

# Negative Dialectics

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## Part I: Relationship to Ontology

### I. The Ontological Need

#### Question and Answer 69-73

The ontologies in Germany, particularly the Heideggerian one, remain influential to this day, without the traces of the political past giving anyone pause. Ontology is tacitly understood as the readiness to sanction a heteronomous social order, exempted from the justification of consciousness. That such considerations are denied a higher place, as misunderstanding, a falling astray into the ontic, and a lack of radicalism in the question, only reinforces the dignity of the appeal: ontology seems all the more numinous, the less it solidifies into a definite content, which the impertinent understanding would be permitted to get a hold of. Intangibility turns into unassailability. Whoever refuses to follow suit, is suspected of being someone without a fatherland, without a homeland in being, indeed not so differently from the idealists Fichte and Schelling, who denigrated those who resisted their metaphysics as inferior. In all of its mutually combative schools, which denounce each other as false, ontology is apologetic. Its influence could not be understood, however, if it did not meet an emphatic need, the index of something omitted, the longing that the Kantian verdict on the knowledge of the absolute ought not to rest there. When in the early days of the neo-ontological movements the resurrection of metaphysics was spoken of with theological sympathy, this was still crudely but openly evident. The Husserlian will to replace the *intentio obliqua* [Latin: oblique intention] with the *intentio recta* [Latin: direct intention], to turn to the things themselves, already had a touch of this; what in the critique of reason delimited the borders of the possibility of cognition was nothing other than the recollection of the capacity of cognition itself, which the phenomenological program at first wished to dispense with. In the “draft” of the ontological constitution of subject areas and regions, finally in the “world as the epitome of all existence”, the will clearly stirred to grasp the whole without the borders dictated by its cognition; the *eidê* [Greek: form, kind], which became Heidegger’s existential [Existentialien] in Being and Time, is supposed to comprehensively anticipate what those regions, all the way to the highest, actually were. The unspoken assumption was that the drafts of reason could sketch out the structure of all fullness of the existent; second reprise of the old philosophy of the absolute, the first of which was post-Kantian idealism. At the same time however the critical tendency continued to have an effect, less against dogmatic concepts than as the effort to no longer set forth or construe the *Absoluta* [Latin: absolutes] which had relinquished their systematic unity and were set in opposition each other, but to receptively receive and describe them, from the standpoint of the positivistic ideal of science. Therein absolute knowledge became once again, as in Schelling, intellectual intuition. One hopes to cancel out the mediations, instead of reflecting on them. The non-conformist motive, that philosophy need not compartmentalize itself into its branches – those of organized and immediately applicable science – capsized into conformism. The categorical construct, exempt from any sort of critique, as the scaffolding of existing relationships, is confirmed as absolute, and the

unreflective immediacy of the method lends itself to every sort of caprice. The critique of criticism becomes pre-critical. Hence the intellectual mode of conduct of the permanent “Back to”. The absolute becomes what it least of all would like and what indeed critical truth said it was, something natural-historical, out of which the norms to be adapted to could be quickly and crudely inferred. In contrast the idealistic school of philosophy denied what one would expect of philosophy, by those who take it up unprepared. This was the flip side of its scientific self-responsibility, imposed on it by Kant. The consciousness of this, that a philosophy run as a specialty niche, which dismisses the questions of those who have turned to it for the answers only it can provide as idle, has nothing to do with people any more, could already be glimpsed in German idealism; it is expressed without collegial discretion by Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche broke off every accord with academia. Under this aspect, the contemporary ontologies are not simply making the anti-academic tradition of philosophy their own, by asking, as Paul Tillich once put it, questions about what concerns one unconditionally. They have academically established the pathos of the non-academic. In them, the comfortable shudder at an impending world-catastrophe is combined with the soothing feeling of operating on solid, possibly even philologically secure ground. Audacity, ever the prerogative of youngsters, knows enough to cover itself by general accord and through the most powerful educational institutions. Out of the entire movement, the opposite became of what its beginnings seemed to promise. The concern with the relevant rebounded into an abstraction, which could in no way be trumped by any neo-Kantian methodology. This development is not to be separated from the problematic of the need itself. It is so little to be placated by that philosophy as once by the transcendental system. That is why ontology has surrounded itself with its miasma. In keeping with an old German tradition, it considers the question more important than the answer; where it owes what it has promised, it has raised its failure for its part to a consoling existential. In fact questions have a different weight in philosophy than in the particular sciences, where they are abolished through their solution, while their rhythm in the history of philosophy would be more akin to duration and forgetting. This does not mean, however, as in the constant parroting of Kierkegaard, that the existence of the questioner would be that truth, which searches in vain for the answer. Rather in philosophy the authentic question almost always includes in a certain manner its answer. It does not follow, as in research, an if-then pattern of question and answer. It must model its question on that which it has experienced, so that it can catch up to it. Its answers are not given, made, produced: the developed, transparent question recoils in them. Idealism would like to drown out precisely this, to always produce, to “deduce” its own form and if possible every content. By contrast, the thinking which does not claim to be an origin, ought not to hide the fact that it does not produce, but gives back what it, as experience, already has. The moment of expression in thinking prevents it from dealing more mathematico [Latin: in mathematical terms] with problems, and then serving up apparent solutions. Words like problem and solution ring false in philosophy, because they postulate the independence of what is thought from thinking exactly there, where thinking and what is thought are mediated by one another. Only what is true, can truly be understood philosophically. The fulfilling completion of the judgement in which understanding occurs is as one with the decision over true and false. Whoever does not participate in the judging of the stringency of a theorem or its absence does not understand it. It has its own meaning-

content, which is to be understood, in the claim of such stringency. Therein the relationship of understanding and judgement distinguishes itself from the usual temporal order. There can be no judging without the understanding any more than understanding without the judgement. This invalidates the schema, that the solution would be the judgement, the problem the mere question, based on understanding. The fiber of the so-called philosophical proof is itself mediated, in contrast to the mathematical model, but without this simply disappearing. For the stringency of the philosophical thought bids its manner of procedure to measure itself by its conclusive forms. Proofs in philosophy are the effort, to procure a committalness [Verbindlichkeit] to what is expressed, in that the latter becomes commensurable to the means of discursive thinking. It however does not purely follow from these: the critical reflection of such productivity of thought is itself a content of philosophy. Although in Hegel the claim to the derivation of the non-identical out of identity is raised to an extreme, the thought-structure of the great Logic implies the solutions in the way that the problems are posed, instead of presenting the results after settling all accounts. While he sharpened the critique of analytical judgement to the thesis of its "falsehood", everything is an analytical judgement for him, the turning to and fro of the thought without the citation of anything extraneous to it. That the new and the different would be the old and familiar, is a moment of dialectics. So evident its context with the identity-thesis, so little is it circumscribed by this. The more the philosophical thought yields itself to its experience, the closer it approaches, paradoxically, the analytic judgement. To become aware of a desiderata of cognition is mostly this cognition itself: the counterpart of the idealistic principle of perpetual production. In renunciation of the traditional apparatus of the proof, by stressing the knowledge which is already known, philosophy establishes that it is by no means the absolute.

#### **Affirmative Character 73-74**

The ontological need guarantees so little of what it wishes as the misery of the hungry does of food. However no doubt of such a guarantee plagued a philosophical movement, which could not have foreseen this. Therein was not the least reason it ended up in the untrue affirmative. "The dimming of the world never achieves the light of being."<sup>1</sup> In those categories to which fundamental ontology owes its resonance and which they for that reason either deny or so sublimate, that they can no longer give rise to unwelcome confrontations, is to be read how much they are the imprints of something missing and not produced, however much they are its complementary ideology. However the cult of being, or at least the attraction which the word exerts as something superior, lives from this, that functional concepts really have come more and more to repress substantive concepts, as once in epistemology. Society has become the total functional context which liberalism once thought it was; what is, is relative to what is other, irrelevant in itself. The horror of this, the dawning consciousness that the subject is losing its substantiality, prepares it to listen to the assertion that being, covertly equated with that substantiality, survives as something which cannot be lost in the functional context. What ontological philosophizing attempts to awaken, to conjure, as it were, is however hollowed out by real processes, the production and reproduction of social life. The effort to theoretically vindicate humanity and being and time as Ur-phenomena does not halt the destiny of the resurrected ideas. Concepts, whose substrate is historically passed by, were thoroughly and penetratingly criticized even in the specifically philosophical area as dogmatic

hypostases; as with Kant's transcendence of the empirical soul, the aura of the word being-there [Dasein: existence], in the paralogism chapter; the immediate recourse to being in the one on the amphiboly of the concept of reflection. Modern ontology does not appropriate that Kantian critique, does not drive it further through reflection, but acts as if it belonged to a rationalistic consciousness whose flaws a genuine thinking had to purify itself of, as if in a ritual bath. Despite this, in order to rope in critical philosophy, an immediate ontological content is imputed to this latter. Heidegger's reading of the anti-subjectivistic and "transcending" moment in Kant is not without legitimation. The latter raises the objective character of his mode of questioning programmatically in the preface to the Critique of Pure Reason and left no doubt of it in carrying out the deduction of the pure concept of understanding. It does not vanish, in what the conventional history of philosophy terms the Copernican turn; the objective interest retains primacy over the subjectively directed, happenstance cognition, in a dismembering of the consciousness in empirical style. By no means however is this objective interest to be equated with a hidden ontology. Against this speaks not only the critique of the rationalistic one in Kant, which granted room for the concept of a different one if need be, but that of the train of thought of the critique of reason itself. This has the consequence that objectivity – that of cognition and that of the incarnation of everything cognized – is mediated subjectively. It indeed tolerates the assumption of an in-itself beyond the subject-object polarity, but leaves it quite intentionally so indeterminate, that no sort of interpretation however cobbled together could possibly spell an ontology out of it. If Kant wished to rescue that kosmos noetikos [Greek: cosmos of the intellect] which the turn to the subject attacked; if his work bears to this extent an ontological moment in itself, it nonetheless remains a moment and not the central one. His philosophy would like to achieve that rescue with the power of that which threatens what is to be rescued.

### **Disempowerment of the Subject 74-76**

Ontology's return to life due to objectivistic intention was supported by what admittedly least of all suited its concept: the fact that the subject became to a large extent ideology, which concealed the objective functional context of society and assuaged the suffering of the subjects under it. To this extent, and not just today, the not-I is drastically suborned to the I. Heidegger's philosophy omits this, but registers it: in his hands that historical primacy becomes the ontological preeminence of being of pure and simple, above everything ontic, everything real. He also prudently refrained from turning back the Copernican turn, that to the idea, before everyone's gaze. He zealously separated his version of ontology from objectivism, his anti-idealistic attitude from realism, whether it be critical or naïve.<sup>2</sup> Unquestionably, the ontological need was not to be levelled out to anti-idealism, according to the battle lines of the academic schools. But under its impulses, perhaps the most enduring was the disavowal of idealism. The anthropocentric way of thinking about life has been shaken. The subject, philosophical self-reflection, has appropriated the critique of geocentrism, as it were, dating back to centuries earlier. This motif is more than a merely superficial world-view, so easily as it was exploited in world-viewing terms. Overweening syntheses between philosophical developments and the ones of the natural sciences are of course offensive: they ignore the growing independence of physical-mathematical formal languages, which are no longer accessible to the intuition, or indeed any categories immediately commensurable to human consciousness.

Nevertheless the results of modern cosmology have radiated far and wide: all conceptions, which would make the universe resemble the subject or even deduce its pride of place therein, are relegated to naivete, comparable to the cranks or paranoids who consider their little town to be the center of the world. The grounds of philosophical idealism, the control of nature itself, has lost the certainty of its omnipotence precisely because of its unstoppable expansion during the first half of the twentieth century; as much because the consciousness of human beings lagged behind and the social order of their relationships remained irrational, as because it took the measurement of what was achieved, whose minuteness was measurable only by comparison to what was not achievable. The suspicion and presentiment are universal, that the control of nature weaves ever more tightly through its advance the catastrophe which it also intended to ward off; the second nature, into which society has overgrown. Ontology and the philosophy of being are – next to other and coarser ones – modes of reaction in which consciousness hopes to escape from that entanglement. But they have a fatal dialectic in themselves. The truth, which exiled humanity from the midpoint of creation and which reminds it of its powerlessness, strengthens the feeling of powerlessness as subjective modes of behavior, causing human beings to identify themselves with it, and thereby further reinforces the bane of second nature. The naïve belief in being, the ignominiously ideological [weltanschaulich] derivative of critical apprehension, really does degenerate into what Heidegger once defined incautiously as membership-in-being [Seinsgehörigkeit: belonging-in-being]. They feel themselves to be facing the All, but cling at the slightest provocation to everything particular, insofar as it is energetic enough to convict the subject of its own weakness. Its readiness to turn a blind eye to the catastrophe which originates in the context of the subject itself, is the revenge for the vain wish to spring out of the cage of its subjectivity. The philosophic leap, Kierkegaard's Urgesture, is itself the caprice by which it imagines to escape the subjugation of the subject under being. Only where the subject is also, in Hegel's words, somehow there, is its bane lessened; it perpetuates itself in that which would be simply different from the subject, just as the *deus absconditus* [Latin: absent god] always bore traces of the irrationality of mythical deities. Light falls on the restorative tendencies of today's philosophies from the kitschy exoticism of cobbled-together world-views, as in for example the astonishingly consumable Zen Buddhism. Similar to this, these simulate a position of thought which the stored-up history in subjects makes it impossible to assume. The delimitation of the Spirit to what is open and achievable in its historical level of experience is an element of freedom; non-conceptual meandering embodies the opposite. Doctrines which unhesitatingly run away from the subject into the cosmos are along with the philosophies of being far more compatible with the hardened constitution of the world, and the chances of success in it, than the slightest bit of self-reflection of the subject on itself and its real imprisonment.

### **Being, Subject, Object 76-78**

To be sure Heidegger saw through the illusion which sustained the popular success of ontology: that the state of the *intentio obliqua* [Latin: oblique intention] could simply be chosen out of a consciousness in which nominalism and subjectivism are sedimented, by one that, above all, became what it is only by self-reflection. He bypassed the alternative with the doctrine of being, which maintained that it was beyond the *intentio recta* [Latin:

direct intention] and *intentio obliqua* [Latin: oblique intention], beyond the subject and object, as well as the concept and the existent. Being is the highest concept – for whoever says being, does not have it, but merely the word – and would nevertheless be privileged before all conceptuality, by virtue of the moments thought along with the word being, which do not exhaust themselves in the abstractly achieved conceptual unity of characteristics. Although at least the mature Heidegger took no more note of it, his talk of being presupposes the Husserlian doctrine of the categorical intuition or apperception [*Wesenschau*]. According to the structure which Heidegger's philosophy ascribed to being, solely by means of such an intuition could it be unsealed or unveiled, to use the language of the school; Heidegger's emphatic being would be the ideal of what yields to ideation. The critique contained in that doctrine of classificatory logic as the unity of characteristics of that which is grasped under the concept remains in force. But Husserl, whose philosophy held itself within the boundaries of the division of labor and left, despite all so-called foundational questions, the concept of strict science unexamined until its late phase, sought, via the latter's ground-rules, to bring whatever had its own meaning in the critique of such into immediate agreement; "he wanted to eat the cake and have it too" [in English]. His method, expressly stated as such, would like to imbue the classificatory concepts through the mode in which the cognition assures itself, with what it cannot have as something classificatory, as the mere preparation of the given, but would have solely through the comprehension of the thing itself, which in Husserl oscillates between something intramental and something opposed to such in the immanence of consciousness. Husserl is not, as was customary in his lifetime, to be reproached as irrationalistic, due to the non-scientificity of the categorical intuition – his oeuvre as a whole opposes irrationalism – but rather its contamination with science. Heidegger noted this and took the step which Husserl hesitated to take. He thereby cast off the rational moment which Husserl guarded,\*1\* and, in this respect quite similar to Bergson, tacitly undertook a procedure which sacrificed the relation to the discursive concept, an inalienable moment of thought. Therein he covered over the weakness of Bergson, who juxtaposed two disparate modes of cognition, each unmediated by the other, in that by mobilizing the allegedly higher dignity, which was bestowed on the categorical intuition, he removed the epistemological one as pre-ontological, along with the question concerning its legitimation. The discomfort with the epistemological preliminary question becomes the legal writ to simply eliminate this; for him dogmatics simply turns, in contrast to the tradition of its critique, into a higher wisdom. This is the origin of Heidegger's archaicism. The ambiguity of the Greek word for being, dating back to the Ionian non-differentiation between materials, principles and pure essence, is not booked as an inadequacy but as the superiority of what is originary. It is supposed to heal the concept of being from the wounds of its conceptuality, the division of the thought and what is to be thought.

### **Ontological Objectivism 78-79**

What however appears as if it had its place in the epoch of the world before the original sin of subjectivizing and concretizing metaphysics, becomes *contra coeur* [French: against its own wishes] the crass In-Itself. The subjectivity, which abjures itself, recoils into objectivism. No matter how painstakingly such thinking evades the criticist controversy, by adding both antithetical positions in equal measure to the loss of being,

the sublimation of its concepts, restless continuation of the Husserlian reduction, relinquishes what is meant with being, all individualized existences as much as all traces of rational abstraction. In the tautology which this being is tantamount to, the subject is driven off: "Yet being – what is being? It is Itself."<sup>3</sup> Being necessarily approximates such tautology. It becomes no better if one opts for it with clever candor and declares it a pledge of the deepest profundity. Every judgement, even the analytical kind as Hegel showed, bears the claim in itself, whether it wishes or no, of predicating something which is not simply identical with the mere subject-concept. If the judgement ignores this, then it breaks the contract, which it signed in advance through its form. This however becomes unavoidable in the concept of being, as modern ontology handles it. It "ends up in caprice, 'being', which precisely in its purity is meaningful only in the exact opposite of pure immediacy, namely as something mediated through and through, foisting this off as the immediate pure and simple".<sup>4</sup> Being must be determined only through itself, because it cannot be touched with concepts, would neither be "mediated", nor allows itself to be immediately demonstrated according to the model of the sensible conscience; in lieu of any critical authority for being, there is only the repetition of the pure name. The residuum, the presumably undistorted essence<sup>5</sup> comes to be similar to an *archê* [Greek: beginning, origin] similar to the type which the motivated movement of the thought had to dismiss. That a philosophy denies being metaphysics, does not decide, as Heidegger once registered against Sartre,<sup>6</sup> as to whether it is or not, but does justify the suspicion that something untrue is hiding in the refusal to admit to its metaphysical content. The new beginning from a presumed zero point is the mask of strenuous forgetting, sympathy with barbarism is not extraneous to it. That the older ontologies decayed, the scholastic ones just as much as their rationalist successors, was no contingent change of world-view or thought-style; this is what the same historical relativism, against which the ontological need once rose up, believed. No sympathy with Plato's enthusiasm in regards to the resignatory, particular-scientific characteristics of Aristoteles defuses the objection against the doctrine of ideas as the duplication of the world of things; no plea for the blessings of order clears away the difficulties which the relationship between *tode ti* [Greek: individual thing, this-here] and *prôtê ousia* [Greek: primary substance] causes in Aristotelean metaphysics; they are derived rather from the unmediated nature of the determinations of being and the existent, which modern ontology resolutely and naively restored. Just as little could the demand for objective reason alone, be it ever so legitimate, think the Kantian critique of the ontological proof of God out of existence. The Eleatic transition to the concept of being glorified today was, in regard to hylozoism, already Enlightenment, something glossed over by Heidegger. However the intention to wipe all this away by regressing to the holy dawn of time prior to the reflection of critical thought, would like solely to circumvent the philosophical compulsion which, once grasped, would prevent the neutralization [Stillung] of the ontological need. The will not to be spoon-fed, to experience something essential from philosophy, is deformed through answers which are tailored according to the need, in the shadows between the legitimate obligation, to provide bread, not stones, and the illegitimate conviction that bread has to exist, because it must.

### **Disappointed Need 80-83**

That the philosophy oriented towards the primacy of the method remains satisfied with such preliminary questions, and for that reason possibly also feels as a basic science on safe ground, only creates the illusion that the preliminary questions, and philosophy itself, scarcely have consequences any more for cognition. The reflections on the instrument have long since ceased to touch upon what is scientifically cognized, but solely upon what would be cogizable at all, the validity of scientific judgements. That which is definitely cognized is something subaltern to such a reflection, a mere *constitutum* [Latin: what is constituted]; while deriving its claim from this, in whose general constitution it immerses itself, it leaves it indifferent. The first formula in which this was expressed was the famous Kantian one, “the transcendental idealist” is “an empirical realist”.<sup>7</sup> The admiration of the *Critique of Pure Reason*’s attempt to ground experience was deaf to the declaration of bankruptcy, that the immeasurable tension of that critique would itself be *adiaphorou* [Greek: indifferent] with respect to the content of the experience. It encouraged only the normal functioning of the understanding and the corresponding view of reality; incidentally Heidegger still opts for the “normally thinking person”.<sup>8</sup> Few of the inner-worldly intuitions and judgements of “common sense” [in English] are taken out of circulation. “Kant wished to prove, in a manner which would offend ‘all the world’, that ‘all the world’ was right: – that was the secret joke of this soul. He wrote against the learned in favor of the popular prejudices of the people, but for the learned and not for the people.”<sup>9</sup> Defeatism hamstring the specifically philosophical impulse to explode something true out from behind the idols of the conventional consciousness. The scorn of the amphiboly chapter against the presumptuousness which wished to cognize what is innermost to things, the self-satisfied manly resignation by which philosophy settles down in the *mundus sensibilis* [Latin: sensible world] as something external, is not merely the enlightening negative reply to that metaphysics which confused the concept with its own reality, but also the obscurantistic one to those which do not capitulate to the façade. Something of the recollection of this best of all moments, which critical philosophy did not so much forget, as zealously excise in honor of the science which it wished to found, survives in the ontological need; the will not to allow the thought to be robbed of that, for whose sake it has been thought. Since the irrevocable sundering of the sciences from idealistic philosophy, the successful ones seek no more legitimation than the statement of their methods. Their self-exegesis turns science into a *causa sui* [Latin: cause in itself], accepting itself as a given and also sanctioning thereby its existing form in the division of labor, whose insufficiency nevertheless cannot remain hidden forever. The intellectual sciences in particular fall prey to irrelevancy and non-conceptuality in countless specific investigations, due to the borrowed ideal of positivity. The partition between solitary disciplines such as sociology, economics and history allows the interest of cognition to disappear in pedantically drawn and overblown trench-battles. Ontology remembers this, but no longer wishes, having grown cautious, to breathe life into that which is essential by the speculative thought of the thing. Rather, it is supposed to spring forth as a given, as tribute to the ground-rules of positivity, which the need wants to go beyond. Many adepts of science expect a decisive completion from ontology, without this needing to touch on scientific procedures. If Heideggerian philosophy claimed in its later phase to rise above the traditional distinction between essence and facts, it mirrors the well-founded irritation at the divergence of the essential and factual sciences, of the mathematical-logical and substantive disciplines,

which blossom in scientific activity disconnectedly next to each other, although the cognitive ideal of one would be incompatible with the other. But the antagonism between the exclusive scientific criteria and the absolute claim of a doctrine of essence or later that of being will not vanish at the mere behest to do so. It opposes its adversary abstractly, afflicted with the same deficiencies of the consciousness within the division of labor, as the cure it passes itself off as. What it provides against science, is not its self-reflection, not even, as Walter Broecker evidently thought, something imposed over such, with necessary movement, as what is qualitatively different. It comes, in the terms of the old Hegelian parable against Schelling, straight out of the pistol, an addition to science, which summarily finishes this latter off, without really changing anything. Its distinguished turn from science ultimately only confirms the supremacy of such, similar to how irrational slogans counterpoint the scientific-technological activities of Fascism. The transition from the critique of the sciences to that which is essential as to being disregards in turn whatever could have been essential in the sciences, and robs the need of what it seemed to grant. By distancing itself from everything substantive [Sachhaltigen] even more fearfully than Kant ever did, ontological philosophizing permits less unregimented insight than idealism in its Schellingesque and even Hegelian form. The social consciousness in particular, though philosophically inseparable to the antique ontologies, is denounced as heterodoxy, as the engagement with the merely existent and *metabasis eis allo genos* [Greek: change into another genus]. Heidegger's hermeneutics adopted the turn against epistemology which Hegel inaugurated in the introduction to the Phenomenology as his own.<sup>10</sup> But the reservations of transcendental philosophy against a substantive one, which forbids content to cross its threshold as merely empirical, survive in his program to raise being from the existent, and to explicate being itself, despite all the protests to the contrary.<sup>11</sup> Fundamental ontology eludes itself not the least because it holds up an ideal of "purity" which stemmed from the methodologization of philosophy – the latest link of the chain was Husserl – as the contrast of being to the existent, nevertheless philosophizing as if over something substantive. This habitus was to be reconciled with that purity only in a realm where all determinable distinctions, indeed all content blurred together. Haunted by Scheler's weaknesses, Heidegger does not permit *prima philosophia* [Latin: originary philosophy] to be crassly compromised by the contingency of the material, the transience of the momentary eternities. But nor does he renounce the concretion originally heralded by the word existence.\*2\* The distinction between the concept and the material is supposed to be the original sin, while it perpetuates itself in the pathos of being. Among its other functions, such as emphasizing its higher dignity in relation to the existent, one should not underestimate the fact that it simultaneously carries the memory of the existent, from which it wished to be raised up, as one of something prior to differentiation and antagonism. Being tempts alluringly, eloquent as wind-blown leaves in bad poetry. But what it praises harmlessly slips out of its grasp, while it is insisted upon philosophically like something it owns, over which the thought, which thinks it, has no control. That dialectic which allows the pure particularization and the pure generality to pass into each other simultaneously, both similarly indeterminate, is silenced and exploited in the doctrine of being; indeterminacy is rendered as a mythical panzer [Panzer: ancient sword, also WW II German tank].

### **“Lack as Gain” 83-84**

Heidegger’s philosophy, amidst all aversion to what he calls Man, in whose name anthropology is supposed to denounce the circulation-sphere, resembled a highly developed credit system. One concept borrows from another. The state of suspense which results from this renders the pose of a philosophy ironic, which feels so close to the ground that it prefers the German “thinking” [Denken] to the foreign word “philosophy” [Philosophie]. As in a faded joke, where the debtor has the upper hand over the creditor because the latter is dependent on the ability of the former to repay, Heidegger squeezes a blessing from everything he owes. That being would be neither a factum nor a concept exempts it from critique. Whatever could be picked on is dismissed as a misunderstanding. The concept borrows from the factual an “air” [in English] of proper plenitude, of that which is not just thought up or tacked together – a.k.a. of the in-itself; the existent of the Spirit, which synthesizes it, the aura of the more than factual being – a.k.a. the consecration of transcendence; and just this structure hypostasizes itself as something higher than the reflective understanding which slices the existent and concept from each other with the dissecting-knife. Even the meagerness of what all this leaves Heidegger in hand, he coins into an advantage: it is one of the pervasive invariants of his philosophy, although never named as such, to revalue every lack of content, every non-possession of a cognition into an index of profundity. Involuntary abstractness presents itself as voluntary vow. “The thinking”, so runs the tract on Plato’s doctrine of the truth, “is on the descent to the poverty of its provisional essence”<sup>12</sup> – as if the emptiness of the concept of being were the fruit of the monastic chastity of that which was original, unconditioned by the aporias of thought. Being however, which is supposed to be no concept at all, or at least an entirely specific one, is the aporetic one<sup>13</sup> pure and simple. It transforms what is more abstract into what is more concrete and hence more true. Heidegger confesses in his own language what this asceticism is all about, in formulations which criticize him far more cuttingly than any hostile critique: “Thinking draws inconspicuous furrows into language with its sayings. They are even more inconspicuous than the furrows, which the slow-footed man of the land draws through the fields.”<sup>14</sup> In spite of such affected humility not even theological risks are undertaken. The attributes of being do indeed resemble, like the absolute idea of old, the ones transmitted by the deity. But the philosophy of being guards itself from the existence of such. So archaistic the whole, so little does it wish to reveal itself to be unmodern. Instead it participates in modernity as the alibi of the existent, of that to which being transcended and yet which is supposed to be sheltered therein.

### **No-man’s Land 85-86**

Substantive philosophizing since Schelling was founded on the identity-thesis. Only if the epitome of the existent, finally the existent itself, the moment of the Spirit, is reducible to subjectivity; only if the thing and the concept are identical in the higher realm of the Spirit, could one proceed according to Fichte’s axiom, that the a priori is at the same time the a posteriori. However Heidegger runs into the historical judgement on the identity-thesis at the very conception. To his phenomenological maxim, that thought should bow to what it is given or in the end “sent” – as if the thought could not penetrate the conditions of such a sending – the possibility of construction is taboo, of the speculative concept which grew together with the identity-thesis. Husserl’s phenomenology already

labored under the desire to break free from epistemology, under the slogan “to the things themselves”. Husserl expressly named his doctrine non-epistemological\*3\* just as Heidegger later called his non-metaphysical, but shuddered before the transition into substantiality more than any Marburg neo-Kantian, who might find the infinitesimal method of help in making such a transition. Like Husserl, Heidegger sacrifices empirics [Empirie], pushing aside everything which would not, in the words of the former, be eidetic phenomenology, onto the unphilosophical particular sciences. But he extends the bane even to the Husserlian *eidê* [Greek: form, kind], to the highest, fact-free, conceptual unity of the factual, in which traces of substantiality are intermixed. Being is the contraction of essences. Ontology ends up due to its own consistency in a no-man’s land. It must eliminate the a posterioris, nor is it supposed to even be logic, as a doctrine of thinking and a particular discipline; every thinking step would take it over the point, at which it hoped to satisfy itself alone. In the end it scarcely dares to predicate anything, even of being. Therein appears less any mystical meditation than the privation of a thought, which wishes to go to its Other and can permit itself nothing, for fear of losing what it claims. Philosophy turns tendentially into a ritual pose. In it indeed stirs something true, its falling silent.

### **Unsuccessful Materiality-at-hand [Sachlichkeit] 86-87**

The historical innervation of materiality-at-hand [Sachlichkeit] as a mode of conduct of the Spirit is not foreign to the philosophy of being. It would like to break through the intermediary layer of subjective positions, which has become a second nature, the walls [Waende: interior walls] which thinking has built around itself. There are echoes of this in the Husserlian program, and Heidegger agreed with it.<sup>15</sup> The achievement of the subject, which founded the cognition in idealism, gives rise to irritation after the latter’s downfall as a dispensable ornament. Therein fundamental ontology remained just like phenomenology the unwilling heir of positivism.<sup>16</sup> In Heidegger, the matter-at-hand does a somersault: he is intent to philosophize purely from the things, without form, as it were, and thereby these dissolve for him. The surfeit of the subjective prison of cognition gives rise to the conviction that what is transcendent to subjectivity would be immediate for it, without being soiled by the concept. Analogous to romantic currents like the later Jugendbewegung [youth-movement] fundamental ontology mistakes itself for being anti-romantic in the protest against the delimiting and obscuring moment of subjectivity; it wishes to overcome this with a militaristic manner of speaking, something Heidegger does not shrink from.<sup>17</sup> Because subjectivity however cannot think its mediations out of existence, it wishes them back in the stages of consciousness, which lie prior to the reflection on subjectivity and mediation. This fails. Where they thought to cling subjectlessly, as it were, to what the things themselves show, doing justice to what is material, originary and New Functionalist [neusachlich] alike, they eliminate all determinations from what is thought, just as Kant once did from the transcendental thing-in-itself. They gave offense as the work of merely subjective reason as much as the descendants of the particular existent. Contradictory desiderata collide and reciprocally annihilate each other. Because neither speculative thinking, as whatever might be posited from thought, is allowed, nor, as in the reverse case, is an existent insisted on which, as a piece of the world, would compromise the precedence of being, the thought does not dare to think of anything other than something totally empty, far more of an X than the old

transcendental subject ever was, which always carried along with it the memory of the existing consciousness, “egoity”, as the unit of consciousness. This X, the absolutely inexpressible, removed from all predicates, becomes an *ens realissimum* [Latin: most real being] under the name of being. In the compulsory nature of the aporetic construction of the concept, against the will of the philosophy of being, Hegel’s judgement on being is brought down on it: it is indistinguishably one with nothingness, and Heidegger by no means deceived himself about this. However existential ontology is not however to be reproached with that nihilism,<sup>18</sup> which to its horror the left existentialists interpreted it as, but that it presents the nihility of its highest word as a *positivum* [Latin: what is positive].

### **On Categorical Intuition 87-90**

However much being is compressed into a single dimensionless point, through permanent caution from either side, the procedure does have its *fundamentum in re* [Latin: fundamental basis]. Categorical intuition, the innervation of the concept, is a reminder that the categorically constituted facts of the matter [Sachverhalten], which traditional epistemology knew solely as syntheses, must always correspond to a moment beyond the sensory *eidê* [Greek: form, kind]. To this extent they always have something immediate, reminiscent of what can be intuited [Anschaulichkeit: concreity, what can be concretely grasped]. So little as a simple mathematical statement is valid without the synthesis of the figures, between which the equation is posed, so little would – Kant neglects this – the synthesis be possible, unless the relationship of the elements corresponded to this synthesis, regardless of the difficulties in which such a manner of speaking entangles itself according to current logic; unless, put drastically and at the risk of being misunderstood, both sides of the equation in fact equalled one another. This matching is no more to be spoken of outside of the thinking synthesis than a rational synthesis would be without that correspondence: a textbook case of “mediation”. That one wavers in the reflection, as to whether thinking would be an activity and not on the contrary, precisely in its effort, something which measures itself, refers to this. What is spontaneously thought is, inseparable from this, something which appears. If Heidegger had emphasized the aspect of the appearance [Erscheinens] against its complete reduction to thought, that would be a salutary corrective on idealism. But he isolates therein the moment of the matter-at-hand [Sachverhalt], gets hold of it, in Hegel’s terminology, just as abstractly as idealism synthesized it. Hypostasized, it ceases to be a moment, and becomes in the end what ontology, in its protest against the division between the concept and the existent, least of all wished to be: reified. It is however according to its own character genetic. The Hegelian doctrine of the objectivity of the Spirit, product of the historical process, permits something like an intuitive relationship to what is intellectual, as many idealists rediscovered, the late Rickert for example. The more insistently the consciousness feels assured of the realized objectivity of what is intellectual, instead of attributing it to the reflecting subject as a “projection”, the closer it comes to a binding physiognomy of the Spirit. Such forms become a second immediacy to a thinking which does not draw all determinations to one side and disqualify what it faces. The doctrine of categorical intuition relied all too naively on this; it confused that second immediacy with a first. Hegel went far beyond this in the logic of essences; it treated the essence as much as something which sprang from being as something which was independent of this, as a kind of existence, as it were. By contrast, Husserl’s demand, tacitly taken up by Heidegger, for the pure description of intellectual matters-at-hand – to take them for what

they claim to be, and only as that – dogmatizes such matters-at-hand, as if what is intellectual, by reflecting, is once more thought, would not become something different. Without hesitation it is maintained that thinking, inalienable activity, could have an object at large which is not at the same time something produced by being thought. Idealism, already preserved in the concept of the pure intellectual matter-at-hand, is potentially reshaped into ontology. However with the subtraction of purely accepting thought the claim of phenomenology to which the entire school owed its effect collapses: that it does not think up, but researches, describes, is not an epistemology, in short, does not bear the stigma of the reflecting intelligence. The arcanum of fundamental ontology however, being, is the allegedly pure self-providing categorical matter-at-hand, raised to the highest formulation. – Phenomenological analysis was for a long time aware of the fact that the synthesizing consciousness has something receptive about it. What belongs together in the judgement allows itself to be cognized in examples, not merely comparatively. The immediacy of the insight is not to be disputed in its own right, rather its hypostasis. The sharpest light falls on the species, when something primary emanates from a specific object: in it the tautology dissolves, which knows nothing else of the species, than how it is defined. Without the moment of immediate insight Hegel's remark, that the particular is the general, would remain mere assertion. Phenomenology since Husserl rescued it, albeit at the cost of its complement, of the reflecting element. Its apperception however – the later Heidegger shied away from the slogan of the school, which produced him – involves contradictions which are not to be resolved for the sake of peace and quiet from the nominalistic or the realistic side. On the one hand, ideation has an elective affinity to ideology, the smuggling of immediacy through that which is mediated, which clothed it with the authority of the absolute, evident being-in-itself, unimpeachable by the subject. On the other hand the apperception names the physiognomic gaze at intellectual matters-at-hand. It legitimates the fact that the intellectual is not constituted by means of the cognizing consciousness directed at this, but is objectively grounded in itself, far beyond the individual prime mover, in the collective life of the Spirit and according to its immanent laws. That objectivity of the Spirit is adequate to the moment of the immediate gaze. As something already preformed in itself, it can look at itself just like at sensory things. But this intuition is so little absolute and irrefutable as that of sensory things. Husserl has no qualms ascribing that which flashes from the physiognomy, like the a priori Kantian synthetic judgement, to necessity and universality, as in science. What however the categorical intuition, fallibly enough, contributes to, would be the comprehension of the thing itself, not its classificatory preparation. The *pseudos* [Greek: falsity] is not the non-scientificity of the categorical intuition, but its dogmatic scientificization. Under the ideational gaze, the mediation stirs which was frozen in the appearance [Schein] of the immediacy of the intellectually given; therein the apperception is close to the allegorical consciousness. As the experience of that which has come to be in what presumably merely is, it would be almost the exact opposite of what it is used for: not the trusting acceptance of being, but its critique; the consciousness not of the identity of the thing with its concept, but of the rift between both. What the philosophy of being swears by, as if it were the organ of the pure and simple positive, has its truth in negativity. – Heidegger's emphasis on being, which is not supposed to be any mere concept, can be supported by the indissolubility of the judgement-content in judgements as previously Husserl did to the ideal unity of the

species. The positional value of such exemplary consciousnesses may indeed rise historically. The more socialized the world, the more tightly its objects are spun with general determinations, the more the particular matter-at-hand is tendentially, as Guenther Anders remarked, immediately transparent in its generality; the more can be described by micrological immersion in it; a state of facts of nominalistic bent indeed, which is strictly opposed to the ontological intent, although it may have given rise to the apperception without this latter's knowledge. If however this procedure always and again exposes itself to the particular scientific objection, to the in the meantime long since automatized reproach of the false or overhasty generalization, then this is not only the fault of the thought-habits which have long misused their scientific ethos to modestly ordain the matter-at-hand from outside, as the rationalization that they are no longer in this, or do not understand them. Insofar as empirical investigations concretely confront the anticipation of the concept, the medium of exemplary thought, with the fact that what is viewed out of something particular, quasi immediate, possesses no generality as something categorical, Husserl's method just as much as Heidegger's is convicted of its failing, that it shrinks from that test and yet flirts with it with the language of research, making it sound as if it had submitted itself to the test.

### **Being *Thesei* [Greek: thesis] 90-92**

The assertion that being, ordained before every abstraction, would be no concept or at the very least something qualitatively superior, suppresses the fact that every immediacy, which always reproduces itself in all mediations according to the doctrine of Hegel's Phenomenology, is a moment, not the entirety of the cognition. No ontological draft can get by without absolutizing specific moments which are scraped together. If cognition is an interweaving of the synthetic thought-function and what it synthesizes, neither of them independent from the other, then no immediate mindfulness, which Heidegger stipulated as the sole legal writ of a philosophy worthy of the name, can succeed either, unless by virtue of the spontaneity of the thought, which he spurned. If no reflection had content without something immediate, then it would pause non-committally [unverbindlich] and arbitrarily without reflection, without the thinking, distinguishing determination of what the presumably purely demonstrative being meant to a passive, not-thinking thought. The artificial sound of pronunciamenti [Italian: pronouncements], that it deconceals itself or alights [lichte], is due to the fictional character of what is asserted. If the thinking determination and fulfillment of the presumed Ur-word, its critical confrontation with what it aims for, is not possible, then this indicts all talk of being. It is not thought, because in the indeterminacy which it demands it is simply unthinkable. That however the philosophy of being turns unachievability into unassailability, the exemption from the rational process into transcendence in regards to the reflecting understanding, is an act of violence as clever as it is desperate. More determinedly than the phenomenology which stops at the halfway mark, Heidegger would like to break out of the immanence of consciousness. His breakout however is one into a mirror, blind towards the moment of the synthesis in the substrate. He fails to note that the Spirit, which in the Eleatic philosophy of being worshipped by Heidegger professed to be identical with being, is already contained as an implication of meaning in what it presents as that pure selfness, which faced opposite it. Heidegger's critique of the tradition of philosophy becomes objectively contrary to what it promises. By suppressing the subjective Spirit, and therein

necessarily also the material, the facticity, on which the synthesis confirms itself; by pretending that what is articulated according to these moments is something unified and absolute, it becomes the reverse of “destruction”, of the demand to disenchant that which is artificial in the concepts of human beings. Instead of diagnosing human relationships therein, it confuses these with the mundus intelligibilis [Latin: intelligible world]. It repeatedly preserves what it rejects, the thought-forms which, according to its own program, are supposed to be removed as coverings. On the pretext of bringing what lies beneath them to light, it imperceptibly turns once more into that In-itself, into which it has anyway already become to the reified consciousness. What acts as if it is destroying the fetishes, is destroying only the conditions of seeing through them as fetishes. The apparent breakout terminates in what it flees from; the being in which it culminates is *thesei* [Greek: thesis]. In the ceding of being, of what is intellectual mediated, to the accepting glance [Schau], philosophy converges with the flatly irrationalistic one of life. The sign of irrationality would not by itself be as one with philosophical irrationalism. That is the mark which the insuperable non-identity of subject and object leaves on cognition, which postulates the predicative judgement of identity through its mere form; also the hope contrary to the hegemony of the subjective concept. But irrationality remains just like this the function of the ratio and the object of its self-critique: what slips through the net, is filtered by such. Even the philosophemes of irrationalism rely on concepts and thereby on a rational moment, which would be incompatible with them. Heidegger evades what needs to be done, according to one of the motives of dialectics, in that he usurps a standpoint beyond the difference of subject and object, in which the inadequacy of the ratio to what is thought is revealed. Such a leap however fails with the means of reason. Thought cannot conquer any position wherein the separation of subject and object which lies in every thought, in thinking itself, would immediately disappear. That is why Heidegger’s moment of truth levels out into just another world-view of irrationalism. Philosophy demands today as in Kant’s time the critique of reason through this, not its banishment or abolition.

### **“Meaning of Being” 93-94**

Under the banning of thought, thinking sanctions what merely is. The genuinely critical need of thought, to awaken from the phantasmagoria of culture, is ensnared, canalized, steered into false consciousness. The culture in whose environs it grew stopped thought from asking, what’s it all about, and what for – roughly put, that of its meaning, which becomes ever more urgent, the less such meaning is obvious to human beings, and the more completely the cultural bustle replaces it. Instead of this, the now-things-are-so-and-not-otherwise is enthroned of what, as culture, claims to have meaning. Under the weight of its existence, the issue of whether the meaning which it claims would be realized, is insisted upon as little as the issue of its own legitimacy. On the other hand fundamental ontology steps forwards as the spokesperson of the interest which was spirited away, of “the forgotten”. This is not the least of the reasons for its aversion to epistemology, which is quick to rank that interest among the prejudices. Nevertheless it cannot annul epistemology any way it wishes. In the doctrine of existence – of subjectivity – as the royal road to ontology, there secretly rises up once again the old subjective inquiry, which had been humbled by ontological pathos. The claim of the phenomenological methods to disempower the tradition of Western philosophizing is still

bound up in the latter, and scarcely deceives itself over this; for the effect of originality it may thank the progress of forgetting under those, who appeal to it. The turn in the question of the meaning of existence or its traditional variants, why is there anything at all, and not nothing? – is of phenomenological origin: it is ceded to the analysis of meaning of the word being. What it, or existence, would in any case mean, would be as one with the meaning of being or existence; something which is itself already as culturally immanent as the meanings which semantics deciphers in languages is denounced, as if it had escaped from the relativity of something artificial as much as from the meaninglessness of the merely existent. That is the function of Heidegger's version of the doctrine of the primacy of language. That the sense of the word being would immediately be the meaning of being is a bad equivocation. To be sure equivocations are not merely imprecise expressions.<sup>19</sup> The consonance of words does indeed refer to a similarity. Both senses of meaning are interwoven. Concepts, instruments of human thought, cannot make sense, if sense is itself negated, if every memory of something objective, beyond the mechanisms of the formation of concepts, is driven out. Positivism, to which concepts are only exchangeable, accidental tokens, drew the consequences from this and extirpated the truth in honor of truth. Certainly the counter-position taken by the philosophy of being reproves the folly of its reason. But the unity of the equivocal becomes visible solely through its implicit differentiation. It is discarded in Heidegger's talk of meaning. He follows therein his inclination to hypostasis: he lends the appearance [Schein] of unconditionality to findings from the sphere of what is conditioned by the mode of their expression. This becomes possible through the iridescent shimmer of the word being. If true being is conceived of as radically *chôris* [Greek: separately] from the existent, then it is identical with its meaning: one need only cite the meaning of what is essential [Wesenheit] to being and one has the meaning of being itself. According to this scheme the breakout attempt out of idealism is imperceptibly revoked, the doctrine of being regresses into one of a thinking which removes everything from being, which would be different from pure thought. In order to make any sort of sense of being, which is perceived as absent, the compensatory offer is made of what is constituted in advance as the realm of meaning in the analytic judgement, the doctrine of interpretation. That concepts, in order to be anything of the sort, must mean something, serves as the vehicle for the fact that their *hypokeimeuou* [Greek: underlying ground, substratum] – being itself – must have meaning, because it would not otherwise be given than as a concept, as linguistic signification. That this concept is not supposed to be a concept but immediate, veils the semantic meaning in ontological dignity. "The talk of 'being' never understands these names in the sense of a species, under whose empty generality the historically conceived doctrine of the existent belongs as special cases. 'Being' speaks ever and anon as sent and thereby permeated by tradition."<sup>20</sup> Such philosophies derive their consolation from this. It is the magnet of fundamental ontology, far beyond its theoretical content.

### **Ontology Suborned 94-96**

Ontology would like to restore the social order exploded by the Spirit, including its authority, from out of the Spirit. The expression "draft" [Entwurf: draft, design, sketch] betrays its tendency to negate freedom out of freedom: transsubjective committalness [Verbindlichkeit] is delivered over to an act of constitutive subjectivity. This all too apparent absurdity could be expressed by the later Heidegger only dogmatically. The

memory of subjectivity is uprooted from the concept of the draft: “That which is thrown [Werfende] in the draft [Entwerf] is not humanity, but being itself, which sends humanity into the everyday existence [Eksistenz] of the exist-ence [Da-Sein] as its essence.” To Heidegger’s mythologization of being as the sphere of sending<sup>22</sup> is added the mythical hubris, which proclaims the decreed plan of the subject as one of the highest authority, passing itself off as the voice of being. The consciousness which does not experience this is disqualified as “forgetfulness of being”.<sup>23</sup> Such proscriptive claims of social order harmonize with the Heideggerian thought-structure. Only as an act of violence against thought does it have a chance. For the loss which resonates in the kitschy expression forgetfulness of being was no stroke of destiny but motivated. What is mourned, the legacy of the early *archai* [Greek: ancient, old], melted away from the consciousness, which wrenched itself away from nature. Mythos itself becomes apparent as deception; the deception alone can concretize it, and the command. It is supposed to realize the self-stylization of being as a Beyond of the critical concept and yet at the same time the legal title, which heteronomy requires, so long as something survives of Enlightenment. The suffering under what Heidegger’s philosophy registers as the loss of being is not only the untruth; he would scarcely have sought succor from Hölderlin otherwise. The society, according to whose own concept the relations of human beings are to be founded in freedom, without freedom being realized to this day, is as paralyzed as defective. In the universal exchange-relationship all qualitative moments are flattened out, whose epitome could be something like a structure. The more overweening the power of institutional forms, the more chaotic the life which they hem in and deform in their own image. The production and reproduction of life, including everything which bears the name of the superstructure, are not transparent to that reason, whose reconciled realization would only be one with a social order worthy of human beings, one without violence. The old, naturally-spawned orders have either passed away or outlived their own legitimation for ill. By no means is the course of society anywhere so anarchic, as it still seems in the constantly irrational contingency of the individual destiny. But its objectified juridicality [Gesetzlichkeit] is the adversary of a constitution of existence, in which one could live without fear. Even the ontological drafts feel this, projecting it onto the victims, the subjects, and frantically drowning out the apprehension of objective negativity by means of the tidings of order in itself, all the way to the most abstract one of all, the structure of being. Everywhere the world is preparing to pass over into the horror of social order, not into what the apologetic philosophies overtly or covertly lament as its opposite. That freedom remained largely an ideology; that human beings are powerless before the system and are not capable of determining their life and that of the whole through reason; indeed that they cannot even think the thought of such, without suffering even more, ensorcelled their rebellion into its inverted form: they invidiously prefer the worse to the appearance [Schein] of something better. The contemporary philosophies have their share in contributing to this. They already feel themselves in tune with the dawning order of the mightiest interests, while they, like Hitler, tragically bear the lonely risk. That they pose as metaphysically homeless and bound up in nothingness, is the ideology of justification as much as of the social order, which causes humanity to despair and threatens it with physical extermination. The resonance of a resurrected metaphysics is anticipatory agreement with that oppression, whose victory lies in the social potential of the West and was long ago achieved in the East, where the thought of realized freedom is twisted into

unfreedom. Heidegger promotes a bondage thinking and rejects the use of the word humanism, with the standard gesture against the market of public opinion. He thereby takes his place in the common front of those who rail against the isms. It might well be asked if he does not wish for that reason merely to abolish the talk of humanism, which is horrid enough, because his doctrine wishes to end the matter.

### **Protest Against Reification 96-99**

In spite of their authoritarian intentions, the ontologies, enriched by a few experiences, seldom praise hierarchy as openly as in the times when a student of Scheler published a work on "The World of the Middle Ages and Us". The tactic of covering all flanks harmonizes with a social phase, whose relations of domination are only half-heartedly founded in a past stage of society. The power-seizure reckons with the anthropological end-products of bourgeois society and needs them. Just as the Fuehrer rises above the atomized people, rails against snobbery and, in order to perpetuate himself, occasionally changes the guards, so too did hierarchical sympathies disappear since the dawning era of the ontological renaissance into the hegemony and solitude of being. This too is not merely ideology. The anti-relativism dating back to Husserl's text on the foundation of logical absolutism, the Prolegomena to Pure Logic, is intermixed with an aversion against static, thingly [dinghaft] thinking, expressed in German idealism and Marx, but in the meantime at first neglected by the early Scheler and the earliest sprouts of modern ontology. In any case the relevance of relativism has lessened; there is less chatter about it, too. The philosophical need has passed over imperceptibly from one of substantive matter [Sachgehalt] and solidity into one of evading the reification of the Spirit which was carried out by society and categorically dictated by its members, through a metaphysics which condemns such reification, delimiting it through the appeal to an original which cannot be lost, and thereby does so little harm to it as ontology does to the scientific bustle. Nothing remains of the compromised eternal values except confidence in the sanctity of being, whose essence is prior to everything thingly. For the sake of its contemptible inauthenticity in view of thingly being, which is supposed to be dynamic in itself, to "occur", the reified world is considered unworthy, as it were, of transformation; the critique of relativism is exorbitantly raised into the denunciation of the progressive rationality of Western thought, including subjective reason. The time-tested hue and cry already being raised in the public opinion against the subversive intellect allies itself with the one against what is materially [dinghaft] alienated: both ever played to the other. Heidegger is at once hostile towards things and anti-functional. At no price is being supposed to be a thing and yet, as the metaphor indicates over and over again, the "soil", something solid.<sup>24</sup> Therein becomes apparent, that subjectivization and reification do not merely diverge, but are correlates. The more that which is cognized becomes functionalized as the product of cognition, the more completely the moment of movement in it is reckoned to the subject as its activity; the object, to the result of the labor congealed in it, something dead. The reduction of the object to mere material, which precedes all subjective synthesis as its necessary condition, sucks its own dynamic out of it; it is immobilized as something disqualified, robbed of whatever would allow movement to be predicated. It is not for nothing that Kant named a whole class of categories as dynamic.<sup>25</sup> The material however, exclusive of dynamics, is no mere immediacy but, despite the appearance [Schein] of its absolute concreity, mediated

through abstraction, first pierced through, as it were. Life is polarized according to that which is entirely abstract and entirely concrete, while it would exist solely in the tension between them; both poles are equally reified, and even what is left of the spontaneous subject, the pure apperception, ceases to be a subject through its dissolution from every living I, as Kant thought of the I, and passes over in its logicity, autonomized, into the hegemonic paralysis. Only, Heidegger's critique of reification summarily charges the reflecting and realizing intellect of what has its origin in reality, which is itself reified along with its world of experience. What the Spirit does, is not the fault of its irreverent presumptuousness, but it gives back, what it is compelled to by the context of reality, in which it itself forms only a moment. To slide back reification into being and the history of being, thereby mourning as fate and consecrating what self-reflection and the praxis it can spark would perhaps like to change, is solely untruth. Indeed the doctrine of being hands down, legitimately against positivism, what the entire history which it slanders grounded, notably Kant and Hegel: that the dualism of the inner and outer, of subject and object, of essence and appearance, of concept and fact are not absolute. Their reconciliation however is projected onto the irretrievable origin and thereby the dualism itself, against which the whole was conceived, is hardened contrary to the reconciling impulse. The dirge over the forgetfulness of being is the sabotage of reconciliation; the mythic impenetrable history of being, in which hope still clings, denies this. Its fatality is to be broken through as the context of deception.

### **False Need 99-100**

This context of deception extends however not only to the ontological drafts but just as much to the needs, to which they are bound and out of which they indistinctly read something like the surety of their theses. Need itself, the intellectual one not less than the material one, is open to critique, since even hard-boiled naivete can no longer be certain that social processes are still directed immediately towards supply and demand, and thereby towards needs. As little as these are something invariant, non-deducible, so little do they guarantee their satisfaction. The appearance [Schein] in them and the illusion, that where they register themselves, they must also be sated, goes back to the same false consciousness. Insofar as they are produced heteronomously, they have a share in ideology, were they ever so tangible. Indeed that which is real is not to be cleanly peeled out of the ideological, if the critique does not wish for its part to succumb to ideology, that of the simple natural life. Real needs can objectively be ideologies, without rendering this as a legal mandate to negate them. For in the needs themselves something reacts in the human beings who are recorded [erfassten] and administered, wherein they are not entirely recordings [erfasst sind], the surplus of the subjective share, which the system did not entirely master. Material needs ought to be taken seriously even in their topsyturvy form, caused by overproduction. Even the ontological need has its real moment in a condition in which human beings do not have the capacity to rationally – meaningfully – know or recognize the necessity which alone rules their behavior. The false consciousness of needs aims at something which self-aware subjects would not need, and compromises thereby every possible fulfillment. To false consciousness can be added, that it passes off what is unattainable as attainable, complementarily to the possible attainment of needs, which it is forbidden. At the same time these sorts of inverted needs intellectually demonstrate the suffering unaware of itself in material privation. It must

push for its abolition, as much as the need by itself fails to do so. The thought without need, which wants nothing, would be nugatory; but thinking out of the need becomes confused, if the need is conceived merely subjectively. Needs are a conglomerate of the true and the false; the true thought would be the one, which wished for what is right. If there is any truth to the doctrine which says needs are to be read not as any natural condition but against the so-called cultural standard, then what also hides in this are the relations of social production along with its bad irrationality. This latter is to be relentlessly criticized against intellectual needs, the ersatz for everything which has been withheld. Modern ontology is an ersatz in itself: what promises to be beyond the approach of idealism remains latent idealism and prevents its incisive critique. Not only the primitive wish-fulfillments, which the culture-industry feeds the masses without the latter ever quite believing in them, are generally ersatz. Deception has no borders there, where the official cultural canon places its goods, in the presumed sublime of philosophy. The most urgent of its needs today seems to be that for something solid. It inspires the ontologies; it is what they take the measure of. It has its right in this, that one wishes to have security, to not be buried by a historical dynamic against which one feels powerless. That which is immovable would like to conserve that which is condemned as old. The more hopelessly the existing social forms block this longing, the more irresistibly does despairing self-preservation strike a philosophy, which is supposed to be both in one, despairing and self-preservation. The invariant structures are created in the spitting image of omnipresent terror, the vertigo of a society threatened by total destruction. If the threat vanished, then its positive inversion would most likely disappear along with it, itself nothing other than its abstract negative.

### **Weakness and Support 100-103**

The need is more specific for a structure of invariant reactions relating to the conception of the loss of forms in the world, originally drawn up by conservative culture-critique in the nineteenth century and popularized since then. Art-historical theses like that of the extinction of the power to form styles fed them; it spread from aesthetics into a view of the whole. What the art-historians assumed is by no means conclusive, i.e. that this loss actually was one, and not instead a mighty step towards the unleashing of the productive forces. Aesthetically revolutionary theoreticians like Adolf Loos still dared to express this at the beginning of the century;<sup>26</sup> only the frightened consciousness of those cultural critics who swore by the existing culture forgot it. The lament over the loss of ordering forms increases with their power. The institutions are mightier than ever; they have long since produced something like the neon-lit style of the culture-industry, which spreads over the world like the Baroque style once did. The undiminished conflict between subjectivity and forms reverses itself under the hegemony of the latter into the consciousness which experiences itself as powerless, which no longer trusts itself to change the institutions and their intellectual mirror-images, into identification with the aggressor. The lament over the loss of forms in the world, the prelude to the call for a binding social order, which the subject tacitly expects from outside, heteronomously, is, insofar as the assertion is more than mere ideology, not the fruit of the emancipation of the subject but of its failure. What appears as formless to a constitution of the existent modeled solely after subjective reason is what subjugates the subjects, the pure principle of being-for-others, of the commodity form. For the sake of universal equivalence and

comparability it debases all qualitative determinations in all places, leveling tendentially. The same commodity form however, the mediated domination of human beings over human beings, solidifies the subjects in their lack of autonomy; their autonomy and the freedom towards the qualitative would go together. Under the spotlight of modern art style reveals its repressive moments. The need for form borrowed from such deceptively glosses over what is bad in it, what is compulsory. The form, which does not justify its right to exist in itself by means of its transparent function, but is only posited, just so that there would be form, is untrue and thereby also inadequate as form. The Spirit, which one wishes to persuade that it would be hidden in them, is potentially beyond them. Only because the attempt to arrange the world such that it no longer obeyed the form-categories contrary to the most advanced consciousness failed, must such prevailing categories frantically be made their own thing. Because however the Spirit cannot completely repress their inadequacy, it opposes the contemporary, crassly visible heteronomy against another one, be it past, be it abstract, with values as *causae sui* [Latin: causing themselves] and the fantasm of their reconcilability with living beings. The hatred for radical modern art, in which restorative conservatism and fascism constantly chime together blissfully, rests on this, that they are reminders of that which was missed, bringing to light the dubiousness of the heteronomous structural ideal through its pure existence. Socially, the subjective consciousness of human beings is too weak to explode the invariants in which it is imprisoned. Instead of this it adjusts itself to them, while mourning its absence. Reified consciousness is a moment in the totality of the reified world; the ontological need its metaphysics, even when, according to its doctrinal content, it exploits the same critique of reification, nowadays grown cheap. The form of invariance as such is the projection of what is paralyzed in that consciousness. Incapable of the experience of anything not already contained in the repertory of monotony, it coins immutability into the idea of something eternal, that of transcendence. The emancipated consciousness, which indeed no one has in a state of unfreedom; one, which had control of itself, as truly autonomous as it hitherto only pretended to be, would not be constantly afraid of losing itself to an Other – secretly, to the powers which rule it. The need for support, for the alleged substantial, is not as substantial as its self-justification would like; rather, the sign of the weakness of the I, familiar to psychology as a typical injury nowadays of human beings. Whoever was no longer oppressed from without and from within would not seek support, perhaps not even from themselves. Subjects, who might rescue something of freedom even under heteronomous conditions, suffer less from the lack of support than the unfree ones, who charge this only too happily to freedom, as freedom's fault. If humanity no longer had to make themselves into the equivalents of things, they would need neither a thingly [dinghaft] superstructure, nor would they have to designate themselves, following the model of thingliness [Dinglichkeit], as invariant. The doctrine of invariance eternalizes how little has changed, its positivity as what is bad. To this extent the ontological need is false. Probably metaphysics would dawn on the horizon only after the fall of invariants. But the consolation is of little help. What would be right on time, has no time to spare, there is no waiting on what is decisive; whoever relies on this, encounters the separation of the temporal and the eternal. Because it is false and nevertheless the answers, which it requires, are blocked by the historical moment, all questions which have to do with consolation have an antinomical character.

## **II. Being and Existence**

### **Immanent Critique of Ontology 104-107**

The critique of ontological need drives towards the immanent one of ontology. Nothing which attacks the philosophy of being generally, from outside, would have any power over it, instead of meeting it on its own turf – after Hegel’s desiderata, turning its own power against itself. The motivations and results of Heidegger’s thought-movements permit their reconstruction in retrospect, even where they are not expressed; to be sure hardly any one of his sentences lacks positional value in the functional context of the whole. To that extent he is the successor of the deductive systems. The latter’s history already has a wealth of concepts realized from the course of thought, even when one cannot put a finger on the matter-at-hand [Sachverhalt] which would correspond to them; the speculative moment of philosophy originates out of the necessity of forming them. That which is petrified in the thought-movement is to be rendered fluid once more, by repeatedly following up on its validity, as it were. It does not suffice to demonstrate to the philosophy of being that, in regards to what it calls being, there would be no such thing. For it postulates no such “giving” [Geben]. Instead, such a blindness of being would need to be deduced in reply to the claim of irrefutability, which employs that blindness. Even the meaninglessness, whose establishment stirred the triumphal cry of positivism, is meaningful in the philosophy of history. Because the secularization of the theological content once deemed objectively binding is not to be revoked, its apologist seeks to rescue it through subjectivity. The Reformation’s doctrine of belief already virtually did so; it was surely the defining figure of the Kantian philosophy. Since then Enlightenment has progressed irresistibly, subjectivity has itself become drawn into the process of demythologization. The chance for rescue sank thereby to a limit-point. Paradoxically its hope has been ceded to its sacrifice, to an unconditional and at the same time self-reflecting secularization. Heidegger’s approach is true, to the extent that he submits to this in the negation of traditional metaphysics; he becomes untrue, where he, not at all so different from Hegel, speaks as if what was thereby to be saved was immediately present. The philosophy of being fails as soon as it proclaims a meaning in being, which that thinking dissolved according to its own testimony, to which being itself is still attached as the conceptual reflection, ever since it has been thought. The meaninglessness of the word being, at which sound common sense is wont to sneer, is not to be ascribed to thinking too little or to an irresponsible scattershot thinking. Deposited in it is the impossibility of grasping or producing positive meaning in the thought, which was the medium of the objective dissolution of meaning. If one sought to complete the Heideggerian distinction between being and its logically circumscribing concept, one would be left, after the subtraction of the existent as well as the categories of abstraction, with something unknown in hand, which has no advantage over the Kantian concept of the transcendental thing in-itself except the pathos of its invocation. Therein however the word thinking, which Heidegger may not renounce, becomes as devoid of content as what is to be thought: thinking without the concept is nothing of the sort. That this being, whose thinking would according to Heidegger be the true task, blocks itself off from

every thought-determination, hollows out the appeal to think it. Heidegger's objectivism, the curse of the bane over the thinking subject, is the true reversed-image of such. In sentences which are meaningless to positivists, change [Wechsel: change, also financial note] is presented to the epoch; they are false for this reason, that they claim to be meaningful, resounding like the echo of something which has content in itself. Meaning does not dwell in the innermost cell of Heidegger's philosophy; while it expounds itself as the knowledge of salvation, it is what Scheler called the knowledge of domination. To be sure Heidegger's cult of being did have, polemically against the idealistic one of the Spirit, the critique of its self-deification as its prerequisite. The Heideggerian being however, almost indistinguishable from Spirit, its antipode, is no less repressive than this; only more opaque than such, whose principle was transparency; hence even less capable of critical self-reflection of the dominating essence than the philosophies of the Spirit. The electrical charge of the word being in Heidegger fits nicely with the praise bestowed by a neutralized culture on human beings who are devout or faithful pure and simple, as if devotion and belief were merits in themselves, irregardless of the truth of what is believed in. This neutralization comes into its own in Heidegger: ritual devotion to being completely cancels out the content, which was noncommittally dragged along in half or entirely secularized religions. Nothing is left of religious customs in Heidegger, who drills them in, than the general strengthening of dependence and submissiveness, surrogates of the objective law of form of thinking. While the structure permanently recedes, it does not leave its adepts, just like logical positivism. With the facts expropriated of everything which made them more than facts, Heidegger thus takes charge of the waste-product, as it were, of the evaporating aura. It guarantees to philosophy something like a post-existence, insofar as it occupies itself with the *eu kai pau* [Greek: well and ended, well and finished] as its specialty. The expression of being is nothing other than the feeling of that aura, one indeed without stars, which shed light on it. In it, the moment of mediation becomes isolated and thereby immediate. Mediation is however so little to be hypostasized as the poles of subject and object; it is valid solely in their constellation. Mediation is mediated through that which is mediated. Heidegger overstretches it into a non-objective objectivity, as it were. He settles in an imaginary intermediary realm between the obtuse sensibility of the *facta bruta* [Latin: brute facts] and the twaddle of the world-view. The concept of being, which does not want to give voice to its mediations, becomes the non-essence, the repetition of the existent, which Aristoteles saw through in the Platonic idea, the essence par excellence. From this is exacted whatever is ascribed to being. While the emphatic claim of being to pure essentiality thus becomes invalid, the existent, which dwells inextinguishably in being without, in the Heideggerian version, having to confess to its ontic character, partakes of that ontological claim parasitically. That being would demonstrate itself, that it would be passively received by the subject, is borrowed from the old data of epistemology, which were supposed to be something factual, something ontic. However that which is ontic simultaneously casts aside the trace of contingency in the sacred district of being, which previously permitted its critique. By virtue of the logic of the philosophic aporia, without waiting for the ideological supplement of the philosopher, it displaces the empirical hegemony of the existent as such into that which is intrinsic [Wesenhafte]. The conception of being as an entity, whose thinking determination invariably misses what is thought by cutting it into pieces and thereby, according to the current political term,

subverts it, hearkens back to the Eleatic unity of conclusiveness just like the system once did and today the world. Contrary to the intent of the systems, however, the unity of what is conclusive is heteronomous: unattainable by the rational will as well as by individuals based on that social total subject, which until this day has not been realized. In the statically renewed society, thereby indicated, no new motifs seem to be swelling the stockpile of apologetic ideology; rather the current ones are so diluted and rendered unrecognizable, that they can be disavowed from contemporary experience only with difficulty. If the fallbacks and artful dodges of philosophy project the existent on being, then the existent is happily justified; if it is punished with contempt as the mere existent, then it will be permitted to foment the bad state of affairs [Unwesen] outside without hindrance. Highly sensitive dictators did not do otherwise by avoiding visits to concentration camps, whose functionaries earnestly followed their orders.

### **Copula 107-111**

The cult of being lives by the ancient ideology of the *idola fori* [Latin: idols of the marketplace]: that which thrives in the darkness of the word being and the forms derived from it. “Is” establishes the context of the existential judgement between the grammatical subject and the predicate and thereby suggests something ontic. At the same time, taken purely by itself, as the copula, it means the general categorical matter-at-hand of a synthesis, without representing something ontic. That is why it has no qualms about adding itself to the ontological side of the ledger. Heidegger draws the ontological purity from the logicity of the copula, thus suiting his allergy against the factual; from the existential judgement however the memory of the ontic, which then permits it to hypostasize the categorical achievement of the synthesis as a given fact. To the “is” there does indeed correspond a “matter-at-hand”: in every predicative judgement the “is” has its meaning just as much as the subject and the predicate. The “matter-at-hand” is however intentional, not ontic. The copula fulfills itself according to its own meaning solely in the relation between the subject and the predicate. It is not independent. By confusing it for something beyond that through which it alone becomes meaningful, Heidegger is overcome by that thingly [dinghaft] thinking, against which he rebelled. In that he solidifies what is meant by the “is” into the absolute ideal in-itself – exactly that of being – what is represented by the subject and predicate of the judgement, once torn loose from the copula, would have the same rights. Both would experience their synthesis through the copula merely superficially; the concept of being was thought up precisely against this. Subject, copula, predicate would once again, as in obsolete logic, be conclusive in themselves, finished particularities, according to the model of things. In truth however the predication is not added in, but by coupling both together, is also what they would be in themselves, if this “would be” could somehow be conceived without the synthesis of the “is”. This is what bars the extrapolation from the copula to a preordained essence of “being”, just as much as to a “becoming”, the pure synthesis. That extrapolation rests on an interpretive-theoretical confusion: that the general meaning of the copula “is”, the constant grammatical token for the synthesis of the judgement, achieves the specific one, that of the “is” in every judgement. By no means do both coincide. To this extent the “is” could be compared to occasional expressions. Its generality is a promissory note on the particularity, the general form for the consummation of particular judgements. The nomenclature takes this into account, in that

it already reserves the scientific terminus “copula” for that generality and for the specific achievement, which the judgement always has to achieve, precisely the “is”. Heidegger fails to notice the difference. Therein the specific achievement of the “is” becomes merely something like a mode of appearance of that generality. The distinction between the category and the content of the existential judgement melts away. The substitution of the general grammatical form for the apophantic content transforms the ontic achievement of the “is” into an ontological one, a mode of being of being. If one neglects however what is postulated in the sense of “is”, the mediated and mediating achievement in the particular, then there would remain no other sort of substrate left to that “is”, except the abstract form of mediation at large. This pure becoming, in Hegel’s words, is so little an Ur-principle as any other, unless one wishes to drive out Parmenides with Heraclitus. The word being has an overtone, which only the arbitrary definition could fail to hear; it lends the Heideggerian philosophy its chromata [Klangfarbe: tone-color]. Every existent is more than what it is; being, in contrast to the existent, is a reminder of this. Because nothing is existent, which does not, by being determined and itself determining, require an other, which it is not itself – for by itself alone there would be nothing to determine – it points beyond itself. Mediation is simply another word for this. Heidegger however seeks to rein in that which points beyond itself and reduces what it points towards to rubble. For him imbrication becomes its absolute opposite, the *prôtê ousia* [Greek: primary substance]. In the word being, the epitome of that which is, the copula is concretized. One could so little speak of the “is” without “being” as vice versa. The word points to the objective moment, which conditions the synthesis in every predicative judgement, in which it nevertheless first crystallized. But being is so little independent in regards to the “is” as that matter-at-hand is in the judgement. Language, which Heidegger correctly takes for more than mere signification, testifies by virtue of the dependence of its forms against what he squeezes out of it. If grammar links the “is” with the substrate-category of being as its asset: that something is, then it reciprocally uses being solely in relation to all of what is, not in itself. To be sure the appearance [Schein] of what is ontologically pure is reinforced by the fact that every analysis of judgements leads towards two moments, neither of which is to be reduced to the other – no more so than, metalogically, subject and object.\*4\* The thought fascinated by the chimera of an absolute first will eventually be inclined to claim even that irreducibility itself as that which is ultimate. In Heidegger’s concept of being there are echoes of the reduction to irreducibility. But it is a formalization, which does not mesh with what is being formalized. It says, taken on its own behalf, nothing more than the negative, that the moments of judgement, whenever judged, do not pass over into each other on one side or the other; that they are not identical. Outside of this relationship of moments of judgement, irreducibility is nothing, nothing at all can be thought under it. That is why no ontological priority can be imputed to it in relation to the moments. The paralogism lies in the transformation of that negative, that no single moment is to be reduced to the other, into something positive. Heidegger reaches the very borders of the dialectical insight into the non-identity in identity. But he does not carry through the contradiction in the concept of being. He suppresses it. Whatever could be thought under being, mocks the identity of the concept with that which it means; but Heidegger maltreats it as identity, as itself pure being, excluding all its otherness. He hushes up the non-identity in absolute identity like a family scandal. Because the “is” is neither merely subjective function nor something

thingly [Dinghaftes], something existent, according to traditional thinking has no objectivity, Heidegger calls it being, that which is third. The transition ignores the intention of the expression which Heidegger humbly believes to have explicated. The cognition, that the “is” would be no mere thought and no mere existent, does not permit its transfiguration into something transcendent in relation to one of these two determinations. Every attempt to even think the “is”, were it in the palest of generalities, leads to the existent here and into concepts there. The constellation of moments is not to be reduced to a singular essence; what dwells within it, is itself not essence. The unity, which the word being promises, lasts only so long, as it is not thought, as long as its meaning, in line with Heidegger’s own method, is not analyzed; any such analysis will bring to light what disappeared in the abyss of being. If the analysis of being itself becomes taboo, then the aporia passes over into subreption. In being, the absolute is supposed to be thought, but only because it is not to be thought, would it be the absolute; only because it magically blinds the cognition of the moments, does it seem to be beyond the moments; because reason cannot think its best, it becomes, to itself, the worst.

### **No Transcendence of Being 111-114**

In truth all particular concepts are, contrary to the linguistic atomism of Heidegger, the faithful believer in the whole, already entwined in themselves along with the judgements which classifying logic neglected; the old tripartite scheme of logic divided into concept, judgement and conclusion is an archaicism just like the system of Linnaeus. Judgements are no mere synthesis of concepts, for no concept is without a judgement; Heidegger overlooks this, perhaps under the bane of scholasticism. However in the mediatedness [Vermitteltheit] of being as well as the “is” hides the subject. Heidegger ignores this idealistic moment, if you will, and thereby raises subjectivity to something given prior to the subject-object dualism, something absolute. That every analysis of the judgement leads to the subject and object, creates no region beyond those moments, which would be in itself. It results in the constellation of those moments, no higher nor even more general third. It can certainly be argued, in Heidegger’s sense, that the “is” would not be thingly, not *ta houta* [Greek: to the wound], not an existent, not an objectivity in the usual sense of the term. For without the synthesis the “is” has no substrate; in the matter-at-hand in question no *tode ti* [Greek: individual thing, this-here] could be pointed to which would correspond to it. Therefore, goes the conclusion, the “is” ought to indicate that third, precisely that of being. This however is wrong, a coup of self-satisfied semantics. The false conclusion becomes flagrant, in that such a presumably pure substrate of the “is” cannot be thought. Every attempt to do so lands in mediations, from which the hypostasized being would like to be exempt. The conclusion however that it cannot be thought, Heidegger books as a net gain, an addition to the metaphysical dignity of being. Because it refuses thinking, it would be the absolute; because it cannot, in best Hegelian manner, be reproduced as a subject or object without a remainder, it would be beyond the subject and object, although if it were independent of them, it could not at all be. Reason, which cannot think it, is in the end itself defamed, as if thought could ever be separated from reason. It is indisputable, that being would not simply be the epitome of what is, of what is the case. Such an anti-positivistic insight does justice to the surplus of the concept over facticity. No concept could be thought, indeed none would even be possible without the “more”, which makes language into language. What in the meantime resonates in the

word being, as opposed to *ta houta* [Greek: to the wound]: that everything would be more than it is, means imbrication, not something transcendent to it. That is what it becomes in Heidegger, who adds it to the particular existent. He follows the dialectic to the point that neither subject nor object would be something immediate and ultimate, but springs out of it, by reaching beyond them for something immediate, something first. Thinking becomes archaic, as soon as it transfigures what in the scattered existent is more than itself into the metaphysical *archê* [Greek: beginning, origin]. As a reaction to the loss of the aura,<sup>1</sup> this latter, as that which points beyond itself in things, is refunctionalized by Heidegger into a substrate and thereby made the same as the things. He prescribes a repriming of the shudder which, long before the mythical nature-religions, prepared the sacred commingling [In-ein-ander]: *mana*<sup>2</sup> is recuperated out of the German name "being", as if the dawning powerlessness resembled that of the pre-animistic primitives towards thunder and lightning. Heidegger secretly obeys the law that with advancing rationality the constantly irrational society reaches ever further back. Wiser for experience, he avoids the Romantic Pelagianism of Klages and the powers of Oskar Goldberg and flees from the region of tangible superstition into a twilight, in which not even mythologemes like that of the reality of images can take shape anymore. He escapes the critique, without dispensing with the advantages of the origin; this is pushed back so far, that it seems to be timeless and hence ubiquitous. "But that / won't do."<sup>3</sup> There is no other way to break out of history than through regression. Its goal, the oldest of all, is not what is true but the absolute appearance [Schein], the obtuse entanglement in a nature, whose impenetrable opacity merely parodies the supernatural. Heidegger's transcendence\*5\* is absolutized immanence, obdurate against its own immanence-character. That appearance [Schein] requires explanation; how it is that the purely deduced, the mediated, being, can hijack the insignia of the *ens concretissimum* [Latin: most concrete being]. It is based on the fact that the poles of traditional epistemology and metaphysics, the pure this-right-here [Diesda] and pure thought, are abstract. Both are so far removed from so many determination that little more can be said of them, if the judgement wishes to proceed by what it judges. Therein both poles seem indistinguishable from each other, and this permits the imperceptible substitution of one in place of the other, depending on what is to be demonstrated. The concept of the existent pure and simple, according to its ideal without any categories, in its complete lack of qualifications, need only delimit itself to nothing existent, and can thus call itself being. Being however, as absolute concept, does not need to legitimate itself as being: with every circumscription it would delimit itself and violate its own meaning. That is why it can be garbed with the dignity of the immediate as much as the *tode ti* [Greek: individual thing, this-here] with that which is intrinsic [Wesenhaften]. Heidegger's entire philosophy plays out between these two extremes, indifferent to each other.\*6\* But against his will the existent ends up prevailing over being. This latter is kept alive by the forbidden fruit, as if this were Freya's apples. While being, for the sake of its auratic absoluteness, does not wish to be contaminated with anything existent, only therein does it become that immediacy which delivers the legal title of the claim to absoluteness, that being always means so much as: the existent pure and simple. As soon as the talk of being adds anything at all to the pure invocation, it stems from the ontic. The rudiments of material ontology in Heidegger are temporal; are something which has come to be and which are transient, as Scheler before.

## **Expression of the Inexpressible 114-116**

Justice would at any rate be done to the concept of being only if the genuine experience which its instauration realizes is understood: the philosophic spur to express the inexpressible. The more anxiously philosophy blocks itself from that spur, its peculiarity, the greater the temptation to directly go after the inexpressible, without the labor of Sisyphus, which would not be the worst definition of philosophy, and which is the source of so much mockery of it. Philosophy itself, as a form of the Spirit, contains a moment with a deep affinity to that which is suspended, as in Heidegger's assumption of what is to be meditated over, which also prevents the meditation. For philosophy is far more specifically a form, than the history of its concept would have one presume, in which it seldom incorporates in reflection, aside from a layer of Hegel, its qualitative difference from science, the doctrine of science, and logic, with which it is nonetheless intertwined. Philosophy consists neither of *vérités de raison* [French: truths of reason] nor of *vérités de fait* [French: truths in fact]. Nothing which it says bows to the tangible criteria of a case of being; its theses on what is conceptual are so little the logical matter-at-hand than those on what is factual are empirical research. It is fragile also because of its distance. It cannot be nailed down. Its history is one of permanent failure, to the extent that it abandoned itself over and over, terrorized by science, to what is tangible. It earned its positivistic critique by the appeal to scientificity, which science reproaches it for; that critique errs, in that it confronts philosophy with a criterion, which is not its own, wherever it may have followed its own idea. It does not however renounce the truth, but illuminates the scientific one as limited. What is suspended in it is determined by this, that in its distance from the verifying cognition it is not non-committal [unverbindlich], but leads its own life of stringency. It seeks this in what it is not itself, what opposes it, and in the reflection on what positive cognition views with bad naivete as committal [verbindlich]. Philosophy is neither scientific procedure nor the thought-poetry to which positivism, with a ludicrous oxymoron, would like to degrade it, but is a form just as mediated by what it is divergent from as by what it sublates. What is suspended is nothing other than the expression of the inexpressible in itself. Therein it is truly the sibling of music. That which is suspended is scarcely capable of being put into words; this may have caused the philosophers, with the partial exception of Nietzsche, to gloss over it. It is more the prerequisite for the comprehension of philosophic texts than its definitive characteristic. It originated historically and may yet fall silent, just as music threatens to do. Heidegger innervated this and literally transformed what is specific to philosophy, perhaps because it is on the point of going extinct, into a niche, an objectivity of quasi superior social rank: the philosophy which recognizes that it neither judges over facticity nor over judgements the way other things are judged, and which is not even entirely certain of its object, would like to have its positive content, as it were, beyond the factum, concept and judgement alike. What is suspended in thought is thereby raised up to the inexpressible itself, which it wishes to express; that which is nonobjectified, to the penciled-in [umrissenen] object of its own essence; and thereby damaged. Under the weight of tradition, which Heidegger wishes to shake off, the inexpressible becomes expressible and compact in the word being; the objection against reification is reified, divorced from thinking and irrational. By treating the inexpressible of philosophy as immediately thematic, Heidegger dams this up all the way back to the revocation of consciousness. As punishment the blocked-up wellspring which he wishes to dig out runs

dry, its trickle scantier than any insight of the presumably destroyed philosophies, which incline towards the inexpressible through their mediations. What was ascribed to the scantiness of time, through the misuse of Hoelderlin, is that of the thinking which imagines itself to be beyond time. The immediate expression of the inexpressible is nugatory; where its expression had weight, as in great music, its seal was that which slips away and is transient, and it was attached to the course, not to the signifying “that’s it”. The thought, which wishes to think the inexpressible through the sacrifice of thought, falsifies it into that which it would like least to be, the gratuitous absurdity [Unding] of an utterly abstract object.

### **The Child’s Question 116-118**

The child, fundamental ontology could argue, if it wasn’t too ontic-psychological to do so, inquires into being. The reflection drives this out of it, and the reflection of the reflection would like, as ever in idealism, to render compensation for this. But the doubled reflection hardly asks immediately, as the child does. Philosophy paints the latter’s conduct with the anthropomorphism, as it were, of the adult, as that of the childhood of the entire species, as pretemporal-supratemporal. What it labors under is its relationship to the words, which it appropriates with an effort scarcely imaginable anymore at a later age, rather than the world, which in its earliest phases is somewhat familiar to it as one of action-objects. It wishes to assure itself of the meaning of words, and the occupation with them, probably something psychoanalytically explicable, its kobold-like, nagging stubbornness, leads it to the relationship of the word and the thing. It may pester its mother with the embarrassing problem of why the bench is called a bench. Its naivete is unnaive. As language, culture migrates into the earliest impulses of its consciousness; a mortgage on all talk of originality. The meaning of the words and their truth-content, their “position towards objectivity” are not yet sharply defined from each other; to know what the word bench means, and what a bench really is – which does include the existential judgement – is one and the same to that consciousness or not at all differentiated, and which by the way in countless cases can be distinguished only with difficulty. Oriented to the storehouse of words it has acquired, childhood immediacy is to this extent mediated in itself, the preformed boring into the why, into the first. Speech is experienced as *physei* [Greek: by nature], “taken for granted” [in English], not as *thesei* [Greek: thesis]; in the beginning is fetishism, and the hunt for the beginning always remains yoked to this. To be sure that fetishism is hardly to be seen through, because everything thought is at any rate also linguistic, unreflective nominalism as false as the realism which endows fallible language with the attributes of a revealed one. It is in Heidegger’s favor that there is no non-linguistic in-itself; that therefore language is in the truth, this latter is not in language, as something merely signified by such. But the constitutive share of language in the truth does not establish any identity of both. The power of language proves itself by the expression and thing stepping out of each other in the reflection.<sup>4</sup> Language becomes an office of truth only in the consciousness of the non-identity of the expression with what is meant. Heidegger denies that reflection; he halts after the first step of linguistic-philosophical dialectics. His thinking is also repositioning in this, that it would like to reestablish the power of the name by a ritual of naming. This power however is not of the sort present in contemporary secularized languages, which would permit the subject to do so. Through secularization the subjects have withdrawn

the name from them, and their intransigence necessitates the objectivity of language, not the philosophical trust in God. It is more than a sign only through its signifying power, there where it most exactly and densely holds what is meant. It is, only insofar as it becomes, in the continuous confrontation of expression and thing; Karl Kraus proceeded similarly, though he himself may have been inclined to an ontological view of language. Heidegger's procedure however is, in Scholem's phrase, Teutonic Kabbalistics. He treats the historical languages, as if they were those of being, as romantically as anyone who is violently anti-romantic. His manner of destruction falls silent before the unnoticed philological cultural formation [Bildung: education], which he at the same time suspends. Such consciousness affirms, what surrounds it, or at least makes its peace with it; genuine philosophical radicalism, wherever it historically emerged, is the product of doubt. The radical question which destroys nothing but this last, is itself illusory [scheinhaft].

### **Question of Being 118-121**

Underlying Heidegger's emphatic expression of the word being is his old category of authenticity, which indeed was hardly mentioned later on. The transcendence of being as opposed to the concept and the existent wishes to dissolve the desiderata of authenticity, as that which would not be appearance [Schein], neither institutionally organized nor inapplicable. It is protested, with good reason, that the historical development of philosophy flattened out the distinction between essence and appearance [Schein], the inherent impulse of philosophy as the *thaumaxein* [Greek: wonder, marvel], as dissatisfaction with the façade. Unreflective Enlightenment negated the metaphysical thesis of essence as the true world behind appearances with the no less abstract counter-thesis, that the essence would be, as the epitome of metaphysics, the appearance [Schein]: as if the appearance [Schein] were for that reason the essence. By virtue of the division of the world, the law of division – what is authentic – is hidden. The positivism which adjusts to this, by cancelling out what is not hidden, what is a datum, as mythos and subjective projection, thereby reinforces illusoriness [Scheinhaftigkeit] as once did the doctrines, which consoled the suffering in the mundus sensibilis [Latin: sensible world] with the assertion of the noumenal. Heidegger felt something of this mechanism. But what is authentic, which he misses, recoils instantly into positivity, authenticity as a conduct of consciousness which, by emigrating from the profane, powerlessly imitates the theological habitus of the ancient doctrine of essences. The hidden essence is rendered proof against the suspicion that it would be the bad state of affairs. There is no consideration which dares to mention that the categories of so-called massification, developed in Being and Time as much as in Jaspers' paperback on the intellectual situation of the time, could themselves be that hidden absurdity which makes human beings into what they are; they must then be scolded by philosophy, because they have forgotten the essence. The resistance against reified consciousness, which still resonates in the pathos of authenticity, is broken. The remainder of the critique is unleashed against the appearance, namely the subjects; the essence remains undisturbed, whose guilt is laid to those who are merely represented and which reproduces itself. – While fundamental ontology would not be distracted from the *thaumaxein* [Greek: wonder, marvel], it blocks the answer, as to what really is authentic, through the form of the question. It is not for nothing that this is shuffled off onto the *dégoutanten* [French: disgusting] terminus, the question of being. It is mendacious, because the corporeal interest of every individual –

the naked one of Hamlet's monologue, as to whether the individual is absolutely annihilated with death or whether he has the hope of the Christian *non confundar* [Latin: *non confundar in aeternum*, "I shall not perish in eternity"] – is appealed to, but what Hamlet means by to be or not to be is replaced by the pure essence, which swallows up existence. In that the existential ontologies, in phenomenological custom, make something thematic, with a full palette of descriptions and distinctions, they satisfy the interest and distract from it. "The question of being", says Heidegger, "aims thus at an a priori condition of possibility not only of the sciences, which research through the existent as such and such an existent and therein always ever move in an understanding of being, but also for the condition of possibility of the ontologies which lie before the ontic sciences and ground them. All ontology, no matter how rich and firmly-compacted a system of categories it may dispose over, remains fundamentally blind and an inversion of its innermost intent, if it has not sufficiently explicated the meaning of being and comprehended this explanation as its fundamental task."<sup>5</sup> Through the overextension of what serves up phenomenological ponderousness in such sentences as the question of being, whatever could be conceived under the word is forfeited, and that conception becomes if possible even more devalued into the frenetic entanglement which recuses the renunciation as a higher wisdom, as the authentic answer to the question it ducked. In order to be all too authentic, the so-called question of being shrinks what it styles as the sole native-born meaning of being down to a dimensionless point. It transforms itself into the ban against going beyond itself, and ultimate going beyond that tautology, which in Heidegger manifests itself as the fact that the self-revealing being says nothing other than being, over and over again.<sup>6</sup> Heidegger would even pass off the tautological essence of being if possible as something superiores [Latin: superior] to the determinations of logic. But it is to be developed out of aporetics. As Husserl before him, Heidegger unthinkingly bows to desiderata of thinking placed next to each other, which, in the history of the metaphysics which he put out of circulation in all too sovereign a fashion, proved to be incompatible: to the pure, that which is free of all empirical admixture and hence absolutely valid, and to the immediate, the purely given, irrefutable because it lacks the conceptual supplement. Thus Husserl combined the program of a "pure", namely eidetic, phenomenology with that of the self-given fact of the apparent object. The title "pure phenomenology" already assembles contradictory norms. That it wished to be no epistemology, but a position arranged entirely the way it pleased, relieved it of thinking through the relationship of its categories. In this regard Heidegger differs from his teacher only insofar as he relocates the contradictory program away from its Husserlian staging-grounds, the consciousness, and into the transcendence of consciousness, a conception which by the way was already anticipated by the preponderance of the noema in Husserl's middle period. However the incompatibility of the pure and that which was graphically concrete [*Anschauliches*] compelled the substrate of its unity to be chosen so indeterminately, that it no longer contained any moment in which either of the two demands could belie the other. That is why the Heideggerian being may be neither existing nor a concept. It must pay for the unimpeachability thereby achieved with its nihility, with an unattainability by every thought and every intuition, which leaves nothing left in hand except for the self-sameness of the mere name.\*7\* Even the endless repetitions which abound in Heidegger's publications are to be ascribed less to his honesty than to aporetics. Only through the determination can a phenomenon reach

beyond itself. What remains completely indeterminate, is said over and over again as a substitute for this, like gestures, which have no effect on their objects of action, but are repeated over and over again as a senseless ritual. The philosophy of being shares this ritual of repetition with mythos, which it would happily be.

### **Volte [French: sudden about-face] 121-123**

The dialectic of being and the existent – that no being can be thought without the existent and no existent without mediation – is suppressed by Heidegger: the moments, which are not, without one being mediated by the other, are to him immediately the One, and this one is positive being. But the sum does not check. The debtor-relationship of the categories is put on trial. Driven out by the pitchfork, the existent returns; the being which is purified from the existent is an Ur-phenomenon only for so long as it nevertheless has the existent in itself, which it excludes. Heidegger deals with this with a master-stroke; it is the matrix of his thought in its entirety. His philosophy lays hands on the well-nigh indissoluble moment of the existent with the terminus ontological difference. “What in any case is to be understood under such a ‘being’, which is presumably completely independent of the sphere of the ontic, must remain unsettled. Its determination would draw it into the dialectic of subject and object, from which it is supposed to be exempted. In this indeterminacy, in what is probably the most central place of Heideggerian ontology, lies the reason that the extremes of being and the existent must also remain necessarily indeterminate towards each other, so that it cannot even be said, wherein their difference lies. The talk of the ‘ontological difference’ reduces itself to the tautology, that being would not be the existent, because it is being. Heidegger consequently makes the mistake which he reproaches Western metaphysics for, namely that what being would mean as distinct from the existent, would remain unsaid.”<sup>7</sup> Under the breath of philosophy the existent becomes an ontological factual state \*8\* [Tatbestand], the dimmed and hypostasized expression of the fact that being can so little be thought without the existent as, in keeping with Heidegger’s founding thesis, the existent without being. Therein he executes his volte [French: sudden about-face]. The privation of ontology, which cannot make do without what opposes it, without what is ontic; the dependency of the ontological principle on its counterpart, the inalienable skandalon [Latin: scandal] of ontology, becomes a piece of its inventory. Heidegger’s triumph over other, less canny ontologies is the ontologization of the ontic. That no being is without the existent, is reduced to the form, that the being of the existent belongs to the essence of being. Therein something true turns into untruth: the existent into an essence. Being arrogates to itself what on the other hand it would not like to be in the dimension of its being-in-itself, of the existent whose conceptual unity always means the meaning of the word being anyway. The entire construction of the ontological difference is a Potemkin village. It is constructed solely to have all doubts in absolute being brushed aside that much more sovereignly, by means of the thesis of the existent as being’s mode of being.\*9\* By reducing everything individually existent to its concept, that of the ontic, what makes it into the existent, in contrast to the concept, consequently disappears. The formal general-conceptual structure of the talk of the ontic and all its equivalents takes the place of the content of that concept, which is heterogenous to what is conceptual. What makes this possible is the fact that the concept of the existent – therein not at all dissimilar from Heidegger’s celebrated one of being – is the same one which

encompasses the purely and simply non-conceptual, circumscribing what does not exhaust itself in the concept, without however ever expressing its difference from what is encompassed. Because “the existent” is the concept for everything existent, the existent becomes itself a concept, an ontological structure which merges seamlessly into that of being. The ontologization of the existent is reduced to its most precise formulation in Being and Time: “The ‘essence’ of being-there [Dasein] lies in its existence [Existenz].”<sup>8</sup> The outcome of the definition of being-there, of that which exists qua that which exists, through the concepts being-there and existence, is that what is precisely not intrinsic in being-there, is not ontological, but would indeed be ontological. The ontological difference is removed by virtue of the conceptualization of what is non-conceptual into non-conceptuality.

### **Mythology of Being 123-124**

Ontology will cease to be disturbed by the ontic, only when it is of a kind with it. The subreption grounds the precedence of ontology before the ontological difference: “But here it is not a question of an opposition between existentia and essentia, because both of these metaphysical determinations of being, let alone their relationship, are not even in question.”<sup>9</sup> That which presumably precedes the ontological difference in Heidegger falls, in spite of the assurance to the contrary, on the side of the essence [Essenz]: by denying the distinction which expresses the concept of the existent, the concept exalted by what is non-conceptual, which it is supposed to have under itself. This becomes clear in another passage of the tract on Plato. He directs the question of existence away from this and transforms it into one of essence: “The statement, ‘Humanity exists’, does not answer the question, as to whether humanity really would be or not, but answers the question of the ‘essence’ [Wesen] of humanity.”<sup>10</sup> The talk of the “not-yet” there, where the antithesis of existence and essence is rejected,<sup>11</sup> is no accidental temporal metaphor for something which is non-temporal. In fact it is archaic thinking, that of the Ionian Hylozoists far more than of the Eleatics; in the sketchy philosophemes handed down by the former, existence and essence are murkily intermixed. The labor and effort of the metaphysics of antiquity, from the Parmenidical one, which had to separate thinking and being in order to be able to identify them, down to the Aristotelian one, consisted of imposing the separation [Scheidung]. Separation is demythologization, mythos the deceptive unity of what is undifferentiated. Because however the inadequacy of the Ur-principles in explaining the world denoted therein caused its analytical exegesis [Auseinanderlegung], and thereby caught the magical extra-territoriality of being, as one vagabond between essence and facts in the web of concepts, Heidegger must for the sake of the privilege of being condemn the critical labor of the concept as a history of decay, as if philosophy could occupy a historical standpoint beyond history, while it nevertheless on the other hand is supposed to obey a history, which is itself ontologized as existence. Heidegger is anti-intellectual out of systemic compulsion, anti-philosophical out of philosophy, just as contemporary religious revivals are inspired not by the truth of their teachings but by the philosophy, that it would be good to have religion. The history of thought is, however far back it is traced, a dialectic of enlightenment. That is why Heidegger does not halt, resolutely enough, at one of its stages, as he might perhaps have been tempted to in his youth, but plunges with a Wellesian time-machine into the abyss of archaicism, in which everything is to be everything and can mean everything. He reaches out towards mythos:

his own, though, remains one of the twentieth century, the appearance [Schein] which history unmasked it as, and which becomes striking in the complete incompatibility of mythos with the rationalized form of reality, in which every consciousness is delimited. It presumes to a mythological condition, as if this were even possible, without itself being the same thing. What is registered with Heidegger's concept of being is the mythical one of fate: "The arrival of the existent rests in the fate of being."<sup>12</sup> The much-praised non-differentiation of existence and essence in being is thereby called by name, as what it is: the blindness of the natural context, the doom of enchaining [Verkettung: chaining, interconnection], the absolute negation of transcendence, which quavers in the talk of being. The appearance [Schein] in the concept of being is this transcendence; its basis however is that Heidegger's determinations, deducted from being-there, from the necessity of real human history to this day, dispense with the recollection of these. They become moments of being itself and thereby something preordained [Vorgeordnet] to that existence. Their astral power and splendor is just as cold to the humiliation and fallibility of historical reality, as this latter is sanctioned as immutable. The celebration of what is meaningless as meaningful is mythical; the ritual repetition of natural contexts in symbolic individual actions, as if they were thereby supernatural. Categories like fear, which is at least not to be stipulated, that it would have to last forever, become by means of their transfiguration constituents of being as such, something preordained [Vorgeordnetes] to every existence, their a priori. They install themselves as precisely the "meaning", which in contemporary social conditions is not to be positively and immediately named. What is meaningless is endowed with meaning, in that the meaning of being is supposed to arise precisely in its counter-force [Widerspiel], in mere existence, as its form.

### **Ontologization of the Ontical 125-128**

The special ontological position of being-there was anticipated by Hegel by means of the idealistic thesis of the preeminence of the subject. Hegel exploits the fact that the non-identical for its part would only be determined as a concept; it is thereby dialectically cleared away for him, reduced to identity: that which is ontic, ontological. Linguistic shadings in the Science of Logic are quick to betray this. Space and time are, as the third note to "Becoming" expounds in reference to Jacobi, "expressly determined as indeterminate, which – in order to return to its simplest form – is being. Precisely this indeterminacy is however what makes out its determination; for indeterminacy is opposed to determinacy; it is therewith as what is opposed itself the determinate, or the negative, and indeed the pure, completely abstract negative. This indeterminacy or abstract negation, which being thus has in itself, is what external as well as inner reflection expresses, in that it equates it with nothingness, declares it as an empty thought-figure [Gedankending], as nothingness. – Or one may express it, that because being is that which is devoid of determination, it is not the (affirmative) determinacy, which it is, not being, but nothingness."<sup>13</sup> Indeterminacy is tacitly used as a synonym for the indeterminate. That which it is a concept of disappears in its concept; it becomes equated to the indeterminate as its determination, and this permits the identification of the indeterminate with nothing. Therein in truth the absolute idealism is already presupposed, which logic would have to prove. Something similar is true of Hegel's refusal to begin with the something instead of with being. Trivial, that the non-identical is no immediacy,

that it is mediated. But Hegel fails to do justice to his own insight at central points. It says, the non-identical would indeed be identical – as itself something mediated – but nevertheless non-identical, the Other in regard to all its identifications. He does not carry out the dialectic of the non-identical, while he however has the intention elsewhere of defending the pre-critical term of speech against that of reflection-philosophy. His own concept of the non-identical, to him the vehicle for turning it into the identical, into self-sameness, has its inalienable content in its opposite; that is why he hurriedly brushes this away. What he expressly established in the text on difference, in order to immediately integrate it into his own philosophy, turns into the weightiest objection against this. Hegel's absolute system, which relies on the perennial resistance of the non-identical, negates itself, against its own self-understanding. Truly no identity is without the non-identical, while this former, as something total, ascribes to itself ontological preeminence in his work. The elevation of the mediatedness [Vermitteltheit] of the non-identical into its absolute conceptual being assists it therein. Instead of theory bringing the indissoluble to what is its own in concepts, it swallows it by subsumption under its general concept, that of indissolubility. The necessary condition of being related [Verwiesensein] of identity to the non-identical, as Hegel nearly achieved it, is the objection against all identity-philosophy. The Aristotelean category of steresis becomes its trump card and its doom. What necessarily diverges from the abstract concept: that it is not capable of being the non-conceptual itself, he accounts for as a merit, as something higher, as Spirit, in contrast to what it is forcibly abstracted from. What is lesser is supposed to be truer, as later on in the self-justifying Heideggerian ideology of the magnificence of simplicity. The apology for scantiness is however not merely one for a thinking which has once more shrunk to a point, but has its precise ideological function. The affectation of noble simplicity, which warms to the dignity of poverty and of the frugal life, suits the continuing absurdity of real scarcity in a society, whose state of production no longer permits the appeal that there are simply not enough goods to go around. By flirting with the Rhenish Home Companion, philosophy, barred by its own concept from unnaivete, helps it around this: in its history of being, scarcity gleams as that which is higher pure and simple, or at the very least ad kalendas Graecus [Latin: the first of the month, by the Greek calendar]. Already in Hegel, what resulted through abstraction counted as the more substantial. He treats the material according to the same topos, even in the transition to existence.<sup>14</sup> Because its concept would be indeterminate, lacking as concept precisely what is meant by it, all light is shed on its form. Hegel fits this into Western metaphysics, at its outermost limits. Engels saw this, but drew the reversed, equally undialectical conclusion, that the material would be the first being.<sup>15</sup> The concept of first being itself deserves dialectical critique. Heidegger repeats the Hegelian sleight-of-hand maneuver. Only the latter practiced it openly, while Heidegger, who wishes to be no idealist, nebulously conceals the ontologization of the ontic. The mainspring, however, which garbs what is less in the concept as its more, is in each case the old Platonic denial, that the non-sensible would be the higher. Logic sublimates that ascetic ideal to the extreme and at the same time fetishizes it, devoid of the tension with the sensible, in which the ascetic ideal has its truth against the deception of its franchised [konzessionierter: licensed] fulfillment. The concept, which becomes pure by elbowing aside its content, secretly functions as the model of an arrangement of life wherein, in spite of all progress of the apparatus – to which the concept corresponds – at no price may poverty be

eliminated. If ontology were at all somehow possible, then ironically, as the epitome of negativity. What remains equivalent to itself, pure identity, is what is bad; mythical doom is timeless. Philosophy was, as its secularization, its slave, in that it reinterpreted the immutable as the good with gigantic euphemisms, all the way to the theodicies of Leibniz and Hegel. If one wished to draw up an ontology and thereby follow the basic matter-at-hand, whose repetition makes it into an invariant, then it would be horror. An ontology of culture would above all have to take up, where culture at large failed. Philosophically legitimate ontology would have its place more in the construction of the culture-industry than in that of being; good, only that which has escaped ontology.

### **Function of the Concept of the Existent 128-130**

The ontologization of the ontic is the primary aim of the doctrine of existence. Since this last, after the age-old argument, cannot be deduced out of the essence, it is supposed to be itself essential. Existence is raised up higher than Kierkegaard's model, but thereby blunted in contrast to the latter. Even the Biblical sentence, that by their fruits ye shall know them, resounds in the temple of existence like its profanation and must fall silent. Existence no longer stands antithetical to the concept of being's mode of being, what is painful in it is removed. It receives the dignity of the Platonic idea, but also the bulletproof nature of what cannot be thought differently, because it is not something thought but would simply be there. Therein Heidegger and Jaspers concur. The latter guilelessly confesses the neutralization of existence against Kierkegaard: "I... felt in his negative decisions... the opposite of everything, which I loved and wished, which I was ready and not ready to do."<sup>16</sup> Even Jasperian existentialism, which did not allow itself to be infected by the *pater subtilis* [Latin: paternal distinction] in the construction of the concept of being, understood itself from the very beginning as the "inquiry into being";<sup>17</sup> both could, without being untrue to themselves, make the sign of the cross before what in Paris, in the sign of existence, drove all too rashly for its taste from the lecture-rooms into the bistros<sup>18</sup> and there made itself sound far less respectable. To be sure, as long as critique remains standing by the thesis of the non-ontologizability of the ontic, it is itself merely a judgement over invariant structural relationships, too ontological, as it were; that was the philosophical motive of Sartre's turn towards politics. The movement after the Second World War, which called itself existentialist and staged itself as an avant-garde, had something powerless, something shadowy about it. Existentialism, which the German establishment suspects of being subversive, has a likeness to the beards of its followers. They costume themselves as oppositional, the youth as cave-people, who no longer play along with the swindle of culture, while they are really only donning the out-of-fashion emblems of patriarchal dignity of their grandfathers. What is true in the concept of existence is the objection against a condition of society and scientific thinking, which virtually drives out the unregimented experience, the subject as a moment of cognition. Kierkegaard's protest against philosophy was also one against the reified consciousness from which, in his words, subjectivity has gone out: against philosophy he also perceived its interest. This repeats itself anachronistically in the existentialist schools in France. The meanwhile really disempowered and internally weakened subjectivity is isolated and – complementary to the Heideggerian hypostasis of its counter-pole, that of being – hypostasized. The division of the subject proceeds no differently from that of being, unmistakable in the Sartre of Being and Nothingness, towards the illusion of the immediacy of what is mediated. As mediated as being is by the concept and therein by

the subject, so mediated is, in the reverse case, the subject by the world in which it lives, so powerless and merely internalized too is its decision. Such powerlessness permits the victory of the thingly bad state of affairs [dinghafte Unwesen] over the subject. The concept of existence impressed many as an approach to philosophy, because it seemed to bind together what is divergent: the reflection on the subject, which would constitute every cognition and thereby everything existent, and the concrete individuation, immediate to every individual subject, to its experience. The divergence of both irritated the subjective approach as a whole: the constitutive subject calls down the reproach that it would be merely deduced from the empirical and hence of no use in grounding it and any other empirical existence [Dasein]; to that which is individuated [Individuum], that it would be an accidental piece of the world and would lack the essential necessity, which it requires in order to encompass the existent and if possible to produce it. Existence or, in demagogic jargon, humanity [Mensch], appears to be as general, the essence common to all human beings, as specific, insofar as this generality can neither be imagined nor even thought through otherwise than in its particularization, the determinate individuality. Before all cognitive critique however, in the simplest reflection on the concept of humanity in intentione recta [Latin: in its correct intention], this Eureka loses its status as evidence. What humanity is, is not to be presumed. It is nowadays mere function, unfree, regressing behind everything with which it is stamped as invariant, be it even the defenseless neediness on which many anthropologists swear. It carries along the disfigurements which it experienced over millenia as a social legacy. If the essence of humanity were deciphered from its contemporary constitution, then this would sabotage its possibility. A so-called historical anthropology would scarcely suffice any longer. It would indeed have an insight into the nature of coming to be and conditionality, but would shuffle this off onto the subjects, under the abstraction of the dehumanization, which made them into what they are, and which continues to be tolerated in the name of a *qualitas humana* [Latin: human quality]. The more concretely anthropology appears, the more deceptive it becomes, indifferent towards that in human beings which is by no means grounded within them as the subject but rather in the process of desubjectivization, which since time immemorial ran parallel with the historical formation of the subject. The thesis of arrivierter [French: new-fangled] anthropology, that humanity would be open – seldom does it lack the invidious side-glance at animals – is empty; they pass off their own indeterminacy, their fallissement [French: archaic term for bankruptcy] as something determinate and positive. Existence is a moment, not the whole, against which it was thought up and from which, once severed, it seized the unredeemable pretension of the whole as soon as it stylized itself as philosophy. That it cannot be said, what humanity really is, is no especially sublime anthropology but a veto against every sort.

### **“Existence ontological in itself” 130-131**

While Kierkegaard nominalistically plays off existence against essence, as the weapon of theology against metaphysics, existence, the immediate individual, is to him considered endowed with meaningfulness, quite in keeping with the dogma that the person is made in the image of God. He polemicizes against ontology, but the existent, as the existence of “that individual”, sucks its attributes dry. The initial reflections of Sickness Unto Death do not characterize existence all that much differently from its exaltation in Being and Time; the Kierkegaardian “transparency” of the subject, consciousness, is the legal

title for its ontologization: “Being itself, to which the existent conducts itself as such-and-such and always somehow conducts itself, we call existence”,<sup>19</sup> or literally: “Existence [Dasein] is on the grounds of its existential determination ‘ontological’ in itself.”<sup>20</sup> The concept of subjectivity iridescently shimmers no less than that of being and thus is to be attuned to the latter any which way. Its ambiguity permits the existent to be equated to being’s mode of being and thus analyzes the ontological difference away. Existence [Dasein] is then called ontic, by virtue of its spatio-temporal individuation, ontological as the logos. What is dubious in Heidegger’s inference from the existent into being is that “at the same time”, which his talk of the “multiple preeminence” of “being-there” [Dasein] “before all other existents” implies. The fact that the subject is determined by consciousness does not mean that what consciousness cannot be detached from is totally consciousness, transparent, “ontological”. No something, only propositions could be at all ontological. That which is individuated, which has consciousness, and whose consciousness would not be without it, remains spatio-temporal, facticity, existent; not being. The subject lies hidden in being, for it is a concept, not immediately given: the particular human consciousness however lies hidden in the subject and thereby that which is ontic. That this existent can think, does not suffice to strip it of its determination as an existent, as if it were immediate intrinsic. It is precisely “in itself” not “ontological”, for this selfness postulates that which is ontic, which the doctrine of ontological preeminence eliminates.

### **Nominalistic Aspect 131-132**

To be critiqued is not merely the fact that the ontological concept of existence extirpates the non-conceptual, by exalting it to its concept, but also the positional value which the non-conceptual moment thereby conquers. Nominalism, one of the roots of existential philosophy of the Protestant Kierkegaard, endows Heideggerian ontology with the attractive power of what is not speculative. Just as that which exists is falsely conceptualized in the concept of existence, so too is that which exists ascribed a complementary preeminence before the concept, from which the ontological concept of existence once more profits. If what is individuated is socially mediated appearance [Schein], so too are its epistemological forms of reflection. Why the individual consciousness of every speaking person, which already presupposes a linguistic generality in the particle “my”, which it denies through the primacy of its particularity, is supposed to be prior to anything else, is unfathomable; the sheer contingency, which impels it to commence with the consciousness, in which it just happened to grow up, turns into a grounds of necessity for it. As Hegel saw early on, the limitation of the “my” implies a priori the relation to that other, which was supposed to be excluded. Society is prior to the subject. That it mistakes itself as an existent prior to society is its necessary deception and says something merely negative about society. In the “my” the property relationship is linguistically perpetuated, has all but become a logical form. Without the moment of the general, which the “my” points to by distinguishing itself from it, the pure *tode ti* [Greek: individual thing, this-here] is as abstract as the generality which the isolated *tode ti* scolds as empty and nugatory. The philosophical personalism of Kierkegaard, and perhaps also its Buberian offshoot, senses the latent chance of metaphysics in nominalism; however, consistent Enlightenment recoils into mythology at the place where it absolutizes nominalism, instead of dialectically penetrating its thesis –

there, where it breaks off the reflection in the belief of something ultimately given. Such a cessation of reflection, the positivistic pride in one's own naivete, is nothing other than non-reflective self-preservation, turned into a recalcitrant concept.

### **Existence Authoritarian 132-134**

The concept of that which is existential [Existentielle], though Heidegger prefers to the already ontologized existential [Existential] of being-there qua being, is governed by the conception that the measure of the truth would not be any sort of objectivity, but the pure being-so and acting-so of the thinker. The subjective reason of the positivists is ennobled, by stripping away its moment of reason. Jaspers unceremoniously joined Kierkegaard in this respect; though Heidegger's objectivism hardly subscribes to the proposition that subjectivity would be the truth, this rings through however in the analysis of the existential in Being and Time. What contributed to its German popularity was the fact that the radical pose and the sacred tone could be recombined into the newly-minted ideology of a person who was authentic and rocksolid [Kernigen], qualities which individuals in the spirit [Geist] of privilege reserve for themselves with sly dim-wittedness. If subjectivity dissolves solidified preordained substances by its – in Kant's term, functional – essence, its ontological affirmation assuages the fear of these. Subjectivity, the functional concept *kat' hexochên* [Greek: what is preeminent, what leads], becomes something absolutely solid, as was already by the way presupposed in Kant's doctrine of the transcendental unity. But truth, the constellation of subject and object, in which both penetrate each other, is as little to be reduced to subjectivity, as in the reverse case to that being, whose dialectical relationship to subjectivity Heidegger attempts to erase. What is true in the subject develops itself in relation to what it is itself not, by no means through the one-upping affirmation of its being-so. Hegel knew this, but the school of repositioning abhors it. If the truth really were in fact subjectivity, if the thought really were nothing but the repetition of the subject, then it would be nugatory. The existential exaltation of the subject eliminates this, for the sake of what could arise in it. It thereby delivers itself over to relativism, over which it thinks itself to be superior, and brings the subject down to its impenetrable contingency. Such irrational existentialism pounds its chest and scapegoats intellectuals, by confessing itself to be one: "But the philosopher braves the talk, that there is no objective distinction between genuine, philosophically originary speaking [Sprechen] and empty intellectuality. While humanity as the Researcher [der Mensch als Forscher] always has generally valid criteria for its results and has its satisfaction in the inescapability of their validity, it has as the Philosopher [er als Philosoph] only the ever-subjective criterion of its own being to distinguish empty speaking from existence-awakening speaking. Hence the ethos of theoretical endeavor in the sciences and in philosophy is different at its very root."<sup>21</sup> Excluding what is other from it, which it has dispensed with, existence, which proclaims itself willy-nilly as the criterion of thought, thus secures the validity of its decrees in authoritarian fashion, just as the political praxis of dictators does to the world-view of the day. Through the reduction of thought to the thinker, its course, in which it would first become thought and in which alone subjectivity would live, is brought to a halt. It becomes reified as the threshed-out grounds of truth. This could already be heard in the ring of the old-fashioned word personalism. Thinking makes itself into what the thinker is already in advance, into a tautology, into a form of regressive consciousness. The utopian

potential of thought would be, rather, that thought, mediated through the reason incorporated in individual subjects, would break through the narrowness of the thinker. It is its best power, to surpass the weak and fallible thinker. It is hamstrung – since Kierkegaard to obscurantistic ends – by the existential concept of truth, propagating provincialism as the power to truth; that is why the cult of existence blossoms in the provinces of all countries.

### **“Historicity” 134-136**

Ontology has long cashiered the opposition of the concept of existence against idealism. The existent, which was once supposed to testify against the sanctity of the idea made by human beings, is outfitted with the much more ambitious sanctity of being itself. Its ether ennobles it in advance in contrast to the conditions of material existence, which Kierkegaard meant with the “moment”, when he confronted the idea with existence. Through the absorption of the concept of existence into being, indeed already by its philosophical preparation to a general concept worthy of discussion, that history is once more spirited away which, in Kierkegaard, who did not regard the Left Hegelians as insignificant, broke into the speculation under the sign of theology, in the paradoxical touching of time and eternity. The ambivalence of the doctrine of being: that it simultaneously deals with the existent, and ontologizes it, thus expropriating it of all its nonconceptuality by recourse to its *characteristica formalis* [Latin: formal characteristics], also determines its relationship to history.\*10\* On the one hand the salt of what is historical is removed by its transposition into the existential of historicity, the claim of all *prima philosophia* [Latin: originary philosophy] extended to a doctrine of invariants over that which varies: historicity brings history to a halt in the unhistorical, heedless of the historical conditions, which undergird the inner composition and constellation of the subject and object.\*11\* This then permits the verdict over sociology. It is distorted, as previously Husserl’s psychology, into the relativization extraneous to the thing itself, which would damage the upstanding labor of thought: as if real history were not stored up in the core of everything which is to be cognized; as if every cognition which seriously resists reification would not bring paralyzed things into flux, precisely thereby becoming aware of the history in them. On the other hand the ontologization of history once again permits the power of being to be ascribed to indiscriminate historical power, and thereby to justify the subjugation to historical situations, as if it were the behest of being itself. Karl Loewith has highlighted this aspect of the Heideggerian view of history.\*12\* That history can accordingly be ignored or deified as need be, is a practical political consequence of the philosophy of being. Time itself, and thereby transience, is both transfigured and absolutized by the existential-ontological drafts as eternal. The concept of existence, as the intrinsicity of transience, of the temporality of the temporal, keeps existence at bay by its naming. Once treated as a phenomenological problem-title, then it is already integrated. These are the latest consolations of philosophy, a kind of mythical euphemism; the falsely resurrected belief, that the bane of what is natural would be thereby broken, by soothingly imitating it. Existential thought crawls into the cave of a long-past mimesis. Therein it accommodates nonetheless the most catastrophic prejudice of the history of philosophy, which it laid off like a superfluous employee, namely the Platonic one, that what is imperishable must be the good; which says nothing more than, whoever is currently mightier in a permanent state

of war is right. If Plato's pedagogy meanwhile cultivated the martial virtues, these were however answerable in the Gorgias dialogue to the highest idea of all, to that of justice. But in the darkened heavens of the doctrine of existence no star shines anymore. Existence is sanctified without that which sanctifies. Nothing is left of the eternal idea, which the existent is to share or through which it is supposed to be conditioned, but the naked affirmation of what it is anyway: the affirmation of power.

## Footnotes to Pages 66-136

\*1\* [Footnote pg 77]

See the chapter on jurisdiction [Rechtsprechung] in the “Ideas”.

\*2\* [Footnote pg 82-83]

Guenther Anders (The Antiquation of Humanity, Munich 1961, Pg. 186, 220, 326, and above all: “On the Pseudo-Concreteness of Heidegger’s Philosophy”, in: Philos. & Phenomenol. Research, Vol. VIII, Nr. 3, pg. 337) criticized the pseudo-concreity of fundamental ontology years ago. The word concretion, charged with the utmost affect in the German philosophy between the wars, was saturated with the spirit of its time. Its magic employed that feature of the Homeric nekia, where Odysseus, in order to get the shadows to talk, feeds them with blood. Presumably the effectiveness of “blood and soil” was not really based on the appeal to the origin. The ironic overtone which accompanied the formula from the beginning betrayed the consciousness of the threadbare appearance of the archaic under the conditions of high capitalist production. Even the Black Corps snickered at the beards of the ancient Teutons. The temptation of the appearance [Schein] of the concrete was, rather, something not exchangeable, not fungible. That phantasm arose in the middle of a world driving itself towards monotony; a phantasm, because it did not touch the ground of the exchange-relationship; otherwise those who longed for it would have felt quite threatened by what they called leveling out, the principle, unknown to them, of capitalism, which they accused their opponents of. The obsession with the concept of the concrete bound itself up with the incapacity to achieve it in thought. The conjuring word replaced the thing. To be sure Heidegger’s philosophy still employed the pseudos of that kind of concretion; because *tode ti* [Greek: individual thing, this-here] and *ousia* [Greek: substance] would be indistinguishable, he equates, as was already projected in Aristoteles, one with the other, according to the need and thema probandum [Latin: theme to be proven]. The merely existent becomes something nugatory, rid of the defect of being the existent, raised to being, its own pure concept. Being by contrast, by excluding every delimiting content, no longer needs to appear as a concept, but counts immediately as the *tode ti* [Greek: individual thing, this-here]: concrete. Both moments, once absolutely isolated, have no differentia specifica [Latin: specific difference] in relation to one another and become exchangeable; this quid pro quo is a central feature of Heidegger’s philosophy.

\*3\* [Footnote pg 85]

He expounds, in the phenomenological fundamental considerations of the Ideas, his method as a structure of operations, without deducing it. The caprice thereby conceded, which he wished to remove only in his late phase, is unavoidable. If the procedure was to be deduced, it would reveal itself as being that “from above”, that it at no price wished to be. It would violate that quasi-positivistic “to the things themselves”. These latter meanwhile by no means necessitate the phenomenological reductions, which for that reason assume the form of something posited any which way. In spite of all the preserved “jurisdiction [Rechtsprechung] of reason” they lead to irrationalism.

\*4\* [Footnote pg 109-110]

The subject-object relation in the judgement, as something purely logical, and the relationship of subject and object, as something epistemological-material, are first of all to be strictly distinguished; the terminus subject means something almost contradictory in the former and latter. In the theory of judgement it is the basic assumption on which something is predicated; in contrast to the act of judgement and that which is judged in the synthesis of the judgement, in a certain sense the objectivity by which thinking is confirmed. Epistemologically however the subject means the thought-function, many times over also that existent which thinks and which is to be excluded from the concept of the I only at the price that it ceases to mean, what it means. But this distinction involves in spite of everything a close kinship of what is distinguished. The constellation of a matter-at-hand found in the judgement – in the language of phenomenology, “that which is judged as such” – and the synthesis, which is based on that matter-at-hand, just as much as it produces it, is a reminder of the material one of the subject and object. These differentiate themselves similarly, are not to be reduced to the pure identity of the one or the other side, and condition each other there reciprocally, because no object is determinable without the determination which makes it into such, the subject, and because no subject can think anything which it cannot confront, not excepting even the subject itself: thinking is chained to the existent. The parallel between logic and epistemology is more than a mere analogy. The pure logical relationship between matter-at-hand and synthesis, which would know space-time facticity irregardless of existence, is in truth an abstraction of the subject-object relation. This is what the viewpoint of pure thinking focuses on, neglecting all particular ontic matters-at-hand, without this abstraction having any power however over the something which occupies the empty place of substantiality, and which indeed means something substantial, no matter how generally this is named, only becoming what it itself means through what is substantial. The methodological procedure of the abstraction has its limit in the meaning of what it wishes to hold in hand as pure form. The trace of the existent is inextinguishable in the formal-logical “something”. The form Something is formed according the model of the material, of the *tode ti* [Greek: individual thing, this-here]; it is the form of the material and insofar requires that which is metalogical according to its own purely logical meaning, for which the epistemological reflection strove as the counter-pole of thought.

\*5\* [Footnote pg 113]

“Being as the fundamental theme of philosophy is no species of an existent, and yet it concerns every existent. Its ‘universality’ is to be sought higher. Being and the structure of being lie beyond every existent and every possible existing determination of an existent. Being is the transcendens [Latin: what transcends] pure and simple. The transcendence of being as being-there [Daseins] is a distinctively superior one, insofar as the possibility and necessity of the most radical individuation lies in it. Every disclosure of being as transcendens [Latin: transcendental] is transcendental cognition. Phenomenological truth (the disclosedness of being) is *veritas transcendentalis* [Latin: transcendental truth].” (Heidegger, Being and Time, 6. Ed., Tuebingen 1949, Pg. 38)

\*6\* [Footnote pg 114]

That in spite of its contact with Hegel it detours around the dialectic, lends it the appeal of achieved transcendence. Bulletproof against the dialectical reflection, though incessantly touching on it, it runs its household according to traditional logic and charges itself, after the model of the predicative judgement, with upholding the character of solidity and unconditionality of that which would be merely a moment to dialectical logic. For example, according to an initial formulation (see Heidegger, Being and Time, op.cit. pg 13), being-there [Dasein] is supposed to be that which is ontic, that which is existing, which has the – secretly paradoxical – advantage of being ontological. Being-there is a German and ashamed variant of subject. It did not escape Heidegger, that it is as much the principle of mediation as unmediated, that as the constituents [Latin: what constitutes] it presupposes the constitutum [Latin: what is constituted], facticity. The matter-at-hand is dialectical; Heidegger translates it at any cost into the logic of non-contradictoriness. Out of the mutually contradictory moments of the subject, two attributes are made, which he attaches to it as though to a substance. This however is of assistance to the ontological dignity: the undeveloped contradiction becomes the surety of something higher in itself, because it does not follow the conditions of discursive logic, in whose language it is translated. By means of this projection the substance called being is supposed to be something positive, as far beyond the concept as beyond the fact. Such positivity could not withstand its dialectical reflection. These sorts of schemata are the *topoi* [Greek: place, position] of fundamental ontology in its entirety. It derives transcendence beyond thinking as much as beyond facts from the fact that dialectical structures are expressed and hypostasized undialectically, as if they were simply to be named.

\*7\* [Footnote pg 121]

“The excess of objectivity, which it” – being – “is ascribed, allows this to appear in its complete emptiness: ‘as empty opinion of everything pure and simply’. Only by means of a quid pro quo – specifically, that modern ontology submerges the meaning, which comes towards being as what is meant, under it – does being mean anything without the opinion-forming subject. Arbitrary subdivision, therefore subjectivity, thereby proves to be its *principale vitale* [French: vital principle]. Ontology is not capable of conceptualizing being other than from the existent, but it suppresses exactly this conditionality.” (Karl Heinz Haag, Critique of Modern Ontology, Stuttgart, pg. 69)

\*8\* [Footnote to page 122]

Heidegger’s doctrine of the privileging of being-there over the ontic, which would be simultaneously ontological; of the presence of being, hypostasizes being from the start. Only if being, as he wishes it, became independent as something which precedes being-there, does being-there receive that transparency of being which this is nevertheless supposed to uncover. To this extent too the presumed overcoming of subjectivism is surreptitious. Despite Heidegger’s reductive plan the doctrine of the transcendence of being served to once more smuggle precisely the ontological primacy of subjectivity into the existent, which the language of fundamental ontology abjures. Heidegger was being consistent when he later changed the course of the analysis of being-there in the sense of the undiminished primacy of being, which cannot be grounded in the existent, because according to him being simply is not. Thereby everything fell by the wayside, to be sure,

which made him effective, but that effect had already passed into the authority of the later works.

\*9\* [Footnote to page 123]

“...unless it otherwise belonged to the truth of being, that being never essences [west: Heideggerian neologism based on archaic verb “wesen”, literally “to essence”] without the existent, that an existent is never without being.” (Heidegger, What is Metaphysics?, 5. Ed., Frankfurt am Main 1949, pg 41.) [Heidegger’s original text was written in 1943; text is also available in the “Nachwort zu: ‘Was ist Metaphysik?’” in Wegmarken, Gesamtausgaben, Band 9, Frankfurt am Main © 1976, pg. 306.]

\*10\* [Footnote to page 134]

“Only the existent, which is intrinsically future-oriented in its being, so that it can be free for its death, shattering on this by letting itself be thrown back onto its factual ‘there’, that is to say only the existent, which as something future-oriented has been equi-originary, can, by handing down to itself the inherited possibility, overtake its own thrownness [Geworfenheit] and be momentarily of ‘its time’. Only authentic temporality, which is at the same time finite, makes something like fate, that is to say authentic historicity possible.” (Heidegger, Being and Time, *ibid.* Pg 385).

\*11\* [Footnote to page 135]

Fundamental ontology convicts itself of a historical and social moment in its linguistic form, which is not for its part to be reduced in turn to the pure essentia [Latin: essence] of historicity. The linguistic-critical findings of Jargon of Authenticity are for that reason those against philosophical content. The sheer randomness which Heidegger smuggles into the concept of the draft, the immediate legacy of phenomenology since its transition to a material discipline, becomes flagrant in the results: the specific determinations of being-there and existence in Heidegger, which he credits to the condition humaine [French: human condition] and considers the key of a true doctrine of being, are not as stringent as he posits, but deformed by what is contingently private. The false tone drowns this out, and by doing so thereby confesses it.

\*12\* [Footnote to page 135]

“The quotation marks, by which Heidegger marks ‘its time’ in the above citation, are presumably to indicate that it is not dealing with any sort of random ‘deployment’ [Einsatz: commitment, operation] to a momentary, up-to-date, urgently pressing ‘today’, but with the decisive time of an authentic moment, whose decisive character results from the distinction between vulgar and existential time and history. But how can one unequivocally distinguish in a given case, whether time is an ‘originary’ moment or only a pressing ‘today’ in the course and trajectory of world-events? The decisiveness, which does not know, what it has decided, provides no answer. It has already happened more than once, that those who are resolute have committed themselves to something, which was claimed to be fateful and decisive, and yet was merely vulgar and not worth the sacrifice. How can one draw, while inside a thoroughly historical thinking, the borders between ‘authentic’ history and that which happens ‘vulgarly’, and be able to unequivocally distinguish between the self-chosen destiny and the non-chosen

vicissitudes, which befall human beings or lure [verfuehren] them into a momentary choice and decision? And has not vulgar history clearly enough revenged itself for Heidegger's contempt for today's merely extant existence [Vorhandene], when it lured him in a vulgarly decisive moment to take on the leadership of the Freiburg university under Hitler and to transport the most authentic, decisive being-there into a 'German being-there', in order to practice the ontological theory of existential historicity on the ontic ground of truly historical, that is to say political events?" (Karl Loewith, Heidegger, Thinker in Needy Times, Frankfurt am Main 1953, Pg. 49)