding line to be made fast? The ontic foundation is ultimately not the existential structures elicited by the analytic but rather the factual existence of Dasein itself presented in these structures, and this existence, as we have argued throughout, and as Nicolaci reminds us in the passage above, is *πρόξις*. In the end, therefore, the fate of the enquiry into being hinges on its capacity to mitigate the disjunction



that keeps the existential analytic from tracing the form and movement of factual existence itself. But how faithfully can this existence be rendered? The most profound obstacle to such a rendering is quite simply the *thematic* character of the analytic; as we have seen, the language for such an account is essentially lacking [Ch.1.V]. Accordingly, *πρᾶξις*, Dasein's ineluctable factual existence, is at once the condition of possibility of raising the question of being and at the same time the principle of closure preventing the prosecution of that question from securing either its own basis or, consequently, its conclusion. The resistance of *πρᾶξις* to thematic exposition occurs as a limit marking the finitude of philosophical enquiry. Heidegger, rather than approaching this as an external limit, thereby consolidating the identity of philosophy, opens the body of philosophical enquiry to allow the inscription of finitude within its very structure and practice.<sup>19</sup>

What this means will become clearer when we have trod the path taken by Heidegger in his radicalization of *πρᾶξις*. However, some light will be shed on the issue if we return to the question of the relative priority of *φρόνησις* and *σοφία*. As we have seen, concern over Heidegger's endorsement of *σοφία* as the highest possibility of Dasein's existence arises from a belief that the retrieval of *πρᾶξις* in his account of factual existence of Dasein may be overridden by the demands of fundamental ontology. Clearly, this presupposes that the relation obtaining between *φρόνησις* and *σοφία* is parallel to that between the factual existence of Dasein and fundamental ontology. To prepare this analogy, however, one must first of all tackle the onto-



theological equivocality in Aristotle's use of the term σοφία, that is, allow the meaning of σοφία to be qualified by the introduction of the ontological difference. Indeed, this equivocality is present even in Heidegger's own commentaries - a fact that argues for the need to discriminate between such direct readings and the critical appropriation of the terms they involve. For in his reading of *Nicomachean Ethics* VI, Heidegger joins Aristotle in describing σοφία as concerned with the 'Immerseienden' and as an apprehension of the highest beings [GA19 137], even though such a reading is utterly inconsistent with his conception of ontology and would amount to an *ontical* interpretation of being. By contrast, the introduction of the ontological difference suggests that σοφία be understood to concern being and thereby to name the disposition of philosophy as fundamental ontology.<sup>20</sup>

The issue of the relative priority given to φρόνησις and σοφία is by no means clear cut from this perspective. First, the possibility of σοφία understood in connection with fundamental ontology hangs on the fact that Dasein is a being for which its own being is an issue and that this concern with its own being takes the form of a self-understanding akin to φρόνησις. If this were not the case, there could be no access to the question of being. For the task of fundamental ontology is to raise to a thematic level the "vague average understanding of being" [SZ 6:25] implicit within the relation Dasein bears to itself in its everyday concern. In this respect, the understanding modelled on φρόνησις is primary. However, this is not to say that everything is rooted in Dasein's relation to

itself, that is, in φρόνησις and in πράξις. For Dasein's relation to itself does not entail its withdrawal from the world, but rather proceeds from the world in which it finds itself. In turn, of course, there can be no world without the disclosure of being. Accordingly, we can reverse the order outlined above and say it is on Dasein's understanding of being that its relation to itself depends. Moreover, as the ultimate ground, it is being that is the proper object of fundamental ontology. In short, the possibility of a thematic interpretation of being (σοφία) arises within the framework of Dasein's relation to itself (φρόνησις), which is in this respect fundamental. Yet as a comportment towards what radically exceeds the horizons of Dasein's being-for-the-sake-of-itself, and precisely insofar as the ground of those horizons is at issue, σοφία can remain without contradiction the highest possibility of Dasein's existence. The relation between φρόνησις and σοφία again appears as one of coordination, not subordination.

This would all be quite satisfactory were it not that to call σοφία the disposition of fundamental ontology distorts its sense, whereupon the analogy at the basis of the reservations over Heidegger's treatment of πράξις and φρόνησις is itself seen to be inaccurate. However, we shall see that the changes required to rectify this distortion actually favour the idea of a co-ordinate relation between φρόνησις and σοφία and therefore lend further support to the view that πράξις continues to play a significant role as a determination of Dasein's factual existence.



There are in fact two aspects of Heidegger's problematic that could be said to correspond to σοφία more faithfully than fundamental ontology as such. First of all, Heidegger's definition of the καθόλου in the *Sophist* lectures explicitly ties it in with λόγος as a ὅλον λεγόμενον. The καθόλου therefore designates a notion of totality inseparable from the structural character of disclosure and significance and may be compared in this respect with Heidegger's sense of world. This reading has the virtue of maintaining a commitment to σοφία's concern with the horizons of the intelligible world. On the negative side, however, it compromises the sense in which the σοφία designates a concern with what radically exceeds the world of Dasein's everyday existence. Accordingly, σοφία and φρόνησις are brought closer together, supporting the view that πράξις is not overridden by σοφία and the βίος θεωρητικός - but only at the price of weakening the conception of σοφία itself. Indeed, φρόνησις and σοφία become two alternative and complementary perspectives on the same notion of totality - as constituted by Dasein's being-for-the-sake-of-itself on the one hand and simply as such on the other.

Such a view is profoundly and deliberately problematised by the increasing prominence that Heidegger accorded to the question of nature. Not evident in the earlier *Sophist* lectures, by 1927 it had already advanced enough to shadow the account of Dasein's being-in-the-world and projective understanding in *Being and Time*. At this point, however, the question of nature seemed to remain eclipsed by the phenomenologically more correct problem of the worldhood of the world. Nature, then, seemed to have been reduced to the status of



environment or that which Dasein encounters [p.57]. But nature has a darker side. It is also that which has no involvement in the referential totality, that which falls within the clearing, yet remains opaque. Only once in *Being and Time* does Heidegger hint at this aspect of nature, and then somewhat obliquely.

*Natur ist - ontologisch-kategorial verstanden - ein Grenzfall des Seins von möglichen innerweltlichen Seienden. Das Seiende als Natur in diesem Sinne kann das Dasein nur in einem bestimmten Modus seines In-der-Welt-seins entdecken. Dieses Erkennen hat den Charakter einer bestimmten Entweltlichung der Welt. [SZ 65:93-94]*

If one understands Nature ontologico-categorially, one finds that Nature is a limiting case of the Being of possible entities within-the-world. Only in some definite mode of its own Being-in-the-world can Dasein discover entities as Nature. This manner of knowing them has the character of depriving the world of its worldhood in a definite way.

Nature begins where the world ends. In 'On The Essence of Grounds,' Heidegger explains that the problem of nature had no place in the account of world given in *Being and Time* because it is not something towards which we comport ourselves [wozu wir uns verhalten]. Nonetheless:

*Natur ist ursprünglich im Dasein offenbar dadurch, daß dieses als befindlich-gestimmtes inmitten von Seiendem existiert. [VWG-WM 155n-156n:83n]*

Nature is primordially manifest in Dasein because Dasein exists as situated and disposed *in the midst of being*.

Nature, then, is manifest in Dasein without having been explicitly disclosed by Dasein. But how can this be, if nature is not worldly? How can what is not of the world manifest itself in Dasein? Without showing itself as such, like death, nature is manifest precisely in Dasein's finitude. Heidegger addressed the connected themes of

nature, philosophy and the finitude of Dasein with increasing urgency in the years following the publication *Being and Time*.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps the clearest exposition of the issue, particularly in the light of the problems we have been discussing, is in the Appendix to §10 of *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, where Heidegger introduces the idea of metontology. The appendix begins by proposing that the temporal exposition of the problem of being (plausibly the culmination of fundamental ontology) must itself give way to a final stage in which the problematic is brought to an understanding of its own task and limits - a radicalization that Heidegger describes as an overturning [*Umschlag*]. He goes on to set out the relation between being and Dasein, whereby being depends on the understanding of being, which in turn depends on the factual existence of Dasein. Thus far, we could paraphrase in Aristotelian terms; the possibility of σοφία depends on the totality of human existence as πρᾶξις. But then Heidegger adds that the factual existence of Dasein in turn presupposes the factual extantness of nature.

*Gerade im Horizont des radikal gestellten Seinsproblems zeigt sich, daß all das nur sichtbar ist und als Sein Verstanden werden kann, wenn eine mögliche Totalität von Seiendem schon da ist. [GA26 199:156-157]*

Right within the horizon of the problem of being, when posed radically, it appears that all this is visible and can become understood as being, only if a possible totality of beings is already there.

This final condition displaces Dasein from its central and fundamental place in the articulation of being; if Dasein can only be understood in connection with being and vice versa, the factual extantness of nature undercuts them both. In response to the



challenge of thinking this condition of finitude, Heidegger calls for a special problematic whose theme is "beings as a whole [*das Seiende im Ganzen*]" [GA26 199:157], and which is, he stipulates, distinguished from any empirical science that simply accumulates information. The emphasis on what is fundamental for philosophy, on what is other than Dasein and on the notion of totality is unmistakably familiar from Heidegger's own account of σοφία. If σοφία has any *single* destination in Heidegger's work, it is not fundamental ontology, but metontology.<sup>22</sup>

What are the implications of this for the role of πρόξις with regard to Heidegger's conception of philosophy? Does metontology so displace or surpass Dasein's factual existence as to render its designation by πρόξις irrelevant? Having directed the problematic towards beings as a whole, Heidegger adds;

*Und hier im Bezirk des metontologisch-existenziellen Fragens ist auch der Bezirk der Metaphysik der Existenz (hier erst läßt sich die Frage der Ethik stellen). [GA26 199:157]*

And here also, in the domain of metontological-existential questioning, is the domain of the metaphysics of existence (here the question of ethics may properly be raised for the first time).

It seems the account of Dasein's factual existence in terms of πρόξις has not fallen away after all. On the contrary, the implication, literally, of the factual existence of Dasein as a whole in the question of being is reaffirmed in the declared coincidence of the domain of metontology with that of existential understanding, the "understanding of oneself" that "never gets straightened out except through existing itself" [SZ 12:33]. In a



reversal (an *Umschlag?*) of the movement from the existential analytic to the question of being proper, a movement that previously circled only to renew itself, here we find the existence of Dasein presented as the very domain in which the fundamental question of metaphysics belongs, as though this question could only be 'straightened out' *through that very existence*. This concentration of the question of being in the realm of existentiell questioning was, I believe, an essential feature of Heidegger's thinking at this time, and one that followed directly from his reading of Aristotle. Although the question cannot be pursued any further here, we shall return to it in the Conclusion.

\*

We began with Heidegger's hermeneutics of facticity and have ended with a lengthy consideration of σοφία. Have we not gone somewhat astray, losing track of our central theme of πράξις? Posing the question in these terms already reveals a misconception we must take care to avoid, for it implicitly suggests that σοφία lies *outside* πράξις, disengaged from factual life and, above all, concerned with a different theme. But it is precisely this disengagement that the reading I have sought to develop here contests. In doing so, it confronts the predominant view that sets φρόνησις and σοφία apart as entirely separable dispositions, even where they given a clear order of priority. By challenging the accepted independence of φρόνησις and σοφία, we have therefore placed a question mark against the separability of their respective themes, namely the ἀγαθόν πρακτὸν and the ἀγαθόν in an absolute sense. Let the emphasis here rest on

'separability.' I do not mean to suggest that these two significations of ἀγαθόν are simply equivalent. However, it may be that they are necessarily crossed, at once inseparable from and irreducible to one another. In this respect, they may be likened to determinations respectively of Dasein and of being, whose inter-relation remained such a "distressing difficulty" for Heidegger [HW 74:871].

In the following sections we shall see how the term σοφία serves as a vehicle for Heidegger to carry through the destruction of the history of ontology in such a way as to undercut scholastic philosophical anthropology and its modern descendents, returning Dasein to the context and structure of πράξις.

### III

In the previous section, we saw how the priority of σοφία was established primarily on the basis of its proper theme. However, Heidegger elaborates a further and particularly intriguing aspect to this priority, concentrating on the picture σοφία gives of the ontological constitution of Dasein.

On account of the fact that νοῦς, in the specific sense, is responsible for apprehending first principles, Heidegger describes φρόνησις and σοφία as "*eigentlichen Vollzugsweisen des νοῦς*: authentic modes in which νοῦς is accomplished" [PIA 255]. In the case of σοφία, we have already mentioned that the σοφός must know not only

the conclusions that follow from first principles, but those principles themselves. For this reason, Aristotle declares that "σοφία must be νοῦς and ἐπιστήμη" [1141a19], where the role of νοῦς in this combination is to apprehend the ἀρχαί and ultimately, of course, the ἀγαθόν as absolute.

As for φρόνησις, it too must grasp the ultimate particulars in a situation without recourse to reasoning, and this is why Aristotle describes the φρόνιμος as having "an eye for things" [1143b14]. All things considered:

νοῦς apprehends the ultimates in both aspects - since ultimates as well as primary definitions are grasped by νοῦς and not reached by reasoning: in demonstrations νοῦς apprehends the immutable and primary definitions, in practical inferences it apprehends the ultimate and contingent fact.... hence we must have perception of particulars and this immediate perception is νοῦς.<sup>23</sup> [1143a35-b5]

Now, if the intellectual virtues are ways in which truth is secured, then by virtue of its priority νοῦς must itself have a more primordial relation to truth, and this is indeed what we find:

*Die »Wahrheit« der αἴσθησις und des Sehens der »Ideen« ist das ursprüngliche Entdecken. Und nur weil νόησις primär entdeckt, kann auch der λόγος als διανοεῖν Entdeckungsfunktion haben. [SZ 226:269]*

The truth of αἴσθησις and of the seeing of 'ideas' is the primordial kind of uncovering. And only because νόησις primarily uncovers, can the λόγος as διανοεῖν also have uncovering as its function.<sup>24</sup>



Noûç provides a primary access to things, prior even to their interpretation 'as' such and such or their articulation via the remaining intellectual virtues.

This is not to say that Heidegger subordinates interpretation to the perceptual act, as though perception could somehow be lifted free of interpretation. In keeping with the strategy of a destructive reading, Heidegger recognizes a certain priority on the part of voûç, yet discovers a hitherto occluded basis for that priority, such that the relation of perception to interpretation is modified. Noûç acquires this priority insofar as it provides for each and every concrete discourse

*sein mögliches Worüber, was letztlich selbst nicht erst im Besprechen als solchem zugänglich werden kann. [PIA 258]*

its possible whereon, that which ultimately cannot become initially accessible in that discourse.

In this way, voûç is an essential and indispensable element of *all* modes of disclosure not because it presents the thing itself, upon which a specific interpretative project can then attach significance of one kind or another, but rather because it discloses the horizon belonging to any such interpretative project against which the thing in question can *first* appear:

*Der voûç ist das Vernehmen schlechthin, das heißt das, was ein Worauf für irgendwelchen gerichteten Umgang mit überhaupt ermöglicht, vorgibt. [PIA 257]*

voûç is simply perception, i.e. what above all makes possible and gives in advance a whereupon [*Worauf*] for any oriented activity.

The form of activity is of course linked to the particular *Worauf* that νοῦς apprehends. If we are concerned with πρᾶξις, then the element of νοῦς in φρόνησις "*macht die Lage des Handelns zugänglich im Festhalten des οὐ ἔνεχα*": makes the site of activity accessible by holding fast the οὐ ἔνεχα" [PIA 259].<sup>25</sup> Alternatively, when the element of νοῦς in σοφία apprehends the ἀγαθόν as an absolute, then it is the totality of beings as such that is disclosed and a theoretical consideration of first principles that is opened as a possibility.

Given that Heidegger is concerned above all with the transcendental problem of world, it is clear that it is the constitutive role of νοῦς in both φρόνησις and σοφία that attracts him. Indeed, Heidegger openly states that his approach to φρόνησις and σοφία is not motivated solely by an interest in the virtues themselves:

*Das Verständnis des νοῦς von der σοφία und φρόνησις her ist meiner Ansicht nach der einzige Weg, in das schwierige Phänomen des νοῦς einen vorläufigen Einblick zu gewinnen.*  
[GA19 144]

The comprehension of νοῦς via σοφία and φρόνησις is my perspective on the sole way of winning a preliminary insight into the difficult phenomenon of νοῦς.

Heidegger is interested in σοφία primarily as ἔξις, a 'state of the soul' and in what it can tell us about the ontological structure of factual life [PIA 260]. In a sense, it may seem that σοφία has little to tell us in this respect since, as we have already discovered, it is characterized by a certain detachment from everyday concerns. Commenting on this in the 1922 'Introduction,' Heidegger describes θεωρία as an activity that



*in seinem Worauf gerade das Leben selbst, in dem er ist, nicht mehr sieht. [PIA 263]*

in its horizon no longer sees the very life in which it is.

Σοφία is hyperopic. Gazing at the highest and most distant, it loses sight of life. Yet it is nonetheless life for that. The highest things with which σοφία is concerned are by definition 'unworldly' - as indeed are the sages to which Aristotle refers [1141b2f]. Yet far from diminishing its significance for Heidegger, the opposite is true; he regards the fundamental *Bewegtheit* of life as more easily discernible in σοφία than in φρόνησις precisely on account of former's detachment from the world.

*Lediglich in der reinen Zeitigung der σοφία als solcher muß, ob der ihr verfügbaren eigentlichen Bewegtheit, das Sein des Lebens gesehen werden. [PIA 260-261]*

The being of life must simply be seen in the pure temporalising of σοφία as such, on account of its accessible authentic *Bewegtheit*.

The privilege accorded to σοφία thereby stems from its characteristic detachment, by virtue of which it serves as access to the determination of νοῦς as the structure of the disclosive activity of the mind in general. That Heidegger chooses to approach the question of νοῦς in this way, as opposed to assuming its structure and movement to be self-evident in thinking, may be taken to indicate that noetic activity cannot be treated in isolation from the existence as a whole in which it is embedded. As such, it reinforces his critique of the preeminent role played by νοῦς in Plato's conception of transcendence.

The activity associated with σοφία is, as we have said, θεωρεῖν, of which Heidegger writes:

*Das θεωρεῖν ist die reinste Bewegtheit, über die das Leben verfügt. Dadurch ist es etwas »Göttliches«. [PIA 263, cf. also GA19 §18]*

θεωρεῖν is the purest *Bewegtheit* of which life is capable. Accordingly, it is something 'divine'.

Heidegger immediately goes on to explain that Aristotle's conception of the divine has nothing to do with religion as such, but simply denotes the highest form of being. Nonetheless, we cannot help being struck by the fact that Heidegger endorses the identification of the "authentic being of man" with what is by definition more than human.<sup>26</sup> In so doing, he is following a tendency evident in Aristotle (but not in him alone) to move from the designation 'what is most human' to that of 'the purest instance of what is most human' - a movement that risks, perhaps necessarily, effacing the ostensibly human dimension from which it arose. Or rather, and we have touched on this above [pp.104-105], it may be understood as a form of transcendence in which human being resides in the possibility of transcending itself. With the advent of Christianity, what had been a recognizable but still ambiguous impulse towards an other-worldly existence acquired new definition, shaping the history of philosophical anthropology to which we referred at the beginning of this chapter. In accordance with his strategy of destructive reading, Heidegger neither denies nor affirms this tendency as such, but rather repeats it in such a way as to retrieve from it a conception



of transcendence that is not determined by the opposition of human and divine forms.

Here, for example, Heidegger emphasizes the way the intellectual virtues are grounded in νοῦς, which is exemplified above all in θεωρία, whose purest form in turn is divine being:

*Das θεῖον ist nur... νόησις νοήσεως. [PIA 263]*

The θεῖον is simply... νόησις νοήσεως.

If we recall the account of anxiety in *Being and Time*, its significance lies in the way beings in the world slip their moorings and Dasein is brought face to face with world as such. In a remarkable echo of the purity of the divine mind, Heidegger describes how in anxiety:

*Die existenzielle Selbigkeit des Erschließens mit dem Erschlossenen... [SZ 188:233]*

*the disclosure and the disclosed are existentially the selfsame...*

Anxiety therefore fulfils for Heidegger an analogous role to that which, in one respect, he assigns σοφία in his reading of Aristotle, that is, it provides unique access to the existential structure of Dasein precisely insofar as it is in anxiety that the world of Dasein's everyday concern recedes and the involvements in which it is for the most part absorbed fall away, leaving it exposed to its own existence as radical potentiality for being and accessible in its totality [SZ §40].<sup>27</sup> Just as σοφία exposes the characteristic *Bewegtheit* of νοῦς, so anxiety exposes the essential movement of Dasein as disclosure. If Heidegger's account of transcendence

proceeds via a radicalization of νοῦς, and if, as this example illustrates, the disclosive capacity of νοῦς must be treated as inseparable from Dasein's existence as a whole, then the connection between νοῦς and the θεῖον must itself be broken in order to allow an interpretation of the *Bewegtheit* of existence that does not take its bearings from a conception of divine being. We shall therefore turn now to the radicalization that leads from σοφία and θεωρεῖν to the determination of divine being.

#### IV

In fact, this transition does not have its source in σοφία as such, but in the account of movement that informs the conception of *Bewegtheit* identified with σοφία. That Aristotle's account of movement is important for Heidegger's understanding of facticity is not in itself surprising. In broad terms, Aristotle understood nature, the sublunary world, as that which is in movement: Heidegger's concern was simply to discern the form of movement specific to Dasein. Thus, several years before its thematic supersession by temporality, the *Bewegtheit* of factual life provided the focus of Heidegger's 1921/22 course on Aristotle and the first part of the 1922 'Introduction' is written from essentially the same perspective.<sup>28</sup> It is Aristotle's *Physics* that provides the conceptual basis for Heidegger's account of facticity. Indeed, the importance of this text for Heidegger cannot be under-estimated. As Heidegger remarks, in his *Physics* Aristotle wins



*einen prinzipiellen neuen Grundsatz, aus dem seine Ontologie und Logik erwachsen, von denen dann die oben schematisch rückläufig gekennzeichnete Geschichte der philosophischen Anthropologie durchsetzt ist. [PIA 251]*

a fundamentally new principle for his ontology and logic, by virtue of which the schematic retrospective of the history of philosophical anthropology outlined above is followed through.

The principle in question is Aristotle's theory of δύναμις [potentiality] and ἐνέργεια [actuality], introduced in response to the inadequate concepts of otherwiseness, unequalness and non-existence by which his predecessors had sought to define movement [201b20f]. Whereas these concepts had failed to apprehend movement, those of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια were drawn, in Heidegger's view from the phenomenon itself in its ultimate and original structure [PIA 267, GA33 §17]. In Chapter Four, we shall consider Heidegger's interpretation of these terms in detail. For the time being, let us set out a provisional view of how this fundamentally new principle has influenced the history of philosophical anthropology: how have δύναμις and ἐνέργεια determined the 'logic' of factual life?

Aristotle's account of movement in terms of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια may be understood as a response to the aporias generated by the theories of his predecessors, notably the Eleatic and Megaric philosophers. The first of these arises with the question: how can being come from non-being? The recognition of movement or becoming entails the further recognition that things are not given all at once, but rather in succession. Since movement is understood as a process of differentiation, the earliest state of things must have been one of indifference or infinity. However, this initial infinity could only

take one of two forms, both of which are unsatisfactory. Each element could retain its individuality, in which case the totality would be finite and could not account for the infinity of movement: or the primordial totality could be undifferentiated and indeterminate, in which case it would be opposed to the finite and determinate nature of being and would therefore be aligned with non-being, returning us to our original predicament. Aristotle's response is straightforward: it is equally permissible to say that being proceeds from being and that being proceeds from non-being, providing that what is meant by 'being' is different in the case of each source term. Thus, being in the sense of ἐνέργεια proceeds from being in the sense of δύναμις and *both* ἐνέργεια and δύναμις are recognized as significations of being [Met.E.2:1026a33f].

The second aporia is concerned less with the origin of becoming than with becoming itself: how can what is become different without ceasing to be the same? In other words, is change reducible to a series of discrete births and deaths or is there an underlying subject that persists throughout? If, in the manner of the Eleatics and their Megaric followers, the identity of a seated and a standing Socrates is denied, then the world is merely a juxtaposition of singular existences with no possibility of change, nor indeed of unity. If on the contrary the seated and standing midwife of wisdom are identical, then one is committed to the co-existence of contradictory determinations (Socrates seated = Socrates standing). Aristotle's conception of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια provides a way of articulating this difficulty by allowing one to say that the subject



[ὑποκείμενον] of change is *potentially* all the forms that it can *actually* become. The being of what is in movement is expressed in terms of both δύναμις and ἐνέργεια.

Aubenque suggests that in putting forward the theory of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια, Aristotle is not so much resolving the aporia as thematising it, and in a sense this is quite right. For in spite of the "cathartic" effect of Aristotle's theory at the level of everyday discourse, "*les distinctions de sens manifestent leur caractère problématique lorsqu'on les réfère à la source indistincte d'où elles sont issues*: the terms of the distinction manifest their *problematic* character when one refers them to the indistinct source from which they have emerged" [PEA 453]. The challenge Aristotle poses to subsequent thinking is thereby to take advantage of the advance in conceptual subtlety and power without allowing the fundamentally aporetic character of the phenomenon of movement to be diminished thereby.

The problematic character of Aristotle's analysis here may be attributed to the subtlety of his aim in seeking to determine what movement is in itself [Ph.III:200b12-14]. As we know, he rejects the possibility of movement existing independently from what moves [200b33], whereupon access to movement can only lie via the moving thing. Yet it is also true that movement is said to be the realization of a potentiality "*and of the subject only qua seat of this potentiality*" [201b5 My emphasis]. In this way, whilst the terms δύναμις and ἐνέργεια are intended to articulate movement itself rather than what is in movement, they must be drawn from and applied

to movement as it appears, which is in each case in the guise of what is in movement. This gives rise to two related difficulties.

The fact that the terms are 'drawn from and applied to' the same phenomenon opens Aristotle to the charge of circularity; movement is defined in terms of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια, and δύναμις and ἐνέργεια themselves defined in terms of movement. On the other hand, one could deflect the charge of circularity by pointing out that a phenomenologically genuine account must be led by the phenomenon itself and that the concepts of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια drawn from the phenomenon of movement and not from the thing in movement. Yet, and this is the second difficulty, insofar as movement only ever appears as the movement undergone by particular things, one cannot *assume* to have secured proper access to movement itself: one must remain constantly vigilant towards the distinction between the being of movement and the being of the thing *in* movement.

These two considerations - that of circularity and that of access - are highlighted in the following passage from Aubenque:

*Il s'agit donc d'appliquer au mouvement en général une terminologie qui s'est constituée pour parler de ce qui est dans le mouvement. Autrement dit, l'acte et la puissance présupposent toujours le mouvement comme horizon à l'intérieur duquel ils signifient.* [PEA 453]

It is therefore a matter of applying to movement in general a terminology constituted in order to talk about what is in movement. In other words, act and potential always presuppose movement as a horizon within which they signify.

Here is both the strength and the vulnerability of Aristotle's analysis. Not only do ἐνέργεια and δύναμις presuppose the horizon of



movement, but, if they are to be understood as significations of being, it is of paramount importance that their intrinsic connection with movement not be broken.<sup>29</sup> As the terms are given meaning within the horizon of movement, they can be understood only insofar as that horizon itself is preserved as such and the terms in question allowed to articulate our experience of it. Insofar as it conforms to this model, Aristotle's account may be said to be phenomenological.

Yet the first sentence in the passage quoted above draws our attention to the risk involved here, namely that of determining the horizon in terms appropriate to that which is disclosed within it. Indeed, because the analysis is engaged proximally with *things* in movement, there is a tendency to understate the fundamental role of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια as significations of movement itself. For Heidegger, this represents the errancy of metaphysics par excellence – the determination of being in terms of beings and the effacement of the ontological difference.

Aubenque is right, therefore, to insist on the fundamentally aporetic character of movement (even in the light of Aristotle's conceptual advance), since this discourages a hasty assimilation of movement to the more familiar terms of what is in movement. At the same time, the success of such an interpretation will depend, and here we depart from Aubenque's presentation of the matter, on the extent to which the terms δύναμις and ἐνέργεια are in fact drawn from the phenomenon of movement itself, rather than simply from what is in movement as

Aubenque suggests; δύναμις and ἐνέργεια must be understood as *ontological* designations.

The requirements we have outlined for reading Aristotle's account of movement are frequently breached by interpreters. For example, Aristotle defines κίνησις in the *Physics* as "the progress of the realizing [ἐντελέχεια] of a potentiality, qua potentiality" [201a10]. Yet Ross, in his commentary on the *Physics*, interprets this as meaning that κίνησις is the "passage" from δύναμις to ἐνέργεια.<sup>30</sup> Although such a reading seems dubious in the face of Aristotle's account of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια at *Metaphysics* θ.3, one is obliged to take it seriously by virtue of its *prima facie* plausibility (at the very level of common sense that Aubenque described as "cathartically" released). Reservations over such a reading are expressed well by Aubenque, who regarded such a reading with the utmost suspicion:

*Mais ce serait là une définition extrinsèque du mouvement, envisagé non en lui-même, mais dans son point de départ et dans son aboutissement; ce serait substituer des positions au passage lui-même. Parallèlement, ce serait user des notions d'acte et de puissance d'une façon extrinsèque par rapport au mouvement, comme si la puissance et l'acte étaient les termes entre lesquels le mouvement se meut et non des déterminations du mouvement lui-même. [PEA 453-454]*

But this would be a definition that is extrinsic to movement, in view not of itself but of its point of departure and its completion. It would be to substitute position for the passage itself. At the same time, it would be to use conceptions of act and potential in a way extrinsic to movement, as though act and potential were the terms between which movement moved and not determinations of movement itself.

To regard δύναμις and ἐνέργεια as the poles between which movement is draped is to place them outside the horizon of movement and thereby



contravenes the condition to which we referred above. Consequently, it is doomed to misconceive all of the terms involved and, to the extent that it fails to secure an understanding of movement itself, even to echo the patently incoherent views of the Megarics to which these same passages address their critique.<sup>31</sup> Such a view of the matter might easily be dismissed as a popular misrepresentation, were it not for the fact that its source lies within Aristotle's own approach to the matter.

One could begin by looking at the term ἐνέργεια itself, and in fact this is where we come across the first of two important senses of radicalization to which the idea of the moving thing is prone. The basis of the term in ἔργον betrays the influence of production: ἐν-έργεια means literally in-the-work.<sup>32</sup> Since the work is what comes at the end of the process, one is immediately invited to understand the movement itself in terms of what apparently lies *outside* it. As we have already said, to understand ἐνέργεια as extrinsic to movement is philosophically spurious. Indeed, in the context of the account of ἐνέργεια and κίνησις at Met.θ.6, it is palpable nonsense. Yet even here, where ἐνέργεια and κίνησις are contrasted to one another as *different kinds of dynamic event*, the contrast is made in terms of their respective relations to their end [τέλος] and the tendency is once more reinforced.<sup>33</sup> In this first sense of radicalization, the movement of a thing is understood in terms of the end of the movement and thereby in terms of what is essentially other than movement. This tendency is embedded deeply in the language of metaphysics. Indeed, it arises from the very dominance of the language of production that

we identified at the outset, since the movement of production is governed by the τέλος and the τέλος, as ἔργον, is by definition separable from the movement itself, extrinsic to it. Insofar as the problem of movement is approached from the perspective of production, it will therefore be inclined to reduce movement to a passage between states, to substitute position for transition.<sup>34</sup> Although this tendency remains for the most part implicit, we have already found its influence over the orientation of Aristotle's thinking to be considerable. Moreover, as Heidegger makes clear, such influence is by no means restricted to Aristotle alone and is at work still more forcibly in the Aristotelian current in Scholastic philosophy.

The direction taken by such interpretation as a result of this tendency is most evident in what I shall call the second radicalization. Here one finds ἐνέργεια as the designation of a form of movement found and firmly rooted in the physical world taken up and used as the basis for thinking divine being. In Aubenque's words:

*Aristote usera de l'expérience sublunaire de l'acte pour penser, par un passage à la limite qui en exténue la relation à la puissance, Dieu comme Acte pur. [PEA 451]*

Aristotle uses the sublunary experience of act, taken to its limit in such a way as to outstrip its relation to potential, to think God as pure Act.

By virtue of its attribution to the being of the unmoved mover, ἐνέργεια is placed beyond movement and its essential link with δύναμις is broken. In this way, it is extrapolated from the realm in which it receives its sense to an external or transcendental point, whereupon it is then understood to ground the realm from which it was



drawn. This is clearly a dubious enterprise, since the couple δύναμις-ἐνέργεια arise together from the phenomenon of movement itself and the attempt to isolate ἐνέργεια not only from δύναμις but even from the horizon of κίνησις in which both terms belong should, as we have said, be followed with caution - and doubly so if it is understood to provide the basis for a treatment of κίνησις. For whereas the initial tendency promoted an understanding of each specific movement in terms of what lies beyond that movement, here we find *all* movement grounded in what lies beyond movement. Access to a conception of movement 'as such' is thereby closed off.

If we return now to Heidegger's presentation of σοφία as exemplary of the *Bewegtheit* of factual life, we can begin to see how the radicalization outlined above informs the history of philosophical anthropology.

Heidegger states that the "authentic being" of man manifests itself in σοφία. However, such "authentic being" is not immediately accessible even via σοφία and cannot simply be read off from human life as such:

*sondern es entspringt in seiner kategorialen Struktur aus einer bestimmt vollzogenen, ontologischen Radikalisierung der Idee des Bewegtseienden. [PIA 260]*

rather, it arises in its categorial structure out of a determinate accomplished ontological radicalization of the idea of the moving thing.

Heidegger repeats the same point in the following paragraph:

*Der Seinscharakter der ἔξις und damit der ἀρετή, das heißt die ontologische Struktur des Menschenseins, wird aus der Ontologie des Seienden im Wie einer bestimmten Bewegtheit*

*und der ontologischen Radikalisierung der Idee dieser Bewegtheit verständlich. [PIA 261]*

The ontological character of the ἔξις and thereby of the ἀρετή, that is the ontological structure of the being of man, is intelligible on the basis of the ontology of beings in the manner of a determinate *Bewegtheit* and the ontological radicalization of the idea of this *Bewegtheit*.

The *Bewegtheit* in question is, of course, that of production. If there were any doubt, this confirms that the radicalization to which Heidegger is referring here is that which we described above as a tendency to describe movement in terms of its end. If this notion of radicalization is understood in the context of an attempt to apprehend the ἀρχαί of beings in the natural world, it leads to the projection of the ἀρχαί beyond the movement itself: ultimately, the ἀρχή of all movement is the divine unmoved mover and the problematic of ontology is accomplished in the form of theology. In terms of our conception of σοφία, this would correspond to a 'regional' interpretation of its characteristic detachment [pp.125-126]

Naturally, the train of influence by no means drew to a halt with the determination of divine being: the translation into theology turns out to be merely a detour and divine being a way-station on a circuitous route back to a determination of human being. Heidegger gives a succinct account of the way in which this radicalization has influenced the history of philosophical anthropology.

*Die entscheidende Seins-Vorhabe, das Seiende in Bewegung, und die bestimmte ontologische Explikation dieses Seienden sind die Motivquellen für die ontologischen Grundstrukturen, die späterhin das göttlichen Sein im spezifisch christlichen Sinne (actus purus), das innergöttliche Leben (Trinität) und damit zugleich das Seinsverhältnis Gottes zum Menschen und damit den eigenen Seinssinn des Menschen selbst entscheidend bestimmen. [PIA 263 My emphasis]*



The decisive *Seins-Vorhabe*, the being in movement, and the particular ontological explication of this are the motivational sources for the fundamental ontological structures that were later to exercise a decisive influence over the specifically Christian conception of the being of God (*actus purus*), the inner-godly life (Trinity) and thereby also the ontological relation of God to man *and thus the meaning of being proper to man*.

The pivotal term in this genealogy is *actus purus*, which is of course the Latin translation of the Greek ἐνέργεια. In turn, ἐνέργεια is the *Bewegtheit* specific to θεωρεῖν and νοῦς, whereupon we are back to the influence of Aristotle's conception of σοφία on philosophical anthropology. However, it is important to consider that this influence has not come directly from Aristotle, but has passed via scholastic theology. For whilst Aristotle himself had already begun to anchor the meaning of conceptions drawn originally from practical philosophy and ontology in their application to theology, this tendency was continued and reinforced in scholastic philosophy until the original sources of key terms had all but disappeared, their translation into Latin and the new context of Christian theology conspiring to bury the traces. Only then, once the terms in question had been refined almost beyond recognition, did the influence reflect back on philosophical anthropology. To undo this course of events, Heidegger must reclaim a conception of ἐνέργεια from scholastic philosophy and thus implicitly from the modern tradition that followed in its wake. However, it is not simply a matter of returning to Aristotle, as though such a return were possible without a profound naivety. As we have already seen, Heidegger engages in a strategy of return or recovery that he terms the destruction of the history of ontology. But such a destruction is only one of three

elements that Heidegger describes as constitutive of phenomenology. In addition to the "construction" that issues from a phenomenological reading, Heidegger names a third and vital moment, viz. "reduction" [GA24 §5]. By this, Heidegger means the shift in perspective from a thing to its being, from an ontic to an ontological determination. With regard to the question of movement, such a reduction will constitute Heidegger's own repetition of the radicalization that he identifies as the source of the ancient and above all scholastic conception of ἐνέργεια. In this way, a phenomenological reading of κίνησις will give rise to an interpretation of ἐνέργεια that, like the view it is intended to supplant, designates the being of movement. Unlike the sense of *actus purus*, however, it will prove not to have been won at the expense of movement itself. Rather, it will bear in a different and more direct fashion upon what is, for Heidegger, the fundamental problem of Aristotle's *Physics*, a problem that is moreover central to Heidegger's own hermeneutics of facticity; namely, that of determining "*das Seiende im Wie seines Bewegtseins*: the being in the manner of its being-moved" [PIA 251, cited above, p.110].



## Chapter Four

### *DUNAMIS AND ENERGEIA: HAVING AN END*

In the previous chapter, we began by outlining the importance of movement to Heidegger's hermeneutics of facticity and, more specifically, how Aristotle's account of movement in the *Physics* bears on Heidegger's interpretation of *Nicomachean Ethics* VI. We showed that the usual understanding of movement implicitly elevates the τέλος over and above the movement itself and how the conception of end arising from the experience of production compounds this tendency to divorce the ἀρχή and τέλος of movement from movement itself. Moreover, this first 'radicalization' invites the further extrapolation, ambiguous in Aristotle but unequivocal in his Scholastic successors, from movement in the natural world to its ἀρχή the unmoved mover. As a result of this second radicalization, the conception of movement brought to philosophical anthropology became a matter of transition between external points. The movement specific to human life was conceived negatively with regard to God (a trail to heaven through the vale of tears), and the reality of movement expelled from movement itself. In this way, the schema of Christian theology cemented the tendency inherent in Aristotelian metaphysics, blocking access to a radical understanding of movement in its own

terms and thereby committing philosophical anthropology to an inadequate basis.

In this chapter we shall set out to establish how Heidegger responds to this predicament by reviewing the conceptions of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια intrinsic to an understanding of movement. Above all, it is a matter of reaching a determination of these terms as articulations of movement itself and this means that, as we suggested in the previous chapter, movement must not only remain the horizon within which they are determined, but must be disclosed as that horizon. In the course of this reading, we shall arrive at a revised understanding of the relation between movement and its end, which is, of course, where we began. Narrowing the focus, Heidegger's reading of Met.θ.2 will yield an interpretation of the form of δύναμις specific to human being (as possessed of *logos*), thereby ensuring that the account of movement is focussed on the question of factual life. Finally, Heidegger's reading as a whole underlines the importance of the notion of having [ἔχειν] to the question of potentiality and thus also of movement. Most significantly of all, this invites us to return to the conception of ἔξις that emerged as fundamental at the end of Chapter Two.

## I

In Section IV of the previous chapter, I drew primarily on Aubenque in order to mark out the consequences of common interpretations of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια. Now it is time to pursue this issue more



carefully via Heidegger's own reading of these terms. By far the most sustained interpretation appears in the 1931 course dedicated entirely to Aristotle's *Metaphysics*  $\Theta$ .1-3. Although Heidegger's commentary on the text is explicitly concerned with only the first three chapters of *Metaphysics*  $\Theta$ , it is premised on an understanding of the structure of the book as a whole.

Aristotle divides the enquiry into  $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  and  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$  roughly into two phases and the question turns on precisely how one understands these phases and their connection with one another. In the opening paragraph, he writes (in the Ross edition):

And first let us explain potency [ $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$ ] in the strictest sense, which is, however, not the most *useful* for our present purpose. For potency and actuality [ $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ ] extend beyond the cases that involve a reference to motion. But when we have spoken of this first kind, we shall in our discussions of actuality explain the other kinds of potency as well. [1045b35-1046a4]

The implication is clear: the provisional analysis will address  $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  with regard to movement [ $\kappa\alpha\tau\grave{\alpha}$   $\chi\acute{\iota}\nu\eta\sigma\iota\nu$ ], but this will be followed by an account of  $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  and  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$  terms in a further sense [ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\grave{\iota}$   $\pi\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omicron\nu$ ], and it is this second sense that takes precedence in the study as a whole. That the sense of  $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  with regard to movement is at once the "strictest" and "not the most useful" for the purposes of the enquiry at hand strikes one as odd. Yet this state of affairs is apparently confirmed by Aristotle's remarks at the beginning of Book VI.

Since we have treated of the kind of potency [ $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$ ] which is related to movement, let us discuss actuality [ $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ ] - what, and what kind of thing, actuality is. For in the course of our analysis it will also become clear, with

regard to the potential, that we not only ascribe potency to that whose nature it is to move something else, or to be moved by something else, either without qualification or in some particular way, but also use the word in another sense, which is the reason of this inquiry in the course of which we have discussed these previous senses also. [1048a25-30]

Marking a break with the analyses in the first half of the book, this passage heralds the introduction of the 'further senses' of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια to which the account as a whole is directed. In Chapters 6-10 of Book Θ Aristotle develops the interpretation of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια from discussions of entirely human and earthbound activities through accounts of ὕλη [matter] and μορφή [form] towards a final chapter on the issue of truth and error.<sup>1</sup> Taking these senses of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια to lie beyond movement, as the customary interpretation of 1046a1-4 implies, has a twofold effect. First, it paves the way for a theological interpretation of ἐνέργεια as a changeless ground [1050b1-5, 12072bff], a reading that culminates in the scholastic notion of the pure act.<sup>2</sup> In addition, viewing the further sense of δύναμις as independent of movement invites an interpretation of ὕλη simply as inert material - an interpretation that owes more to the Cartesian tradition than to Aristotle. For on closer inspection, ὕλη is δύναμις not simply as stuff in general, but as that particular stuff which can become a house, a tree or whatever [1046a22-25, 1048b36ff]. Ὑλη is always relative to a specific process of change or production. Consequently, as Heidegger pointed out some years later, the interpretation of the being of this "so-called material" depends on how change and production themselves are



understood [VWB-WM 274:249]. Determining the meaning of ὕλη as δύναμις to have no regard for movement closes off such an approach.

Clearly, Heidegger cannot go along with the view that the 'further senses' of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια are somehow independent of movement. Indeed, the reading he seeks to develop, above all in opposition to the scholastic reception of these terms, depends directly on countering such an interpretation. In so doing, he is by no means at odds with Aristotle's text, as we can see from the definition of δύναμις towards which the account has been directed.

I mean by δύναμις not only that definite thing which is said to be a principle of change in another thing or in the thing itself regarded as other, but in general every principle of movement or of rest. [1049b5-9: translation modified]

It would be hard to claim that the sense of δύναμις given here extends "beyond the cases that involve a reference to motion" as the customary translation of the opening paragraph of Book Θ would have it [1046a1-3]. The question Heidegger (and indeed any serious commentator) must address is therefore *how* this definition may be reconciled with the earlier negative remarks concerning movement [1046a1-2].

Let us compare Heidegger's own translation of the passage from the opening paragraph of Chapter 1 that we quoted above in the Ross edition.

*Und zuerst (wollen wir handeln) über δύναμις in der Bedeutung, in der man meistens eigentlich das Wort gebraucht; freilich ist die so verstandene δύναμις wahrlich nicht brauchbar für das, was wir jetzt (in dieser Abhandlung) vorhaben. Denn die δύναμις und die ἐνέργεια (die eigentlich unser Thema sind) erstrecken sich über mehr als*

die entsprechenden Ausdrücke, die nur im Hinblick auf Bewegung genommen werden. Aber nachdem wir darüber gehandelt haben, wollen wir, und zwar in den Erörterungen über die ἐνέργεια auch über die anderen (d.h. die weitertragenden Bedeutungen der δύναμις) einen Aufschluß geben. [1045b35-1046a4, GA33 49-50]

And first of all (we wish to deal) with the sense of δύναμις in which it is for the most part actually used. Though δύναμις understood in this way is not in fact appropriate to what we have before us (in this discussion). For δύναμις and ἐνέργεια (which are properly our theme) concern more than the corresponding expressions used solely in reference to movement. But after we have dealt with these we shall, in our discussion of ἐνέργεια, also give an account of the others (i.e. of the further reaching senses of δύναμις).<sup>3</sup>

There are several points at which Heidegger's translation differs from the customary reading as represented by the Ross edition quoted above. First, Heidegger suggests that the initial enquiry introduced by this passage concerns *dunamis* not in its 'strictest sense,' as many commentators have suggested, but rather as they "as they are for the most part actually used."<sup>4</sup> He then describes this usage as not wholly appropriate [*brauchbar*], rather than as simply not useful.<sup>5</sup> In this way, he avoids one of the pitfalls of the usual translation, namely, having to dismiss the 'strictest' sense of δύναμις as relatively useless for the enquiry at hand, a gesture that paradoxically denigrates as *inessential* the very senses of δύναμις the account is apparently concerned to establish. Instead, Heidegger's translation encourages us to regard the first part of the account as a necessary prelude to the ensuing consideration of the more fundamental senses, senses that are less familiar precisely because they are more philosophical. But in what does the transition



from the sense of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν to the sense of these terms ἐπὶ πλέον consist?

The Greek phrase in question is "ἐπὶ πλέον γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ ἐνέργεια τῶν μόνον λεγόμενον κατὰ κίνησιν," rendered in the Ross edition as "For potency and actuality extend beyond the cases that involve a reference to motion." This translation crucially elides the adverb μόνον [solely], thereby presenting the preservation or eschewal of a reference to movement as exclusive alternatives. By contrast, Heidegger is careful to retain μόνον, proposing that the further senses of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια do not lie *wholly* within the perspective denoted by the expression κατὰ κίνησιν. The transition from the general understanding of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια to their further sense therefore involves a changed relation to movement, rather than a break with movement as such.

We saw in Ch.3.IV that there is a risk of referring improperly to movement in terms that are more appropriate to what is *in* movement and that such a confusion leads to the treatment of movement as present-at-hand, *vorhanden*. The same tendency is implicit in our apprehension of δύναμις, as Heidegger points out:

*Wenn wir auf Bewegungen hinblicken [κατὰ κίνησιν], begegnet uns Bewegtes. Und wir sprechen dann (unwillkürlich) von Kräften, die das Bewegte bewegen, und ebenso von Tätigkeiten, die am Werke, bei der Arbeit [ἔργον] sind.*  
[GA33 50]

If we *look at* movements [κατὰ κίνησιν], we come across what is moved. And we then speak (involuntarily) of powers that move what is moved, and likewise of activities working on the work [ἔργον].<sup>6</sup>

Δύναμις and ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν are themselves treated as present-at-hand, as things like any other.<sup>7</sup> For Heidegger, the apprehension of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν is purely ontic. In this way, the shift in perspective accompanying the introduction of the further senses of δύναμις corresponds to a transition from an ontic to an ontological determination - a trajectory matched by Aristotle's declared intention to establish "when a thing exists potentially and when it does not" [1048b36], that is, to determine δύναμις as a signification of being. According to this reading, Aristotle's question would have to change from 'how describe what is in movement?' to 'how describe the way in which what is in movement exists?' In short, the further senses of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια would not be independent of movement and the eschewal of questioning κατὰ κίνησιν would not entail leaving movement out of the picture. On the contrary, movement must above all be kept in view, but not κατὰ κίνησιν. Rather, Heidegger characterizes the acquisition of an ontological perspective as a transition from asking κατὰ κίνησιν to asking κατὰ κινήσεως [GA33 53].<sup>8</sup> The difference Heidegger wishes to highlight is that between asking *in connection with* movement and asking *about* movement. In the first case, the meaning of movement itself is presupposed as the horizon of the enquiry, whereas in the second case it is movement itself that is at issue. To take Heidegger's own example, if we consider the movements involved in building a house, we think of materials being cut and assembled, their powers realized via the movement of building.

*Wir blicken aber nicht auf die Bewegung als Bewegung, nicht auf das κινούμενον ἢ κινούμενον wir fragen nicht, was das*



*Bewegtseiendes als solches sei; wir nehmen das κινούμενον nicht ἢ ὄν und die κίνησις nicht ἢ εἶναι. [GA33 53-54]*

But we do not look at movement as movement, not at the κινούμενον ἢ κινούμενον; we do not ask what the moving thing as such might be. We do not take the κινούμενον ἢ ὄν e or κίνησις ἢ εἶναι.

Movement itself is reduced to the transition between states and comes to be seen as accidental to the thing that happens to be in movement. Out of view, it is not regarded as intrinsic to the being of the thing in question. Heidegger's reading of Met.θ sets out to reverse this tendency. In his view, to ask after δύναμις and ἐνέργεια in their further sense [ἐπὶ πλέον] is to ask after them κατὰ κίνησεως, and this means to consider them not simply as the limiting conditions of movement, but as articulations of movement itself and therefore as ontological determinations of what is in movement [GA33 53].<sup>9</sup> Indeed, by preserving the horizon of movement, this reading enables one to understand how δύναμις and ἐνέργεια feature as one of the four basic significations of being in the sublunar world [1026ba33f, p.34].

The further senses of δύναμις are therefore expressly not to be understood as in any way independent of movement. Indeed, assuming such independence, as many commentators do, commits the enquiry at best to obscuring what is original in Aristotle's thought, and at worst to incoherence. However, it is still not clear how the enquiry into δύναμις and ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν contributes to securing the ontological senses of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια. If the sought after senses are precisely *not* accessible to questioning κατὰ κίνησιν, what is to be gained by dedicating the first half of Book θ to this very

perspective? Is the sense of δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν not relatively 'useless,' as the customary translations suggest?

If it were, the fact that Heidegger chose to devote an entire lecture course to the examination of the first three chapters of Book Θ would on the face of it be somewhat surprising. In fact, he never states explicitly how the analyses presented relate to a reading of the further senses as they are developed by Aristotle in Chapters 6-10. There are, perhaps, too many points at which the interpretation would have to anticipate itself. However, some indication of Heidegger's conception of the text's development in this respect emerges at the end of §7. Heidegger speculates (heuristically) on how one might expect Book Θ to look, breaking its thematic development down into a series of discrete stages.<sup>10</sup> Having already drawn attention to the potential inadequacy of such a schematic conception, Heidegger then remarks:

*Das Verhältnis von δύναμις und ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν zu ἡ δύναμις und ἡ ἐνέργεια, die ἐπὶ πλέον sind, dieser Übergang ist nicht einfach das Auswechseln des einen gegen das andere, sondern er ist ursprünglich Eines: ein Entwurf mit Fußpunkt in der δύναμις und ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν. [GA33 56]*

As for the relation of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν to ἡ δύναμις and ἡ ἐνέργεια, which are ἐπὶ πλέον, this transition is not simply the replacement of one by the other, but is rather originally one [integrall]; a projection anchored in δύναμις and ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν.

The account of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν is clearly more than just a foil for the ontological determination of these terms κατὰ κίνησεως. Indeed, Heidegger goes further, underlining that the determination of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια ἐπὶ πλέον is neither an



extension nor a generalization of former account. If a definitive passage from one phase of the enquiry to the other is ruled out, it seems that the two phases must in some sense be *concomitant*.<sup>11</sup>

Regrettably, Heidegger's commentary gets no further than 1047a32, just before the end of Met.θ.3. However, it would be wrong to say that it breaks off inconclusively. On the contrary, it is as though the enquiry had been carried through to a high point, the culmination of the whole study. Perhaps Heidegger feels here that he has elicited from Aristotle's text the *Fußpunkt* in which the original integrity of the projection between perspectives is anchored. However, before seeking to establish the nature of the connection with the sense of δύναμις ἐπὶ πλεόν that Heidegger perceives in Met.θ.3, we must take a more general look at how the perspective of questioning κατὰ κίνησεως is opened up.

## II

Aristotle defines *dunamis* in Met.θ.1 as:

ἀρχὴ μεταβολῆς ἐν ἄλλῳ ἢ ἢ ἄλλο

an originative source of change in another thing or in itself *qua* other. [1046a10f]

With slight lexical variation, a similar definition is given in

Met.Δ.12:

ἀρχὴ κινήσεως ἢ μεταβολῆς ἢ ἐν ἑτέρῳ

a source of movement or change which is in another thing than the thing moved or in the same thing *qua* other. [1019a15]

This definition has come to be seen almost as a commonplace requiring little or no further investigation. Not so, objects Heidegger. For the description given here could only be said to define δύναμις once the meaning of all the terms in the definiens have themselves been fixed. But in addition to doubt over whether the 'in another' [ἐν ἄλλῳ or ἐν ἑτέρῳ] qualifies μεταβολή or ἀρχή the meaning of ἀρχή itself has yet to be established. Moreover, the senses of κίνησις and μεταβολή can hardly be taken for granted, since the purpose of the whole enquiry could be said to consist in an elaboration of precisely these terms. Accordingly, Heidegger intends to treat the definition less as a point of conclusion than of departure, the material from which a definitive outline [*Grundriß*] of δύναμις will gradually emerge.

We tend almost irresistably to discover in phenomena a pattern that lends them meaning. As Heidegger points out, we might understand autumn leaves to be finding their proper place as they fall to earth (a form of interpretation he claims has been wrongfully disparaged and abandoned). Or, as is more common, we might regard falling leaves as explicable in terms of a pre-existing condition: trees have the potential to shed their leaves in autumn and leaves have the potential to fall to earth. Yet in saying this, how are such potentialities apprehended? When we speak of the load-bearing capacity of a bridge or of the gravitational force exerted by the earth, he asks, have we grasped a potentiality directly and in itself? Clearly not:



*Kräfte lassen sich nicht unmittelbar feststellen, wir finden immer nur Leistungen, Erfolge, Wirkungen. [GA33 78]*

Powers do not let themselves be grasped directly; we find only achievements, results, actual effects.

However, such actual effects are themselves inaccessible, even unintelligible, independently of the powers to which they correspond. In this way, we are tempted to conclude that we only experience something as actual insofar as it is apprehended as the actual effect of a power, and above all as the effect of a power understood as a cause. In this way, δύναμις emerges as a function of causality.<sup>12</sup> Heidegger warns against taking the meaning of causality to be self-evident, above all because the conception of causality most familiar to us today, and the one operative in the illustration above, is impoverished in comparison to the theory of the four causes as presented in Aristotle. In this respect, Heidegger's reservations have less to do with Aristotle's own theory of causality than with the reductive emphasis on efficient causality alone that predominates in modern philosophy. Whilst this bias, fostered by the rise of seventeenth century science, is characteristic of post-Cartesian thinking, its roots stretch back into scholastic philosophy, where existence is already understood in terms of actuality and actuality as the effect of a cause [GA24 §§10-11]. The relation between efficient cause and effect thereby becomes paradigmatic for understanding reality.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, on this interpretation, δύναμις, as 'what caused the change,' will be treated as an entity that is present-at-hand like any other - just as Heidegger in fact describes the apprehension of δύναμεις κατὰ κίνησιν. At a stroke, therefore, we

find that ontology is committed to an ontic conception of grounds, the understanding of being is narrowed to include only presence-at-hand (the being of the work) and the possibility of δύναμις, signifying a unique manner of existence, as Aristotle intends, is effectively removed. In short, the elevation of efficient causality to the status of an ontological principle cements the interpretation of being informed by the experience of production.<sup>14</sup> Apparently, the most direct way for Heidegger to oppose this reading would be to reverse the reduction of Aristotle's theory of the four causes to a conception of efficient causality alone. However, simply to restore the interpretation of δύναμις to the context of the four causes is not in itself an adequate response to the problem of defining δύναμις, particularly in view of the caution Heidegger must exercise with regard to production.

Aristotle gives two substantially equivalent accounts of causality [Ph.II.3, Met.Δ.1-2]. In order for any movement or change to take place, there must be four causes, which are as follows [194b24ff].

- 1) *The material cause* For there to be a bronze statue, there must first be bronze; in each case of movement or change there is something that undergoes the movement or change.
- 2) *The formal cause* This something must acquire a new form and the image or determination of what it is to become is the formal cause.
- 3) *The efficient cause* The movement or change must be initiated by something and this is termed the efficient cause.
- 4) *The final cause* In addition, the end or purpose for the sake of which the movement or change is undertaken is called the final cause.



If we recall Heidegger's account of the way terms such as εἶδος, ὕλη, μορφή, οὐσία and others receive their meaning from the experience of production, it is impossible not to see the same experience informing the doctrine of the four causes - a fact to which we have already seen Bernasconi allude [p.59]. Each cause as defined above corresponds to a moment in the process of production, as though they too were derived precisely as a formalisation of such a process.<sup>15</sup> This does not mean that they cannot occur simultaneously, coincide with one another, or even articulate actions that are on the face of it unconnected with production. On the contrary, they may very well do so. However, this only underlines the extent to which the experience of production dominates our understanding of all forms of activity. Restoring the modern conception of efficient causality to the Aristotelian theory of the four causes will thus do little to offset the influence of production - unless the theory of the four causes is itself placed under scrutiny.

Leaving aside the issue of production for a moment, δύναμις could only be adequately defined on the basis of the four causes if the meaning of each of the four causes were itself secure. Yet this is manifestly not the case, since the meaning of the material cause (at least) is surely implicated in the account of δύναμις itself.<sup>16</sup> Rather, as with the individual terms in the definiens, Heidegger's interpretation of the four causes will develop in tandem with the interpretation of δύναμις. This hermeneutic flexibility is of the utmost importance for Heidegger's response to the problem of production as we have described it. Indeed, the necessity of such an

approach arises directly from the fact that Heidegger is interested in δύναμις and ἐνέργεια above all as significations of being. If their meaning were wholly determined by the theory of the four causes, then it is the latter that should feature alongside the other fundamental significations of being. Yet not only is this not the case, but the theory of the four causes is itself shrouded in difficulty. Are there just four causes and, if so, why? From what region of being does each cause arise and to what extent can it be applied outside that region: e.g. is space the material cause of geometrical figures?<sup>17</sup> Heidegger is anxious to restore a genuinely ontological significance to the theory of the four causes, but this entails keeping it alive as a problem, not regarding it as an established doctrine.

Heidegger's strategy, then, is twofold. In the longer term, he undertakes to recover a more complex and nuanced reading of the four causes.<sup>18</sup> A reading of this kind is given in later essays such as 'The Question Concerning Technology' (1955) and 'Science and Reflection' (1954), although the strategy was present in outline much earlier: in Heidegger's 1926 lectures *Die Grundbegriffe der antiken Philosophie* we already find a description of causality as an ontological determination of beings insofar as they are or can be in movement [GA22 13-15]. With regard to the present enquiry, we can say that Heidegger aims to elaborate a conception of δύναμις that does not *proceed from* causality. In so doing, he clears the way for an account of movement that is not dominated from the first by the influence of production. This, and the senses of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια



that emerge from such a reading, will lead us back to the problem of Heidegger's radicalization of *πρῶξις* as a determination of Dasein's transcendence. We shall now trace Heidegger's reading of the remainder of Met.θ.1 as it is presented in his 1931 lecture course.

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Following the definition of *δύναμις* to which we referred at the beginning of this section, Aristotle identifies two senses of the potentiality or power of being acted upon [*δύναμις τοῦ πάσχειν*]: that of passively undergoing change [*δύναμις τοῦ παθεῖν*] and that of resisting change or destruction [*ἔξις ἀπαθείας*] [1046a11].

Heidegger translates the first of these as *Ertragsamkeit*, conveying the susceptibility, even acquiescence, of that which tolerates change [GA33 88].<sup>19</sup> The second is translated as *Widerstand*, denoting a resistance to all forms of change, modification, degradation or destruction [GA33 89]. Both of these senses refer back to the primary sense of an originative source of change in what is other. Given that each of them consists in a relation to an active power of formation, it is tempting to suppose that the primary sense in question must be *δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν*, the potentiality of doing or making. But Aristotle makes no reference to this kind of *δύναμις* here and Heidegger explicitly rules it out of consideration. In fact, he continues, it would be mistaken to place any *single* form of *δύναμις* in a position of priority: rather, the primary sense should be understood as the still undetermined *Grundriß* of the essence of *δύναμις*.

Nonetheless, of the two secondary senses mentioned, Heidegger accords *Widerstand* a certain priority, inasmuch as *Ertragsamkeit* is itself unintelligible without reference to the character of that which resists [GA33 91-94]. Moreover, in contrast to our understanding of *δύναμεις* as the hidden causes of the actual effects [*Wirkungen*], our experience here is more immediate. For if resistance is the manifestation of a power, this power is not a hidden cause lying behind the phenomenon, but is rather encountered directly in the resisting thing itself: "*Das Widerstehende selbst ist das Kräftige und die Kraft*: The resisting thing is itself what is powerful and power" [GA33 91]. Circumscribing our experience of power in the resistance of things favours a consideration of power that does not take as its point of reference the active power of a subject, but which recognizes resistance and movement, thrust and counter-thrust [*Stoß und Gegenstoß*] in the reciprocal relation of things to one another [GA33 94]. Having framed the matter in this way, Heidegger draws the phenomenon of resistance into the light of the Leibnizian conception of *potentia*:

*Widerstand aber ist nicht einfach Gleichgültigkeit gegen Bewegung, kein bloßes »sie nicht mitmachen«, sondern Gegenstreben, d.h. ein Eigenes, von wo aus sich im anderen Ding etwas bestimmt.* [GA33 97]

Resistance, however, is not simply imperviousness to movement, no plain 'not going along,' but rather a counter-striving, ie. something proper, from out of which something determines itself in the other thing.<sup>20</sup>

Enriching the notion of resistance with that of striving [*Streben*] not only restores dynamism to the modern conception of matter, it also paves the way for an interpretation of human potentialities on



the basis of broader understanding of δύναμις in the natural world. Such a displacement of subjectivist metaphysics had, of course, been central to Heidegger's work for some while, even where his analyses engaged humanist or subjectivist themes and tropes. In this emphasis on resistance and its characterization as *Streben*, for example, Heidegger is implicitly working through the philosophical basis of resoluteness [*Entschlossenheit*] that was so important in *Being and Time*. And significantly, just two years after delivering these lectures on Aristotle, Heidegger returned to the theme in his Rectoral Address, using language strongly reminiscent of the account of power in terms of resistance offered here.<sup>21</sup> As we shall see, the concept of *Streben* will continue to play a important role in Heidegger's interpretation, above all with respect to ὄρεξις, desire.

At this point, Aristotle introduces a further specification of δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν, and one that will be crucial for the purposes of our own reading.<sup>22</sup>

*Wiederum werden nun die bereits angeführten (δύναμεις) Kräfte genannt und als solche verstanden entweder nur einfach in Bezug auf das, wozu sie Kräfte sind, zum Tun bzw. Leiden, oder aber in Bezug auf das »in der rechte Weise«, so daß auch im Verstehen dieser Bedeutung von δύναμις in gewisser Weise darin mitverstanden sind die Bedeutungen der vorgenannten. [1046a16-19, GA33 99]*

Again, the foregoing come to be called (δύναμεις) powers and understood as such either simply in relation to that of which they are powers, acting or undergoing, or else in relation to acting or undergoing 'in the right way,' so that in understanding this sense of δύναμις the previously named senses are in a certain sense also understood.

In this way, to query 'can she run?' is to ask whether she can run *well*; to remark of a cricketer 'he can't play short-pitched bowling'

is not to doubt that he can offer a stroke, but that he can consistently play *good* strokes. Moreover, the same pattern is found in cases of δύναμις τοῦ παθεῖν and ἕξις ἀπαθείας; to say that green or damp wood does not burn is not to deny that it will combust, but to say that it does not burn easily and *well*; to say that the outhouse is weatherproof is not to boast that it can stand up to weather, but that it can resist *bad* weather. The notion of potentiality or power implicitly refers to the manner of existence that represents its accomplishment. Heidegger goes on to express this relation in terms of the concept of *Streben* introduced above.

*Auch und gerade im Begriff der δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν liegt demnach ein Verfassungmäßiger Bezug auf τέλος: damit ist nicht dergleichen wie »Zielstrebigkeit« gemeint, sondern: innere Zuordnung von etwas auf Ende, Abschluß, Fertigkeit. In der δύναμις liegt daher das Moment des Unterwegs-zu, des ausgerichteten Strebens, ausgerichtet auf ein Ende und Fertigwerden. [GA33 100]*

Even, indeed precisely, the concept of δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν comprises a constitutive relation to the τέλος: this in no way means a 'purposefulness,' but rather an inner assignment (orientation?) of something to an end, a rounding off, a readiness. In δύναμις there lies the moment of on-the-way-to, the oriented striving, oriented towards an end and a becoming ready.<sup>23</sup>

At first glance, Heidegger's remarks on the relation between *dunamis* and the *telos* seem to flirt with contradiction. Initially, he rules out any idea of δύναμις as a 'purposefulness' [*Zielstrebigkeit*].<sup>24</sup> Yet in its place he offers the image of a settled orientation towards a given end and goes on to describe δύναμις as an oriented striving [*ausgerichteten Streben*] and as being underway towards [*unterwegs-zu*] an end. Whilst balking at the idea that δύναμις might at a certain point arrive like a train at its destination, we are left wondering



how to distinguish δύναμις as an "ausgerichteten Streben" from a "Zielstrebigkeit"? The answer stems from the fact that the τέλος marking the accomplishment of δύναμις is not a work but a manner of existence.<sup>25</sup> δύναμις does not strive towards accomplishment, but is accomplished as a manner of striving, and as a manner rather than a subject of striving, it is already 'at' the end in question. Whilst this clearly speaks against any reification of δύναμις as something present-at-hand, it still remains to spell out the meaning of *Streben* here and accordingly of the description of δύναμις as 'underway.' Heidegger will begin to address these questions in the remainder of his commentary on Met.θ.1, but a fuller answer will emerge gradually over the course of his commentary

Aristotle opens the next passage with the following guarded remark concerning the possible connection between δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν καὶ πάσχειν

*Offensichtlich, wird nun also folgendes: Eine Kraft zum Tun und zum Erleiden ist das einmal (in einer Hinsicht) so, daß eine einzige (als ein und dieselbe) beides ist,... sie ist sodann so, daß die eine von beiden je eine andere ist (daß sie beides als je eine andere in einem anderen ist). [1046a19-22, GA33 103]*

Clearly, then, a power to act and to undergo is such that at the same time both are (in one respect) singular (one and the same)... and then that one of the two is in each case other (they are both as other in another).

On first inspection, this may seem little more than a recapitulation of the earlier point that the power of being acted upon and that of acting are complementary. However, this passage pushes the issue of their unity beyond any sense of complementarity, raising the question

of the 'primary sense' to which all other senses refer. According to Ross, the sense in which the power of acting is one with that of undergoing reflects their occurrence as "complementary aspects of a single fact" [AMC 241]. Their unity, on this reading, arises from the phenomenon they articulate, but is not extended to the powers themselves: what is in fact one appears, and is named, as two. The ambiguity introduced by Aristotle is thereby portrayed as a failure of language to grasp the *fact* of the matter; the meaning of δύναμις is isolated from the unity of δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν καὶ πάσχειν and cemented as twofold in the wake of the division. For Heidegger, on the other hand, the ambiguity lies in the essence of δύναμις itself and directly concerns the sense in which the active and passive powers may be said to be the same. Are they two distinct kinds of δύναμις or just one? And if they are just one, how is it to be understood? [GA33 104]. Arguing the case for single essential sense, Heidegger describes how δύναμις τοῦ πάσχειν and δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν are inseparable from one another, not just in general or at an abstract level, but in each instance.

*Kraft ist in sich der Bezug der ἀρχῆ τοῦ ποιεῖν auf eine ἀρχή τοῦ πάσχειν und umgekehrt. Das Wesen der Kraft ist in sich, aus dem eigenen Wesen her und in Bezug auf dieses, in einer ursprünglichen Weise in zwei Kräfte auseinandergegangen.* [GA33 105]

Power is in itself the *relation* of the ἀρχῆ τοῦ ποιεῖν to an ἀρχή τοῦ πάσχειν and vice versa. The essence of power is in itself, from out of its own essence and in relation to this essence, divided in an original manner into two powers.

By casting the primary sense of δύναμις as the *essential* sense and distinguishing it from each factual instance of δύναμις, Heidegger



reveals the putatively 'useless' analysis of δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν to be a genuinely important introduction to the ontological question of *dunamis*.<sup>26</sup> For whilst it is not yet a matter of δύναμις ἐπὶ πλεόν, it seems that Heidegger's interpretation has taken a decisive step towards the κατὰ κίνησεως perspective that he associated with a properly ontological determination of δύναμις. To be sure, the genitive phrase does not appear in this discussion and Heidegger even confirms that it is still δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν that is under consideration. However, the way Heidegger pursues the question of δύναμις from this perspective alters the scope of the perspective itself. Indeed, the original determination of κατὰ κίνησιν is modified to such an extent in the course of the present analyses that before moving on to the next phase of the reading, Heidegger will declare the true significance of the expression δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν to have become evident for the first time. His description of this true significance leaves little doubt that the sense of δύναμις at which he arrives here is properly speaking ontological.<sup>27</sup>

Nonetheless, when Heidegger describes the essence of power as divided into two powers, he does not wish to suggest that the essence is in any way separable as a prior form. It is not the case, he writes, that first there is one and then the other. Rather, the ambiguity between them belongs to the essence of what we call power [GA33 106]. As he is quick to underline, this does not mean that the essence of power is a composite of the two manifest and present-at-hand powers. The essence of power lies in the relation between these two:

das Kraftsein ist beides als eines. [GA33 105]

*being-power is both as one.*

It is here, at this point of identity and difference between δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν and δύναμις τοῦ πάσχειν, at the original cleft [*Grundriß*] between them, that Heidegger lodges the ontological sense of δύναμις.

In defending his reading, Heidegger insists on a certain reading of the phrase ἐν ἄλλῳ in the definition of δύναμις [1046a11]. For Ross, the distinction between 'ἀρχή of change in another thing' and 'ἀρχή of change in itself qua other' depends on ἐν ἄλλῳ pertaining to μεταβολή only and not to ἀρχή [AMC 241]. For Heidegger, however, referring ἐν ἄλλῳ to μεταβολή favours the identification of δύναμις, as ἀρχή, with that which initiates change, namely, the ontic determination of δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν. Not only does such a reading lack a strong textual basis, but it also gives undue emphasis to the active powers of the subject or agent, tacitly opening the door to the reductive interpretation of δύναμις in the light of efficient causality. That a commentator of Ross's distinction defends a reading that implicitly elevates δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν above the other senses and which identifies the *arche* with the agent of change – a move whose repercussions he would surely deplore – is testimony to the force with which this perspective imposes itself. On the other hand, associating ἐν ἄλλῳ with the ἀρχή allows Heidegger to say that where there are two ontic potentialities present, it is not unequivocally the case that the ἀρχή resides in the agent: ontologically speaking the ἀρχή lies neither in the passive nor the active side but in the difference between them, or rather, in their fundamental



differentiation. It is precisely this dynamic nexus that he explores in his commentary on the final passage of Met.θ.1.

Aristotle raises the issue of the contrary to δύναμις in the sense of what may be called incapacity or impotence and, in the wake of the previous considerations, carries the investigation to a new level.

The passage begins as follows.

*Und die Unkraft (Unkräftigkeit) und demzufolge auch das »unkräftig« ist als das der δύναμις im besagten Sinne Gegenüberliegende ein Entzug [στέρησις]; daher ist jede Kraft, wenn sie zur Unkraft wird, d.h. als Unkraft je in Bezug auf dasselbe und in Gemäßheit desselben (bezüglich worauf die Kraft eine Kraft ist, ist jegliche Kraft Unkraft). [1046a28f, GA33 108]*

And un-power (impotence) and accordingly also 'im-potent' is, as that which stands over against δύναμις in the sense intended, a privation [στέρησις]; hence, each power, in becoming a-power, i.e. as un-power, is in each case in relation to and conformity with the same thing (with regard to that which the power is a power, every power is un-power).

The key to the passage is the concept στέρησις, translated by Heidegger as *Entzug* and usually rendered in English as privation.<sup>28</sup> In general, στέρησις signifies the condition of being without something. This may of course take several forms, which Aristotle lists both here and in Book V [1046a32f, 1022b22ff]. However, these are ontic examples. In the context of the sentence preceding these illustrations (that quoted above), Heidegger detects a move to repeat the relation of active and passive powers at the level of the essence of δύναμις itself. Thus a correspondingly essential sense of στέρησις is required.

Insofar as the δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν does not meet insuperable resistance, it may be said to have a domain of efficacy. Heidegger describes this as the power holding sway over or governing not simply what submits to it but also *itself* [*sich selbst beherrschen*]. However, such governance can fail, whereupon the power gives way to its privation.

Accordingly, when Aristotle writes that power is intrinsically related to un-power, Heidegger understands him to mean that every power, as finite, is bound from the first to its own reversal. In the case of specific powers, we have already seen that active powers are essentially related to the power of resistance [pp.173-175]. As regards the essence of *dunamis*, the relation is still more intimate. For in this case, the relation of power to un-power is not that of an original plenitude to its exhaustion or its externally imposed limit, that is, it does not consist in the transition from one phase to another.

*Der steretische Wandel der Kraft zur Unkraft ist demnach ein anderer als etwa der von Bewegung zur Ruhe, nicht nur, weil überhaupt Kraft und Bewegung dem Sachgehalt nach verschieden sind, sondern weil der der Kraft eigene Besitzcharakter dem Verlust und Entzug innerlicher verhaftet ist. [GA33 113]*

The steretic change of power to un-power is thus nothing like that of movement to rest, not only because the cases are ... different, but because the case of power is intrinsically bound to its own possession of loss and privation.

The essence of δύναμις is not 'pure' δύναμις, but rather comprises its own negation (as indeed befits the *Grundriß* between active and passive senses).<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the notion of στέρησις throws the sense



of mastery associated with power into relief as a function of possession: the positivity of δύναμις is characterized in terms of possession, its overturning or surpassing in terms of privation. The essence of δύναμις is therefore a play of possession and privation – the emergent leitmotiv of Heidegger's reading. For the time being, however, its value lies in furthering our interpretation of δύναμις as the ἀρχή μεταβολής.

Heidegger described *arche- Sein* as "*in sich ein Ausgehen zum anderen: in itself a setting out for what is other*" [GA33 101]. In the light of what we have discovered concerning the differential character of the essence of δύναμις and its characterization in terms of possession and privation, let us compare this with the following passage on the meaning of μεταβολή:

μεταβολή meint daher in der vollverstandenen Leitbedeutung nicht mehr nur einseitig das aktiv Umsetzen, aber auch nicht das passive Ertragen dazu, sondern den Wechselbezug beider als solchen. [...] sie fällt so wenig zwischendurch, daß gerade die Aufweisung der bezüge – δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν καὶ πάσχειν ὡς μία – sie in den Blick bringt. [GA33 115 My emphasis]

Understood properly in its fundamental significance, μεταβολή thus no longer means merely an active turn-around or the corresponding endurance, but the relation of exchange between them as such. [...] So little does it occur between, that it brings into view the relation δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν καὶ πάσχειν ὡς μία.

Μεταβολή, then, has nothing to do with the realization of an ontic potentiality in its actual form, but is rather the phenomenon of the differential relation between the active and passive senses of potentiality; a relation that displays the essential unity of the senses as much as their difference. Accordingly, δύναμις, as the ἀρχή of μεταβολή, is not the initial impetus for a determinate transition, but rather a 'setting-out' [Ausgehen] that constantly surpasses itself in a play of possession and privation. Only on the basis of such a play can anything like movement actually occur. In this respect, the nexus of δύναμις and στέρησις is the fundamental structure underlying the phenomenon of movement understood as *metabole*.<sup>30</sup>

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Looking back at the initial definition of δύναμις in its primary (essential) sense as the ἀρχή μεταβολῆς ἐπὶ ἄλλῳ ἢ ἢ ἄλλο, it is now a little clearer what Heidegger meant by the claim that the enquiry into δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν may not itself engage the ontological question of δύναμις κατὰ κίνησεως, but that it is useful nonetheless. For as Heidegger's commentary shows, the ontological question is present, albeit for the most part implicitly, even in these so-called preliminary considerations. In this respect, the two phases of the enquiry are, as we suggested [p.167], concomitant.

In his reading of this first chapter, Heidegger has achieved one thing above all. He has elicited from Aristotle's text an interpretation of δύναμις that, whilst intimately bound up with the



concept of δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν, does not proceed from an established conception of production and does not concede priority to the active powers of the subject. Indeed, its predominant formulation is in terms of μεταβολή, understood as the point of original scission between the active and passive senses of potentiality. On the basis of this interpretation, Heidegger will, in his reading of Book Θ Chapter 2, seek to distinguish the sense of δύναμις specific to human being.

### III

In the opening passage of Met.Θ.2 Aristotle distinguishes powers belonging to beings with a soul from those belonging to beings with no soul, thereby invoking the theme of possession and privation raised at the end of the previous chapter. At the outset, Heidegger notes that the distinction in question here is between ways of being [*Seinsweisen*], adding that by virtue of δύναμις being a signification of being, such ways will bear on the essence of δύναμις itself. In addition, the distinction between beings with and without soul is crossed by another, namely, that between powers that are accompanied by a rational formula [δύναμις μετὰ λόγου] and those that are not [δυναμεις αλόγος], whereupon the condition of being human is determined not simply as having soul, but rather of having λόγος; a human being is a ζῶον λόγον ἔχον. As a designation of the essence of human being, the verb ἔχειν thus signifies a way of being. Yet, as Heidegger remarks, the notion of possession itself hereby becomes

questionable, since one presumably does not possess either λόγος or a soul in the same way as one possesses consumer durables. Indeed, if it is in general true that the character of possession cannot be understood in isolation from its object, it is especially true when it is logos that is the object of possession. In Chapter One, we remarked on Nicolaci's observation that because our relation to all things is determined by λόγος, the manner in which λόγος itself is possessed is similarly determined [pp.63-64]. The verb ἔχειν in the expression ζῶν λόγον ἔχον does not denote a relation between the subject ζῶν and the object λόγος, so much as a manner of existence specific to human being by virtue of its determination by λόγος. As such, having λόγος amounts to a way of having things. The question of how human being is related to λόγος is thereby translated into the question of how it is related to things, for the nature of that relation is itself dictated by λόγος.

Before proceeding with the commentary, Heidegger recalls the distinction Aristotle makes between the scientific and calculative parts of the rational soul [NE.VI.2:1139a12]. The former [ἐπιστημονικόν] is described as knowing something in such a way that one at the same time has an understanding of self. By contrast, the latter [λογιστικόν] is a circumspective reckoning or consideration with an implicit reference to choice and decision.<sup>31</sup> In addition, both are described by Heidegger as belonging to *logos* understood as a general gathering together and setting forth of that which is related [die Sammlung des unter sich Bezogenen: GA33 121]. This is not restricted to apophantic or propositional form and can equally be



questioning, requesting, wishing etc., all of which fall under the general title of 'announcements' or 'indications.' λόγος thus understood is »Kundschaft« [GA33 122] and provides the basis for both Dasein's acquaintance with things in the world and with "seine eignen Möglichkeiten und Notwendigkeiten: its own possibilities and necessities" [GA33 128]. This affirmation of λόγος as the common ground of both τέχνη and φρόνησις frames the discussion that is to follow.

Moreover, it does so in a very important fashion. For Met.θ.2 continues:

*Daher sind alle Fertigkeiten [τέχναι] und Weisen des Sichverstehens auf Herstellung [ποιητικαὶ ἐπιστήμαι] von etwas Kräfte (in unserem Sinne also Vermögen): denn sie sind solches, von wo aus als in einem anderen dieses ausgerichtet ist auf ein Umsetzenkönnen. [1046b2-4: GA33 130]*

Thus all preparednesses [τέχναι] and ways of understanding oneself with regard to the production of something [ποιητικαὶ ἐπιστήμαι] are potentialities: for they are such as have their source in what is as other and are directed towards a capacity to change-around.

This passage sets the tone for the rest of the chapter inasmuch as it deals exclusively with δύναμις in terms of ἐπιστήμη. One is thereby encouraged to regard the sense of δύναμις associated with human being as intrinsically a matter of ποίησις. Yet, as Heidegger reminds us, if all τέχνη and ποιητικαὶ ἐπιστήμαι are δύνάμεις μετὰ λόγου, one cannot make the contrary inference. What emerges from Heidegger's reading is an understanding of δύναμις μετὰ λόγου that is based on a conception of λόγος as *Kundschaft* and which underlies both the ἐπιστημονικόν and the λογιστικόν. Accordingly, Heidegger will be able

to follow Aristotle in elaborating a conception of δύναμις μετὰ λόγου that is linked to ποιητική ἐπιστήμη, and at the end of it still ask whether λόγος has thereby been determined in its most fundamental sense [GA33 146-147]. If not, then of course the same will also be true of δύναμις μετὰ λόγου. For our purposes, we shall have to see how this fundamental conception of δύναμις pertains to the ontological determination of Dasein in terms of πράξις.

Aristotle begins the paragraph in question by noting that potentialities related to λόγος may be directed towards one of two contrary ends, whereas potentialities with no relation to λόγος can issue in one end alone. Accordingly, medicine can kill or cure, but that which is wet can only make you wetter. Why should this be so? That is, why should the involvement of λόγος 'explain' the relation of potentiality to contrary ends? Aristotle suggests that it is because the λόγος discloses at once that with which one is concerned and its privation. For his part, Heidegger addresses the issue by elaborating the role of the εἶδος in the process of production.<sup>32</sup> As the image of the ἔργον that is held in advance of its production, the εἶδος announces the end to which the activity is directed. However, as such an announcement, it is not merely a pure object of intuition, but rather an interpretive synthesis.

*Das εἶδος ist ein so zusammengelesenes Ausgelesenes, ein λεγόμενον, es ist λόγος. Und das εἶδος ist τέλος - das be-  
endende Ende, τέλειον - das Vollkommene, das Vollendete,  
Erlesene, Auserlesene; τέλος ist seinem Wesen nach immer  
ausgelesen: λόγος. [GA33 142]*

The εἶδος is what is interpreted, read in this way as one, a λεγόμενον, it is λόγος. And the εἶδος is τέλος - the ending



end, τέλειον - the completed, accomplished, picked, picked out; in its essence, the τέλος is always interpreted: λόγος.

The question of why λόγος should comprise the possibility of affirmation and negation is hereby elaborated in terms of the relation between the agent and what is to be produced. However, the source of this possibility must be traced back beyond the introduction of λόγος as a sufficient explanatory principle in itself, and above all beyond its more conspicuous links with production.

The εἶδος in each case conveys an 'as' which discriminates between success and failure in the accomplishment of the end. In turn, this may be understood in terms of λόγος as a *Kundgabe*, for what is thus given is given as such and such and not otherwise. The possibility of discrimination therefore rests on the specificity of this 'as' [SZ 933]. But why should this 'as' belong to the λόγος?

*Weil die Kundgabe zur Kundschaft gehört und Kundschaft ursprünglich einem Erkunden antwortet. Erkunden aber ist notwendig Weg-einschlagen, je Wahl des einen Weges unter Aufgabe des anderen, und ist zugleich Übernehmen eines Standortes und Aufgabe des anderen. [GA33 145]*

Because the *Kundgabe* belongs to *kundschaft* and *Kundschaft* originally responds to an *Erkunden*. *Erkunden*, however, is necessarily a breaking-open of a way; in each case a choice of one way and the surrender of others, and similarly the assumption of one standpoint and the surrender of others.

λόγος, as *Kundschaft*, "responds" to a more original feature of the soul that Heidegger calls *Erkunden*, a form of disclosure that precedes re-presentation and which forgoes the reassurance of seeing its destination in advance. A critical, that is, discriminatory,

relation to the world is established ahead of its subsequent ordering in terms of ideas and the relation of λόγος to contrary ends is presented in terms of the orientation of the soul towards one thing rather than another, that is, in terms of the movement of the soul itself. This does not mean that the λόγος is in any way secondary: the notion of *Erkunden* to which Heidegger appeals here does not precede the λόγος, to be subsequently refracted through it, any more than δύναμις μετὰ λόγου is a modification of a pre-rational potentiality. The idea of such a discriminatory relation goes back to Aristotle's description of ὄρεξις as in each case either flight or pursuit. Moreover, ὄρεξις is itself described as essentially responsive to λόγος [p.98], whereupon the sense of *Erkunden* to which Heidegger appeals here may be said to comprise a reciprocal relation of ὄρεξις and λόγος in which each term is effectively equiprimordial. It is of course as just such a conjunction of desiderative and rational elements that Aristotle characterizes human being as the ἀρχή (efficient cause) of activity [1139a31-1139b7, p.94].<sup>34</sup> However, thought only motivates activity if it is for-the-sake-of something, that is, if it is oriented by a relation to a specific end, the ὄρεκτον, which is the final cause of the activity. For there to be activity, the soul must have a relation to the ἀρχή that is the final cause. With this, we return to our suggestion in Chapter Two that Heidegger conceived of transcendence as a radicalization of the unity of νοῦς and ὄρεξις. In fact, for Aristotle, the unity of the terms is manifest in προαίρησις and this is echoed by Heidegger's emphasis on the element of decision or choice inherent in the fundamental



orientation of the soul. Naturally, this is no accident, for the account of δύναμις μετὰ λόγου bears directly on the determination of human being in terms of προαίρησις and the remainder of the passage under discussion [1046b15-24] itself hinges on the description of the soul as possessed of the of movement [κινήσεως ἔχει ἀρχήν]. In order to carry forward our enquiry into the relation to the end of activity, we must continue to focus on the way that the soul 'has' such an ἀρχή.

With regard to the contrary ends to which δύναμις μετὰ λόγου is related, Aristotle writes:

*Denn eine Kunde [λόγος] geht immer auf beides, aber nicht in gleicher Weise, und sie gehört (ihrer Seinsart nach) in eine Seele, die selbst (als solche) ein Von-wo-aus für Bewegung in sich vor-hält. [1046b20-21, GA33 149]*

Then a *Kunde* [λόγος] always relates to both, but not in the same way, and (in accordance with its way of being) it belongs in a soul, which itself (as such) holds before itself a source of movement.

The soul grasps the ἀρχή of movement, of its own movement, via (in the manner of) λόγος, and in such a way that it holds the ἀρχή "before itself." This is clarified a little further, in terms of the ἀρχή as an ὀρεχτόν.

*Die Seele hat diese ἀρχή, sofern die Seele als wesentlich strebende, als ὄρεξις (DA.III.9:432b7) auf ein ὀρεχτόν bezogen ist. Das Haben, ἔχειν (cf. λόγον ἔχον) meint also nicht einfach: an sich haben als irgendwelche Eigenschaft, sondern etwas haben in der Weise des Sich-dazu-verhaltens. [GA33 151]*

The soul has this ἀρχή insofar as the soul as essentially desiring, as ὄρεξις (DA.III.9:432b7) is related to an ὀρεχτόν. Having, ἔχειν (cf. λόγον ἔχον) therefore means not

simply having in itself as some property, but rather having something as a comporting-oneseft-towards it.

Possession of the ἀρχή consists in the relation towards it, which is that of desire: to 'have' and to 'desire' are equivalent here. How can this be so? Does one not desire what one does not have? Is desire not at bottom a not-having? And, on gaining possession of a thing, is one's desire for it not satiated? The object of desire is unmistakably 'there' in some sense. But how is this to be expressed in terms of having? In his lectures on the *Theatetus* (offered the semester after the course on Met.Θ.1-3, in the Winter of 1931-1932), Heidegger notes that to possess something is customarily understood to mean having it at one's disposal [GA34 212]. However, he writes, such an experience is often accompanied by a forgetfulness of the self, a loss of the subject. Contrary to appearances, such having amounts to a form of slavery in which the self forsakes the capacity of choice and is held in thrall by that which it ostensibly commands.<sup>35</sup> Such possession, however complete, is duly *inauthentic* [GA34 213]. By contrast, an authentic sense of having is said to involve the self 'coming to itself' [*zu sich selbst kommen*] - an expression our present interests forbid us to take at face value. How is such a movement to be understood? In what sense does one arrive at oneself? These were precisely the questions that we posed to Nicolaci in Chapter One when he described the sense of self-relation specific to πρᾶξις as a *raggiungersi* [arriving at or reaching oneself] [p.64]. Our point at the time was that the usual understanding of such a movement implicitly involves a relation to an external end, that is,



a form of relation determined by the experience of production and inherently inappropriate to the understanding of  $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ . Could the sense of 'authentic having' to which Heidegger refers here offer an alternative, such that it may give a sense to the expression 'coming to oneself' that may illuminate the for-the-sake-of relation that, as we have maintained from the start, must be distinct from the relation between the agent and the work? Certainly, if we are to indicate the way such a relation may be conceived, then an alternative to the sense of possession outlined above must be discovered, and the opposition between having and desire is clearly not irrelevant to the matter. Moreover, the opposition between having and desire is not as clear cut as it may seem. Indeed, Heidegger goes so far as to ask whether desire may be not merely a manner of having, but actually co-constitutive of the essence of authentic having [GA34 214].

In Heidegger's view, desire, like having, has both authentic and inauthentic forms. In its inauthentic form, it consumes itself "chasing after [*nachlaufen*]" that which is desired and thereby brings about the destruction [*Zerstörung*] of the desiring self.<sup>36</sup> But not every desire loses itself in its object. That desire is 'over-to' [*Hin-zu*] something does not necessarily mean that it is 'away from' itself [*Weg-von-sich-selbst*] [GA34 215].

*Vielmehr läßt sich (zunächst) ein Streben denken, das im Hin-zu auf das Bestrebte gerade dieses Bestrebte als ein solches fest-und dabei auf sich selbst zu hält, um in diesem Auf-sich-zu-halten des Bestrebten sich selbst zu finden, und zwar sich selbst nicht als ein Punkt und ein Ding und ein Subjekt, sondern sich selbst im Sinne des Wesens der Seele, die Wesenhaft Verhältnis ist,- und also sich selbst zu*

*finden gerade als dieses Strebensverhältnis zum Bestrehten.*  
[GA34 215]

Rather, one can *conceive* (provisionally) of a striving that holds that which is striven for fast as *such in the over-to* [*Hin-zu*] and thereby holds it close by itself: and in this holding-close-by-itself of that which is striven for finds itself and does so not as a point or a thing or a subject, but rather in the sense of the essence of the soul, which is substantially relation, - and thus finds itself precisely as this striving-relation to that which is desired.

In this way, authentic desire informs the notion of authentic having that we came across a moment ago, helping to shed light on the sense of 'coming to oneself' that was associated there with the for-the-sake-of relation. But first, how is it that what is held in desire is neither consumed nor remains entirely alien? It is true that what is given (in and through the *λόγος*) must, to preserve the sense of giving, remain in part other [GA33 144-145]. Heidegger chooses to explicate this by referring to the way that what is disclosed is in each case disclosed in this or that respect, as this or that.<sup>36</sup> That which is disclosed must remain in part other precisely insofar as it is held as something. If the finitude of desire consists in the fact that it engages what is desired in each case only in a particular respect, then it is on account of such finitude that desire does not achieve the complete possession of what it desires.

But have we not merely described a weakness of desire, its incapability of wholly grasping its object and thereby annulling itself in the full achievement of its end? We should certainly beware of laying too much emphasis on the previous explanation. For given that the account of *ᾧρεξις* forms part of a broader account of *δύναμις*



by which it is in turn informed, we might expect the sense of finitude attached to δύναμις to be reflected in the conception of desire. Heidegger warned us earlier against thinking the finitude of δύναμις as the waning of its powers or as its inability to overcome an external limit. The ὄρεχτόν, then, is not viewed as an entity towards which the soul must move, as when the process of production draws toward the pre-sighted end [GA33 151]. In fact, what is striking about Heidegger's description of authentic desire is precisely the degree to which it lacks any sense of pursuit. The description of desire holding that which is desired "close by itself" imbues the phenomenon with a sense of stasis that seems at odds with the very notion of desire. Whilst this is certainly true, we should avoid any jumping to any obvious conclusions, for, ontologically speaking, even that which is at rest is determined in terms of movement.<sup>38</sup> Our task will thus be to arrive at an understanding of such apparent stasis that is itself fundamentally conceived in terms of movement. In this, it may be instructive to recall Heidegger's characterization of Dasein's being-towards-death [SZ §§50-53]. We cannot enter into a full account of it here. However, as the present enquiry is concerned at bottom with the form of movement specific to the existence of Dasein, the determination of Dasein's being-towards-death will at once be informed by and, perhaps, illustrate some of the issues raised by the discussion of desire. Heidegger of course rules out any thought that being-towards-death be understood as a death drive. This would be to seek the actualization of death, whereas his intention is to show how death is preserved precisely as

*possibility*. Accordingly, it is not a case of Dasein's movement towards death, so much as a relation to death that is at once made possible by the end in question and yet which is at the same time responsible for that end as such (i.e. for its having the form of possibility). In the case of desire, too, the being of the end as the ἀρχή of the movement is determined by the relation itself, which is only what it is by virtue of the desire. In this way, what is desired is held in the very movement of desire: desire has its end. To recall an earlier description of *dunamis*, it is *unterwegs-zu* precisely because it is *ausgerichtet auf* [p.176]. To say that desire is *unterwegs-zu* is not to say that has yet to arrive. Quite simply, desire does not move towards its end because it is itself movement: and movement itself does not move, only what is in movement. By analogy, it would be more accurate to say of desire that it is itself a mode of having, rather than the subject of having.<sup>39</sup> In this respect, the reason desire does not have its end absolutely or, as it were, conclusively, lies in the essential relation of power to its own reversal. For the sense of movement implicit here has less to do with transition, least of all that between active subject and passive object, or agent and work, than with the essential differentiation of activity and passivity within δύναμις itself, that is, with μεταβολή as the overturning of having and not-having into one another. And it is in this, its relation to στέρησις, that the finitude of δύναμις properly consists.

But what of the specificity of πράξις? We began this section by noting that in spite of the bias in Aristotle's presentation towards



ποιητική ἐπιστήμη, Heidegger's interpretation of λόγος as *Kundschaft* secured the basis for a neutral determination of δύναμις μετὰ λόγου that was not itself governed by either ποίησις or πράξις. How then are we to draw from this any conclusion regarding the for-the-sake-of relation and the movement specific to the existence of Dasein as πράξις?

In all of this, what is it that is supposed to be 'had'? Ultimately, the ἀρχή to which the soul is related is the final end, the ἀγαθόν. But, as we saw in Chapter Three, the ἀγαθόν is not given directly as such. Inevitably, indeed necessarily, the existence of Dasein as a whole interposes itself and the question becomes intertwined with that of the ἀγαθόν πρακτόν, εὐπράξια. This same congruence of the ἀγαθόν in an absolute sense and the ἀγαθόν πρακτόν, of Dasein's relations to being and to its own existence, is evident in Heidegger's remarks concerning the concomitance of desire and having. To his description of having as a manner of comporting oneself towards something [*Sich-dazu-verhalten*: GA33 151, p.192], he added that in such having the soul "comes to itself," and it does so "as this striving relation": that is, in 'having' the ὀρεκτόν, holding sway over it, the soul also has or holds itself over against the privation and withdrawal characteristic of δύναμις itself [GA34 215]. The relation to the ὀρεκτόν is not only inseparable from the relation of such having-desire to itself, but can only be manifest in such a relation. This becomes clear when we recall that the ἀγαθόν πρακτόν is εὐπράξια, a manner of existence. We have already seen that δύναμις is essentially articulated in terms of a manner of existence. Having-

desiring the end therefore means having-desiring a manner of existence and this necessarily entails that there *is* δύναμις, that is, that δύναμις holds sway over the dissipation and loss that characterize its essential finitude.

In this way, we are brought back not only to the place of self-relatedness in the relation to the final end, but also to the nature of that relation in terms of the concomitance of desire and having that we have already identified as of the utmost significance for the question of the for-the-sake-of relation. Moreover, in returning to it we have found the dominant theme to be that of having. There would be little difficulty in bridging the gap from here back to the end of Chapter Two, where the bond of νοῦς and ὄρεξις characteristic of human being as an ἄρχή of activity was traced in Aristotle to ἔξις, the relation to virtue and itself related to the Greek verb ἔχειν, to have. However, we shall defer any further consideration until we have looked at Heidegger's commentary on Met.θ.3, where the question is not that of essence but of existence. Having reached an understanding of *what* δύναμις is, it is now a matter of determining *how* it exists as such. Given the interpretation Heidegger has offered, this will mean establishing *how* the play of appropriation that characterizes the finitude of δύναμις will manifest itself in a manner of the existence of that being possessed of δύναμις μετὰ λόγου.



If the first two chapters of Met.θ were concerned with the essence of δύναμις, the third engages the question of its existence, that is, not with what δύναμις is, but with the way that it manifests itself. This is not to say that the two questions are wholly separate from one another. Quite the contrary; the essence and the existence of δύναμις (as indeed of anything else) must be considered in connection with one another [GA33 169, 222]. Indeed, our remarks on the authentic and inauthentic forms of having and desire in the previous section have already carried the account of the essence of δύναμις so far as to broach the question of its existence. Since Met.θ.3 addresses itself to this issue explicitly, it might be regarded as a supplement to the enquiry carried out in the previous two chapters. However, it is more than a conclusion. A substantial part of the chapter is taken up with a polemic against the Megaric school over the existence of δύναμις, and, as is well known, Aristotle frequently prefaces his own account of a problem with a critical review of competing theories. In view of this we might expect the chapter to serve as a springboard from which Aristotle launches a new phase of the enquiry. This is indeed the case, and in two important respects. First of all, in establishing the manner of existence appropriate to δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν, Aristotle carries the enquiry another step nearer to the account in Met.θ.6 of δύναμις as a signification of being, that is, of δύναμις ἐπὶ πλέον. More immediately, however, the Megarics' theory of the existence of δύναμις brings the theme of ἐνέργεια to the fore for the first time, and this heralds Aristotle's

own interpretation of ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν. This is important to recognize, since Aristotle does not draw attention to the fact that ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν will be addressed here. And even when the determinations of δύναμις καὶ ἐνέργεια ἐπὶ πλεόν are introduced in Met.θ.6, he gives no indication that the preceding chapters have dealt with anything besides δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν. In this way, the critique of the Megarics at once supplements the preceding enquiry into the essence of δύναμις and opens the way for both phases of Aristotle's account of ἐνέργεια.<sup>40</sup> Ultimately, however, the determinations of the essence and existence of δύναμις must be considered as a whole, a single account reflected upon itself.

Heidegger's commentary on Met.θ.3 is long and particularly rich. We shall therefore have to be more selective in our reading than hitherto, picking out only those themes that are most important for the problematic at hand.

\*

Met.θ.3 begins with an outline of the Megarics' thesis concerning the existence of δύναμις.

*Es gibt aber gewisse Leute, wie z.B. die Megariker, die sagen, nur wenn eine Kraft am Werke sei, dann sei das Kräftigsein zu etwas vorhanden, wenn sie aber nicht am Werke sei, dann sei auch kein Kräftigsein, z.B. der nicht bauende (Baumeister) sei nicht kräftig des Bauens, wohl aber der bauende, wenn er baut; imgleichen gelte das auch von den anderen Kräften. Daß das, was mit dem Gesagten sich einstellt, nirgends unterzubringen ist, das ist nicht schwer zu sehen. [1046b29-33, GA33 162]*

There are certain people, such as the Megarics, who say that being-powerful for something is only present when a power is at work, but that there is no being-powerful when it is not



at work; e.g. the (builder) who is not building is not capable of building, but only the one building, when he is building. It is not hard to see that what is proposed here cannot be accommodated.

The question, then, is whether and how δύναμις can be actually present as power. It is the Megarics' view that δύναμις can only be present in the very actualization for which it is a power, in ἐνέργεια; in Heidegger's terms, only when it is 'at work.'<sup>41</sup> As the end of the passage quoted above suggests, Aristotle is quick to seize on the absurdities that follow from the Megaric thesis and points out immediately that it commits one to saying that only the builder who is actually building may legitimately be called a builder, and similarly with other arts [τέχναι]. Elaborating the problem, Aristotle notes that the Megaric thesis leaves no room, or rather time, for either learning or forgetting such arts: one passes from being able to build to not being able to build directly on laying down tools. Understandably reluctant to accept such a view, Aristotle reminds us that the powers in question here must be acquired over a period of time and that once acquired, they are not lost in an instant. The power to build, present in the acquired capacity of the builder, not only persists throughout the movement of building, but survives the end of that movement. As such, its existence cannot simply be identified with the activity or its accomplishment.

The crux of the matter is that the Megarics do not distinguish between power (or potentiality) and possibility. In their view, whatever has not yet taken place does not exist. Consequently, what is potential does not exist and, which amounts to the same thing,

cannot be present until such time as it actually occurs. Moreover, if the existence of what is potential is denied, there will be no sense in saying that something has the power or potential to change. Accordingly, what is not happening cannot happen and the very possibility of movement is denied. But one cannot affirm this and continue to claim, as the Megarics do, that δύναμις exists only in the movement of realization without lapsing into self-contradiction: such a view clearly precludes any sense in which potentiality itself may be present. Conversely, Aristotle's recognition of the importance of learning and forgetting, of acquisition and loss, lead him to the question of how potentiality can be present precisely as potentiality, *independently of the realization of that for which it is a potentiality*. We shall look at this more closely in a moment, but first of all, some more general remarks.

Aristotle frames his treatment of the issue in such a way as to magnify the contradiction in the Megarics' thesis. Yet if Heidegger emphasizes Aristotle's achievement in posing the question of δύναμις in this way, he also underlines repeatedly that the Megaric thesis contains an important element of truth. Heidegger characterizes the actual existence at issue as *Vorhandensein* or *Anwesenheit*. For the Megarics, this sense is determined solely with regard to the work, the ἔργον. For Aristotle, however, this conception was too narrowly drawn and had to be broadened in such a way as to encompass the presence of δύναμις prior to and following its realization. Aristotle thereby challenges the paradigm of the work that exerted such an influence over Greek conception of being and insists in particular



that it is inappropriate to the ζῶν λόγον ἔχον. Moreover, in so doing, he casts a different light on movement itself. For the Megarics, movement is the becoming present of what was absent; for Aristotle, movement is at once the becoming present of what was absent (the work) *and* the becoming present in one way of what was already present in another way (δύναμις) [GA33 185]. Yet it would be wrong to suppose that the Megaric thesis had been dismissed entirely. Rather, Aristotle's break with the Megarics is set against the background of a broader continuity. For his response remains within the ambit of productive activity whilst focussing on the very condition for such activity, namely, having *acquired* the potential to act in such a fashion. For Heidegger, then, Aristotle's determination of the existence of δύναμις in terms of having does not replace the Megaric thesis so much as place it within its proper limits, that is, ground it in its necessary condition of possibility [GA33 184].

As we have seen, Aristotle understands the existence of δύναμις to consist in the way that it is possessed by an individual. In Heidegger's terms:

*Vermögend-sein zu etwas heißt eben: die δύναμις haben, und das entsprechende Nichthaben besagt: nicht vermögend-sein. Dieses Haben und Nichthaben birgt in sich das Wirklichsein und Nichtwirklichsein der δύναμις. Wird also das Haben als ein Sein gefaßt? Offenbar ist hier das ἔχειν und μὴ ἔχειν in ganz bestimmtem Sinne verstanden. [GA33 177]*

being-able to do something simply means having the δύναμις, and the corresponding not-having means not being-able. This having and not-having harbour in themselves the being-actual and not being-actual of δύναμις. Is having thereby grasped as being? Clearly ἔχειν and μὴ ἔχειν are understood here in a wholly specific sense.

According to everyday idiom, one *has* the power to do something. Yet if we recall that the essence of δύναμις was itself defined in terms of having, then the sense in which ἔχειν and μὴ ἔχειν are intended here does indeed become problematic. For one cannot have having, whereupon the sense in which one might be said to have a power is equally obscure. As Heidegger suggests, it is more appropriate to understand ἔχειν and μὴ ἔχειν as ways of being: one does not *have* power, one *is*, exists as, power in a manner akin to that of having as outlined with regard to the essence of power.<sup>42</sup> Accordingly, the acquisition of power is not comparable to the addition of an accidental property to a substantially constant subject. In Heidegger's terms, it is a fundamental modification in the manner of Dasein's relation to itself and to things in the world. Moreover, because δύναμις is not an object, and its acquisition less an act performed upon an object than a modification of the subject itself, it can be neither performed nor 'willed' as such. In Aristotle, this problem manifests itself in the difficulty surrounding the origin of ἔξεις; to put it in the starkest possible terms, the τέχνη required to build cannot be acquired otherwise than by building, yet one cannot build without having already acquired some measure of τέχνη. Heidegger reiterates a variation of this bind in the opening paragraph of 'The Origin of the Work of Art,' but it is evident elsewhere too, albeit in a less overt fashion; for example, in the question of Dasein's alternation between authenticity and inauthenticity and in the problematic relation between resoluteness and will.



What we have touched upon here in connection with δύναμις could be described as the problematic relation between essence and existence. How is *what* something is manifest in *how* it is? A somewhat crude response might present the relation in terms of appearance: the thing-like essence appears in a certain fashion, is articulated in a series of forms determined in part by the context of its appearance, a series responsive to synthesis and the cognitive reconstruction of the essence [SZ 52:76-77]. But if such an approach was already rendered problematic by Aristotle's animation of substance, it is driven to new heights of implausibility by Heidegger's ontological appropriation of Aristotle's practical philosophy. In the first place, the essence-existence relation is all but collapsed insofar as the essence of Dasein lies in its existence [SZ 42:67]: the *what* of Dasein is determined precisely by the ontological structures that determine the *manner* of its comportment in and towards the world. There is, therefore, no substantial essence. However, a new and still more problematic difference threatens to open up, namely that between ontological (existential) determinations and their ontic (existentiell) counterparts. As we saw earlier [p.9], by taking the ontological structures constitutive of Dasein from the language of activity, Heidegger risks giving the impression that the divide between Dasein's deliberate activity and the movement constitutive of its ground (*Abgrund* as well as *Grund*) has been effaced. In spite of the congruence of essence and existence at the basis of Heidegger's account of Dasein, there remains a difference between them which is indeed brought all the more sharply into focus by the proximity of

the respective determinations, both of which are defined in terms of having. Heidegger insists on their being understood via one another. But are we to understand having as in each instance the same? To be sure, the essence of Dasein lies in its existence, but how does the definition of its essence in terms of a play of appropriation and loss and as mastery over itself translate into an existentiell comportment? Can we even conceive of such a translation? If in broader terms, questions such as these arise as a consequence of Heidegger's ontological interpretation of Aristotle's practical philosophy, in the present context they follow from the fact, noted above, that one cannot *have* potentiality because potentiality is itself defined essentially in terms of appropriation and loss, that is, as having. Insofar as having potentiality is therefore a manner of existing, it may be described as a form of movement [1022aff]. Accordingly, it is in terms of movement that the question of the relation between essence and existence will increasingly be phrased.

The actuality of δύνάμις consists in the possession of a skill or ability, in what Heidegger calls *Eingeübtsein* [being-practiced] [GA33 191]. For there to be movement, this *Eingeübtsein* must 'come' to an *Ausübung* [exercise or execution] or *Ausführung* [leading out], an event that Heidegger describes at once as *übergehen* [going-over] and as *überführen werden* [being led over] [GA33 191]. This touches upon the problem of how movement begins. Allowing a transition from rest to movement invites an infinite regression of such beginnings. It is for this reason that Aristotle rejected the idea that the beginning of movement could itself be a movement.<sup>43</sup> Heidegger's response is to



propose that the transition is always already underway in the essence of δύναμις. Prior to the occurrence of movement, potentiality already exists as δύναμιν ἔχειν, a condition that Heidegger describes variously as *Gehaltenheit* [having-heldness] and as an *Ansichhalter* [holding-in-itself]. Rather than being something that happens to such a condition, the *Sichüberführen* is itself intrinsic to δύναμις as an *Ansichhalten*.

*Die Überführung wird dem Vermögen nicht als etwas Neues dazugeschoben, sondern ist als Aufbehaltenes in diesem Ansichhalten. [GA33 192]*

The leading over is not added to the potentiality as something new, but is rather held back within this holding-in-itself.

Movement does not spring from an inert condition of potentiality. Accordingly, the term *Sichüberführen* suggests that *Ausübung* and *Ausführung*, as designations of movement, are not so much initiated as released from the essence of δύναμις in and through a modification in its manner of existence. Indeed, in elucidating this notion of *Sichüberführen*, Heidegger explicitly refers the reader back to his account of the essence of δύναμις and in particular to the fact that every power 'holds sway' over something other than itself. At the same time, of course, it must hold sway over itself and, in its finitude, over the withdrawal and loss [στέρησις] that inheres in its essence. The dimension in which the predominance of appropriation over loss takes place is invoked by Heidegger's reference to the *Spielraum* required by the notion of *Sichüberführen*. In this way, the account of the existence of δύναμις refers back to its essence, and

the sense of movement as μεταβολή that one finds there. Yet if we take in the broader perspective of the account as a whole, we see that δύναμις and ἐνέργεια themselves arise as articulations of movement and it is precisely in view of the relation of δύναμις to movement that one has recourse here to the account of its essence in terms of μεταβολή. What, then, of δύναμις and movement?

Having argued that the Megarics' thesis on the actuality of δύναμις does away with movement, Aristotle illustrates the difficulties to which it leads:

*Immer nämlich wird sowohl das Stehende stehenbleiben als auch das Sitzende sitzenbleiben; nicht nämlich wird es sich aufrichten, wenn es sich gesetzt hat; denn es ist unvermögend [ἀδύνατον], daß es aufstehe, was das Vermögen aufzustehen gar nicht hat. [1047a15-17, GA33 211]*

Thus, one standing will remain always standing, just as one sitting will remain sitting. Thus, if one has sat down, one will not get up. What does not have the potential to stand up will therefore be incapable [ἀδύνατον] of standing up.

As Heidegger remarks, between sitting and standing there lie sitting down and standing up as kinds of transition, *Übergang*. But these do not lie between the end points in the same way a stone lies between two other stones. For the state of sitting is itself a 'having-sat' and standing is 'having-stood-up':

*der Übergang gehört zu diesen Phänomenen als das, wodurch sie in verschiedener Weise hindurchgegangen sein müssen bzw. hindurchgehen werden. Das Vermögendsein-zu ist in seiner eigensten Wirklichkeit mitbestimmt durch dieses Phänomen des Übergangs. [GA33 211]*

transition belongs to these phenomena as that through which they must in different ways exist as gone through towards or be gone through towards. Being-potential-to is in its



authentic actuality co-determined through this phenomenon of transition.

Both the end of the movement and the potential for the movement are fundamentally determined by the movement itself. Heidegger encapsulates his interpretation of δύναμις in an example, that of an athlete, a sprinter, poised on the starting line in anticipation of the gun. What do we see, he asks? Not simply a man who is not in movement, who is kneeling down. This could be said equally well, or rather better, of an old peasant before a station of the cross. Rather, it seems as though the whole of the athlete's frame is bent towards the way ahead. In fact, adds Heidegger, does it only seem so?

*Nein, es sieht nicht nur so aus, es ist so, und - was ebenso entscheidend ist zu bedenken - wir sehen das unmittelbar so. [GA33 218]*

No, it not only seems so, it is so and - what is precisely decisive to think - we see it immediately to be so.

Here, then, potentiality is present as such. Both the intention to run and the ability to do so well are concentrated in the very stillness of the athlete awaiting the signal to go. As such, it is anything but the absence of movement.

*Wirklich-Vermögend-sein ist das bereitschafterfüllte Im-Stand-sein-zu, dem nur noch die Enthemmung in den Vollzug fehlt, so daß, wenn diese vorhanden ist, sich eingestellt hat, das heißt: wenn der Vermögende sich ins Zeug legt, der Vollzug wahrhaft Ausübung ist und nur dieses. Er ist nichts anderes als Sich-ins-Zeug-legen - ἐνέργεια (ἔργον: das Werk oder das Zeug). [GA33 219]*

Being-actually-potential is the fully ready being-in-place-to, the accomplishment of which lacks only the release, so that when this is present, it is engaged: ie. if what is potential sets to work, the accomplishment is truly

performance and only this. It is nothing other than setting to work - ἐνέργεια (ἔργον: the work or the tool).<sup>44</sup>

For the potentiality to be present as such, it is not enough that it be acquired and held in readiness. It must also be plain that it can be put into practice. Hence the definition of potentiality that Aristotle gives at 1047a24 and which Heidegger translates in the following way (given the importance of this passage and the particular force of his translation, I shall not attempt my own):<sup>45</sup>

*In Wirklichkeit vermögend aber ist dieses, dem nichts mehr unausführbar ist, sobald es sich in das Zeug legt, als wozu das Zeug zu haben angesprochen wird. [1047a24-26, GA33 219].*

It must hold sway over itself and over that which stands in resistance against it: the sense of mastery implicit in the complementary relation of δύναμις τοῦ ποίειν καὶ πάσχειν and, of course, in the essence of δύναμις itself. Clearly, then, ἐνέργεια is relevant to the definition of *dunamis*, though not as the Megarics thought. Rather, it contributes to the definition of movement, in view of which δύναμις is itself defined. In the passages above, it directly denotes movement, which is characterized by ἐνέργεια as '*Sich-ins-Zeug-legen*.' This most unusual translation has a twofold significance. First of all, it preserves a sense of the etymological composition of the word from its elements, *en* and the verbal form of ἔργον: in-work, at-work.<sup>46</sup> But in addition, *Sich-ins-Zeug-legen* can also mean 'to buckle down' or 'to put one's shoulder to the wheel' and thereby conveys the sense of concentrated effort which Heidegger's interpretation attaches to δύναμις. What this eloquently



demonstrates is that Heidegger understands δύναμις and ἐνέργεια in a fully integrated fashion. Moreover the scene of integration is movement itself, precisely because the two terms in question are treated from the first as articulations of movement, the point, as Aubenque has it, of their original indistinction [PEA 453]:

*das Vorhandensein des Vermögenden als solchen in gleicher Weise wie die Wirklichkeit im Sinne des Vollzugs sind Weisen des In-Bewegung-seins, auf dieses in sich bezogen und nur von daher zu fassen. [GA33 216]*

the being present-at-hand of potentiality as such and similarly the actuality in the sense of accomplishment are *ways of being-in-movement*, to which they are intrinsically related and only in connection with which can they be comprehended.

If both δύναμις and ἐνέργεια are ways of being-in-movement, do they share a common feature? Can we get closer to what is meant by this sense of being-in-movement? Let us turn briefly to Heidegger's later essay on Aristotle's conception of φύσις, where he gives a succinct account of his interpretation of ἐνέργεια and ἐντελέχεια.

Movement is, for Aristotle, a fundamental characteristic of the sublunar world. Accordingly, even those things which are superficially at rest are determined with regard to movement. Rest, therefore, is simply a limiting case of movement, rather than a condition essentially opposed to movement. It, too, has its being in what Heidegger calls *Bewegtheit* [being-moved]. Indeed, the purest manifestation of *Bewegtheit* is to be found where rest does not mean the cessation of movement, but rather where movement is, as it were, gathered into its end:

*dieses Innehalten die Bewegtheit nicht aus sonder ein, ja nicht nur ein, sonder erst aufschließt. [VWB-WM 282:256]*

this ingathering, far from excluding being-moved, includes and for the first time discloses it.

This is why circular movement, in which there is no discernible beginning or end, represents the highest form of movement, a movement which is at all times complete and which is therefore tantamount to being at rest. However, the example Heidegger gives is taken from Met.θ.6, namely that of seeing: one sees and has seen at the same time and in such seeing there is no separation between movement and end. Seeing is an ἐνέργεια, in the specific sense that stands in contrast to κίνησις and which characterizes also, amongst other things, living well and being happy [1048b25, cf. p.32]. In Chapter One we saw the so-called ἐργον argument conclude in the determination of the final end, εὐπραξία, as the ἐνέργεια of the soul's rational faculties, that is, of the intellectual ἔξεις, of those potentialities described in this chapter in terms of δύναμις μετὰ λόγου.

We saw then that the essence of δύναμις consisted in a sense of mastery in which the appropriative current in the play of appropriation and loss prevailed. This play, the essential relation of δύναμις to its own finitude, was described by Heidegger in terms of *metabole*. Moreover, the possibility of such mastery was in turn intrinsically linked to a notion of end as a manner of existence, the *how* that gives the δύναμις its necessary orientation. Further on, we found that the existence of δύναμις depends upon one 'having



potential' and that this is characterized as the relation to an end which itself denotes a manner of existence. This relation, at once having and desiring, is in turn parallel to the sense implicit in the essence of δύναμις. Having potential thereby consists in a desiderative appropriation of the end, where this end is a *manner* of existence and therefore not independent from that existence as the desiderative appropriation itself. Having the end therefore amounted to having itself, that is, to the existence of δύναμις as a form of mastery. In the present case, we find that the *Bewegtheit* of a movement is said to consist in the way the movement of a moving being 'has' itself in the end, a sense captured in the very word ἐντελέχεια by which Aristotle denotes such *Bewegtheit* and which Heidegger, avoiding Latinate forms, translates literally as '*Sich-im-Ende-Haben*,' 'having-itself-in-the-end.'<sup>47</sup> The being of movement is thereby identified with its end, but not so as to suppress the significance of the movement itself. ἐντελέχεια is intended here to denote the condition of the thing that stands at the accomplishment of movement, that which has become what it is. As such, it should be understood in the light of the example of sitting and standing from Met.θ.3 mentioned above; the end is the condition that arises by virtue of the movement and is no more isolated from that movement than the present is from the past.<sup>48</sup> But what of the sense of ἐντελέχεια and ἐνέργεια associated with movement, that is, the ἐνέργεια of δύναμις qua δύναμις [201b4]? One of the most important and most challenging aspects of Heidegger's interpretation is the way these various usages of the terms ἐντελέχεια and ἐνέργεια are brought

together. Whereas the stasis of the end as ἐνέργεια is often contrasted to the dynamic character of movement as the ἐνέργεια of δύναμις, Heidegger highlights the common thread in these disparate senses by way of an interpretation that could be said to comprise two principal features. First, it remains insensible to the distinction between state and process, which is appropriate only to the level at which movement is contrasted to rest, but is inapt if applied to the level of *Bewegtheit* as the common condition of that which is or can be in movement. In this way, it remains faithful to Aristotle's declared intention to articulate not merely the phenomenon of a thing in movement, but rather movement itself [*Physics* III.1-2, especially 200b12].<sup>49</sup> Second, the determination ἐντελέχεια that is ostensibly devoid of all potentiality and movement insofar as it represents the accomplishment of change is itself given what might be called a dynamic sense by virtue of the component ἔχειν. Taking this in its verbal sense lends ἐντελέχεια a appropriative moment (hence Heidegger's translation: *Sich-im-Ende-Haben*, having-itself-in-the-end).

In asking after *Bewegtheit* in this sense, Heidegger aims to articulate the being of a κινούμενον, the line of enquiry closed off by the usual perspective of questioning κατὰ κίνησιν. Following Aristotle's lead, he takes the example of making something. When we look at someone making something, we see movements. But these are not simply the movements of the artisan:

*sondern er [Aristoteles] denkt bei der Entstehung des Tisches eben die Bewegung dieses Entstehenden selbst und als eines solchen. κίνησις ist μεταβολή, das Umschlagen von*



etwas zu etwas dergestalt, daß im Umschlagen dieses selbst in einem mit dem Umschlagenden zum Ausschlag, d.h. in den Vorscheinkommt. [VWB-WM 283:256-257]

Rather, in the generation of the table, he [Aristotle] is thinking precisely of the movement of *this generation itself and as such*. κίνησις is μεταβολή, the change of something into something, such that in the change the very act of change itself breaks out into the open, i.e. comes into appearance along with the changing thing.

This is not change as the process of transition between pre-determined states. What Heidegger means by the "very act of change" is change as such; that is, change understood as the manifestation of the play between activity and passivity, appropriation and loss, by which he characterized μεταβολή in connection with the essence of *dunamis*. Indeed, in a development of the interpretation set out in the lectures on Met.θ.1-3, Heidegger presents δύναμις here in terms of appropriation [*Eignung*]. Accordingly, the "very act of change," μεταβολή, is described as an emerging appropriation. Given that the being of κίνησις lies in its end (as described above), Heidegger can give the following translation of Aristotle's definition of κίνησις in *Physics* III.

*Das Sich-im-Ende-Haben des Geeigneten als eines Geigneten (d.h. in seiner Eignung) ist offenkundig (das Wesen der) Bewegtheit.* [201b4f, VWB-WM 283:257]

The having-itself-in-the-end of the appropriated as appropriated (i.e. in its appropriation) is clearly (the being of) being-moved.

This extraordinary, and extraordinarily powerful, interpretation merits lengthy consideration. However, we can do no more here than take stock of the fact that it confirms what we have already said about the relation between ἐνέργεια and ἐντελέχεια, κίνησις and the

essence of δύναμις. Notably, the first parenthesis preserves the ambiguity between state and process necessary to a genuinely fundamental determination; the having-itself-in-the-end, even where it designates what might be called the 'perfect condition' of 'having become' and therefore the gathering of the movement in the end, nonetheless remains *appropriation*, having as a movement or activity. But if this can be said of the end of a movement that has the form of a process, it is all the more applicable to that form of movement which itself goes by the name of ἐνέργεια. It too is a modality of being-moved and is thus also determined ontologically as having-itself-in-the-end of the appropriated as appropriated, i.e. in its appropriation. In short, as a form of movement in which the very act of change is no less present than in the manufacture of a table, the existence of ἐνέργεια as an activity repeats the μεταβολή that lies at the essence of δύναμις. Seeing, playing the flute, living well and, we might add, εὐπράξια, are forms of movement in which the constitutive relation to the end, an end which is in no way extrinsic to the movement, is conceived in terms of having, appropriation.



## Conclusion

### THE ACT OF APPROPRIATION

The problem we set ourselves was to establish whether Heidegger's critical assimilation of Aristotelian practical philosophy comprised a means of understanding πράξις otherwise than as a superficial modification of ποίησις. This meant finding an alternative to the representational form characteristic of the relation to an external end and to the assumption of the work as paradigmatic for the understanding of being in general, and of Dasein in particular. Above all, we said, ποίησις and πράξις must be distinguished by more than the placement of their respective ends. To do this, however, required an understanding of the form of movement specific to πράξις as a designation of human existence. Heidegger's analysis of δύναμις paved the way for such an understanding by providing an ontological interpretation of movement, that is, an interpretation of movement as the being of beings. The accompanying determination of ἐνέργεια was thereby seen to denote the *Bewegtheit* of Dasein, not in contrast to the existence of δύναμις, but as the form of movement specific to that existence.

When looking at the connection between transcendence and πράξις, we found that the unity of νοῦς and ὄρεξις constitutive of human being as an ἀρχή of activity is accomplished via ἔξις. As such, and in the

light of Heidegger's interpretation of transcendence and the ἀγαθόν, we suggested that ἔξις may be understood as a relation to ground. In addition to designating both the dispositional relation to ethical virtue and the intellectual dispositions by which truth is secured, this term simply means 'having,' which Aristotle characterizes as "something like an action or a movement".<sup>1</sup> It is this action or movement that lies at the heart of the account. Changing perspective, we suggested in Chapter Three that the hermeneutics of facticity, as an account of the form of movement specific to the existence of Dasein, called for a re-interpretation of ἐνέργεια. The determination of δύναμις in terms of having and above all the radical interpretation offered of this with regard to the essence of δύναμις, the corresponding reading of ἐνέργεια as the being of movement and finally the account of movement itself in terms of appropriation provide a remarkable way of bringing together the treatment of movement and the theme of having as it occurs in connection with transcendence: the fundamental movement characteristic of the existence of Dasein is itself to be understood in terms of appropriation and having, understood, as we have seen, not as one's having of something, but as a movement of appropriation akin to the sense of μεταβολή at the essence of δύναμις. Moreover, the essence of δύναμις as a movement of finite appropriation is mirrored in its actual existence as δύναμιν ἔχειν, having potential. Insofar as Dasein exists as potentiality for being, it is therefore determined by this 'action or movement' of appropriation. But what of its end?



Because potentiality is essentially related to its successful accomplishment, the relation to its end implicit in its actual existence is a relation not to an extant thing, but to a manner of existence. In a similar fashion, the final end of activity, εὐδαιμονία or εὐπραξία, itself denotes a manner of existence defined in terms of the good. However, the position is complicated in Heidegger's case by his translation of Aristotle's lexicon into the ontological register, as a result of which πράξις denotes the being of Dasein as such and is not, or at least not primarily, a possible form of activity amongst others.<sup>2</sup> What, then, can εὐπραξία mean? The pursuit of or flight from a particular end or manner of existence becomes the pursuit of or flight from existence itself; existing well, for Heidegger, is implicit in the appropriative moment of potentiality for being. Existing as potentiality for being, Dasein is characterized by the *Bewegtheit* of finite appropriation; it exists as an activity or movement that is an end in itself, constantly engaged in an appropriative relation with its own existence as potentiality for being and existing as the activity or movement of that appropriation. As such, it is πράξις, an activity that is an end in itself.

In this way, and in accordance with Heidegger's declared intention, we can say that the account of πράξις as an activity or movement of finite appropriation bestows coherence upon the structure of activity in general, insofar as it alleviates the naivety that Heidegger detected at the heart of Greek philosophy: the being of Dasein is distinguished from that of the work, and the instrumental activity in

which Dasein is for the most part engaged has been more adequately delimited.



## NOTES

### Introduction

1. M Heidegger, *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (1927), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1975 (hereafter GA24) p.57; *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. A Hofstadter, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1982, p.111.
2. The remark is made in 'Notre Compagne Clandestine,' in *Textes pour Emmanuel Levinas*, ed. F Laruelle, Paris, Jean-Michel Place, 1980, pp.79-87; 'Our Clandestine Companion,' trans. D Allison, in *Face to Face with Levinas*, ed. R Cohen, Albany, SUNY Press, 1986.
3. Heidegger refers to *quidditas, quod quid erat esse, definitio, forma* and *natura*, cf. GA24 121:86, 148:105.
4. Cf. GA24 95 and M Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (1927), first appeared in the *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* Vol. VIII. All references in this thesis are to the 16th edition, Tübingen, Niemeyer, 1986 (hereafter SZ); *Being and Time*, trans. J Macquarrie & E Robinson, Oxford, Blackwell, 1980, 96.
5. GA24 149:106. Beginning with the concept of μορφή, he notes that forming and shaping lend a being a particular look [εἶδος, ἰδέα], and it is by reading off such a look that we come to know what a thing is. In the case of encountering a being in perception, it seems its look is founded on its form, that μορφή is the ground of εἶδος. However, Heidegger notes that in Greek ontology the founding connection is precisely the reverse. Accordingly, he concludes that the terms must have been understood with regard not to perception, but to production. For the thing is produced by shaping it in conformity with the εἶδος or ἰδέα of the thing that is anticipated in advance. Accordingly the εἶδος encapsulates what the thing already was prior to its being actualized [GA24 150-151:107]. Moreover, insofar as it presents the complete being, the εἶδος opens the possibility of definition ὀρισμός and determines the γένος of the thing. All these characteristics of *essentia* arise as determinations of what is produced from the perspective of producer. The work itself, on the other hand, is released from the process of production and stands independently, a characteristic encapsulated in the Greek term ὑποκείμενον, denoting that which lies-before. But that which lies-before is primarily what one uses in everyday activity and so the experience of production extends its influence still further; "Das verfügbare Hab und Gut, die Habe, ist das Seiende schlechthin, griechisch οὐσία: Disposable possessions and goods, property, are beings; they are quite simply that which is, the Greek οὐσία" [GA24 153:108]. (Note that 'disposable' here denotes 'that which is at our disposal.' As such, it is akin to the term 'ready-to-hand' [zuhanden] used in *Being and Time*.) The meaning of *essentia* therefore carries over into the kind of being associated with the work itself. Yet, writes Heidegger, *essentia* is only the literal translation of οὐσία. In addition, the verb εἶναι, *esse, existere*, must also be interpreted by way of οὐσία, and thereby via the experience of production [GA 24



153:1091; existing, Heidegger maintains, is in the traditional sense simply being present-at-hand. In short, production is the horizon within which both essence and existence acquire their meaning.

6. GA24 154:109.  $\theta\epsilon\omega\pi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  is a form of perception that looks towards what is to be produced and orients itself accordingly. By virtue of the fact that it apprehends the  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\omicron\varsigma$ , which comprises all the 'real' determinations of a being,  $\theta\epsilon\omega\pi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  is understood to grasp the being as it really is.

7. Heidegger later distinguished between making and producing, meaning by the former the experience outlined here and reserving that latter term for the sense of production [ $\pi\omicron\acute{\iota}\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ] at which he arrived later and which is elaborated in texts such as 'Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes' (1935-36) in *Holzwege*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1977 (hereafter HW) pp.1-74, tr. 'The Origin of the Work of Art' in 'Poetry Language and Thought,' trans. A Hofstadter, New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London, Harper Colophon, 1975, pp.17-87; 'Vom Wesen und Begriff der  $\Phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$  Aristoteles Physik B, 1' (1939) (hereafter VWB) in *Wegmarken*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1976 (hereafter WM) pp.239-301, 'On the Being and Conception of  $\Phi\Upsilon\Xi\Lambda\varsigma$  in Aristotle's *Physics* B 1,' in *Man and World* 9, Aug. 1976, pp.219-270 (page references will be indicated by the abbreviation VWB-WM, followed by the references to WM and to *Man and World* respectively). However, during the period with which this thesis is primarily concerned (i.e. up to 1933), no such distinction was made. Nonetheless, the reader should bear in mind that there is no intrinsic contradiction between Heidegger's withdrawal of metaphysics from the experience of making and the role of  $\pi\omicron\acute{\iota}\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$  in his later writings.

8. Cf. also "Man muß sich darüber klar werden, was das bedeutet, daß der Mensch zu den Werken, die er herstellt, ein Verhältnis hat: one must be clear what it means that man has a relation to the works he has produced," M Heidegger, *Aristoteles Metaphysik  $\Theta$  1-3: Von Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Kraft* (1931) [Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann [1990] (hereafter GA33) p.137. Cf. also J Taminiaux 'Ποίησις et Πρᾶξις dans l'articulation de l'ontologie fondamentale' (hereafter AOF) in *Heidegger et l'idée de la phénoménologie*, ed. F Volpi, [Dordrecht: Kluwer Publishers: 1988], pp.107-125 cf. esp. p.116. This article is revisited and expanded in Taminiaux, *Lectures de l'ontologie fondamentale: Essais sur Heidegger*, Grenoble, Jérôme Millon, 1989, (hereafter LOF) pp.149-189, cf. esp. p.162. Cf. LOF 149-162 for a broader account of many of the themes discussed so far.

9. Tom Sheehan also deserves special mention for his translation of VWB and for several essays that brought the importance of Aristotle's influence on Heidegger to the attention of the English-speaking world at a time when it was still not fully recognized. Cf. 'Heidegger, Aristotle and Phenomenology,' *Philosophy Today* Vol.XIX No.2/4 Summer 1975 pp.87-94, 'On Movement and the History of Ontology,' *The Monist* Vol.64 No.4 October 1981, pp.534-542.

10. Volpi, *Heidegger e Aristotele* (1984) (hereafter HA), 'Dasein comme praxis: L'assimilation et la radicalisation heideggerienne de la philosophie pratique d'Aristote' in *Heidegger et l'idée de la*



*phénoménologie*, pp.1-42; a translation of this paper has appeared as 'Dasein as praxis: the Heideggerian assimilation and radicalisation of the practical philosophy of Aristotle' in *Martin Heidegger: Critical Assessments Vol.II*, ed. C Macann, London, Routledge, 1992, pp.90-129 (hereafter DAP), 'L'esistenza come praxis. Le radici aristoteliche della terminologia di «Essere e Tempo»' (hereafter ECP) in *Filosofia '91*, ed. G Vattimo pp.215-252.

11. For example, Volpi relates the following pairs of terms: Dasein-πρᾶξις, *Zuhandenheit*-ποίησις, *Vorhandenheit*-θεωρία [HA 93, DAP 103-105, ECP 224-229], *Sorge*-ᾄρεξις [DAP 108], *Gewissen*-φρόνησις [DAP 118-119, ECP 246-247], *Entschlossenheit*-προαίρεσις [DAP 119-120, ECP 247-248].

12. Regarding the problems that can arise from insisting on a particular 'translation' cf. R Bernasconi, 'Heidegger's Destruction of Phronesis' (hereafter HDP) in *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* (1989) Vol.XXVIII, Supplement pp.127-147 (hereafter SJP), cf. esp. p.130, p.144 n.8.

13. HA 75-80, 90-92; pp.67-68 below.

14. Of course, this is not intended to be an exhaustive critique of their writing on this question. There is further reference to the interpretations of Bernasconi and Nicolaci in Ch.1.V, and to those of Bernasconi, Nicolaci and Taminiaux in Ch.3.II.

15. Cf. pp.92-93, 131-133, 205-206.

16. The profoundly problematic nature of the relation between philosophy and politics in Heidegger, and indeed elsewhere, has been shown by Phillippe Lacoue-Labarthe, cf. especially 'La transcendance finie/ε dans la politique' in *Typographies II*, Paris, Galilée, 1986, pp.135-173; *Typography, Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics* ed. C Fynsk, London & Cambridge Massachusetts, Harvard U P, 1989, and *La fiction du politique*, Paris Christian Bourgois 1987, *Heidegger Art and Politics*, trans. C Turner, Oxford, Blackwell, 1990.

17. R Bernasconi, 'The Fate of the Distinction Between Praxis and Poiesis' (hereafter FDP) in *Heidegger Studies Vol.2* pp.111-139.

18. G Nicolaci, 'La Lettura heideggeriana della praxis' in *Ermeneutica e Filosofia*, ed. N De Domenico & A Escher di Stefano, Marsilio, Venice, 1990, (hereafter LHP).

19. M Heidegger, *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung* (1921/22) (hereafter GA61), and 'Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation),' in the *Dilthey Jahrbuch* 6 1989 (hereafter PIA) pp.235-274.

20. Volpi remarks on Heidegger's identification of πρᾶξις with the kinetic character of Dasein's existence. Cf. HA 96 n.30.

21. On Bernasconi's reading, there could be no such idea, at least not within metaphysics. For insofar as the dominance of making is concomitant with the origin of metaphysics, to overthrow that dominance must be understood as equivalent to overcoming metaphysics.



## Chapter One

1. Except where indicated, the passages from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* presented in English are taken from the translation by J A K Thomson, London, Penguin, 1976.
2. T Engberg-Pedersen, *Aristotle's Theory of Moral Insight* (1983) Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983, (hereafter ATM) Chapter 1.
3. It may be objected that the use of this terminology imposes an anachronistic set of Kantian concerns on Aristotle. In fact, the notion of a condition of possibility - though not a Kantian transcendental condition - follows simply from the theory of final causality, insofar as the final cause is that 'for the sake of which' any specific act is said to have been undertaken and is therefore that without which it would not have occurred.
4. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. W D Ross, Oxford, Clarendon, 1908.
5. It may come as no surprise to learn that Heidegger saw in this passage an implicit recognition of the ontological difference.
6. This relation is also variously termed 'focal meaning' by G E L Owen ('Logic and Metaphysics in Some Earlier Works of Aristotle' in *Articles on Aristotle Vol 3: Metaphysics*, ed. J Barnes, M Schofield, R Sorabji, London, Duckworth, 1979, hereafter AE, pp.13-32) and paronymy by G Patzig, ('Theology and Ontology in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*' in *Articles on Aristotle Vol 3: Metaphysics* AE 33-49).
7. In view of the fact that the translation of οὐσία as 'substance' is frequently misleading, I shall, as indeed in the case of many other terms, retain the Greek.
8. For Aristotle's understanding of priority, cf. 1018b8ff.
9. The basic theme is i) matter, ii) form, iii) the compound of matter and form. For a set of variations, cf. 1017b10f, 1042a24f and 1069a30f.
10. W Jaeger, *Aristoteles: Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*, Berlin, Weidmann, 1923; tr. *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of his Development*, trans. R Robinson, Oxford, Clarendon, 1948.
11. Patzig argues that Aristotle had sought "a philosophical discipline that is both a first and a general philosophy, and a substance that is so superior to all other substances that it can at the same time be called in a certain sense substance in general." If we are to follow Aristotle, he writes, we should not oppose the two definitions of first philosophy to one another, but rather appreciate that "these two definitions essentially belong together and that only their conjunction adequately characterises Aristotle's 'first philosophy.'" Indeed, first philosophy "is theology of so special a kind that it is *as such and at the same time* ontology." Even if we accept the πρὸς ἕν relation may be adequate to explain the universality of theology, Patzig's interpretation is still flawed on his own terms because he cannot accommodate Books Γ, Η and Θ. He brings ontology and theology together by the πρὸς ἕν structure, but



only in certain books: thus, the conflict is levelled out in one context only to be readmitted in another. Cf. Patzig, 'Theology and Ontology in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*' cited above (n.5).

12. P Aubenque, *Le problème de l'être chez Aristote*, Paris, Press Universitaires de France, 1962, (hereafter PEA). Aubenque's study is perhaps the most comprehensive and stimulating of the modern commentaries and has already become a classic of its kind.

13. P Merlan takes Met.E.1:1026a30-31 to be the decisive moment, cf. *From Platonism to Neo-platonism*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1975, pp.168-170. In Book Γ, therefore, 'universal' does not indicate an abstract generality, but rather the presence in all things of the primary substance and first philosophy is theology in a strong sense. J Owens, too, proposed that ontology simply is theology, since the system of πρὸς ἓν relations shows the nature of all things to be derived from the primary substance, which is therefore the cause of all things. Cf. *The Doctrine of Being in Aristotelian Metaphysics* (1951), Wetter, Universa, 1963, pp.160-175. This thesis is similar to that of Merlan's insofar as the universality of first philosophy is seen to depend on the highest form of substance whose very priority might have been thought to destroy the basis for such a claim. But in place of the rather crude assertion that divine being is present in all things, the onus is shifted to the influence of the highest substance on all beings.

14. Similarly, having discussed the πρὸς ἓν relation earlier, he asks: "*Cette solution en est-elle une dans le cas de L'être? N'est-elle pas plutôt le problème même hypostasie?*: Is this solution a solution in the case of being? Is it not rather a crystallization of the problem?" [PEA 192].

15. It should be pointed out at this stage that the association of being as such with οὐσία may have both basis and significance. Later, I shall discuss Heidegger's reading of this issue, in which a close association does emerge [pp.37-39]. However, it is always tempered by the fact that Heidegger resists any straightforward identification of οὐσία with its categorial signification.

In spite of the plausibility of Aubenque's reading, it is by no means common amongst commentators on Aristotle. Cf. L Lugarini, *Aristotele e l'idea della filosofia*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1972, pp.246-248. Lugarini accepts the application to the problem of being of the πρὸς ἓν relation drawn from the example of health. However, he does not 'overlook' the discrepancy between the two cases (to which Aubenque draws attention), so much as emphatically deny any such difference: "*La specificità del suo fondare - del suo esser mia φύσις, mia ἀρχή - dipende dal fatto che pure la salute è uno dei modi del 'salutare', preso come tale e in generale, ovvero è uno dei suoi molteplici sensi; non è, invece, l'esser-salutare in quanto tale: The specificity of its foundation - of its being my φύσις, my ἀρχή - depends on the fact that health is also a modality of 'healthy,' taken as such and in general, i.e., it is one of its many senses; this is not the case with being healthy in general"* p.247. In putting forward this view, Lugarini is laudably anxious to avoid any suggestion that the unifying term is a generic term for the series in



question. Yet to this end, he begins from the view that the primary sense of being is itself one of the categories and then proceeds to understand the model, namely, health on the basis of that which it was intended to inform. This seems somewhat unnecessary, inasmuch as the notion of universality which the πρὸς ἕν relation is to introduce does not rely on encompassing each element within a single genus.

16. GA33 §1. We shall examine Heidegger's reading of Met.θ.1 in Chapter Four, Section I.

17. Aubenque draws textual support for this reading from Aristotle's declaration that the categories apply as much to non-being as to being: cf. 1089a16 and 1051a34.

18. "Wie geht das zusammen? Die Antwort fehlt. Und wir bedenken fortan: Die Frage nach dem Wesen der Kategorien führt ins Dunkel: How does this work? There is no answer. And from now on we reflect: the question of the essence of the categories leads into darkness" [GA33 71].

19. Heidegger's most extended reference to οὐσία occurs in *Vom Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit* (1930), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1982, (hereafter GA31) §§7-8. Cf. also *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1978, (hereafter GA26) pp.182-183, tr. *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, trans. M Heim, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1984, p.145; SZ 25:47 & 90:123; VWB-WM 239-301:219-270. In his reading of Aristotle's *Physics* B 1, Heidegger insists that *Seiendheit* [beingness] is "the only adequate translation of οὐσία," and that οὐσία, beingness, is that which distinguishes a being as such. That the same translation was already in place in 1926 is evidenced by Heidegger's 1926 lecture course *Die Grundbegriffe der antiken Philosophie*, p.92. (This course has not yet been published and I am indebted to Franco Volpi for having made a typescript of it available to me. The text is presently being prepared for publication by Franz-Karl Blust and will appear as Volume 22 of the Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann. Hereafter, it will be referred to as GA22, followed by the page number appropriate to the typescript. For an account of the course as a whole, cf. Volpi's monograph 'Heidegger e la storia del pensiero greco: figure e problemi del corso del semestre estivo 1926 sui 'Concetti fondamentali della filosofia antica,' in *Itinerari* n.1-2, 1986. In view of this, we can say that the term *Anwesenheit* denotes the kind of being attributed to *ousia* as beingness and is therefore complementary to the aforementioned translation.

20. Regarding the importance of not allowing the meaning of οὐσία to be reduced to its categorial sense alone, cf. Volpi, 'Heidegger e la storia del pensiero greco,' p.254. Volpi reminds us that οὐσία is understood by Heidegger as a manner of being and not, as it were, as a kind of substance.

21. Aristotle repeats the same point in Book II: "[...] the branch of philosophy on which we are at present engaged is not, like the others, theoretical in its aim - because we are not studying to know what goodness is, but in order to become good, since otherwise it would be useless" [1103b26f - translation modified]. The tension



which arises as a result of the commitment of what is formally a theoretical treatise to a deliberately non-theoretical end places the text itself under considerable stress. As we have noted above (pp.13-14), in Nicolaci's view, it opens an entirely unexpected space within which new possibilities of reading the text present themselves, LHP 247-250. I shall return to this excellent study below, pp.61-64, 126-127.

22. With regard to the distinction between analogy of proportion, intended here, and analogy of attribution, a scholastic usage corresponding to the  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  relation as described here, cf. GA33 46-47, GA22 87, R A Gauthier & J Y Jolif, *L'Ethique a Nicomaque, traduction et commentaire* Tome II premiere partie, Louvain, Publications Universitaires de Louvain: 1959 - & - Paris, editions Beatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1959, (hereafter ENT) pp.46-47.

23. J Burnet, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, London, Methuen, 1900, p.29.

24. "*Si le bien nous apparaît sous différents aspects, qui ne relèvent pas d'une science commune, c'est qu'il se dit dans les différentes significations de l'être; et si le Bien en tant que bien n'est pas un simple mot et presente une unité relative de signification, il le doit à l'égalité des rapports que ses différentes significations entretiennent avec chacune des catégories de l'être: If the good appears to us in different guises that cannot be treated by a single science, it is because it is articulated in the different significations of being. And if the Good qua good is not merely a word, but actually presents a relative unity of meaning, this is due to the fact that its different significations bear an equivalent relation to each of the categories of being*" PEA 203.

25. Cf. Gauthier & Jolif ENT pp.45-47. In their view, Aristotle's apparent preference for the analogical argument in the *Nicomachean Ethics* represents an over enthusiastic rejection of the Platonic theory (for it is the furthest from a theory of the ideal Good), and Aristotle's more considered and therefore definitive approach is to be found in *Metaphysics*, where the  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  relation is introduced to account for the homonymy of being.

26. Cf. 1096a5-6 & 1096b29. Presenting the case for the  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  relation, Gauthier and Jolif write: "*le bien unique, qui est le principe et la fin de tous les autres, c'est le bien essentiel; par exemple, pour l'homme, c'est l'intellect qui est l'essence de l'homme et qui est son bien: the single good that is the beginning and end of all the others, is the essential good; e.g. for man, the intellect is the essence of man and his good*" [ENT 45].

27. Cf. the problem of priority in Section II.

28. S R L Clark, *Aristotle's Man, Speculations on Aristotelian Anthropology*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1975.

29. T Nagel, 'Aristotle on *Eudaimonia*' in *Articles on Aristotle's Ethics*, ed. A O Rorty, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1980.

30. D Achtenberg, 'The Role of the Ergon Argument in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*' in *Ancient Philosophy* 9 (1) Spr. 1989 pp.37-47.



The main issue in each of these alternatives is to what degree the term ἔργον is associated strictly with productive activity and to what extent it is allowed a broader signification. This will plainly have a significant bearing on the conception of human activity associated with the final end or practicable good. As the rest of this chapter will make clear, my own view is that to rely too heavily on the format of productive activity in understanding human activity in this sense leads to irresolvable contradictions. Note also that the entire passage under discussion here recalls Plato's *Republic*, 352d-353b.

31. The first group of activities are crafts, whereas the second clearly do not issue in any independent result over and above their activity. Whilst they could hardly be called πράξεις, they could certainly be identified as ἐνεργεῖαι [Met.θ.6]. It is a matter of debate to what extent the ποίησις/πρᾶξις distinction and the χίνησις/ἐνέργεια distinction may be considered parallel to one another. The issue is to the fore of the following passages in the text. However, at this point I shall do no more than recognize a marked proximity between the two sets of terms. In any case, the two examples are by no means equivalent to one another.

32. Cf. 1097b32f and Gauthier & Jolif, ENT 55-56, who emphasise this expression. They read it as indicating that the definitive character of human being lies beyond each regional preoccupation or activity insofar as it lies in the soul. In itself, this is an entirely reasonable interpretation. However, it could only masquerade as a full explanation as long as one refrained from asking what is understood by 'soul.'

33. GA33 196-197, and also Heidegger, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik. Welt - Endlichkeit - Einsamkeit*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1983, (hereafter GA29/30) p.320.

34. Remi Brague, *Aristote et la question du monde*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1988, (hereafter AQM) p.474.

35. I have used Bernasconi's translation of this passage [FDP 116, HDP 1371] since it emphasises the philosophical issues more clearly than the standard published translations. In addition to questions of clarity, however, there is disagreement amongst translators over the sense of an important phrase. Rackhams's translation for the Loeb edition has: "the act of making is not an end in itself" in place of "that which is made is not an end in itself." The disagreement surrounds the interpretation of the Greek τὸ ποιητόν, which in Rackham's view refers here to the process rather than the result. In opting for this alternative, he follows the example set by Burnet, who claims that the phrase τὸ ποιητόν "is used in the same way as τὸ πρακτόν and means the thing *done*, not the thing *made*, the building and not the house" [p.256]. Yet the example of τὸ πρακτόν may be misleading, since in the case of πράξις, the distinction in question here does not arise: τὸ πρακτόν is not identified with the thing done as opposed to the thing made, since the category of artefact is inappropriate to πράξις. Thomson, in his translation for the Penguin edition, takes the opposite view to Burnet and Rackham, identifying τὸ ποιητόν with the result of making. This view is also taken by



Joachim (*The Nicomachean Ethics* ed. D A Rees, Oxford, Clarendon, 1951, p.109), Engberg-Pederson [ATM 29], and of course Bernasconi. Surprisingly, perhaps, Gauthier and Jolif do not refer to the passage. The general reading that I have been developing is favoured by the interpretation of τὸ ποιητόν adopted by Thomson, Engberg-Pederson and Bernasconi, since it immediately disqualifies τὸ ποιητόν from fulfilling the role of final end. Could it be that Burnet and Rackham were influenced in their decision to read the second phrase of the second sentence as: "since the process of making is always relative to some further end" by the wish to preserve the possibility that the relation to the final end may be understood in terms of production? For if it is the process of making that is relative to some further end (in itself a trivial claim), then the further end in question is not necessarily relative. However, the necessity of associating the final end with τὸ πρακτόν does not depend on this passage alone and could be upheld just as successfully were Burnet's reading to be confirmed. Over and above the condition of self-sufficiency and the privilege accorded to θεωρία in Book X, each of the following passages would be sufficient to establish the link between πράξις and the final end; 1098a14, 1098b15, 1098b18-20, 1098b20-22.

36. It is by no means clear that Aristotle's text employs this concept as such and one should be wary of taking its legitimacy for granted.

37. Heidegger's view that the doctrine of the four causes has its source in the experience of making will be considered in Ch.4.II.

38. Aristotle claims that ποίησις and πράξις are "generically" different 1140b3. Yet with the integrity of the distinction itself placed in question, it would be doubly difficult to maintain the credibility of so fundamental a difference. Cf. also Aristotle's definition of *genus*, Met.Δ.28:1024a29-10294b15.

39. Cf. H Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Chicago & London, The University of Chicago Press, 1958, (hereafter HC) pp.153-158 and M Horkheimer, *Zur Kritik der Instrumentellen Vernunft*, Frankfurt am Main, Verlag GmbH, 1967; tr. *Critique of Instrumental Reason*, trans. M J O'Connell and others, New York, Seabury Press, 1974, Part I.

40. A detailed discussion of this interpretation would be premature at this stage: cf. Chapter Four.

41. Cf. LHP 243, 248 and 252.

## Chapter Two

1. Heidegger's interpretation of Aristotle and his phenomenological method are profoundly complementary, each serving to open new ways of reading the other. Sheehan made this point in his essay 'Heidegger, Aristotle and Phenomenology,' but such a reading is given its most comprehensive articulation by Brague [AQM].



2. 'Vom Wesen des Grundes' in WM (hereafter VWG-WM), tr. 'The Essence of Reasons' trans. T Malick, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1969, 155n:81n, 162n:97n, cf. also below, Ch.2.IV. Departing from the Malick's translation, I shall refer to this essay as 'On the Essence of Grounds.'

3. The prominence accorded to the distinction between theory and practice ultimately detracts from G Prauss's engagement with the Question of activity in Heidegger; cf. *Erkennen und Handeln in Heideggers »Sein und Zeit«*, Freiburg/Munich, Karl Alber, 1977.

4. As Bernasconi writes: "Simply to ignore the distinction between *πρᾶξις* and *ποίησις* is to succumb to the metaphysical dominance of *ποίησις*. But to insist on *πρᾶξις* in contradistinction to *ποίησις* is still to remain in the orbit of metaphysics" [FDP 129]. The latter course remains the most common amongst those addressing the question of *πρᾶξις*, including the otherwise markedly astute Taminiaux.

5. The importance of the term *πράγματα* to Heidegger's re-examination of the relation between Dasein and things is further underlined in his 1942-43 lecture course on Parmenides, where he refers to *πράγμα* as "the originally inseparable totality of the relation between things and man," cf. *Parmenides*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1982, (hereafter GA54) p.124 and p.118; *Parmenides* trans. A Schuerer and R Rojecwicz, Bloomington & Indianapolis, Indiana UP, 1992, p.84 and p.80. This description could very well have been applied to the concept of world in *Being and Time* or any of the texts of that period. Cf. *Die Frage nach dem Ding* (1936-36), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1984, pp.53-54, tr. *What is a Thing?* trans. W B Barton Jnr. & V Deutsch, South Bend, Regnery/Gateway, c1967, p.70. Strangely, the later essay 'The Thing' (1950) refers to the word for thing in Old High German, Italian, French, English and Latin, but does not mention the Greek at all.

6. E Husserl, *Ideen* (1913), The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1950, (hereafter ID) pp.32-34, tr. *Ideas*, trans. W R Boyce Gibson, London, Macmillan, 1962, pp.65-66.

7. For our own purposes here, we might prefer to pose the converse question: do specific cases 'lie within' the logical form? In other words, granted the distinction between genus and form, how are we to understand the sense of universality attached the latter?

8. SZ 10-11:30-31, GA24 112:80; Cf. also W McNeill, 'Metaphysics, Fundamental Ontology, Metontology 1925-1935' *Heidegger Studies* Vol.8 1992 pp.63-79.

9. W McNeill 'On the Concreteness of Heidegger's Thinking' in *Philosophy Today* 36(1) Spring 1992 pp.83-94.

10. This would amount to a formal-logical designation of *πρᾶξις* as the ontological structure of Dasein. Volpi touched upon such a possibility in the closing remarks to his book, where he suggests that our epoch is characterized less by the oblivion of being than by the atrophy of the *λόγος* [HA 217]. By this he means that the different forms of *λόγος* Aristotle discusses in NE.VI have been reduced to that which corresponds exclusively to *τέχνη*. Thus, he writes, we should consider the need for a recovery of the *λόγος* of



πρᾶξις. One might object that precisely this has been the aim of the Frankfurt School and of Habermas in particular. However, in the context of Heidegger, it is more appropriate, at least as an initial step, to consider the importance of the λόγος to the form of self-relatedness characteristic of the fundamental movement of Dasein's existence.

11. In fact, Heidegger's strategy of uncovering the unthought *within* source texts renders the designation 'original' unsatisfactory, since on this basis Heidegger's interpretations will be more original than the ostensibly 'original' sources from which they are drawn.

12. Cf. 1096b24f, where Aristotle names utility as the 'good' of relation.

13. Cf. SZ 244(n.iii):288(n.iii), where Heidegger remarks on the longstanding distinction between whole and sum, ὅλον and πᾶν, *totum* and *compositum*.

14. Could there be a trace of initiative in Dasein's relation to a possibility of its own being? This raises the issue of whether there is a residual sense in which Dasein is master over its own foundation, the subject of its own position. Whilst *Being and Time* presses urgently in a different direction, towards the finitude of thrownness, facticity and the receptivity of conscience, the implication of Dasein in its own ground and in the constitution of world cannot be ignored. Indeed, a great part of the fascination exerted by this text stems from its refusal to portray the order of grounding as *simple*. There are of course grave problems in deploying a language of activity in the ontological register - problems, moreover, that arise in the present case precisely from Heidegger's translation of the Aristotelian figure of πρᾶξις and which touch on the central themes of possibility, actualisation and the relation between Dasein and being. Cf. pp.92-94, Ch.4.IV and Conc..

15. But cf. SZ 333:381. When Dasein is immersed in its everyday concerns, it submits *itself* to the possibility of its being for-the-sake-of-which it is working as much as it submits the equipment it handles. Although Dasein is not itself ready-to-hand, the strict dependence of readiness-to-hand on the being of Dasein means that it belongs to Dasein in some way: worldhood, like possibility, is an existentielle. This reflects a constant tension in Heidegger's characterization of Dasein as being-in-the-world between preserving its ontological specificity and denying its separation from the world.

16. The same impression of an essentially generic form of relation based on utility and instrumentality is given by Heidegger's repeated use of the expression 'goes back' [*geht ... zurück*] to describe the relation of the totality of involvements with the being of Dasein. Cf. "*Die Bewandtnisganzheit selbst aber geht letztlich auf ein Wozu zurück, bei dem es keine Bewandnis mehr hat*: But the totality of involvements itself goes back ultimately to a 'towards-which' in which there is no further involvement" [SZ 84:116]. "*Solches, und was ihm ferner zugrunde liegt, wie das Dazu, als wobei es die Bewandtnis hat, das Worum-willen, darauf letztlich alles Wozu zurückgeht ...*: Anything of this sort, and anything else that is basic for it, such



as the 'towards-this' as that in which there is an involvement, or such as the 'for-the-sake-of-which' to which every 'towards-which' ultimately goes back ..." [SZ 86:118-119]. Does the totality 'go back' to the for-the-sake-of-which in the same way as each towards-which 'goes back' to the next? Heidegger writes that he has "*Der angezeigte Zusammenhang, der von der Struktur der Bewandtnis zum Sein des Daseins selbst führt* als dem eigentlichen und einzigen Worum-willen: indicated the interconnection by which the structure of an involvement leads to Dasein's very being as the sole authentic 'for-the-sake-of-which'" [SZ 84:117]. One is tempted to say that whilst he may have indicated it, he has done little to explain it.

17. Indeed, Macquarrie and Robinson have consistently translated 'zu' as 'towards' wherever it has appeared, either independently or in conjunction with another preposition.

18. Indeed, by virtue of its circumscriptive sense, 'um' is particularly suited to expressions concerned with horizontality. Does the term's ambiguity between unidirectional and circumscriptive senses plaster over the cracks between the phenomenological notion of horizon and the Aristotelian sense of purposefulness?

19. E.g. "*Das wesenhafte Möglichsein des Daseins betrifft die charakterisierten Weisen des Besorgnes der »Welt«, der Fürsorge für die anderen und in all dem und immer schon das Seinkönnen zu ihm selbst, umwillen seiner: The Being-possible which is essential for Dasein, pertains to the ways of its solicitude for Others and of its concern with the 'world', as we have characterized them; and in all these, and always, it pertains to Dasein's potentiality-for-Being towards itself, for the sake of itself*" [SZ 143:183 My emphasis].

20. In the remainder of this note, Heidegger goes on to say that the account of the instrumental world and the environment is nonetheless an invaluable preliminary to a further consideration of the transcendental problem of world. Moreover, he adds that if SZ §§15-18 seemed to have passed over the theme of nature, there were good reasons for this. Nature is not something that we can encounter *within* the world or towards which we comport ourselves. Yet insofar as being in the midst of nature is a mode of Dasein's thrownness, it can only be approached adequately via an account of Dasein's being as care, such as SZ §§15-18 are intended to prepare. Cf. also VWG-WM 160(n.59):97(n.59). Heidegger took up the question of nature again in 1929/30 lectures, cf. especially GA29/30 262-263. Cf. J P Fell, 'The familiar and the Strange: on the Limits of Praxis in the Early Heidegger,' in SJP 23-41. We refer to this theme in Ch.3.II below.

21. By way of a prefatory remark, however, Heidegger's treatment of the transcendental problem of world, and of the place of  $\pi\rho\alpha\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  within this problematic, should be approached in the context of his concern to address the contending legacies of Aristotle and Kant. Indeed, in each of the principal accounts of transcendence and world dating from the late 1920s and early 1930s, it is above all to Kant that Heidegger refers, whereas Aristotle is barely mentioned [GA26 §11 and 'On the Essence of Grounds' Part II.]. Yet if Aristotle's presence in these analyses seems slight, his contribution is nonetheless decisive. For whilst remaining indebted to Kant's



transcendental philosophy, Heidegger seems to have regarded Kant's thought as marred by what one might regard as its residual Platonism - a condition thrown into relief by the deeply Aristotelian hue of Heidegger's own philosophical formation. We should not be surprised, therefore, if we discover the Kantian element of Heidegger's account of transcendence to be tempered and qualified his appropriation of Aristotle. In the present instance, this may be likened to an implicit repetition on Heidegger's part of the Aristotelian critique of Plato's theory of ideas and, in particular, of the inscription of grounds within the order of discourse (or activity) whose basis they provide. As we shall see, the confluence of Aristotelian and Kantian currents of thought contributes to a subtle and at times ambiguous treatment of the problem of, transcendence and world.

22. "*Der transzendente Weltbegriff ist offenbar auf die übrigen in eigener Weise bezogen. Andererseits erschöpfte keiner der unter 1 bis 3 genannten Begriffe, auch nicht ihre Summe, den Begriff »Welt« als Konstitutivum der Transzendenz:* The transcendental concept of world is evidently related, in its ownway, to the other conceptions. On the other hand, none of the concepts mentioned, from 1 to 3, nor even their sum, exhausts the concept 'world' as a constituent of transcendence" [GA26 180:232]. The same connection had already been made in *Being and Time*, but only in §69, much later than the initial analyses.

23. Cf. Walter Brogan's excellent reply to Bernasconi's paper, SJP 149-153.

24. *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (1935), Tübingen, Max Niemeyer, 1983] (hereafter EM); tr. *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. R Mannheim, New York, Anchor Books, 1961, pp.161-162:128.

25. EM 161-162:128, GA54 §6 especially 131-147. Cf. also W McNeill, 'Porosity: Violence and the Question of Politics in Heidegger's *Introduction to Metaphysics*, *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 14(2)-15(1), 1991, pp.183-212.

26.  $\text{No}\ddot{\upsilon}\varsigma$  is understood here in its general sense as rational faculty; cf. 1139a18-20, where it is presented alongside  $\alpha\dot{\iota}\sigma\theta\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$  and  $\delta\omicron\rho\epsilon\acute{\xi}\iota\varsigma$  as constitutive elements of the soul. This sense of  $\text{vo}\ddot{\upsilon}\varsigma$  should be contrasted with the specific sense it is given as one of the five intellectual virtues [1139b15-17 and 1139b31-1141a9]. Cf. H Weiss: "*Die Orexis für sich allein besteht überhaupt nicht, sondern ist nur in Einheit mit dem Logos bzw. dem Nous. Diese Einheit von Orexis und Nous ist der Mensch selbst als Arche:  $\delta\omicron\rho\epsilon\acute{\xi}\iota\varsigma$  never exists by itself, but only ever in unity with  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ , i.e. with  $\text{vo}\ddot{\upsilon}\varsigma$ . This unity of  $\delta\omicron\rho\epsilon\acute{\xi}\iota\varsigma$  and  $\text{vo}\ddot{\upsilon}\varsigma$  is man himself as  $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\acute{\eta}$ ," *Kausalität und Zufall in der Philosophie des Aristoteles*, Basel, Verlag Haus zum Falken, 1942, pp.116-117.*

27. The gesture of drawing differentiated terms back to a common source is not without precedent in Heidegger. In particular, Volpi notes the way each of the couples *Befindlichkeit-Verstehen* and *Geworfenheit-Entwurf* are drawn back to the common ground of *Sorge*, which Volpi regards as Heidegger's ontological interpretation of  $\delta\epsilon\acute{\xi}\iota\varsigma$ . There is good evidence for such a reading, not least the account of *Sorge* given in *Prologomena zur Geschichte des*



Zeitsbegriffs (1925), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1988, (hereafter GA20); tr. *The History of the Concept of Time*, trans. T Kisiel, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1985, where its characterization in terms of *Hang* [urge] and *Drang* [propensity] echoes Aristotle's description of ὄρεξις as φυγή [flight] and δίοξις [pursuit]. Cf. 1139a22f, GA20 295-297, Volpi ECP 244-246 and DAP 107-114.

28. The notion of ἀρχή will be subject to this radicalization no less than those of πρᾶξις and the union of νοῦς and ὄρεξις. Without anticipating the analyses that are to follow in Ch.3, regarding the present topic, it may be helpful to point out that the ἀρχή of a movement is shown to be dynamic in itself. As Heidegger remarks, "*Das ἀρχή-Sein, Ausgangsein für... meint eben nicht gleichsam ein Ding oder ein Eigenschaft, davon etwas ausgeht, sondern das Ausgangsein für etwas anderes ist in sich ein Ausgehen zum Anderen: Being-an-ἀρχή, being-an-opening-for.... does not really mean a thing or a property from which something sets out, as it were. Rather, being-an-opening-for something else is in itself a setting out towards other things*" [GA33 101]. This will be important in considering the extent to which Heidegger's thought of transcendence, as a radicalization of the ἀρχή of πρᾶξις, should or should not be differentiated from πρᾶξις.

29. Elsewhere, Aristotle refers to 'brutishness' [θηριότης] as a "state of moral character" [NE.VII:1145a15-18]. He goes on to say that this condition is commonest amongst the non-Greek races, although some Greek examples are also to be found amongst the diseased, the educationally subnormal and the excessively violent. In other words, those who are to a greater or lesser degree beyond the educative and socialising power of the political community.

30. Strictly speaking, the 'appetitive part of the soul' does not translate an expression with 'ὄρεξις,' but Aristotle clearly places them together [NE.I:1102b30-31].

31. This conception of an intermediate faculty between the rational and desiderative sides of the soul, a development from the Platonic sense of spirit, may remind us of Heidegger's account of conscience in *Being and Time* §57, where "the call of conscience" is said to come "*from me and yet from beyond me*" [SZ 275:320]. Cf. also Conc..

32. Moreover, the two aspects of virtue are by no means isolated from one another, but are at least partially inter-linked in a relation of

### Chapter Three

1. Cf. PIA, GA61 especially Part III; M Heidegger, *Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität)* (1923), Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 1988, (hereafter GA63), especially §§16-26.

2. "*Eine eigentliche Interpretation mit der zentralen Fundierung in der exponierten philosophischen Grundproblematik der Faktizität fehlt*



völlig: an authentic interpretation grounded centrally in the expressed fundamental philosophical problematic of facticity is entirely lacking" [PIA 250].

3. Similarly, Heidegger writes elsewhere that: "*Die Tradition der philosophischen Fragen muß bis zu den Sachquellen zurückverfolgt werden. Die Tradition muß abgebaut werden*: The tradition of philosophical questioning must be traced back to its sources. The tradition must be de-constructed" [GA63 75].

4. Cf. Heidegger's subsequent comment that: "*Diese Aufgabe ist nur zu bewerkstelligen, wenn eine vom Faktizitätsproblem, das heißt einer radikalen phänomenologischen Anthropologie, her orientierte konkrete Interpretation der aristotelischen Philosophie verfügbar gemacht ist*: This task can only be accomplished, if one can engage in a concrete interpretation of Aristotle with regard to the problem of facticity, that is, a radical phenomenological anthropology" [PIA 251]. In addition to Heidegger's well known interest in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, cf. also his description of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* as "*die erste systematische Hermeneutik der Alltäglichkeit des Miteinanderseins*: the first systematic hermeneutic of the everydayness of Being with one another" [SZ 138:178]. Not only did Heidegger regard this work as the first of its kind, but "*die grundsätzliche ontologische Interpretation des Affektiven überhaupt seit Aristoteles kaum einen nennenswerten Schritt vorwärts hat zu tun können*: the basic ontological interpretation of the affective life in general has been able to make scarcely one forward step worthy of mention since Aristotle" [SZ 139:178].

5. Note all except τέχνη includes 'sehen', thereby suggesting the primacy of sight: despite a common belief that Heidegger displaced the primacy of vision in favour of language, there is no doubt that vision played a fundamental role in his conception of disclosure and truth. Cf. for example, *Platon: Sophistes* (1924/5), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1992 (hereafter GA19) §11a.

6. Amongst those that share Heidegger's view that there are but two intellectual virtues, cf. Gauthier and Jolif [ENT 450-452] and Joachim, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, pp.172-173 and pp.190-215. Strong textual support for such a reading is found at 1143b15-17. Of course, each faculty is made up of more than one disposition: the scientific faculty comprises both σοφία and ἐπιστήμη, and the calculative faculty comprises both πράξις and τέχνη. This is decidedly not to say, however, that φρόνησις is the virtue of τέχνη, as the division might suggest. We shall comment on the implications of this matter during the remainder of this section. Cf also Bernasconi, HDP 136 and Brogan's response, SJP 151-153; cf. also Heidegger, *Platon: Sophistes* (1924/5), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1992, (hereafter GA19) §5 and §8c.

7. Φρόνησις, therefore, is not a purely rational disposition [μετὰ λόγον μόνον, 1140b28], but is, in Heidegger's words, "in der πράξις noch mehr als in λόγος: is in πράξις even more than in λόγος" [GA19 139].

8. The description of φρόνησις as a *Gestelltsein* of Dasein seems odd, given that 'stellen' and 'Gestell' later became central to



Heidegger's thinking of τέχνη; cf. 'Die Frage nach der Technik' (1955) and 'Die Kehre' in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Pfulligen, Gunther Neske, 1954, (hereafter VA); 'The Question Concerning Technology' and 'The Turning' in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. W Lovitt, New York, Harper Torchbooks, 1977, (hereafter QCT). However, one might also remember the passage at SZ 333:381 (cited above in Ch.2. n.15) where Dasein is said to submit itself to the possibility of being for-the-sake-of-which it is working at any moment.

9. "*Die φρόνησις macht die Lage des Handelns zugänglich im Festhalten des οὐ ἔνεχα: φρόνησις makes the site of activity accessible by holding fast the οὐ ἔνεχα*" [PIA p.259]. We shall consider Heidegger's vocabulary of holding and having in more detail later [Ch.4.III-IV]. Cf. NE.VI, 1143a35f and 1142a25f. With respect to Heidegger's use of 'seeing' here, cf. his description of the vision constitutive of φρόνησις as an "*Augenblick*," [GA19 163-165 and SZ §68a].

10. "*Die Ausarbeitung der konkreten Lage zielt..., die rechte Entschlossenheit als Durchsichtigkeit der Handlung verfügbar zu machen. Und sofern diese Entschlossenheit in der Tat angeeignet und vollzogen ist, sofern ich also entschlossen bin, ist die Handlung in ihrer äußersten Möglichkeit da: the elaboration of the concrete situation aims to make genuine resoluteness accessible as transparency of the activity. And insofar as this resoluteness is in fact appropriated and accomplished, insofar as I am thereby resolved, the activity is there in its most extreme possibility*" [GA19 150 My emphasis].

11. "The wise man therefore must not only know the conclusions that follow from his first principles, but also have a true conception of those principles themselves" [1141a18]. It is interesting to note that Aristotle says the same thing about φρόνησις [1141b14, 1141b22], although the status of the first principles themselves is different in each case. Aristotle's brief history of σοφία finds its Platonic counterpart at *Apology* 21b-22e. For a comprehensive genealogy of the term σοφία, cf. ENT 481-489.

12. Not for the last time, we are reminded of Heidegger's account in *Being and Time* of how the theoretical attitude, apprehending beings as present-at-hand, arises out of circumspective concern [SZ 73-74:102-104, §69b].

13. Met.Λ.10:1075a13.

14. For Heidegger's interpretation of the ἀεί ὄν, cf. WM 267:244-245.

15. In simple terms, presenting the problem as an opposition between humanist and theocentric anthropologies fails to acknowledge that what is most human may be precisely an ability to transcend our condition via a relation to some form of divinity. Both Christian and Judaic views of human being clearly share such a view, however differently it may be articulated in each case.

16. "*Die σοφία hat den Vorrang in bezug auf das Seiende an ihm selbst, insofern das Seiende, auf das sie geht, griechisch seinsmäßig den Vorrang hat. Das Seiende kommt in den Blick aus dem her, was es an ihm selbst, immer schon ist: Σοφία has priority in relation to the*



being itself, insofar as the *being with which it is concerned has priority with regard to being* for the Greeks. The being comes into view from that which in itself always already is" [GA19 137]. On this basis, Heidegger elicits and apparently endorses several further criteria for the priority of σοφία, of which I shall mention two. 1. φρόνησις consists in the apprehension of the ἀγαθόν πρακτὸν, yet Aristotle declares that the good only appears as such to one who is already good [1144a33]: in short, φρόνησις cannot make us any better than we already are. As Heidegger puts it: "*wir werden dadurch nicht dazu gebracht, sittlich besser zu handeln, sofern wir nicht schon gut sind*: we do not thereby come to act better ethically, except insofar as we were already good" [GA19 167]. In this way, the accomplishment of φρόνησις depends upon a certain form of existence. Aristotle goes so far as to question the advantage to be gained from φρόνησις: "but what do we need it for? seeing that it studies that which is noble and good for man, but these are the things that a good man does by nature. Knowing about them does not make us any more capable of doing them, since the virtues are qualities of character" [1143b20f]. First of all, we might remark that Aristotle is conflating the acquisition of φρόνησις with its study. If we recall, in Book I he declared the purpose of the treatise to consist not in learning about being in good, but rather in actually becoming good [1095a5]. To this end, the account Aristotle presents in NE.VI is indeed quite irrelevant. But this passage also raises the issue of the distinction between natural virtue [ἀρετὴ φυσικῆ] and virtue in some stronger sense [ἀρετὴ κυρία] [1144b15f]. Natural virtue inheres in the character traits that could loosely be called ours from birth, whereas virtue in the stronger sense is associated specifically with the cultivation or modification of those traits in later life. φρόνησις marks the transition from the former to the latter, although it cannot be said to 'cause' or bring about that transition for the reasons mentioned. Nonetheless, to dispense with φρόνησις would rob the distinction of sense altogether, which Aristotle would presumably have found disagreeable. In short, φρόνησις cannot make us any better than we already were, but it can cement a changed relation to one's existence as a whole insofar as the φρόνιμος acts *deliberately* in view of the good. As this represents the difference between voluntary and involuntary action [1109b30ff], φρόνησις could therefore be linked to an Aristotelian conception of freedom. Underlining the significance of this twist, Heidegger writes: "*Sofern die φρόνησις hinsichtlich der Möglichkeit ihres rechten Vollzugs darauf angewiesen bleibt, daß sie von einem ἀγαθός vollzogen wird, ist sie selbst nicht eigenständig. Damit ist der Vorrang der ἐνέργεια erschüttert, ob sie sich zwar auf das menschliche Dasein bezieht*: Insofar as the possibility of the correct accomplishment of φρόνησις continues to depend on the fact that it is accomplished by an ἀγαθός, it is itself not independent. The priority of φρόνησις is thereby overturned, even though it is indeed related to human Dasein" [GA19 167]. By contrast, σοφία is said to be independent inasmuch as it deals with the αἰεί ὄν, that is, with what above all else does not proceed from Dasein and therefore is not contingent upon a specific form of its existence. The fact that it is clearly linked to a specific form of activity [θεωρεῖν] is treated as irrelevant here, apparently because the accomplishment of φρόνησις depends upon a certain formation of character and an orientation



towards a certain way of life, whereas the accomplishment of σοφία demands a detachment from precisely those mundane interests that throw our existence into relief. (Such indifference corresponds to the character of the first principles themselves when viewed as such and not in the light of particular pursuits). 2. Heidegger notes that our activity is for the most part episodic, broken up by the demands of the changing situation [1177a21, GA19 174]. Following Aristotle, he contrasts the inconstancy of even the least venturesome of lives with the invariance of contemplation; "*Während das Seiende der πράξις je anders sein kann und jeweils einen Entschluß im Augenblick verlangt, verharrt das reine Betrachten des Immerseienden gleichsam in einem dauernden Jetzt*: Whereas the being of πράξις can always be other than it is and in each case requires a resolution in the present moment, the pure observation of the perpetual being persists as though in a lasting now" [GA19 174].

17. One must not forget the intimacy with which the problem of the ἀγαθόν is linked to that of being. Gauthier and Jolif clearly take this view when, with regard to the passage at 1096b34 quoted above, they propose that the "practicable good" be the object of θεωρία no less than of ποίησις or πράξις. As they point out, for Aristotle; "*Ce qui est l'objet aussi bien de la contemplation que de l'action, ce n'est pas le concept, c'est l'être en qui il se réalise*: The object of contemplation, as of action, is not the concept, *it is being, as it is realized*" [ENT 47 My emphasis]. Just as being is not immediately accessible because it is πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον, so the intangibility of the ἀγαθόν itself may be attributed to its intrinsically manifold character. Accordingly, as we have already noted, the ἀγαθόν in an absolute sense is not isolable in a region of its own.

18. Cf. GA24 26-27:19-20, GA26 11-18:9-18, SZ 11-15:32-35, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (1929), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1991, pp.3-9; tr. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. J Churchill, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1962, and Bernasconi, 'The Double Concept of Philosophy' in *Research in Phenomenology* Vol. XVIII 1988, pp.41-57.

19. Although articulated differently, such finitude was already evident in the relation between ontology and theology in Aristotelian philosophy, as readings such as those offered by Heidegger and Aubenque demonstrate. On a different note, it may be objected that a central plank of the thesis I am defending (that Heidegger's radicalization of πράξις challenges the conceptual hegemony of ποίησις and thereby allows for the articulation of πράξις as a determination of Dasein) is at odds with the description we have given here of Heidegger's response to this notion of finitude; if a language appropriate to πράξις were to become available, it would no longer be encountered as a limit and the incorporation of this experience of finitude into the structure and practice of philosophy would become redundant. We shall see, however, that this is not the case and that the two lines of address are, on the contrary, intimately linked [pp.132-135].

20. Cf. Taminiaux's remarks on the way the βίος θεωρητικός engulfs πράξις [LOF 175] and the ensuing reservations over the priority



accorded to σοφία. Cf. also, Brogan's remark that Heidegger's interest in σοφία reflects a desire to preserve a relation between Dasein and something that exceeds its own existence [SJP 152].

21. Cf. GA29/30 Ch.6. The problematic of nature gradually evolved into that of φύσις as it emerges above all in VWB. For a sense of this transformation, cf. EM Ch.1.

22. The only conspicuous discontinuity between σοφία and the question of beings as a whole as it is raised here lies in the absence of any reference to λόγος, which previously structured the sense of totality associated with σοφία.

23. Gauthier and Jolif relate the wide variety of readings given to these lines by various commentators. For their part, they distinguish the following senses that may be attributed to the term νοῦς [ENT 5371]:

*FACULTÉ:* (1) *Intellect*

*FONCTION:* (2) *Intellect spéculatif*

(3) *Intellect pratique*

*QUALITÉ:* (4) *Intelligence des principes*

(5) *Intelligence des valeurs morales concrètes*

The qualities represent the ἕξεις [qualités ou états habituelles] of the functions. Most of the ancient commentators and a number of the moderns (of which Trendelenburg and Teich-Müller are singled out) are said to have drawn no distinction between the functions and qualities of νοῦς. By contrast, J Walter, in his study *Die Lehre von der praktischen Vernunft in der griechischen Philosophie*, Jena, 1874, (pp.313-335) is said to have distinguished between the functions and qualities of νοῦς only to confound senses (4) and (5), reading νοῦς in the passage above as *intelligence des principes*. Gauthier and Jolif detect the influence of Walter's reading in many subsequent commentators, including Ross.

24. Heidegger is probably thinking here of Aristotle's conjecture in *De Anima* that thinking is like perceiving. Pursuing the analogy, Aristotle adds that "Mind [....] must be related to what is thinkable, as sense is to what is sensible" [DA.III:429a17]. One could also point to the remark in the final chapter of *Met.θ* that "blindness is akin to a total absence of the faculty of thinking" [Met.θ.10:1052a3, cf. also p.250(n1)]. Heidegger makes essentially the same point in the 1922 'Introduction'; "*Das genuin Gegenständliche des νοῦς ist das, was er ἄνευ λόγου ohne die Weise des Ansprechens auf etwas auf seine »Als-Was-Bestimmungen« (οὐ τι κατὰ τινοῦς DA 430b28) vernimmt: die ἀδιαιρέτα, was an ihm selbst nicht auseinandernehmbar, nicht weiter explikabel ist: the genuine objectiveness of νοῦς is that which it perceives ἄνευ λόγου, without addressing its 'determination-as-something': the ἀδιαιρέτα, that which in itself cannot be contrasted, is no longer explicable*" [PIA 258, cf. also GA33 204].

25. We shall have occasion later to consider Heidegger's vocabulary of holding and having. Cf. NE.VI:1143a35f, 1142a25f.



26. Cf. 1177a12-25, 1178a9f and 1179a25-27. However, the point is moot, for elsewhere Aristotle describes νοῦς as what is most human 1178a6. Cf. also PIA 263.

27. To be sure, this is not the only influence on Heidegger's conception of anxiety. As a conjunction of hermitic revelation and abysmal dissolution, it amounts to a radicalization of a 'Cartesian' tendency that may itself be rooted in the same notion of purity attached to the Greek experience of θεωρία. In addition, one might also think of Kierkegaard's description of the self as "the relation that relates itself to its own self," *'The Sickness unto Death' in Fear and Trembling and The Sickness Unto Death*, trans W Lowrie, New Jersey, Princeton U P, 1961, p.146.

28. Although it seems that the analysis of movement gave way to that of temporality as to a more fundamental or profound formulation of the problem, it is worth noting that the latter problematic was only possible in the wake of the advances made by the former. Indeed, even when one considers the exceptional interpretation Heidegger gave of Aristotle's treatment of time in *Physics* IV 10-14, it is still tempting to suppose that Aristotle's discussions of movement and change offered Heidegger more fruitful reading, insofar as they impinged directly on the themes of δύναμις, ἐνέργεια and thereby the Aristotelian conception of both life and divine being.

29. This is the sense in which Heidegger is interested above all, cf. GA33 especially §7; for the source of this reading in Aristotle, cf. Met.E.2:1026b1.

30. *Aristotle's Physics*, ed. with commentary W D Ross (1936), Oxford, Clarendon, 1960, p.537.

31. Because δύναμις is seen as a state *from* which one must move, rather than as a state of *having* the power to move: as with movement, the Megarics tend to view δύναμις as a being, rather than as a manner of being. Cf. Heidegger's reading of Met.θ.3 and Ch.4.IV below.

32. Heidegger offers the following translations of ἐνέργεια: *Am-Werke-sein*, *Sich-ans-Werk-machen*, *-ins-Zeug-legen* [GA33 220], *Im-Werk-stehen* [VWB-WM 282:256]. Cf. also p.257(n47).

33. Ἐνέργεια is said to be complete, whereas κίνησις is incomplete [ἀτελής] [1048b18-35].

34. Significantly, this critique, moved by Aubenque in the passage quoted above, is also at the basis of Heidegger's reading of Aristotle's account of time. Moreover, the interpretation he offers of the now as transition is intended to win access to movement *as movement* - precisely what is at issue here. Cf. GA24 §19 esp. 251:354.



## Chapter Four

1. Heidegger attached great importance to this chapter, seeing it as the clearest expression in Aristotle of the conception of truth as unconcealment. Cf. *Vom Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit* (1930), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1982, §9, *Logik: die Frage nach der Wahrheit* (1925/26), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1976, §13c, and Volpi, HA 172-182.
2. As we have noted already, the tendency towards a theological resolution of the problems of ontology is intrinsic to Aristotle's philosophy and in many respects may be taken as a mark of its distinction. If any doubt remains, we are not arguing that it is mistaken as such, but rather that it is inadequately thought through, above all by Aristotle's successors. For whilst the complexity and ambiguity of Aristotle's own text testifies to his awareness of the problems involved, the impulse to elevate ἐνέργεια beyond change sanctions the reductive interpretations of Aristotle that are the real target of Heidegger's reading.
3. For an excellent reading of this passage, cf. Pierre Rodrigo, 'Heidegger lecteur d'Aristote: *Dynamis* et *énergeia* sous le regard phénoménologique' in *Les Études Philosophiques*, Juillet-septembre 1990, pp.353-372.
4. The Greek in question is: λέγεται μὲν μάλιστα κυρίως... In its adverbial form, κυρίως is indeed generally taken to narrow the sense of the verb to its primary or most essential meaning. Thus, Liddell and Scott refer to its use in the context of language as indicating "in the proper sense." However, as an adjective, κυρίως may be applied to persons "having power or authority." It may be that Heidegger draws on this element of its meaning, transferring the connotation of 'holding sway' to suggest that the sense in question is merely the most common or prevalent, but not necessarily the most proper or correct. Cf. *A Greek Lexicon*, H G Liddell & R Scott, Oxford, Clarendon, 1951 (ninth edition).
5. Heidegger translates the Greek οὐ μὲν χρησίμη as "*wahrlich nicht brauchbar*." If the selection of this particular sense of *brauchbar* seems a somewhat arbitrary basis on which to construct an opposition to 'useful' (which is also amongst the senses of *brauchbar*), Heidegger also offers *verwendbar* [applicable] as a possible alternative and expressly rejects terms such as *nützlich* [useful-serviceable] and *dienlich* [useful-suitable]. On the contrary, he claims that the enquiry into this first sense is precisely *nützlich* and *dienlich* for what follows. Ross's commentary to the 1924 edition chooses "not the most suitable" in preference to "not the most useful," thereby going some way towards mitigating the problem in the same fashion as Heidegger.
6. Heidegger is not consistent in his translation of δύναμις. As the subtitle of the course indicates, he generally opts for *Kraft* [power], but also uses the more usual *Vermögen* [potentiality]. One suspects that the choice of *Kraft* over *Vermögen* reflects a wish to distance the account from a residual passive or secondary character



associated with the term potentiality - a character that may derive in part from the privilege given to actuality as a determination of what is 'genuinely real.' Ultimately, Heidegger will develop his interpretation further in the company of Nietzsche. However, that the orientation of such a reading was already decided is evident from the account of Leibniz in GA26, esp. §5. Whatever the broader strategic significance of Heidegger's choice of terms, his distinction between *Kraft* and *Vermögen* does not seem to have arisen directly from his interpretation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, as he often uses the two terms in conjunction with one another or as interchangeable, e.g. GA33 167, 209.

7. "*Die δύνάμεις κατὰ κίνησιν sind die vorhandenen Kräfte, von denen wir sprechen wenn uns Bewegtes irgendwelcher Art begegnet: the δύνάμεις κατὰ κίνησιν are the present-at-hand powers that we speak of when we encounter any kind of thing in movement*" [GA33 55-56]. Aristotle himself warns against this mistake, pointing to the way that movement had consistently been described in negative terms (otherwiseness, unequalness, non-existence) as evidence that it is neither a thing nor a quality nor indeed anything such as would fall under any other category [201b20-30].

8. The expression κατὰ κινήσεως does not appear in Met.θ as such and is essentially Heidegger's way of introducing the ontological difference into Aristotle's account of movement. However, it echoes the determination of δύναμις as the ἀρχὴ κινήσεως [1019a15], thereby linking this shift in perspective to the account of δύναμις that is to follow. Moreover, it is by no means without basis. In *Physics* III.1-2 Aristotle is clearly frustrated by the inability of the categories at his disposal to grasp movement as such and Heidegger's use of the genitive does point to a trajectory of questioning that Aristotle may have welcomed. Ultimately, however, the introduction of the genitive form stands or falls by the sense it enables one to make of the problems at issue in *Metaphysics* θ.

9. By way of illustration, in Heidegger's 1939 paper on Aristotle's *Physics*, ὕλη and μορφή are presented as essentially dynamic significations of ways of being. The possibility of such an *ontological* reading rests on the interpretation of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια ἐπὶ πλέον in terms of movement that Heidegger sets out here.

10. "*Es bleibt die Möglichkeit, daß der Gang in folgenden Abschnitten geht: Ausgang von der δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν, Fortgang zur ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν, Übergang zur ἐνέργεια κατὰ κινήσεως* Ausgang zur δύναμις κατὰ κινήσεως: There remains the possibility that the path is divided into the following stages: outset from δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν, development to ἐνέργεια κατὰ κίνησιν, transition to ἐνέργεια κατὰ κινήσεως, conclusion to δύναμις κατὰ κινήσεως [GA33 55].

11. Ross, following Bonitz, suggests that Aristotle lapses, introducing the later definition of δύναμις (which Ross calls potentiality) into the account of the earlier sense (which he calls power) [ACM 241]. Significantly, the point at which he believes this to have happened [1047a24] is precisely the point that Heidegger picks out as the pinnacle of Aristotle's achievement: "*Mit ihm [diesem Satz] ist die größte philosophische Erkenntnis der Antike*



ausgesprochen, eine Erkenntnis, die bis heute in der Philosophie unausgewertet und unverstanden geblieben ist: it [this proposition] gives voice to the greatest knowledge of Ancient times, knowledge that philosophy to this day has neither evaluated nor understood" [GA33 219].

12. Cf. above all I Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1781), Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp, 1992; tr. *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. N Kemp Smith, London, Macmillan, 1983, A204 B249.

13. Discussing the alteration in meaning undergone by the term ἔργον on being translated into Latin, Heidegger later notes that it came to be understood as a result. "Das Ergebnis ist das, was aus einer und auf einer actio folgt: der Erfolg. Das Wirkliche ist jetzt das Erfolgte. Der Erfolg wird durch einer Sache erbracht, die ihm voraufgeht, durch die Ursache (causa). Das Wirkliche ercheint jetzt im Lichte der Kausalität der causa efficiens. A result is that which follows out of and follows upon an actio: the consequence, the outcome [Erfolg]. The real is now that which has followed as consequence. The consequence is brought about by the circumstance [Sache] that precedes it, i.e. by the cause [Ursache] (causa). The real appears now in the light of the causality of the causa efficiens." 'Wissenschaft und Besinnung' in VA, p.50, 'Science and Reflection' in QCT, p.161.

14. As regards ontology, the question of grounds is transformed into a search for the first link in the causal chain - a modern version of an ancient tale, as Heidegger points out in *Being and Time*: "Der erste philosophische Schritt im Verständnis des Seinsproblems besteht darin, nicht μῦθόν τινα διηγείσθαι, »keine Geschichte erzählen«, d.h. Seiendes als Seiendes nicht durch Rückführung auf ein anderes Seiendes in seiner Herkunft zu bestimmen, gleich als hätte Sein den Charakter eines möglichen Seienden: If we are to understand the problem of Being, our first philosophical step consists in not μῦθόν τινα διηγείσθαι, in not 'telling a story' - that is to say, in not defining entities as entities by tracing them back in their origin to some other entities, as if Being had the character of some possible entity" [SZ 6:26]. The citation is from Plato, *Sophist* 242c, cf. also *Phaedo* 98c-99c. Presumably, Heidegger would see in big bang theory and the efforts of contemporary cosmology to reconstruct the events of the earliest universe a sign of both the power of science and its philosophical poverty.

15. The examples used by Aristotle to illustrate his account of the four causes are predominantly those of building and of sculpture. The notable exception is that of paternity in the case of the efficient cause, though even here, Aristotle adds "or in general the maker a cause of the thing made" [1013a31], suggesting that this remains the model even for paternity. Nonetheless, it is far from clear that the relation of father to child is compatible with the general tenor of Aristotle's account. On a more contemporary note, Derrida's essay 'L'invention de l'autre' prefaces a consideration of the possibility of inventing something radically new with the question "Invente-t-on un enfant?: Does one invent a child?" *Psyché*, Paris, Galilée, 1987, p.14. Derrida raises this as an example that might precisely escape or exceed the schema of production, insofar as the end is not sighted



in advance. In this way, the future opened by act is not one's own and there is a sense of discontinuity not found in production. Derrida's interest emerges as more than a passing coincidence, if one sees in Derrida's essay an implicit interrogation of the limits of the language of potentiality and actuality, an interrogation that, though this is rarely acknowledged, also characterizes Heidegger's 'On the Origin of the Work of Art.'

16. Regarding δύναμις and material causality, VWB-WM 271-289:248-261.

17. Heidegger raises these questions and others in his 1926 course, GA22 13.

18. Cf. Jean-François Mattei, 'L'étoile et le sillon: L'interprétation heideggerienne de l'être et de la nature chez Platon et Aristote,' in *Heidegger et l'idée de la phénoménologie*, ed. F Volpi, pp.43-66.

19. *Ertragsamkeit* is cognate with *ertragen* (to endure, tolerate) and *erträglich* (endurable, tolerable). The root *Ertrag* denotes yield or output, thereby linking *Ertragsamkeit* to the experience of production.

20. Heidegger quotes from Leibniz's writing on dynamics: "*Quando agere est character substantiarum, extensioque nil aliud quam jam praesupositae nitentis renitentisque id est resistentis substantiae continuationem sive diffusionem dicit, tantum abest, ut ipsammet substantiam, facere possit.* Since activity is the characteristic mark of substances, extension on the contrary, affirms nothing other than the continual reiteration or propagation of an already preposed effort and counter-effort, that is, resistant substance, and therefore cannot possibly constitute substance itself." 'Specimen Dynamicum' in *Leibniz: Selections* ed. P P Wiener, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951, pp.119-136; cf. p.120 and GA33 96. The introduction of the concept of striving [*Streben*] to that of resistance is also the basis for an attack on the Cartesian view of the natural world as an aggregate of inert and extended matter. In connection with the concept of resistance, this means replacing *extensio* with *agere*. The fact that a heavy body halts the movement of a smaller body and not vice versa would be inexplicable in terms of extension alone, argues Heidegger. In this way, as in his analysis of worldhood of the world in *Being and Time* [SZ §§19-21], Heidegger exposes the indifference of Cartesian metaphysics to a more original determination on which it in fact depends.

21. Heidegger speaks there of the essence of science as "holding one's ground in the midst of the uncertainty of the totality of what is" RR 12:473.

22. All further passages from Met.Θ.1-3 quoted in the context of Heidegger's interpretation of them will be reproduced in Heidegger's own translation followed by my rendition of that translation.

23. *Fertigkeit* could be translated as accomplishment or skill, thereby relating it to the foregoing description of potentiality. Indeed, Heidegger later offers *Fertigkeit* as a translation of τεχνή [p.187]. However, *Fertig* can mean ready or prepared and thus *Fertigkeit* could be taken as readiness. I have chosen to use this



sense in the translation in view of Heidegger's use of *Fertigwerden* later in this passage. Cf. also Heidegger's use of *Fertigkeit* in his definition of ἐντελέχεια at the end of GA33 §22, p.249(n.46).

24. *Zielstrebigkeit* could be taken simply as 'singlemindedness' or even 'resoluteness.' However, in the context of this discussion, it seems that Heidegger wishes to distance himself from the sense of 'movement towards what lies ahead' that is conveyed by the conjunction of *Ziel* [goal] with the stem of *Streben*. Accordingly, I have translated *Zielstrebigkeit* as 'purposefulness' in the hope of preserving the sense of having a goal 'in one's sights.'

25. Cf. the ἔργον argument, pp.46-52.

26. This is a typically Heideggerian gesture. The difference in approach between Ross and Heidegger on this point is brought into relief by Ross's reference to *De Anima* 425b25-426a30. Aristotle begins: "The activity of the sensible object and that of the percipient sense is one and the same activity and yet the distinction between their being remains." Heidegger's reading of this passage would surely focus on their unity, his interpretation of truth as unconcealment providing the ground for the subjective and objective limbs of the event as it is described here. By contrast, Ross sees this passage, and the discussion that follows it, as evidence of how two fundamentally *distinct* phenomena can appear as one.

27. The expression κατὰ κίνησιν is no longer said to designate that potentiality which is apprehended in the observation of a moving thing. "*Sondern die δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν ist diejenige, deren Wesenbau in dem Grundphänomen der μεταβολή, eben in dem Wechselbezug von δύναμις τοῦ ποίειν und τοῦ πάσχειν mitgegeben ist, von solcher Bewegung her - auf solche Bewegung hin verstanden ist: Rather, δύναμις κατὰ κίνησιν is that whose essential structure is given with the fundamental phenomenon of μεταβολή, precisely in the inter-relation of δύναμις τοῦ ποίειν and τοῦ πάσχειν; it is understood from such movement and in view of such movement*" [GA33 115].

28. *Entzug* can mean 'privation,' but also simply 'withdrawal.' Heidegger often plays on the kinetic character of the latter, which also preserves the positive significance of what has been withdrawn better than the more plainly negative 'privation.' That said, Heidegger's interpretation of στέρησις would not disqualify the use of 'privation.' For a more detailed treatment of στέρησις by Heidegger cf. VWB-WM, esp. 294-301:264-269; cf. also Aubenque PEA 425, 431-438.

29. Heidegger twice picks out what he regards as the key phrase from 1046a28f, translating it slightly differently on each occasion: "*In Bezug auf dasselbe und in Gemäßheit desselben ist jegliche Kraft Unkraft: In relation to and in conformity with the same thing each potentiality is a-potentiality*" [GA33 110], "*Jede Kraft ist Unkraft in Bezug auf dasselbe und gemäß desselben: Every power is un-power in relation to and according to itself*" [GA33 111]. This is true not only of specific powers but of the essence of power itself.

30. Of course, the complete picture will also involve ἐνέργεια, as we shall see in Section IV. However, what we have already discovered



regarding δύναμις will prove vital for the hermeneutics of facticity (our primary concern here).

31. "[Ἐ]πιστήμη: *sich verstehen auf etwas, etwas kennen und erkannt haben*; λογισμός: *umsichtige Berechnung, Überlegung und damit bezogen auf Wahl und Entscheidung*; [Ἐ]πισήμη: *to understand oneself with regard to something, to know and have discerned something*; λογισμός: *circumspensive taking account, deliberation and thereby relation to choice and decision*" [GA33 128].

32. Cf. GA33 138-148, GA24 149-154:106-109.

33. DA.3:4323b28f, NE.VI.ii.2:1139a21. "[D]ie Bewegung immer ist die eines Fliehenden oder Verfolgenden (φυγή bzw. δίωξις), das aber bedeutet; *sich in Schutz bringen vor etwas bzw. sich in Besitz bringen vor etwas*: Movement is always flight or pursuit (φυγή or δίωξις), which means; bring oneself to safety before something or bring oneself into possession before something" [GA33 150]. Cf. the many references to fleeing and avoidance that occur throughout *Being and Time*, particularly with regard to disposition [Befindlichkeit] and being-towards-death. In turn, these cases are generally counterposed to a 'coming before something' associated with the modification to authenticity [Eigentlichkeit].

34. The impetus for pursuit or avoidance does not come from the mind as such, for "even when the mind does command and thought bids us pursue or avoid something, sometimes no movement is produced; we act in accordance with desire" [433a1-2]. Human being, as one who chooses, is described as either ὀρεκτικὸς νοῦς or ὄρεξις διανοητική [1139b5].

35. This is an important theme in *Being and Time*, where Dasein is often absorbed in a non-thematic circumspensive relation to the equipmental totality. "*In dieser Vertrautheit kann sich das Dasein an das innerweltlich Begegnende verlieren und von ihm bennomen sein*: In this familiarity Dasein can lose itself in what it encounters within-the-world and be fascinated with it" [SZ 76:107]. Aside from the fact that Dasein can also 'lose itself' in the they, the notion of fascination [Benommenheit] by which Heidegger characterizes the absorption of the self in world of its concern plays an interestingly equivocal role in his determination of Dasein vis-à-vis the animal. Whereas it is presented as characteristic of Dasein in the passage quoted above, in the 1929/30 lectures, it becomes a feature of animal life that distinguishes it from Dasein [GA29/30 §§58-60]. Cf. also Derrida's remarks on this matter in *De l'esprit, Heidegger et la question*, Paris, Galilée, 1987, pp.75-90, esp. p.85. 'Of Spirit, Heidegger and the Question, trans. G Bennington and R Bowlby, Chicago, London, University of Chicago Press, 1989. Note also the way that σοφία requires that one cease to be preoccupied with what is most immediate [p.116].

36. The conception of the self implicit in this account, and above all its association with the reserve constitutive of authenticity, is clearly a topic that invites further comment. Regrettably, a full critical consideration is beyond the bounds of the present work. However, the themes of having, appropriation, and accordingly those of authenticity and selfhood, continue to play a large part in the



remainder of the thesis. Whilst they are not explicitly placed in question, the philosophical sources from which Heidegger developed these concepts are in some measure brought to light, thereby preparing the ground for such critique.

37. With this explanation we turn back on ourselves and rejoin the discussion at the point where Heidegger was concerned to establish the possibility of discrimination that belongs to δύναμις μετὰ λόγου [cf. pp.188-190].

38. Cf. Section IV below. This is premised on Aristotle's view of the physical world as essentially determined by movement. By contrast, geometrical figures cannot move, whereby it makes no sense to speak of them as at rest either.

39. Cf. Met.Δ.20:1022b3-10. There are several points in the present study at which this passage assumes considerable importance, inasmuch as, although not cited by Heidegger, it articulates an ambiguity that Heidegger explores in his treatment of Dasein; cf. 92-93, 205-206, Conc. and p.258(n1), where the passage is quoted in full.

40. Note Heidegger's questions over the order of the account. Cf. pp.166-167, GA33 55.

41. "*Das Ausschlaggebende und für das Verständnis und die Auslegung des ganzen Kapitels Leitende ist die Übersetzung des energe. Ἐνεργεῖν heißt: am Werke sein (nicht einfach: wirklich sein). Wenn ein Vermögen zu etwas 'am Werke ist', d.h. bei der Herstellung dessen, wozu es Vermögen ist, beschäftigt, dann, sagen wir kurz, 'verwirklicht' sich das, was vor dem nur etwas Mögliches war: Decisive as a guide in the understanding and interpretation of the whole chapter is the translation of energe. Ἐνεργεῖν means: being at work (not simply being actual). If a potentiality for something is 'at work,' i.e. is engaged in the production of that for which it is a potentiality, then we say that what was previously only something possible 'actualizes itself'" [GA33 167].*

42. Note that the account of the essence of δύναμις concerned primarily δύναμις μετὰ λόγου, the form of δύναμις pertaining to beings with souls. Consequently that account should be read as an account of the essence of human being as the ζῶον λόγον ἔχον.

43. *Physics* V-VI, I A Kosman, 'Aristotle's Definition of Motion' in *Phronesis* Vol.XIV 1969 pp.40-62, esp. p.45.

44. This is problematic passage to translate and the version offered here should be taken only as a rough indication. In particular, the expression *Im-Stand-sein-zu*, translated as being-in-place-to, also conveys the idea of being in condition for something. The sense of concerted effort this implies is reflected in the phrase *Sich-ins-concerted effort* this implies is reflected in the phrase *Sich-ins-Zeug-legen* by which Heidegger translates *energeia* and which I have rendered as setting-to-work. In so doing, I have taken advantage of Heidegger's own conjunction of work [*ergon, Werk*] and tool [*Zeug*].

45. The Ross edition runs: "And a thing is capable of doing something if there is nothing impossible in its having the actuality of that of which it is said to have the capacity" [AMC 241]. Heidegger praises this definition as a high point in Ancient philosophy that has



remained unsurpassed and even misunderstood throughout the whole of the history of metaphysics [GA33 219]. By contrast it is in this passage that Ross identifies a failure to maintain distinct senses of δύναμις. Cf. AMC 241 and p.243(n11).

46. Heidegger also offers '*Am-Werke-sein*' and '*Sich-ins-Werke-machen*' [GA33 220], '*in der Werkhaftigkeit sich halten*' and '*Sich-in-der-Hergestelltheit-und-Dastehendheit-Halten*' in GA31 69. Cf. p.249(n32).

47. Heidegger recognizes it as essentially equivalent to ἐνέργεια. It is worth noting that, Heidegger's translation of ἐντελέχεια in GA33 is '*Sich-in-Fertigkeit-halten*.' The preference for *Fertigkeit* [readiness] over *Ende* [end] more fully reflects the term's link with δύναμις.

48. Indeed, one could instructively compare Heidegger's determination of ἐντελέχεια with that of the now in GA24 §19. Here too there is a move from a sense of full presence to one of transition, that is, μεταβολή or, in Heidegger's translation, *Umschlag*.

49. Thus the 'as such' [ἢ τοιοῦτον] is intended to pick out movement as the actuality of potentiality (as opposed to the actuality of what the potentiality is capable of accomplishing), but not necessarily in the way most commentators believe. Whereas it might be thought to indicate that movement is the ἐντελέχεια of the potentiality of x to do y or to become z, it may be understood more fundamentally as an insistence that it is potentiality *as such* that is at issue and not simply the specific the potentiality of x to.... This would lead to a formal definition of movement focussed on the event of change itself that would correspond to the perspective that we have already seen him describe as κατὰ κινήσεως [p.144].

### Conclusion

1. Aristotle, Met.Δ.20:1022b6-10: "'Having' [ἔξις] means (1) a kind of activity of the haver and of what he has - something like an action or movement. For when one thing makes and one is made, between them there is a making: so too between him who has a garment and the garment which he has there is a having. This sort of having, then, evidently we cannot *have*; for the process will go on to infinity, if it is to be possible to have the having of what we have."
2. Cf. p.6, p.63, pp.205-206.



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