

THREE FORMS OF TRANSCENDENCE:

A STUDY OF HEIDEGGER AND MEDIEVAL MYSTICAL THEOLOGY

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

This study compares the thought of Martin Heidegger with that of a number of medieval mystical authors, in order to explore some aspects of the concept of God. It is divided into three sections, each consisting of two chapters.

Section I examines issues related to the idea and apprehension of God as immanent within the world. Chapter One in this section compares the first two chapters of Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, on contemplating God in and through created things, with Heidegger's analyses of early Greek thought. Chapter Two compares Heidegger and Eckhart, focussing particularly on the dialectic of immanence and transcendence present in the writings of both.

Section II examines issues related to the idea and apprehension of God as indwelling within the mind, or within some aspect of 'human being'. Chapter Three in this section compares the chapters of the *Itinerarium* on contemplating God through the mind with Heidegger's analyses of knowledge and understanding. Chapter Four compares the relationship between the soul and God in the sermons of Johannes Tauler with the relationship between Dasein and *Sein* in Heidegger's writings, mainly in *Sein und Zeit*.

Section III examines the idea and apprehension of God as transcendent. Chapter Five in this section looks at the last few chapters of the *Itinerarium*, and compares Bonaventure and Heidegger with respect to their conceptions of being and goodness. Chapter Six compares Heidegger with Jan van Ruusbroec. It explores themes like rapture, transformation and illumination in the writings of these two, stressing how these notions suggest absolute dependence upon a superior power.

This study is not attempting to argue for a specific position or doctrine. It is using a number of comparisons as a way of pointing out some possibilities for how one may think of God. It concludes with the observation that these possibilities are, in a sense, metaphysical, and that Heidegger's thought can be seen as a contribution to metaphysics, rather than as a destruction of it.

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NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

All quotations from primary sources in this dissertation are given both in the original language and in English translation, as are quotations from Latin sources like Augustine and Richard of St. Victor. In most cases, the translations simply reproduce the text of a published translation, where one exists, with only minor changes. I have consistently reduced the amount of capitalization (e.g. for terms like 'the good' and 'the one'). Heidegger's *Sein* and *Seyn*, as well as the Latin *esse* and *ens* have generally been translated as 'being'. Heidegger's *Seiende* has been variously translated as 'what-is', 'being', 'beings', 'entity' or 'entities', depending upon the context, together with the need to differentiate this term from *Sein*. Where no reference to a translation is given, the translations are my own.

ABBREVIATIONS

References to the works of Heidegger, Bonaventure, Eckhart, Tauler and Ruusbroec use the following abbreviations. Most references will include a cross reference to an English translation, where one exists. Thus, EM, 168/160 indicates that I am quoting or referring to p. 168 of the German edition of *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, and p. 160 of the English translation, both of which are listed in the Bibliography. Likewise, LW II, 124/TP, 87 means that I am quoting or referring to Latin Volume II, p. 124 of the Kohlhammer edition of Eckhart's works, and p. 87 of the translation, *Teacher and Preacher*. The translations of Tauler are my own (but see Bibliography). The three works of Ruusbroec listed below are bilingual editions.

1. Heidegger

| | |
|-----|---|
| B | <i>Beiträge zur Philosophie</i> |
| EM | <i>Einführung in die Metaphysik</i> |
| G | <i>Gelassenheit</i> |
| Gb | <i>Grundbegriffe</i> |
| GP | <i>Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie</i> |
| Hb | <i>Ein Brief über den Humanismus</i> |
| Hw | <i>Holzwege</i> |
| ID | <i>Identität und Differenz</i> |
| MAL | <i>Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik</i> |
| SA | <i>Schelling: Vom Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit</i> |
| SD | <i>Zur Sache des Denkens</i> |
| SG | <i>Der Satz vom Grund</i> |
| SZ | <i>Sein und Zeit</i> |
| TK | <i>Die Technik und die Kehre</i> |
| US | <i>Unterwegs zur Sprache</i> |
| VA | <i>Vorträge und Aufsätze</i> |
| W | <i>Wegmarken</i> |
| WhD | <i>Was heißt Denken?</i> |
| WM | <i>Was ist Metaphysik?</i> |
| WP | <i>Was ist das - die Philosophie?</i> |
| WG | <i>Vom Wesen des Grundes</i> |
| WW | <i>Vom Wesen der Wahrheit</i> |

2. Medieval Authors

| | |
|--------|---|
| It. | Bonaventure, <i>Itinerarium Mentis in Deum</i> |
| DW I-V | Eckhart, <i>Die deutsche Werke</i> |
| LW I-V | Eckhart, <i>Die lateinische Werke</i> |
| Pf. | Eckhart, <i>Predigten</i> , ed. Franz Pfeiffer |
| ES | Eckhart, <i>The Essential Sermons, Treatises, Commentaries, and Defense</i> |
| TP | Eckhart, <i>Teacher and Preacher</i> |
| W I-II | Eckhart, <i>Sermons and Treatises</i> , trans. M.O'C. Walshe |
| PQ | Eckhart, <i>Parisian Questions and Prologues</i> |
| V | Tauler, <i>Predigten</i> , ed. Ferdinand Vetter |
| BV | Ruusbroec, <i>Boecsken der verclaringhe</i> |
| GB | Ruusbroec, <i>Die geestelike brulocht</i> |
| SS | Ruusbroec, <i>Vanden seven sloten</i> |

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted to the University of York in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. I, Sonya Sikka, hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself, that the work of which this thesis is a record is my own, and that it has not been accepted elsewhere in any previous application for a higher degree.

Sonya Sikka

INTRODUCTION

It is one of Heidegger's fundamental observations that the content and structure of any enquiry is essentially determined by its task, by what it seeks to accomplish. In that case, one way of explaining the nature of a particular investigation is through the elucidation of its basic aim, the aim governing, for instance, its choice of material, its points of emphasis, and its methodology. Such an elucidation will also help to make intelligible the unity binding the various elements of the work into a coherent whole.

With these points in mind, the first thing I want to make clear about the following investigation is that it is not a study of sources. Although I believe that Heidegger was in fact strongly influenced by medieval mystical texts, and by medieval theology in general, this study does not aim to establish the fact of historical influence, much less to examine the precise nature of that influence or the channels through which it may have been transmitted. The comparisons that will be drawn here between Heidegger and various medieval figures are guided, rather, by a quite different task, the task of thinking about God in the present age, which means responding to the need currently felt by the absence of God.

By setting up a dialogue between Heidegger and a number of medieval mystical authors, St. Bonaventure, Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler and Jan van Ruusbroec,¹ I will attempt to explore some possibilities of how the divine may be thought, given the current situation of God. It is this end that unifies the various ways in which the medieval and Heideggerian texts are compared in the following pages. Whether the comparison points out a similarity or contrast, or uses Heidegger either to deconstruct or to retrieve a metaphysical or theological notion, or uses a medieval text to criticise Heidegger, or vice versa - all of these ways in which the members of the dialogue are brought into relation with one another are oriented towards the primary task of thinking about how God may be thought in future, given what has occurred in the past. The appropriation of past thought which this involves is never a matter of simple repetition, but of transformative revision in the light of what needs to be thought at present.

Thus, while I believe that placing Heidegger's writings beside these medieval texts helps to clarify both, this clarification is itself an intermediate, and not a final, objective. By means of it, I hope especially

to open some avenues for rethinking the relation between God and metaphysics. While Heidegger explicitly opposes the so-called 'God of metaphysics', a point to which I will return, his thought, and that of medieval mystical theology, can also help to retrieve this God by providing insight into the experiential ground of the theological and metaphysical terms which form the fundamental concepts of much philosophical theology. The often startling linguistic innovations of Heidegger and of the mystics are not designed to obfuscate the obvious, but to make the familiar strange, in a poetic manner. This often constitutes a poetic revision of the language of metaphysics and theology, based on insight into that which this language originally sought to articulate, that in response to which it was first uttered. For both Heidegger and the medieval mystics, particularly the mystics of the fourteenth century, this revision sometimes takes the form of a translation of metaphysical terms adopted from a foreign language, whose metaphoric import, and so basis in experience, is lost through such adoption, into the vernacular, so that the language of abstract thought and the language of concrete experience are no longer artificially separated. Looking at the insights offered by the language of the mystics and Heidegger in this regard can then help to reestablish the link between these abstract terms and their origin in human experience, a necessary enterprise in an age in which the discourses of theology and metaphysics have been subject to radical question.

However, while this may be enough to explain, albeit only in a preliminary and partial fashion, why I have chosen to examine the writings of Eckhart, Tauler and Ruusbroec in conjunction with Heidegger's thought, the choice to compare Heidegger's works with Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* requires some further comment. After all, Bonaventure stands squarely within the metaphysical tradition, and his writings seem to contain many of the elements to which Heidegger specifically objects when he speaks critically of the God of metaphysics, and of metaphysics in general. But because Bonaventure's form of metaphysics is simultaneously a mystical theology, because, that is, his metaphysical expressions are grounded in a type of experience and are not merely a function of speculative reason, many of Heidegger's criticisms, I will argue, are not entirely valid against his thought. This suggests that Heidegger's critique of metaphysics does not cover the whole of what may fall under this term, that all metaphysics is not what Heidegger claims it must be. I am, in fact, using Bonaventure's writings partly to criticise some of

Heidegger's sweeping generalisations about metaphysics and about the form of theology associated with it, and to suggest that there is room for more than one interpretation of metaphysical formulations, perhaps because these are themselves ambiguous and prone to a certain kind of deterioration.

That is not the only point of the comparisons between Bonaventure and Heidegger, though. I also want to set up a dialogue between Heidegger's thought and Bonaventure's form of metaphysics to demonstrate that there is a sense in which Heidegger can himself be termed a metaphysician. Finally, I will be using this dialogue to explore possibilities of metaphysics for the future, including ways in which it can be transformed and revised. Bonaventure's *Itinerarium*, because it addresses, in a concise and comprehensive manner, a large number of the key themes within medieval theology, is an ideal text for these several purposes.

The study is divided into three sections, each consisting of two chapters. These three sections examine three ways in which the understanding could be said to transcend both the empirical and the rational, where the category of the empirical covers sense-perception, and the category of the rational covers the extension of this perception through deduction and inference. This transcendent understanding, and I maintain that it is a form of understanding and not some kind of 'feeling', may be termed 'mystical'. Corresponding to these three forms of transcendent understanding are three forms in which the transcendent object, the *noema* of this form of *noesis*, manifests itself. The three sections of this study explore the manifestation of this transcendent *noema* with respect to: 1) the things that constitute nature and world, 2) the faculties, capabilities and potentialities of the mind and the self, and 3) *a priori* categories or transcendentals, the 'names of God', such as goodness and being, and beyond all concepts and categories in the 'divine darkness', the abyss.

This structure follows the three stages of contemplation in the *Itinerarium*, and the first chapter of each section (chapters 1, 3, 5) examines the chapters of the *Itinerarium* dealing with a particular stage of ascent, and then compares these with relevant themes in Heidegger's writings. The tripartite division in the *Itinerarium* is a recurrent one in medieval mystical and theological writings, and is based primarily on a threefold distinction between the objects with which the human mind concerns itself. It is drawn by Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173), among

others, in a passage in the *Benjamin Minor* where he speaks of three 'days' of knowledge. The first 'day' or type of knowledge is one where the mind is directed towards physical objects, so that its intention or focus is 'outside' of itself. The second type of knowledge is reflexive; here, the mind's object is itself, and its attention is focussed 'within'. In the third type, the mind reaches beyond itself towards 'divine things', towards that which transcends it.²

Knowledge of God is not, however, confined to the last stage for Richard, as God is revealed to the mind in all three of the 'days'. The epistemological hierarchy expounded throughout the *Benjamin Major* and *Benjamin Minor* is not concerned with distinguishing between profane and sacred knowledge but with describing the orders of the latter, the degrees or steps in the mind's apprehension of divinity. The *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, Bonaventure's best-known work, takes up the same theme, and is strongly influenced by Richard of St. Victor. Bonaventure also describes a threefold path, divided on the basis of the objects of cognition, through which the mind ascends to God. The objects of knowledge, as with Richard of St. Victor, are divided into the material, the mental, and the divine, and there is a mode of knowledge corresponding to each.

The ultimate object of knowledge with which Richard and Bonaventure are concerned, however, is only one - God. The three types of knowledge are actually only three ways of apprehending God: through the external world, through the mind, and above the mind. The mode of cognition is also ultimately only one. Since it is possible to know or to think about physical things, mental things, and even transcendent things without encountering God in the way Richard and Bonaventure describe, the three types of knowledge must have something in common to distinguish them as a whole from other cognitive modes. They can all be placed under the general title of 'contemplation'. *Contemplatio*, Richard says in the *Benjamin Minor*, *est libera mentis perspicacia in sapientiae spectacula cum admiratione suspensa* ['the free, more penetrating gaze of a mind suspended with wonder concerning manifestations of wisdom'].³ It differs from other ways of knowing, like imagination, rational thought and meditation, because it is unified (*sub uno visionis radio ad innumera se diffundit* ['diffuses itself to innumerable things under one ray of vision']),⁴ non-discursive (*suspensa*), and accompanied by a sense of the miraculous, a sense of *admiratione*. *Proprium itaque est contemplationi jucunditatis suae spectaculo cum admiratione inhaerere* ['It is the property of contemplation

to cling with wonder to the manifestation of its joy!';⁵ in contemplation, the mind is *semper ex admirationis magnitudine juxta aliquid suspendatur* ['always suspended near something because of greatness of wonder'].⁶

While God can be encountered at various stages, then, the state of the one who encounters remains in a certain way the same. And when the mind turns to contemplate the three objects apprehended in the three 'days' of knowledge, it discovers three aspects of one God. It finds an immanent God (discovered through the contemplation of nature), an indwelling God (discovered through the contemplation of the soul or mind), and a transcendent God (discovered through the contemplation of that which surpasses the mind). Just as these three 'gods' are in truth only three aspects of one God, so there is a unity behind the three ways of discovering them, a state that remains substantially identical through these three modes.

The second chapter in each of the three sections comprising this study compares Heidegger's thought with elements in the works of Eckhart (chapter 2), Tauler (chapter 4) and Ruusbroec (chapter 6). Unlike the chapters dealing with the *Itinerarium*, these do not address a particular stage of contemplation, but, focussing on the aspect of the divine under consideration in the section, take up a number of issues related to it. These chapters range across a wide spectrum of themes, stressing the interrelatedness of the various topics raised in this study.

The comparisons with Heidegger proceed through an examination of passages in Heidegger's writings which address themes parallel to the ones taken up in the analysis of each medieval figure. The choice of texts from the Heideggerian corpus is simply determined by this, and does not follow the chronological order of his works. The zigzag pattern thereby formed with respect to chronological order has the added advantage of helping to illuminate the precise nature of the continuity between the early and the late works, a continuity relevant to my discussion in a way that will become clear during its course.

Since each individual section begins with a few pages introducing its own contents and themes, there is no need to go into any further detail about these at this point. I should, however, mention one general feature of my approach. To put it simply, this approach does not move within the context of faith, if faith means adherence to a set of propositions or articles constituting a particular creed. This affects not only the manner in which the discussion proceeds, but also the selection of areas taken up

for discussion. With respect to medieval texts, I will not be examining those components which are strictly theological, in the narrow sense of being tied down to the specificity of a certain creed in such a way that they cannot be legitimately thought about or spoken of in a language that does not presuppose adherence to that creed.

I mention this especially because I do not want to give the impression of attempting to diminish the importance of these theological elements in the thought of Bonaventure, Eckhart, Tauler and Ruusbroec. Their exclusion is simply a function of the demands of my own project. I am not attempting to give a complete and wholly representative account of these figures, but only to appropriate those elements in their thought which show themselves as relevant in light of the aims of this study. This does not make the discussion quite as exclusive as one may at first think. A distinction must be drawn here between theology simply as *logos* of *theos*, as discourse about God, and theology as the clarification and systematisation of specifically Christian existence. The latter conforms to Heidegger's express view of the nature of theology,⁷ and it defines what I am *not* doing. The former, on the other hand, is an appropriate description of the following discussion, and it does not exclude reflection on, for instance, the nature of the Trinity or the meaning of Christ. These, it could be objected, are specifically Christian ideas. That is of course true, but insofar as these ideas, and others, may be analysed outside the context of faith, in the specific sense stated above, they are not being discussed in a manner that is theological according to the narrow definition.

On the basis of these remarks, one might conclude that I intend only to look at the 'philosophical' elements in these medieval writings. That is not incorrect, as long as 'philosophical' does not simply equal 'rational', in that sense which extends mainly to deduction and inference according to the rules of logic. In this context, a distinction is sometimes drawn between natural and revealed theology where natural theology is really philosophical, i.e. rational, discourse about God. This study does not confine itself to that form of discourse. But it does not therefore belong to revealed theology, since that term is generally reserved for the discipline dealing with the particular revelations, set down in Scripture, that come to constitute the body of Christian belief.

I would prefer to employ a different distinction, one drawn by Max Scheler in *On the Eternal in Man*.⁸ Scheler points out in this work that

rational metaphysics must be distinguished from natural religion, and natural religion involves a natural immediate knowledge of God or the divine (pp. 131, 141-2). This may seem to be a contradiction in terms, but Scheler only means by it an experience or intuition of God through a religious apprehension, as opposed to an inference to God on the basis of evidence which is not itself religious, not the intentional object of what Scheler calls a 'religious act'. As an example elucidating this distinction, he contrasts the process whereby one reaches the conclusion that there is an absolutely and infinitely rational being by inference from the nature of reason and of the world with 'the experience of infinite reason as it pours its light into finite reason and shines forth out of created things'. Augustine's notion of understanding all things *in lumine Dei*, for instance, expresses this sense of divinity, and is not the product of a metaphysical inference (pp. 167-8).

This study is intended as a contribution to natural theology understood not as rational metaphysics but as the theology arising from natural religion as Scheler understands it. In fact, the revised understanding of metaphysics which I want to suggest is in part associated with the fact that certain forms of metaphysics are actually rooted in this kind of religion. Perhaps that is the same as saying that these forms of metaphysics are based on mystical experience. Indeed, Gregory Vlastos has made precisely this point about Plato's metaphysics,⁹ and it is no coincidence that the unique quality of the strand of theology I am examining here - a strand which includes Augustine as perhaps its most eminent figure - owes so much to Neoplatonism.

John D. Caputo, in *The Mystical Element in Heidegger's Thought*, says that the relationship between Meister Eckhart and Heidegger involves 'a similarity of structures, not of content'.¹⁰ He argues that 'the *Sache* in Heidegger and in Eckhart differ greatly', but 'the relationships that each thinker sees within his own concern are interestingly akin'. He is therefore not positing an essential identity in which both thinkers have in mind the same referent, the same *Sache*, but an 'analogy of proportionality', in which 'the relationship, the dialectic, the interchange, between God and the soul in Meister Eckhart is similar to the relationship between Being and *Dasein* in Heidegger', but 'the terms of the relation - Being and God, *Dasein* and the soul' are themselves not related (pp. 143-5). I intend, on the other hand, to explore the relation between Heidegger's *Sein* and the

God of medieval mystical theology. This assumes, against Caputo, that there actually is a relation between the content or referent, the *Sache*, of these terms, not that what is being said (*das Geredete*) is identical, but that what is being talked about (*das Beredete*) is in some sense the same (see SZ, 161-2).

Some of Heidegger's own remarks would seem to settle the question of any relation between being and God in a definite way. In the *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, for instance, he says:

Denn niemals ist das Seyn eine Bestimmung des Gottes selbst, sondern das Seyn ist Jenes, was die Götterung des Gottes braucht, um doch und vollends davon unterschieden zu bleiben. Weder ist das Sein (wie die Seiendheit der Metaphysik) die höchste und reinste Bestimmung des $\theta\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$ und Deus und des »Absoluten«, noch ist es, was zu dieser Auslegung gehört, das gemeinste und leerste Dach für jegliches, was nicht nichts »ist«.

[For being is never a determination of God himself, but is that which the divinization of God needs, to remain yet completely distinct from being. Being is neither (like the beingness of metaphysics) the highest and purest determination of *theion* and *Deus* and the 'Absolute', nor is it - a notion which goes with this interpretation - the most general and emptiest covering term for everything that is not nothing.] (B, 240)

For the Heidegger of the *Beiträge*, being (*Seyn*) is the event of appropriation (*Er-eignis*), and this event is the source of God and gods. In that case, it is distinct from the 'beingness' which, according to Heidegger, is essential to the notion of being (e.g. *ipsum esse*) as a name of God. Being is rather what makes such a determination possible, the event that grants or sends the understanding of being.

In truth, however, the question cannot be decided as easily as that. For one thing, the relation between being qua event and being qua beingness (where the former is supposed to give rise to the latter) must be clarified, and the issue of this relation is complicated by the fact that what Heidegger here calls *Seiendheit* he elsewhere calls *Sein* and takes as primordial. Once the meaning of these two notions of being, and the relation between them, has been clarified as far as possible, it must then be determined where the so-called 'metaphysical' notion of being stands in relation to them. Heidegger's own appraisal, which is itself not immediately perspicuous, cannot just be assumed, but must be tested. This testing must take into account whatever complexities, ambiguities and obscurities lie in the metaphysical conception, as well as the fact that, in the case of someone like Bonaventure or Eckhart, for instance, metaphysics and mysticism are bound together in such a way that 'seeing' what being itself means and entails is not simply a matter of forming the appropriate

concept.

In the end, the question is best decided through analyses of Heidegger's various reflections on being in comparison with what has been said about God, and not through prior assumptions about the meaning and relation of being and God, even assumptions based on Heidegger's own claims, since these themselves require critical analysis. After all, Heidegger himself says that what God is to mean can only be decided from the meaning of being (Hb, 102/230). For Heidegger, 'God' is rooted in the understanding of being as the overpowering, the holy. In that case, to determine what God means, it is necessary to determine in what sense being 'is' the overpowering and the holy, in what way this idea of being belongs to the understanding of being (see MAL 211, n.3/165, n. 9). God, for Heidegger, is not the holy and is not being, but is an entity arising from, and beckoning towards, being as the holy. The gods are then the messengers of divinity, the beckoning messengers of the Godhead (*Gottheit*) (VA II, 24/150).

But Heidegger's remarks on this issue are actually prescriptive rather than descriptive. As such, they are open to question. It is not at all clear that what Heidegger calls 'God' or 'gods' on the various occasions that he engages in God-talk is: a) what 'God' has always and everywhere meant in the Western tradition and b) all that 'God' may mean so as to determine necessarily what God is to mean in future, i.e. what is to be called God. The relation between what God is to mean and what God has meant is not a simple one. It may be, for instance, that some one item in the essence of God so far, in what God has meant to date, is so essential that it must be preserved through all conceptions and findings. This might require that many of the other attributes of God that have been taken to be essential be sacrificed, made accidental, for its sake. To give a simple example, it could be that the attribute of absolute priority or ultimacy, is so essential to the definition of God that if Heidegger's analysis of *Sein* as *Ereignis* convincingly presents an ultimate which in other respects does not look much like the traditional Western conception of God, that ultimate is nonetheless what is properly called 'God', and not the 'God' or 'gods' that Heidegger names. A decision must be made here about what is essential and what is accidental to God. The decision in this case might involve asking whether it is essential that God be ultimate or whether it is essential that God be an entity, if, that is, Heidegger's analysis convincingly demonstrates that the ultimate is not an

entity.

Deciding whether or not Heidegger's analysis is to be deemed 'atheistic' requires an elaboration based on such considerations. If it is decided that God has to be an entity and that belief in the existence of God is necessarily a belief in the existence of an all-powerful and ultimate entity, then the question of whether or not Heidegger's thought is atheistic will revolve around a number of further possible questions, where these will have to make further decisions about what God may and may not mean. If, in the question about belief in the existence of God, it is necessary that God be an all-powerful ultimate entity, and that God be single, the question will be: Is that which is ultimate and single for Heidegger, namely, being or the event, an existent entity? If God need not be single, and if believing in the existence of God can mean believing in the existence of gods, then the question might be: Can the 'gods' which the event sends be said to 'exist', and in what way? This means asking, is the way in which these gods are, and it is clear that they in some sense are, sufficient for asserting 'belief in the existence of'? In case both of these questions are answered in the negative, which I believe they must be, unless the terms 'existence' and 'entity' are being used in a highly extraordinary way, then the conclusion that Heidegger's thought is atheistic follows if and only if it is decided that 'atheism' is equivalent to 'not believing in the existence of an ultimate entity called God' so that a sense of the holy as the overpowering which does not lead to belief in the existence of an all-powerful entity in any ordinary sense amounts to atheism.

The issue about 'belief in', then, demands some decisions about how far the term God can be stretched. When does God cease to be God? When may what is 'believed in', what is asserted as being in some sense true, no longer appropriately be called God? Being or the event are ultimate, but they are not entities, although they are not simply nothing, either. They cannot be said to be in any univocal sense of 'being'. For Heidegger, in fact, it cannot be appropriately said that they 'are' at all. Clearly, this in itself cannot decide the question about whether what Heidegger takes as ultimate can or cannot be called God, since the claim has been made within the Christian theological tradition that being cannot be applied univocally to finite entities and to God (e.g. Aquinas), and even that it cannot be properly applied to God at all (e.g. Eckhart). None of the traditional attributes of God apply in any ordinary sense to what Heidegger takes as

ultimate, but, again, that can be said of a good deal of Christian theology as well. On the other hand, most voices within the Christian theological tradition would want to maintain that these attributes do apply in some remote sense, that the entity usually called God, whose properties can be listed, is not a completely fictional fabrication, but in some way points to or indicates the 'true' God. But that can also be said of Heidegger's gods as the beckoning messengers of divinity. Those gods could then be taken as finite entitative representatives of the one true 'God', the God that is not an entity, and is not representable *an sich*. They can be taken as mediations, both true and untrue, just as, within the theological tradition, every conception of God has to be seen as a mediation, as partially true and partially false.

I am not claiming at this point that they should be so taken. It is the purpose of this study to shed light on these issues, and to reach some conclusions. Moreover, whatever may be the similarities between Heidegger's conception of being and the theological conception of God, the mere fact that Christian theology speaks of various conceptions and manifestations of a single God, while Heidegger speaks of gods that beckon to an 'Es' which he does not want to call God is significant. Even if Heidegger's decisions on this point often have more to do with the status of the term 'God' in the present age than with a real difference of content (which, once again, can only be decided through an analysis of content), the difference in stance is an important one.

For Heidegger, this difference in stance is the essential difference between faith and philosophy. Philosophy is essential questioning. It asks, for example, 'Why is there something rather than nothing?', a question that, from the standpoint of faith, is foolishness (EM, 8-9/6-7). Philosophy has no business meddling in faith (see Hw, 255/105), and because theology, as the *begriffliche Interpretation der christlichen Existenz* ['conceptual interpretation of Christian existence'] (W, 57/13) is the science of faith, it needs philosophy only to clarify the pre-Christian content of its basic concepts (W, 61ff./17ff.), and does not need any help from metaphysics. Like Heidegger's claims about God, however, these claims about the nature and task of theology are prescriptive rather than descriptive, and open to objection. In the use of Heidegger for philosophy of religion, there has been a tendency among some scholars to treat these and similar utterances as gospel. But, assuming that Martin Heidegger is not the son of God, one is surely not compelled to accept everything he

says on such issues as beyond question. .

The same point can be made with respect to the 'God of philosophy'. Heidegger most emphatically objects to this God, but, while there is a good deal of truth in his objections, they are not valid in an absolute and unqualified fashion. For instance, when Heidegger says that *Causa sui* is the just and appropriate name for this God (ID, 70/65) and intends this as a pejorative statement indicating, in the end, the godlessness of such a God, he articulates an old and to some extent valid opposition between the seemingly lifeless God of philosophy and the living God of faith. But the God of philosophy is not simply and always an empty logical construction. For instance, the notion of God as a first cause goes back to Aristotle, and here is how Abraham Edel describes this God:

Pure, necessary, fully actual, eternal, unchanging, living, self-conscious thought, embracing within itself the vibrant essence of the world, the ultimate source of physical movement and biological growth, the light that quickens human thought, the good that alone can order the whole and give eternal structure to things and processes - such is Aristotle's God.''

Although this conception of God has nothing to do with *faith*, it is not therefore necessarily divorced from all that may be called *religion*. Again, it is helpful to add Scheler's distinction between natural and revealed religion to the common distinction between rational theology and faith. Just as revealed theology is the conceptual clarification of faith, so natural theology can be the conceptual clarification of natural religion, the conceptualisation, that is, of a God whose presence and activity are very much manifest in the world.

Curiously, while in his later works Heidegger repeatedly speaks against any contribution of metaphysics to the question of God and the theology of faith, he asks in 1928:

Ob aber nicht der vermeintliche ontische Glaube an Gott im Grunde Gottlosigkeit ist. Und der echte Metaphysiker religiöser ist denn die üblichen Gläubigen, Angehörigen einer ›Kirche‹ oder gar die ›Theologen‹ jeder Konfession?

[But might not the presumably ontic faith in God be at bottom godlessness? And might the genuine metaphysician be more religious than the usual faithful, than the members of a 'church' or even than the 'theologians' of every confession?] (MAL, 211, n. 3/165, n. 9)

The *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, the work from which this passage is taken, was composed before Heidegger's disavowal of metaphysics, and in it he still speaks of 'the metaphysical essence of *Dasein*' (MAL, 197/155). This at least suggests an ambiguity in Heidegger's thought on the issue of metaphysics, an ambiguity which, I believe, remained present throughout his writings.

If it is argued that Heidegger has simply changed his mind with respect to the relation between God and metaphysics, in accord with his changed relation to metaphysics in general, one still needs to ask in what way he has changed his mind. This raises the question about the nature of the 'turning' between early and late Heidegger, a question I will address repeatedly in the following pages. As a preliminary remark, I would suggest that instead of taking all of Heidegger's pronouncements about being, God, and metaphysics at face value, one might question the extent to which what Heidegger chooses to say involves a decision about what it is advisable or inadvisable to say, given the historical moment. This decision is not just a matter of 'covering up' something, of choosing obscurity for practical reasons, for instance, out of fear of being misunderstood, but of what it is right or wrong to say, given the historically determined sense of the terms one employs. If, for example, Heidegger did say that 'being' could be understood as 'God', the question of what this would mean cannot be dissociated from the question of how it would be heard. If how such a statement is likely to be understood determines what it presently means, the statement is no doubt simply wrong. But that does not entail the conclusion that what Heidegger means by 'being' could not possibly be the same as what someone once meant by 'God'. Given how 'God' is today likely to be understood, being is not God, but in that case what Eckhart calls God is not 'God' either. In truth, what Eckhart calls God is not, in any age including his own, what the term readily means, how it is easily and immediately understood. His God is, after all, a dark saying, heard with much difficulty and struggle. Eckhart does still speak of God, but Heidegger may at times mean the same as him, while having decided that the historical situation of this term is such that it would be better today to remain silent about God as an object of thinking (ID, 51/47-8).

Consequently, while Heidegger explicitly says that being is not God (e.g. Hb, 76/210), the sense of this statement is not obvious. The statement 'being is God' is, after all, itself ambiguous. It can mean: what is called God, is being, where the meaning of God is taken as primary. Or the statement can mean: what is called being, is God.¹² In that case, the search for the meaning of being would also be the search for the meaning of God. This search would then not *begin* with a determinate sense of God, but would *end* by saying, 'and this we call God'. Heidegger rejects this possibility, but in so doing he makes a certain decision about

the meaning of God, or perhaps a tactical decision about what it is wise to say at this time, or both. And it is possible to disagree with him.

The questions raised here are not just questions about how to interpret Heidegger, but impinge on the relation between Heidegger's analysis and the question of God in general. Heidegger's thought can be used to address that question in more than one way. In 'Topologie de l'être et topographie de la révélation', J.S. O' Leary objects to what he feels is a misappropriation of Heidegger by, among others, Karl Rahner, Bernhard Welte, Heinrich Ott and John Macquarrie.¹³ In his view, this misappropriation arises from 'the temptation to establish a rapport between the Heideggerian being and God'. Macquarrie, he notes in astonishment, 'with great goodwill but without any scruple of fidelity to Heidegger's questions, goes so far as to present the divine Trinity as three modes of the presence of being!' (p. 196) For O' Leary, on the other hand, fidelity to both Heidegger and to the questions of theology requires that the distance between the message of Scripture and the message of Heidegger be recognized, that before making use of Heidegger's notion of *Ereignis*, for instance, it be noted that 'one may read the whole Bible without hearing the slightest murmur of *Ereignis*' (p. 201).

These criticisms rest on an acceptance of Heidegger's own prescriptions about the nature and task of theology, as well as his judgements about metaphysics. Much of Western theology, on the other hand, has not been narrowly tied to what is contained in Scripture, but has involved an ongoing discourse about what God may mean, and what the nature of God may be. That discourse has traditionally incorporated philosophy and metaphysics. Heidegger rejects this incorporation, but, once again, the judgements on which his rejection is based are worth questioning. As Heidegger himself says, *Einen Denker achten wir nur, indem wir denken* ['We show respect for a thinker only when we think'], and thinking is not served by mere assent (Hw, 250/99).

One reason why Heidegger's judgements about metaphysics are worth questioning is that the kind of story he wants to tell about the history of Western philosophy decides which threads are drawn into the weave of his narrative, and which are not. Every story is necessarily exclusive, and Heidegger's story, the story of Western philosophy as the history of the forgetting of being, is no exception. It is guided from the beginning and throughout by the end it attempts to reach, and that means by the effort to explain how the predominant movement of Western metaphysics culminates

in the modern age, the age dominated and essentially determined by technology. This does not mean that the history constructed, or reconstructed, within Heidegger's account is 'wrong' or 'slanted' because he has a particular end in view. The end is a real end and the story may be a true one. But the end he has in view determines what Heidegger wants to explain, and what he wants to explain determines which of the multiple meanings of philosophical texts he chooses to highlight. There is room for alternative readings of these texts, with different points of emphasis. Moreover, while Heidegger's interpretations may genuinely serve to indicate the *dominant* features of the philosophical tradition, those features, that is, which come to predominate so as to end in the present situation, there may be other interpretations which, rather than explaining how we got to where we are, suggest possibilities for where else we might be, or, which comes to the same thing, where we might go from here.

To be sure, Heidegger's deconstruction of metaphysics, and particularly his attempts to reinterpret early Greek thought, are also intended to suggest alternatives for thinking. These proceed, however, within the context of what he sees as the history of the forgetting of being, where the retrieval of early Greek thought is meant to contribute to the preparation for the reversal of this forgetting. One needs to ask here what kind of recovery or retrieval reflection on the historical beginning actually effects, where this is necessarily linked to the question of what kind of covering up, what kind of forgetting, the subsequent tradition involves or may involve. To what extent, and in what way are the characteristics of being, originally uncovered and maintained in that uncoveredness (cf. SZ on truth, e.g. 218, 224) in the sayings of the early Greeks, 'lost' and 'forgotten' in what is said later? Is it necessarily the case that later formulations cover up what was originally uncovered in their sources, that they block access to what was talked about, what was held in view or *gemeint* in the original sayings of the Greeks? What does this talk of covering up and blocking access mean?

Insofar as it means something like concealing, it may simply suggest, in accordance with Heidegger's analysis of ambiguity as a characteristic of falling in *Sein und Zeit* (§37), that what is said later tends to lose relation to the original, the real, phenomena, that the later talk tends to become uprooted, no longer rooted in the phenomenal basis from which it must derive the only genuine meaning that it has. In that case, it may be that the earliest language, being closest to the ground, as it were, is

less likely to cover up that phenomenal basis, more likely to provide original access to it because more likely to be genuinely rooted in it. In the later developments which have their source qua historical origin in early Greek thought, on the other hand, what was thought there - what was *gemeint* - may be forgotten. The original sayings, passed along as currency, may fall. They may become ambiguous in that, in the way they are picked up, transformed, translated, interpreted and passed along, what was said in them, what they intended to uncover, may no longer be seen or heard. The concealing that thereby occurs would then involve a loss of meaning consisting in the degeneration of a genuine thought into the emptiness of a mere concept, a concept that no longer refers to anything 'true', anything that may be truly uncovered. The attempt to return to early Greek thought would then not be a matter of 'nostalgia',¹⁴ but of trying to recover the genuine meaning of terms with respect to their roots in the phenomena.

But this would not mean that no thinker after the early Greeks could possibly see what they saw in what they said about being, or mean what they meant. What is originally uncovered has its roots in what can show itself, the phenomenon. It therefore refers to, means, what can really be seen, while what is meant by a mere concept can in no case really be seen. It could be that, in every formulation and reformulation of what the Greeks said about being, access to the phenomenon, to what is originally uncovered and meant, is preserved in such a way that what is being pointed out may be seen, or not. This would be tantamount to saying that the original meaning may be authentically appropriated, or not. A thinker may then genuinely discover what the terms 'originally' intend, or may fail to do so, where 'originally' means not only first in historical order, but also first in the sense of phenomenally basic. Moreover, what is uncovered originally, e.g. being, may in truth be everywhere the same. If so, it can be said that the recovery of the beginning may be, in truth, a recovery of what is everywhere the same, of what is in truth always the same. It may then be a recovery of what someone may always uncover and discover, at all times and in all situations. The history of being, in that case, might not be best described as a history of the forgetting of being. Rather, it could be that being is, in many ages and with many genuine thinkers, constantly open to being both remembered and forgotten. It may be that what is spoken about being always involves a hard saying, something it is always hard to hear and to keep in view, hard even for the early Greeks,

and perhaps no less hard for them than for later thinkers.

If one then asks, for example, does Bonaventure, or Eckhart or Aquinas, 'hear' or 'see' what being itself means, and in the way that Heidegger does through his dialogue with early Greek thought, the answer cannot be 'no' just because they belong to the supposed history of the forgetting of being. It could be that what comes to light in the dialogue between Heidegger and, for instance, Anaximander, helps to illuminate what these later thinkers actually mean, or what they may glimpse on occasion, where the early Greeks may only have glimpsed this on occasion, too. One question about them might take the form, do they 'hear' that of which they speak, do they know what they are talking about, or are they just employing an empty concept devoid of any genuine meaning? In the case of sayings having to do with something that is not an object within the world, this question must involve the issue of insight into what must remain, for all reason, mysterious, the issue, that is, of 'mystical' (in a broad sense) intuition. It is true that, to be posited as existing, what is thus posited must be given to experience; it must be in some way intuited. It is also true that, to be intuited as an object, what is intuited must lie within the world. But all that comes to presence may not be an object, and all intuition may not involve intuition of what can be represented as an object within the world. The formation, and therefore the reference, of a term which does not refer to anything within the world can take a variety of forms. What Kant fails to see is that the very same notion may be an empty concept, or an attempt to capture, in a limited way and in the language of metaphysics, what is given in an experience that transcends the world as a spatio-temporal continuum, an intuition to which, ultimately, no categories apply.

I will return to these issues many times in the following pages. The above comments are only meant to anticipate, in a general way, some of the basic objections that might be raised against the approaches adopted here.

As a final word, I should point out that the task this study has set for itself, the task of exploring possibilities of 'God', guides its appropriation of Heideggerian texts as much as of medieval ones. Thus, I do not intend to give a complete and wholly representative account of the former any more than of the latter. Such a claim must never, however, become an excuse for misrepresentation, and I hope that, in my necessarily exclusive analysis of these texts, I have nonetheless remained true to both their letter and their spirit.

SECTION I

THE IMMANENT GOD

The first chapter in this section compares the first two chapters of St. Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* with Heidegger's deconstructive analyses of early Greek thought, i.e. of the so-called - and, according to Heidegger, *miscalled* - 'pre-Socratics'. In this comparison, Heidegger's analyses will, to some extent, be used to deconstruct Bonaventure's metaphysical formulations so as to uncover what is most basic to them. However, I hope also to show that Bonaventure's metaphysical theology is rooted in an experience of being which, while it does stand worlds apart from the experience of the early Greek thinkers, nonetheless still exhibits some similarities to it. In demonstrating this, I will suggest as well that many of Heidegger's criticisms of the God of metaphysics, and therefore of philosophical theology, are not entirely valid when directed at a mystical theologian like Bonaventure.

The second chapter compares Meister Eckhart and Heidegger. It demonstrates the ways in which Heidegger appropriates and transforms some key metaphysical concepts through a dialogue with Eckhart's thought. Among other issues, this chapter will deal with traditional scholastic transcendentals such as being, truth, goodness and unity. While the concepts of being and goodness will also be discussed in Chapter Five, the analysis here focusses specifically on how the God named through these terms can be conceived as immanent, although this immanence necessarily involves an aspect of transcendence as well. Because the presentation of Eckhart's thought in these pages, and the comparison of it with Heidegger, is meant to lay a foundation for the comparison between Heidegger and Tauler in Chapter Four, and between Heidegger and Ruusbroec in Chapter Six, the discussion in this chapter is longer and more detailed than in any of the others.

The order of discussion in Chapter One is: 1) an expository account of the first two chapters of the *Itinerarium*, and 2) an account of Heidegger's analysis of early Greek thought, incorporating a step by step comparison with Bonaventure. I have attempted to keep the exposition of Bonaventure as simple as possible, focussing only on those features of his thought relevant for the dialogue with Heidegger. I have consequently avoided lengthy discussions of, for instance, the complexities of his epistemological system, his doctrine of analogy, and so forth. This is only possible to a certain extent, however, and some detail on issues not strictly relevant for my purposes has been unavoidable in clarifying the issues that are relevant.

The order of discussion in Chapter Two is similar, with a presentation of Eckhart's thought first, and a comparison with Heidegger second. Many of the issues introduced here will be taken up from different perspectives in Chapters Four and Six, in accord with Tauler's and Ruusbroec's incorporation and adaptation of Eckhartian themes in their own writings.

CHAPTER ONE

BONAVENTURE'S PRESENT DIVINITY AND THE BEING OF EARLY GREEK THOUGHT

1. *Bonaventure on the God Known In and Through Creatures.*

The first two chapters of the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* seek to demonstrate the ways in which the mind is capable of grasping God in and through the things of the material, or 'sensible', world. Seeing God by means of this world constitutes, for Bonaventure, the first step in the mind's journey to God. It is the first rung of the spiritual ladder by which the mind ascends into God (It. I.9, 299/63). The mind does not grasp God in creatures of necessity. Rather, the ladder presents an invitation, and the soul has the power to accept this invitation, to ascend the ladder by presenting the world to itself in a certain way; namely, as a mirror reflecting God, in which God is visible. Thus, the world is itself not necessarily, but only potentially, a mirror of God, where the potentiality of the world to appear in this way corresponds to the potentiality of the soul to present it to itself as such, to see it in a particular light. Whether or not the world manifests God in its appearance, therefore, rests, in some sense, upon a decision on the part of the soul.

The decision to ascend (*ascendere*) the ladder is the decision to cross over (*transire*) to God, to make the passage from created things to creator. In this passage, the soul journeys from one realm into another, from the land of bondage in which it is born (Egypt) to the land it inherits as a promise, from the world to the Father, from ignorance to wisdom (I.9, 299/63).

For Bonaventure, the realm of matter, the 'material world', is the

realm of those properties that are said to be apprehended through the bodily senses, and the things that belong to this world, physical or corporeal entities, are the things whose essential nature or substance is defined in terms of these properties. While all that is, excepting only God and what pertains to God, is a 'creature', since it stands in relation to God as to a maker (where this relation provides the ultimate explanation of its being, of both its existence, the fact that it is, and of its essence, its being so and so), the name of creature is especially applied to the things within this corporeal region of what-is, to substances exhibiting sensible properties.

The exterior senses convey these sensible properties to the 'interior senses'. In so doing, they act as messengers announcing the attributes of God, for they serve the intellect in the operations whereby it comes to know God through creatures. Bonaventure mentions three ways in which they perform this function, corresponding to three intellectual processes (I.10, 299/63-4). First, in 'contemplating intellectually', the intellect considers things in themselves (*res in se ipsis*). It considers, through the images communicated to it by the senses, the order and qualities of the physical world. From the attributes of the sensible world, Bonaventure claims, the intellect can rise up (*consurgere*) *ex vestigio ad intelligendum potentiam, sapientiam et bonitatem Creatoris immensam* ['as from a vestige . . . to knowledge of the immense power, wisdom and goodness of the Creator'] (I.11, 299-300/64). Without delving too deeply into the precise details of Bonaventure's description of the physical world, his basic point is that, from the nature of this world, from the order it manifests in its internal division, arrangement, and motion, the attributes of its creator, which are not the attributes of matter but of mind, are visible to the human mind in contemplation. For Bonaventure, the structure of reality precisely corresponds to the structure of *mens* in terms of its powers of apprehension and understanding, with physical properties corresponding to the bodily senses, and rational order to the intellect. It is in comprehending the rational order of things that the 'immense power, wisdom and goodness' of the mind which conceives and creates them is evident to the mind which apprehends them.

Second, in 'believing faithfully', the intellect represents another kind of order to itself, the order of the universal course of things for the believer, the history of all that is, was or will be, as faith understands it. It considers the 'supreme principle' of the world through a

consideration of the origin, process and end (*originem decursum et terminum*) of the world (I.12, 300/64). For faithful belief, the highest principle, considered in terms of the origin of the world, is the cause which brings all that is, understood collectively as 'creation', that which is created by the activity of the first cause understood as creator, into being from out of nothing. It is what effects the transition from nothing to being, where this transition is conceived as the creative process or act of creation. The intellect represents to itself the power of this supreme principle, the creator, in considering the power, the capability or potentiality (*potentia*), required to effect such a transition.

The rectitude of the concept of creation itself, and, consequently, the appropriateness of the language of creation for representing what is the case with respect to the origin of the world (and it is important to keep in mind that this representation, in determining the relation between what is and what brings it into being, also determines the fundamental nature of what is as a whole), is not, for Bonaventure, a subject for question, since it is a matter of faith. It is evident from some of his other works, though, that Bonaventure holds that philosophy can trace a ratiocinative route to a first cause (Aristotle), to exemplary ideas (Plato), and to the location of these ideas in the divine mind (Neoplatonists).¹ Thus, reason unaided by faith can know: 1) that all that is, taken together, has a cause or origin, 2) that it is ordered in that origin in a 'logical' way, so that its inception is a conception like to the formation of ideas in the human mind, which asserts by implication that, in its origin, reality has a structure like to the structure of human thought and language, and 3) that it is conceived and generated by a mind to which the human mind bears a resemblance of analogy. To the notion of the Christian creator-God, however, the belief *aptata esse saecula Verbo vitae*, that the ages are prepared and brought forth by the Word of life (I.12, 300/64), belongs the idea of creation out of nothing by means of the Word, and this must be held by faith.

In considering, next, the course of history through time, faithful belief sees an orderly progress of ages manifesting the providence of the same ordering mind that conceives all that will unfold in time at the beginning of time. For the Christian faith, the essential nature of this unfolding, the way it is to be divided and organised, is no more subject to radical question than is the essential nature of the beginning. History, for Bonaventure, manifests three ages: nature, scripture and grace. Each

has its own law, and each succeeds the other in an orderly, and ascending, fashion (I.12, 300/64).

The logic of this history, the history revealed to Christian faith and manifesting the logic of the Christian God in time, culminates and ends in the final judgement. Because the world of faith is, in its development through time, ordered to this end, the logic of its history is visible only by reference to this event at the end of it. Although the full truth of this history, the understanding that sees face to face, becomes manifest only at its end, with the result that the full meaning of the time of faith can be known only at the still awaited end of this time, the basic nature of the *eschaton*, like that of the origin and progress of the world, is already revealed to faith. Faith sees the end of the world as *just*, and, in so doing, it sees justice as the ultimate principle according to which the structure of the world's temporal progress is determined. The justice of the end of the world necessarily manifests the justice of the supreme principle commanding the history of the world, but the fact that this end is just, so that the world, in the end, is just, is held not by any necessity of reason, but by the free decision of faith.

A necessity of reason is claimed, on the other hand, for 'investigating by reason', the third intellectual process in which the senses assist the understanding to pass over to God from the sensible world (I.13, 300/64). Here, the intellect, having seen, on the basis of the information conveyed to it by the senses, that the visible world exhibits degrees of perfection, moves from this to a being which has the ultimate degree of perfection with respect to the various forms of perfection apprehended. It thus moves from the world to God by way of gradation. Discussing this point, Bonaventure posits a particular hierarchy or chain of being, with God at the top. As in any hierarchical ordering, a system of valuation is presupposed. For Bonaventure, intelligence, spirituality, and incorruptibility have the maximum value, and the degree of perfection accorded to an entity is directly proportional to the degree to which it possesses these attributes in its mode of existence. Moreover, truth and value are directly proportional to one another and truth is equivalent to degree of being. Therefore, the highest reality, the mode of existence which is most 'true' and has the greatest degree of being, is that which is most perfect, where perfection is determined with respect to the aforementioned attributes. The true world is thus the realm of intelligence, spirit and immutability, realized absolutely in God, and the

false world, the world of appearance as opposed to truth, is the realm of ignorance, matter and corruptibility. In 'rational investigation', the intellect moves from the attributes of the imperfect modes of existence possessed by entities in the world of appearance to those of the perfect mode of existence possessed by God: *Ex his ergo visibilibus consurgit ad considerandum Dei potentiam, sapientiam et bonitatem ut entem, viventem et intelligentem, mere spiritualem et incorruptibilem et intransmutabilem* ['From these visible things, therefore, one rises to consider the power, wisdom and goodness of God as existing, living, intelligent, purely spiritual, incorruptible and unchangeable'] (I. 13, 300/64-5).

Bonaventure next expands his consideration of how the attributes of God are manifested in the world of creatures by dividing that world into a sevenfold 'condition'. This sevenfold condition of creatures, in which they are considered with respect to their *origo, magnitudo, multitudo, pulcritudo, plenitudo, operatio et ordo* ['origin, magnitude, multitude, beauty, fulness, activity and order'] (I.14, 301/65), forms a sevenfold testimony to the power, wisdom and goodness of their creator. While such a testimony can only be received by the reflective processes of *mens*, it is not, of course, a fabrication of the form of those processes. Within this realist epistemology, the seven properties named are not products of the way the human subject experiences and organises the world in its own perceptions and analyses, but constitute the real state of things which *mens* apprehends.

Through the full understanding of each of these conditions, *mens* is led, once more, to knowledge of the attributes of the being ultimately responsible for the structure of the world in its totality, and therefore also for the specific features of that structure. For instance, when considering the threefold origin of creatures, their beginning *secundum creationem, distinctionem et ornatum* ['creation, distinction and embellishment'] (I.14, 301/65), *mens* passes over to the conception of the power of a being capable of producing all out of nothing (*cunctis de nihilo*), the wisdom of the being who divides and arranges this all into the great variety of creatures that exist, and the goodness of the being in virtue of which these types of creatures are provided with what is necessary for them and adorned with what is proper to them. This being is represented as the principle which not only created all that is, but which continues to create it, in that it continually gives rise to and sustains the being of all that remains in being. It is an immanent principle. In

Augustine's words, *ipse facit haec . . . Non enim fecit atque abiit, sed ex illo in illo sunt* ['God created all things, not by letting them come about and then going on his way, rather he remained in them'].² Because of this immanence, Bonaventure can say, for example, that the *magnitudo* of created things *manifeste indicat immensitatem potentiae, sapientiae et bonitatis trini Dei, qui in cunctis rebus per potentiam, praesentiam et essentiam incircumscriptus existit* ['clearly manifests the immensity of the power, wisdom and goodness of the triune God, who by his power, presence and essence exists uncircumscribed in all things'] (I.14, 301/65).

Chapter Two of the *Itinerarium* deals mainly with the apprehension of this immanent principle, the God who exists within all things. Here, Bonaventure turns to the contemplation of God in, rather than through, the sensible world, claiming that,

Sed quoniam circa speculum sensibilium non solum contingit contemplari Deum *per ipsa* tanquam per vestigia, verum etiam *in ipsis*, in quantum est in eis *per essentiam, potentiam et praesentiam*; et hoc considerare est altius quam praecedens.

[Concerning the mirror of things
perceived through sensation,
we can see God
not only through them as through his vestiges,
but also in them
as he is in them
by his essence, power and presence.
This type of consideration is higher than the previous one.]
(II.1, 303/69)

The God who resides within the 'sensible mirror' in terms of *essentia, potentia et praesentia* forms the answer to the 'limiting questions'³ about the being, the motion, and the presence of the things that constitute the world of sense-perception. God is the being of beings, in the sense that God is the being from whose infinite being the finite being of all creatures is derived, and by which that finite being is sustained. God is also the absolute power behind the limited and dependent power of creatures, the prime mover originating the motion of beings, and, finally, God is the ultimate presence within all present beings. The sensible mirror reflects this immanent God insofar as the mirror of *mens* reflects God to itself in reflecting the sensible world. The essence, power, and presence of God are always existent in the world of creation, but they shine through this world - are truly reflected, manifest, in it - only when *mens* mirrors the world in such a way as to mirror the God within it, which means: in such a way as to discover the world itself as a mirror of God.

It is, once more, the exterior senses that provide the most basic information by means of which the the God within the world is known, since

these five senses are the 'doors' through which the sensible world first enters the mind (II.2, 304/69). They act as passageways through which *sensibilia exteriora* ['exterior sense objects'] enter the mind *non per substantias, sed per similitudines suas* ['not through their substance, but through their likenesses'] (II.2, 305-6/71). Through their mediation, the elements that make up the greater world, the *macrocosmos*, are reconstituted within its reflection in the lesser world, the *minor mundus*, of the soul. All *sensibilia*, and so *totus iste sensibilis mundus* ['the entire sense world'] enters into the soul *per apprehensionem* ['through apprehension'] (II.4, 305/71). While apprehension is not itself sense-perception, but consists in the activity of the purely interior 'apprehensive power' (*potentia apprehensiva*), its achievement is dependent upon the information supplied to it by the senses.

If what is encountered by apprehension is 'agreeable' (*conveniens*), in a quite literal sense, to the one who apprehends, the result is pleasure and delight. The original cause of this delight, the one simple *ratio* forming the basis of all of its modes, is actually 'proportionality': *omnis . . . delectatio est ratione proportionalitatis* ['all enjoyment is based on proportion'] (II.5, 306/71). The reasons for delight can be reduced to forms of proportionality, and must be so reduced in providing an adequate account of this event if proportionality is its original, its most basic and simple, reason. The abstracted similitude or likeness through which the senses take delight in an object possesses (*tenet*), if it is 'suitable', three 'reasons' for delight, and each of these manifests a form of proportionality. When the sensible species whose apprehension causes delight is considered *respectum ad principium, a quo manet* ['in relation to the principle from which it flows'], proportionality is considered in terms of form, *et sic dicitur speciositas* ['and then it is called beauty'], as in sight. When the species is considered with respect to the *medium, per quod transit* ['medium through which it passes'], proportionality is understood in terms of power, the intensity of the species in the medium in which it is generated, and the consequent degree of force it exerts upon the senses; *suavitas* ['sweetness'], as in smell and hearing, consists in the agreeable proportion between the senses, which *tristatur in extremis et in mediis delectatur* ['are pained by extremes and delighted in the mean'], and the power acting upon them. Finally, when the species is considered with respect to the *terminum, in quem agit* ['term on which it acts'], proportionality is regarded with a view to *operatio*, to efficacy for

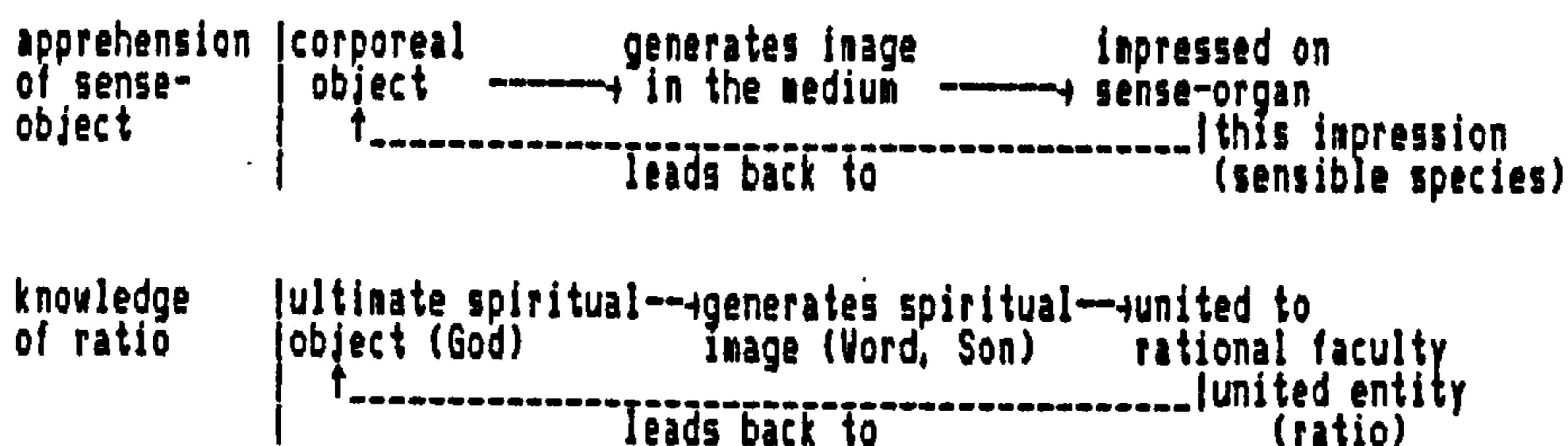
the receiver. Where the *operatio* of the agent fills a corresponding need on the part of the patient, proportionality is seen in *salubritas* ['wholesomeness'], as in taste or touch (II.5, 306-7/71). In this way, just as sense-perception apprehends *sensibilia exterioria*, so that the senses are doors through which the sensible properties of external objects pass into the soul by means of a generated likeness, so pleasure apprehends *delectabilia exteriora*, and is seen as the means by which the 'delightful' properties of objects enter the soul (II. 5, 307/71-2).

After apprehension and pleasure comes judgement (*diudicatio*), in which one inquires after the reason for pleasure; and finds that it lies in *proportio aequalitatis* ['the proportion of harmony'] (II.6, 307-8/72). In producing an account of pleasure where it is reduced to forms of proportionality, Bonaventure has already, according to his own definitions, moved out of the region of pleasure and into that of judgement, since he has inquired after and given the *ratio* of *delectabilia*. This *ratio*, which is the basis of all harmony, is the unified ground of all *delectabilia*; it is the reason-principle lying behind or within the objective properties that cause the various forms of delight. It is important to keep in mind here the ontological status of this *ratio*, the object of judgement. A reason-principle, a *ratio*, is, for Bonaventure, a constitutive feature of world, and not the construction of a human faculty. It is not a mental model bearing some form of structural or analogical similarity to what is the case in the world, but is itself a component in the structure of world, not a physical component, of course, since a *ratio* is not a physical entity, but a metaphysical, a 'spiritual', component.

A *ratio* is an abstract entity, but, for Bonaventure, this does not mean that it is the *product* of a mental process of abstraction. It is a real entity which *itself* abstracts from the conditions that determine particularity and corporeality, *viz.* time, space, and motion, and the activity of the power of judgement does not produce it, but reveals it (II.6, 306/72). Judgement does purify and abstract, but, in so doing, it only uncovers the *ratio* in its own purity and abstraction, in its 'spiritual' nature. 'Spiritual' does not describe an attribute of human consciousness in this case, but is a kind of being possessed by certain types of entities within the world. It is an aspect of world.

This aspect of the world leads the mind back, finally, to the 'rational', the principial, source of the world. To understand the way in which this is supposed to occur, it is again necessary to keep in mind the

ontological status of the *ratio* as the real object of the power of judgement. Bonaventure claims, basically, that the relationship between the power of judgement and its object is like that between the power of sense-perception and its object. The processes involved can be clarified with the help of a diagram:



The *ratio* in the mind, united to 'an individual of a rational nature', meaning, simply, to that creature whose nature is such as to allow it to abstract *rationes*, i.e. *mens*, leads back to the object which generates that *ratio* and of which the *ratio* is an image, in the same way that the abstracted sensible species leads back to the physical object which generates it and of which it is a representation. Moreover, just as the physical object generates its image in a medium, from which it is then impressed upon the physical organs of *mens*, so the ultimate spiritual object of *mens* (God) generates its own image in a spiritual medium (Christ as the Word), through which it is then apprehended by the rational powers of *mens*. The Word, a kind of divine logical space in which the archetypal ideas, the *rationes*, of all things actual and possible are contained, then functions as a mediator between *mens* and the primal mind which generates these ideas, just as the image generated in the medium mediates between *mens* and the physical object. God is thus the *fontale principium et objectum* ['fountain source and object'] with respect to ideas (*rationes*), as is the physical object with respect to sense-percepts (*sensibilia*) (II.7, 308-9/72-3).

This way of speaking is somewhat misleading, however, since, for *mens*, *rationes*, and consequently the God who gives rise to them through the mediation of the Word (the God of creation, who is known *a posteriori*), are themselves mediated by *sensibilia*, since they are abstracted from the sensible species. The order of ascent occurring in this process of abstraction corresponds to the order of descent in the process of creation. God generates the ideas of things in the Word, and these ideas are then incarnated in particular creatures; *mens* climbs up this chain of being from particular creatures to their ideas to God.

Although the *rationes* of creation, contained in the supreme *ratio* of

the Word, are, in a sense, remote from both the *sensibilia* and the *delectabilia* of the particular entities that make up the created world, they are also intimately conjoined to, and manifested by, these. The distance, the space of difference, between the 'uncreated' *rationes* and these 'created' properties must, of course, be understood metaphysically. They inhabit different regions of being (where 'being' is, in this case, to be understood as a covering word for all that is), regions that are brought together and yet held apart in the multi-faceted things of the created world, in *creatura*.

Given this relationship between the *ratio* and that of which it is the *ratio*, and given that the *ratio*, as the Word, is consubstantial with God and is God, it follows that God is actually the ultimate *ratio* of creation. As such, God is the *ratio* of the pleasurable properties of creatures, the proportion and harmony from which all delight arises and in which it is contained (It. II.8, 309/73). From this, according to Bonaventure, *manifeste videri potest, quod in solo Deo est fontalis et vera delectatio, et quod ad ipsam ex omnibus delectationibus manuducimur requirendam* ['it is obvious that in God alone there is primordial and true delight and that in all of our delights we are led to seek this delight'] (II.8, 309/73).

The last two points in Bonaventure's consideration of how God is manifested in creatures involve the immutability and eternity of the reason (*ratio*) by which the mind judges, and the seven different kinds of number or harmony (*numerus*) present at the level of the deep structure of things. With respect to the first point, Bonaventure proposes that the *ratio* by which the mind judges, and in which the rules or laws (*leges*) of certain judgement are comprehended, must be unchangeable, unlimited and endless, since it abstracts from place, time, and mutability. Because, for Bonaventure, the only being of which these attributes can be predicated is God, it follows that the *ratio* according to which judgement proceeds, the *ratio* which allows the mind to abstract the *rationes* of things, is itself God. The laws comprehended in this *ratio* are located in the mind of God; they are *non factas, sed increatas, aeternaliter existentes in arte aeterna, a qua, per quam et secundum quam formantur formosa omnia* ['not made, but uncreated, existing eternally in the eternal art, by which, through which and according to which all beautiful things are formed'] (II.9, 310/74). These laws grant certain truth because they are the laws both according to which the mind judges and according to which things are made.

Bonaventure is not claiming here that either first principles or the

ideas of things are innate, but that the knowledge of these, acquired through abstraction from the sensible species, proceeds according to certain immutable laws. These laws are themselves invisible to judgement. They transcend *mens*, and yet it is only by virtue of their regulative force that judgement is capable of understanding, through abstraction, the *rationes* of things. They are the *rationes aeternae* present to the mind which enable it to comprehend the *rationes aeternae* of the created world. This point will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

With respect to the seven types of number, Bonaventure's general point is that numerical proportion, the harmony in the various aspects of the world, expressible in terms of mathematical relation, is the basic feature in the structure of the world: *ac per hoc «numerus est praecipuum in animo Conditoris exemplar» et in rebus praecipuum vestigium ducens in Sapientiam* ['thus "number is the foremost exemplar in the mind of the Creator," and in things, the foremost vestige leading to Wisdom'] (II.10, 312/75). The remarks about number reinforce and expand the notion that the heart of reality consists in and is expressed by proportion, for *proportio primo sit in numeris* ['proportion exists primarily in numbers'] (II.10, 312/75), and that, in understanding this proportion, the mind is led from its manifestations in the sensible world to its source in God. As in the discussion of proportionality, God is said to be known in the physical world through the three forms of number corresponding to apprehension, delight, and judgement: *in cunctis corporalibus et sensibilibus, dum numerosa apprehendimus, in numerosis proportionibus delectamur et per numerosarum proportionum leges irrefragabiliter iudicamus* ['in all bodily and sensible things when we apprehend the numerical, delight in numerical proportions and judge irrefutably according to the laws of numerical proportion'] (II.10, 312/75).

The fact that Bonaventure's consideration of all of these aspects of the God known in and through creatures is worked out and presented in the language of philosophical theology should not lead one to conclude that the points he makes are remote from everyday experience, and that the God of which he speaks, the so-called 'God of the philosophers', is only a very distant relative of the God actually encountered in the world of experience. Bonaventure's reflections do not describe a 'speculative' God, but work out the truth of the ways in which the 'real' God (meant here not in the sense of 'objectively true' but in the sense of 'present to, or within, experience') is encountered in and through the world. They can

therefore function as a survey, and a quite comprehensive one at that, of the experiences of the world in regard to which the word 'God' is spoken. They then help to clarify the *meaning* of the God of creation. They must not, on the other hand, be taken as proofs, if by 'proof' is meant not the demonstration, the working out, of the content of experience - in this case, of the God present within the experience of the world - but the establishment of this content outside the experience itself.

As George Boas points out, knowledge, for Bonaventure, and that includes knowledge of God, is not, ultimately, based upon rational argumentation, but upon direct experience or vision:

Throughout the *Itinerarium* Saint Bonaventure emphasizes that knowledge in the last analysis comes down to seeing, to contemplation, to a kind of experience in which we know certain things to be true without further argument or demonstration. On the lowest level, this occurs in sensory observation, on the highest in the mystic vision.⁴

Bonaventure's natural theology in the first chapter of the *Itinerarium*, for instance, is based on a kind of immediate observation. The God of this natural theology is seen in the world, and not inferred from it, or proven on the basis of it, in contrast with, say, the God of Aquinas' demonstrations in the *Summa Theologiae*. For this reason, Boas remarks that 'Saint Bonaventura seems to have as his purpose a demonstration of God's existence and of His traits which is not irrational but nonrational' (p. xvi). Because the knowledge of which Bonaventure speaks is immediate, the simple man of faith, the man of religion rather than theology, is as capable of it as the learned theologian. But this does not mean, for Bonaventure, or for the medieval Christian theologian in general, that one should not try to give a rational demonstration for what may be known immediately by faith. Rather, 'what Kant was to say of the relationship between concepts and percepts, the Christian could have said of that between faith and reason, or religion and philosophy: faith without reason is blind, reason without faith empty' (Boas, p. xviii).

If Bonaventure's remarks about the contemplation of God in and through creatures are viewed from this vantage-point, they are not proofs but articulations of experience. They then suggest a number of apprehensions of the natural world which evoke the word 'God', and which, in so doing, determine the experiential content or meaning of that term. They suggest, for instance, that 'God' is evoked by the sense of order in the world, by the sense that the internal distinction, arrangement, and activity of what-is as a whole, which the human mind does not invent but discovers, manifests a logic or *ratio*, and, through this, the activity of an

originating mind. They suggest, too, that this sense of order is also felt with respect to the history of the world, its beginning, progress, and end, and that the logic of the same originating mind is thereby manifested through the structure of what is as a whole considered in its temporal extension. From the sense of order in these two forms, the mind is inclined to pass to certain attributes of the ordering mind, e.g. power, wisdom, and benevolence, and to the notions of providence and justice at work in the world.

The sense of this mind is especially, for Bonaventure, felt in the movement of the human mind to 'abstract' truth, to the knowledge of the deep structure of reality where the ideas of things and the principles of the world's structure are present. Thus, proportion, number, and harmony, the mathematical relations at the basis of all phenomena: these, too, evoke what is called God.

Bonaventure demonstrates this harmony through a series of logical steps, but this does not mean that it is itself known only at the end of a chain of reasoning. Rather, Bonaventure sets out, systematically, the way in which such a harmony shines out through the world, in beauty, sweetness, and wholesomeness, in natural things, music, and art. The sense of whatever is contained in the concept of God, whatever is meant by God, is associated, then, with all of these phenomena.

It is also associated with the transcendent nature of the laws of judgement by which the mind is led to truth, with the passage of the mind from the degrees of imperfection it sees in the world to the notion of perfect being, and with the sense of an ultimate object of delight as well as of reason. Behind all of these experiences of God within the world lies the assumption, and this assumption is itself *part of the experience* and revealed within it, that *mens*, the human mind or soul as a totality, mirrors the real in such a way as to be the place where the truth of things is manifested. In all of its passages from the world to God, *mens* experiences itself as being drawn towards an objective truth which is nonetheless revealed inwardly to it. This sense of the objectivity of the transcendent mind as it presents itself to *mens* in logic, history, beauty and so forth, which Bonaventure sets out most clearly and systematically in his analysis of how God is known in pleasure and reason, is absolutely fundamental to the experience of this kind of God in general, and to all talk based upon this experience. It is part of the grammar of this God.

It is important to emphasize that the experience itself out of which

this conception of God arises is not a 'neutral' one. Helen S. Lang, in a paper entitled 'Bonaventure's Delight in Sensation', demonstrates that 'the notion of delight . . . appears at each moment of Bonaventure's account of sensation'.⁵⁵ Delight, for Bonaventure, is not a subjectivising mood, not a colour of the subject which then colours the 'true' nature of the object. It is, rather, a response to the ultimate and sacred nature of the object, for delight is based on proportions, and 'since proportions are nothing other than the presence of God in things through number, delight is but our natural response to the presence of God' (p. 88). It is this delight that motivates the question, why? Seeking the answer to this question, the reason for delight, is an indirect way of seeking God (p. 90). Thus, the God of creation is apprehended in delight, and sought on the basis of delight.

Not surprisingly, Germain Kopaczynski describes the role of wonder in St. Francis' thought in similar terms:

Where St. Thomas makes a distinction - wonder begins naturally but ends beyond the natural - St. Francis sees with a unitary vision . . . Here the vision and the wonder remarkably dovetail, and we have a hard time distinguishing the two. If God is the ultimate source of wonder as well as its ultimate end, the very phenomenon of wondering itself is really at bottom a pining for God.⁵⁶

Bonaventure himself retains this sense, so important to the founder of his order, that wonderment in the face of the world reveals the presence of God, and contemplation, for Bonaventure as for Richard of St. Victor, is a rapt wondering that discloses God.

It could even be argued that some of the finer points of Bonaventure's unique epistemology are rooted in this sense of a delightful and wonderful apprehension of divine presence in the world, an apprehension which is primarily receptive. For instance, Bonaventure's conception of the senses as doors through which the world enters in, rather than as windows through which the soul looks out, a conception that, Lang points out, is Aristotelian and Thomistic rather than Augustinian and Platonic (pp. 73-5), may be influenced by his sense that the mind directly perceives those properties of the object (the formal, 'immaterial', properties reproduced in the similitude) that indicate the presence of God within it. And the fact that this perception is not really the function of an activity of the mind abstracting from matter, as it is for Thomas (Lang, p. 81, n. 32), but of the reception of an abstraction, may articulate the same basic sense of the relation of *mens* to the relation of world and God.

The fundamental nature of this relationship between God and the physical world, as *mens* apprehends it, is expressed in condensed form in a passage near the end of the *Itinerarium*:

omnes creaturae . . . illius primi principii potentissimi, sapientissimi et optimi, illius aeternae originis, lucis et plenitudinis, illius, inquam, artis efficientis, exemplantis et ordinantis sunt *umbrae, resonantiae et picturae, sunt vestigia, simulacra et spectacula* nobis ad contuendum Deum proposita et *signa* divinus data; quae, inquam, sunt *exemplaria* vel potius *exemplata*, proposita mentibus adhuc rudibus et sensibilibus, ut per sensibilia, quae vident, transferantur ad intelligibilia, quae non vident, tanquam per signa ad signata.

[For these creatures are
shadows, echoes and pictures
of that first, most powerful, most wise, and most perfect
principle,
of that eternal source, light and fulness,
of that efficient, exemplary and ordering art.
They are
vestiges, representations, spectacles
proposed to us
and signs divinely given
so that we can see God.
These creatures, I say, are
exemplars
or rather exemplifications
presented to souls still untrained
and immersed in sensible things
so that through sensible things
which they see
they will be carried over to intelligible things
which they do not see
as through signs to what is signified.]
(II.11, 312/76)

The language in which creatures are defined in this passage is rich in Platonic metaphors. All of these have in common the idea of something that imitates or indicates a reality in which it therefore in a sense participates, but which is also other from it. With the exception of *resonantiae* ['echoes'], the metaphors are at root visual. Creatures are *umbrae* ['shadows'], *picturae* ['pictures'], *vestigia* ['vestiges'], *simulacra* ['representations'], *spectacula* ['spectacles'], *signa* ['signs'], and *exemplata* ['exemplifications']. Insofar as these metaphors express the fundamental nature of physical entities, their essential being, that nature is conceived as constituted by a relation to God. The epistemological consequence of this ontological condition will be that *mens* can only be said to comprehend the fundamental nature of a physical entity when it understands that entity in its relation to God. For Bonaventure, this amounts to seeing it as a *creatura*.

The divine, considered in its creative aspect, is what gives rise to these entities. God the creator is, first, the *primum principium*, the first principle or Word, the *logos* that incarnates itself in, and rules over, all that is. The description of God's creative aspect as 'light', another

originally Platonic metaphor, and one much favoured by Bonaventure, is related to this concept of *logos* via the Gospel of John. The divine nature *in cunctis creaturis relucet* ['shines forth in all creatures'] (III.1, 314/79), and to see this light with which they are resplendent is to be *illustratur* by *rerum creaturarum splendoribus* ['enlightened' by the 'splendour of created things'] (I.13, 302/67). According to the Platonic metaphysic, this means apprehending things by the light of their forms, a light immanent in the mind and yet also transcending it. God, then, as the principle of all forms, is both the light shining through all things and the light in the mind by means of which all things 'appear' to the eyes of the understanding, the Johannine 'Light that lighteth every man that cometh into this world'.

God is also the *origo* or 'source' of all creation, and has absolute priority. According to Augustine, God is a being that has priority *aeternitate* ['in eternity'], *incommutabiliter mutabilia facientem, ac per hoc priorem* ['creating things that are subject to change yet never suffering change itself and thereby being prior to them all'].⁷ While Augustine, however, draws a distinction between 'priority in eternity,' belonging exclusively to God, and 'priority in origin' (*origine*), logical priority applied to concepts other than God,⁸ Bonaventure collapses these to make God 'eternal origin' or source.

God is also *plenitudo* ['fulness']; the principle of all forms must contain within itself, in some fashion, the totality of all that is. God is the one that comprehends the all.

Bonaventure also describes the creator/creation relationship through the metaphor of the creator as artist, with creation as the divine art. In this case, the Platonic idea of creation according to an ideal form or exemplar is mingled with the language of Aristotelian causality, so that creatures are the result of the *artis efficientis, exemplantis et ordinantis* ['efficient, exemplary and ordering art'] of the creator.

As effects of a cause, and as exemplifications of an exemplar, creatures are signs, and when the mind sees through them to what is signified, it reads God in the book of creation. This requires a shift on the part of the observing mind from the type of comprehension that constitutes the 'worldly' world, the world of things considered as independent, to that which constitutes creation, the world related to God. It requires that the mind learn to read, as it were, that it learn the signification of the signs in this this book, and so come to see all *res* as *vestigia dei*. Augustine says of signs:

Quoniam de rebus scriberem, praemisi commoens ne quis in eis attenderet nisi quod sunt, non etiam si quid aliud praeter se significant; versim de signis disserens hoc dico, ne quis in eis attendat quod sunt, sed potius quod signa sunt, id est, quod significant. Signam est enim res, praeter speciem quam integerit sensibus, alius aliquid ex se faciens in cogitationem venire: sicut vestigio viso, transisse animal cujus vestigium est, cogitamus; et fume viso, igne subesse cognoscimus . . .

[Just as I began, when I was writing about things, by warning that no one should consider them except as they are, without reference to what they signify beyond themselves, now when I am discussing signs I wish it understood that no one should consider them for what they are but rather for their value as signs which signify something else. A sign is a thing which causes us to think of something beyond the impression the thing itself makes upon the senses. Thus if we see a track, we think of the animal that made the track; if we see smoke, we know that there is a fire which causes it . . .]⁹

To consider all things as *vestigia dei* is to reconstruct the invisible transcendent referent from the signs, the visible evidence, which testifies of its cause or source. It is to rise, as Richard of St. Victor says, *per visibilium rerum speciem ad invisibilium cognitionem* ['by means of the appearance of visible things to knowledge of invisible things'].¹⁰

It was noted at the beginning of this chapter that the world is only potentially a mirror of God, and that whether it appears as such depends upon a decision on the part of *mens*. The world looks in different ways, depending upon how *mens* looks at it, and the transformation in which the essential constitution of the things that make up the world is altered so that they appear as *vestigia dei* corresponds to a transformation of the vision for which and in which things appear. Thus, the nature of the gaze cast upon the world by *mens*, the light it casts, determines the light in which things appear, the aspect they manifest.

The decision to look with the gaze for which the world manifests God is not, for Bonaventure, a matter of holding this or that arbitrarily constructed belief. It requires, rather, that *mens* hold itself in a certain way in and before the world, that it achieve a certain stance with respect to things. For this stance, creatures are allowed to manifest themselves in their relation to the transcendent source of themselves, thereby mediating that source itself. In requiring such a stance of his reader, Bonaventure describes it in the following way:

Aperi igitur oculos, aures spirituales admove, labia tua solve et cor tuum appone, ut in omnibus creaturis Deum tuum videas, audias, laudes, diligas et colas, magnifices et honores, ne forte totus contra te orbis terrarum consurgat.

Therefore, open your eyes,
alert the ears of your spirit, open your lips
and apply your heart
so that in all creatures you may
see, hear, praise, love and worship, glorify and honor
your God

lest the whole world rise against you.
(I.15, 303/67-8)

The stance required here involves a form of openness and application on the part of the observer. For Bonaventure, 'rightness' with respect to the world means achieving this stance, this form of *noesis* for which the *noema* is the creature mediately manifesting God as its source. Because how the world appears is a function of this stance, and because the stance itself, as a way of determining and being determined by the things of the world, is a possibility that can be chosen or not, Bonaventure can attribute fault to a person who does not see what the stance reveals:

Qui igitur tantis rerum creaturarum splendoribus non illustratur caecus est; qui tantis clamoribus non evigilat surdus est; qui ex omnibus his effectibus Deum non laudat mutus est; qui ex tantis indiciis primum principium non advertit stultus est.

[Whoever, therefore, is not enlightened
by such splendor of created things
is blind;
whoever is not awakened by such outcries
is deaf;
whoever does not discover the first principle
from such clear signs
is a fool.]
(I.15, 302-3/67)

The state of ignorance described in this sentence is not just seen as pitiable, but as reprehensible. It is a state of spiritual blindness arising out of a refusal to see.

Spiritual vision, on the other hand, consists in the ascent that moves from the thing to its transcendent referent. In this ascent, the nature of the world receives its full, metaphysical, explanation, an explanation consisting not in the production of a rational account, although it may also be so expressed, but in the seeing in which heart, will, and intellect are united. The referent that *mens* catches sight of in this vision, though, is unlike any other in that it is not an object within the world, but is a light shining through the things of the world, a light in which these things shine forth. This referent is never clearly visible, conceivable, or expressible as it is in itself. The pointing of creatures to it is an indication grasped not clearly and distinctly, but in an obscure manner.

Moreover, what is indicated in this pointing can never be subject to empirical demonstration or proof, since it lies outside the empirical world. This does not mean that it is never present to 'experience'. On the contrary, the root of all that Bonaventure says concerning the immanent God lies in an intuition which in some way undergoes the experience of the transcendent, the presence of the absent. This may not be immediately

apparent, given the seemingly largely intellectual and rational nature of Bonaventure's demonstrations. But it should be evident from the foregoing analysis of the *Itinerarium* that Bonaventure's basic sense of the objectivity of reason and order, which goes hand in hand with a sense of the presence of mind and spirit in the world, is itself not a 'rational' affair. It is not a function of ratiocination, if that means means 'giving a ground for', so that the rational is what is grounded, i.e. understood in terms of something else that serves as its ground, and, in so doing, provides its justification. The presence which, for Bonaventure, is grasped in and by the light shining both in the world and in the mind, the presence which *is* this light, is justified by nothing but itself, in its own appearance. For Bonaventure, what is primarily intellectual and rational is this light, since it is the light of all understanding, the light that enables understanding and is its source. The manifestation of this light, for a person who not only sees within it, which any creature of a 'rational' nature must do, but who also sees it, constitutes the original apprehension of divinity.

The metaphor of seeing a light is, of course, just that - a metaphor. With respect to the things of the world, the essence of such a vision perhaps consists in the intuition which Evelyn Underhill once described as finding 'an added significance and reality in the phenomenal world', involving not 'the forsaking of the Many in order to find the One', but 'the discovery of the Perfect One ablaze in the Many.'¹¹ It is the sense of a presence within the empiricial which is yet *not* the empirical, 'the glimpse,' to quote another classic work on mysticism, 'of an Eternal, in and beyond the temporal and penetrating it, the apprehension of a ground and meaning of things in and beyond the empiricial and transcending it.'¹² To this apprehension, the phenomenal world appears invested with a sense of the 'numinous' or 'holy' (Otto, *passim.*), a sense of a divinity that is in one sense wholly other, as the noumenal reality behind phenomena, but in another sense wholly near, an immanent reality revealed in phenomena. Such an apprehension and what it reveals cannot be tested by a different kind of apprehension having a different kind of object. Its truth can be known only from within it, since the reality of that to which it testifies is present only to it.

2. Heidegger's Analysis of the Early Greek Experience of Being.

The history of Western metaphysics is rooted, according to Heidegger, in the question, *Warum ist überhaupt Seiendes und nicht vielmehr Nichts?* ['Why is there any being at all and not rather nothing?'] (WM, 22/277). As the fundamental question (*Grundfrage*) of metaphysics, this question does not simply stand as an event at the beginning of the history of metaphysics. It is an enduring event, one that continues to occur as long as metaphysics does, for the occurrence of this question is the constant origin of all metaphysical thought.

The occurrence of this basic *Warumfrage* of metaphysics is, moreover, rooted in the 'occurrence', the nihilation, of nothing (*das Nichts*), and therefore in the event of transcendence, the transcendence, that is, of what-is as a whole (*das Seiende im Ganzen*). The experience of not-being (*Nicht-Seiende*), as the wholly other to all beings (*schlechthin Andere zu allem Seienden*) is the condition for the possibility of addressing any question to what-is as a whole, for in order to ask anything about the totality of what-is, that totality must first be brought into view as such. It must then be transcended to an 'outside of', but the outside of all that is presents itself, in the first instance, as nothing. Thus: *Das Wesen des ursprünglich nichtenden Nichts liegt in dem: es bringt das Da-sein allererst vor das Seiende als solches* ['The essence of nothing as original nihilation lies in this: that it alone brings *Da-sein* face to face with what-is as such'] (WM, 35/369).

When, on the basis of this passage from beings to the original nothing in which what-is as a whole is suspended, the *Warumfrage* of metaphysics arises, it does so as a movement back from nothing to being. The event of this movement, the disclosure of what-is as a totality in the passage from nothing to beings, enabled by the original transcendence of what-is as a whole in the passage from beings to nothing, is the event of *being* (*das Sein*). The question about what-is in totality asks about the being of beings, and does so on the basis of a primordial projection into nothing, although it does not ask about being, or nothing, itself.

Metaphysik, says Heidegger, *ist das Hinausfragen über das Seiende, um es als ein solches und im Ganzen für das Begreifen zurückzuerhalten* ['Metaphysics is an enquiry over and above what-is, with a view to winning it back again as such and in totality for our understanding'] (WM, 38/375). It is an overcoming, a crossing beyond (*Übersteigen*) of what-is as a whole. This is transcendence, and, for the Heidegger of *Was ist Metaphysik?*, it is

essential to human existence, for it is *das Grundgeschehen im Dasein* ['the ground phenomenon of Dasein'], and is Dasein itself (WM, 41/379). Metaphysics has this status because every »*Warum?*« is ultimately grounded in the wonder (*Verwunderung*) in the face of beings awakened by the strangeness (*Befremdlichkeit*) of beings, and this strangeness is made possible by the primordial projection into nothing of transcendence.

If Bonaventure's conception of *creatio ex nihilo*, as well as his notion of going over from the world to the source of the world, God, are seen in the light of this analysis, they appear at first to be an obvious example of this fundamental happening (*Grundgeschehen*) of metaphysics. And so they are, insofar as Bonaventure is a scholastic philosopher. However, insofar as he is a believer, he cannot, Heidegger thinks, truly ask the fundamental question of philosophy, »*Warum ist überhaupt Seiendes und nicht vielmehr Nichts?*«, since, for faith, this question has been answered even before being asked: *Das Seiende, soweit es nicht Gott selbst ist, ist durch diesen geschaffen. Gott selbst »ist« als der ungeschaffene Schöpfer* ['Everything that is, except God himself, has been created by him. God himself, the increate creator, "is"']. This does not mean, for Heidegger, that the biblical revelation of God as creator, the revelation to which faith holds, offers one possible answer to the question of philosophy. The words of the Bible cannot answer the question because they are in no way related to it. The security of faith, as one way of standing within truth, is utterly opposed to the stance of questioning proper to philosophy, and a believer cannot adopt the stance of philosophy without ceasing to be a believer. From the standpoint of faith, the question of why there are beings rather than nothing is 'foolishness', and, if asking this question is fundamental to philosophy as essential questioning, then philosophy is this very foolishness. The notion of a 'Christian philosophy' is, therefore, self-contradictory; a 'Christian philosophy' is a 'round square' (EM, 8-9/6-7).

On the other hand, in his *Habilitationsschrift* (1915), Heidegger had spoken of 'the Christian philosophy of the Middle Ages'.¹² The firm division he later draws between the realms of faith and philosophy involves a rejection of the Greek metaphysical element in the tradition of Western theology. This is a rejection of the metaphysical God, which Heidegger opposes absolutely to the God of Christian faith. I will return later to the question of this distinction, which Bonaventure's thought does not, of course, respect. Whether or not the distinction, as Heidegger

characterizes it, is tenable, it should be noted that the Christian doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* by God, even when it is wholly dissociated from Greek philosophy, still has to be ultimately rooted in Dasein as meta-physical. For Bonaventure as a believer, the question of why there should be beings rather than nothing is indeed, in a way, already answered, but it is not answered, nor could it ever be, without a relationship to nothing. It is the understanding that beings might not be, that nothing might be, which grants the possibility of *creatio ex nihilo* as answer, the answer that nothing brings into existence and sustains the world except God. After all, without the understanding that nothing might be, no question about the origin of all that is could arise, and the notion of creation, which is essentially bound up with nothing, could not itself be. The answer of faith is not a possible answer to a *philosophical* question, since faith does not question philosophically, but the origin of the propositions of faith still rests in the experience of Dasein, and the ideas of faith are no less structured by the universal determinations of this experience than are the ideas of philosophy. This does not mean that faith is matter of universal experience, reducible to such experience. The content of faith is not universal, but specific. However, *existentialia*, insofar as they are the general conditions of existence, must condition, and thus be visible within, this specificity as much as any other.

Among the *existentialia* that *Sein und Zeit* uncovers are *Befindlichkeit* ('disposition')¹⁴ and *Stimmung* ('mood' or 'attunement'). As determinations of the being of Dasein, these determine, equiprimordially, the being of beings, the way beings are discovered to be. *Was ist das - die Philosophie?* develops this notion, suggesting that human beings can be attuned (*gestimmt*) to the appeal of being at a variety of frequencies, so to speak. The frequency of their attunement - the pitch of their mood, to put it differently - gives one feature of the manner in which they are determined (*bestimmt*, also 'tuned' and 'decided') by beings, the manner in which they reverberate with beings, and the manner in which beings are determined by, and reverberate with, them. Attunement gives one feature, therefore, of the manner in which human beings correspond to being (WP, 75-9).

Philosophy is characterised, in this work, as *das gestimmte Entsprechen* ['tuned correspondence'] (WP, 78-9). Heidegger points out that Plato and Aristotle already drew attention to the fact that philosophy and philosophizing belong in that dimension of man called *Stimmung* by naming

astonishment (*das Erstaunen*, Gk. *thaumazein*) as the particular *pathos* of the philosopher. Conceiving *pathos* as *Stimmung*, Heidegger goes on to describe the *pathos* of astonishment as a stepping-back from the being of beings which is at the same time drawn to and held fast by that from which it steps back. This is the attunement, he claims, within which the Greek philosophers were granted correspondence to the being of beings (WP, 84-5).

For Bonaventure, the highest form of correspondence to truth occurs in contemplation, which, it will be remembered, Richard of St. Victor describes as 'the free, more penetrating gaze of a mind, suspended with wonder concerning manifestations of wisdom', a mind 'suspended near something because of greatness of wonder'.¹⁵ What is revealed in contemplation is always, for Bonaventure and Richard of St. Victor, divinity. *Admiratio* uncovers what-is as *miraculum*, as a marvel to be wondered at, and it is in and through the marvellous nature of the *miraculum*, discovered as such within *admiratio*, that the presence of God makes itself manifest. The wonderment of the medieval thinker does not unfold in quite the same way as that of the Greek philosopher, since however much the world of the former may have been influenced by philosophy, it is still a world of faith as distinct from philosophy. But it is important to see that Bonaventure's thought, like that of the Greek philosophers, as Heidegger understands them, arises out of a certain attunement, and that he sees this attunement as essential to the revelation of divinity. It is also important that contemplation is a gift; it is something by which the mind is seized and enraptured (*raptus*), just as a *pathos* is something one suffers, something that comes over one. In both cases, the attunement, and the way it gives correspondence to the being of beings, is granted. And in both cases, it does not 'colour', but reveals.

The most astonishing thing for the Greeks, that before which the *philosophos*, the one who loves the wisdom (*sophon*) that says *hen panta* ['One (is) all'], is especially astonished is the gathering together of beings in being - the *logos*. For Heraclitus, according to Heidegger, to 'love the wisdom of *hen panta*, to love the *sophon*, means to correspond to the *logos* so as to speak in the way it speaks. This correspondence is accordance (*Einklang*) with the *sophon*, where accordance is *harmonia* (WP, 46-9). The *philosophos*, then, is one who harmonises with the *sophon*, and one whose speaking corresponds to the speaking of the *logos*, of being as

the gathering and uniting principle of what-is, through this harmonisation.

In *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger gleans these points from an interpretation of two fragments of Heraclitus that speak about the *logos*

Vom λόγος wird gesagt: 1. Ihm eignet die Ständigkeit, das Bleiben; 2. er west als das Zusammen im Seienden, das Zusammen des Seiend, das Sammelnde; 3. alles was geschieht, d. h. in das Sein kommt, steht da gemäß diesem ständigen Zusammen; dieses ist das Waltende.

[It is said that 1) permanence and endurance are characteristic of the *logos*; 2) it is togetherness in what-is, the togetherness of all that is, that which gathers; 3) everything that happens, i.e. that comes into being, stands there in accordance with this permanent togetherness; this is the dominant power.] (EM, 136/127-8)

Logos is then *die Sammlung* ['collection'], which means both *das Sammeln* ['collecting'] and *die Gesammeltheit* ['collectedness']. It means here *die sammelnde Gesammeltheit, das ursprünglich Sammelnde* ['collecting collectedness, the primal gathering principle']. It is *die ständig in sich waltende ursprünglich sammelnde Gesammeltheit* ['the original collecting collectedness which is in itself permanently dominant'] (EM, 136-7/128).

For the most part, men, although they have hearing and hear words, do not hear or follow (*hören*, also 'listen', 'pay attention' and 'obey' or 'heed'), the *logos*, which is not audible (*hörbar*) in the way that words are. True hearing consists in the heeding that follows: *Das echte Hörigsein hat . . . nichts mit Ohr und Mundwerk zu tun, sondern besagt: Folge leisten gegenüber dem, was der λόγος ist: die Gesammeltheit des Seienden selbst* ['True hearing has nothing to do with ear and mouth, but means: To follow the *logos* and what it is, namely the collectedness of what-is itself'] (EM, 138/129). Those who do not heed the *logos* do not understand or comprehend (*begreifen*) this collectedness. They do not encompass the *logos* in that they do not apprehend as one what is collected together into one. They do not bring together what is permanently collected together, and so do not follow the collecting collectedness of the *logos*.

As *die ständige Sammlung, die in sich stehende Gesammeltheit des Seienden* ['the steady gathering, the intrinsic togetherness of what-is'], the *logos* is *das Sein*, being, and those who do not heed it are those who, losing themselves perpetually among beings, and supposing that beings are just beings and nothing further, turn away from being and thereby alienate themselves from it. Such people are awake to beings but asleep to being, which is hidden from them (EM, 139/130). They are asleep, therefore, to truth.

These sleepers are *axynetoi*, 'those who do not comprehend' (EM,

139/130), where *xynon*, that which is not comprehended by the uncomprehending, means *das εόν, das Seiend* ['*eon, beingness*'] as *gesammelt Anwesen* ['*collected presence*'] (EM, 139/131). Such collected presence is not *das »Allgemeine«* ['*the 'universal'*'], *nicht solches, was über allem schwebt und keinen faßt* ['*not something which hovers over all and touches none*'], but *das alles in sich Versammelnde und Zusammenhaltende* ['*that which in itself collects all things and holds them together*'], *die ursprünglich einigende Einheit des Auseinanderstrebenden* ['*the original unifying unity of what tends apart*']. An example of a *xynon*, Heidegger says, is the *nomos* for the *polis*, *die Satzung* [*setzen als zusammenstellen*], *der innere Gefüge der πόλις* ['*the statute that constitutes or puts together, the inner structure of the polis*'] (EM, 139-40,131).

In Bonaventure's realist epistemology, the one who comprehends is the one who sees the intrinsic structuring principle of what-is, the one who sees the *ratio*. That *ratio*, whether or not it gets called a 'universal', does not hover over things but incarnates itself within them. In so doing, it gives, is, the unifying unity of beings, and a kind of ordering law (*nomos*) that holds beings together in their being. To be sure, Bonaventure often associates this incarnate Word with seeing rather than with hearing, and thus displays one of those shifts in the Western conception of understanding that Heidegger often laments. But the metaphor of seeing still stands for an understanding that follows. It is a kind of reading which 'sees' what is being said in the text, where the text, for Bonaventure, is read, both seen and heard, as the 'book of creation'. Of course there are presuppositions in such a reading. Of course Bonaventure's presuppositions are different from those of Heraclitus. But in their shared sense that understanding the being of beings is a matter of following a noiseless speaking that binds, structures, and unifies beings, a sameness also makes itself manifest.

Bonaventure also shares with Heraclitus the sense that following this speaking requires paying heed. It requires attendance, where attendance can be conceived as a way of looking, if looking is thought of not as a function of some visual apparatus but as a gathering together, a concentration, of concern involving the totality of one's capabilities. While contemplation is a gift, this attendance is a decision. Through it, *mens* becomes receptive to the truth of beings. And the reception of this truth is, for Bonaventure like Heraclitus, a kind of awakening. It is an illumination, a being illumined by that which shines through beings.

The collecting collectedness of the original Greek *logos* gathers together and assembles things which strive apart, and it holds them against one another in this assemblage. The restraining and mastering (*Bändigung*) of what strives apart into a constant unity in which the striving elements are held against one another is, for the Greeks, beauty (*Schönheit*). Since being is the original and most constant gathering power, the *logos*, *das Sein alles Seienden ist das Scheinendste, d. h. das Schönste, das in sich Ständigste* ['the being of all that is is the supreme radiance, i.e. the greatest beauty, that which is most permanent in itself'] (EM. 140/131).

For the Greeks, being in this sense is *physis*, the ruling power that holds sway or prevails over all beings, and whose prevailing presence is a constancy standing in opposition to becoming and appearance:

Sein ist als φύσις das aufgehende Walten. In der Gegenstellung zum Werden zeigt es sich als die Ständigkeit, die ständige Anwesenheit. Diese bekundet sich in der Gegenstellung zum Schein als das Erscheinen, als die offenbare Anwesenheit.

[Being in the sense of *physis* is the power that emerges. As contrasted with becoming, it is permanence, permanent presence. Contrastd with appearance, it is appearing, manifest presence.] (EM, 134/125)

The gathering power of being as *logos* and *physis* never just places beings together in a haphazard way. As a power reigning over and through all beings, it draws what strives apart and against into a unity in which the elements that stand opposed to one another also belong to one another. The gathering thus neither levels and flattens into a mere equality, nor just jumbles disparate things together into a confused pile. Being, the penetrating power of the *logos* (*physis*) binds into a unity characterized by neither equality nor confusion, but by a holding back and holding together of opposition in tension (EM, 142/134). It is as a binding and holding which has this nature that being is *harmonia*, *Einklang*. It is a sounding of many as one, a unison, but one in which all the notes are gathered together and preserved in their relations of difference to one another, and not one in which they are simply equalized into a monotone. It is the harmony of a consonance that gathers and encompasses every form of dissonance within itself without thereby denying it. In contrast with mere equalization, the accordance of this kind of unison is not obvious, but hidden:

das Sein, der Logos, als der gesammelte Einklang, [ist] nicht leicht und in gleicher Münze für jedermann zugänglich, sondern entgegen jenem Einklang, der jeweils nur Ausgleich, Vernichtung der Spannung, Einebnung ist, verborgen: ἀρμονία ἀφανής φανερῆς χρείττον, »der nicht (unmittelbar und ohne weiteres) sich zeigende Einklang ist

mächtiger denn der (allemal) offenkundige« (Heraclitus, Frg. 54).

[being, the logos as gathering and harmony, is not easily accessible and not accessible to all in the same form; unlike the harmony that is mere compromise, destruction of tension, flattening, it is hidden: *harmoniē aphanēs phanēres kreittōn*, 'the harmony that does not (immediately and easily) show itself is mightier than that which is (at all times) manifest'.] (EM, 142/133).

Bonaventure, too, locates beauty in the harmonious symmetry given by the way that things are put together and held together by the *logos*, or, in Bonaventure's case, by the incarnation of the eternal *ratio* or Word of God. For Bonaventure, insofar as this *ratio* structures all things, all things are in some way beautiful, and they are so in virtue of the visibility of the *ratio* 'within' them. Moreover, the supreme proportionality and harmony lies in the source of the proportionality which is visible in all things and yet requires effort to be seen. It lies in the Word itself, the permanent structuring principle. For the Greeks, Heidegger says, what is most beautiful is being as *logos*, which is simultaneously the permanent gathering and structuring principle, and the the permanent gatheredness, the structure, of what-is.

For the Greeks, furthermore, the originating power that reigns over all things is being, *logos*, as *physis*. For Bonaventure, it is the power of God, understood again on the basis of an implicit understanding of nothing, as this power manifests itself in opposition to nothing. It brings beings into being from out of nothing and sustains them in being against nothing. It is manifest not only in the existence, but also in the essence of a being; it rules over not only the 'thatness', the *quodditas*, of a being, but also its 'whatness', its *quidditas*, since it brings each being into the structure of what it is, as well as ordering it into its place in relation to all that is. It thereby gathers and orders the structural symmetry of the unity of beings, bringing about and maintaining the harmony of creation as a well-ordered whole. The medieval theological notion of *creatio ex nihilo* nonetheless stands in opposition to the Greek notion that *ex nihilo nihil fit*, but in both cases there is the sense of an ordering principle that is in some way the origin of what-is. Once again, while there is undoubtedly a great difference between these two conceptions, there is a significant measure of identity as well.

The hidden harmony is not, in the Greek conception, open to all and sundry. That the more powerful harmony is only open for the more powerful as the ones whose greater discernment is capable of wresting it from hiddenness suggests that to the openness of being, and so to truth,

belongs rank (*der Rang*). *Das Wahre ist nicht für jedermann, sondern nur für die Starken* ['The true is not for every man but only for the strong'] (EM, 142/133), and the fact that there are various stations or positions, the fact that there is an order of rank with respect to the truth of being, is a sign of the way in which being as *logos* gathers. It is a sign of the fact that dominance and predominance belong to the *logos* in its gathering, and, therefore, to the disclosure of being (EM, 141/133).

On this point, there is a clear difference between the ancient Greek and the medieval Christian views. Bonaventure believes that everyone is in principle capable of discerning the hidden yet manifest Word, although everyone does not do so. It is not a matter of some people having a superior intrinsic capability that allows them to see what is hidden to others. Rather, as one later Greek thinker says, the task lies in calling upon a vision which is the birth-right of all, but which few turn to use.¹⁴ On the other hand, what-is as a whole is, for Bonaventure, hierarchically structured, so that here, too, an order of rank is in some way intrinsic to the arrangement of being. It is intrinsic to the Word that opens beings and maintains them in their openness.

At the conclusion of his discussion of *logos* in this particular section of *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger also comments briefly on the difference between *logos* as conceived by Heraclitus and the *logos* of the New Testament. He points out that, in the New Testament, *logos* does not mean the being of beings, as it does for Heraclitus, but one particular being, the Son of God, and in his role as mediator between God and man. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, it signifies the 'word' in the definite meaning of command and commandment. The *logos* is then the messenger who hands down commands and commandments, and the *logos* of the cross is Christ, the *logos* of eternal life, *logos zōēs*. *Eine Welt*, Heidegger ends, *trennt all dieses von Heraklit* ['A whole world separates all this from Heraclitus'] (EM, 145/135).

It is, for Bonaventure, an element of the specific content of the Christian faith that the world is created by a personal God, and that its truth, its coming into existence as well as its revelation to human beings, is mediated by that God in the person of Christ. This person, and this person alone, is the *logos* of the Christian faith, a particular being, as Heidegger says, and one that Christian theology comes to understand as consubstantial with God. Such a *logos* is necessarily separated by a world from that of Heraclitus, since it belongs to a different world, the world

of the Christian faith, but, as Heidegger knows only too well, the world of Greek thought and the world of medieval Christian theology (where the latter is not, of course, identical with the world to which the authors of the New Testament belong) are closely connected.

Because the dialogue with Greek philosophy plays such a major role in determining the course and evolution of Christian theology, it is not always easy to see where one leaves off and the other begins. In the case of Bonaventure's *ratio*, however, the conception of it as idea and archetype, and thus as something intellectual, something noetic, and the consequent location of it in a transcendent intellectual sphere - all of this clearly belongs to the history of Greek thought and none of it is specifically Christian. What is specifically Christian, and therefore not a matter of philosophy but of faith, is the identification of this Greek *logos* with Christ as the Word and Son of God. With this identification, the Greek *logos* is naturally transformed, and so, too, is Christ.

To the extent that this transformed *logos*-Christ is a product of Greek philosophy, the deconstruction of the concept of *logos* within that philosophy is also a deconstruction of this *logos*, and can yield something of its essence. Such a deconstruction will not uncover or communicate anything of the specifically Christian meaning of the word, the meaning it has when sublated within the experience of faith, and it must not pretend to do so. The understanding of this meaning is the peculiar provenance of faith, and its explication is a matter for the theology of faith. Philosophical analysis can uncover only the philosophic content of a term, and Heidegger is in a way right to say that the task of phenomenology, when applied to the language of theology, is only to uncover the 'pre-Christian' meaning of the terms of that language (W, 64/19).

However, when these forms of analysis are applied to a theological tradition in which the articles of faith are themselves understood, rightly or wrongly, through a dialogue with philosophy, the case is naturally complex. Given such a case, the extent to which the methodology of philosophy and the language of the philosophical tradition are appropriated for the understanding of the articles of faith, the extent to which these articles are understood philosophically, also gives the extent to which the meaning of the final product of this understanding is exhausted by philosophical analysis and by phenomenological deconstruction. Because medieval theology is to a large extent theo-logic, as opposed to 'theology of faith', or, to speak more precisely, because, as a consequence of making

no clear distinction between these two, it freely and widely borrows both the language and the methodology of philosophy so as to transform not only what it borrows but also itself, the extent to which it can be appropriately subjected to philosophical analysis and critique is also large.

In the Introduction, I made some brief comments about Heidegger's views on the relation between philosophy and Christian theology. A lengthy critical analysis of the question concerning the rightness or wrongness of the philosophical approach to theology, however, lies outside the scope of the present discussion. To pass judgement on the issue of whether or not Christian theology should ever approach its subject-matter in this way, whether or not there is a basic and irreconcilable opposition between faith and philosophy which sets severe limits to the possibility of any rapprochement between them, involves making a decision about the essence of theology in such a way as to delimit that essence for the future, thereby delimiting, implicitly, the task of theology in the future. The prescriptive critical stance from which such a delimiting judgement proceeds may have its own value, but it is not the stance from which this study proceeds.

To return to the point at issue, in his deconstruction of the *logos* of Greek philosophy, Heidegger traces it back to Heraclitus, for whom, according to Heidegger, it is understood as collection in the sense of both collecting and collectedness. Originally, then, *logos* is both the collecting and the collectedness of what-is, and, because it gathers into a unity of belonging together, it is associated with *hen*, with 'one' as a principle of unification. Bonaventure's *logos*, on the other hand, is the *ratio* in the mind of God and consubstantial with that mind, which both incarnates itself in all that is and regulates the understanding of all that is. Superficially viewed, these have little in common. However, the *ratio* of God contains the *rationes* of things, and these *rationes* are the eternal ideas of God, the exemplars exemplified in creatures as exemplifications. In order for creatures to be seen as exemplifications of an exemplar, as instantiations of an idea, they must first be collected into an articulated unity. Only if they are so collected can that unity, the logical structure, or way in which a thing is put together, be conceived as a subsisting exemplar or idea according to which a thing is made, where this conception originates the notion of the *ratio* in the mind of God according to which a *creaturum* is constructed. The collectedness into the unity of an

articulated structure is thus basic to the notion of the divine *ratio* incarnating or instantiating itself within that which is, and the collecting into such a unity is basic to the notion of its revealing its operation in the understanding of that which is.

The gathering principle, for the Greeks, is the unifying law of the being of a being, the law that constitutes and reigns over the inner structure of a being so as to make it what it is as a unitary entity. Because the manifestness of that which is, the being of a being - its truth - is given in this gathering, it is the gathering principle that gives truth and is the origin of truth. The gathering of the *logos* is the truth or manifestation of being, then, without which no thing could be. This manifestation, in the sense of both manifesting and manifestness, of being, i.e. the *logos*, is not something other to being. It is not an external medium of revelation, but the unified-unifying principle of being, identical with being. What is gathered and revealed in the gathering is nothing other than being, the collectedness of what-is, and what gathers into the gathering is also nothing other than being, the collecting of what-is.

Whatever it may have meant in the beginning, the Johannine notion of Christ as the *logos* or Word of God comes to be identified, to some extent, with the *ratio* of God containing the *rationes* of things, through which God is mediated to the world and 'spoken', revealed, in and by that world. To this extent, the conception of the *logos* as the gathered-gathering principle of revelation is original to the conception of the Christ-*logos*. If being were not primally gathered and gathering in such a way that its manifestation consisted in the law, the binding and unifying log-ic, of this gathering, no such conception could be founded. When Bonaventure seeks the ultimate *ratio* of things, that by which and from which (*quare*), they are what they are, what he seeks is not an empirical cause, but precisely this gathering and unifying principle which holds all *creatura* together.

For early Greek thought, the nature of the order of rank established by and within the overpowering power of being as *physis* and *logos* is given, according to Heidegger, in the Greek word *dikē*. To translate this word in the customary manner as *Gerechtigkeit* ['justice'], where 'justice' is understood in a juristic, moral sense, is, for Heidegger, to lose its fundamental metaphysical content. Heidegger translates it instead with the term *Fug*, and, in giving his definition of this term, he exploits the

connotations it can have, or be given, by virtue of its association with a cluster of other terms that contain it as a root:

Wir verstehen hier Fug zuerst im Sinne von Fuge und Gefüge; sodann Fug als Fügung, als die Weisung die das Überwältigende seinem Walten gibt; schließlich Fug als das fügende Gefüge, das Einfügung und Sichfügung erzwingt.

[Here we understand Fug first in the sense of joint and framework; then as decree, dispensation, a directive that the overpowering imposes on its reign; finally, as the governing structure which compels adaptation and compliance.] (EM, 168/160)

Dikē is the overpowering decree and the decree of the overpowering power. It gives the directive that orders the structure of beings and orders beings into that structure. The word thus belongs, along with *physis* and *logos*, to the delimitation of being corresponding to the experience of being among the early Greek thinkers. *Das Sein, die φύσις, ist als Walten ursprüngliche Gesamtheit: λόγος, ist fügender Fug; δίκη* ['Being, *physis*, as power, is basic and original togetherness: *logos*; it is governing order: *dikē*'] (EM, 169/160). Such words give, or are, the correspondence between being and early Greek Dasein.

What is the same for this Dasein and the medieval Dasein of Bonaventure on this point is the notion of an imposing order which is both structure and command. Bonaventure's Word, too, is a directive and 'a governing structure which compels adaptation and compliance', and it functions in this way in every region of being, since it is the overarching ordering principle of what-is in totality.

The understanding of this harmony, which gives the whatness of all that is, also involves an implicit understanding of nothing, since it could not arise without the understanding of the possibility that things could not be what they are, and so that the whole of what is could not be what it is in its harmonious order. There are laws that determine it to be such, but there could also not be such laws, and there could be dis-order. That, at the level of the deep structure of each thing, the level, also, of the overarching structure of all things, there is not disorder but order, is, for Bonaventure, a function of the power that orders the being of beings, and so orders it to be such as it is and not otherwise.

One word that stands opposed to *dikē* for early Greek Dasein is *technē*. Heidegger interprets the essential meaning of this word to be not art or craft or skilled making of any sort, but knowledge (*Wissen*). As knowledge, *technē* is a power which opposes, in the sense of confronts, the overpowering power of being as *dikē* in any given being. It is, moreover, the capability to bring that power to a stand, and thereby into appearance,

by setting it into [a] work: *Wissen ist das Ins-Werk-setzen-können des Seins als eines je so und so Seienden* ['Knowledge is the ability to put into work the being of any particular being'] (EM, 168/159). Art is especially *technē* weil das Kunst das Sein, d.h. das in sich dastehende Erscheinen, am unmittelbarsten [in einem Anwesenden (im Werk)] zum Stehen bringt ['because art is what most immediately brings being (i.e. the appearing that stands there in itself) to stand, stabilizes it in something present (the work)'] (EM, 168/159). However, the conflict of power (*deinon*) in which the violence of *technē* breaks out against the overpowering power of *dikē*, is never of such a sort that *technē* could be said to master or rule over *dikē*, for *dikē*, as governing order, always orders *technē* as well (EM, 169/160-1). This confrontation can occur at all only insofar as Dasein occurs, since the power of *technē*, the ability to bring the being of beings to a stand and thus into manifestation by setting it into a work is only given with the entity that stands before beings in such a way that their being is manifest for it. That this entity should occur, though, is itself the work of being. Dasein, as the space for the disclosure of being, is a mortal breach (*Bresche*) which is itself posited by the superior power of being in order to reveal itself as what-is, i.e. in beings (EM, 171-2/162-3).

Bonaventure's *mens* is also, although in a different way, posited by a superior power for the sake of its own revelation in beings. It is created by God as a *minor mundus* reflecting the world as a reflection of God. Insofar as an 'artificial' product of *mens*, for instance, music, reveals the being of beings, and in so doing, reveals the superior power that reigns over and through beings, it is enabled to do so because it is itself structured by the structure of being, the structure whose relations are given, for Bonaventure, in number. Every revealing act of man - and, for Bonaventure, every act of man must in some sense be a revealing - is disposed over by the commanding order of the Word, and this includes all making, all setting into work. The notion of violence, though, plays no part in Bonaventure's conception of either the power that decrees and orders, or the (human) power that responds and corresponds to this order, and receives its own power from it. The commanding power is all-powerful, but it is not violent, and the human power commanded by it reveals not by confrontation and opposition, but by joyful and patient, although by no means effortless, reception.

Heidegger's discussion of the reciprocal relation between *technē* and

dikē, which proceeds through an analysis of the first chorus of Sophocles' *Antigone*, takes place in the wider context of a reflection upon Parmenides' saying, *to gar auto noein estin te kai einai*, commonly, and, Heidegger says, crudely and inappropriately, translated as *Dasselbe aber ist das Denken und das Sein* ['thinking and being are the same'] (EM, 145/136). Discussing how this translation misinterprets the saying, Heidegger points out: 1) that *noein* is not 'thinking' as the activity of a human subject, but *Vernehmung* ['apprehension'] as *aufnehmendes Zum-stehen-bringen des sich zeigenden in sich Ständigen* ['the receptive bringing-to-stand of the intrinsically permanent that manifests itself'], 2) that *to auto* does not mean *leere Einerleiheit* ['empty indifference'], but *Einheit* ['unity'] in the sense of *Zusammengehörigkeit des Gegenstrebigen* ['the belonging-together of antagonisms'], and 3) that *einai* is not being as objectivity, the representation of the thinking power of man, but *physis* as the emerging power to which *Vernehmung* belongs and in whose power *Vernehmung* participates, so that *Vernehmung geschieht umwillen des Seins* ['apprehension occurs for the sake of being'], and not vice versa. Being is only there when there is disclosure, and *Vernehmung* occurs for the sake of the disclosure of being and by means of the power of that disclosure (EM, 146-7/137-9). *Vernehmung* is thus not a power (*Vermögen*) or attribute (*Eigenschaft*) which man has, but a happening (*Geschehnis*) which 'has' man (EM, 149-50/141).

When Heidegger returns to this saying of Parmenides after his discussion of the first chorus of *Antigone*, he claims that the bond, the belonging together (*Zusammengehörigkeit*), of *noein* and *einai* spoken of in the saying is nothing other than the relation between *dikē* and *technē* (EM, 174/165). *In dem dichterisch gesagten Wechselbezug von δίκη und τέχνη*, he says, *steht δίκη für das Sein des Seienden im Ganzen* ['In the poetic relation between *dikē* and *technē*, *dikē* stands for the being of what-is as a whole']. For Parmenides, *das Sein ist als δίκη der Schlüssel zum Seienden in seinem Gefüge* ['being as *dikē* is the key to what-is in its structure'] in that *das Seiende eröffnet nur, indem der Fug des Seins gewahrt und bewahrt wird* ['what-is discloses itself only insofar as the structure of being is guarded and preserved'] (EM, 175/166). In *noein*, on the other hand, *in der Vernehmung als dem hin-nehmenden Vor-nehmen das Seiende als solches aufgeschlossen wird und so in die Unverborgenheit hervor-kommt* ['in apprehension as accepting anticipation what-is as such is disclosed and so comes forth from concealment'] (EM, 175/167). Moreover,

Vernehmung characterised as *Aufnahme-stellung für das Erscheinen des Seienden* ['a receptive attitude toward the appearing of what-is'] is *kein bloßer Vorgang, sondern Ent-scheidung* ['apprehension is no mere process, but de-cision'] (EM, 176/167). It is a differentiating discernment, *für das Sein gegen das Nichts und somit Auseinandersetzung mit dem Schein* ['for being against nothing and thus a struggle with appearance'], and this decision must use violence *im Vollzug und Aushalten gegen die ständig andrängende Verstrickung im Alltäglichen und Gewöhnlichen* ['if it is to persevere against the continuous pressure of involvement in the everyday and commonplace'] (EM, 177/168). Thus, *noein* is a kind of *technē*. It is a violent struggle with *einei* as *dikē*, with being as the overpowering power that establishes the power of knowledge for the sake of its own disclosure and brings that power into confrontation with itself, while yet remaining master over it so that the disclosure might occur in an appropriate way.

The disclosive power of knowledge is established, for Bonaventure, by the Word of God. It is established by the *ratio aeterna* that grants the laws of both *mens* and world. Understanding proceeds according to the rule of this *ratio*, and, as in Heidegger's interpretation of Parmenides' *noein*, it is not an autonomous power of man, but a receptive discernment of 'the intrinsically permanent that manifests itself'. But what is most permanent for Boaventure is the *ratio aeterna* itself, the *ratio* of all *rationes*. This means that understanding proceeds by the power of the Word for the sake of the Word. Since the Word is the revelation of God, it can be said that thinking is made appropriate or proper to God through the Word and for the sake of God's self-disclosure. God, for Bonaventure, is being itself, and the Word of being itself commands both *mens* and that which *mens* apprehends. Basically, the similarity between Bonaventure and [Heidegger's] Parmenides here lies in the notion that the power of disclosure is not something human standing apart from being, but is itself made possible, and ruled over in its structure, by the power and governing order of being. Thinking *belongs* to being.

Thus, the prior disclosure of the structure of being necessary for the revelation of beings is not a function of the *a priori* structure of an isolated subject. Indeed, Bonaventure's *ratio aeterna* is too 'prior' to be determined as an *a priori* structure of the subject, because it will necessarily determine any such determination. There is no stance from which it could be determined as 'subjective', since it always rules over the subject, and the object, being prior to them both. This prior

disclosure permits the revelation of beings, and it belongs to and within the order of being.

In addition, true apprehension requires, for Bonaventure as for Parmenides, a receptiveness which is not wholly passive but decisive. The decisiveness consists in the struggle against the everyday appearance in which the truth of beings is hidden, in which the being of beings is not explicitly differentiated from beings and discerned in its nature through the difference. Without the discernment granted by this differentiation, Bonaventure's God cannot appear. Once again, this discernment does not, for Bonaventure, involve violence, but it does involve application and struggle.

Heidegger elaborates upon the point that *noein* as a kind of *technē* is a struggle with *einei* as *dikē* by examining another sentence of Parmenides, *Chrē to legein to noein t'eon emmenai*. At this point in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger translates this sentence as: »Not tut das gesammelte Hinstellen sowohl als das Vernehmen von diesem: das Seiend (ist) Sein« ['Needful is the gathered setting-forth as well as the apprehension of this: what-is (is) being']. Needful, then, are *logos* and *Vernehmung*, but *logos* must, in this case, be differentiated from *logos* as *physis*, the collecting collectedness of being. The *logos* is in this case the power that gathers together the gatheredness of being. It does this by collecting itself out of, and thus turning away from, dispersion into the impermanent and confusion in appearance, while gathering itself together upon, and thus turning towards, *Fug, dikē*, the governing order of being. This gathering is *logos* as need (*Not*), as opposed to *logos* as *physis* (EM, 178/169). However, insofar as it is *dikē* that brings about the concentration of this power towards itself, and insofar as that which is concentrated upon is itself the *logos* (the collectedness of being as *physis*) and insofar as man is hurled into the need that constitutes his essence as *Dasein* by the superior power of being, it is the need of being as *logos, dike, physis* which makes needful the *legein, techne, noein* of man.

The *ratio* of *mens*, in Bonaventure's conception, apprehends the *ratio* of being. This apprehension requires, precisely, that *mens* gather itself out of customary dispersion in beings and concentrate upon what is permanently one in beings. The gathering together into one on the side of *mens* is what enables the apprehension of what is permanently gathered into one on the side of being, but, more fundamentally, it is the primordial gathering of being itself, the Word, which calls forth and

enables the self-gathering of *mens*.

In his discussion of Parmenides in another, considerably later, work, *Was heißt Denken?*, Heidegger translates the *chrē* of the sentence *Chrē to legein to noein t'eon emmenai* not as *Not tut* but as *Es brauchet* ['It is useful'] (WhD, 115/188). *Brauchen*, to use, is here: *Einlassen in das Wesen, ist Wahrung im Wesen* ['to let <something> enter into its essential nature, to keep it safe in its essence'], and *der Brauch* is *der Anspruch, daß etwas in sein Wesen eingelassen werde und das Brauchen nicht davon ablasse* ['the summons which demands that a thing be admitted to its own essence and nature, and that the use keep to it'] (WhD, 114/187). Authentic use, Heidegger says, is not a matter of mere utilizing and needing. It is rarely manifest, and is generally not the business of mortals. Rather, *im günstigen Fall sind Sterbliche vom Schein des Brauchens bescheinen* ['mortals are at best illumined by the radiance of use'] (WhD, 115/187).

In *Der Spruch des Anaximander*, Heidegger also translates Anaximander's *chreon*, usually translated with *Notwendigkeit*, 'necessity', as *der Brauch*, 'usage'. Here usage is said to be a granting or apportioning (*Erteilen*) of shares or portions (*Anteile*), in which what is present is granted the portion of its *Weile* ['while' or 'lingering'], the share of its duration between arrival and departure. Usage orders or enjoins (*verfügt*) present beings into the 'jointure' (*Fuge*) of their while, i.e. into the 'between' of the twofold absence of arrival and departure, and thus delivers them into their presence. As the apportioning of the portion of jointure, usage is *das zuschickende Fügen: die Verfügung des Fugs* ['the fateful joining: the enjoining of order'] (Hw 363/54). It is the sending which ordains and decrees the jointure of each being, and the joining of beings one to another. It is the destining of *dikē*.

This destining bounds and confines, de-termines and de-limits (*beendet und be-grenzt*) what is present with respect to its presence. Usage is then the handing out of the limits or boundaries (*Grenze*) of the being of beings. It delimits the *Wesen*, the abiding presence, of beings, the 'essence' of beings when being is thought through time. The essence of usage consists in its destining the fitting limits delimiting what-is at any given time, for it sends *die Grenze der Weile dem je-weilig Anwesenden* [the 'boundaries of the while to whatever lingers awhile in presence']. Because usage itself comes to, and abides in, presence as this fateful dispenser of delimiting limits, usage is itself delimited as unlimited. It is *ohne Grenze* ['without boundaries'] (Hw, 363/54).

Since the 'whiling', the enduring in presence, of beings, gives their being in essence, their essenc-ing, and since usage, *to chreon*, sends and preserves, destines, this essenc-ing, usage is *das Wesende im Sein selbst* ['essential presencing in being itself'] (Hw, 363/53). Understood in this way, Anaximander's *to chreon birgt in sich das noch ungehobene Wesen des lichtend-bergenden Versammelns* ['harbors the still hidden essence of the gathering which clears and shelters']. It is the gathering, the *logos*, from whose essence the essence of being is determined as the unifying one, the *hen*.

Parmenides thinks the unity of this unifying one as *moira*, and *moira* is itself hidden in *to chreon* as apportionment. *Moira* is the dispensing of portions to which both gods and men are subordinated and subject (Hw, 364/55). For Parmenides, it is the destining of being, the fateful gathered-gathering apportionment of presence, *die in sich gesammelte und also entfaltende Schickung des Anwesens als Anwesen von Anwesendem* ['the dispensation of presencing, as the presencing of what is present, which is gathered in itself and therefore unfolds of itself'] (VA III, 48-9/97). Here, 'being', *eon*, is the duality of being as the presencing of what is present, a duality into which being is destined by *moira*. As apportionment, *moira* dispenses, provides and presents, through the destining of this duality.

In that the disclosure of this duality, the destining of being into the duality, is what permits or bestows the presencing of what is present, it is also what permits the disclosure of truth. Truth is the opening within which the being of a being, the being in its being, is revealed and becomes visible, and it is therefore dependant in its origin upon the unfolding of the twofold of being given by *moira*. This does not mean, however, that in the event of the unfolding of the twofold, the event itself is revealed as such. On the contrary, in the destiny of being, according to Heidegger, the event of this unfolding, and so the origin of truth, remain veiled.

Im Geschick der Zwiefalt gelangen jedoch nur das Anwesen ins Scheinen und das Anwesende zum Erscheinen. Das Geschick behält die Zwiefalt als solche und vollends ihre Entfaltung im Verborgenen. Das Wesen der *Ἀλήθεια* bleibt verhüllt. Die von ihr gewährte Sichtbarkeit läßt das Anwesen des Anwesenden als »Aussehen« (*εἶδος*) und als »Gesicht« (*ἰδέα*) aufgehen. Demgemäß bestimmt sich die vernehmende Beziehung zum Anwesen des Anwesenden als ein Sehen (*εἰδέναι*). Das von der *visio* her geprägte Wissen und dessen Evidenz können auch dort ihre Wesensherkunft aus der lichtenden Entbergen nicht verleugnen, wo die Wahrheit sich in die Gestalt der Gewißheit des Selbstbewußtseins gewandelt hat. Das *lumen naturale*, das natürliche Licht, d.h. hier die Erleuchtung der Vernunft, setzt schon die Entbergung der Zwiefalt voraus. Das Gleiche gilt von der

augustinischen und von der mittelalterlichen Lichttheorie, die, von ihrer platonischen Herkunft ganz zu schweigen, nur im Bereich der schon im Geschick der Zwiefalt waltenden *Ἀλήθεια* ihren möglichen Spielraum finden können.

[In the destining of duality, however, only presencing attains a shining, and only what is present attains appearance. Destiny altogether conceals both the duality as such and its unfolding. The essence of *<alētheia>* remains veiled. The visibility it bestows allows the presencing of what is present to arise as outer appearance *<eidos>*, and aspect *<idea>*. Consequently the perceptual relation to the presencing of what is present is defined as 'seeing' *<eidenai>*. Stamped with this character of *visio*, knowledge and the evidence of knowledge cannot renounce their essential derivation from luminous disclosure, even where truth has been transformed into the certainty of self-consciousness. *Lumen naturale*, natural light, i.e. the illumination of reason, already presupposes the disclosure of the duality. The same holds true of the Augustinian and medieval views of light - not to mention their Platonic origins - which could only develop under the tutelage of an *<alētheia>* already reigning in the destiny of the duality.] (VA III, 48/97)

As already indicated, the ordering power of the Word in Bonaventure's understanding gives the order of what-is as a whole, so that there is no region of being which has not been ordered by it. Consequently, the order of every aspect of the world manifests this power. The same ordering power is thus manifest in the essences of things and in the history of the world, which Bonaventure sees through the eyes of faith. The way that beings have been ordered to be, in whatever region they are considered, is said to manifest the 'wisdom' and 'goodness' of this ordering power, the providence of God. The qualities belonging to the notion of providence then articulate the principle of the ordering power, evident in all that is ordered, which is to say, in all that is. This evidence is not immediate. The *ratio* of history, identical with the *ratio* of all that is, binds the view which sees through to the end. Such a view is given, for Bonaventure, only in revelation. Faith holds to it as the substance of what is hoped for, and the evidence of what is not seen.

For the early Greek thinkers, on the other hand, the governing order of being is *dikē*, which Heidegger translates not in the customary way as 'justice', but as *Fug*, the rule and directive given by the overpowering power which decrees the structure of all that is and compels compliance with that decree. It is this same directive that rules over the coming and going of beings, their temporal and historical order, and it is enjoined by *chreon*, the apportioning of portions, by *moira*, the destining of being. The Christian notion of providential design is clearly a long way from these Greek conceptions of necessity and destiny. But common to both is the idea of an overpowering power which enjoins and sends, destines,

the order of beings, an order in which the apparent disorder of beings is itself ordered, and thus surpassed and subsumed. Through such destining, this power reveals itself in beings, but as other to them.

With respect to the dispensing of portions in which what is present is granted the while of its presence, and is thus delimited or bounded into the fittingness of this while, the otherness of that which dispenses manifests itself under the characteristic of the unbounded, the unlimited. For Bonaventure, the being that dispenses to beings the proper boundaries of their being in every respect, thereby bringing them into the appropriate limits of their bounded, *finite*, essence, reveals itself in opposition to these beings, and therefore through them, as infinite. Insofar as this infinitude is thought with a view to time, such a being is also conceived as eternal. 'Eternal' can, in turn, be conceived either as infinite perdurance or as timelessness. In the former case, it might be thought that the being possessing the most being is also the one that lasts the longest, the being with the greatest while, so that the greatest conceivable being is the one with the greatest conceivable while, i.e. is 'everlasting'. In the latter case, the greatest conceivable being, as the one which gives to each thing its time or 'while', does not itself have a time, but is 'beyond' time, timeless.

The view of time involved in the original differentiation of the duality of presence and what is present, a differentiation which Heidegger seeks to make visible through an appropriative analysis of the earliest Greek thought, lies, according to Heidegger, at the basis of the temporal regionalisation of being in the entire history of Western thought. It is because being is conceived as presence, and because presence is thought of as persistence, endurance in time, that that which endures the longest comes to be conceived as that which is most in being. The evaluation of beings according to the magnitude of their being as duration, the length of their while in presence, is prepared for originally in the distinction of rank and power according to permanence and predominance of presence, and according to the capacity to see what predominates in permanence of presence.

Because of this distinction, the identity of structure which gives the unity of a kind of being in that it yields the common look, the *eidos* that maintains itself through the changes and variations and so has a kind of permanence, comes to have a priority of being over the various beings that manifest the look. This permanence, the manifest steadiness of the look

that appears time after time, as opposed to the unsteadiness of the things that can be seen to come and go in time, forms the starting point for the differentiation between the 'timeless' idea, the 'universal', and the 'temporal' thing, the 'particular', and the identification of permanent presence with being originates and sustains the ontological evaluation of the members of this duality. Insofar as the regions of 'created' and 'uncreated' are identified with these two regions, then, the differentiation between them, as well as the evaluation of them with respect to one another, rests upon the original evaluative differentiation of this basic temporal duality.

The look that appears time after time, in various instances, eventually becomes the universal that gathers particular things into the unity of a group. Without this primal gathering, given by the repetition of the look in distinction from what presents the look, the particular thing could not be named in its being. It could not be defined. The gathering of the fleeting thing into the steadiness of what comes to be called the universal is thus what enables the thing to be comprehended and spoken of as what it is. If this is the case, the unconcealment of beings in their being requires this differentiation, this duality, in which the while of the steady look is distinguished from the while of what presents the look in passing. The steady look is originally given, however, by the gathering of being as *logos*. The gathering is therefore original to *noein* and *legein*. It is the original 'speaking' of being which calls forth or evokes the corresponding word of human being.

For Bonaventure, what grants the intelligibility necessary for naming and definition is the archetype in the mind of God, instantiated in the thing and comprehended by the intellect according to the infallible rules of the *ratio aeterna*. This archetype is, in its universality, the *ratio* of God. It is the knowledge and speech of God, the *logos* as the Word. The most universal is the *ratio* comprehending all *rationes*, the *ratio* which, as has been said, is visible in the world as proportionality, the permanent and everywhere visible structure of the world whose relations are given in number. This, for Bonaventure, is the most predominant and the steadiest, for it manifests itself and recurs in all that is, in the things of nature as well as in knowledge, art, and music.

Because the gathering of the *logos* sustains knowledge, and because it comes to be associated with the idea as the common structure known by the intellect, the gathering itself comes to be conceived as something

intellectual. For Bonaventure, a *ratio* is a mental entity, although not yet something 'subjective', and the *ratio* of God, consubstantial with the being of God, is purely intellectual and wholly 'spiritual'. The region of the spiritual is not here primarily the region of human consciousness, but the region of those entities which, while involved with change and particularity, and thus with 'matter', to the extent that they manifest themselves in conjunction with entities subject to mutation and decay, are yet other to these and 'incorruptible', in that they do not themselves move and change in the same way as 'material' beings. The delimitation of the spiritual as the unchanging and incorruptible itself rests, then, upon the temporal duality spoken of above.

As Heidegger sees it, the history of this duality, a duality into which being is destined, is, however, one in which the original difference is forgotten. One mode of this forgetting can be seen, according to Heidegger, in the transformation into a being of that which maintains itself as other to beings in the difference. In this case, the 'other' becomes the highest being, the divine being, and its characters become the 'attributes of God'. Without passing any judgement at this point regarding Heidegger's own view of this kind of representation as a forgetting of being, it is clear that, to some extent at least, this is precisely how Bonaventure conceives the otherness of this other. For example, with respect to the temporal distinction mentioned above, the characteristics which Heidegger thinks are originally the temporal characteristics of being as presence, viz. duration and steadiness, are represented as the properties of God, so that God is conceived as unchanging and eternal. Whatever then manifests these properties, for instance, the unchanging *ratio* of that which is not itself unchanging, is understood as in some way identical with the being of God.

This point can be made with respect to all of the names and attributes of the God known through the world as other to the world, e.g. essence, presence, power, plenitude, origin, principle, and light. The conception of God under these determinations rests, originally, upon the basic duality or differentiation that Heidegger describes. Only if such determinations can be distinguished from beings in such a way as to appear other to them, without yet necessarily coming to presence apart from them, is it possible to attribute them to a divinity that manifests itself, under these attributes, within beings while remaining different from them. The difference between God, conceived in this way, and creatures rests, then,

upon the differentiation of being from beings, as Heidegger suggests. Only if it is possible to distinguish being, for instance, as essence, power, or presence, from beings, is it possible to pose the question of the being of beings in such a way that God can appear at its limits as existing uncircumscribed in all things by essence, power, and presence. Only on the basis of this distinction, furthermore, can a relationship between the two be posited, for instance, of causality or exemplification. But the notion that God is in this case represented as a being is questionable. While Bonaventure, along with other medieval theologians, does sometimes speak of God as a being, he also claims that God is actually being itself. I cannot expand upon this point here, except to indicate that it forms the subject of a later chapter.

It is also questionable whether, in conceptions like those of Bonaventure, the 'difference' between being and beings is 'forgotten'. Heidegger thinks of this difference historically, as a 'destiny' in which the members of the duality are interpreted in various ways over the course of time. This kind of thinking, which Heidegger calls *seinsgeschichtlich*, is obviously quite foreign to the medieval mind. Having said that, however, I fail to see how, at any time when the relation between the one and the many has been a matter of thought within the Western philosophical tradition, as it often has, it can be said that the 'difference' between being and beings does not come to light. The tendency to reify being, to turn it into a being, may obscure this difference, and obscure as well the kind of identity which forms the other moment in this dialectic. But that reification is not so much a specific historical phenomenon as a basic tendency of the human mind, a tendency against which many Western thinkers have struggled.¹⁷ I also fail to see how the Platonic theory of illumination, and the Augustinian and medieval notions that originate from it, are so very different from Heidegger's own notion of truth as 'luminous disclosure'. In this instance, then, Heidegger's analysis appears to be more of a retrieval than an overcoming. I do not mean to suggest that Heidegger is just repeating what some of these other thinkers have said, that his thought is unoriginal. It is, I believe, both original and highly valuable, but one can maintain this while still challenging the notion that Heidegger's break with the tradition is so radical at every point that he is no longer involved in the same philosophical conversation.

On the other hand, I also do not want to deny that many of the

traditional philosophical and theological notions which Bonaventure, for instance, maintains are now unacceptable and, at the very least, in need of revision. My point here is only that, in the task of thinking about God and being in the present, the early Greek thinkers do not have a monopoly on buried possibilities. There are many more suggestive and potentially fruitful thoughts within the philosophical tradition than some of Heidegger's grand (and often grandiose) evaluative overviews of the history of philosophy would seem to imply.

Turning now to the issue of man's relation to the twofold, if the sentence *chrē to legein to noein t'eon emmenai* is heard as Heidegger hears it, and if it is kept in mind that the sentence simultaneously concerns the essence of being and the essence of man, then, with respect to the essence of man, the sentence says that the use of man which determines his essence, the use to which he is destined by the destining in which usage sends him into his essence and preserves that essence, is the *legein* and *noein*, the gathering and apprehending, of the twofold: *eon emmenai*, beings:being. This usage delimits man as the being he is, the being that stands in the clearing of the twofold, the clearing of truth. Since this clearing appropriates the essence of man so as to bring to presence and preserve the truth of being, i.e. truth itself, essential truth, the destiny of man and the destiny of being are one. They belong together in essential correspondence within the unfolding of the duality of beings:being, the unfolding that bestows the revelation of truth. Truth is given and preserved in the speaking of language, in the *legein* of the *logos*, where human *legein* is the echo of the *legein* of being, a hearing corresponding to the claim of being as *logos*. For this reason, the destiny of being and man are bound up with the destiny of language, and the essence of man as the one used for the truth of being belongs to the speaking of language as the speaking of being.

In Heidegger's interpretation of early Greek thought, the differentiation of the regions supported by the difference is considered as a need involving the essence of man. This need places man in a perpetual decision, a decision for being against appearance. The hearing correspondence to the *logos*, the receptive and accepting anticipation of *noein*, and the bringing-to-stand by setting-into-work of *technē* are all responses to this need, a need imposed upon the essence of man by the power which establishes it for the sake of its own appearance. For Bonaventure, the passage from the world to the source of the world, God,

also requires a decision, and it is a decision to which *mens* is called by the power which makes it and the world what they are. This power is manifest in the world and calls upon the mind to see it there in its immanence and transcendence, in its presence in, and difference from, what it has made to be. In its own way, it, too, like the *logos* of Heraclitus, calls for the comprehension as one of that which is permanently collected as one, for it calls for the vision of that which is the same in all.

The disclosure of the essence of man as the one who corresponds to the claim of being as *logos* stands at the beginning of Western history and is decisive for that history. In *Einführung in die Metaphysik* Heidegger had summarised the essence of man as revealed in the words of the early Greek thinkers in a formula of his own devising: *physis = logos anthrōpon echōn: das Sein, das überwältigende Erscheinen, ernötigt die Sammlung, die das Menschsein (acc.) innehat und gründet* ['being, overpowering appearing, necessitates the gathering which pervades and grounds being-human']. The decisiveness of this determination for the West does not consist in its being handed down in its original form, however, but in the profound shift that takes place in the consequent definition of man as *das vernünftige Lebewesen*, 'the rational animal'. This determination is summed up in the formula, *anthrōpos = zōion logon echon: der Mensch, das Lebewesen, das die Vernunft als Ausstattung hat* ['man, the animal equipped with reason'] (EM, 185/175), in which the *logos* becomes a faculty of man as the best kind of animal. The *logos* eventually becomes *ratio*, and *ratio* comes to be seen as a court of judgement deciding over being.

In Bonaventure's understanding, man is certainly the rational animal, and the distinctiveness and superiority of being human rests in this. However, reason is nonetheless not, for Bonaventure, a court of judgement deciding over being, but is itself still decided over by being. Human reason apprehends the Word, to which the human word is a corresponding response, an echo. And reason, as a human faculty, is not autonomous and isolated, not something standing in itself over against being in itself, but is a power whose power is constantly granted, and ruled over, by the same Word that it apprehends, by the governing order of what-is as a whole. The distinctiveness of being human, then, resides, for Bonaventure, in a revealing and bringing to word enabled, ultimately, not by human reason, but by that which sends reason and sends itself to reason in revealing and speaking itself. Man is brought into the truth of his essence through correspondence to this sending, and this correspondence requires both an

effortful turning-away, and a concentrated turning-towards. No violence is involved in this usage, though, in the way that the superior power governing the world calls the mind to the manifestation of itself in and through the world. What is required in response to the draw, the pull, of this power is also not violent, but is simply an open concentration of all the powers of the soul, of vision, hearing, and passion, of eye, ear and heart. It is to this form of receptivity, which is yet not passivity, not sleep but wakefulness, that the correspondence to the Word definitive of the human essence is granted.

Ratio also comes to be seen, of course, as ground or cause, the reason that something is and is the way it is, and philosophy, as metaphysics, becomes the rational search for the ground of beings. According to Heidegger, it then becomes onto-theo-logic, looking towards the the ground of beings as that which is common to every being (onto-logic), and looking towards this ground in terms of the highest being as the first cause and ultimate reason of all beings (theo-logic) (see ID, 56, 69/52, 63). The search for ground in the latter sense signals, for Heidegger, the entry of the concept of God into philosophy. This is theo-logic as the 'science of God', the speculative knowledge of God as ultimate ground which Heidegger distinguishes from theology as the 'science of faith', the conceptual knowledge and articulation of that which is disclosed in faith.

As already stated, the God of onto-theo-logic, the God of philosophy, which metaphysics represents as the highest and self-caused cause, the *causa sui*, has, for Heidegger, nothing to do with the God of faith, or, for that matter, with the *göttliche Gott* before which human beings worship and pray:

Zu diesem Gott [i.e. the God of metaphysics] kann der Mensch weder beten, noch kann er ihm opfern. Vor der *Causa sui* kann der Mensch weder aus Scheu ins Knie fallen, noch kann er vor diesem Gott musizieren und tanzen.

[Man may neither pray to this God, nor may he sacrifice to him. Confronted by *Causa sui* man may neither sink onto his knees nor could he sing and dance.] (ID, 64/65)

The God which the Western metaphysical tradition represents as the *summum ens* and *ultima ratio* is, then, an ungodly God. This ungodly God has, in turn, arisen as a result of the oblivion of being (*Seinsvergessenheit*) in the West, which is simultaneously a forgetting of the ontico-ontological difference, the difference between beings and being. In the ontotheological representation of God, this forgetting manifests itself in the transformative deterioration of the ontico-ontological difference into

the difference between God, as the highest being - the being which is, to be sure, 'most in being, but which, for all that, is still a being and therefore an object capable being represented - and all other beings. This is the difference between the one object represented as a *causa sui* causing all things, and the remaining objects that make up what-is as a whole, represented as effects of the one self-caused cause. In Heidegger's view, such a God is neither worthy of belief, nor capable of being worshipped, and, insofar as the 'death of God' means, among other things, the deterioration of God into this concept, a concept under which God cannot live, it is precisely those theologians who dabble in ontotheologic that have brought the event about.

Bonaventure's God is decidedly, in some sense, an ontotheological God. It is a first cause. It is pure mind, and it contains exemplars. The prime exemplar it contains is number, so this is even a mathematical metaphysical God. What could be worse? And yet this metaphysical God is apprehended in delight and wonder. Through this apprehension, the God is seen, not inferred, beheld, not proven. The language of seeing cannot simply be dismissed as a misconception, because it is not simply a conception, but articulates an experience. Before the God of this experience, it is by all means possible, and appropriate, to fall to one's knees in awe, to pray and worship, to offer and to sacrifice. Indeed, for Bonaventure, thought itself, even as science, even as metaphysical science, is a kind of sacrifice, a religious duty and a form of piety.⁶⁸ As for playing music and dancing, what could be a more fitting, a more corresponding, response to a God who makes all things beautiful and delightful by making them rhythmical? If this is a metaphysical God, it is one that is neither pale nor lifeless. Rather, like Aristotle's original uncaused cause, this God has a pulse, *is* pulse.

Thus, Bonaventure's God, as seen in and through the visible world, is a godly God, a sacred God, because this God is known from within a form of disclosure appropriate to the uncovering of the sacred and the holy, namely, from within that rapture in which *mens* is held before the world while yet transported beyond the world to its other. That Bonaventure speaks of this other in terms that bring to mind Heidegger's criticisms of the God of a certain kind of theology does not mean that he speaks from outside of this transportation, that his understanding is 'speculative' rather than 'experiential', or, alternatively, 'rational' rather than 'mystical'. Whatever philosophy and theology may become in a later age, in

the Middle Ages, as Heidegger points out in a very early work, such a divide is not appropriate:

Besinnt man sich auf das tiefere, weltanschauliche Wesen der Philosophie, dann muß auch die Auffassung der christlichen Philosophie des Mittelalters als im Gegensatz zur gleichzeitigen Mystik stehender Scholastik als prinzipiell verfehlt herausgestellt werden. Scholastik und Mystik gehören für die mittelalterliche Weltanschauung wesentlich zusammen. Die beiden „Gegensatz“-paare: Rationalismus-Irrationalismus und Scholastik-Mystik decken sich nicht. Und wo ihre Gleichsetzung versucht wird, beruht sie auf einer extremen Rationalisierung der Philosophie. Philosophie als vom Leben abgelöstes, rationalistisches Gebilde ist machtlos, Mystik als irrationalistisches Erleben ist ziellos.

[If one reflects on the deeper essence of philosophy in its relation to a world-view, then the conception of the Christian philosophy of the Middle Ages as a scholasticism standing in opposition to the contemporaneous mysticism must also be exposed as fundamentally inappropriate. For the medieval world-view, scholasticism and mysticism belong essentially together. The two pairs of 'opposites,' rationalism-irrationalism and scholasticism-mysticism, do not coincide. And where their equivalence is sought, it rests upon an extreme rationalization of philosophy. Philosophy as a rationalist construction, detached from life, is powerless: mysticism as an irrationalist experience is purposeless.]⁵

As previously stated, one of my aims in looking at Bonaventure's descriptions of the immanent God through Heidegger's deconstructive analysis of early Greek thought is to penetrate to what is most original, most basic, in this conception of the God discovered in and through the world. The hope has been to perhaps yield a glimmer of what binds together the worlds, the thought and experience, of these two very different forms of Dasein with respect to the question posed and in the light of the Western tradition. Through this, it may be possible to catch a fainter glimmer of some elements that might be the same in the thought and experience of many forms of Dasein on this question, some elements that might then bind together the other of many worlds. This is not to say that the conceptions of the being of beings examined so far are 'universal', but only that, by considering these conceptions in their unique and historically specific identity and difference, the identity of that which holds the possibilities of what can be conceived may draw a little closer. The examination of these historically founded delimitations can thus help to make visible that same *Sache* which is being delimited thus, and which forms the origin or basis of these finite and particular conceptions.

In the preceding examination, the sameness of the original *Sache* which binds together the conceptions of the early Greek thinkers and Bonaventure has been explored through a variety of formulations, but the

question of what 'original' and 'basic' mean in this context has not been explicitly addressed. I have assumed that Heidegger's interpretations of the early Greek thinkers name what is in some sense original, and my analysis has proceeded through these, but this raises the question of what kind of origin Heidegger seeks to bring to light, and what kind he does in fact bring to light, where these may not be the same. It must, in the first place, be noted that Heidegger's hermeneutical stance does not represent an attempt to think in precisely the same way as the thinker he is confronting. He attempts, rather, to appropriate the thought of that thinker more originally, to experience the ground that sustains it and is made visible by it, while yet remaining unthought in itself. That the essential origin of *logos* lies in 'collection', for example, and that this origin is made visible in the writings of Heraclitus, does not necessarily mean that Heraclitus 'meant' this, or, if it does, then the meaning of 'meant' is itself a question. What it evidently does not mean is that Heraclitus reflected upon the meaning of the term and represented it to himself with some other word naming 'collection', in the same way that Heidegger does. The extent to which Heraclitus explicitly understands something like gathering or collection when he says *logos* is debatable, but the meaning of a term, and the meaning, the so-called 'intention', of the person using the term, is not exhausted by such explicit understanding. The meaning of collection may be original to what Heraclitus conceives as *logos*, without his having experienced this original meaning explicitly. The 'correctness' of Heidegger's interpretation of the term will then obviously depend in part upon what kind of meaning he attributes to Heraclitus in making the claim that he meant 'collection'. He may, however, be wrong even in this judgement, while yet being right that 'collection' is, in some sense, a sense which perhaps remains unclarified, original to the meaning of *logos*.

But if it is said that the meaning of 'collection' is in some way original to the many permutations and translations the term undergoes in its history, and that it is therefore original to Bonaventure's *ratio* and *Verbum*, too, the question arises about the sort of priority this historically original meaning maintains through the variations, the way in which it imposes itself within the variations. In the claim that 'collection' is original to the twofold meaning of *ratio*, this originality may imply logical or temporal priority, and, with respect to the latter, historical or experiential priority, where these are not mutually exclusive

but interconnected. The issue of the interconnection between these forms of priority has already been discussed in general (see Introduction, pp. 15-16). Applying the conclusions reached in that general discussion to the particular case of *ratio*, as well as to the other concepts explored so far in this section, it would be maintained that, in the meaning that has historical priority, an original experience is delimited in such a way that it *also* forms the original experience of the subsequent transformations in usage. It then has a *continuing* priority in terms of experience. The priority of the original experience imposes, moreover, a logical, or, perhaps phenomenological, priority upon the concept, in that the meaning formed in accord with that experience is also phenomenologically prior in the concept. It is the basis of every particular conception. In the case of Bonaventure's *ratio*, this would suggest that the experience or understanding of 'collection' is still, as opposed to 'was once', phenomenologically basic and essential, and so 'prior' to the specific way in which the term is conceived. If this is the case, the original meaning continues to inform the concept, without necessarily being experienced as such, recalled to mind and remembered, whenever the term is used. The original meaning informing and sustaining the concept in its historical development may be progressively forgotten, and it is this forgetting which tends to block both the appropriate and original understanding of the conception, and the possibility of a different one.

Heidegger's appropriation, through deconstructive analysis, of the original meaning of some of the basic concepts of Western thought is essential to the project of his own thought. The work of this appropriation is seen not only in the writings, or sections of writings, in which Heidegger deals directly with one thinker or another, but in the way that certain elements of the tradition are subsumed and transformed in his own reflections on being. The independence and originality of these reflections does consist in a certain breaking free of the tradition, but this freedom is gained not by a simple denial or rejection of the tradition (which would be the surest way to remain bound to it), but by thinking through to the ground of certain ideas. The next chapter in this study, which discusses and extends the dialogue between Meister Eckhart and Heidegger, will attempt to bring to light some key elements within this process of deconstruction and appropriative transformation.

CHAPTER TWO

ECKHART AND HEIDEGGER ON BEING AND BEINGS

1. *Eckhart's Dialectical Theism*

It is a basic tenet of Meister Eckhart's metaphysics that *eadem . . . sunt principia essendi et cognoscendi* ['the principles of knowing and of being are the same'] (LW III, 21/ES 130). Like Bonaventure, Eckhart conceives these same principles in terms of the Word, and he equates principle and Word with *ratio*, which for him is the Latin equivalent of the Greek *logos* (LW I, 491, LW III, 22/ES, 101, 130). The principle, Word, *ratio*, or *logos*, he claims, is both prior and posterior to particular things; it is prior as the *ratio* located in the mind of God, and posterior as the *ratio* received by the intellect through abstraction (LW III, 22-3/ES, 131). As a prior *ratio*, it is a kind of cause (LW III, 22/ES, 131), not a cause that departs from its effect, but one which remains with the thing while yet remaining with God. It is the simultaneously immanent and transcendent ideal reason according to which a thing is created, and through which it is what it is. This ideal reason gives the logical structure, the essence or *quidditas* (LW I, 187/ES, 83), of a particular thing, and unlike that thing, it is uncreated and immutable.

The same immutable *ratio* that gives the 'whatness' of a created thing and is the principle of its being 'shines' (*lucet*) in that thing and is the principle of its intelligibility. Strictly speaking, according to Eckhart, nothing shines in a thing, nothing illuminates it except this *ratio* or *quidditas*, for a thing is known only in its reason or idea. The divine Word or *ratio* is then 'the light of men' as rational beings, beings capable

of comprehending the reasons or ideas of things. The locus of its shining is the intellect, since the light by which ideas are known, the light that enables them to shine out, is the light of that faculty which grasps the intelligible structure of a thing. It is this faculty that permits a thing to be defined by a name, since the name of a thing signifies nothing other than the intelligible structure which is its idea and definition. With respect to the kind of cause that an idea or essence is, therefore, explanation consists in definition, and such definition is the full 'proof' (*demonstratio*) of the thing to be known (LW III, 10-11/ES, 125-6). Given that a name signifies an essence, the essence explicated in a definition, the name constituting the human word is, ultimately, a response to the divine Word through which and in which a thing is created. For this reason, it corresponds to the prior idea in the mind of God. Consequently, the ideas in the mind of God inform both things and concepts. They 'look to a double being' (*respiciunt duplex esse*), to intellectual being in the soul and to material being outside the soul (LW I, 204/ES, 91).²

According to Eckhart's anthropology, it is natural for human beings, as rational beings, to seek knowledge of things, where this means primarily seeking to understand things in their causes. With respect to the things of the world, the soul's knowledge is not innate but acquired, proceeding through received images. When presented with the image of a thing that it does not understand, the soul is led to wonder about it, and this wondering spurs it to pursuit, for, having perceived clearly *that* something is, the soul wonders about the 'how' and the 'what' of this existence. It seeks to understand the being of the thing with respect to cause and essence. Since its knowledge of the being of things is never complete and since it is natural for it to seek this knowledge, it constantly wonders about things and its pursuit of them never comes to a rest (Pf, 8/W I, 8-9).

If reasoning as seeking to know things in their principles is proper to human beings, then an essential property of this being is that it seeks to understand things with respect to essence, as a kind of cause. For Eckhart, the understanding of this kind of cause is the task of metaphysics. Like mathematics, metaphysics does not deal with exterior causes, with the efficient and final causes of things, but considers *ens inquantum ens*. It considers a thing in terms of *quod quid est*, in terms of its *quidditas*, to which the question of existence bears no relation (LW II, 340-1/TP, 148). It considers a thing with respect to its *principium*

essendi, cognoscendi, amandi et operandi ['principle of being, knowing, loving and working'] (LW III, 287). In such a consideration, the understanding that constitutes metaphysical knowing must pass beyond the physical entity to its *esse*, which is not physical but rational. The passing of this knowing is then definitive for the *animal rationale*, for man, *cuius . . . rationem [petit] purissimum, rationem scilicet rerum* ['whose rational part seeks what is most pure, namely the idea of all things'] (LW III, 501/TP, 192).

As already suggested, the ideal reasons of all things, their *esse* with respect to formal structure, are immanent in God and God is immanent in them. They are with God and are God in that eternal beginning (*principium*) in which all things are created not actually but rationally. This beginning is the Son, *qui est imago et ratio idealis omnium* ['who is the image and ideal reason of all things'] (LW I, 188/ES, 84). In that this ideal reason is the image both of God of the world, it stands in an intermediating relation to the two, mediating one to the other. It is actually the primal speech, the first articulation of the simple unity of God, through whose mediation that unity is translated into and expressed as the world of particular things. It is also the principle of unity immanent in the world, unifying and simplifying things into the ideal reasons in which the divine being is mirrored and spoken.

However, in the ideal reason and image in which the divine being speaks itself, the reasons forming the essences of things are not distinct. This speech is a wholly simple and single one, comprehending all things within itself in an indistinct way:

Der vater sprach ein wort, daz was sin sun. In dem einigen worte sprach er alliu dinc. War umbe ensprach er niht wan éin wort? - Dar umbe, wan im alliu dinc gegenwertic sint.

[The Father spoke a Word; this was his Son. In this single Word he spoke all things. Why did he only speak one Word? Because all things are present to it.]
(DW III, 455/TP, 335)

Thus, all creatures are conceived in unity in this eternal Word. This is the Word of the divine understanding, a word neither brought forth nor thought out, but continually being conceived by, and eternally remaining within, the speaker (DW I, 157/TP, 259).

Consequently, while all things are 'in' God, they are not what they are qua distinct creatures in God. They are, rather, one in God, and are then *the one* which is God:

sub pallio unius unitur deus et est in omnibus, et sub pallio et proprietate unius res omnia capit deum e

converso. In illo uno sibi sociantur deus et anima, quin immo deus et omnia.

[God is united and is in all things under the covering of the one, and vice versa under the one's covering and property each thing grasps God. In that one God and the soul, indeed God and all things, come together.]
(LW II, 443/TP, 160).

For Eckhart, this one in which all things are united is not a number, nor a thing which is numbered, but is the principle of any number or numbered thing insofar as that number or numbered thing is itself, as a unitary entity, one and single. As the principle of unification, the source, therefore, of all forms of unity, *unum sive unitas non dividitur nec numeratur in numeris sive numeratis, sed numeros et numerata in se colligit et unit* ['the one or unity is not divided or numbered in numbers or in the things that are enumerated, but gathers and unites numbers and what is enumerated into itself'] (LW I, 486/ES, 99). The one is then the principle of the unity of units, the primal all-comprehending and all-gathering monad. It is, in fact, the act of unifying.

One, moreover, is, according to Eckhart, the same as indistinct, for everything distinct is two or more, and everything indistinct is one (LW II, 482). It follows that the one, as the principle of unity, is also the principle of indistinction. On the one hand, this means that, since the one comprehends all things in indistinction within itself, and since this one is God, *nihil tam unum et indistinctum quam deus et omne creatum* ['nothing is so one and indistinct as God and every created being'] (LW II, 155/TP, 169). But, on the other hand, since, precisely in being utterly indistinct, the one is distinguished from every distinct being, *deus est distinctissimus ab omni et quolibet creato* ['God is most distinct from each and every created thing'] (LW II, 489/TP, 169). God, *sub ratione unius*, is distinguished by indistinction.

The indistinction and unity of God are in turn connected with the nature of the divine being as unlimited and infinite. In accord with an idea that dates back to Plato's *Parmenides*, the nature of every specific being is defined, delimited, against that of other beings. Therefore, every being is what it is through negation, through the exclusion and lack of what it is not. Eckhart expresses this idea in saying that every finite being, every creature, is also not being (*non ens*). Outside the one, on the other hand, there is nothing. In that case, there is nothing against which the one may be delimited, so that nothing limits the one and nothing distinguishes it. To arrive at the one is consequently to negate all distinctions, but since every distinction is itself a negation of the one,

the negation of all distinctions is the negation of all negations. The one, therefore, is the negation of negation, which is also pure affirmation, plenitude and superabundance (LW II, 485).

This idea that the negation of negation is the negation of all not being suggests that the one is actually pure being, excluding all not being. In fact, Eckhart claims that *unum* is convertible with *ens* (LW I, 487), and that *unum respicit per essentiam esse ipsum sive essentiam, et hanc unam* ['the one essentially refers to being itself or to unitary essence, for essence is always one'] (LW IV, 265/TP, 224). With respect to creatures, to be one is to be an entity, where being an entity means being possessed of a single defining essence. The essence gives the unity of an entity and the borders of the essence are the borders of that entity. They are the borders of this or that unit defining it against other units and thereby circumscribing it into its own range of being. That which bestows itself in bestowing the finite unity and being of a given entity, however, the one, or being itself, is uncircumscribed. It has no range of being, but, as being itself, is indistinct being, and includes all being through this indistinction.

So, like the indistinction of the one with which being is interchangeable, the indistinction of being itself is what distinguishes it from any entity:

. . . ratio enim entis est quid abjectum et indistinctum et ipsa sua indistinctione ab aliis distinguitur. Quo etiam modo deus sua indistinctione ab aliis distinctis quibuslibet distinguitur.

[The idea of being is something commonplace and indistinct and distinguished from other things by its very indistinction. This is the way God is distinguished by his indistinction from any other distinct thing.]
(LW III, 489/TP, 187)

As *ipsum esse*, God is the *esse omnium*, and indistinct from any entity insofar as it 'has' being, but as the unity and fullness of being, God is simultaneously wholly distinct from any finite being. As being, then, God is both within and beyond all creatures (DW I, 143/TP, 256).

These concepts of God as unity and being itself belong to Eckhart's dialectical conception of God. Bernard McGinn, in his introduction to *Meister Eckhart: The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises, and Defense*, points out that 'Eckhart's teaching about God really needed a way of speaking about the divine nature that would combine the negative (ie. transcendent) and the positive (ie. immanent) moments, or the simultaneous thinking of contradictory determinations, into some higher positive unity'. The language of distinction and indistinction with respect to being forms

part of this dialectic, yielding 'a way of talking about God as simultaneously totally immanent to creatures as their real existence and by that very fact absolutely transcendent to them as *esse simpliciter* or *esse absolutum*' (ES, 33-4).³

The notion of God as being has a long pedigree in the Christian theological tradition. Bernard of Clairvaux, for instance, says that, as the being of all things, God is *in se* absolutely transcendent and unknowable, and yet, as the being of any thing, God is also wholly near and present.

Non quod longe ab unoquoque sit qui esse omnium est, sine quo omnia nihil: sed, ut tu plus mireris, et nil eo praesentius, et nil incomprehensibilius. Quid nempe cuique rei praesentius, quam esse suum? Quid cuique tamen incomprehensibilius, quam esse omnium?

[Not that he is far from anyone, he who is the being of all, without whom all things are nothing; but, to make you wonder even more, nothing is more present than him, and nothing more incomprehensible. For what is more present to anything than its own being? Yet what is more incomprehensible than the being of all?]⁴

For a Christian theologian, that God is the being of all cannot mean that there is no substantial distinction between creatures and God, and Bernard immediately qualifies the above statements to exclude the possibility of any such misconception:

Sane esse omnium dixerim deum, non quia illa sunt quod est ille; sed quia ex ipso, et per ipsum, et in ipso sunt omnia. Esse est ergo omnium quae facta sunt ipse factor eorum, sed causale, non materiale.

[But indeed I say that God is the being of all things, not because they are what he is, but because all things exist from him and through him and in him. He who is the maker of all is therefore the being of all that is made, but with respect to cause, not matter.]

God is not some sort of prime matter out of which creatures are shaped, but is the cause of the being of all that is, the *factor* of all *facta*. God is then the being that gives rise to and supports the being of all that comes to be and is.

For Eckhart, too, following Aquinas, God as *esse* is the cause of the being of all that is, in that everything except God has being from something or somewhere other than itself, and, ultimately, from God as creator. Creation is the conferring or bestowal (*collatio*) of being, and the being of all that is created, all *entia*, is bestowed by God (LW I, 197/ES, 87). But God is also not other than that which is conferred in creation, since what is conferred is being, and what confers is also being, *ipsum esse*, which is God. Creation is then the act in which being itself gives itself, and thereby gives rise to beings. It is the act in which the

self-bestowal of being first allows beings to be.

The substantial distinction between God and creatures is not thereby dissolved. The *esse omnium* as *ipsum esse* is not identical with any finite thing, insofar as that thing is considered as the necessarily limited thing which it is. If, on the other hand, the consideration of the understanding moves from the finite thing to its being to being itself without qualification, distinction or determination, what it then finds in and through the creature is indeed identical with God, but then the encounter is no longer with the creature qua creature. Precisely in virtue of being not the all but the unity, in the sense of unification, of the all, God is distinct from any 'this' or 'that', any creature as well as any determination of any creature. A distinction must be drawn, then, between the finite being of any determinate thing, its essence, and being itself which 'contains' all essences in an indistinct way.

What distinguishes the two, finite beings or *entia* on the one hand and the being of all or *ipsum esse* on the other, is negativity or not being. God is only being; creatures are both being and not being (*ens et non ens*). That God is only being means both that God is nothing other than pure being (*nihil est aliud nisi purum esse*) and that God is the fullness of being and full being (*plenitudo esse et plenum esse*) (LW II, 77/TP, 68). Creatures, insofar as (*inquantum*) they are and are one, insofar as they are entities and units, participate in and manifest being itself and the one, but insofar as they are finite and limited, they are distinguished from the purity and fullness of being itself and the one. This distinguishing finitude is the admixture of not being which differentiates the being of creatures from being itself, and which differentiates the limited unity of any unitary entity from the unbounded unity of the one. Thus, just as every unitary entity participates in the one in virtue of its being one, so that, insofar as it is one, it is in the one, so every being participates in being in virtue of the fact that it is. But every single being is also distinguished from being and the one by the fact that it, as finite, must also be *not*, not this and not that, excluding this and that unit and this and that entity, lacking this and that determination. As the fullness of being and the unbounded unity of the one, God lacks no determination, but what lacks no determination also lacks anything against which it may be determined and is therefore indeterminate. It is this very indeterminacy which determines the being of God, that is to say, the being of being, against the being of any entity.

God as being is wholly exclusive and wholly inclusive, *totus intra, totus extra* (LW II, 143/TP, 93), a *puritas et plenitudo essendi*.

The lack of determination and definition in God, the lack of any *terminus* or *finis*, is the lack of any negativity, for it is the lack of those borders that de-terminate and de-fine the being of a being in terms of the determinations of being which it is not, the predicates that cannot be predicated of it. The determining differentiation of this 'not', this negativity, also gives rise to the number and multiplicity characterizing finite beings. Therefore, because there is no differentiating 'not' in God, as being itself, there is also no number or multiplicity in God (LW II, 449/TP, 163). Moreover, the 'not' that determines the thing into its essence, its *quidditas*, gives the name of that thing. In the absence of this 'not', there can be no name, and so God, as being, which includes all names within itself in an indistinct way (LW II, 146/TP, 96), has no name. The being named only in saying 'I am that I am' is unnameable because omninameable. The lack of multiplicity, number and name in God, then, is rooted in a lack of the differentiating not, in the fact that there is in God no negation except the negation of negation, which is the purest and fullest affirmation (LWII, 77/TP, 68).

It is a logical consequence of the definition of God as being itself, the negation of negation, that no being (*ens*) can truly be counted alongside God (LW IV, 29/TP, 210). Everything apart from God as being is not a being (LW II, 124/TP, 87), for nothing can be without being (LW III, 44/ES, 141). Since nothing that is is without being, and since being excludes nothing, *alliu dinc mit got enist niht mé dan got aleine* ['all things together with God are not more than God alone'] (DW II, 101/TP, 293). For this reason, those who know God alone also know created things (DW V, 116/ES, 245). The way that God, as pure being excluding nothing, gives rise to beings so that they are not without being and are yet utterly distinct from it in itself, forms that part of Eckhart's dialectic in which it is said that God flows into all creatures but remains untouched (*unberüeret*) by them (DW III, 217/TP, 321), and that all flow out from God and yet remain within.

Because everything apart from God is not a being, creatures, considered in themselves, are, in a sense, pure nothing (*ein lüter niht*) (DW I, 69/TP, 250). If, after all, the being (*wesen*) of creatures depends upon being itself in such a way that outside being there is nothing, then apart from God, apart from being, creatures simply are not. In this case, God

alone is (LW II, 29/TP, 49) and creatures are only insofar as they are not without God. Here, being is conceived as the name which includes all names and is therefore above them, the most general and universal name, common to all names and things but by that very fact beyond them. Understood in this way, the name is proper to God alone (LW II, 146/TP, 96). On the other hand, if being is conceived in such a way that it can be applied to creatures, if creatures can be said to be, then God cannot, since no name applying to creatures can, strictly speaking, be applied to God. Thus, God is above being and is not a being, which does not mean that God is in no sense being, but only that God is not being in the same sense that creatures are:

Got wûrket über wesene in der wite, dâ er sich geregen mac, er wûrket in unwesene; ê denne wesen wære, dô worhte got; er worhte wesen, dô niht wesen enwas. Grobe meister sprechent, got sî ein lûter wesen; er ist als hôch über wesene, als der oberste engel ist über ein mûcken. Ich spræche als unrechte, als ich Got hieze ein wesen, als ob ich die sunnen hieze bleich oder schwarz. Got enist weder diz noch daz. Und sprichet ein meister: swer dâ swæret, daz er got bekant habe, und bekante er iht, so enbekante er got niht. Daz ich aber gesprochen hân, got ensî niht ein wesen und sî über wesene, hie mite enhân ich im niht wesen abgesprachen, mër: ich hân ez in im gehæhet.

[God works above being in vastness where he can roam. He works in nonbeing. Before being was, God worked. He worked being when there was no being. Unsophisticated teachers say that God is pure being. He is as high above being as the highest angel is above a gnat. I would be speaking as incorrectly in calling God a being as if I called the sun pale or black. God is neither this nor that. A master says: 'Whoever imagines that he has understood God; if he knows anything, it is not God that he knows.' However, in saying that God is not a being and is above being, I have not denied being to God; rather, I have elevated it in him.] (DW I, 146/TP, 256)

God is above every finite essence and every actually existent thing, and God's activity is both prior and superior to the being of all such entities. Again, the difference between being as applied to creatures and being as applied to God rests in negation and in the negation of negation. God is a *wesen âne wesen* ['being beyond being'], because *Got ist en solch wesen, daz in im treget alliu wesen* ['God is that kind of being which contains within itself all beings']; that is, because God, as being itself, *enhât keine wise* ['has no limited mode'] (DW III, 230-31/TP, 324-25) but is *die lûter absolûcio des vrien wesens* ['the pure absoluteness of free being'], *diu blôze isticheit, diu da beroubet ist aller wesens und aller isticheit* ['bare beingness which is deprived of all being and all beingness'] (DW III, 133/W II, 175). This *isticheit* is the 'essence' of God as being itself, the pure is-ness proper to God in contradistinction to the *esse hoc et hoc* appropriate to creatures.

When, in the *Parisian Questions*, Eckhart does seem to deny being to God in favour of the term *intelligere*, this must be understood in the light of his dialectical understanding of being. At the end of the first question, he says:

I also assert that being does not belong to God, nor is he a being, but he is something loftier than being. Aristotle says that the power of sight must be colorless so that it can perceive all colors, and that the intellect is not a natural form so that it can know all forms. So also I deny being itself and suchlike of God so that he may be the cause of all being and precontain all things.
(PQ, 50)

God is here not an actual being, but the the possibility of everything actual and possible, precontained in the idea, the *logos* or Word. The most appropriate term for that which contains the possibility of all being, however, is not 'being', but intellect. Since the divine intellect is not receptive but productive, its understanding is the cause of being, the act that gives rise to being and is therefore in itself empty of being. Eckhart calls this emptiness of actual being containing the possibility of being a *puritas essendi* ['purity of being'], and he says that 'being does not befit God, unless you call this purity being' (PQ, 48). But at other points this purity is precisely what Eckhart calls *ipsum esse*, and even in the *Questions* he says, 'Of course if you wish to call understanding being I do not mind' (PQ, 48). Given the sense in which the purity of being in God can be called being, *esse* and *intelligere* are the same in God.

As pure being, God is also both the first and the final cause of creatures, both that which gives rise to them, and that which they seek as their goal. This first and final cause is the answer to their 'why' of all creation: *si quaeratur quare deus creavit omnia, mundum scilicet universum, respondendum: ut essent* ['if someone asks why God "created all things", that is, the whole universe, the answer should be "that they might be"'] (LW II, 346/TP, 149). Every creature aspires towards this cause and answer. Being is what everything thirsts and hungers for, what everything desires (LW II, 274/TP, 175), for all things desire and intend their first cause (LW II, 279/TP, 177). Every creature seeks to sustain and fulfill its being, and is unrestful and in motion until it does so. Being is therefore the principle of motion and becoming with respect to creatures,

the prime mover as the cause and end of all striving. All creatures except man, however, are made according to some idea in God, and they seek likeness to this idea and find rest in achieving that likeness. But man is made according to the the image of the whole substance of God, and is not satisfied until he achieves that substance. He is not satisfied, in that case, until he achieves the one which is infinite being lacking no determination (LW III, 479/TP, 183). Man's hunger for being, which is a hunger for absolute completion and sufficiency, is thus a hunger for infinity (LW II, 272/TP, 174). The intellect and the will, the potentialities of man, move towards the totality of being (LW III, 496/TP, 190), and are in restless motion until they find that totality in the substance of God.

Given that no being (*entium*) has the being (*esse*) for which it longs from itself, every being is in itself bare and in potency towards being (*in se nuda et potentia ad esse*), where this potency is the desire and thirst for being itself (*quae potentia appetitus est et sitis ipsius esse*) (LW II, 274/TP, 175). For *entia*, *esse* is both a need and a gift or loan; *Alle créaturen in dem daz sie sint, da sint sie als ein niht; swenne sie überschinen werdent mit dem lihte, in dem sie ir wesen nement, dá sint sie iht* ['All creatures as such are nothing; but when they are illumined from above with the light from which they receive their being, they are something'] (DW II.1, 369/W I, 225). Beings are wholly receptive towards being. Being is a possibility for them, and one they do not command. Being itself, by contrast, is the superior power that includes all possibilities of being; God's kingdom consists of all possible worlds (DW III, 143/W II, 166). For being, then, nothing is impossible (LW II, 35-6/TP, 51), and everything possible lies within it. This power, the power of infinite being itself, bestows possibilities of being upon beings and enables their realization. And for the being that desires being itself and is satisfied with nothing less, the realization of being which it seeks can be nothing less than the achievement of all that can be, the achievement of infinite being.

This means that the first and final cause of all things, the principle and goal of being, is also the *summum bonum* of all that is. God as being is also the good. The good, in turn, is love (*caritas*), and is the name under which God is taken in love. This name, for Eckhart, articulates the nature of God as both diffusive and unifying (LW IV, 51/TP, 212). God qua love is diffusive in that *dei natura, esse et vita subsistit in se*

communicando et se ipsum se totum dando ['God's nature, existence, and life consist in sharing himself and giving himself totally'] (LW IV, 55/TP, 213). It is the nature of the good to share itself in this way; the good, a name proper to God alone, shares what is its own, shares itself, by giving itself in all of the gifts that creatures receive (DW I, 149/TP, 257). But the good, which is love, is also unifying because what it gives in all of these various gifts is in essence simple and single, and common to all (LW IV, 51/TP, 212).

The unifying nature of the good also consists in its action of drawing all beings towards itself, and therefore towards the unity of God as the one. This is its active power as a final cause, the God for which nature in its innermost self seeks and secretly strives, but which is also in some way already within it (DW III, 172/TP, 313). As the final cause of all creatures, this good is the last end of being, the end in which all being is perfected in the incomprehensible essence of God. According to Eckhart, the principle that orders and directs being toward this end from the beginning comes to rest only here:

'In principio' daz sprichet als vil ze tiutsche als ein angenge alles wesens, als ich sprach in der schuole; ich sprach noch mé: ez ist ein ende alles wesens, wan der erste begin ist durch des lesten endes willen. Já, got der ruowet selbe niht dá, dá er ist der erste begin; er ruowet dá, dá er ist ein ende und ein raste alles wesens, niht daz diz wesen ze nihte werde, mër: ez wirt dá von volbráht in sinem lesten ende nâch siner hæsten volkomenheit. Waz ist daz leste ende? Es ist diu verborgen vinsternisse der ewigen gottheit und ist unbekant und wart nie bekant und enwirt niemer bekant. Got blíbet dá in im selber unbekant, und daz lieht des ewigen vaters hát dá ewicliche ingeschinen, und diu vinsternisse enbegrifet des liehtes niht.

[*In principio* means in German as much as a beginning of all being, as I said in the school. I said more: It is an end of all being, for the first beginning is for the sake of the last end. Yes, God never takes rest where he is the first beginning; he takes rest there where he is an end and a repose of all being, not that this being should perish, but rather it is there perfected in its last end according to its highest perfection. What is the last end? It is the hidden darkness of the eternal divinity, and it is unknown, and it was never known, and it will never be known. God remains there within himself, unknown, and the light of the eternal Father has eternally shone in there, and the darkness does not comprehend the light (Jn. 1:5).
(DW I, 389/ES, 196)

Perfection, then, rests in the essence of God, an essence ultimately beyond any concept and so unknowable, but articulated and thereby mediated to the understanding as being itself, the one, and the good. Only on the basis of this conception of perfection is the notion of evil as privation, as not being and nothing, comprehensible. For Eckhart, *peccata vero et universaliter mala non sunt entia* ['sin and evil in general are not beings']

(LW III, 43-4/ES, 140), but this does not mean that there is in no sense evil in the world or that evil is merely virtual. It means, rather, that evil is the negation of being as perfection, and is therefore a lack or absence, a defect, of being: *Mala enim non sunt nec sunt facta, quia non effecta sive effectus, sed defectus alicuius esse* ['evil things are not and are not made because they are not produced as effects, but as defects of some being'] (LW III, 44/ES, 140). Evil is a negation of the perfection of being to which creatures are ordered, and which is possible for them. It is a defect of the ideas that constitute the perfection of finite essences. God does not have power over evil, because God, as *ipsum esse*, has power only over the things that are, and evil things *sint nihil et non entia, sed sint privatio omnis entis* ['are nothing and not being . . . are privations of all being'] (LW II, 38/TP, 53). To have power over evil is to have power over nothing. God is the perfection of being that has power over everything, not over nothing.

If perfection rests in the essence of God as being itself, the one, and the good, furthermore, it must be the negation of negation, and all that is not the negation of negation, all that is 'outside' the one and pure being, must always be imperfect. The negativity and limitation characterizing particular entities, the finitude of this and that excluding this and that, as well as the finitude of not being identical with the perfect idea in God, necessarily places all actual distinct beings within the realm of imperfection, distant from the realm of perfection as infinite being lacking nothing, and as the one excluding nothing. Consequently, all the things that are numbered among the things that are, 'fall' from the one into the 'guilt' of the all (LW II, 64/TP 63). God has power over the things that are insofar as *esse ipsum* is the source, origin and cause of all *entia*, their ground, but being is this ground only to the extent that beings have being as an effect of being as an efficient and final cause, and not insofar as their conception includes the defects of imperfection, of not being. God is *der boden, der reif aller creaturen* ['the ground and the encirclement of all creatures'] (DW I, 225/W I, 193), but only with respect to what they are - that is, with respect to the being (perfection) which is effected in them - and not with respect to what they are not, not with respect to the not being that defines them as defects or 'incompletions' of being.

This notion of God as ground must be differentiated from the notion of the ground of God, where the latter is the divine essence in itself. As

the ground of all that is, the ground, one might say, of the nature *quae creatur et creat* and *quae creatur et non creat*, God is understood under the property of originating and making. God as ground is then the cause of creatures as effects, the nature *quae creat et non creatur*. In the *verborgenen stilheit* ['hidden stillness'] of the divine essence, however, God is *sunder werk* ['without effects'] (DW III, 381-2/TP 333), and this is the ground of God beyond God as ground, the nature *quae nec creat nec creatur*.⁵

For Eckhart, the ground of God as opposed to God as ground is the Godhead as opposed to God. God is active and productive; the Godhead is not. *Got unde gotheit hât underscheit an wûrken und an niht-wûrken* ['God and Godhead are distinguished by working and not-working'] (Pf, 181/W II, 82). The God that works, the God of creation, is only when creatures are as effects, so it can be said that God comes to be or 'becomes' (*wirt*) only when creatures 'speak' of their creator. But creatures say 'God' only when the creature that knows God in creatures comes to be. Thus, it can also be said that *dô ich flôz, dô sprâchen al créatûren got* ['when I flowed forth, all creatures said "God"']. Of the Godhead, however, nothing speaks, since *allez daz, daz in der gotheit ist, daz ist ein, unde dâ von ist niht ze sprechene* ['everything that is in the Godhead is one, and of that there is nothing to be said']. In the Godhead, there are neither creatures as effects nor God as cause, for *there* there is no activity of production and no distinction between producer and produced. Because 'God' is only in this activity and therefore in relation to creatures, there God *unbecomes* (*entwirt*) (Pf, 181/W II, 81-2). This does not mean that in the ground of God there is 'nothing' in any sense, but that there is in that ground nothing but the Godhead, the hidden essence of God, and that all that is there is simple and indistinct, identical with the simplicity and indistinction of the being of God. *Hie sind alle graß bletlein und holtz und stein und alle ding ein* ['Here all blades of grass, wood, stones and all things are one'] (DW II.ii, 470/W II, 251). Here, all things are the one, and nothing else.

The distinction between God and Godhead is central to many of Eckhart's more 'pantheistic' passages, especially those which appear to collapse the distinction between the being of God and the being of human being. The following passage from Sermon 52 in the Kohlhammer edition is one of the most well-known of these:

Wan in dem selben wesene gotes, dâ got ist obe wesene und ob underscheide, dâ was ich selbe, dâ wolte ich mich selben und bekante mich selber ze machene disen menschen. Her

umbe sô bin ich mîn selbes sache nâch minem wesene, dâz ewic ist, und niht nâch minem gewerdene, daz zîtlich ist. . In mîner geburt, dâ wurden alliu dinc geborn, und ich was sache mîn selbes und aller dinge; und hâte ich gewolt, ich enwære niht, noch alliu dinc enwären niht; und enwære ich niht, so enwære ,got' niht. Daz got ,got' ist, des bin ich ein sache; enwære ich niht, so enwære got niht ,got'.

[For in the same being of God where God is above being and above distinction, there I myself was, there I willed myself and committed myself to create this man. Therefore I am the cause of myself in the order of my being, which is eternal, and not in the order of my becoming, which is temporal . . . In my birth all things were born and I was the cause of myself and of all things; and if I would have wished it, I would not be nor would all other things be. And if I did not exist, 'God' would also not exist. That God is 'God,' of that I am a cause; if I did not exist, God too would not be 'God.'](DW II.11, 503-4/ES, 202-3)

The idea that God is not God before the coming to be of the 'I' as distinct from God has already been discussed, but here Eckhart makes the more radical claim that this 'I' is the cause of God, as well as of itself and all other things. If the coming to be of the distinct 'I' is a condition for the possibility of 'God' as distinct from it, then, in one sense, the 'I' is obviously the 'cause' of God. But in the above passage, Eckhart seems to be asserting that the I is the cause of God in a more profound sense, in that it is the cause of its own coming to be, with which God and all things also come to be. It is then a self-caused cause, but this determination belongs, traditionally, only to God.

One must distinguish, however, between the I that comes to be and which, in coming to be, differentiates itself from God, and the I in the indistinct ground of God. In that ground, the I is identical with the essence of God. Thus, all that God chooses, wills and is capable of here is also what the I chooses, wills and is capable of. It is not quite correct to say 'also' in this context, in fact, for the I in this indistinct ground is nothing other than God, not God qua 'God', that is, from which the I must always be distinct, but God qua Godhead, in which the distinction between I and God is so wholly dissolved that there is here, in truth, no I and no God.

It is this I in the indistinct ground of God, then, the I qua Godhead, which is a self-caused cause that freely chooses to create all that is, including the distinct self that comes to be in the order of becoming. Only in this ground is the I absolutely free, for only in this ground is it determined by no cause outside of itself. The absolute freedom of God rests in this self-determination, in the fact that the divine being, and only it, has no ground other than itself. It should be emphasized that this determination of God's activity as absolutely free in no way suggests

that it is arbitrary. Rather, the activity of God is wholly free in that it is determined only by the nature of God. The gifts creatures receive from this activity, the gifts of their being in the sense of both essence and existence, both what they are and that they are, proceed only from the nature of God, which is to say that they are freely given by God.

Eckhart's notion that God has no 'why' (*quare, war umbe*) is associated with this notion of God as an absolutely free cause, a ground of being having no ground external to it. The principle which is the end and beginning of all things does not have a 'why'; it is a 'why', of everything and for everything: *Non habet quare, sed ipsum est quare omnium et omnibus* (LW III, 41/ES, 139). The reason, principle or goal of all things cannot itself have a reason. God, the principle of the creature, is then a principle without principle, the only being not from another and having nothing from another (LW III, 496/TP, 189). Only this kind of being *non habet quare . . . sed propter se ipsum, sui gratia, liberum* ['has no "wherefore", but exists for itself as spontaneous and free'] (LW IV, 58/TP, 214).

Such being is actually not, to speak appropriately, a 'kind' of being, since the being that comprehends and fulfills all kinds of being cannot be defined as one kind of being among others, having one way of being among others. The God that is the last end of being and is infinite and measureless being is thus also without mode or manner (*modus*), without a 'way' (*wise*). And the human soul, since it is created according to and for this infinite being and highest good, can never rest in any mode (*wise*), but hastens past all modes towards its end (DW III, 64/W II, 77), towards the *wise ane wise* ['modeless mode'] (DW III, 124/W II, 95) which it seeks.

The modelessness and simplicity of the being of God are also definitive for the temporality of God, and necessarily so. The temporality of God is eternity, and Eckhart understands eternity as a 'now' (*nunc, nū*), in which *omne tempus et eius differentia includitur aequaliter . . . non minus praeteritum et futurum quam praesens* ['the whole of time and its differences are found in equal fashion . . . the past and future no less than the present'] (LW II, 145/TP, 96). For Eckhart, the 'now' of eternity includes all parts and modes of time. It contains (*begriffet*) within itself all time (DW I, 143/TP, 256), comprehended in a simple unity. This is the 'fullness of time' where all time is gathered up (DW II.1, 230/W I, 216). However, just as being itself, which includes all being, is also above being and is not a being (is 'beingless being', not this and not

that), so 'all time' is above time and is timeless. And just as the fulness of being itself is the incomprehensible source of all being, so the fulness of time in the now of eternity is the timeless source of time.

If God is modeless and all-comprehending being, *ipsum esse*, then the temporality of God has to be as Eckhart describes it. What comprehends all being in a simple unity must also comprehend all time in a simple unity, for it then comprehends all that is, was, or will be. In eternity, above time, all things are therefore present (DW I, 78/W I, 109); here, all things are as *ipsum esse*. Because there where all things are, nothing can come to be or pass away, there can be no change or motion in the now of eternity, and so no time as the measure of motion. And yet this now is not *something else besides* time, any more than being itself is something else besides beings. In the same way that beings are not outside of being or other than being, time is not outside of the now or other than the now. But just as being itself is beyond any being precisely because it is the simple unity comprehending all beings and giving rise to them, so the now is beyond any kind of time in virtue of being the simple and modeless unity of time, a unity which is also the source and origin of all the parts and modes of time.

Since, in the now of eternity, all time is gathered up together, there is, in this condition, or lack of condition, no before and after, no past and future. Furthermore, given that this gathered unity of time, the now of eternity, is the temporality of God, it follows that all that God ever has done or will do is always being done at once here (DW II.1, 262/TP, 298). All the works of time are contained in this eternity, and so every act of God, regardless of the 'when' of its occurrence, rests there in the single activity of pure being.

Paradoxically, this simple now of eternity, the temporality proper to the being of God, is also the 'then' of creation, the moment in which both God and world come to be what they are in distinction from one another. Because God is not 'God' without creatures, without the beings in which the divine being is spoken, Eckhart can say:

Non enim imaginandum est falso, quasi deus steterit expectans nunc aliquod temporis futurum in quo crearet mundum. Simul enim et semel quo deus fuit, quo filium sibi coaeternum per omnia coaequalem deum genuit, etiam mundum creavit.

[It is false to picture God as if he were waiting around for some future moment in which to create the world. In the one and the same time in which he was God and in which he begot his coeternal Son as God equal to himself in all things, he also created the world.]

(LW I, 190/ES, 85)

God is only when God speaks, where the speaking of God is also the acting and making, the creating, of God. The 'when' of this creating speaking is the same *primum nunc simplex aeternitatis* (LW I, 190/ES, 84), in which all that comes to pass in time is conceived and held together in one.

All that unfolds in the course of time, then, every finite act and deed from the beginning to the end of time, is comprehended and conceived in this moment. It is 'seen' by God *in sinem ersten ewigen anblicke - ob wir einen ersten anblick da nemen solten* ['in his first everlasting glance - if we can think of his first glancing at anything'] (DW V, 415/ES, 289). Every occurrence is thus 'foreseen' by God in the 'first' simple moment of eternity in which the world comes to be, and so *got wuerset nihtes niht von niewem, wan ez ist allez ein vorgewuerset dinc* ['God does not undertake anything whatever afresh, because everything is something already accomplished'] (DW V, 416/ES, 289). So there is nothing new *here* under the sun, and yet *there*, in the moment of eternity, where being is and coming-to-be is, where all things are always in God as God, everything is ever new. Since nothing there is subject to time, *swaz da ist, daz enmachtet kein zit alt* ['time can age nothing there'] (DW II.1, 349-50/W I, 168).

This dialectic of being and becoming parallels Eckhart's dialectic of divine revelation and hiddenness, expression and non-expression. The God that is eternally at rest beyond all time (God qua Godhead) must also remain eternally unexpressed and inexpressible, but the God that comes to be in the moment wherein all time comes to be (God qua 'God'), is expressed in that moment, in all the acts and works that occur in time. God, therefore, is both *gesprochen und ist ungesprochen* ['spoken and unspoken'] (DW II.11, 529/ES, 204). In the divine nature, *Got ist ein wort, ein ungesprochen wort* ['God is a word, a word unspoken'] (DW II.11, 529/ES, 203), but in the works and effects of creation, uttered through the mediation of the Son as *logos*, *Got ist ein wort, daz sich selben spricht* ['God is a Word that speaks itself'] (DW II.11, 529/ES, 204). In the speaking of this Word, God utters all creatures, and yet utters only the divine nature. It is this nature which, in the utterance, communicates, bespeaks, itself to all things and in all things. It utters itself totally in and through the Word that brings all things into being. God speaks to all things and speaks all things (*loquitur . . . omnibus et omnia*) (LW I, 621/ES, 115) in the command that orders the being of all things. The 'response' of creatures to this command, their correspondence to it, is *fieri sive creari aut produci a deo* ['to become, to be created and to be

produced by God'), and this is the same as *audire praecipentem et oboeidire, item respondere, loqui et colloqui dicenti* ['to hear him commanding and to obey, as well as to answer, speak to and converse with him when he speaks'] (LW I, 631/ES, 120). Within the conversation of creatures with God, therefore, the response of creatures to the speaking of God consists in their hearing and obeying the Word that commands their being and thereby becoming what they are.

Becoming what it is, a creature 'speaks' with its essence in God. This is an immediate speech and conversation between superior and inferior, between the principle that bestows and disposes the being of a creature, and the creature whose being is granted and ordered. It is, for Eckhart, the truest form of speech, of which exterior discourse is but an imperfect trace, for the correspondence of thing and essence in the utterance of the 'exterior' word is only an echo of the immediate colloquium perpetually taking place in the innermost depths of every thing that is (LW I, 617/ES, 114).

Because *alle créaturen sint ein sprechen gotes* ['all created things are God's speech'] (DW II.11, 535/ES, 205), *ein ieglichiu créature ist vol gotes und ist ein buoch* ['every creature is full of God and is a book'] (DW I, 156/TP, 259). As utterances of the divine being, creatures must speak that being. They speak it through their essence and their existence, their being as the utterance of being itself. They speak it through their unity reflecting the one as the unifying principle of their being, and through their activity manifesting the good as the beginning and end of all their being and becoming. *Got ist in allen créaturen glíche 'náhe' . . . got hát sín netze úzgebietet, sine stricke úf alle créaturen, daz man in einer ieglichen vinden mag* ['God is equally near in all creatures . . . God has set his nets and lines out over all creatures, so that we may find him in any of them'] (DW III, 144/W II, 166).

However, with respect to the divine substance in its own truth, the essential nature of God, no creature is a sufficient expression. In the other moment of the dialectic, therefore, all creatures strive to express God, but no creature can truly do so:

Alle créaturen wellent got sprechen in allen irn werken; sie sprechent alle, so si náhest múgen, sie enmúgen in doch niht gesprechen. Sie wellen oder enwellen, ez si in liep oder leit: sie wellent alle got sprechen, und er blíbet doch ungesprochen.

[All creatures want to utter God in all their works; they all come as close as they can in uttering him, and yet they cannot utter him. Whether they wish it or not, whether they like it or not, they all want to utter God,

and yet he remains unuttered.] (DW II.11, 531/ES, 204)

The first cause of all things, while visible in all things, is yet beyond them. It is therefore beyond words, since all language is in some way tied to things. Whether a person speaks of what is above things, or through a likeness to things or in terms of the operations of things, the speech is still rooted in things and cannot wholly surpass them. But these things, the things of the world, are not the cause of the world and are inadequate to declare that cause (DW I, 329/W I, 236-7).

Thus, because no creature can utter the essence of God, because that essence, the Godhead rather than 'God', is wholly remote from creatures, God is truly God where all creatures come to an end: *Dâ diu créature endet, dâ beginnet got ze sinne* ['Where the creature stops, there God begins to be'] (DW I, 92/ES, 184). God is first 'God' when creatures come to be, but God is truly what God is where creatures cease to be.

Ultimately, the 'what' that God truly is, unspoken and unspeakable by creature or word, is nameless, not good, not wise, and not being (LW III, 441-2/ES, 206-7), having nothing in common with anything, sharing no genus or species, no category or kind, with anything, so that no comparison or likeness can be drawn between it and anything else (LW II, 44/TP, 55). It is impossible, therefore, to speak truly of God, to utter the truth of God in words. The only appropriate response to this truth, the response that corresponds to the nature of God, is silence, for God is *mê ein swigen dan ein sprechen* ['more silence than speech'] (DW II.1, 189/W I, 274-5). At the most radical point of this negative moment in Eckhart's dialectical way, it is said that even 'God' does not express this truth, and whoever seeks it should relinquish 'God':

Her umbe sô biten wir got, daz wir gotes ledic werden und
daz wir nemen die wârheit und gebrûchen der êwiclîche, dâ
die obersten engel und diu vliege und diu sêle glîch sint
. . .

[So therefore let us pray to God that we may be free of
'God,' and that we may apprehend and rejoice in that
everlasting truth in which the highest angel and the fly
and the soul are equal . . .] (DW II.11, 493-4/ES, 200)

The absolute unity of the Godhead is not God; it is not anything at all.

It is therefore nothing. *Götlich wesen enist niht glîch, in im enist noch bilde noch forme* ['The divine being is equal to nothing, and in it there is neither image nor form'] (DW I, 107/ES, 187). God is *ein vber swebende wesen vnd ein vber wesende nitheit* ['a being transcending being and a transcending nothingness'] (DW III, 442/ES, 207). But God is also something, for *Got ist ein niht, und got ist ein iht* ['God is a nothing and

God is a something']. God is nothing only in the sense that God is a *neizwaz* ['an I-know-not-what'] beyond every 'something' that may be conceived (DW III, 23/TP, 323). The nothingness of God here must be differentiated from the nothingness of creatures. The nothingness of creatures characterises the condition of their being as limited by not being, in the twofold sense of exclusion and deficiency, and as wholly immanent within and contingent upon being itself (God). Creatures are nothing, first, because their finite being excludes this and that predicate; second, because their being is always deficient, never fully achieving the perfection of essence; third, because that being is not outside of being and so, considered in itself apart from being, is nothing; and fourth, because the being of creatures is not their own, but is wholly supported by God as being itself, without whose support it would slip into nothingness. The divine being is nothing, on the other hand, because it is neither this nor that. It is no thing. Being no thing and being wholly remote from any thing, nothing can be predicated of it, and so it is utterly dark to the understanding.

Consequently, in order to conceive God appropriately, the mind must become nothing. It is within this nothing, Eckhart says in one of his most striking passages, that God is born:

Es dühte einen menschen als in einem troume - ez was ein wachender troum -, wie ez swanger würde von nihte als ein vrouwe mit einem kind, und in dem nihte wart got geborn; dér was diu vruht des nihtes. Got wart geborn in dem nihte. Dâ von spricht er: 'er stuont ûf von der erden, und mit offenen ougen sach er niht'. Er sach got, dâ alle créatûren niht ensint. Er sach alle créatûren als ein niht, wan er hât aller créatûren wesen in im. Er ist ein wesen, daz alliu wesen in im hât.

[It seemed to a man as though in a dream - it was a waking dream - that he became pregnant with nothing as a woman does with a child, and in this nothing God was born; he was the fruit of the nothing. God was born in the nothing. Hence he says: 'He rose from the ground and with eyes open saw nothing.' He saw God, where all creatures are nothing. He saw all creatures as nothing because he (God) has the being of all creatures in himself. He is a being that has all beings in itself.]
(DW III, 224-5/TP, 323)

God is nothing because God excludes nothing by excluding the differentiating 'not' that delimits the being of finite *entia*. The divine being, because it excludes this not, is no thing, and is seen only when no thing is seen. But, in that case, the seeing of no thing is the seeing of every thing as *ipsum esse*, and this *ipsum esse* is also, in a way, something.

Insofar as the exclusion of the 'not' that defines distinct *entia* yields nothing, the divine being is equal to nothing, and the human self

must be formed into nothing, and nothing must be formed into itself, if it is to genuinely conceive that being, 'to be placed into' (*gestast in*) it (DW III, 322/TP, 329). However, insofar as the negativity of creatures in the four senses indicated above is understood as nothing, *deus est oppositio ad nihil mediatione entia* ['God is the opposite of nothing by means of the mediation of being'] (LW IV, 52/TP, 213), and the self must separate itself from not and nothing to reach God (DW II.1, 382/TP, 305). The 'transcending nothingness' and the *negatio negationis* are one and the same.

So if the nothingness of God, as the opposite of the nothingness that pertains to *entia*, places God beyond any name (*super omne nomen*), this is not because God is unnameable (*innominabile*) in the sense that the divine being contains none of the perfections which are bestowed upon beings and which beings therefore manifest but in an imperfect way as a result of their forms of nothingness. It is, rather, because God is omninameable (*omninominabile*) in the sense that the divine being precontains (*praehabet*) every possible perfection of every possible being in a more excellent way (*excellentius*), a way that excludes all the forms of nothingness in which the being of finite beings is involved (LW II, 41/TP, 53-4). What is seen in seeing the nothing of God, then, is the perfection of everything, and it is seen there where everything is always already accomplished in perfection, in the Godhead. The one who sees this is *ein wär-sehender, ein ,wärer Isráël', daz ist, ,ein sehender man Got', wan im enist niht verborgen in der gotheit* ['a "true seer", a "true Israel", that is, a God-seeing man, for nothing in the Godhead is hidden from him'] (DW III, 322-3/TP, 329). Keeping in mind the temporality of the Godhead, what is seen here must also include all that comes to pass in time, all that has occurred, is occurring and will occur, not as this and that event, though, but enfolded into the unity of all time in the now of eternity.

On the one hand, then, God is present in all creatures and all creatures are present in God. On the other hand, God is nothing and no thing has anything of God in it. With respect to knowledge, this means that on the one hand God dwells in remoteness from created things and the vision of God requires a corresponding darkness to those things, while on the other hand God is visible in all things for those who have eyes to see. But for those who truly have eyes to see, these two moments are reconciled, as the genuine vision of God consists in finding all things in God and God in all things. To see in this way is truly to see as God sees, since the knowledge of God as absolute unity is a knowledge that

finds itself in all things and all things in itself.

The seers in possession of this Godlike vision, Eckhart says, are those people who have God 'essentially present' to them:

Der got alsô in wesenne hât, der nimet got götlichen, und dem liuhtet er in allen dingen; wan alliu dinc smeckent im götlichen, und got erbildet sich im ûz allen dingen. In im blicket got alle zit, in im ist ein abgescheiden abekêren und ein inbilden sines geminneten gegenwertigen gotes.

[The man who has God essentially present to him grasps God divinely, and to him God shines in all things; for everything tastes to him of God, and God forms himself for the man out of all things. God always shines out in him, in him there is a detachment and a turning away, and a forming of his God whom he loves and who is present to him.] (DW V, 205-6/ES, 253)

For the person to whom God is essentially present, God is imaged in all things, and so such a person, dwelling in the midst of creatures, yet dwells only with God. Eckhart does say here, though, that the forming of God out of all things, which must mean in some sense the transformation of all things into God, involves 'a detachment and turning away'. If, however, a person in this condition is still with things, still in the midst of them and dealing with them and so still active in the world, such detachment and turning away cannot mean physical withdrawal from the things of the world, but must mean a different way of being with them, a different kind of being towards them.

This different way of being with things, which is at the same time a constant being in the presence of God, forms a central theme in many of Eckhart's vernacular works, and a number of his most important Middle High German terms, terms like *abegescheidenheit*, *gelâzenheit*, *âne warumbe*, *âne wise*, *âne mittel* and *âne eigenschaft*, are connected with it. Common to all of these terms is the suggestion of a transformation of will involving some form of relinquishment and renunciation. The last of these terms, *âne eigenschaft*, is the opposite of *mit eigenschaft*, where *mit eigenschaft* expresses the way people ordinarily are. Frank Tobin, in his article, 'Eckhart's Mystical Use of Language: The Contexts of *eigenschaft*', gives three definitions for this word as it appears in Eckhart's writings: '1/possession or possessiveness; 2/bondage or servility; 3/*proprietas* or *qualitas*, namely a characteristic inherent in a substance'.⁶ In the notion of being *mit eigenschaft*, these three meanings of *eigenschaft* express three facets of this way of being. First, being *mit eigenschaft* is an essentially concupiscent mode of existence, encountering things in the world from out of a form of desire that seeks to master its object in ownership. It is thus possessive and self-seeking in a straightforward

sense. Second, such a mode of existence is, ironically, a form of bondage. Through it, the human soul, attempting to be master, enslaves itself, for it binds itself to the things it seeks to possess and hold, and places itself in thrall to those things. It also binds itself to a certain vision of those things, one which prevents the vision of God. Third, this form of encounter grasps that which it encounters with 'property' in the sense of *proprietas*, i.e. through predicates and categories. In so doing, it obstructs the apprehension of that to which no property is proper, the apprehension of pure truth and being itself.

The term *eigenschaft* usually carries all of these connotations in Eckhart's writings, with varying degrees of emphasis. As Tobin illustrates, Sermon 1 in the Kohlhammer edition of Eckhart's works, *Intravit Jesus in templum et coepit eiecere vendentes et ementes*, provides a good example of this. In this sermon, Eckhart first likens the *koufliute* ['businessmen'] buying and selling in the temple to those people who do good works *daz in unser herre etwaz dar umbe gebe* ['so that our Lord might give them something in return'] (DW I, 7/TP, 240). Such people *wellent alsô koufen mit unserm herren* ['want to make a business deal with our Lord'] (DW I, 7/TP 240), as they perform their actions only for the sake of a self-concerned end or purpose. Eckhart adds that, *alle die wile der mensche ihter iht suochet in allen sînen werken von allem dem, daz got gegeben mac oder geben wil, sô ist er disen koufliuten glich* ['as long as a person in any of his works seeks anything at all of that which God can or shall give, he is like these businessmen'] (DW I, 9/TP, 240), and he urges his listeners to free their souls from all such *koufmanschaft* ['mercantilism'].

When he then uses the phrase *mit eigenschaft*, it carries, in the context of these immediately preceding passages, its usual Middle High German sense of 'ownership', as well as the more specialized sense of 'property' or 'quality' that corresponds to the term *proprietas* in Eckhart's Latin works:

Ich hân ouch me gesprochen, daz unser herre sprach zu den liuten, die dâ tûben veile hâten: 'tuot diz enwec, tuot diz hin!' Die liute entreip er niht Oz noch enstrâfte sie niht sêre; sunder er sprach gar gûetliche: 'tuot diz enwec!' als ob er sprechen wolte: diz enist niht boese, und doch bringet ez hindernisse in der lûtern wârheit. Dise liute daz sint alle guote liute, die iriu werke tuont lûterliche durch got und ensuochent des irn nicht dar an und tuont sie doch mit eigenschaft, mit zît und mit zal, mit vor und mit nâch.

[I have already mentioned that our Lord said to the people who were selling doves: 'Put that away, get rid of that!' These people he did not drive out or punish very much. Instead he spoke very kindly: 'Put that away!' as though he wanted to say: This is not really bad, but it does cause obstacles for pure truth. These people are all good

people who perform their works purely for God's sake and seek nothing of their own in them, and yet they still do them with possessiveness, in time and in number, with a before and after.] (DW I, 10-11/TP, 241)

Mit eigenschaft refers in this case to the appropriation, the 'own-ing', of any mode of existence that still apprehends *mit zit und mit zal* ['in time and number'], and so not in accordance with the apprehension of God, not *sub specie aeternitatis*. Clearly, anyone who acts through calculation and for the sake of a preconceived end, however elevated that end may be, is still involved in this and that, in before and after, in multiplicity and time. Such involvement obstructs the apprehension of 'pure truth', which, being one and simple, is free from all divisions and categories, of space as well as of time. To free the soul of all *eigenschaft*, therefore, is to cast out from it any thought or representation that involves it in time and number, where this requires freeing it from all thought of return or reward as well as from any manner of calculation.

Indeed, being *âne eigenschaft*, being without *eigenschaft* in the various senses of the word, means being without representations, without images and conceptions (*bilde*). And yet Eckhart says:

Waere ich alsô vernûftic, daz alliu bilde vernûfticliche in mir stûenden, diu alle ie enpfiegen und diu in gote selber sint, waere ich der *âne eigenschaft*, daz ich enkeinez mit *eigenschaft* haete begriffen in tuonne noch in lâzenne, mit vor noch mit nâch, mâr: daz ich in disem gegenwertigen nû vri und ledic stûende nâch dem liebsten willen gotes und den ze tuonne *âne* underlâz, in der wârheit sô waere ich juncvrouwe *âne* hindernisse aller bilde als gewaerliche, als ich was, dô ich niht enwas.

[If I were so rational that there were present in my reason all the images that all men had ever received, and those that are present in God himself, and if I could be without possessiveness in their regard, so that I had not seized possessively upon any one of them, not in what I did or what I left undone, not looking to past or future, but I stood in this present moment free and empty according to God's dearest will, performing it without ceasing, then truly I should be a virgin, as truly unimpeded by any images as when I was not.]

(DW I, 26/ES, 177)

This passage from Sermon 2 clarifies the imageless nature of being *âne eigenschaft* by suggesting that being *mit eigenschaft* is rooted more primordially in will than in understanding. Images form an obstruction in the way of pure truth only when they are grasped, taken hold of and understood (*begriffen*), *mit eigenschaft*, with the own-ness of vision in which the self looks to itself with concern for itself. In so doing, it looks to itself as it is in time, and it then looks to the this and that with which it is involved in time. Being *âne eigenschaft* means not being concerned with, not willing and not conceiving, the self in this way, and consequently not willing and not conceiving this and that from such

concern. It means casting off all *care* (*sorge*) (DW II.11, 163/W I, 207-8) so as to be *mit der sorge, niht in der sorge* ['near care but not *in* care'], which also means being *bi den dingen, niht in den dingen* ['near things, not *in* things'] (DW III, 488/TP, 341-2). In achieving such a state of detachment, a state of still being in the world but *ane eigenschaft*, a person still acts in time, is still in a time and at a place, and yet has transcended the way these categories ordinarily bind the soul. The human self is then unattached and pure, a *juncfrouwe*. Being this way, it is conformed to the divinity it seeks, standing *vri und ledic* in the *nü* of eternity.

Returning to Sermon 1, *eigenschaft* has here, too, this sense of a bondage from which the soul must free itself in order to to be conformed to its highest end. In its first appearance in the sermon, *eigenschaft* gains this sense partly through its association with *koufmanschaft*, of which Eckhart has said the soul must be free, and partly through the immediately following sentence, in which Eckhart claims that those who work *mit eigenschaft, sint . . . gehindert der aller besten wärheit, daz sie solten vri und ledic sîn, als unser herre Jesus Kristus vri und ledic ist* ['are kept from the best truth, that they should be free and empty as our Lord Jesus Christ is free and empty'] (DW I, 11/TP, 241). Eckhart does not say here that people who work *mit eigenschaft* are kept from any kind of truth, but from the *best* truth; they are kept from being in the way Christ is, both in the world and out of it, both active and contemplative. They are kept from the perfection of that way of being with things and in the presence of things which is simultaneously a way of being with and in the presence of God.

The mode of existence that keeps them from this perfect reconciliation of action and contemplation actually involves a dual form of bondage, a bondage of both *noema* and *noesis*. On one side, what is encountered is bound, circumscribed by the understanding that arises from being *mit eigenschaft*. On the other side, the understanding itself is bound, limited by and to this way of being. What is understood is then limited to being that which can be seen in the vision determined by possessiveness and property, and that vision is itself, of course, limited to seeing what can be seen by it. The understanding of this vision, as arising from being *mit eigenschaft*, is rooted in a self-willing where the self that wills makes what it sees its own by translating it after the possessive desire of its nature. It then twists the forms of things in

accord with itself as possessive. But it is also held in thrall to itself as a possessive willing, and is then in bondage to the objects of that willing, although this is at root still a bondage to itself.⁷ This dual bondage prevents accordance of will and understanding with God.

It therefore becomes apparent that the three senses of *eigenschaft*, corresponding to three features of the state in which the soul ordinarily encounters reality, also describe three features of the reality encountered. *Eigenschaft* as ownership and bondage describes both the way the soul encounters reality and the way reality encounters, or reveals itself to, the soul. Both are owning and owned, both master and slave. The soul is master in that its approach is appropriating, but it is a slave in that this approach places it in bondage to the objects of its appropriating will. The object, then, the reality encountered, is both the master of its subject, and itself subjected by it.

Freedom from this form of bondage means being *âne eigenschaft*. In the simple sense of *eigenschaft* as ownership, this means that *wir suln alliu dinc haben, als ob sie uns gelihen sîn und niht gegeben, âne alle eigenschaft, ez sî lîp oder sêle, sinne krefte, ûzerlich guot oder êre, vriunde, mâge, hûs, hof, alliu dinc* ['we ought to have everything as if it were loaned to us and not given, without any possessiveness, whether it be our bodies or our souls, our minds, powers, worldly goods or honors, friends, kinsmen, houses, lands, all things'] (DW V, 296/ES, 281). A person who *enhât niht eigenschaft* ['has no possessiveness'] at this level *niht enbegert noch enwil haben* ['covets nothing and wants to have nothing'] (DW V, 299/ES, 282). Such a person has achieved *inwendigiu armuot* ['inward poverty'] (DW II.ii, 486/ES, 199). The renunciation of possessions, *ûzwendigiu armuot* ['external poverty'], is but the outward manifestation or sign of this inner renunciation that has already occurred. Spiritual poverty actually consists in a letting go of the desire for ownership, a letting go and forsaking of possessive desire altogether.

Such letting go and forsaking, *gelâzenheit*, is also a letting be, for it lets be whatever comes to be. This does not mean being indifferent to all events, but being *âne eigenschaft* towards them. A person who is in this way sees and works as God does, in seeing only the good and working only for the good, and thus seeking the perfection of being in an undifferentiated way. The self that sees and works in this way is also *âne mittel*, 'without means'. It is without possessiveness or property, without a specific goal in reference to which anything might be

constituted as a means, and without the properties and qualities by means of which, in the sense of 'through the medium of which', it generally sees. *Gelâzen* in this way, *âne eigenschaft* and *âne mittel*, a person sees without mediation, without mode, manner or medium, and this vision corresponds to the vision of being itself, the one and the good, the vision of God.

A person who is in this way is also *âne war umbe* ['without a why'], for this person exists - thinks and acts - for the sake of nothing. According to Eckhart, only such a person acts in the right way and justly. Acting without a why, without forming any reason or seeking any end, is will-less action, and such action is Godlike, but it is not performed by representing God as an end. In order for actions to be truly right and just, Eckhart says, they must have no end, not even God (DW II, 253-5/TP, 296).

Thus, the truly just man acts in a Godlike fashion by acting without any why or end at all. Because the divine being, as the why of all things, has no why itself, it acts from itself and for itself as its own end. To act as it acts, to will as it wills and thus come into accord with 'the will of God', is to will it as it wills itself, but this means to will the 'itself' which is the perfect end of being. That end is neither this nor that, neither God nor anything else. To work as this end works is to work from within in such a way that one works for the sake of nothing that can be thought, no end that can be formed and represented. *Die gerechten enhânt zemâle keinen willen* ['The just have no will at all'] (DW I, 102/ES, 186), and this does mean that they will as God wills, but in order to truly will as God wills, a person has to possess a poverty that is free both of self and of 'God': *daz sî ein arm mensche, der niht enwil ervûllen den willen gotes, mër; daz er alsô lebe, daz er also ledic sî beidiu sines eigenen willen und des willen gotes, als er was, dô er niht enwas* ['a man is poor who does not want to fulfill God's will, but who lives so that he may be free both of his own will and of God's will, as he was when he was not'] (DW II.ii, 499/ES, 201). *Der gerechte mensche endienet weder gote noch den créatûren, wan er ist vri* ['The just man serves neither God nor creatures, for he is free'] (DW II.1, 62/W I, 143). Truly right action is, like the action of God, *âne war umbe* and worked from within. Its moving force, its motive, is both groundless and wholly interior.

To the extent that this motive is identified with the will of God, the will of God has to act as an interior rather than an ulterior motive. It is enabled to act in this way when all self-will is relinquished into

God's will (DW V, 282-3/ES 277). Acting in accordance with God's will cannot, in this instance, mean 'figuring out' what God wants and then doing it. Such a process would involve calculation. It would require that a person look to a before and an after, an end and a means. It would thus be neither *âne eigenschaft* nor *âne mittel* nor *âne warumbe*. In order that one 'mean' (*meinen*) *got lüterlichen und aleine*, by contrast, in order for the intention to be purely and only for God (DW V, 202/ES, 252), that will must be wholly *in den willen gotes gebildet und geformieret* ['formed and shaped into God's will'] (DW V, 218/ES, 257). To effect this, *wir suln . . . erledigen uns selber in allen dingen* [we should empty 'ourselves of self in all things'] (DW V, 281/ES, 276); *der mensche muoz aller bilde und sîn selbes üzgan und dem allem gar verre und gar unglich werden* ['man must go out of every image and out of himself and out of everything, he must go far off indeed, and become quite unlike all this'] (DW V, 114/ES, 243).

'Going out' in this way does require renouncing all things, being *allen dingen töt* ['dead to all things'] (DW II, 255/TP 296), but only in the sense of renouncing the 'interested love', as Evelyn Underhill called it,²² of all things, achieving a condition where the stance towards things is one of *detachment* - Eckhart's *abegescheidenheit*, a term similar in meaning to *âne eigenschaft*. *Abegescheidenheit*, like *âne eigenschaft*, is in essence a detaching of self from self, a letting go of 'self-love'. Letting go of 'the world' is grounded in this: *Alliu minne dirre werlt gebūwen ūf eigenminne. Haetest du die gelāzen, sō haetest dū al die werlt gelāzen* ['All the love of this world is founded on self-love. If you had forsaken this, you would have forsaken the world'] (DW I, 107-9/ES, 187). 'Love of the world' is that kind of love for things within the world which is built upon self-love. It is love *mit eigenschaft*, in distinction from the diffusive, unifying and undifferentiated love of God as the Good. 'Worldliness', in the theological sense, is then that form of absorption in the world which is founded on being *mit eigenschaft*, founded on *eigenminne*.

Abegescheidenheit is also similar to being *âne eigenschaft* in the sense of 'without property'. The self-emptying it describes involves a letting go of images and concepts as well, yielding a letting-be of the 'pure truth' that cannot be captured through *eigenschaften* or *bilden*. In this respect, terms like *abegescheidenheit*, *gelāzenheit*, *âne mittel*, and *âne war umbe* carry the sense of relinquishing a will whose appropriating and self-referring intention grounds its imposing of properties upon what is

without property. Being *mit eigenschaft* is then possessive in a more subtle way, as it seeks to master and possess the truth of that towards which it comports itself by imposing upon it modifications inappropriate to 'pure truth', to being itself. Because the God constructed in this way is no true God, the appropriating activity of the will at this level is responsible for a form of idolatry. It causes the soul to make a God from things and to take that God as true, thereby confusing an idol of its own making with the truth of *ipsum esse*.

Abegescheidenheit on the other hand, *bringet mich . . . dar zuo, daz ich nihtes enpfenclich bin wan gotes* ['Detachment leads me to where I am receptive to nothing but God'] (DW V, 403/ES, 286), because *dem menschen, der sich selber vernihtet hât in im selben und in gote und in allen créatûren: der mensche hât die niderste stat besezzen, und in den menschen muoz sich got alzemâle ergiezen, oder er enist niht got* ['the man who has annihilated himself in himself and in God and in all created things . . . has taken possession of the lowest place, and God must pour the whole of himself into this man, or else he is not God'] (DW II, 415/ES 197). A state of detachment is a state of pure emptiness, a state of pure receptivity in which mind and heart seek nothing and impose nothing. Being this free of created things and this close to nothingness, a person can apprehend nothing except that which is itself a transcending nothingness remote from created things: *Dâ von ist abegescheidenheit nihtes enpfenclich dan gotes* ['and so detachment can apprehend nothing except God'] (DW V, 404/ES, 286). What is something must be received by something, but what is no thing can be received only by nothing.

Once more, then, to receive this nothing, the soul must accomplish nothing in itself. To hear the word of God, it must accomplish silence, becoming deaf to the tumult of 'the flesh' that gives rise to the tumult of creatures (LW III, 68/ES, 152). To see God, it must become blind, entering the darkness in which no thing is visible. But this darkness is still something, for it is a *mûglich enpfênglichkeit* ['potential receptivity'], a capability of being *erfüllet mit vollem wesene* ['filled with all being'], and that is the highest possibility for human beings (Pf, 26/W I, 41). As a potential and a possibility, it is something the soul possesses, something it has, and yet Eckhart claims that the soul must be empty of all it has in order to receive God. The paradox is captured in Eckhart's analogy of the eye and colour. *Sol ich geverwet sîn, Eckhart says, so muoz ich an mir haben, daz ze der varwe hæret* ['If I am to receive

color, I have to have something about me that belongs to color' (DW III, 175/TP, 314). Likewise, in order to receive God, the soul must have the potential to do so, and it must then have something about it that belongs to God. But Eckhart also affirms Aristotle's claim that *daz ouge in siner græsten lüterkeit dâ ez keine varwe enhât, dâ sihet ez alle varwe* ['the eye in its purest state, when it is free of all color, sees all color'] (DW III, 229-30/TP, 324). And the soul in its purest state, when it is free of all beings, sees God *des wesen alliu wesen ist* ['whose being is all beings'] (DW III, 230/TP, 324). Detachment brings a person into the pure emptiness and receptivity of this vision, into the Godlike potential for knowing nothing while knowing everything immediately within this nothing. This nothing of the soul corresponding to the nothing of God is the nothingness of the intellect.* It is *intelligere*, the potentiality for all being which is both the ground of being and the purity of being.

Pure detachment, in which nothing is imposed between the self and what it sees, apprehends God because it encounters this purity of being immediately, that is, *âne mittel* (DW III, 165/TP, 312). A person who sees *âne mittel* also seeks God *âne wise*, 'without a way', and finds the God who is without way or mode. This person seeks nothing but *to be*, and finds nothing but being. He finds the life that lives out of its own ground, having no why and seeking no why:

Wan swer got suochet in wise, der nimet die wise und lât got, der in der wise verborgen ist. Aber swer got suochet *âne wise*, der nimet in, als er in im selber ist; und der mensche lebet mit dem sune, und er ist daz leben selbe. Swer daz leben vrâgete tûsent jâr: war umbe lebest dû? solte ez antwûrten, ez spraeche niht anders wan: ich lebe dar umbe daz ich lebe. Daz ist dâ von, wan leben lebet ûzer sinem eigenen grunde und quillet ûzer sinem eigen; dar umbe lebet ez *âne warumbe* in dem, daz ez sich selber lebet. Swer nû vrâgete einen wâhrhaften menschen, der dâ wûrket ûz eigenem grunde: war umbe wûrkest dû dîniu werk? solte er rehte antwûrten, er spraeche niht anders dan: ich wûrke dar umbe daz ich wûrke.

[Whoever is seeking God by ways is finding ways and losing God, who in ways is hidden. But whoever seeks for God without ways will find him as he is in himself, and that man will live with the Son, and he is life itself. If anyone went on for a thousand years asking of life: 'Why are you living?' life, if it could answer, would only say: 'I live so that I might live.' That is because life lives out of its own ground and springs from its own source, and so it lives without asking why it is itself living. If anyone asked a truthful man who works out of his own ground: 'Why are you performing your works?' and if he were to give a straight answer, he would only say, 'I work so that I may work.'](DW I, 91-2/ES, 183-4)

To work as life lives means working out of one's own ground. It means working without why, without forming the questions that ask for grounds, for answers in the form of reasons. To work out of one's own ground,

then, is to stop seeking grounds, but in this groundlessness, the work is yet self-grounded. It is grounded in that which is without ground because it is its own ground.

It can be thus grounded because the ground of itself 'is' the groundless ground of God. This groundless ground is the immediate, in the sense of unmediated and undifferentiated, being of the self, and it stands within *ipsum esse*. Therefore, *anima vero per suum esse stat in esse dei, in deo* ['through its own being, the soul stands in God's being, in God'] (LW IV, 243/TP, 221). In and through the ground of its being, God is present to the soul, but the God present here is not different from the God that, as *ipsum esse*, is present in all things. The human soul, however, is in a different situation from every other being because it has the capacity to know itself, and to know thereby the being and life in which it dwells, and which dwells in the heart of itself. The realisation of this capacity constitutes the fulfillment of human being: *Niht enbin ich dâ von sælic, daz got in mir ist und daz er mir nâhe ist und daz ich in hân, mâr: dâ von, daz ich bekenne, wie nâhe er mir ist und daz ich got wizzende bin* ['I am not blessed because God is in me and is near me and because I possess him, but because I am aware of how close he is to me, and that I know God'] (DW III, 142/W II, 166).

The soul's capacity for knowing is the power of the intellect, and when this power becomes aware of God, it becomes the knowledge of God, and this is the Son. The knowledge of God is the image of God, and if it is dependent upon the knowledge of the being that can know God because it is made in the image of God, then *vergienge daz bilde, daz nâch gote gebildet ist, sô vergienge ouch daz bilde gotes* ['if the image that is formed according to God were to perish, God's image would perish, too'] (DW III, 178/TP, 314-5). The image of the God who is being, unity, goodness, and truth is present only in and for that creature bearing the capacity to understand these, within itself and without. To the extent that this creature realises its capacity for the knowledge of God, it is the vessel of God carrying God with it in the world. *Swa ich bin, dâ ist got; sô bin ich in gote, und swâ got ist, dâ bin ich* ['Where I am there God is; and then I am in God, and where God is, there I am'] (DW III, 100/W I, 51). The soul stands in God's being through its own being in a special way, because it can know the principle of being that it carries about within itself. Because it has an *inner ouge* . . . *daz in daz wesen sihet und sîn wesen von gote âne allez mitel nimet* ['inner eye . . . that sees into being and

takes its being from God without anything else mediating'] (DW I, 165/TP, 263), it can know the being that originates, moves, and sustains its being, the power that allows it to be and without which it would not be, and it can know it as it knows itself. For, in being and knowing, *got der enkan sich niht verstan âne die sêle und die sêle âne got; als gar ein sint sie* ['the soul is so completely one with God that one cannot be understood without the other'] (DW II.ii, 632/TP, 309).

In the final analysis, the soul's potential for true knowledge of things, its potential for knowing the being of things and so knowing God in all things, is grounded in this knowledge of the being at the heart of itself. In order to grasp things as they truly are, in order to find nature unveiled (*bloß*), the soul must grasp all things beyond any likeness in the one (DW II.ii, 473/W II, 252), but to grasp things in the one, it must grasp them in and from itself as one and in the one. This is the *morgenbekantnisse* ['morning knowledge'] in which a person *bekennet got und créature in einem* ['knows God and created things in one'] (DW V, 116/ES, 245). It is the *inner bekennen* ['inward knowing'] of a life in which *sint alliu dinc ein, alliu dinc gemeine al und al in al und al geeiniget* ['all things are one; all things together, all and all united in all and all'] (DW III, 317/TP, 328). It takes place beyond all division *in regione intellectus, ubi procul dubio in quantum huiusmodi nec aliter sunt omnia in omnibus* ['in the region of the intellect where without doubt all things, insofar as they are intellect and not other, are in all things'] (LW IV, 270/TP, 226). Returning to this region, the soul returns all things to their simple ground. This *reditus* ['returning'] is the *durchbruch* ['breakthrough'] and *widerruk* ['turning back'] to the place from which the *ûzbruch* ['breaking out'] and *ûzfluz* ['flowing out'] of the soul and all creatures proceeds, and it is, in Eckhart's view, nobler than the procession:

Ein grôz meister sprichet, daz sîn durchbrechen edeler sî dan sîn ûzvliesen, und daz ist wâr. Dô ich ûz gote vlôz, dô sprâchen alliu dinc: got der ist: und diz enmac mich niht sælic machen, wan alhie bekenne ich mich créature. Mâr: in dem durchbrechen, dá ich ledic stân min selbes willen und des willen gotes und aller sîner werke und gotes selben, sô bin ich ob allen créatren und enbin weder got noch créature mâr: ich bin, daz ich was und daz ich bliben sol nû und iermê . . . Alhie enfindet got keine stat in dem menschen, wan der mensche erkriegeret mit dirre armuot, daz er êwiclîche ist gewesen und iermê bliben sol. Alhie ist got einz mit dem geiste, und daz ist diu næste armuot, die man vinden mac.

[A great authority says that his breaking through is nobler than his flowing out; and that is true. When I flowed out from God, all things said: 'God is.' And this cannot make me blessed, for with this I acknowledge that I am a creature. But in the breaking-through, when I come

to be free of will of myself and of God's will and of all his works and of God himself, then I am above all created things, and I am neither God nor creature, but I am what I was and what I shall remain, now and eternally . . . Here God finds no place in man, for with this poverty man achieves what he has been eternally and will evermore remain. Here God is one with the spirit, and that is the most intimate poverty one can find.] (DW II.ii, 505/ES, 203)

Existing in this knowing, a person knows all and God, while knowing nothing but the self in one being with God. In fact, this knowing is nothing but being one with God, for it is identical with the self-knowing and the being of God. Such a knowing, the knowing of the being of God, means becoming the Son of God, but a person cannot become the Son of God unless he has the same being as that Son (DW III, 316/TP, 328), 'has' it, that is, as a potentiality to be realised. The soul could not become God unless it already 'was' God, unless being God, and being one with all things in God, were a possibility for it. As long as this possibility is not yet achieved, though, *daz enist noch nicht offen, waz wir werden* ['it is not yet revealed what we shall become']. We shall become one *wesen und substancie und natûre* ['being, substance, and nature'] with God because we 'are' this, *in potentia, aber daz enist nû niht offen* ['but this is not yet evident']. It will be evident *wanne wir in sehen, als er got ist* ['when we see him as he is God'] (DW III, 320/TP, 328), when we are in actuality what we already are in the potentiality that constitutes the truth of our essential being, when we become what we most truly are.

What the soul truly is where it is one being and one knowing with God is what it is in its ground. Eckhart calls this 'what' by many names. He calls it a *vûnkeln* ['little spark'], a *bûrgeln* ['little town'] (DW I, 39, 42/ES, 180-1), a *zwîc* ['sprout'], and a *tröpfeln vernûnfticheit* ['drop of understanding'] (DW I, 151/TP, 257) in the soul. He describes it as *ein kraft in der sêle that nimet got blôz zemâle in sinen istigen wesen* ['a power in soul' that 'seizes God naked in his essential being'] (DW I, 220-2/W I, 190-1), that *enhat mit nihte niht gemein* ['has nothing in common with anything'] and that *machet von nihte iht und al* ['makes anything and everything out of nothing'] (DW I, 182/W II, 159-60). It is *ein kraft in dem geiste, diu sî aleine vrî* ['a power in the spirit that alone is free'] (DW I, 39/ES, 180), *neizwaz gar heimliches und verborgens und verre dar enboben . . . dâ ûzbrechent die krefte vernûnfticheit und wille* ['something completely mysterious and hidden in the soul existing far above where the powers intellect and will burst forth'] (DW I, 123/TP, 254), *etwaz in der sêle . . . daz gote alsô sippe ist, daz ez ein ist und niht vereinet* ['something in the soul that is so closely related to God that it is one

[with him] and not just united'] (DW I, 197/TP, 269). It is a *huote* ['guard'] or *lieht* ['light'] of the spirit (DW I, 39/ES, 180), the *innigste* ['innermost'] and the *hæste* ['highest'] of the soul (DW II.1, 95/TP, 292), a *vünkelin der vernüfticheit* ['spark of intellect'] which is *als viel als ein vünkelin götlicher natre, ein götlich lieht, ein zein und ein ingedrucket bilde götlicher natüre* ['none other than a tiny spark of the divine nature, a divine light, a ray and imprint of the divine nature'] (DW II.1, 211/W I, 229).

Like all descriptions of the being of God, however, these descriptions are ultimately inadequate, and what the soul truly is in its ground no human ingenuity can discover (DW I, 123-4/TP, 254). *Got, der åne namen ist - er enhât enkeinen namen - ist unsprechelich, und diu sêle in irm grunde ist ouch unsprechelich, als er unsprechelich ist* ['God, who has no name - he has no name - is ineffable, and the soul in her ground is also ineffable, as he is ineffable'] (DW I, 284/W I, 172); *als wênic als man gote eigenen namen finden mac, als wênic mac man der sêle eigenen namen vinden aleine dâ grôziu buoch von geschriben sîn* ['just as no one can find a true name for God, so none can find the soul's true name, although mighty tomes have been written about this'] (DW II.1, 237/W I 218). The innermost being of the soul is in truth *weder diz noch daz* ['neither this nor that']; *ez ist von allen namen vri und von allen formen blôz, ledic und vri zemåle, als got ledic und vri ist in im selber* ['it is free of all names, it is bare of all forms, wholly empty and free, as God in himself is empty and free'] (DW I, 39-40/ES, 180). In a way, the ground of the soul is actually *not* the soul, just as the ground of God, the Godhead is not 'God'. It is something in the soul *daz über daz geschaffen wesen der sêle ist* ['which transcends the created being of the soul'], *ein elende und . . . ein wüstenunge . . . mê ungenennet, dan ez name habe . . . mê unbekant dan ez bekant si* ['a strange and desert place . . . rather nameless than possessed of a name . . . more unknown than it is known'] (DW II.1, 66/W I, 144). In the end, it is just 'something' (*etwaz*) (DW II.1, 88/TP, 290) corresponding to the 'something' (*was*) which is the divine being (DW I, 254/ES, 191).

But just as God is nameless because omninameable, so the spark of divine nature in the ground of the soul is no thing because it is all things. As the point where God is essentially present to the soul, it is what God is, a *puritas et plenitudo essendi* including all that is in the unity of *ipsum esse*. It is thus the one that comprehends the all, and in which all is eternally present, the unifying unity of the being of God. In

this unity, the unity of the hidden ground of the soul, all truth is contained, and this truth draws the soul towards itself; *geruowet die vernunft niemer denne alleine in der weselichen wårheit, diu alliu dinc in ihr beslozzen hât* ['the intellect cannot rest except in the essential truth that embraces all things'] (Pf, 21/ W I, 32),¹⁰ and this means that it cannot rest until it goes beyond itself into this hidden ground, so that what lies in this ground is also its highest good as a rational soul. As the good of the soul, the being, truth and unity lying enfolded in the ground form both the source from which the multiple powers of the soul, with all that they know and can know, break forth and flow out, and the goal to which they seek, with all that they know and can know, to return.

The words and deeds of a person issue from this ground, so that the relationship between the exterior effects of a person and the inner unity of the ground of the soul is like that between the effects and the unity of God. When God creates and acts, that which is created and enacted, the exterior word, is a concretisation of the inner Word, the Son, generated in the heart of God the Father. This inner Word is consubstantial with and is an expression of the essential being of God; it is an expression of the Godhead, of what God is in the ground where all the things that come to be are present in a unified and preeminent way. Human speech, the spoken word, stems from and expresses what is present in the ground of the soul in a similar fashion:

Ich sprach einest: swaz eigentlich gewortet mac werden, daz muoz von innen komen, mâr: von indewendic sol ez her ûz komen. Daz lebet eigenliche in dem innersten der sêle. Dâ sint der alliu dinc gegenwertic und inner lebende und suochende und sint an dem besten und sint an dem hæsten.

[I once said whatever can be expressed properly in words must come forth from within and must have movement from an inner form; it cannot enter in from without but must come out from within. It lives actually in the innermost [part] of the soul. There all things are present to you, are living within and seeking, and are in their best and highest [state].] (DW I, 66/TP, 249)

It is in this innermost part of the soul that every word which mediates between the unity of being and the multiplicity of beings, and which in so doing echoes the eternal Word that is the offspring of God, is conceived. It is born here in the intellect, before taking shape in thought and then being spoken out loud (DW II.1, 229/W I, 215).

Every true word is a response corresponding to the eternal Word in which the forms of all things actual and possible are contained, the primal idea through whose generation the unity of the being of God first becomes two. The eternal and living Word supporting all things speaks in the soul,

and the soul responds with the living word (DW I, 305/W I, 265-6). But this Word, expressing the *ratio* of God under the aspect of intellect, also expresses the *end* of God under the aspect of will. It is the good that God both seeks and is, the good which is nothing other than the being itself of God. In the same way, the eternal and living word speaking in the soul expresses the end of the soul. It expresses what the soul wills and inclines towards in the unity of the desire which is shadowed in the multiplicity of its desire for creatures. What is desired is being itself, which needs nothing and receives nothing because it already contains all things within it. What is desired is life, whose principle flows into and works and is present in the heart, the centre of life that contains all things, and touches all things while remaining untouched itself (DW III, 218/TP, 321). The word spoken in the summit of the intellect is also spoken in the depths of the heart. The words that echo this word correspond both to what is known and to what is loved, for it is true both that the spoken word expresses what is present as known, and that the mouth speaks of that with which a person is concerned, of that which fills the heart (DW I, 219/W I, 190).

When the inclination of the life of the soul, the aspiration of the spark of divinity within it which is satisfied with nothing less than infinite being, finds itself as it is in the ground where it is not itself but God, then only God fills the heart. The soul then comes to the hidden end of itself. However, because this hidden end is always present within itself as a beginning, as the unknown source of being, in it the soul's being is, and always has been, in and from another (DW I, 418/TP, 285). When the soul arrives here, where this arriving is a returning to its beginning, the essential being of God, God qua Godhead is comprehended. What comprehends that being, though, is not really the soul itself, but the God within it: *Der unmezliche got, der in der sêle ist, der begrifet den got, der unmezlich ist. Dâ begrifet got got und wûrket got sich selben in* ['The immeasurable God who is in the soul is the one who comprehends the God who is immeasurable. There God comprehends God, and God fashions himself in the soul and forms it like himself'] (DW III, 463/TP, 336). This ground is *sô gar ein und einvaltic, als got ein und einvaltic ist, daz man mit dekeiner wise dar zuo geluogen mac* ['so utterly one and simple, as God is one and simple, that man cannot in any way look into it'] (DW I, 40/ES, 180), so all that is 'man' must be left behind in its vision. But if all that is 'man' must be left behind here, so must all that is 'God', for 'God'

only is when man is. Since *in den grunt der sêle enmac niht dan lûter gotheit* ['nothing can come into the ground of the soul but the pure Godhead'], *dennoch enmac got dar in niht, im enwerde abegenommen allez, daz im zuogelegt ist* ['even God cannot enter unless he is stripped of everything that that is added to him'] (DW I, 361/TP, 281).

Being drawn into this ground, the soul is drawn into the boundless and modeless unity of the Godhead. It is then placed *in die wîte, in daz mer, in ein ungrüntlich mer* ['into vast regions, into the sea, into uncharted depths'] (DW I, 121/TP, 253) for it then takes God *in sîner einunge und in sîner einæde; si nimet got in sîner wüestunge und in sînem eigenen grunt* ['in his oneness and in his solitary wilderness, in his vast wasteland, and in his own ground'] (DW I, 171/TP, 265). It takes God in the unity where all difference is subsumed and comprehended, the indistinction in which no thing can be distinguished, not one thing from another, and not itself from God. Its finite being is dissolved into infinite being like a drop of water into the sea, and it becomes divine, remaining *an gote, als got an im selber blîbet* ['in God as God remains in himself'] (DW III, 387/TP, 334).

Clearly, when it enters into the being of God, the soul must enter into the time of God as well, the fullness of time in which all time is contained. For Eckhart, it is capable of entering into this time, into eternity, because, in standing between God and creatures, between the boundless and the bounded, between being itself and entities, it stands between eternity and time:

Diu sêle ist geschaffen als in einem orte zwischen zit und ewicheit, die si beide rüerende ist. Mit den obersten kreften rüeret si die ewicheit, aber mit den nidersten kreften rüeret si die zit.

[The soul is created as if at a point between time and eternity, which touches both. With the higher powers she touches eternity, but with the lower powers she touches time.] (DW II.1, 405/W I, 183)

The lower powers are involved with time because they are involved with particulars, with the 'this' and 'that' of multiplicity. The higher powers work in the unity which, in comprehending this multiplicity, comprehends its time in eternity. The *oberste teil der sêle* ['highest peak of the soul'], where it is one with God, *stât obe zit en enweiz niht von der zit noch von dem lîbe* ['stands above time and knows nothing of time or of the body'] (DW II.1, 24/W I, 97). Here, *schepfet got alle dise werlt* ['God creates this whole world'], including *allez daz vergangen ist, und allez, daz gegenwertic ist, und allez, daz künftic ist* ['everything that is past,

everything that is present, and everything that is future'] (DW II.1, 96/TP, 292-3). When the soul gathers itself into this innermost and highest point of itself, it gathers all time into the present presence embracing the fullness of time and being. This gathering brings itself and all the many into the point of time, the moment, in which all multiplicity is restored in unity (DW I, 246/ES, 190).

The person who is established in this moment, the person who dwells within and lives from the fullness of being and time in the innermost and highest unity of the soul, is the one to whom God is essentially present in all things and all acts. For the person who lives in this inwardness *diu ûzercheit der bilde ensint . . . niht ûzerlich, wan alliu dinc sint den inwendigen menschen ein inwendigiu gôtlichiu wise* ['the outwardness of images is not outward because to inward men all things possess a divine inwardness'] (DW V, 277/ES, 275). This person, living in and from the ground whence all life flows, without possession and without why, becomes the Son of God, *ein einiger ûzfluz . . . mit dem ewigen wort* ['a single flowing-out with the eternal Word'] (DW II.1, 379/TP, 304), an adverb (*biwort*) to the Word (DW I, 155/TP, 259) in all acts of thought and speech. In the moment in which this is achieved, the moment in which such a person lives, world and God are reconciled, for in this moment all things are in God and God in all things.

2. *The Metaphysical Element in Heidegger's Mysticism.*

One of the greatest differences between the region of the modern philosophical world to which Heidegger belongs and the world of medieval scholastic metaphysics undoubtedly rests in the uniquely modern realization of the finite and relative nature of all conceptualisation, which goes hand in hand with an understanding of the historical contingency of every form of language. John Caputo, in *Heidegger and Aquinas*, says 'I do not in fact believe that any Heideggerian would be moved by the "existential" metaphysics of St. Thomas because he would take *esse* to be an objectivistic and ahistorical notion', whereas Heidegger's notion of *aletheia*, of truth as 'destined' revealing, 'belongs to a phenomenological-historical kind of thinking which would be altogether impossible for a thirteenth-century man.' Assuming that this judgement is largely correct, there are a number of possible stances towards the scholastic metaphysics of someone like Thomas, or Eckhart, once the lack of a historical dimension in their formulations has been recognised.

One stance consists in simply viewing this species of metaphysics, like any other, as part of the tradition that Heidegger's *Destruktion* seeks to overcome. Its conceptions are then wholly subject to Heidegger's critique, and, ultimately, to be rejected. Another approach, and the one that Caputo himself adopts, attempts to discover through deconstruction a non-metaphysical element behind the 'metaphysical casing'. In the case of Aquinas according to Caputo, this consists in 'the mystical-religious experience of life which animates his works' (pp. 247-9). Caputo claims that 'one need only find the quiet spot in [Aquinas'] metaphysical treatises, that point in his metaphysical theology at which he himself unmasks the pretension of *ratio* to absolute validity, in order to see that this metaphysics, unlike all post-Cartesian systems, *invites* deconstruction' (p. 250). He locates this spot especially in the record of an experience near the end of Aquinas' life which is supposed to have put an end to his metaphysical-theological writing (p. 248).

To the extent that Eckhart's writings involve, as Oliver Davies has suggested, a kind of 'conceptual poetry' and a 'poeticization' of theological language,¹² a deconstructive attempt to discover a 'non-metaphysical' dimension in his thought does, on the face of it, promise to be fruitful. Not only do his works 'invite' deconstruction - and at every level of his speculation, not merely at the points where *ratio* breaks down in a unitive experience - rather more than do the writings of Aquinas, but it could be argued that Eckhart's poetic transformation of theological language is already a form of deconstruction. A comparison between Eckhart and Heidegger proceeding from this perspective might search out the 'poetic' elements in their thought, and examine the way that these represent an overcoming of metaphysics.

On the other hand, it should be apparent from the preceding exposition of Eckhart's thought that it contains nothing like a thoroughgoing rejection of *ratio* or metaphysics, but, on the contrary, manifests a profound sense of their importance in the revelation of truth. Eckhart's poeticization of the tradition, which sometimes involves no more (and no less) than the resurrection of dead metaphors through the translation of Latin scholastic terms into the vernacular, is no more a deconstruction than it is a reconstruction, a recovery of basic meanings that have become flattened and concealed. It is true that Eckhart acknowledges the inability of *ratio* to penetrate the nature of the Godhead, and the insufficiency of any name to capture that nature, but it is also

true that he believes firmly in the validity of *ratio* as an approach to truth, and in the adequacy of transcendental categories as an articulation of that approach. He believes in scholastic metaphysics as approximation, although, in the attempt to reach what is *proprius* rather than *proxime* to truth, it must be left behind.

The following comparison between Heidegger and Eckhart does not immediately set aside the metaphysical aspect of Eckhart's thought in favour of the 'mystical' and 'poetic' one. Rather, a major portion of this comparison will focus precisely on those elements that define Eckhart as a scholastic metaphysician. How, it might be asked, can there be any such comparison, if Heidegger has succeeded in his task of destroying metaphysics through historical thinking, if Heidegger's own thinking is radically historical in a way that medieval scholastic metaphysics could never be? This can be answered fully only in the course of the discussion. As an anticipatory answer, however, I would maintain that Heidegger's deconstruction, too, is simultaneously a reconstruction. This does not entail any simple acceptance of traditional metaphysics, but is, as suggested at the end of Chapter One, a transformative appropriation. The transformation involves, *inter alia*, an understanding of historicity, and one might say there is in Heidegger a kind of temporalised meta-metaphysics. What Fergus Kerr says in commenting on Max Müller's *Existenzphilosophie im geistigen Leben der Gegenwart* also expresses in brief the view of Heidegger's relation to scholastic metaphysics which informs my discussion in the rest of this chapter:

... it is not a matter of its being 'wrong' or out-of-date. It is rather that traditional metaphysics itself, in the existence of so original a metaphysician as Heidegger appears to Müller to be is demanding from within, as it were, to display and thus surmount its present limitations. Nothing is being abandoned, nothing is being destroyed. Everything is being deepened and enlarged, and there is thus need for genuine re-vision.'^a

First and foremost, this revision requires that traditional metaphysical concepts be expanded through an understanding of the historicity and finitude of existence. Kerr notes that Heidegger found such an understanding not in the Greek, but in the biblical, conception of man (p. 403).

In the last discussion of *Was ist Metaphysik?*, it was pointed out that, according to Heidegger, the question *Warum?* is ultimately grounded in *Dasein* as transcendence, since *Dasein* can only raise questions about the being of beings because it can pass beyond beings to nothing. Thus, every

why-question, including all of those that inquire in any way into the grounds and causes of things, has its original source in Dasein as metaphysics (WM, 41/379). The question into the ground of metaphysics, on the other hand, the question *Was ist Metaphysik?*, inquires, insofar as it is still a metaphysical question, into the ground of the climbing over of transcendence. If it is transcendence which grounds the *Warum?* in general, the question about the ground of metaphysics will be the question about the ground of grounds, the reason for reasons. Heidegger's answer in *Was ist Metaphysik?* is: nothing, which *als das Andere zum Seienden ist der Schleier des Seins* ['conceived as the pure "other" than what-is, is the veil of being'] (WM, 52/392).

Being and nothing, therefore, belong together. As the wholly other to beings, being, in relation to beings, is, in a sense not-being (*Nicht-Seiende*). It is therefore nothing. But this nothing 'is' (*west*) as being (*Sein*), because the experience of nothing permits the experience of the vastness, the clear and expansive openness (*Weiträumigkeit*), of that which gives all that is (*alles Seiende*) the 'grant' (*Gewähr*) to be, namely, being itself (*das Sein selbst*). The being of all that is depends upon and is grounded in the granting of being itself, whose own ungrounded essence (*abgründiges Wesen*), i.e. coming to presence, is granted, darkly, by nothing: *Ohne das Sein, dessen abgründiges, aber noch unentfaltetes Wesen uns das Nichts in der wesenhaften Angst zuschickt, bliebe alles Seiende in der Seinslosigkeit* ['Without being, whose unfathomable and unmanifest essence is vouchsafed us by nothing in essential dread, everything that 'is' would remain in beinglessness'] (WM, 46/384).

Suspending for a moment various questions that naturally arise about the profound, or seemingly profound, differences between Heidegger and Eckhart on this issue, it is first possible to note some obvious similarities. For Eckhart, as for Heidegger, being (*ipsum esse*) is other to beings (*entia*), and, as such, in relation to beings, is nothing. This nothing outside of beings, however, 'is' also, again as for Heidegger, what grants being to beings. The nothing in relation to beings is being itself, which grants itself in granting the being of beings. Moreover, while, for Eckhart, *entia* are nothing in relation to *esse*, nothing without *esse*, in relation to nothing, they are, and their being in relation to nothing grounds the notion of *creatio ex nihilo*, the 'active upsurge', as Caputo says (*Heidegger and Aquinas*, p. 101), of that which is from nothing,¹⁴ just as the relation of beings to nothing founds the being of beings in

Heidegger's conception.

In the *Beiträge zur Philosophie* (composed 1936-9), some of these similarities are clearer. Here, Heidegger claims that if it is said that what-is is, then being (*Seyn*) 'is' not, but *west* (B, 7, 286). In truth, however, it is being that truly is, while what-is 'is' not (B, 472). Thus, as for Eckhart, the applicability of 'being' to the ground of beings depends upon the sense of this term, and it can be said that for Heidegger, too, 'being' is predicated of that ground, of being itself, in a preeminent sense.

Turning now to the differences between Eckhart's notion of being and that of Heidegger in *Was ist Metaphysik?*, which tend to be more in evidence in the text of the original 1929 lecture than in the *Einleitung* and *Nachwort*, both of which were written much later,¹⁵ the first point to consider is that Heidegger does himself take up the issue of how Christian dogma formulates the being of beings in relation to God, and explicitly distances himself from this formulation. The *nihilo* of the Christian *creatio ex nihilo*, he claims, involves the notion of the absence or non-being (*Abwesenheit*) of all being outside God, and nothing then becomes the opposite of God as the authentic being, the *summum ens* as the *ens increatum*. While an interpretation of nothing is presupposed in this conception of being (*Seiende*), as it is in metaphysical discussion, the questions of being and nothing, according to Heidegger, remain unasked in both cases. Dogma then does not have to confront the difficulty that the absolute is supposed to exclude from itself all nothingness (*Nichtigkeit*), and yet God must have some relation to nothing in order to create out of it (WM, 39/376).

Eckhart's God is not, properly speaking, an *ens*, but *ipsum esse*, as *puritas et plenitudo essendi*, does exclude nothing. However, Eckhart's *ipsum esse* is not precisely the being of beings, and therefore not, I would argue, the 'being' of Heidegger's 1929 lecture. Although, in *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger says, *Sein ist jeweils das Sein eines Seienden* ['being is always the being of an entity'] (SZ, 9), in the *Beiträge* he distinguishes between being as the being of beings, which he writes as *Sein*, and being itself, which he writes as *Seyn*. *Sein und Seyn*, he says, *ist dasselbe und doch grundverschieden* ['the same and yet fundamentally different'] (B, 171). Thus, R.S. Gall is right to point out that Heidegger uses 'being' sometimes in the sense of the presencing of what is present, and sometimes in the sense of that which makes the presencing of what is present possible. It

is in addressing the latter notion, Gall notes, that Heidegger speaks sometimes of the essence, truth, or meaning of being, and eventually of *Ereignis*.¹⁶ But when, in the 1929 text of *Was ist Metaphysik?*, Heidegger says that Hegel is right to identify being and nothing, though not because, as Hegel thought, these are the same in their indeterminacy and immediacy, but because being is essentially finite and therefore hangs together with nothing (WM, 40/377), it seems to be the former sense that he has in mind. In that case, the nothingness at the basis of Dasein revealed in essential dread grants to it the experience of the sheer contingency of being, the contingency of the fact that what-is is, and is not nothing. This experience of contingency grounds, explicitly or implicitly, the projection of possibility. However, the claim put forward in the 'Postscript', that the experience of nothing allows the experience of being itself as that which grants being to all that is, rests on the conception of being not as contingent but as ungrounded, where these are not the same. Being is not here a contingent event, but the *ungegründete Grund* from which *das Seiende* originates (WM, 44/382), the *abgründiges Wesen* that makes it possible for beings to be. It still hangs together with nothing, but now not because it is finite and contingent, but because, as the possibility of everything actual, it 'is', in itself, not any thing.

Eckhart's *ipsum esse* corresponds to this latter conception of being. The being of beings, on the other hand, including the being of *omnia*, is, for Eckhart, too, always finite, always incomplete and imperfect, exclusive and contingent, always pervaded and defined by forms of not being. The being 'of beings' never includes all possibilities of being nor is it absolute being, but being itself, as the pure affirmation that grants every possibility of being, does and is. It is the opposite of nothing through the mediation of beings (*entia*).

In *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, Heidegger points out that medieval mystical theology involves a peculiar speculation which *die Idee des Wesens überhaupt, d. h. eine ontologische Bestimmung des Seienden, die essentia entis, zu einem Seienden umbildet und den ontologischen Grund eines Seienden, seine Möglichkeit, sein Wesen, zum eigentlich Wirklichen macht* ['transforms the idea of essence in general, which is an ontological determination of a being, the *essentia entis*, into a being and makes the ontological ground of a being, its possibility, its essence, into what is properly actual']. Because of this, Eckhart's God, as *das allgemeinste Wesen* ['the most universal being'], is *die reinste noch unbestimmte*

Möglichkeit alles Möglichen, das reine Nichts . . . das Nichts gegenüber dem Begriffe aller Kreatur, gegenüber allem bestimmten Möglichen und Verwirklichten ['the purest indeterminate possibility of everything possible, pure nothing . . . the nothing over against every determinate concept of every creature, over against every determinate possible and actualized being']. There is in this, Heidegger notes further, *eine merkwürdige Parallele zu der Hegelschen Bestimmung des Seins und der Identifizierung mit dem Nichts* ['a remarkable parallel to the Hegelian determination of being and its identification with nothing'] (GP, 127-8/90-1). Eckhart's God is actually the essence of essenc-ing, the essence that makes the realization of any essence possible, in that *ipsum esse* holds within itself, in a unity, the essential possibilities of all that comes to be. Only if Heidegger, in the postscript to *Was ist Metaphysik?*, conceives of being in a similar way can it make sense for him to say that *im Sein hat sich anfänglich jedes Geschick des Seienden schon vollendet* ['in being all that comes to pass in what-is is perfected from everlasting'] (WM, 52/392). And while possibility is not, for Heidegger, what is properly actual, he does say, in *Sein und Zeit*, that possibility is higher than actuality (SZ, 38)

The nothing at the heart of being in Heidegger's earlier conception, then, corresponds not to the nothing which, for Eckhart, is *ipsum esse*, but to the negativity of creatures as contingent, and, in a peculiar way, also to the not being that closes every determinate being into its finitude. That finitude involves both the imperfection, the incompleteness, of its actual being with respect to its ideal essence, and the exclusivity that de-fines it in that essence. In that Heidegger conceives nothing as essential to being, essential to the disclosure of what-is, there is, again, a formal similarity between his thought and that of Eckhart, since the determination of the (necessarily finite) being of any being requires, for Eckhart, too, a delimitation against not being. Thus, there is a formal correspondence between the essential belonging together of being and nothing in the disclosure of truth which Heidegger sometimes describes in terms of the simultaneity of hiddenness and unconcealment, and the 'mixture' of being and not being, which, for Eckhart, defines the being of any creature, where a creature, an *ens creatum*, is any finite being.

Heidegger thinks of such definition historically, while Eckhart, of course, does not. With respect to the question of metaphysics, while, for Eckhart, the understanding of being in the sense of understanding *that*

something is, leads the soul to raise questions about how and why it is, where this gives rise to metaphysical inquiry about essence, he thinks the finitude of any such inquiry synchronically rather than diachronically. That metaphysical speculation, insofar as it is determinate and rational, must, for Eckhart as much as for Heidegger, be finite, and must fall short of the essence of truth, is clear, and this has formed the basis for much of the comparison between Heidegger and Eckhart. There is a point at which, for Eckhart, the intellect does reach the essence of truth, but at this point it also ceases to grasp anything strictly determinate, and this point is beyond the reach of metaphysics as a rational discipline. It is indeed a point of return to the ground of metaphysics, where metaphysics, as the search for the truth of essence, is the search for the essential determinations of being (not in the sense of what is actual, but in the sense of what can be with respect to essential - ideal, and thus possible - attributes), and is therefore grounded in that which makes it possible for anything to be at all, *ipsum esse*.

But Eckhart obviously does not, and could not, think of the essence of metaphysics in terms of finite historical possibilities, as Heidegger does. For Heidegger, while every metaphysical determination of the is-ness of what-is seeks to delimit the being of what-is as a whole (and in so doing, to be absolute knowledge, as knowledge of the absolute), each historical disclosure of metaphysics is bounded by the not being of excluded possibilities, the possibilities it has not yet realised, and by the exclusivity proper to the delimitation of its essence as rational inquiry, which, by definition, cannot think its own ground because it must presuppose it. That ground is, as for Eckhart, the abyss of being itself. For Heidegger, too, it can become visible in itself only at the 'end' of metaphysics, but that end is, for him, a historical moment.¹⁷

What has been said about being (presencing) and not being in terms of the essence of metaphysics in general also applies to the fundamental terms, the 'definitions' of being, which metaphysics arrives at in its search for essence. For the scholastic tradition to which Eckhart belongs, metaphysics is supposed to consider the immutable ideas, the fixed logical forms of things, and to give expression to these in its words. For Heidegger, on the other hand, the metaphysical speculation of a given age fixes, in its own specific vocabulary, what it considers to be the essential truth of beings, in accord with historically determined and variable possibilities. This is well known. But the point also needs to

be made that if Dasein is thought to be a *Lichtung* of being, and a necessarily finite and historical one, the thought that thinks the essence of Dasein in this way, if it is true to itself, is unlikely to consider linguistic unconcealments (including those belonging to the metaphysical tradition) as 'false' or 'mistaken' in any simple sense, and certainly not for the reason that they are 'merely' finite and historical - except, that is, insofar as they take themselves not to be finite, meaning insofar as they do not recognize the nothing that belongs to the being of beings, the hiddenness that belongs to every form of unconcealment.¹³ Again, while Eckhart thinks synchronically of the necessary mixture of being and not being in the definition of any stable finite essence, Heidegger thinks this diachronically, in terms of the instability of a historically evolving (in the sense of changing, not progressing) vocabulary.

Before going on to discuss further the nature of the thinking that goes beyond metaphysics while going back into the ground of metaphysics, it is necessary to address the all-important fact of Heidegger's locating the origin of the 'not' of being in the nothing revealed to Dasein not through logic, but through a mood, *Angst*. In the 1929 lecture, this mood, in revealing nothing and thereby revealing the contingency and finitude of being, reveals that which, originally, makes possible the understanding of possibilities of being. As in *Sein und Zeit*, it reveals Dasein itself as possible, as free for possibilities. Only through such freedom can Dasein have a relationship to itself and to what-is (WM, 35/370). It is because it has such freedom, and because it is finite, that Dasein, in *Sein und Zeit*, is originally and essentially being-guilty. Dasein is essentially a mixture of being and not being, because any possibility it chooses and realizes is a finite affirmation of being which excludes possibilities of being, since it is bounded by all the forms of negation that delimit a determinate choice in a determinate situation. Dasein's temporal self-achievement is the process whereby, in choosing to realise itself, it realises possibilities of its being, thereby disclosing itself in a determinate and finite way. Once again, disclosure requires determinacy, and therefore finitude, the de-finition of not being. When thought in terms of the temporal disclosure of the essence of Dasein, that nothing belongs to being in the revelation of truth means that Dasein discloses itself in the realization of finite possibilities that constitutes its becoming what it is. Infinite possibility, on the other hand, is nothing, not not being, but being itself as the source of all possibility.

Considered in itself, this source is the negation of negation, the pure affirmation of being. Insofar as Dasein understands anything like a possibility of being, it must stand in an essential relation to this source.

For the early Heidegger, who thinks of 'world' as a *Wie* of the being of Dasein (e.g. WG/50), a horizon projected in the transcendence through which Dasein achieves its being - the existential version of a 'transcendental horizon' - what is within the world is discovered in terms of the project of Dasein's being. In reference to this project, logical negation, as Heidegger says, is not the only, and not even the chief, mode of nihilation. He mentions, as stronger forms, *die Härte des Entgegenhandelns*, *die Schärfe des Verabscheuens*, *die Schonungslosigkeit des Verbieters*, and *die Herbe des Entbehrens* ['the harshness of opposition', 'the violence of loathing', 'the pain of refusal', the 'mercilessness of an interdict', and 'the bitterness of renunciation'] (WM, 37/373). Along with the notion that in the nothingness of dread Dasein uncovers the original sense of itself as thrown project (*geworfener Entwurf*), or, as Kierkegaard puts it, 'the alarming possibility of *being able*,'⁹ there is here a hint of the Fichtean notion that the origin of the not-A rests in a kind of *Anstoß* delivered to the self through the consciousness of itself as finite and free, and that the being of what-is is constituted in terms of the decisive action through which self-realisation takes place. But the realisation of finitude presupposes an essential relation to infinity. The finite ego is aware of itself as such only in relation to the infinite ego (Fichte); 'sin' is before God (Kierkegaard).

For Heidegger, only because Dasein understands its own finitude in relation to possibilities of being is it capable of understanding the finitude of beings, their contingency and their possibilities, where these are uncovered in terms of the contingency and possibilities of the being of Dasein as thrown project. This understanding is what gives rise to the nothing of not being. On the other hand, only if Dasein has a relation to possibility can it understand the finitude of its being, and this is a relation to the nothing which is the veil of being itself, as pure possibility. In that case, being itself (pure possibility) is the 'ground' of essences because it is that in relation to which what-is is constituted in its possibility, its 'ideal', against which its actuality may be measured. What-is is constituted and measured in reference to what is wanted, and what is wanted is being. The essence of the hammer is determined in terms of a destination (SZ, 69), and the destination of destinations is

being itself. This is another instance of the way the return to the ground of metaphysics is also a retrieval of metaphysics, for being itself is then, in the final analysis, the ground of *Sollen*, and, as such, *agathon*, the pure form of the good.

Thus, just as, for Eckhart, the preeminence of human beings lies in their capacity to reach, within and through their own finite being, the source of every possibility of being, being itself which is also the good, so the preeminence of *Dasein* lies in its ability to relate, through a relation to finitude, to the hidden origin and destination of what-is. Yet this is not ontotheology, not even if the hidden origin and destination is conceived as the the negation of negation, the negation of the not being of every imperfection and incompleteness, not even if it is named as being itself as pure affirmation because 'it' is still not anything *vorhanden*, anything representable or objectifiable. 'It' is not, in fact, any thing at all, and every determination is inadequate to it, precisely in virtue of being a determination. If *omnis determinatio est negatio* (Spinoza), no *determinatio* can be proper to what is the *negatio negationis*, not 'God' or 'good', not even, in the end, being itself. Nothing is secured in such thinking, since what is pointed out is brought into view only as that which cannot be brought into view - as the mystery. There can be no question here of philosophy's finding the 'answer' to the meaning of being.

Purely formal determinations like the good and being itself can finally do no more, but also no less, than point to the mystery as the inexhaustible source of all that is. They do then 'refer' and 'mean', but in the manner of beckoning to what is hidden. They indicate the mystery. Since what is indicated here can only be disclosed in a finite manner, the word that reveals can only do so in the manner of concealing. It both names and does not name. The word is then, with respect to the mystery, essentially poetic, and since all indicating is, in this region, a poetic beckoning, the one who beckons may be a poet as much as a thinker, or he may, like Eckhart or Heidegger, be a poetic thinker. If such beckoning is 'mystical', it is so not out of a desire to be obscure, but on account of the obscurity of that to which it addresses itself. It is mystical because it has to do with the mystery, because it closes its eyes to what-is²⁰ in order to see the other that is hiddenly revealed in what-is. Where this other is 'known' and 'named', it is nonetheless preserved in its *rätselfhaften Unkenntlichkeit* ['enigmatic unknowableness'] (WM, 49/388), preserved as other to what is known and named. Where it is not preserved

as other, and this, for Eckhart, is possible, it is also not known and not named, not comprehended or comprehensible, although it is precisely here, where nothing is determined or disclosed, that the heart of the mystery is found.

Whereas the early Heidegger tends to think of the being of beings in terms of a project of Dasein, the later Heidegger, after the so-called *Kehre*, is more inclined to think of Dasein as a project of being, and to think the being of beings accordingly. This does not mean the world now ceases to be a *Wie* of the being of Dasein, but the possibilities of that *Wie* are enlarged to include, and indeed as a most elevated form, a 'sacrificial' way of being, in which Dasein renounces all purposive projects for the sake of being itself, for the project of being. In this way of being, being itself, as the wholly other, is the 'purpose' of Dasein, so that Dasein has no purpose in terms of itself and what-is. The 'turn' involves, to some extent, a shift of focus from what-is as creative product of Dasein - 'product' in the widest sense, to include all forms of 'objective spirit' - to what-is as 'nature', not the nature that natural science studies, but the nature in which the poet, and sometimes also the philosopher, discovers being as the holy, the nature of, for instance, Hölderlin or Schelling. But 'nature' in this case, as the realm of things in which being as the holy is presented, also includes many of the 'made objects' of the *Lebenswelt*. It includes not only tree, pond, heron and roe, but also jug, bench, footbridge and plow (VA II, 55/182). In the end, it is not a matter of *technē* vs. *physis*, but of the way of being of 'poetic dwelling' rather than the way of being of *Stellen*, of self-referring positing and manipulation.

Being and Dasein belong together, and to this shift in the essence of what-is there corresponds a shift in the essence of Dasein. The thrown project of Dasein now becomes truly a *Lichtung*, a space for the unconcealment of what is other to beings. In terms of this essence, Dasein realises its 'ideal' to the extent that it clears itself for this other, and expends itself for the sake of its unconcealment, its 'truth'. With respect to the historical disclosure of the essence of being and Dasein, while the early Heidegger thinks 'from the side of Dasein' of the temporal disclosure of the essential possibilities of Dasein's being in and through its choice of what to be, the later Heidegger thinks 'from the side of being' of the temporal disclosure of possibilities of being in and through the freedom of Dasein's being as *Lichtung*.

This is not a shift from action to contemplation. Sacrifice, as a way of being, is also a way of acting. Although it takes its departure (*Abschied*) from beings on the way to the preservation (*Wahrung*) of the favour of being, it does not renounce *Werken und Leisten im Seienden* ['doing and working in the midst of what-is']. But it is not consummated there; rather *sein Vollzug entstammt der Inständigkeit, aus der jeder geschichtliche Mensch handelnd - auch das wesentliche Denken ist ein Handeln - das erlangte Dasein für die Wahrung der Würde des Seins bewahrt* ['its consummation comes from the inwardness out of which historical man by his actions - essential thinking is also an act - dedicates the Da-sein he has won for himself to the preservation of the dignity of being'] (WM, 50/390). As an act, such origivative thinking (*anfängliche Denken*) is a thanking (*Danken*) which, through the departing nature (*abschiedliche Wesen*) of sacrifice, brings to human word what the silent speaking of the 'word of being' gives to be thought. It is the act which occurs when the thinker has become strikingly like a *biwort* to the word:

Das anfängliche Denken ist der Wiederhall der Gunst des Seins, in der sich das Einzige lichtet und sich ereignen läßt: daß Seiendes ist. Dieser Wiederhall ist die menschliche Antwort auf das Wort der lautlosen Stimme des Seins. Die Antwort des Denkens ist der Ursprung des menschlichen Wortes, welches Wort erst die Sprache als die Verlautung des Wortes in die Wörter entstehen läßt.

[Origivative thinking is the echo of being's favour wherein the unique clears a space for itself and occurs: that what-is is. This echo is man's answer to the word of the soundless voice of being. The speechless answer of thinking is the source of the human word, which is the prime cause of language as the enunciation of the word in words.] (WM, 49-50/389)²¹

The word of the thinker, therefore, corresponds to the word, the truth, of being, if, that is, it is adequate to that truth. And if it is adequate, if it is right in the sense that it 'rings true', then it is beckoned on by the voice that brought it forth (WM, 51/391). The source of the human word that rings true is an ongoing correspondence, an ongoing attempt to be adequate to being.

One could say that essential thinking, as a mode of being, is truly adequate when it is *abgeschieden* and *ohne war umbe*, when it parts or detaches itself from what-is and when it has no purpose, since *die Sucht nach Zwecken verwirrt die Klarheit der angstbereiten Scheu des Opfermutes, der sich die Nachbarschaft zum Unzerstörbaren zugemutet hat* ['the search for purpose dulls the clarity of awe, the spirit of sacrifice ready prepared for dread, which takes upon itself kinship with the imperishable'] (WM, 50-1/390). Readiness for dread endures the terror of the abyss, and

this enduring grants the possibility of awe. Awe is before the experience of being, the experience that what-is is, which is also the experience of the vastness of that which lets what-is be (being itself). The courage for dread knows *im Abgrund des Schreckens den kaum betretenen Raum des Seins, aus dessen Lichtung erst jegliches Seiende in das zurückkehrt, was es ist und zu sein vermag* ['in the abyss of terror, the all-but untrodden region of being, from whose 'clearing' everything that 'is' first returns into what it is and is able to be'] (WM, 47/386).

This hardly entered region of being bestows the lighting that allows beings to be what they are and what it is possible for them to be. Its clearing establishes the space of disclosure or unconcealment. But the clearing within which unconcealment takes place is Dasein itself. Thus, this region of being, in clearing, must bestow the essence of Dasein as clearing. The abyss, then, in granting awe as the experience that what-is is, and so the experience of being as the other to beings, grants the possibility of understanding what beings are and may be, where that understanding gives the essence of Dasein. This is not to say that Dasein is first granted its essence in the experience of the abyss, but that, in this experience, it comes to know what grants its essence. Enduring the abyss, Dasein comes to know, in awe, the hidden source of itself as clearing, which is also and simultaneously the source of the being (presence) of beings. This source is the *kaum betretenen Raum des Seins* from whose lighting all that is returns into itself.

For Eckhart, the source of both intelligibility and being is, ultimately, the nothing as the trackless abyss of the Godhead. This is the undifferentiated unity in which all things are contained in principle, and, as such, it also the simplicity of the divine intellect, identical with the pure idea. It is the emptiness in which the Word is eternally being conceived. In itself, it corresponds to the region (*regio*) of the intellect where 'all things are in all things' (*sunt omnia in omnia*). In union with God, the intellect, in breaking through to this region, returns all things to the unity of their hidden ground. Eckhart does not describe the abyss of the Godhead as terrifying, although *wüste* and *einöde* are hardly comforting terms, but breaking through to the abyss of the Godhead does require that the soul endure the nothing which is absolutely other to all that is, that it surpass every *ratio* under which the ground of beings may be conceived. In this surpassing, the soul passes into a hidden region where everything returns to itself in pure inwardness. This inwardness is

nothing 'subjective', but is the essential ground of all being, the condition for the possibility of being in the sense of *esse hoc et hoc*. That condition is the empty space of simple unity, known to the intellect bold enough to venture into the desert, to venture beyond all names to the naked being of God. This is the *durchbruch* and *widerruk*, the *reditus* in which the intellect takes all with it into its unity, into the pure abiding in itself of simple truth.

The place to which the intellect then returns, however, which is also the simple and empty space of itself as the ground of all being, as well as the source of freedom and the place where the soul receives grace, is the unity from which all division, and primordially, the division between being and understanding, between that which is, and that which, in knowing, receives and conceives what is ('subject' and 'object'), breaks out. In this breaking out, the unity is broken up, and through the break 'truth' is both hidden and revealed. The initial break of the ground's identity, its original division into two, first bestows the nothingness of the intellect standing in a receptive difference from being. Here God, as the *esse omnium*, is first God, and here all creatures come to be, for only where the intellect is differentiated from the *esse omnium*, while yet being related to it in its ground, can anything that in any sense 'is' 'be' what it is; only then is it unconcealed as such. That includes 'God', even as *ipsum esse*. As Fichte knew, any determination of the infinite, including even its determination as infinite, immediately destroys its infinite indeterminacy. And yet nothing breaks out, nothing becomes manifest, without this destruction.

As that in which manifestation takes place, the intellect, as the innermost essence of the soul, is, like Dasein, a clearing in which what-is comes to be, not only in its actuality but also in its possibility, since the intellect, in grasping being, grasps the ideas of things. It grasps what they may be in addition to what they are, or, rather, it grasps what they are in essential relation to what they may be. From the perspective of the 'Postscript', that the nothingness in which *omne ens qua ens fit* is the nothingness of Dasein (WM, 40/377) would mean that the *ens* becomes what it is in the reception where, in response to the silent speaking of being which 'includes' possibilities of being, the word is conceived in the emptiness of Dasein. In order to conceive, Dasein must receive, so there is decidedly a 'given', but the givenness of that given lies in the inwardness of Dasein, which is also the inwardness of all things. It lies

in the unity, in the sense of essential belonging together, of being and thinking, a unity that 'occurs' in the being of Dasein. This is the unity of being itself, which bestows being (presence) at the same time as it opens the space of Dasein. This event, the event of being, is the essential happening of truth. One might then even be forgiven the license of saying that Dasein is a kind of clearing in the wilderness of the Godhead.

The word of the original thinker, therefore, the individual who thinks originatively and thus 'poietically', is, when conceived in response to the word of being, part of the coming to pass of truth. Where the thinker thinks for the sake of this conception, he dedicates himself to the preservation of the truth of being. This dedication is original thanking. It is the nobility of poverty (*Adel der Armut*) and the freedom of sacrifice (*Freiheit des Opfers*), the possibility of which is preserved by the favour (*Gunst*) of being, which bestows upon man the unique relation that allows him to expend his essence for the sake of being (WM, 49-50/389-90). For Heidegger, as for Hegel, genuine thinking is devotion, *Andacht*. As an act, it arises from the inward poverty where, for Eckhart, the noble soul surrenders its being to the voice that speaks in the innermost depths of that being. And for Eckhart, too, this dedication of being to being, originating as it does from the ground of the soul, is born of the abyss of freedom (WM, 49/389). Insofar as this involves a devotion to the other to beings in the midst of what-is, the similarity between Heidegger and Eckhart is an essential and not a merely analogical one. The difference, on the other hand, is not essential, but particular. It rests in the fact that Heidegger is thinking of such devotion in terms of his own task, the task of the thinker. That does not mean that only the thinker is capable of the acting born of devotion and sacrifice. Heidegger says essential thinking is *also* an act; he does not say it is the only act.

The interpretation of Heidegger suggested by the above comparisons may seem, at times, a bit violent. However, it is highly instructive to set some of Heidegger's comments in *Was ist Metaphysik?* beside those of two contemporary philosophers with whom he was involved in conversation (both literally and metaphorically) during his life, Max Scheler and Edmund Husserl. In the first place, many of Heidegger's statements about being and nothing in relation to the question concerning the ground of metaphysics seem to have been heavily influenced by Scheler, if not taken directly from him. In *On the Eternal in Man* (1921), Scheler says, for

example, that the first self-evident insight of philosophy is 'that *there is something* (in general) or, to put it more acutely, that *there is not nothing*', where 'nothing' denotes 'absolute nothing' before the distinction between essence and existence. He goes on to say that this insight is the object of the ultimate philosophical wonder, that it requires humility and that it is only granted to those who are prepared to look into the 'abyss of absolute nothing'. What is most interesting for the interpretation of Heidegger that I am suggesting, however, is that, for Scheler, this first insight leads to the second insight that there is an absolute being, seen through the 'relative nothingness of contingent and finite beings' (pp. 98-102).

While Scheler's theological concern, at this stage of his thought, is with a transcendent absolute being (*Seiende*), Husserl's phenomenological investigation in *Ideas I* sets out to examine 'pure consciousness' as 'absolute being' (*Sein*). This is the 'new region of being' (*Seinsregion*) won through the completed phenomenological 'disconnection' (*Ausschaltung*) or *epochē* of the 'world of things'.²² §49 is thus entitled *Das absolute Bewußtsein als Residuum der Weltvernichtung* ['Absolute Consciousness as a Residuum of Nullifying the World'] (p. 114). This absolute and pure consciousness is gained (although in another sense it is always there) through a radical phenomenological reduction consisting in disregarding or turning away from (*Absehen von*) the whole world (p. 120), and it is 'wholly closed within itself and yet without any boundaries (*ohne Grenzen*) which could distinguish it from another region' (p. 121). And like Eckhart's pure intellect and the 'all but untrodden region of being' that Heidegger speaks of, it is the most fundamental condition for the possibility of what-is.

Also apposite in this context is Heidegger analysis of Schelling in his commentary on Schelling's *Of the Essence of Human Freedom*, where the issue of the self-revelation of God in man and creation is associated with the question of freedom. For Schelling, God only comes to 'exist' through such revelation, and the revelation involves a breaking up of the simple identity (the ground) of God which is at the same time a manifestation of that identity, a self-manifestation of God (see SA, §18). For Eckhart, the ground of God corresponding to the ground of the soul is, as the undifferentiated identity of being itself, the condition for the possibility of all things, their belonging together in a unity. It is both hidden and revealed in its identity through the free act of creation, the act in which God is first God and creatures first come to be. The soul's own freedom

to be, a freedom fully achieved only when it binds itself to the action, the be-ing, of God, rests in that ground where it is already conjoined with the source of what is.

Keeping all this in mind, it is surely significant that Heidegger says, in *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*:

die Besinnung auf den Wesenszusammenhang zwischen Wahrheit und Freiheit bringt uns dahin, die Frage nach dem Wesen des Menschen in einer Hinsicht zu verfolgen, die uns die Erfahrung eines verborgenen Wesensgrundes des Menschen (des Daseins) verbürgt, so zwar, daß sie uns zuvor in den ursprünglich wesenden Bereich der Wahrheit versetzt.

['consideration of the natural affinity between truth and freedom induces us to pursue the question as to the nature of man in one of its aspects - an aspect vouched for by our experience of a hidden ground in man's nature and being, so that we are transported in advance into the original living realm of truth'.] (WW, 15/332)

Freedom is the freedom to reveal something open, and it rests in that hidden ground in which being is already disclosed to Dasein. In that ground, Dasein belongs to being, but the belonging only comes to *be*, i.e. to exist as actual, when it is unconcealed, when truth as Dasein, the open space of unconcealment, comes to pass. As Heidegger says in the Schelling commentary:

Wir wissen nur, was wir anschauen. Wir schauen nur an, was wir sind; wir sind nur das, dem wir zugehören. (Diese Zugehörigkeit aber ist nur, indem wir sie bezeugen. Diese Bezeugung aber geschieht nur als Da-sein).

[We know only what we intuit. We intuit only what we are; we are only that to which we belong. (But this belonging is only by our bearing witness to it. This bearing witness, however, only occurs as Da-sein, human being.)]
(SA, 97/56).

To speak in the language of *Sein und Zeit*, Dasein can only disclose beings because being is disclosed to it in its essence, which means because it is disclosed to itself in its own being. Through that disclosedness (*Erschlossenheit*), Dasein understands being as possibility and actuality, and in this understanding beings are 'lit up'. But the understanding of being as possibility and actuality is also the source of Dasein as a free being. And the understanding of being that establishes the disclosedness of Dasein, and thus establishes its ability to unconceal beings in their being, to let be what-is, is granted to Dasein in the ground of its being, so that Dasein (to speak now away from the language of *Sein und Zeit*) corresponds to being in its ground. This is also a correspondence between nothing and nothing. Being, in itself, apart from beings, is nothing. Dasein, in itself, apart from beings, is also nothing. But this nothing is the emptiness within which beings are unconcealed. As

such, it is the ground of all that is.

A ground is both that which makes something possible, and that on the basis of which, or in reference to which, something is comprehensible. As such, it is *das Woraufhin des primären Entwurfs* ('the upon-which of a primary projection') constituting the meaning of something (SZ, 324). Nothing is the ground of what-is as a whole because nothing must already have been projected in order for what-is as a whole to come into view. The meaning of what-is as a whole is then determined on the basis of nothing, because it is in the light of, or, in this case, perhaps it would be better to say, 'in the darkness of', nothing that what-is in totality is comprehended. It is therefore nothing that permits the process of the unconcealment of beings, their revelation as beings. Nothing is the veil of being both because this process is what Heidegger sometimes calls being, in the sense of presencing, and because nothing hides that which permits the presencing of what is present. In the *Nachwort* to *Was ist Metaphysik?*, this is called being itself.

It is essential, though, not to consider the 'it' that bestows being upon what-is as another being of some sort, whether a substance or a subject. In a sense, when that which allows the presencing of what is present is considered as being itself, it is also just presencing considered in itself. It is be-ing in itself, without relation to beings. This is not to say that being ever 'is' or 'comes to presence' (west) without beings. But it can be considered in itself, although it never comes to presence as such, and it can then be thought of as that 'within' which all that comes to pass is already comprehended. Whether considered as nothing or as being itself this ground and end of beings, the ultimate 'meaning' of beings as that in reference to which they are and are comprehensible, is never fully visible in itself. The last end of being lies, for Heidegger as for Eckhart, in the darkness of that which makes all things possible.

If one puts the same question to Heidegger as he puts, in 1929, to Christian theology, how that which comprehends all being can have a relation to nothing, the answer has to be, as it is for Eckhart, that it is the opposite of nothing by the mediation of being. By means of the (finite) coming to presence of beings, the source of that coming to presence, the pure act of presencing, considered in itself, 'appears', hiddenly, as the negation of negation, the completion and fullness of being. On the other hand, it can also be said that this hidden ground of

being is also the opposite of being, in the sense of what-is, by the mediation of nothing.

Clearly, what grounds the totality of what-is, and is, therefore, primordial ground, cannot itself 'have' a ground. If the ground of being, as the wholly other to what-is, is nothing, then, *Nichts ist ohne Grund* ['nothing is without ground (reason)'] (SG, *passim*). As what makes something possible in its totality, the upon-which of meaning, however, a ground is also what gathers something into a unity while at the same time being other to it. It is the principle that gathers together different things into the wholeness of an articulated unity. It is then the principle of the identity of difference, the principle that reconciles difference into synthesis. Nothing does not itself appear as this principle, but as that from which the principle emerges in its primordial form, as being. Nothing lets being 'be', or rather, it lets *beings* be, and this letting is itself being as presencing. The identity of all things is being as ground, but if the ground of being is nothing, then this means that being is without ground, since being then has nothing as its ground. Because being is primordial grounding, the primal gathering principle, being is ground-like (*grundartig, grundhaft*) (SG, 90), and being and ground are in some sense the same, but because being, precisely as primordial grounding, cannot itself have a ground, being is at the same time the abyss. *Sein und Grund: das Selbe. Sein: der Ab-grund* (SG, 93). Nothing grounds the letting of letting-be. The letting 'merely' lets. In response to this letting, it can only be said, *Es gibt Sein*.

If the letting is comprehended as ground-less, in that it is seen to be comprehensible only in terms of nothing, then it must be understood as determined by nothing. But being determined by nothing is the meaning of *freedom*, and what is understood as determined by nothing is called *free*. Being, as groundless letting, is *das Freie*, the free. While beings need the 'permission' and com-mission of being to be, being itself, as that which gives and is this allowance, is in itself permitted and committed by nothing. The being of beings is the free gift of being.

The way this letting occurs, the way *Es gibt Sein*, is not, however, arbitrary. *Die Freiheit des Freies besteht weder in der Ungebundenheit der Willkür, noch in der Bindung durch bloße Gesetze* ['The freedom of the free consists neither in unconstrained arbitrariness nor in constraint through mere laws'] (TK, 25/25). The free, being as letting, cannot be said to be determined by laws if these are conceived as other to it, for the other to

being is nothing. On the other hand, the way the letting occurs is not merely chaotic. It is an-archic in a literal sense, since being does not have an *archē*, a first principle or ground, but is *archē* as primordial grounding. The sending of being, then, does not have laws, but is itself law as dispensation (*nomos*) (Hb, 114-5/238-9). The giving of being is also the giving or dispensing of law (*nemein*), a giving constrained by nothing outside of itself.²³

As is the case for Eckhart, then, being is groundless ground, undetermined by anything other than itself and thus free, and yet this very freedom is the source of law. Life is without why, but it is not therefore chaotic. The just man, who binds himself to the life that is without why, yet binds himself to the source of law. This source cannot be 'God', since the truly just man does not take 'God' as an end, but is that hidden ground in the depths of the soul which calls it to an absolute freedom of being, while at the same time directing it to a necessity of being. This free but necessary directing of being is established, for Eckhart, in the individual who establishes himself outside the realm of purpose and will. It is established in the person who is *abegescheiden* and *gelāzen*, who lives groundlessly from the ground, and thus lives as life lives. Such a person is attuned to the groundless ground of being in an essential way.

However, in *Heidegger and Aquinas*, John Caputo notes that Johannes Lotz²⁴ sees a strong point of dissimilarity between Heidegger's and Eckhart's conceptions of being as groundless ground:

In Lotz's view the critical flaw in Heidegger's account of Being as ground is his notion of being as a groundless ground, as a veritable abyss (*Ab-grund*). Being is indeed an abyss, Lotz holds, only if one means thereby that Being is a ground which rejects any ground other than itself, that is Being is self-grounding (*ens a se*), a *principium sine principio*, as Meister Eckhart says. For Being in contradistinction to beings is the absolute fullness of all possible ways to be, and so there can be nothing other than itself upon which it is founded. If there were, Being would not be Being. But this is clearly not Heidegger's view. For Heidegger takes Being as a ground which is altogether lacking in any ground, internal or external to itself. (p. 214)

It is not clear, though, what this difference amounts to when, on the one hand, being itself is for Eckhart wholly lacking in any purpose other than itself, and, on the other hand, being for Heidegger sends itself in a law-like way. In both cases, being is both free and necessary, in that it 'acts' from nothing other than its essential nature, which nature necessarily remains a hidden ground and a mystery. In that case, it can be said for Heidegger, too, that being is self-grounding, for what is an

'internal' ground if not the necessity of something's nature? But to say that something is self-grounded is necessarily to say, with Aristotle, that at a deeper level it is ungrounded, not, strictly speaking, a self-caused cause, but an uncaused cause. If the answer to Aristotle's question, What causes the self that causes itself? is: nothing but itself, then all that can be said of it in truth is that it is because it is, and for no other reason.

Furthermore, if one takes Eckhart's formulations seriously, without making any *a priori* decisions about 'what Eckhart really means' in distinction from his 'hyperbolic' way of speaking,²⁵ then the end of being is for him *genuinely* hidden; it is not 'God' in any sense that truly makes sense. If all that can be said can be said clearly, then this, the sense of the world which lies outside the world, cannot be said. That does not require passing over it in silence, for it can still be referred to, but only in the manner of hinting and beckoning.²⁶ 'God' can then only be a word that speaks in this hinting manner, a poetic word, a beckoning messenger of divinity, or of being as the holy. But these words, too, are only indications, referring to something that remains in itself unknown and unknowable, as Eckhart says.

The above quotation from *Heidegger and Aquinas* expresses the view of Lotz rather than of Caputo, but in *The Mystical Element in Heidegger's Thought*, Caputo does himself adopt a similar position. He says here that whereas for Eckhart God is a loving father as well as 'a plenum of Being, goodness, and intelligibility', Heidegger's being is not loving or benevolent, nor is it a plenum of intelligibility, since 'inasmuch as it is a process of *a-letheia*, being is necessarily a process of emerging out of a primary and ineradicable core of concealment (*lethe*)' (p. 247). I have tried to show both that there is a sense in which transcendental terms like *ens*, *verum* and *bonum* apply to Heidegger's conception of being, and that there is a sense in which they do not apply to Eckhart's conception of the Godhead. In *both* cases, there is a 'primary and ineradicable core of concealment', if, that is, one takes seriously Eckhart's claim that the ground of God is unknowable, and that every determination of it is simultaneously a manifestation and a falsification, simultaneously both true and not true.

It is this belief, which by its very nature also necessitates the lack of any firm dogmatic belief, any claim to 'absolute truth', that lends to Eckhart's writings, and especially but not exclusively his vernacular

writings, their unique tone of a constant struggle with the ambiguity and difficulty of language, a tone that Heidegger shares. As Frank Tobin says:

If one assumes that God is nameless, that our hold on him through words is more tenuous than supposed, say, by those following Thomas, then in attempting to describe him and one's union with him through what is divine in oneself one will lay much less claim to being 'dogmatic'. One will not suppose that one's formulations of religious truths attain a degree of accuracy and completeness which require that they be considered somehow exclusive.²⁷

This point about 'religious truths', moreover, is actually a point about truth itself. No determination captures the absolute; *omnis determinatio est negatio*.

It is true that Heidegger's notion of 'the groundless play of Being', 'far from being a plenum of intelligibility . . . is equiprimordially unintelligible' (*Mystical Element*, p. 247), but the same can be said for the modeless abyss of the Godhead. In that case, the *principium sine principio* is also, when followed into its depths, a ground that, like Heidegger's being, 'does not admit of explanation'. The 'explanation' which is truly 'final' for Eckhart is not being, nor the good, nor the one, but the hidden ground of being, the good, and the one - which is God only knows what. In the end, it is only itself, and acts only for the sake of itself. This 'acting for the sake of itself' is the genuine sense of 'groundless play'. That the destiny of being (*Seinsgeschick*), the self-sending of being in time, is a child that plays does not mean, for Heidegger, that it is chaotic and idiotic, but that the play is for the sake of itself, and has no other purpose. *Es spielt, weil es spielt. Das «Weil» versinkt im Spiel. Das Spiel ist ohne «Warum»* ['It plays because it plays. The 'because' sinks in the play. The play is without 'why'] (SG, 188). The self-revelation of being, which Heidegger here thinks of historically, is innocent of any motive other than itself, as is the *Selbstoffenbarung Gottes* in Schelling's conception, and the *ebullitio* or *üzfliezen* of God in Eckhart's. Life is without why because it is its own why, and to live as life lives is to live in receptive accord with a be-ing whose ultimate end, for Eckhart, too, is 'inscrutable' (*Mystical Element*, p. 248). It is to become innocent of motive, like a little child.

As to the question of 'benevolence', that God is 'love' and the 'good' must be set against statements like *wer dá spræche, daz got guot wære, der tæte im als unrehte, als ob er die sunnen swarz hieze* ['whoever would say tht God is good would be treating him as unjustly (also 'unrightly', i.e. erroneously) as though he were calling the sun black'] (DW I, 148/257). Again, the profoundly analogical nature of every determination must be

given its full weight. And yet the determinations are not wholly meaningless. God is in some sense, for Eckhart, the source of every perfection, of every grace with which life is endowed, and is therefore the proper object of devotion and reverence. But then Heidegger's being bestows the favour that grants to Dasein the dignity of its essence in every respect, the appropriate response to which is thanking and sacrifice, and this understanding of being must be set against being as 'inscrutable play'.

This is not to say that Eckhart's and Heidegger's conceptions are identical in every way - they are not - but seeing the genuine differences requires that one see, first, the extent of the similarity. This endeavour is not aided by the nostalgia of any Christian apologetic that would prefer to reduce everything radical in Eckhart's thought to the comforting platitudes of dogmatic theology. The need of the times (a need only felt, admittedly, by those for whom 'God' has become a problem) is also not served by such a move. It was in response to that need, the need of a god-less age, that Heidegger searched out possibilities for the future, within, for instance, the negative theology of Meister Eckhart. Searching out, in the past, possibilities for the future is never a matter of simple return. It requires transformation, and there can be no doubt that Heidegger transforms the elements of Eckhart's thought that he appropriates. However, there is, to begin with, an essential and not merely superficial correspondence between Heidegger and Eckhart with respect to the matter (*Sache*) of thought, and it is that correspondence which makes the appropriation a fruitful one. To miss the correspondence by levelling off the more challenging, and at times even disturbing, edges of Eckhart's thought is to dismiss what is genuinely valuable in the dialogue.

R.S. Gall, whose evaluation of the Christian tradition is very different from that of Caputo, also misses this correspondence when he says:

The traditionally pious way of unobstructed vision, of cleanliness and purity, implied in otherworldly ideas and ideals or the antiseptic procedures of science knows what is happening . . . it is a way ruled out for Heidegger by Nietzsche and Hölderlin; theirs (and his) is a twilight vision ruled over by an enigmatic, chaotic god such as Dionysus (Hölderlin, Nietzsche) or a tricky messenger who grants favor - or leads astray, one cannot be sure . . . There is much danger in such a vision; not surprisingly, too much danger for theologians: even a mystic is to be preferred to Heidegger. (*Beyond Theism and Atheism*, p. 33)

He adds, in a note to this passage, 'John D. Caputo . . . much prefers the

plenum of being, goodness, and intelligibility that is Meister Eckhart's lovable God to Heidegger's inscrutable being and *Ereignis*' (p. 38). There is, however, much more affinity between Eckhart's God in relation to the unknowable Godhead and Heidegger's being, as presencing, in relation to his 'inscrutable being' than Caputo allows. Moreover, while the twilight gods of Nietzsche and Hölderlin are undoubtedly far removed from the God of any Christian theologian, the notion that the 'traditionally pious way' consists in 'unobstructed vision' is an absurd oversimplification, not only with regard to the thought of Eckhart, but also with respect to a major part of the Christian theological tradition in general.

Gall locates what he sees as the heart of the difference between Heidegger and any Christian theology in the concept of faith. 'Faith,' he claims is . . . secure (in its affirmation) even where it is unsure of its "conception" of God (as in various negative theologies, or those driven by the "Protestant Principle")' (p. 27). But affirmation and conception are not as easily separated as that. It is not easy to see what is affirmed when 'God' is said to be so wholly unknowable that not even 'God' is really an appropriate term. If affirmation just amounts to saying that there is something there which is being spoken of, the same can be said in the case of Heidegger's *Sein*, and all his rewritings of it (*das Seyn*, *das Geviert*, *das Ereignis* etc.). More importantly, Heidegger thinks of the kind of affirmation in which human beings try to make themselves secure and certain as being primarily an act of the will, and Eckhart's notion of giving up grounds, of being *âne* any *warumbe* including God, involves a way of being that establishes itself outside any self-securing position. If there is nonetheless a certain calmness and peace in this state of *gelâzenheit*, the same can be said for Heidegger's own notion of *Gelassenheit*, as well as for his notion of sacrifice. In both cases, the individual is established outside the realm of desiring personal security, and in both cases, being established outside this realm entails the achievement of a kind of serenity, a peaceful accord with being which is not indifference but a 'released' concern for being. As to the slighting use of the term 'mystic' in reference to Eckhart, one might quote Heidegger's own response to the possible (pejorative) application of the label 'mystic' to Schelling, or to Eckhart or Boehme: *aber damit ist angesichts geistigen Geschehens und wirklicher denkerischer Schöpfung nichts gesagt* ['nothing is said by that with regard to the spiritual occurrence and the true creation of thought'] (SA, 204/117).

One would not, on the other hand, want to overemphasize the similarities either, at the expense of the differences. For one thing, while, for Eckhart, it is not easy to discern the other to beings in and through beings, so that here, too, being must be wrested from appearance through a kind of resolve (the line between resolve and openness being not a simple one, in that openness also requires application and overcoming), that other does not exactly hide or withdraw itself, as it does for Heidegger. It must be both obscured and revealed in beings, but it has no love of obscuring, no love of hiding. If the *deus* is *absconditus* here, that is not a voluntary act. Moreover, where the soul turns away from beings and towards their source, there remains for it no uncertainty of revelation. God *must* pour himself out to the prepared soul. This returning of the turning is not so certain for Heidegger, as Caputo points out (*Mystical Element*, pp. 248-50).

But the location of this difference leads in a strange direction. Eckhart's notion that God has to turn to the soul that turns towards it is one of those supposedly hyperbolic pronouncements that brings Eckhart to the borders of heresy, whereas there is something deeply (and perhaps depressingly) orthodox in Heidegger's sense that salvation, in this case, the salvation of Western Dasein, can in no way be secured or guaranteed. Scheler may have been right to spot early on *eine neue Form von finsterem Calvinismus* in Heidegger's understanding of being.²⁹ More basically, though, the idea that the other deliberately conceals itself while revealing itself, that its traces in the world are intentionally obscure so that only those who have eyes to see, may see is not without representatives in the Christian tradition. Pascal, whose shadow is unmistakable in *Sein und Zeit*, provides an obvious example. And he does nothing more unorthodox than take seriously the Old Testament line, *Vere tu es Deus absconditus*.³⁰ Furthermore, although it may be true that Eckhart's God is, in the end, a safer bet than Heidegger's *Ereignis*, that is not true of every conception of God in the Western tradition. The thought that the being of man is staked on the unpredictable turns in the play of *Ereignis* may not produce more of a shudder than the thought of its being submitted to the equally inscrutable twists of that arch-God of history, Jehovah, or even to the Christian God who breaks into history like an unwanted and unexpected intruder into a seemingly secure realm, a thief in the night, as it were.

Caputo does actually allude to Heidegger's interest in the passage at

the beginning of I Thess. 5, which speaks of how 'the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night' (*Mystical Element*, p. 89). He does not note, however, that this passage also speaks of 'danger'; Luther's German reads: *Denn, wenn sie werden sagen: Es ist Friede, es hat keine Gefahr; so wird sie das Verderben schnell überfallen etc.* (I Thess 5:2). Having acknowledged Heidegger's interest in these verses, should one not also acknowledge the point that Heidegger's experience of being, in terms of the cohabitation of the danger and the saving power, and the need to be 'watchful' (*nüchtern*) has some strong affinities with orthodox Christian thought? The tradition is not homogeneous and Eckhart and his God do not represent the whole of it. In fact, on this point, Heidegger is more 'orthodox' than Eckhart.

And there is yet another problem here. Either Heidegger's *Ereignis* is wholly impersonal, in which case no analogy drawn from whatever counts as *Personsein* is proper to it, or it bears a stronger resemblance to 'God' than even some of the proponents of a similarity between Heidegger's thought and Christian theology have wanted to establish. In the former case, the ascription of *voluntas* to it is deeply problematic, and without such an ascription the idea that the self-withdrawal of being in the history of the West is something voluntary becomes untenable. The latter possibility, that there is in fact something person-like about the event of being (and time) will be taken up later on.

Still, I have no wish to gloss over the important fact that Eckhart generally thinks of 'God' as the most appropriate term for that which has no proper name, and Heidegger does not. For Heidegger, as Caputo notes, the Christian God is one historical sending, subordinate to *Sein* or *Ereignis*.³⁰ This is in line with the historical nature of Heidegger's thought. Eckhart, on the other hand, is a profoundly ahistorical thinker. He seems even to have little relation to Christian salvation history, and he stands in an age for which 'God', however conceived, is the right term for whatever is ultimate. But insofar as Heidegger's *Sein* or *Ereignis* can be seen as a historicised version of Eckhart's notion of God as *ipsum esse* or as the hidden source of being, it can also be seen as an enrichment and extension, rather than a denial, of that notion. In the end, it depends, of course, on what is meant by 'God'.

To clarify how Heidegger thinks through the notion of *esse* in terms of the historicity of truth, I will proceed now to a more detailed analysis of some of Heidegger's conceptions on this issue.

In the first place, the free giving that brings beings into unconcealment is what Heidegger calls truth. Being, as the groundless grounding that unconceals and lets be, is also primordial truth, and the revelation of beings in their being is the coming to pass of truth. In the giving in which being sends itself, though, it simultaneously holds itself back in itself. What is held back is the mystery, and it is revealed as such, i.e. as mystery, in the sending itself. Thus, in the free giving in which the coming to pass of truth occurs, there is a simultaneous concealment of that which frees, but in this revealing the concealment also comes to light as such. It is revealed as veiling; the revelation of the free unveils itself as that which frees in unveiling itself as the mystery. The veil of the mystery is not thereby penetrated, but is revealed precisely as a veil:

Alles Entbergen gehört in ein Bergen und Verbergen. Verborgen aber ist und immer sich verbergend das Befreiende, das Geheimnis. Alles Entbergen kommt aus dem Freien, geht ins Freie und bringt ins Freie . . . Die Freiheit ist das lichtend Verbergende, in dessen Lichtung jener Schleier weht, der das Wesende aller Wahrheit verhüllt und den Schleier als den verhüllenden erscheinen läßt.

[All revealing belongs within a harboring and a concealing. But that which frees - the mystery - is concealed and always concealing itself. All revealing comes out of the open, goes into the open, and brings into the open . . . Freedom is that which conceals in a way that opens to light, in whose clearing there shimmers that veil that covers what comes to presence of all truth and lets the veil appear as what veils.] (TK, 25/25)

The freedom of the occurrence of revealing, and so of truth, is a lighting that hides the source of itself, but also, in so doing, lets that source appear as a hidden one.

The one to whom it thus appears is Dasein. Dasein is the 'place', the *Da*, of the letting, the place of the happening of truth. Without Dasein, the coming to pass of truth, as the unconcealment of beings in their being, could not occur, as there would then be no 'there' within which it could manifest itself to itself, and so come to presence in and for itself. Dasein is therefore the being to which the free sending of being sends the gift of itself.

The freedom of Dasein, in turn, consists in its ability to receive this sending. It consists in the relation to being that allows Dasein to cor-respond to the appeal of being, and to free beings through such correspondence. This corresponding freeing can occur only because Dasein already corresponds to the free or open in its essence. It is in the depths of that essence that the mystery of *das Befreiende* dwells, for

Dasein is itself the setting-free (*freilegen*) of beings, and it is this on the basis of its own primordial projection into nothing. If this is the case, then the way the letting occurs, the way *Es gibt Sein*, where this determines the way beings appear to be, is also dependent upon the being of Dasein, for it will then be dependent upon the way Dasein is. The ways of being are simultaneously the ways of beings and of Dasein. The being of beings is thus dependent upon Dasein in terms of both existence and essence. The existence of beings, the fact that they are revealed as being at all, is dependent upon the existence of Dasein, upon the fact that *it is*, and the essence of beings, the way or ways that they are revealed to be, is dependent upon the essence of Dasein as the ways in which it is.

Caputo claims that this view of the relation between being and man in Heidegger's thought forms an aspect of the disanalogy between Heidegger and Eckhart, since in Eckhart's thought God does not need man in order to be brought 'into His "own"', but is, as the one, already the fullness of being. This disanalogy, Caputo notes, extends also to the relation between Eckhart and the German Idealists (*Mystical Element*, p. 105). However, there remains the stubborn fact that this 'fullness of being' which 'is' from the beginning does not and cannot be revealed without the division between God and soul which, in granting the nothingness of the intellect as a space for understanding, grounds the revelation of God in *creatura*. God is not 'God' without this division and the manifold that it gives rise to, and it is for this reason that Heidegger, in *Der Feldweg*, says:

Die Weite aller gewachsenen Dinge, die um den Feldweg verweilen, spendet Welt. Im Ungesprochenen ihrer Sprache ist, wie der alte Lese- und Lebemeister Eckehardt sagt, Gott erst Gott.

[The wide expanse of everything that grows and abides along the pathway is what bestows world. In the unspoken of its speech, there - as Eckhart, old master of letter and life, says - God is first God.]³¹

The antithetical moment of Eckhart's dialectic which says that where creatures end, there God begins to be, also must be taken into account, but creatures only 'end' with the being that can know their end, the being that can know the 'something' which is other to all that is, and of which all that is is in some way reminiscent. Heidegger's sentence actually captures both moments of this dialectic, for it suggests that God is first God where creatures begin *and* where they end, in what is suggested by them as wholly other to them. And that 'happens' only with man. The *durchbruch* may be nobler than the *ûzbruch*, but both happen only with the coming to be of understanding, taken in its broadest sense. This was the

fundamental insight of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, who also saw in their own way that what comes to be has, in a sense, been from the beginning - as, to be sure, Heidegger sees as well.

With respect to this last point, one cannot avoid the question that Heinrich Seuse raises in asking, in the *Büchlein der Wahrheit*, whether the being (*wesen*) of creatures is nobler in God or in itself.³² If, after all, it is in every way nobler in God, then it is hard to see what value there is in creation, in the original procession of the creature from God. Seuse's answer is that the being of the creature is nobler in itself, as it has to be if life as process is to have any meaning, and if the absolute is to be anything more than 'the night in which all cows are black'.³³ In this case the question about the 'need' of creation, which is equiprimordially the question about the 'need' of man, cannot be denied by any simple appeal to the self-sufficiency of being in itself as pure plenitude. In addition, if, as Eckhart claims, the 'now' of God is an eternity that comprehends past, present and future, then this very self-sufficiency surpasses all time precisely by including it, so that the completeness of *ipsum esse* does not rest in a having been from the beginning where 'beginning' is understood on the basis of a conception of time as the *nacheinander* of now-points. It rests, rather, in the self-identity of the *ens a se* as *alpha* and *omega*, the being which, as life, stretches itself out in time from potency to act, but which, considered in itself as *that which* realizes itself in time (as *Geist*, perhaps), is in its beginning and end and in-between - the same. This same is the timeless plenitude of being that has no 'need' of anything because it 'is' all things.

But the revelation of this same in time, which is simultaneously its coming to be, as God, or even as the one or being, does require that it part itself from that in and through which it reveals itself. This requires a de-parture of itself from itself such that it becomes, in a sense, 'dependent' upon the 'itself' from which it takes leave and with which it remains. If 'I' were not, then 'God', too, would not be, not as being or the one, and not as the divinity that may be read from the book of creation as the other to creation, and rests unspoken in the speech of what-is. The *ih̄t* which the world recalls depends for its recalling on the *ih̄t* for which the recalling occurs.

The freedom of *Dasein* consists, for Heidegger, in its ability to recall this *ih̄t* (or *Nichts*) as the other to beings, its ability to pass

from beings to being, and to do so in a variety of ways. This transcendence, however, has been named as the ground of meta-physics. The freedom of Dasein is meta-physical; it is a freedom for the passage from which metaphysics arises. The way of this passage is then the way of metaphysics. It is the way in which the being of beings and beings in their being are found. The particular determination of this way gives the manner of Dasein's correspondence to being, and this, in turn, gives the way that beings are discovered in their correspondence to being. Where being is ground, then, this determination, which is itself free, will determine the nature of the ground of beings, and how they are established to be by their relation to that ground. If ground is the primary projection that gives meaning, and if the question is about the being of beings as the ground of what-is as a whole, then the way this ground is determined will determine the meaning of what-is as a whole. It will determine the meaning of the world, since it is that in reference to which that meaning is decided. The meaning of the world is therefore dependent upon the way Dasein represents being, not in itself, for being is not representable in itself, but as the ground of beings, and this representation is dependent upon the nature of its transcendence.

Metaphysics, then, is a decision about the sense of the world. If 'the sense of the world must lie outside of the world', and if 'the feeling of the world as a limited whole is the mystical feeling',²⁴ then metaphysics as transcendence must be dependent, originally, upon a mystical feeling, for instance, the feeling (*Befindlichkeit, Stimmung*) of *Verwunderung*. It is dependent, that is, upon some sense of the *ih*t that, in relation to beings, is *nicht*, and yet makes itself manifest in such a way that it is also, even as absence, *nicht nichts*. That metaphysics moves everywhere in the realm of the truth of being without being able to reflect on that truth itself (WM, 44/382) means that metaphysics cannot think, with the mode of thought proper to it, the hidden source that makes transcendence possible, the source that also grants the openness of every possible way of being.

In his earlier works, as already indicated, Heidegger conceives this transcendence largely from the side of Dasein, as a self-projecting that establishes beings in one way or another. In *Vom Wesen des Grundes*, for instance, he speaks of transcendence in terms of three modes of grounding, the first of which, *Stiften* ['establishing'], is a function of a will (*Willen*) in which Dasein, existing for the sake of (*Umwillen*) possibilities

of itself, primordially projects a 'for-the-sake-of' (*Worumwillen*) in terms of which beings are discovered (WG, 103). This for-the-sake-of is then the upon-which of the primary projection of possibility that constitutes the meaning of what-is, and its projection determines Dasein's understanding.

World is defined here not as the totality of beings, but as the specific horizon within which that totality manifests itself. World is what Dasein transcends to in bringing itself before beings. It is the ground that Dasein projects or forms in the freedom of its transcendence towards possibilities of itself. World then means *ein Wie des Seins des Seienden* ['a how of the being of what-is'], rather than what-is itself (WG, 50-1). It is *das Seiende im Ganzen und zwar als das entscheidende Wie, gemäß dem sich menschliches Dasein zum Seienden stellt und hält* ['what-is in its totality as the definitive how in accordance with which human Dasein positions and holds itself with respect to what-is'] (WG, 56-7). The *Wie* of Dasein's surpassing to world, the world it throws in the willing that projects a 'for the sake of', establishes the form of the representation of beings 'in' that world. It establishes the way beings are freed. This must not be understood as if the world were just there as a totality of things-in-themselves over which Dasein then cast various 'subjective' nets. World is indeed a projection cast over what-is, but this *vorgängige Überwurf ermöglicht erst, daß Seiendes als solches sich offenbart* ['preceding 'casting over' first makes it possible for what-is as such to manifest itself'] (WG, 88-9).

In projecting, however, Dasein is also already in the midst of (*inmitten von*) beings not like itself. In order to surpass them, Dasein must already find itself, must already be situated (*sich befinden*) among beings, and this situating also belongs to transcendence, and thus to the project of the world in its 'that' and its 'how'. It belongs, therefore, to freedom. There are options here; Dasein can be situated in one way or another amongst beings, where this situating is one way that the nature of beings, the nature or 'worldhood' of the world as the horizon of beings opened up by care, is grounded. This being situated within, in which Dasein is already disposed, attuned, and preoccupied with beings, is the second mode of grounding, which Heidegger calls *Boden nehmen* ['gaining a footing'] (WG, 106-9).

The way beings are freed through this situated projecting determines both how they are grounded and the form of ground sought for them, the

kind of *Warum?* posed of them. It is, then, in the freedom of transcendence that the nature of ground is determined. As in *Was ist Metaphysik?*, transcendence turns out to be the ground of grounds, the reason for reasons, but since transcendence is rooted in freedom, it can equally well be said that *die Freiheit ist der Grund des Grundes* ['freedom is the reasons for reasons'] (WG, 126-7). Freedom is freedom *for* grounds, the ability to pose the *Warum?* and seek the *Weil*, the capacity to pose and answer questions. The fact of freedom determines the fact of this capacity, in that Dasein's asking 'why?' is rooted in its basic comprehension of 'rather than' (WG, 124-5), in its comprehension of *possibility*, and this is a function of freedom. The 'how' of the capacity is rooted in the 'how' of its freedom, in Dasein's transcending to one possibility or another.

The understanding of possibility in its 'that' and its 'how' is grounded, however, on the prior comprehension of being. Every *Warum?* moves within an already disclosed region of being, a region of truth. The understanding of being then establishes every question and contains the answer to all questions. Ontological truth, the third mode of grounding, is the manifestation of the being of a being. It is the manifestation of the being-structure or constitution of a being. That being-structure must in some way already be disclosed in any ontic investigation, so that all such investigation moves from the beginning in the uncomprehended light of this disclosure (WG, 114-17). At this stage of Heidegger's thought, the task of ontology is conceived as being the thematization of this already disclosed structure so as to bring it into explicit knowledge. The being-structure of any entity or region of entities is then both earlier and later; it is both the beginning and the end of any seeking to understand.

Heidegger's basic observation with respect to this mode of grounding is that, in order for any question to be raised about the nature of anything, that to which the question is addressed must already have made itself manifest or evident in some way. This becoming evident, or coming forth into unconcealment, is a more primordial form of truth than is the usual conception of truth as correspondence, because it forms the basis or principle for the articulation of any proposition, as well as for the structure of the entity to which the proposition is supposed to correspond. This prior unity is the source of both proposition and thing which Heidegger refers to in a later work, in a passage where he reflects upon the relationship between thing and sentence, and concludes:

Im Grunde gibt weder der Satzbau das Maß für den Entwurf des Dingbaues, noch wird dieser in jenem einfach abgespiegelt. Beide, Satz- und Dingbau, entstammen in ihrer Artung und in ihrem möglichen Wechselbezug einer gemeinsamen ursprünglicheren Quelle.

[Actually, the sentence structure does not provide the standard for the pattern of thing-structure, nor is the latter simply mirrored in the former. Both sentence and thing-structure derive in their typical form and their possible mutual relationship from a common and more original source.] (Hw, 8/24)

Primordial truth is actually the manifestness that gives this prior visibility and mutual relation. It gives the unity of being (presence) and thinking. It is the openness of being itself, which, as Reiner Schürmann points out, is *hen* as *henosis*, the primordial binding into one of *logos*.³⁵

Thus, although in *Vom Wesen des Grundes* Heidegger still takes his lead from *Dasein* in his conception of transcendence, being already manifests a certain priority. After all, if transcendence is a movement towards possibility, and if any such movement is enabled by the understanding of being, then being must be the 'source' or 'ground' of all possibility. And if, furthermore, the understanding of the being-structure of a being is rooted in an overtness in which *Dasein* finds itself from the beginning, then that overtness, which grants the possibility of both ontic and ontological truth, is prior to *Dasein*, though not in a temporal sense. It is only a short step from this to saying that being grants truth in granting to *Dasein* the openness of itself.

This examination of how Heidegger's 'turn' is prepared for in *Vom Wesen des Grundes* gives a clearer sense of how and why the later Heidegger thinks of being, or *Ereignis*, as the source of every possible way of being. This, in turn, deepens and enriches the correspondence between his and Eckhart's conceptions of being. For Eckhart, being itself is both the unified ground of what-is and the unified ground of the soul. In the first place, it is the unity from which every power of the soul flows out, and it is these powers, these *krefte*, that grasp, and so determine, the way beings are. In the second place, the flowing out of the soul from its unified ground into multiplicity is at the same time the flowing out of creatures from their unified ground. Heidegger's conception of the *Dasein:Sein:Seiende* relationship is not dissimilar, and this impinges upon his position within the idealist/realist debate. The ways of being of *Dasein* are inextricably bound up with the ways of being of the world, but this is not, nor was it ever for Heidegger, a matter of some 'subjectivist' projection, whether individual or social. *Dasein* and *Sein* belong together far too primordially for that. *Dasein's Verhaltungen* ['comportments'] are,

after all, ways of being, which determine, at the same time, ways of the being of beings. If, then, certain metaphysical conceptions of the ground of beings are 'based' in some way on the manifold ways of being of Dasein, which they have to be, this is not a matter of 'subjectivization', but simply of a finite disclosure of being, a disclosure of the being of Dasein 'and' the being of beings, where the 'and' should not be understood as linking together two genuinely distinct things, but as naming two moments of a single disclosure.

This means that Heidegger must never be understood as rejecting metaphysical determinations as 'subjective' in any simple sense. For instance, with respect to the mathematical ordering of the being of beings, the fact that the being of beings can be mathematical only because the being of Dasein can be so does not mean that mathematical conceptions are 'relative' or 'subjective' in a sense that would entail their being 'not really true'. On the contrary, *ta mathēmata*, as one disclosure of the being of beings is one disclosure of the truth of Dasein and beings. It is one disclosure of what being means, and it is not created or fabricated by Dasein as a self-assertive subject, but is evoked or called forth, and thus given, 'sent', by being itself. Insofar as a certain type of mathematical thinking is nonetheless part of the 'error' of Western history, the erroneous character of that error does not have to do with its being a 'merely human' invention or projection - that it is not - but in its mistakeness about its own essence, its failure to see itself as a mode of being, and not being itself. Mathematics, logic, science, technology: these are not false or mistaken, but they are finite ways of corresponding to being, where that very finitude gives the determinacy of their truth. Their nature is mistaken if one fails to see the necessary finitude of that truth, but it is no less mistaken if they are taken as false on account of that finitude. Both of these mistakes would rest, for Heidegger, on a misconstrual of the essence of truth.

The ways that being (the being of Dasein 'and' beings) is disclosed in these relations of man and what-is, therefore, in, for instance, the mathematical relation, yield aspects of what is called truth. In these relations, and many others, Dasein corresponds to the giving of being. After Heidegger has taken the step of conceiving Dasein as the recipient of what being gives to be thought, its freedom comes to mean its being capable of authentic response to this giving. That capability is the source of 'correspondence', and it is definitive of the being of Dasein as

the 'there' of being. W.J. Richardson summarizes this aspect of Heidegger's later thought in the following way:

[*Dasein*] is the *Da des Seins*, the there of Being among beings through which Being reveals itself. Being has need of its There, so that the revelation can take place. *Dasein*'s task is simply to let Being reveal itself in the finite mittance, to let Being be. Sometimes the revelation of Being to *Dasein* is conceived as a 'call' or 'hail' to *Dasein*. *Dasein*'s task is, then, to 'respond' to that call, to 'correspond' with it, to 'tend' Being in beings as the 'shepherd' of Being, to acquiesce to its own commitment in the e-vent of Being's self-revelation.³⁶

Given this conception of the dynamics of the *Sein:Dasein* relation, if world is in any sense still to be conceived as a project, it has to be one that is given by being. This does not by any means necessitate rejecting the analysis in *Vom Wesen des Grundes*, or in *Sein und Zeit* where it proceeds in similar terms, but it may require reinterpreting that analysis to uncover what is unthought in it, in Heidegger's case, what is thought only later. In that case, world and truth are in no sense relative to an arbitrary choice on the part of *Dasein*. Their relativity to *Dasein* consists only in their dependence upon it as the 'there' of being's sending.

Since this sending is law and gives law, *Dasein*'s correspondence to it will mean correspondence to the law of being, the same law that dispenses order to beings and holds them in that order. Authentic correspondence does not, however, come about of itself, but by way of a demand or claim made on *Dasein*, to which *Dasein*, in accordance with its freedom, can choose to respond and correspond, or not. The choice to respond to this claim involves a resolution on the part of *Dasein* to assist in the coming to presence of truth, a resolution to let truth be manifest, to participate in the allowance that lets beings be. Such resolve is the fundamental decision that both differentiates being from beings, and distinguishes being from appearance. It yields the discernment that opens the way for truth. In so far as the dispensing of truth is the dispensing of order, *Dasein*'s resolve for truth is a resolve for the discernment of this order. It is a resolve to hear the order of being, and to make that order manifest by corresponding to it in thought and word. If the rules of such correspondence are in any way like the rules of a game, the game nonetheless arises within the play, and interplay, of being and language. That play is not arbitrary. It is ruled by the way *Es gibt Sein*. Authentic correspondence consists in accordance with that rule, in following and being ruled by the always finite and always historical, always 'aspectival', truth of being. Convention is then originally a decisive coming together (*con-venire*) on aspects of being.

It belongs to the nature of the mystery that in the historical sending of being, and Dasein's correspondence to it, being draws away in itself each time that it manifests itself in beings. In *Der Spruch des Anaximander* (1946), Heidegger says, *Das Sein entzieht sich, indem es sich in das Seiende entbirgt* ['As it reveals itself in beings, being withdraws'] (Hw, 332/26). Unconcealing itself in beings, being conceals itself in itself, and this revealing concealing is the *epochē* of being. In each epoch of being's destiny, each mode of its sending of itself in beings while holding itself back in itself, 'world occurs', that is, a mode of world's worlding, a world, which is a way that what-is as a whole is disclosed, comes to light. The withdrawal of being in the bringing to light of the world of each epoch is the opening up of the realm of *Irre*:

Jedesmal, wenn das Sein in seinem Geschick an sich hält, ereignet sich jäh und unversehens Welt. Jede Epoche der Weltgeschichte ist eine Epoche der Irre.

[When being keeps to itself in its destining, world suddenly and unexpectedly comes to pass. Every epoch of world history is an epoch of errancy.] (Hw, 335/27)

Errance, in the sense meant here, does not arise as a result of some mistake on the part of human beings. It belongs to being's revealing of itself in beings, and so belongs to truth. The realm of errance is opened up by being itself, in its holding to itself in the truth of its essence while lighting itself up in the modes in which beings come to light, in the modes of truth, which are modes of being's own essence, but, by the very fact of being modes, are not that essence itself. When the essence of being, the essence of truth, is left unthought, the modes do not reveal themselves as modes but appear simply as truth, and this appearance, the presumption of the mode, gives rise to errance. Each world-historical epoch in the history of the *epochē* of being, therefore, is, as a mode of truth, simultaneously a mode of errance.

The root of errance is the darkening of being itself that belongs necessarily to the lighting-up of beings, the obscuring of the light of being in its granting of light to beings: *Die Unverborgenheit des Seienden, die ihm gewährte Helle, verdunkelt das Licht des Seins* ['The unconcealing of beings, the brightness granted them, obscures the light of being'] (Hw, 332/26). With respect to human being, the being whose essence is appropriated in this lighting process, the being 'in' whom beings are revealed, errance means wandering about in what-is, and wandering from one form of what-is as a whole to another, from one world to another, while forgetting the truth of world, the truth of being itself. The ecstatic

character of Dasein, as the ek-sistence that stands outside of itself in the truth of being, and is, therefore, the lighting or clearing in which beings can be, sustains the epochs of being (Hw, 334/27), and so sustains both the truth and the error which belong to them.

Because the *epochē* of being appropriates the ecstatic essence of Dasein in its hiding-revealing, to each epoch of being there corresponds an epochal determination of the essence of man. In that the ultimate truth of the essence of being remains hidden in each of these epochs of errancy, and is gathered up only in the ultimacy of that destiny, in the outermost point at the end of the history of being, the truth of the essence of man, which consists in the appropriateness of that essence to the truth of being, also remains hidden until that end.

It is not hard to see how the structure of epochal unconcealment in relation to its hidden source forms a historicized analogue to the structure of finite disclosure in relation to its hidden ground in the thought of Eckhart. For Eckhart, too, modes of being both reveal and conceal *ipsum esse*, which, as the pure plenitude of being that comprehends all possible ways of being, is both the source of every mode (*modus, wise*) of being, and, in itself, modeless. Moreover, this hidden source is simultaneously the ground of every *entium* and the ground of the soul, and the flowing out of the soul from its original unity into the multiplicity of its powers, ideas and images is also the flowing out of creatures from their original unity into the multiplicity of their distinct forms. It is the *Uzfliegen* of being to beings, the one to the many. But insofar as beings and the many are, and are one, they hiddenly reveal being/the one, for they are a function of the be-ing of being/the unifying of the one. Heidegger's modes of what-is as whole are also, insofar as they are and are one, a function of the happening of the unifying of being, of *hen* as *henosis*. The more original common source that binds together thing and sentence is also the source of the mutual possibilities of being that bind together world and Dasein in every respect. Also, while Eckhart thinks ahistorically, he does not think atemporally. Being itself includes all time, so that every form of being and unity in time must be a formation (heard verbally) of being and the one, which, considered in themselves, are timeless. Thus, once again, Heidegger's historicizing of such conceptions can be seen more as a thinking through and extension than a real destruction.

Given the equiprimordiality of the manifoldness of the soul and the

manifoldness of beings, the way the being of beings is revealed corresponds to a revelation of an aspect of the nature of the soul for Eckhart as well (although he does not, again, think this historically). But the ultimate nature of the soul lies in the was which includes all possibilities, of the soul 'and' of beings. This is the soul's beginning and end, which it finds in the *durchbruch* of the *widerruk*. Heidegger's version of this is the *Rückgang in den Grund der Metaphysik* at the 'end' of the destiny of being. Although that end, which is also a return to a simple origin, still remains essentially hidden, Heidegger's own thinking does seek to give some sense of the understanding of being and Dasein that may arise through it. To the extent that Dasein is here conceived as a pure emptiness capable of receiving the possible formations of being, while being is conceived as that which sends itself in sending these formations, the origin is not far from that of Eckhart. The return to it, which overcomes errance, consists in paying heed to the deepest mystery at the heart of the simultaneous revelation/concealment of being in beings, to that which holds itself back in unconcealing.

In *Zeit und Sein*, near the close of Heidegger's attempt to return to the origin, this mystery is thought in terms of *Ereignis*. *Ereignis* is the event that 'gives' time and being; it is the *Es* of *Es gibt Sein*. At this point in Heidegger's thought, being is the constancy of presencing, the process of arising, enduring and passing away, whose various modes are the historical phases or epochs of being. These are determined *aus der Weise, wie Es Sein gibt* [by 'the way in which It gives being'] (SD, 8/8), where the *Es* is now what holds itself back while sending being (presencing) in its various modes.

Being as presencing is not limited to the present. Rather, the time of being is the *in der Gegenwart, im Gewesen, in der Zukunft spielende Reichen von Anwesen* ['giving of presencing that prevails in the present, in the past, in the future'] (SD, 14/13), and it consists in the *Sich-einander-Reichen von Zukunft, Gewesen und Gegenwart* ['mutual giving to one another of future, past and present'] (SD, 14/14), and so in the unity of these three dimensions. The structure of the dimensionality of the time of being here is similar to that of the temporality of Dasein as *gewesend-gegenwärtigend Zukunft* ['a future which makes present in the process of having been'] (SZ, 326) in *Sein und Zeit*. This formula describes the fact that Dasein's present, the being towards of concerned being-in-the-world, is originated by the for-itself of its future that comes to pass, the for-

the-sake-of itself in the process of having been. Basically, Dasein's temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*), on the basis of which the Temporality (*Temporalität*) of being was to be determined, consists, in *Sein und Zeit*, in the unity of Dasein's meaning as care (*Sorge*), which is the articulated unity of intentional existence.

Sein und Zeit does not complete the project of working out the Temporality of being, but the time of being in *Zeit und Sein* is obviously based on the determination of Dasein's temporality in *Sein und Zeit*, insofar as it consists in a *lichtenden Reichen, als welches Ankunft die Gewesenheit, diese jene und beider Wechselbezug die Lichtung des Offenen erbringt* ['a reaching out that opens up, in which futural approaching brings about what has been, what has been brings about futural approaching, and the reciprocal relation of both brings about the opening up of openness'] (SD, 15/14-15). It will be noted that the primary temporal mode here, too, is the future. Presencing is primarily futural, primarily *approaching*, so that the time belonging to it is also a coming towards in the process of having been, an extension where the coming-to of the future and the having-been of the past give rise to each other in such a way as to bring about the openness of the present.

The unity of the time of being, the unity of presencing, and thus of time itself, of absolute time, it could be said, cannot be attributed to any one of these dimensions, since presence approaches, and so presencing 'occurs', in all of them:

Vielmehr beruht die Einheit der drei Zeitdimensionen in dem Zuspiel jeder für jede. Dieses Zuspiel erweist sich als das eigentliche, im Eigenen der Zeit spielende Reichen, also gleichsam als die vierte Dimension - nicht nur gleichsam, sondern aus der Sache.

[Rather, the unity of time's three dimensions consists in the interplay of each towards each. This interplay proves to be the true extending, playing in the very heart of time, the fourth dimension, so to speak - not only so to speak, but in the nature of the matter.] (SD, 15-16/15)

The unity of the past, present, and future of being is, then, the fourth dimension of time.

The *Es* that gives being also gives the time which belongs to it, and to which it belongs. This 'It' is nothing lying at hand. It is not a thing, but an event, the 'event of appropriation' (*Ereignis*) in which both being and time come into their own (SD, 20/19). This event is not an occurrence, but that which enables occurrence. It is the unfolding of time in which presencing comes to pass. It is the moment of being.

As such, it must also be the moment of Dasein, for being as

presencing is the approaching, the becoming present in the sense of coming into presence, of that which concerns, and such an approaching can only occur in the event of there being concern. Presencing occurs only 'for' that being whose being is essentially care (*Sorge*): Dasein. Being as presencing is thus eventuated only in the event of Dasein. This is actually a tautologous statement, for it just says that being is only there in being-there.

The unity of Dasein as care, as the letting-presence that lets be, is the unity of its temporality. Dasein is care in that it has a certain kind of time, in that it comes towards itself concernfully in the process of coming to pass. This temporality, the time of Dasein, echoes the time of being because Dasein, as a being that understands being, stands within the time of being, within genuine time. In Dasein, i.e. with the event of Dasein, time and being are first opened up. The event, the opening up of time and being, thus appropriates the essence of human being. It brings human being into its own:

Im Sein als Anwesen bekundet sich der Angang, der uns Menschen so angeht, daß wir im Vernehmen und Übernehmen dieses Angangs das Auszeichnende des Menschseins erlangt haben. Dieses Übernehmen des Angangs von Anwesen beruht aber im Innestehen im Bereich des Reichens, als welches uns die vierdimensionale eigentliche Zeit erreicht hat.

Sofern es Sein und Zeit nur gibt im Ereignen, gehört zu diesem das Eigentümliche, daß es den Menschen als den, der Sein vernimmt, indem er innesteht in der eigentlichen Zeit, in sein Eigenes bringt. So geeignet gehört der Mensch in das Ereignis.

[In being as presence, there is manifest the concern which concerns us humans in such a way that in perceiving and receiving it we have attained the distinction of human being. Accepting the concern of presence, however, lies in standing within the realm of giving. In this way, four-dimensional true time has reached us.

Because being and time are there only in appropriating, appropriating has the peculiar property of bringing man into his own as the one who perceives being by standing within true time. Thus appropriated, man belongs to appropriation.] (SD, 23-4, 23)

The essence of human being belongs to the event, because human being is only human in understanding being.

To stand within the event so as to be the pure recipient of the sending of being, with no concern other than following that sending, is to stand within the fourth dimension of time. It is rather like standing *frü und ledig* in the *nū* of eternity. In the *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, Heidegger equates Eckhart's *nū* with the *nunc stans*, which is rooted in a conception of eternity as pure presence (MAL, 56/45). However, while Eckhart certainly does speak of all things being always present in the *nū*, 'present' is an analogous term in this context, as the moment is actually

the gathering up of past, present and future. Heidegger is in fact closer to Eckhart's conception of eternity when, a few years later, he says in the Schelling commentary:

Die ursprüngliche Gleich-Zeitigkeit besteht darin, daß Gewesensein und Künftigsein sich behaupten und gleichursprünglich mit dem Gegenwärtigsein als die Wesensfülle der Zeit selbst ineinander schlagen. Und diese Schlag der *eigentlichen Zeitlichkeit*, dieser Augenblick, »ist« das Wesen der Ewigkeit, nicht aber die bloß stehengebliebene und stehenbleibende Gegenwart, das *nunc stans*. Die Ewigkeit läßt sich wahrhaft, d.h. dichterisch nur denken, wenn wir sie als ursprünglichste Zeitlichkeit begreifen, niemals aber nach der Weise der gesunden Menschenverstandes, der sich sagt: Ewigkeit, das ist der Gegenteil zur Zeitlichkeit: also muß, um Ewigkeit zu begreifen, alle Zeit weggedacht werden. Was bei diesem Verfahren übrig bleibt, ist aber nicht ein Begriff der Ewigkeit, sondern lediglich ein mißverstandenes and halbgedachten Begriff einer Scheinzeit.

[. . . original simul-taneity consists in the fact that being past and being present assert themselves and mingle with each other together with being present as the essential fullness of time itself. And this mingling of *true temporality*, this moment, 'is' the essence of eternity, but not the present which has merely stopped and remains that way, the *nunc stans*. Eternity can only be thought truly, that is, poetically, if we understand it as the most primordial temporality, but never in the manner of common sense which says to itself: Eternity, that is the opposite of temporality. Thus, in order to understand eternity, all time must be abstracted in thought. What remains in this procedure is not, however, a concept of eternity, but simply a misunderstood and half-baked concept of an illusory time.] (SA, 197/113)

The question of the relationship between the *Augenblick* of Dasein in *Sein und Zeit* and the fourth dimension of time in *Zeit und Sein* will be raised in Chapter Four. For the present, I only want to point out the similarity between the temporal self-disclosure of Dasein and that of *Sein*. Dasein is originally pure *Seinkönnen*, pure potentiality-for-being. Existing for the sake of itself, it unfolds that potentiality-for-being through the acts and decisions whereby it realises the finite possibilities of its being. It is through these acts that it comes to exist as actual, and it is through them that it enters time. Pure potentiality-for-being is not 'yet' temporal, but is empty of time and being, capable of them. The event is also not in itself temporal, for it is the timeless source of time (and being). Through the acts of the event finite possibilities of being as presencing are realised in time. The event, then, considered in itself, is the possibility of being and time. In the event, being extends itself over time in finite disclosures for the sake of itself. The event is empty of time and being, and yet is their source. In itself, 'before' time and being, it, too, is pure potentiality-for-being, a potentiality that realises itself in time. Given this structure, it is even possible to speak of the event as person-al, in an analogous sense. Or perhaps it is actually the

Personsein of *Dasein* that is the analogon.

Following the sending of the event with concern for presencing is a form of accord with being that lets being be. This is a kind of willingness; it is *die Gelassenheit zu den Dingen und die Offenheit für das Geheimnis* ['releasement towards things and openness to the mystery'] (G, 24/55). This willing is neither selfish nor purposeful; it is *âne eigenschaft* and *âne warumbe*. In *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, Heidegger claims that this is what he had meant by *Entschlossenheit* ['resoluteness'] in *Sein und Zeit*: *Die in „Sein und Zeit“ gedachte Entschlossenheit ist nicht die decidierte aktion eines Subjekts, sondern die Eröffnung des Daseins aus der Befangenheit im Seienden zur Offenheit des Seins* ['The resoluteness intended in *Being and Time* is not the deliberate action of a subject, but the opening up of human being, out of captivity in that which is, to the openness of being'] (Hw, 53/67). It is a *Geschehenlassen* ['letting-happen'], *ein Sichfügen und so gleichsam ein Nichtwollen* ['a compliance and thus, as it were, a nonwilling'] (Hw, 67/82) which lets the arrival (*Ankunft*) of truth occur.

Letting the advent of truth happen is concomitant with acting in and for the truth. *Wer wahrhaft das Seiende weiß*, Heidegger remarks, *weiß, was er inmitten des Seienden will* ['He who truly knows what is knows what he wills to do in the midst of what is']. This *Wissen, das ein Wollen, und das Wollen, das ein Wissen bleibt, ist das ekstatische Sicheinlassen des existierenden Menschen in die Unverborgenheit des Seins* ['knowing that remains a willing, and willing that remains a knowing, is the existing human being's entrance into and compliance with the unconcealedness of being'] (Hw, 53/67). It is standing in the moment, living from the ground, and becoming a *biwort* to the *wort*, and it is available to the one who is *wagender . . . als der Grund* ['more venturesome than the ground'], the one who dares to venture *dorthin, wo es an allem Grund gebricht, in den Abgrund* ['to where all ground breaks off - into the abyss'] (Hw, 292/119).

Only in this way of being are human beings truly released from care:

Sicher, securus, sine cura bedeutet; ohne Sorge . . . Ohne diese Sorge sind wir nur, wenn wir unser Wesen nicht ausschließlich im Bezirk des Herstellens und Bestellens, des Nutzbaren und Schutzbaren aufstellen. Sicher sind wir erst dort, wo wir weder mit dem Schutzlosen, noch auf einem in Wollen errichteten Schutz rechnen.

[Secure, *securus, sine cura* means: without care . . . We are without such care only when we do not establish our nature exclusively within the precinct of production and procurement, of things that can be utilized and defended. We are secure only when we neither reckon with the unprotected nor count on a defence erected within willing.]
(Hw, 294/120)

Just as, for Eckhart, the soul becomes grounded, acting out of its own ground, only when it becomes without ground or *âne war umbe*, so, for Heidegger, human beings become secure only when they give up their quest to secure their being. Moreover, the release from care described here is much like Heidegger's interpretation, in *Nietzsche I (Wille zur Macht als Kunst)*, of the way of being towards described by Kant in saying that the beautiful is an object of an *interesselosen* pleasure. To take an 'interest' in something means here: *dieses Etwas für sich haben wollen, nämlich zum Besitz, zur Verwendung und Verfügung* ['wanting to have this something for oneself, as a possession at one's use and disposal'].²⁷ It means being towards *mit eigenschaft*. Release from interest understood in this way releases the things of the world as well, releases them from the subjection of *eigenschaft* as own-ing.

The knowing and willing that complies with the unconcealment of being is not an *amor fati* which accepts all that is and wills it as good. The convertibility of *esse* and *bonum* does not mean this. For Eckhart, all that is, insofar as it is, is good, but insofar as it is also not (and it is necessarily also not), there is evil, which is a negation to be negated. The 'is' here has to be understood essentially, in terms of possibilities of being, in terms of 'ideal' being. Unconcealing the truth of what-is is not a matter of understanding the 'facts' of its existence, but of seeing what-is in its essential relation to what can and should be. Only that seeing knows being in beings and beings in being. Being is not what-is, but the truth of what-is. Being is *meaning*. The withdrawal of being is the withdrawal of meaning, just as the hiddenness - or death - of God concerns an absence of meaning. Concern for what presences in what-is, then, as concern for truth, is concern for meaning. This point is too likely to be missed where Heidegger's notion of being is taken as 'existentialist' rather than 'essentialist'. In fact, the unconcealment of beings in their being, which is at the same time that 'active upsurge' of being from nothing, is as much essential as existential. Heidegger does not accept any clear fact-value distinction.

Where being is the holy, it is so in virtue of that sense in which it is convertible with the good, in virtue of the sense in which it is meaning. Therefore, Camus' 'quarrel with God', for instance, is well-founded as a quarrel with an all-powerful entity that permits utterly unholy things to occur, but it is not a quarrel with the God that is *ipsum esse* and *bonum*, and not a quarrel with being as the holy. That being is

the holy cannot mean that an apparently unholy event, an apparently evil event, is nonetheless in some sense, or from some perspective, actually holy and good. Such a thought is itself unholy, and well worth quarrelling with. Rather, that being is the holy, and that *esse* is *bonum*, means that the unconcealment of such an event in its truth, in the very extent of its unholiness, is the advent of being as the true and the good, as meaning. Such unconcealment of negation, the negation which, for example, love discovers in the suffering of another and which can itself occur only in reference to an implicit *agathon*, is necessary for - indeed, if genuine, is coterminous with - the action that would seek to negate it. The truth of being is not given in the fact of the suffering, but in the appropriately corresponding response, for instance, in the revolt against an unholy God (the God whose only excuse, as Stendahl said, is that he does not exist).³⁸

Compliance with being, therefore, means accordance in thought and deed with what the unconcealment of being sends to be thought and done in the midst of what-is. This is the essence of renunciation (*Verzicht*), which does not take away, but gives. *Er gibt die unerschöpfliche Kraft des Einfachen* ['It gives the inexhaustible power of the simple'].³⁹ It gives accordance with the being whose *eigenschaft ist einicheit* ['property is unity'] (DW I, 368/TP, 282). Accordance is letting-be. To think of being is to allow being to send itself to thought, and, in so doing, to draw thought towards it. Thought is drawn by the pull (*Zug*) of being; it is attracted by the traits (*Züge*) of being. To think being is to allow thought to be thus pulled. Thought lets be when it fits itself to being by holding itself in obedience (*sich fügen*) to the pull of being, so that it may be determined by the structure (*Gefüge*) of being (which is not merely the 'factual' arrangement of what is the case).

To think the presencing of being in history is to obey its historical 'construction', the sending (*Schickung*) of itself which constitutes its destining, and is experienced from the side of *Dasein* as the falling of a stroke of fate (*Fügung*). Thought, the unity of mind and heart, lets be the presencing that comes to presence through history insofar as it places itself in submission to, and holds itself in readiness for, the call of being in time. This holding itself in readiness is thought's being obedient (*gefällig*) to what being decrees (*fügt*), its readiness to fit itself to the justice (*Fug*) of being. This does not mean accepting whatever comes as just. It means being ready to be just in the face of what comes.

Such accordance is, of course, not necessary, since Dasein is free. It is free to be dis-cordant, free to not let be, and free to forget the mystery. It is free to part itself from the truth of being. For Heidegger, modern man, technological man, is specifically parted from the truth of being through the way of being that now holds sway over the West. This way of being, which Heidegger calls *Gestell* ('enframing' or 'setting', as the unity of all forms of positing and arranging) is defined by *das Unbedingte des bloßen Wollens im Sinne des vorsätzlichen Sichdurchstehens in allem* ['the unconditional character of mere willing in the sense of purposeful self-assertion in everything'] (Hw, 290/116). *Der neuzeitliche Mensch stellt sich in solchem Wollen als den heraus, der in allen Beziehungen zu allem, was ist, und damit auch zu ihm selbst, als der sich durchsetzende Hersteller aufsteht und diesen Aufstand zur unbedingten Herrschaft einrichtet* ['By such willing, modern man turns out to be the being who, in all such relations to all that is, and thus to himself as well, rises up as the producer who puts through, carries out, his own self and establishes this uprising as an absolute rule'] (Hw, 285/111). As Ross Mandel says, 'to every mode of Dasein's revealing there corresponds a way in which a thing is revealed',⁴⁰ and the mode of revealing definitive of *Gestell* concerns a *Wie* of Dasein that projects the being of beings in such a way as to uncover what-is as a whole, the 'world', as *Bestand* or 'standing-reserve', *das Ganze der herstellbaren Gegenstände* ['the whole of producible objects'] (Hw, 284/111).

This kind of willing is an extreme form of being *mit eigenschaft*; it is, as Bernhard Welte notes, the world of *eigenschaft* transformed into a world destiny.⁴¹ It may be overturned by a *Gelassenheit* that lets be, to which corresponds a different conception of the essence of being and man, and a different conception of truth. That conception is close to the original Greek notion of *physis*, in which being unfolds and reveals itself in the coming to presence of beings, and human beings reveal the truth of being insofar as they participate in *der Entborgenheit und der Entbergen des Seienden* ['the revealedness and revelation of what-is']. Participation is here a freedom which *enthüllt sich . . . als das Seinlassen von Seiendem* ['reveals itself as the letting-be of what-is'], the letting happen of *aletheia* or truth as *das Unverborgene* ['the Unconcealed'] (WW, 15/333). It is revealing as original *poiesis*, a bringing-forth that reveals truth.

Technē, Heidegger points out, originally belonged to *poiesis* in this sense. For the Greeks, it is *eine Weise des αληθεύειν* ['a mode of

aletheuein'), of knowing or *aufschließendes* ['opening up'] that *entbirgt solches, was sich nicht selber her-vor-bringt und noch nicht vorliegt* ['reveals whatever does not bring itself forth and does not yet lie here before us'] (TK, 13/13). Modern technology is also a revealing, but, *das Entbergen, das die moderne Technik durchherrscht, entfaltet sich nun . . . nicht in ein Her-vorbringen im Sinne der ποιησις* ['the revealing that holds sway through modern technology does not unfold into a bringing-forth in the sense of *poiesis*']. It is, rather, *ein Herausfordern* ['a challenging'] (TK, 14/14).

Such challenging, which completes, for Heidegger, the oblivion of being in the history of the West, is the exact opposite of the 'spirit of absorbed submission' (Otto, p. 150) that discovers the holy, and the exact opposite of what Richard of St. Victor means by contemplation. Heidegger himself, though, claims that the translation of Greek *theorein* and *theoria* with the Roman terms *contemplari* and *contemplatio* *bringt das Wesenhafte dessen, was die griechischen Worte sagen, mit einem Schlag zum Verschwinden* ['makes that which is essential in what the Greek words say vanish at a stroke'] because *contemplari heißt: etwas in einen Abschnitt einteilen und darin umzäunen* ['*contemplari* means: to partition something off into a separate sector and enclose it therein'], so that, *in der zur contemplatio gewordenen θεωρησις meldet sich das bereits im griechischen Denken mitvorbereitete Moment des einschneidenden, aufteilenden Zusehens* ['in *theoria* transformed into *contemplatio* there comes to the fore the impulse, already prepared in Greek thinking, of a looking-at that sunders and compartmentalizes'] (VA I, 46-7/165-6).

However, the medieval tradition of *contemplatio* is, in definition and practise, close to Heidegger's description of *theoria* as *das verehrende Beachten der Unverborgenheit des Anwesenden* ['the reverent paying heed to the unconcealment of what presences'] (VA I, 45/164). Far from setting up boundaries and divisions, it tries to break them down, and Richard of St. Victor's definition of contemplation as *libera mentis perspicacia in sapientiae spectacula cum admiratione suspensa* ['the free, more penetrating gaze of a mind, suspended with wonder concerning manifestations of wisdom'] is actually similar to Heidegger's *Besinnung* ['reflection'] as *die Gelassenheit zum Fragwürdigen* [the 'calm, self-possessed surrender to that which is worthy of questioning'] (VA I, 60/180). Moreover, the contemplative life, like the *bios theoretikos*, is *das höchste Tun* ['the highest doing'] (VA I, 44/164), the purest form of work. If it is not seen

as such in the modern world, this can perhaps be attributed to what Evelyn Underhill, in the language of the early 20th century, described as 'the narrow and superficial definition of "work" set up by a muscular and wage earning community' (*Mysticism*, p. 210). *Gestell*, then, may be overcome by a turning that returns to a more primordial form of *technē*, one that stems out of a way of being and knowing which is *poietic*.

Many of the specific parallels between the way that, for Heidegger, man discovers the holy in the things of the world through such a turning, and the way that, for Eckhart, the soul, having become *āne eigenschaft*, discovers God in all things have been well-covered by John Caputo and Bernhard Welte,⁴² and there is no point in repeating their work here. I have tried to develop another aspect of the dialogue between Heidegger and Eckhart, one that permits a released appropriation and retrieval of metaphysics, rather than calling for a destruction of it. I hope to have demonstrated that such retrieval can shed new light on the meaning of 'God' as immanent in what-is.

As in the case of Bonaventure, though, it is necessary to note that this immanence of the other to what-is is still not something that can be demonstrated through argument. It rests, ultimately, on a certain revelation of being, a certain experience of the truth of being. The holy 'is' not outside of that truth, and 'God' cannot be in the absence of the holy. As Heidegger says in an often-quoted passage:

Erst aus der Wahrheit des Seins läßt sich das Wesen des Heiligen denken. Erst aus dem Wesen des Heiligen ist das Wesen von Gottheit zu denken. Erst im Lichte des Wesens von Gottheit kann gedacht und gesagt werden, was das Wort «Gott» nennen soll.

[Only from the truth of being can the essence of the holy be thought. Only from the essence of the holy is the essence of divinity to be thought. Only in the light of the essence of divinity can it be thought or said what the word 'God' is to name.] (Hb, 102/270)

This passage is neutral with respect to the possible absence or presence of God, and with respect to how God may be conceived in general. It makes no decision for or against atheism, for instance, which rests on a certain experience of being and has a stance towards the holy, divinity and God which corresponds to that experience. It is not possible to argue with that experience, or with that stance. Where, hard by the terror of the abyss there dwells not awe but nausea, where being is revealed in such a way that nothing in the revelation evokes the concept of the holy, where nothing in experience builds a need for such language, what this language names for an experience to which it is appropriate, and by which it is called forth, cannot be mediated.

And where there is no mediation, there can be no argument. In that case, it is either P or not-P, either *ist* or *nicht*, and no *Aufhebung* is possible.

As a final note, since the development of the relationship between Eckhart and Heidegger in this chapter has impinged at points upon the question of ethics, a word or two about Heidegger's relation to the ethical sphere may be called for. The formal resemblance between Eckhart's description of the just man and Heidegger's description of accordance with the sending of being is evident, but it is no less evident that Heidegger's writings make very little reference to notions like justice, or compassion or concern for the welfare of others, as many people have observed. It is true that the structure of released correspondence to being is entirely compatible with acting in the midst of what-is with concern for others. It is, after all, very much like Eckhart's description of being perfectly just and right. The fact that this existential form can be determined in that way, however, does not entirely mitigate the striking absence of references to responsibility for others, and to phenomena like suffering, injustice and love in Heidegger's works. These are merely ontic phenomena, to be sure. But insofar as every ontology must rest upon a determinate ontic foundation, the absence of attention to these things, which would seem to reveal an absence of concern with them, necessarily gives Heidegger's delimitations of existential structures a particular slant. It would lie outside the scope of this thesis to expand upon this point, but the observation of this lack in Heidegger's thought does need to be made, and to be recognised as important, if only because the need of the times is not served any better by a Heideggerian apologetic than by a Christian one.

SECTION II

THE INDWELLING GOD

In the preceding section, it was suggested that, whether conceived as *creatura*, the products of a transcendent creator-God, or as beings dependent upon the openness or sending of being, the things of nature and world can either appear in a way that reveals their source and end, their ultimate referent, or in a way that conceals it. Whether the appearing of these entities occurs in such a way as to manifest the ground of their appearance, or whether it obscures this ground depends, it was suggested, upon the correlative mode of knowing of the revealing entity, the way of being towards of *mens*, *seele*, or *Dasein*.

Since this revealing entity is itself a being, although of a special sort, it, too, can appear in this twofold manner. Again, the way it appears, the way it comes to presence or reveals itself, depends upon the way it is revealed, upon the mode of discovering of the being to which it is revealed. In this instance, revelation is self-revelation, self-discovering or unconcealing, and the writings examined in this section all suggest that human existence can disclose itself to itself in a manner that allows the ground of the disclosure, the ground of itself, and, in fact, of all beings, to come to presence within the disclosure, or it can discover itself in a manner where this ground remains entirely hidden.

In that case, the interpretation of this being, like its interpretation of any other being, is ambiguous. It can be based either on the appearance in which both entity and ground are disclosed together, or on the appearance in which the source of what appears does not come to presence in any way. Since the source of the appearance is the ultimate referent of the appearing thing, the sign, and since adequate interpretation requires an appropriate referring of sign to referent, only a mode of disclosure in which the entity becomes transparent to the point where the referent may be caught sight of can provide an adequate ground for interpretation. The central issue in the next two chapters is the degree of human being's transparency to itself, and, consequently, the clarity of its interpretation of itself.

The first chapter in this section begins by examining Bonaventure's descriptions, mainly in Chapter Three of the *Itinerarium*, of how *mens'* powers of understanding reveal themselves to concentrated reflection. Such reflection requires a bracketing out of a profound sort, and Bonaventure's thought on this point is a kind of transcendentalism in which the mind shuts out particular objects in order to understand its own

cognitive powers. The conclusions reached by this reflection, taken together, make up the way *mens* discovers itself in self-contemplation when it sees through itself to its source. As in its contemplation of creatures, what it finds is a God that is both present and absent, both indwelling and transcendent. Bonaventure's account of the nature of human understanding, which can only, for him, be fully understood when it is thought in reference to this indwelling God revealed in self-contemplation, will then be compared with some of Heidegger's descriptions of the understanding of Dasein.

Chapter Four looks first at the sermons of Johannes Tauler, where he describes the need and quest of the soul for God, and speaks of the nature of human perfection in reference to God. For Tauler, the life of the soul is a striving for completion and perfection, a striving for the absolute. The soul could not strive for something of which had no knowledge at all, and the striving for completion, equivalent, for Tauler, to a reaching for God, is guided by God as an indwelling principle, an 'interior witness' in the ground of the soul. The essence of the soul's life consists in its relation to this witness, and this is determined by its relation to what Tauler, writing under the influence of Eckhart, describes as a unified ground of the soul where God is present. When the soul enters fully into this ground, it achieves the perfection it seeks, in achieving union with God.

These aspects of Tauler's thought will then be compared with aspects of Heidegger's analysis of the existence of Dasein in *Sein und Zeit*. The comparison will demonstrate that the care which defines Dasein's existence is also a reaching for perfection, and that this reach, like the perfection of the soul, is possible only on the basis of a transcendent 'something' for which it reaches. That something is then the beginning and end of Dasein's existence, as God is the beginning and end of the soul. It is *Sein*, and the essence of Dasein consists in its relation to *Sein*, as the essence of the soul consists in its relation to God.

The issues of identity and alienation raised in this section are, in the first place, issues of awareness. Both chapters in this section are concerned, first, with the awareness of human existence, with its becoming aware of what is the case for itself. It will be suggested that while existence, the whole of the self, is always, in a sense, transcending, in that it always proceeds in reference to a transcendent something towards

which it transcends, becoming aware of this transcendence requires a self-transcendence of a special sort. Such transcendence, in which the self catches sight of the ground of itself, brings with it an awareness in which it knows itself in relation to what it has seen, and continues to see. In 'remembering' the transcendent ground of itself in this way, and so remembering itself in relation to that ground, which also means remembering the truth of itself, the identity of the self undergoes a radical shift. This shift of identity is not, for Bonaventure, Tauler, or Heidegger, a matter of a purely 'interior' transformation, from which no consequences for action ensue. There is no such distinction between thought and praxis here. The transformation is a transformation of *being*, of the way one *is* in the world.

CHAPTER THREE

BONAVENTURE AND HEIDEGGER ON THE NATURE OF UNDERSTANDING

1. Mens as Imago Dei.

The third chapter of the *Itinerarium* begins by introducing that stage in the mind's ascent at which, having been led into God through creatures as *vestigia*, it is next led into itself. It then reenters into the place *in qua divina relucet imago* ['where the divine image shines forth'], the place where *ad modum candelabri relucet lux veritatis in facie nostrae mentis* ['the light of truth, as from a candelabrum, glows upon the face of our mind'] (III.1, 314/79). The imagery of light and shining is once more all-pervasive, remaining constant through Bonaventure's descriptions of what and how the mind sees when it approaches beings other than itself in the mode of contemplation, and what and how it sees when it turns to contemplate itself. This image of a transcending light that is yet immanent to creatures in its shining through and within them again suggests the correlative immediacy of presence and vision. Creatures are not traces that have been left by God, pointing to something entirely external to them, something wholly departed from them, but traces indicating an other which is still there. God is different to creatures, but this different is present, and its presence (not its essential being) is seen, not inferred.

Seeing in this context is a being-illuminated, and there is again a combination of activity and passivity essential to the way of knowing that

discovers what is to be known in this case. On the one hand, the mind is led to God via God's traces in the world, and is illumined by the light of divinity shining through those traces, while on the other hand it must, and should, strive (*conari debemus*) to become aware of that light. The mind must turn its attention to what is to be known, and concentrate upon it, but its vision ultimately depends upon an illuminating light, and this light can only be received and reflected.

Bonaventure sees the movement of withdrawal to interiority in self-contemplation as a movement to a higher, because more immediate, apprehension of God. In turning from creatures other than itself towards itself, the mind draws nearer to God, because it moves from an exterior region of the sacred, a region where God is less near, to one where God is inwardly present. It moves from the *atrium forinsecus* ['outer court'] to the *sanctum* ['sanctuary'], thereby moving closer to the true abode of divinity in the world (III.1, 314/79).

The distinction between these regions rests upon the nature of *mens* as a preeminent kind of trace. As an *imago dei*, *mens* is a sign whose relationship to God is very different from that of other creatures. In terms of the theistic conception of God as the creator and artist of all that is, all creatures are in some sense products or effects, although not effects utterly divorced from their creative and designing cause, which perpetually stays with them and sustains them. But *mens* is also an *image* of this creative artist, and so a mirror of creator and creation alike. Reflecting the mind of the artist, *mens* reflects as well all that the artist conceives and brings into being. Basically, the human mind is a mirror of the divine mind, and, by virtue of this likeness, *mens* is capable of revealing, through reflection, what the divine mind has thought and created, i.e. what-is. The various faculties of the human mind, the categories into which the processes of reflection can be divided, discover and preserve the truth of what-is in that they mirror, at a number of levels, its structure. And they mirror that structure because they mirror the mind which, *plene resolvens* ['by a full analysis', or in the final analysis], is the efficient and structuring cause of all that is.

The theist notion of God as a creative artist, a notion that, in its various forms, is probably a complex blend of poetic metaphor and speculative hypothesis, must depend originally upon the intelligibility of the world, and arises through reflection upon that intelligibility. Insofar

as the world has an intelligible structure, it is like intelligence and shows signs of intelligence. It is then person- and subject-like, and the notion of God as an intelligent being, as 'spirit', depends upon this person-al and subject-ive character of what-is. This character is always in some sense 'relative' to the human mind, since it is apparent only to that mind, and so the human mind is always, in a way, the 'source' or 'ground' of intelligibility. Clearly, while the Kantian conception is that the human mind is the ultimate source of intelligibility because it is what imposes rational structure upon the world, the medieval realist conception is that human intelligence and the intelligible world participate in an overarching rational structure, articulable into a set of structures, that regulate both. Theistic speculation then builds upon this conception in the notion that the world manifests intelligible structure because it is originally the product of an intelligent being, God, and the ability of *mens* to grasp this structure makes it an image of that being.

In Bonaventure's Christian theist system, largely adopted from Augustine's *De Trinitate*, the processes of reflection belonging to *mens* are divided into a trinity of powers mirroring the divine Trinity. The divine Trinity is not quite a hypothesis or inference where something unknown (the nature of God) is projected on the basis of something known (the nature of the human mind) but human subjectivity is clearly in some sense the starting point for the conclusion: *Si igitur Deus perfectus est spiritus, habet memoriam, intelligentiam et voluntatem* ['If, then, God is a perfect spirit, he has memory, understanding and will']. (It. III.5, 321-2/84). This 'starting point', however, while it is the initial immanent point of departure for the reflection that moves to the transcendent powers of God, is not genuinely initial in the sense of originative. Rather, for Bonaventure, reflection upon the powers of *mens* leads to consideration of the powers of God because the former are discovered to be derived from and dependent upon the latter. How this discovery takes place becomes clear in the course of the reflection itself, a course which my analysis will attempt to follow.

To begin with, the fact that the mind has three powers or capabilities (*potentia*) is not simply taken as the corollary to an article of faith. It is instead, for Bonaventure as for Augustine, something that makes itself evident to rational observation:

Intra igitur ad te et vide, quoniam mens tua amat ferventissime semetipsum; nec se posset amare, nisi nosset; nec se nosset, nisi sui meminisset, quia nihil capimus per

intelligentiam, quod non sit praesens apud nostram
memoriam; et ex hoc advertis, animam tuam triplicem habere
potentiam, non oculo carnis, sed oculo rationis.

[Enter into yourself, then, and see
that your soul loves itself most fervently;
that it could not love itself
unless it knew itself
nor know itself
unless it remembered itself,
because our intellects grasp only what is present to our memory.
From this you can observe,
not with the bodily eye, but with the eye of reason
that your soul has a threefold power.]
(III.1, 314/80)

For an observation without any Christian presuppositions, this tripartite division is certainly not the only possible one, but it is not merely arbitrary, either. Following Book IX, chs. 2-4 of *De Trinitate*, Bonaventure makes the not terribly contentious claim that *mens* loves itself. It intends and desires itself, and this love of itself is visible to it in self-observation. But while love, according to Augustine, draws the soul towards what is loved (where lover and loved are the same in this instance), so that it acts as a motor for the realization or fulfillment of knowledge, it also presupposes some prior grasp of the thing intended. It follows, then, that the mind could not love itself if it were not in some fashion already disclosed to itself. Only something remembered, however, can be disclosed to knowledge; that is to say, only what is present to *mens* can be known by it. *Memoria* in this instance is not exclusively a faculty of recall, but is that power by which *mens* presents something to itself and retains it in presence. That *mens* remembers itself then means that it is present to itself. It can know itself only because of this original self-presence, and it can intend itself only because of that knowledge.

In the operations and relations of these three powers, *mens* is an inferior image, an imperfect copy, of God. As such, it refers to and reflects God, but darkly, *per speculum in aenigmate* (III.1, 314-5/80). The relationships of the three powers obscurely mirror God in that their identity and difference, the fact that they are genuinely distinct and yet do not constitute separate substances, reflects the consubstantiality and distinction of the Trinity. God is also revealed through their *operationes*, in that each faculty functions with reference to some aspect of an absolute which transcends it, but which it also must apprehend in some prior fashion in order to function at all.

The activities of the first power, for instance, *memoria*, refer to

eternity, simplicity and immutability (III.2, 315-6/80-1). The first activity of memory which Bonaventure mentions, the retention of all things past, present and future, has its source in the *Confessions*, XI, 20, where Augustine speaks of 'three times' existing in the mind. These are actually, according to Augustine, three modes of the present: a present of past things (memory), a present of present things (direct perception), and a present of future things (expectation). For Bonaventure, the memory, in its capacity for retaining these three times, bears an image of eternity, conceived as an omnipresence extending across all time and times, without mode or division. Of such nature is the temporal extension of the being of God, then, as opposed to, and yet reflected in, the *distensio animi* constituting the time of human being (see *Confessions*, XI, 26).

The second activity attributed to memory is the retention of *simplicia, sicut principia quantitatum continuorum et discretarum, ut punctum, instans et unitatem* ['simple things, such as the principles of continuous and discrete quantities like the point, the instant and the unit']. These *simplices formas* cannot, according to Bonaventure, be gained empirically; they cannot be derived from the *phantasmata* that enter the mind through sense-perception. They are then *a priori*, which means, for Bonaventure, received and maintained *a superiori*. Aside from the question of which principles actually count as basic (a question that Bonaventure answers via Aristotle), the more fundamental assumption is that whatever is absolutely presupposed presupposes the absolute. In that case, the absolutely binding conditions of subject and object, the conditions that necessarily bind being and thinking and bind them to one another, are not only transcendental but transcendent. They regulate subject and object from above and beyond both, and not only from 'within' the subject.

This applies as well to *scientiarum principia et dignitates* ['the principles and axioms of the sciences'], by which Bonaventure means the laws of logic, as is made clear by his Aristotelian examples: «*De quolibet affirmatio, vel negatio*» and «*Omne totum est maius sua parte*» ['On any matter, one must either affirm or deny' and 'Every whole is greater than its part']. All axioms that cannot be contradicted *ad interius rationem* ['by our inner reason'] belong within the category of invariable truths, and these, like simple forms, cannot be derived empirically. They are, rather, 'remembered' in 'an unchangeable light'. They are recollected by the mind as apodictically certain, and the light that grants this certainty, the

light within which certain truths are realised, is present to the mind in an unchanging way.

Eternal presence, simple forms, and immutable truths are reflected in memory, therefore, present to it primordially and innately. They are remembered *in principio*, and the remembrance of them constitutes the enigmatic memory of the absolute, grasped antecedently, although not, in the first instance, explicitly. This original memory enables the true revelation of the things of time, space and number. The mind discovers the truth of particular instantiations through its prior apprehension, its innate memory, of their originary principles. 'Innate' in this instance does not mean lying within the powers of the subject, nor does it mean that *a priori* principles are actually present in the mind before any contact with particular things. It means, rather, that these principles are realised upon contact with particular things without yet being derived from those things. What grants and maintains the subject's capabilities by bestowing these principles is certainly immanent in the sense that its power is constantly present to the subject, but it is also transcendent in the sense that the subject's own powers depend upon it without having power over it, and in the sense that it cannot be seen clearly in itself. The memory 'presupposes' the light within which it sees what appears to it as certainly true, but the source of that light is not itself visible.

The situation of the intellective power is similar. Its function consists in *perceptione intellectus terminorum, propositionum et illationum* ['understanding the meaning of terms, propositions and inferences'] (III.3, 316/81). To understand the signification of a term means to comprehend that term in a definition.

Sed definitio habet fieri per superiora, et illa per superiora definiri habent, usquequo veniatur ad suprema et generalissima, quibus ignoratis, non possunt intelligi definitive inferiora. Nisi igitur cognoscatur, quid est ens per se, non potest plene sciri definitio alicuius specialis substantiae.

[But definitions are constructed by using more universal terms; and these are defined by more universal terms until we come to the highest and most universal. Consequently, unless these latter are known, the less universal cannot be grasped in a definition. Unless we know what being per se is, we cannot fully know the definition of any particular substance.] (III.3, 316-7/81)

The intellect has an antecedent comprehension of being *per se*, and only on the basis of this prior understanding can it comprehend the manifold forms of being that it encounters. Some understanding of this highest and most general term is then presupposed in the delimitation of any particular

substance, although the intellect only realises this presupposition in the process of resolving the nature of that substance. Thus, as in the case of the presuppositions of memory, what the intellect realises only later is what it must have always known in some way in order to function as what it is. Since *ens per se* is, for Bonaventure, God, what it comes to see is that it must always have had a dim understanding of God insofar as it has understood anything at all.

The idea of *ens per se* is also the idea of unlimited and perfect being, and it is according to this idea that the intellect grasps limited and imperfect forms of being. It cannot, then, be derived from those finite forms of being by way of abstraction, because its presence to the mind is a prior condition for recognising them. This means that the mind understands negations of being, *privations et defectus* ['privations and defects'], on the basis of purely positive being, *quod est ens simpliciter et aeternum* ['which is unqualified and eternal being']. As for Eckhart, being in itself is pure affirmation, containing the perfect principles of all things. Negations, 'privations and defects', are understood through this wholly pure, actual, complete and absolute being (III.3, 317-8/81-2). Since all created particular beings are 'defective', not wholly pure or actual, and not fully complete or absolute, the knowledge of being without any defect is a prerequisite for understanding them. Thus, in every act of understanding a being, the intellect implicitly or explicitly refers to being *per se*. The adequate analysis or interpretation of a finite mode of being requires a reference to this infinite being; it requires that the imperfect mode of being be understood in reference to a perfect one. To begin with and generally, the mind is not explicitly aware of this reference. It is not aware of its own relation to perfect being, on the basis of which its comprehension of beings, which means its relating or referring of them to perfect being, is possible. It becomes aware of this special relation of itself to perfect and infinite being, constituted by its *a priori* understanding of it, by contemplating the process through which it understands. In such contemplation, what is most primordial in its comprehension becomes visible. This is *ens per se*, which, as the source of all beings including the mind itself, comprehends all things from the beginning in their principles.

The intellect comprehends propositions, Bonaventure goes on to say, *cum certitudinaliter scit, illas veras esse* ['when it knows with certitude that they are true'] (III.3, 318/82). This requires its seeing that the

truth the proposition expresses is unchangeable (*incommutibilem*), and Bonaventure argues that since the mind is changeable, it can only see such truths *per aliquam lucem omnino incommutabiliter radiantem* ['by means of some light which shines in an absolutely unchangeable way'] (III.3, 318/82). Consequently, that by means of which the intellect understands the invariable truth of a given proposition, like that by means of which memory understands logical principles, is not itself something belonging to the mind. It cannot be a characteristic of the mind, since the mind is changeable. Strictly speaking, then, it does not lie within the power of the mind. Rather, like being *per se*, it is something that both supports and surpasses understanding.

Similarly, *intellectum vero illationis tunc veraciter percipit noster intellectus, quando videt, quod conclusio necessario sequitur ex praemissis* ['our intellect truly grasps the meaning of an inference when it sees that the conclusion follows necessarily from the premises'] (III.3, 318/82). It sees this necessity *non solum . . . in terminis necessariis, verum etiam in contingentibus* and *non solum in rebus entibus, verum etiam in non-entibus* ['not only in necessary but also in contingent terms' and 'not only in existing things, but also in nonexisting things'] (III.3, 318-9/82). The argument then follows a path much like the one from the unchangeable truth of propositions, and Bonaventure concludes that the necessity of such an inference must come *ab exemplaritate in arte aeterna, secundum quam res habent aptitudinem et habitudinem ad invicem secundum illius aeternae artis repraesentationem* ['from its exemplarity in the eternal art, according to which things are mutually oriented and related to one another because they are represented in the eternal art'] (III.3, 319/83). The sorts of inferences Bonaventure has in mind are not supposed to depend upon the existence of anything, in that they are true regardless of whether or not what they are speaking of exists (e.g. 'if a man is moving, the man is running'). They are absolutely necessary, but necessity cannot be based upon empirical fact, since whatever is empirical is contingent. For Bonaventure, this necessity is a reflection of the way things are in their original logic, the way they are in principle.

At no point does Bonaventure argue for the warrantability of this belief, nor would one expect him to from his situation as a medieval thinker. He does not try to prove that what appears to be certainly true is so, but assumes this, and asks instead about the source of this certainty. What is clear and distinct cannot, for Bonaventure, be doubted

nor does it need to be proven. The notion that certitude is granted by a 'light' is not a proof of anything or an argument for anything, but only, originally, a poetic description of the fact of clarity and distinctness itself. That fact cannot be supported by justification because it is itself the support for whatever knowledge counts as justified. It is the ground for what is known, and, as such, a beginning behind which one cannot go. The light of reason and the principles comprehended within it do testify, for Bonaventure, to the presence of God, but it is important to see that the process of pointing out this light constitutes a form of immediate demonstration rather than an argument. For Bonaventure, the light is itself the immediate demonstration, even though it is actually 'seen' only indirectly, in its operation. *Mens* only needs to raise itself to an awareness of this light in order to affirm the self-evident presence of God.

However, that Bonaventure is a medieval thinker does not mean, of course, that no question of a skeptical nature can possibly arise for him, and the examples he gives of certain truths are of the same sort that Augustine gives in arguing against skepticism.' But there is for him no question of any sort of 'evil demon', no question of some occult force or principle that could make what is indubitable 'in truth' false. There is no question, then, that one might be deceived in some way even in what is clearly apprehended as true. The fact that there is certainty, the fact anything is held to be certainly true, or just that anyone strives for truth, simply demonstrates for Bonaventure the reality of truth itself, as the directing principle of the intellect in its quest for understanding:

Omnis igitur, ut dicit Augustinus de Vera Religione, vere *ratiocinantis* lumen accenditur ab illa veritate et ad ipsam nititur pervenire. - Ex quo manifeste apparet, quod conjunctus sit intellectus noster ipsi aeternae veritati, dum non nisi per illam docentem nihil verum potest certitudinaliter capere.

[As Augustine says in *On the True Religion*: The light of everyone who reasons truly is enkindled by that truth which he also strives to reach. From this it is obvious that our intellect is joined to eternal truth itself since it can grasp no truth with certitude if it is not taught by this truth.] (III.3, 319/83)

In the chapter of *De Vera Religione* to which Bonaventure is referring, Augustine argues that everything is open to doubt except truth itself, since:

Omnis, qui se dubitantem intellegit, verum intellegit et de hac re, quam intellegit, certus est. De uero igitur certus est. Omnis ergo, qui utrum sit ueritas dubitat, in se ipso habet uerum, unde non dubitet, nec ullum uerum nisi ueritate uerum est. Non itaque oportet eum de ueritate dubitare, qui potuit undecumque dubitare. Vbi uidentur haec, ibi est lumen sine spatio locorum et temporum et

sine ullo spatiorum talium phatasmate. Numquid ista ex aliqua parte corrumpi possunt, etiamsi omnis ratiocinator intereat aut apud carnales infero ueterascat? Non enim ratiocinatio talia facit, sed inuenit. Ergo antequam inueniantur, in se manent, et cum inueniuntur, nos innouant.

[Everyone who knows that he doubts knows with certainty something that is true, namely, that he doubts. He is certain, therefore, about a truth. Therefore everyone who doubts whether there be such a thing as *the* truth has at least a truth to set a limit to his doubt; and nothing can be true except truth be in it. Accordingly, no one ought to have doubts about the existence of *the* truth, even if doubts arise for him from every possible quarter. Wherever this is seen, there is a light that transcends space and time and all phantasms that spring from spatial and temporal things. Could this be in the least destroyed even if every reasoner should perish or grow old among inferior carnal things? Reasoning does not create truth but discovers it. Before it is discovered it abides in itself; and when it is discovered it renews us.]²

The self that doubts cannot itself be doubted, so that the existence of that doubting self necessarily entails the concept of truth. It then entails the being, in some sense, of truth itself. That truth is transcendent, revealed but not manufactured by human reason, and only in reference to it is it possible even to question or doubt anything that is held to be true.

Bonaventure is also in accord with Augustine on the point that, to find such truth, the mind must return to itself. Indeed, it must go so deeply within itself that it transcends itself. To find immutable truth, Augustine claims, the mind must go beyond its own changeable nature; to find the ultimate object of reason, it must transcend reason. For Augustine, reasoning is a form of appetite. It is a hunger for truth, and truth itself is its beginning and end. Truth fires the appetite of reason, and it is what that appetite seeks to consume. But it does not follow that 'the' truth, absolute truth or truth in itself, can actually be attained by reason. Rather, such truth transcends reason precisely because reason is always stretched out towards it. 'Seeing' this truth then means catching sight of, becoming aware of, that to which reason necessarily refers insofar as it functions as reason. Truth is the transcendent *telos* of reason, and the nature of reason is granted only in reference to this *telos*.³

Just as this transcendental reference on the part of reason makes complete skeptical doubt impossible, so, given a similar reference on the part of the will, there can also be no question of total skepticism with respect to matters of evaluation. The will, the power of choice (*virtus electiva*), is seen to operate in consilio, iudicio et desiderio ['deliberation, judgement and desire']. *Consilium* here consists in

inquirendo, quid sit melius, hoc an illud ['in inquiring which is better, this or that']. Given, however, that *melius non dicitur nisi per accessum ad optimum* ['better has meaning only in terms of its proximity to best'], in the final analysis, *omni . . . consilianti necessario est impressa notio summi boni* ['the notion of the highest good is necessarily imprinted in everyone who deliberates'] (III.4, 320/83). The ultimate measure to which the will refers when it orders the world axiologically does not belong to *mens* any more than does the one to which the intellect refers when ordering the world logically. The ideal by which *mens* evaluates, like the idea by which it understands, is not posited by itself and is not a property of itself. It is *a priori* and transcendent. It follows that this ideal cannot itself be evaluated, since there is nothing by means of which, or in reference to which, such an evaluation could proceed. The idea of the good is the ultimate referent of all that has value, since it is the always transcendent standard according to which all that has merit, all that is good in any sense, is ordered. It thus provides the ground of every act of evaluation, just as the idea of being grounds every act of understanding. All that is good approaches this ideal, is near or far to it, and refers to it through this propinquity, that is, by way of approximation. And since it grounds all evaluative judgements *a priori*, the notion of the highest good, like that of being in itself, cannot be explained as derived from contingent entities by way of gradation.

Bonaventure argues further that the law according to which *mens* passes judgements concerning value must transcend *mens* itself, since *mens* judges about itself, and it cannot judge about the law through which it judges (III.4, 320-1/83). Thus, *mens* is no more a law unto itself in the sphere of the good than in the sphere of the true. However much specific judgements may change, the formal point remains that even in the most radical questioning of values, where the values one holds are overturned or transvalued, there has to be an examination or evaluation of those values, and this evaluation has a logic that cannot itself be interrogated as to its value if it is that which makes all such interrogations possible in the first place. The logic of evaluation is simply unquestionable, then, as the laws that determine judgement are themselves, in a quite literal sense, just beyond question.

Since choice is contingent upon evaluation, and evaluation is itself determined in reference to a standard that transcends *mens* and according to laws which, like the laws of logic, are other to and beyond *mens*, the

movement of the will in its desire for happiness is based, ultimately, upon a category no less imperative, no less absolute and commanding, than the one that originates and provides the end for the movement of the intellect in understanding. This is the category of the highest good, the optimal and final end of desire. It is said to provide the will with its ultimate motivation because this category, transcendental and inaccessible *per se*, is found at the limit of all analyses of that on account of which desire, as a function of the will, is stirred, and so of that which stirs it (III.4, 321/84). Since action is initiated by choice or desire, by the movement of the will, this category also establishes the limit of any analysis of that for the sake of which action is performed. In the final analysis, the highest good is that towards which the will inclines in all of its movements, and so that to which, in these movements, it refers. It lies at the limit of the will's referring in the same way that the category of being provides the referential limit for the understanding.

This way of talking about these two categories is not entirely adequate, however, as the distinction between the highest good and being in itself is not a distinction of substance. Being in itself is, after all, perfect being, which is dimly recollected when anything is judged to be less than perfect. As perfect being, being in itself is then also the highest good. It is what the soul seeks in the end, and its complete realization would constitute the absolute fulfillment of the soul's desire. *Inquietum cor est nostrum donec requiescat in te*, says Augustine, and the *te* that is wanted is a single being. *Ens* and *bonum*, along with *verum* and *unum*, are convertible names for that being.

The validity and convertibility of these terms is not dependent on the question of whether or not the being named by them is an actually existing entity. For Bonaventure, perfect being is God, who exists in some way. But in the drive towards fulfillment, the realization of the highest good still means the realization of the uttermost possibility of being, of perfect being, even if this perfect being does not 'exist'. The drive towards this being is still the absolute drive upon which all finite drives, all limited potentialities for being, are grounded. What moves to act or motivates the drive is what reduces potentialities to act, i.e. brings them into actual being. The drive towards the good is therefore the drive towards the actualization of being itself, and the achievement of the highest good is then equivalent to the realization of absolute being. Since this being comprehends all possibilities, it is also absolute truth.

and since it is complete in itself without movement or division, it is perfect unity as well. It is, in short, ideal being, and insofar as human beings refer to it and are related to it, it 'is' in some way, although what way still remains a question.

To summarize, when the mind turns to contemplate itself, it finds that it functions in reference to: eternity, simple forms, and immutable truths (memory); being *per se*, the unchanging light of certitude, and the laws of logic (intellect); the highest good, the laws of evaluation, and the ultimate end of desire (will). These are the categories and laws delimiting the finite apprehension proper to *mens*, in that they determine and name the limits beyond which *mens* cannot pass by means of its own faculties. They are in some way properties of the ground supporting the processes appropriate to *mens*, but, as that ground is *per se* utterly transcendent to *mens*, any attempt to produce grounds for these limiting laws and categories, any attempt to justify them rationally by referring them to a visible ground, must lead ultimately to an abyss insofar as it leads beyond reason. To reflect upon the ground out of which reason emerges requires that reason be transcended, because reason cannot penetrate the ground that supports it. In itself, this ground is unfathomable and unthinkable, and yet only with reference to it and by means of it can *mens* fathom the truth of the world in which it finds itself, and, indeed, the truth of itself. For Bonaventure, only in and through this 'ungroundable' ground, only with its support at every step, is it possible for thinking to occur at all.

This becomes evident to *mens* upon reflective self-examination. For Bonaventure, the fact is that *mens* does understand, and it can do so only with reference to categories and according to laws that are somehow present to it, but do not belong to it. These laws are of another order than the one in which *mens* usually discovers itself and upon which it generally bases the whole of its interpretation of itself, namely, the order of things within the world and concepts derived from them. This suggests that *mens* actually always stands between these two orders, between the temporal and the eternal, between beings and being, between creatures and God. An adequate analysis of understanding, then, must point out both of these orders. Although *mens*, in thinking, necessarily refers to something that transcends it and to which it has primordial access, it must also, in understanding particular things, have contact with them. Consequently, its knowledge is to an extent innate or natural and to an

extent adventitious or acquired. Bonaventure points this out more clearly in his *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*:

Cum enim ad cognitionem duo currant necessario, videlicet praesentia cognoscibilis et lumen, quo mediante de illo iudicamus . . . habitus cognitivi sunt quodam modo nobis *innati* ratione *luminis* *animae* *inditi*, sunt etiam quodam modo *acquisiti* ratione *speciei* . . . Nemo enim unquam cognosceret *totum*, aut *partem*, aut *patrem*, aut *matrem*, nisi sensu aliquo exterior *speciem* eius acceperet . . . Illud autem *lumen* sive naturale iudicatorium dirigit ipsam animam in iudicando tam cognoscibilibus quam de operabilibus.

[For since in cognition the two things necessarily accompany each other, namely, the presence of the thing to be known, and the light, by means of which we judge concerning it . . . the cognitive habits are in a certain measure innate in us on account of the light placed into the soul, but are also in a certain measure acquired on account of the image . . . For no one could ever know whole, or part, or father, or mother, unless he had somewhere received their images through the external senses . . . But that light or natural judgement directs the soul itself as much in judging of things to be known as of things to be done.]⁴

In the event of understanding, *mens* touches both the particular thing and the transcendent light in which that thing is comprehended, so that each time understanding occurs, both the 'earthly' and the 'divine' realm are manifest. Since this twofold disclosure is of the essence of understanding in the intellectual as well as the moral sphere, it follows that *mens* can only produce a proper account of its own functioning, and thereby derive a proper definition of itself, on the basis of a self-interpretation that recognizes its intermediary position between these two dimensions or orders.

Since the order of particular things, of creatures, is the one that *mens* initially and generally finds itself in, and out of which or in relation to which it generally determines itself, the alternative and more complete interpretation of itself as intermediary requires, first and foremost, that *mens* realize the transcendent order to which it is also related and to which it also belongs. It is this kind of interpretation that lies behind the understanding, in this context, of *mens* as the image of God. Where being, truth, and good are names of God, and God as subject is the identity in difference of these determinations, being the image of God is definitive for that entity which, in reflecting upon beings, reflects being, truth and goodness *per se*. In understanding, *mens* reflects being itself; in evaluation, it mirrors the good, and its discovery of what-is through these forms of reflection constitutes the revelation of truth.

As already implied, the absence here of any complete intellectual or moral skepticism is a necessary concomitant of the fact that, for

Bonaventure, there is no distinction between the transcendental as an epistemological determination and the transcendent as an ontological one, and therefore no possible disparity between epistemological imperatives and ontological truths. What must be thought is what is the case. It could be said that this stance adopts an attitude of faith towards the possibility of understanding in general, since the veracity of the ground supporting the processes of *mens* is never called into doubt. But Bonaventure's analysis also suggests that the veracity of that ground cannot be called into doubt, that *mens* cannot genuinely ask whether it understands at all, but only how, in reference to what, it understands.

There is, after all, nothing in reference to which it can ask the question of whether it understands. *Mens* cannot, within the limits of the modes of understanding proper to it, bring into question the truth of what it must presuppose as true, or the being of being in itself, or the goodness of the highest good. It cannot ask whether the laws of logic are logical, nor can it evaluate the laws of evaluation. Such questions, which seek to question the very grounds of rational thought, the basic principles upon which it is founded, cannot even be properly posed as rational questions. They cannot be posed without self-contradiction, and they certainly cannot be answered through the kind of thinking by which reason proceeds. Any effort to question them from within the circle of reasoning is simply paradoxical, since such an effort inevitably remains circumscribed by the very principles and modes of thought it is attempting to interrogate in a fundamental way.

This analysis does not establish any ontic criteria for judgement, and it does not offer any definitive 'answer' to conflicts of opinion. But what it does establish is the indispensability of basic metaphysical categories like being, truth, goodness and unity, wherever answers are sought. Thinking, it suggests, cannot help but presuppose these. If truth is called error, that statement is nonetheless supposed to be true. If all moral systems are judged to be degenerate, that judgement still presupposes a principle of value. Truth and value, moreover, are intrinsically related to one another and they are both related to being; the true is *ontos on*, the really real, and it is only with reference to it that value is decided. And what is judged to be really real, true and good will be that according to which and in terms of which what-is is explained in its being. It will then be unity.⁵

Although the ground of thought is not itself visible, Bonaventure

does claim to catch sight of it in some way when he conceives it, in the traditional manner, as a transcendent light informing every activity of understanding. The concept of divine light, however, like that of all the truly fundamental principles of *mens*, only offers a name for a limit, a negativity, as it can never itself be analysed. 'The divine light,' as Gilson says, 'is . . . an immediate cause and not an object of our knowledge . . . we affirm it as we affirm the existence of the hidden source whose flowing waters are actually before our eyes'.⁶ It is immediately present in that it is placed within the soul and truth is grasped within it. But it is nonetheless 'seen' indirectly, 'contuited' as an *objectum fontanum* (Gilson, p. 362) in that mode of reflection where the functions of *mens* are revealed as *vestigia* through which the properties of the absolute are manifested. 'The same things may be envisaged either as things or as signs,' Gilson comments, and 'the human soul itself is a different object of knowledge according as it is considered a reality sufficient to itself or the obscure image of a transcendent God' (p. 345).

For Bonaventure, it is the obscure image of the God who is one in essence or being and three in persons, and the nature and relations of the powers of the soul reflect this God:

Secundum autem harum potentiarum ordinem et habitudinem ducit in ipsam beatissimam Trinitatem. - Nam ex memoria oritur intelligentia ut ipsius proles, quia tunc intelligimus, cum similitudo, quae est in memoria, resultat in acie intellectus, quae nihil aliud est quam verbum; ex memoria et intelligentia spiratur amor tanquam nexus amborum. Haec tria scilicet *mens generans, verbum et amor*, sunt in anima quoad memoriam, intelligentiam et voluntatem, quae sunt consubstantiales, coeuales et coevae, se invicem circumincedentes.

[These powers lead us to the most blessed Trinity itself in view of their order, origin and interrelatedness. From memory, intelligence comes forth as its offspring, since we understand when a likeness which is in the memory leaps into the eye of the intellect in the form of a word. From memory and intelligence love is breathed forth as their mutual bond. These three - the generating mind, the word and love - are in the soul as memory, understanding and will, which are consubstantial, coequal and coeval, and interpenetrate each other.] (III.5, 321/84)

The first point, that understanding proceeds from memory, is based on the notion, previously mentioned, that the mind only understands what is present to it in memory.⁷ When what is present to memory translates itself into understanding, it expresses itself in the form of a word. Memory and understanding generate love. What is present and known is also what is loved, and so love is the 'mutual bond' between the first two powers. The generation of these three faculties one from another, a generation preceding any action, mirrors the generation of the members of

the divine Trinity which is itself non-temporal and prior to the act of creation. The fact that the three powers of the mind are nonetheless aspects of a single substance or subject reflects the consubstantiality and distinction of the three persons which are yet one God.

Because the mind, for Bonaventure, is itself an image pointing beyond itself to God, what is said of God on the basis of it cannot be considered as simply a 'subjectivization' of the absolute, and therefore a 'fiction'. However, behind all of Bonaventure's descriptions of God and of the Trinity, there always stands the consciousness that what is being said could never be other than 'according to us' in some way, that any and all predicates applied to God are only analogically true. To name God a perfect spirit with these and these powers could never be construed here as proper definition, as if, through this naming, the 'literal' truth about God had been uttered. An utterance of this nature is, with respect to God, impossible. As was the case with the relation to God of creatures other than man, the immanence of God to the mind is accompanied by a simultaneous transcendence.

The conditions that, for Bonaventure, form the possibility of experience and of the objects of experience do not apply, therefore, to God - which does not mean that God is the thing in itself. The things themselves are the particular entities of the phenomenal world. God is the noumenal being of which these phenomena are translations, but they are real translations, manifold expressions and manifestations of the simple being of God. They are therefore copies, images, or representations of that being, and reflect it only partially and dimly in their appearance, but that appearance is nonetheless a true one, produced by the self-translation of the divine, and not the human, subject. Because the human subject mirrors the divine one, it understands the translation in reference to its source.

The mode of reflection that reveals *mens* as an image of God, the mode that discovers all entities, including *mens*, as *vestigia dei*, is contemplation. Near the beginning of Chapter Four of the *Itinerarium*, Bonaventure describes some features of the state in which the human mind usually apprehends itself, in which it does not discover God within itself and so does not come to understand itself as a sign of God. In describing this state, he also suggests, by implication, what differentiates it from the mode of self-apprehension proper to contemplation. *Sollicitudinibus distracta*, distracted by cares and dissolved in them, the human mind is

drawn away from itself towards the manifold objects of that care (IV.1, 324/87). This constitutes its anxious involvement in the world, where it is out of itself and thus, in a sense, estranged from itself. Since the objects of care are many, in being drawn towards them, the mind is also divided up and pulled apart. To overcome such division, it must recollect itself. It must gather up its faculties from their dispersion in the manifold objects of its accustomed attention, and concentrate them back upon itself.

It must learn to know itself, to return to itself through understanding, and that means to abstract itself from the *phantasmata* to which it adheres through concupiscence. Augustine discusses this point in Book 10.viii (11) of *De Trinitate*:

Ergo se ipsam quemadmodum quaerat et inueniat, mirabilis quaestio est quo tendat ut quaerat aut quo ueniat ut inueniat. Quid enim tam in mente quam mens est? Sed quia in his est quae cum amore cogitat, sensibilibus autem, id est corporalibus, cum amore assuefacta est, non ualet sine imaginibus eorum esse in semetipsa. Hinc et oboritur erroris dedecus dum rerum sensarum imagines discernere a se non potest ut se solam uideat; cohaeserunt enim mirabiliter glutino amoris. Et haec est eis immunditia quoniam dum se solam nititur cogitare hoc se putat esse sine quo se non potest cogitare. Cum igitur ei praecipitur et se ipsam cognoscat, non se tamquam sibi detracta sit, sed id quod sibi addidit detrahat.

[How the mind may seek and find itself is, therefore, a remarkable question: whither does it go in order to seek, and whither does it come in order to find? For what is so much in the mind as the mind? But because it is in those things of which it thinks with love, and it has grown accustomed to thinking of sensible things, that is, of bodies with love, it is incapable of being in itself without the images of those things. From this arises its shameful error, that it can no longer distinguish the images of sensible things from itself, so as to see itself alone. For they have marvelously cohered to it with the glue of love, and this is its uncleanness that, while it endeavors to think of itself alone, it regards itself as being that without which it cannot think of itself.

When it is, therefore, commanded to know itself, it should not seek itself as though it were to be withdrawn from itself, but it should rather withdraw what it has added to itself.]⁹

To know itself, *mens* must turn back to itself with desire. It must turn its will away from the images which, through its adherence to them, adhere to it and then become identified with it. It has drawn these images into itself through its attraction to the objects from which they are drawn, but *mens* goes out of itself, out of the purity of its own inwardness, when it directs itself towards them: *Cum ergo sit mens interior, quodam modo exit a semetipsa cum in haec quasi uestigia multarum intentionum exerit amoris affectum* [As the mind, therefore, is within, it goes in some way outside of itself when it directs the affection of its love towards these sensible things which leave their footprints, as it were, in our mind

because we have thought of them so often'].²

Lost in these images, *mens* confuses its own substance with them, and thus comes to understand its own nature in terms of them. To understand the truth of its essence, the meaning of itself, *mens* must first mean itself. To think itself *per se*, it must pull its intention away from all that it represents to itself, and intend itself alone.¹⁰ It has to unglue itself from all that sticks to it through the adhesive power of love or intention, and that requires looking away from all particulars towards that which comprehends them, towards the self alone. For Bonaventure, this looking away and looking towards is a turning inwards of the three faculties of the mind, an inversion of memory, intellect and will upon themselves. It is concentrated self-reflection, in which the mind detaches itself from the objects of reflection in order to focus as profoundly and narrowly as possible upon its own reflective processes. What *mens* finds when it concentrates upon itself in this way is not an independent and self-sufficient subject, but, rather, its relation to the indwelling God. In looking within itself, it looks through itself to the absolute.

When it is hindered from inspecting itself, on the other hand, it is prevented from insight into the source of its comprehension, from insight into truth: *Videre igitur per te potes veritatem, quae te docet, si te concupiscentiae et phantasmata non impediunt et se tanquam nubes inter te et veritatis radium non interponant* ['You can see, therefore, through yourself the truth which teaches you, if your desires and sensory images do not hinder you and interpose themselves like clouds between you and the rays of truth'] (III.3, 319/83). *Mens* always stands within this truth, and the truth of its representations is founded upon it. That truth is granted, therefore, not by *mens*, but by the truth in which it stands. Representations, when true, are the creations or the creatures of truth itself. They are *vestigia dei*, and in a true representation, what *mens* represents to itself is only what truth represents to it.

In its usual way of being, *mens* is deceived and in error (*fallitur et errat*) only because it fails to understand the representation as representation, as a translation of truth, though not, it must be remembered, as *mens'* own translation, but as the translation to *mens* of truth itself. *Mens* wanders in error when, in its everyday mode of existing, it accepts image and copy for truth (*cum effigiem et simulacrum pro veritate acceptat*) (III.4, 321), because this mode of existing discloses beings in such a way that their transcendent ground remains completely

hidden. *Mens* then tends to confuse creature and creator, in that, by thinking that it understands beings independently of any transcendent ground, it sees the creature as its own ground, not realizing that no creature is ever truly comprehensible purely in reference to itself. In contemplation, on the other hand, the ground of beings appears, although indirectly, and with its appearance it becomes apparent to *mens* that all creatures are in some way related to this ground, and that the truth of their being can only be comprehended in terms of that relation. When *mens* then seeks its own truth in self-contemplation, when the mode of revealing whose decisive character consists in discovering all things as signs of God is turned inwards towards *mens*, it reveals itself to itself as a special kind of sign, an *imago dei*.

2. *Dasein* as Transcendence.

At the beginning of *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger states that the intention of this work is *die konkrete Ausarbeitung der Frage nach dem Sinn von »Sein«*. ['to work out the question of the meaning of *being* and to do so concretely'] (SZ, 1). Working out the question of being forms the topic of all of Heidegger's works in one way or another. His inquiries are always directed by and towards the 'truth' of being, which, in the Schelling commentary, he defines as *dasjenige, was Seyn in seinem Wesen überhaupt offen und demzufolge verstehbar macht* ['that which makes being in its essence open at all and thus comprehensible'] (SA, 110/64). Insofar as it is true that *jeder Denker denkt nur einen einzigen Gedanken* ['every thinker thinks one only thought'] (WhD, 20/50), the thought of this truth, of the openness, manifestness or comprehensibility of being in its manifold determinations, is the one thought around which Heidegger's thinking always circles.

What Heidegger is aware of from the outset, however, is that this inquiry already presupposes an understanding of what it seeks, and that this prior understanding of being is actually a prerequisite for any act of understanding, so that *all* thinking is, in some sense, the thinking of being. Given that each time the 'is,' or some other modification of being, is spoken, there is an unthought reference to being and an implicit understanding of it, the understanding of beings always occurs within a primordial understanding of being (SZ, 5).

This primordial understanding of being, moreover, is constitutive for the essence of that entity which understands. It belongs to the essential

way of being, and therefore to the definition, of Dasein. *Dasein ist in der Weise, seiend so etwas wie Sein zu verstehen* ['Dasein is in such a way as to be something which understands something like being'] (SZ, 17). However, Dasein's understanding of being is, proximally and for the most part (*zunächst und zumeist*), pre-ontological and unthematic, a 'presupposition' in the strongest sense.

As a presupposition forming the ground of any and all understanding of beings, being is, in itself, groundless and transcendent. Dasein does not establish its own understanding of being, but always finds itself already moving within it, and, since being is always presupposed in every act of understanding, Dasein can never step outside being to inspect it as an object of understanding. As Helmut Fahrenbach says, 'the understanding of being (i.e. the "transcendence") of Dasein . . . remains without ground (*abgründig*),' in that 'temporal-finite Dasein cannot itself be the ground of its own being understanding. For the understanding of being . . . is only possible in an already 'lighted' region, in which beings are cleared in their being. Man . . . cannot establish this region of 'being open', but only relate himself to it; he finds himself always already within it beforehand, in so far as he is 'there' and understands beings and himself in their being.'''

On this point, Heidegger explicitly acknowledges his debt to the medieval scholastic tradition. In *Sein und Zeit*, he quotes Aquinas: *Illud quod primo cadit sub apprehensione est ens, cuius intellectus includitur in omnibus, quaecumque quis apprehendit* (SZ 3, *Summa Theologica*, 11, Q.94, art. 2). As pointed out previously, however, for Heidegger, unlike for the scholastic tradition that includes Aquinas, being is historical, and appears in many lights over the epochs of metaphysics in which it both sends itself and holds itself back in itself. But each of these epochs still 'presupposes' being. Heidegger consistently argues that all metaphysical speculation and reasoning already moves within the understanding of being in which being is lit up, so that being itself, as what is presupposed in every metaphysical interpretation of beings, is the ground of metaphysics that remains unthought by metaphysics. Thus, in the 'Introduction' to *Was ist Metaphysik?* he claims:

Wie auch immer das Seiende ausgelegt werden mag, ob als Geist im Sinne des Spiritualismus, ob als Stoff und Kraft im Sinne des Materialismus, ob als Werden und Leben, ob als Vorstellung, ob als Wille, ob als Substanz, ob als Subjekt, ob als Energie, ob als ewige Wiederkehr des Gleichen, jedesmal erscheint das Seiende als Seiendes im Lichte des Seins. Überall hat sich, wenn die Metaphysik das Seiende vorstellt, Sein gelichtet.

[In whatever manner beings are interpreted - whether as spirit, after the fashion of spiritualism; or as matter and force, after the fashion of materialism; or as becoming and life, or idea, will, substance, subject, or *energeia*; or as the eternal recurrence of the same events - every time, beings as beings appear in the light of being. Wherever metaphysics represents beings, being has entered into the light.] (WM, 7-8/207)

The 'clearing' of being is always there beforehand in every metaphysical representation of beings, and because metaphysics, in thinking about beings, must always remain inside the circle of this clearing, it cannot think the clearing itself. Metaphysics cannot, therefore, question its own ground, and any thinking that seeks to experience the ground of metaphysics, the revelation of being within which all understanding occurs, must in a sense leave metaphysics behind (WM, 9/208).

When Bonaventure speaks of the mind's transcendental grasp of being, and of the eternal light in which the mind grasps whatever it grasps with clarity, he has himself, in a way, left metaphysics behind. This grasp and this light cannot be turned into an object of which true propositions are asserted, since all true saying already has its life, movement and being within it. All true saying presupposes it and dwells inside of it. Bonaventure claims that this understanding of being obscurely refers to God in referring to something beyond the mind. Heidegger would agree that it refers to 'something' transcending Dasein, although he would certainly not acquiesce in the hypostatization of that 'something' into a transcendent personal entity, insofar as that is what Bonaventure means.

In *Sein und Zeit*, the way Dasein presupposes being is also the way it presupposes truth. For Heidegger, truth is, primordially, uncovering. It is unconcealing and disclosing, the wresting of beings from hiddenness (SZ, 222). As such, it is a way of being of that entity which is in the world in such a way as to disclose world and beings. It is a way of being of Dasein, and Dasein is then itself primordial disclosure, or truth (SZ, 220). Directed towards innerworldly beings, Dasein reveals them in their being, and this revelation of being is truth. Therefore, the locus of being, the 'place' wherein being comes to light, and the locus of truth, defined as the uncovering and coming to presence of being, are one and the same - namely, Dasein. Insofar as it moves within an understanding of being, then, *Dasein ist »in der Wahrheit«* ['Dasein is "in the truth"'] (SZ, 221). It follows that truth only is as long as Dasein is, but that does not mean that Dasein either fabricates truth or constructs the being of entities. It means only that, since truth is manifestation, it cannot come to be

before the appearance of the entity whose essence is constituted as being manifesting (SZ, 226).

Mit der Entdecktheit des Seienden, though, zeigt sich dieses gerade als das Seiende, das vordem schon war ['once entities have been uncovered, they show themselves precisely as entities which beforehand already were'], since *so zu entdecken, ist die Seinsart der »Wahrheit«* ['such uncovering is the kind of being which belongs to "truth"'] (SZ, 227). When Augustine says that before truth is discovered it abides in itself, he is speaking out of this experience of truth, where things are revealed as having been, and having been so and so, before their revelation. For Augustine, this being, rather than either being manifesting or being manifest, is truth, and so, for him, truth, as the truth of the way things are, including the way things have been, can be unmanifest or hidden, resting 'in itself' (*in se*) outside discovery.

What Heidegger observes, however, is that the abiding in itself beforehand of truth, the independence of truth, can itself only be discovered on the basis of the revelation of truth, and so, again, in relation to the entity which reveals truth. While maintaining the independence of truth, Heidegger points out, in *Gelassenheit*, that *die Unabhängigkeit der Wahrheit vom Menschen ist offenkundig doch eine Beziehung zum Menschenwesen* ['evidently truth's independence from man is a relation to human nature'], in that *die Wahrheit kann . . . unabhängig vom Menschen wesen* only because *der Mensch ist der in das Wesen der Wahrheit Gebrauchte* ['truth's nature can come forth independently of man' only because 'man is he who is made use of for the nature of truth'] (G, 63-4/84-5). This also means, though, that, as the one who is made use of by truth for the coming to presence of truth, man is never its ultimate source. The nature of the most authentic and rigorous kind of thinking, the kind that undertakes to discover the nature of truth, consists in *die Entschlossenheit zur wesenden Wahrheit* ['a resolve for the coming forth of truth's nature'] (G, 59/81). It never amounts to a primary originating of this nature.

In spite of the fact that they conceive the being of truth in a somewhat different way, truth is, for Heidegger as much as for Augustine and Bonaventure, a matter of discovering rather than creating. *Dasein* does not spin truth out of itself, although *alle Wahrheit ist gemäß deren wesenhaften daseinsmäßigen Seinsart relativ auf das Sein des Daseins* ['because the kind of being that is essential to truth is of the character

of Dasein, all truth is relative to Dasein's being'. The way of being of truth, as revealing, is always essentially 'according to Dasein' (*daseinsmäßig*), because truth comes into being only with the being of Dasein, and its being is therefore dependent upon that of Dasein. But this is by no means equal to saying that truth is 'subjective' in the sense of »in das Belieben des Subjekts gestellt« [""left to the subject's discretion""]. On the contrary, this way of being that Dasein essentially is (i.e. being-uncovering, which is truth) *bringt das entdeckende Dasein vor das Seiende selbst* ['brings the uncovering Dasein face to face with the entities themselves']. In discovering, Dasein sets entities free into their own being, and that setting free is truth, but what these entities are, what they are set free into, is not constituted by Dasein. For this reason, *die »Allgemeingültigkeit« der Wahrheit* ['the "universal validity" of truth'], while *lediglich darin verwurzelt, daß Dasein Seiendes an ihm selbst entdecken und freigeben kann* ['rooted solely in the fact that Dasein can uncover entities in themselves and free them'], is not lessened by the fact that the event of truth is founded upon the event of Dasein. *Wird die rechtverstandene Wahrheit dadurch im mindesten angetastet, daß sie ontisch nur im »Subjekt« möglich ist und mit dessen Sein steht und fällt?* ['If truth has been correctly understood, is it in the least impaired by the fact that it is ontically possible only in the "subject" and that it stands and falls with the being of that "subject"?'] (SZ, 227).

The essence of truth, then, belongs to the essence of Dasein, since both come to presence together with *Seinsverständnis*. Although this means that being is there only as long as Dasein is, since Dasein is the clearing or space in which being and beings are lit up, and so the locus of the truth of being, it does not mean either that Dasein creates being, or even that it in any way commands being to reveal itself. Fahrenbach notes that:

The understanding of being (in *Sein und Zeit*) is in no case something like a 'power' of Dasein, with which it directs itself towards 'being' and 'achieves' the understanding of it. Rather, the understanding of being in each case already forms the basis of Dasein as a fact, and makes Dasein itself possible; it is the fundamental occurrence, in which Dasein is, but over which it does not 'dispose'. (p. 106)

Indeed, according to the later Heidegger, Dasein as clearing is itself 'sent' by *Sein*. The *Da* of Dasein is the space being clears for itself in order to reveal itself, in order to *be there*. Heidegger makes this point in the *Humanismusbrief*, while correcting any possible misinterpretation of *Sein und Zeit* in this regard:

Aber ist nicht in «S.u.Z» (S. 212), wo das «es gibt» zur Sprache kommt, gesagt: «Nur solange Dasein ist, gibt es

Sein»? Allerdings. Das bedeutet: nur solange die Lichtung des Seins sich ereignet, übereignet sich Sein dem Menschen. Daß aber das Da, die Lichtung als Wahrheit des Seins selbst, sich ereignet, ist die Schickung des Seins selbst. Dieses ist das Geschick der Lichtung. Der Satz bedeutet aber nicht: das Dasein des Menschen im überlieferten Sinne von *existentia*, und neuzeitlich gedacht als die Wirklichkeit des *ego cogito*, sei dasjenige Seiende, wodurch das Sein erst geschaffen werde. Der Satz sagt nicht, das Sein sei ein Produkt des Menschen. In der Einleitung zu «S.u.Z.» (S. 38) steht einfach und klar und sogar im Sperrdruck: «Sein ist das transzendens schlechthin».

[But does not *Being and Time* say on p. 212, where the 'there is/it gives' comes to language, 'Only so long as Dasein is, is there being'? To be sure. It means that only so long as the lighting of being comes to pass does being convey itself to man. But the fact that the *Da*, the lighting as the truth of being itself, comes to pass is the dispensation of being itself. This is the destiny of the lighting. But the sentence does not mean that the Dasein of man in the traditional sense of *existentia*, and thought in modern philosophy as the actuality of the *ego cogito*, is that being through which being is first fashioned. The sentence does not say that being is the product of man. The 'Introduction' to *Being and Time* says simply and clearly, even in italics, '*being is the transcendens pure and simple*.'] (Hb, 83/216)

Thus, the 'there' of 'being-there' is something sent (*Geschick*) by the sending (*Schickung*) of being, and what is sent in the *Da*, the clearing of being, is being itself. The *Da* is the lighting up of being, in which being lights itself up. In a sense, it is being, in that it is a clearing provided by being for itself and within itself, but it is also different from being itself in that it is a mode of being, a kind of being, namely, being-*there*. Dasein is, therefore, a reflection of being in which being mirrors itself to itself, and which comes to be through an act of providing on the part of being itself. Far from Dasein's creating being, and so projecting it in its own image, Dasein is itself a projection of being, a clearing whose 'mission' is to reflect being.

For Bonaventure, that *mens* is an image of God and mirror of the the world means that it grasps the way things are in their eternal and unchanging order, where understanding that order means grasping the fixed logic of things. God is revealed in this logic, and is this logic. Heidegger questions both the notion of any eternal and unchanging order, and the supremacy of logic in determining the truth of what-is. However, it is still the case that insofar as the lighting of the *Da* reflects the truth of being in its various manifestations, it in some way reveals the order in which and according to which being manifests itself in beings. As a clearing in which truth comes to be, Dasein, too, reflects the organization or *logos* of *Sein*, the 'logic' of being in its appearing. Reflection does not mean here the representation of something 'inside' which then agrees with something 'outside', and the truth of logic does

not, consequently, reside in the agreement between the organization of a thinking subject's thought and the structure of an 'external reality'. Rather, *logos*, according to Heidegger, is primarily *ein bestimmter Modus des Sehenlassens* ['a definite mode of letting something be seen'] (SZ, 33). As discourse (*Rede*), it has the structure of *apophansis*, *Offenbarmachens im Sinne des aufweisenden Sehenlassens* ['making manifest in the sense of letting something be seen by pointing it out'] (SZ, 32), and because of this meaning it can also have the structural form of *synthesis* (SZ, 33). The syntheses belonging to *logos*, and so the logical syntheses expressed in the mode of discourse having the form of proposition or assertion, reveal by letting what is spoken about be seen in its connection, its being together with, something else. To reveal the thing in this connection with something means to let it be seen as what it is.

Such synthesizing projects an order of being, but in doing so, it does not manufacture an order into which it then shoves beings, but discovers the order, the *logos*, according to which beings are placed together, and through which being is structured. It is systematic in an authentic sense, in which the Greek *synistemi*, 'I put together', from which the word 'system' is derived, means:

Ich füge in eine Ordnung derart, daß nicht nur Vorhandenes und Vorkommendes nach einem schon vorhandenen Netz von Stellen verteilt und darin untergebracht wird - etwa so, wie die Glasscheibe in einen fertigen Fensterrahmen eingeschoben wird -, sondern füge in eine Ordnung derart, daß dabei die Ordnung selbst erst entworfen wird. Dieser Entwurf ist aber, wenn er ein echter ist, nicht nur ein Überwurf über die Dinge, etwas ihnen nur Aufgestülptes, sondern der echte Entwurf wirft das Seiende so auseinander, daß es nun gerade in der Einheit seines eigensten Gefüges sichtbar wird . . .

[I order things in such a way that not only is what is present and occurring distributed and preserved according to an already existent network of places - for example, the way the windowpane is inserted into a completed windowframe - but order in such a way that the order itself is thereby first projected. But this projection, if it is genuine, is not only thrown over things, not only dumped on top of them. A genuine projection throws beings apart in such a way that they precisely now become visible in the unity of their inmost jointure . . .] (SA, 45/25)

This passage from the Schelling commentary suggests that a genuine projection does not construct being, but uncovers the outlines of being's construction or design, its 'architectural blueprint' (*Entwurf*). It thus reveals the structure of being (*Seinsgefüge*), the way being is put together or 'jointed'.

Heidegger is explicating Schelling here, while his own thought, and especially his later thought, attempts to overcome this notion of a 'system' with a fixed logic. Whereas Bonaventure does see the truth of

being as somehow 'systematic', as fixed and ordered within the eternal and exemplary art of God, Heidegger thinks of it as changing over time. For Bonaventure, then, there is one right sketch, one *Entwurf*, as it were, while, for Heidegger, there are many possible ones, many ways in which the being of beings may be ordered, and 'logic' in the narrow sense is itself only one kind of ordering. But, in the *Beiträge*, Heidegger notes that any such projection, any *Seynsentwurf*, is actually ultimately projected by being and *through* Dasein (B, 304). It is the projection of the truth of being, and being, not Dasein, is its true source. Such a projection is then not arbitrary, but is, Heidegger says, the highest necessity, although not in the sense of logical sequence (B, 324).

If, after all, the *Da* of Dasein is sent by being to reveal being, and such revealing is Dasein's mission and destiny, then the sketches according to which Dasein projects the order of being must, when they are authentically revealing, also be projects of being. They therefore do not create being, but, as modes of revealing, modes of truth, they are modes of being's lighting itself up to human being. The *Humanismusbrief* says of this process of lighting up:

Sein lichtet sich dem Menschen im ekstatischen Entwurf.
Doch dieser Entwurf schafft nicht das Sein.

Überdies aber ist der Entwurf wesentlich ein geworfener.
Das Werfende im Entwerfen ist nicht der Mensch, sondern
das Sein selbst, das den Menschen in die Ek-sistenz des
Da-seins als sein Wesen schickt. Dieses Geschick ereignet
sich als die Lichtung des Seins, als welche es ist. Sie
gewährt die Nähe zum Sein. In dieser Nähe, in der
Lichtung des «Da», wohnt der Mensch als der Ek-sistierende,
ohne daß er es heute schon vermag, dieses Wohnen eigens
zu erfahren und zu übernehmen.

[Being illumines itself for man in the ecstatic
projection. But this projection does not create being.

Moreover, the projection is essentially a thrown
projection. What throws in projection is not man but being
itself, which sends man into the ek-sistence of Da-sein
that is his essence. This destiny comes to pass as the
lighting of being, as which it is. The lighting grants
nearness to being. In this nearness, in the lighting of
the *Da*, dwells man as the ek-sisting one without yet being
able properly to experience and take over this dwelling.]

(Hb, 84/217)

Projection is 'ecstatic' in that it projects beyond itself and stands outside itself. The projecting 'agent' is being, and it sends human being, in projecting, into the standing outside that causes to appear, into ek-sistence as the essence of Dasein. Such a sending occurs, then, as the event of the clearing or lighting (*Lichtung*) of being, as Dasein. In this event, human being is placed in a proximity to being in which it always lives, without necessarily being explicitly aware of it, without travelling through it in thought and overtaking it as its own.

If, then, 'logic', in a broad and original sense, is a projection that orders beings in a certain way and thus uncovers them as what they are, i.e. in their being, that project belongs originally to being itself. It is projected by being as understanding, a mode of being-there (Dasein), and this project appropriates human being into its revealing. Originally, therefore, logic, as letting be seen, is a mode of revealing, a mode of truth. Just as, according to the secondary meaning of truth, 'true' also refers to what is revealed, so *logos* can also refer to *das Aufgezeigte als solches* ['that which is exhibited, as such'] (SZ, 34). What is primarily logical is Dasein; secondarily, what Dasein reveals in logical ordering, in letting something be seen in its togetherness with something else.

To say that what is revealed by understanding is logical in a secondary sense is then not to say that the understanding or ordering of Dasein is its source. The reverse is actually true, in that what evokes the understanding of Dasein, what calls forth thinking, including representing and ordering, is the thing itself, the 'voice' of being as the *logos*, the 'word' in which and according to which being is gathered together and revealed. This voice or word, the principle (which is not necessarily 'logical' in the narrow sense) according to which beings are structured or 'articulated', and so in and through which being 'speaks' itself, evokes the response of Dasein as thought and speech.

In the case of a representation, for instance, what is primary is not a picture in the head that substitutes for something, nor a sound that arbitrarily signifies something. The picture and the sound stand in place of something, and thus do re-present it, but what is primordial in that representation is standing before the thing and being presented to it, and its corresponding being presented to and standing before. In *Was heißt Denken?*, Heidegger says:

Wir stehen . . . z.B. vor einem blühenden Baum - und der Baum steht vor uns. Er stellt sich uns vor. Der Baum und wir stellen uns einander vor, indem der Baum dasteht und wir ihm gegenüber stehen. In die Beziehung zueinander - voreinander gestellt, *sind* der Baum und wir. Bei diesem Vorstellen handelt es sich also nicht um »Vorstellungen«, die in unserem Kopf herumschwirren . . . Wir stellen uns einem Baum gegenüber, vor ihn, und der Baum stellt sich uns vor. Wer stellt hier eigentlich vor? Der Baum oder wir? Oder beide? Oder keiner von beiden? Wir stellen uns, so wie wir sind, nicht bloß mit dem Kopf oder mit dem Bewußtsein, dem blühenden Baum gegenüber, und der Baum stellt sich uns vor als der, der er ist.

[. . . we stand before a tree in bloom, for example - and the tree stands before us. The tree faces us. The tree and we meet one another, as the tree stands there and we stand face to face with it. As we are in this relation of one to the other and before the other, the tree and we are. This face-to-face meeting is not, then, one of these 'ideas' buzzing about in our heads . . . We come and stand

facing a tree, before it, and the tree faces, meets us. Which one is meeting here? The tree, or we? Or both? Or neither? We come and stand - just as we are, and not merely with our head or our consciousness - facing the tree in bloom, and the tree faces, meets us as the tree it is.] (WhD, 16-7/42)

Heidegger is listening, in this passage, to a number of echoes produced by the word *Vorstellen*, its meaning as introduction or meeting, as representing and relating, and, most literally, as simply 'placing before' (*Vor-stellen*). This placing before, in which something is set before us and we are set before it, is the primordial meeting and the primary relation, the primary *correspondence* at the root of representation.

Since, moreover, the thing that stands before is a revelation of being, in which the *phainomenon* presents itself to the uncovering of *Dasein*, a 'true' representation, one which is *angemessen* (a term Heidegger uses frequently in *Sein und Zeit*), is, as a response to being's presenting of itself by coming into the open, a re-presenting of being in which being corresponds to itself and relates itself to itself. The truth of a representation is, therefore, granted and sustained by being, since being is itself that which is presented and represented in that representation.

When representations are organized in a certain way to reveal order, either gathered together in the unifying unity of a concept or arranged within the articulative structure of a sentence, it is then not a matter of something occurring 'in the head' according to a set of laws that determine the mental conduct of an isolated entity, but of an understanding which, in its correspondence to what is as it is, discovers the correspondences that hold between the things that are, and allows them to lie forth as what they are. The verb corresponding to the noun *logos* is *legen*; in *Was heißt Denken?* Heidegger translates, and so interprets, *legen* as *Vorliegenlassen* ['to let lie before us'] (WhD, 123/202). Original speech (*legen* as *Sagen*), in which unifying and arranging 'first' occurs, is then: *gesammelt-sammelndes beisammen-vor-liegen-Lassen* ['a letting-lie-together-before which gathers and is gathered'] (*Logos*, VA III, 9/64).

Human speech is not the most original speaking of the *logos*. It is a response to the *logos*, a response to the silent speaking which is the articulation of being, the principle of structure according to which what-is is put together as a differentiated unity. The discovery of this articulation is the revelation of beings in their being, and that is truth and understanding. It is correspondence. *Dasein* is capable of such understanding in so far as it is already in correspondence with being,

where correspondence, „Entsprechen“ heißt . . . : *be-stimmt sein, être disposé, nämlich vom Sein des Seienden her. Dis-posé bedeutet hier wörtlich: auseinander-gesetzt, gelichtet und dadurch in die Bezüge zu dem versetzt, was ist* ['being de-termined, être disposé by that which comes from the being of beings. *Dis-posé* here means literally set-apart, cleared, and thereby set, placed in relationship with what is.'] (WP, 76-7). The speech of Dasein, in which Dasein articulates being - that is to say, articulates the articulation of being as a response to primordial *logos* - is determined not by human being but by being. It is a project of being, and only for this reason does it correspond to being.

'Logic', understood in the above sense, 'maps' the structure of being through this essential correspondence. It 'mirrors' the structure of being, to which it responds and corresponds, since it is this structure itself which evokes logic. Language is primordially the *logos*, the way being is articulated, structured, put together, gathered up and jointed, and secondarily human speech, occurring as a response to this speaking of being. Dasein reflects the *logos* insofar as it is the the place where the structure of being is unconcealed, where being reflects itself to itself. The *logos* is therefore dependent upon Dasein, but only as a locus. Logic, as language, the speaking (articulation) of being, appropriates Dasein, and not the other way around.

Truly 'logical' thinking is then by its very nature in correspondence with being, since it corresponds to what calls it forth, namely, to the articulation of being, the *logos* that evokes the word and the sentence. Being is, ultimately, what calls for thinking and what calls forth thinking (*was heißt Denken*) in all of its forms. Being is the final 'to be thought' (*zu-Bedenkende*) and the most originally thought-provoking (*das Bedenklichste*). Thinking occurs as a response to being, and is determined by being as that which presents itself to be thought, thus forming the first and last subject matter of any inquiring after beings. Moreover, since being is what is projected in thinking, and thinking is itself a way of being, being is also what thinking is called. Thinking is always the thinking of being, in a twofold sense, in that being is what gives itself to be thought, and being is what gives itself in thought: *esse est intelligere*, where the *est* is an essential belonging-together. Thinking is the free gift of being, and being is, in every sense, the ultimate referent of thinking, and yet, although every analysis of thinking, as a way of being definitive for Dasein and constituting the essence of Dasein, leads

to being, being is itself, in itself, unthinkable. The ultimate referent of thinking, which is also the ultimate referent of Dasein, is transcendent.

Given these points, there are a number of ways that Bonaventure's pre-critical position and Heidegger's post-critical one can be seen to meet. In the first place, and most basically, Heidegger, like Bonaventure, 'accepts' the 'truth' of that which is clear. This is not to say that, for Heidegger, there are such and such principles or facts that are indubitably certain and eternally true, but only that what originally comes to light within the clearing of Dasein, viz. a phenomenon, is not an appearance that only seems, but is that which shows itself from itself just as it is (see SZ, 28-31). The phenomenon then has a certain kind of 'self-evidence'. This form of evidence is actually always prior to both doubt and certainty. It is an original self-presenting, a coming into the open in which the phenomenon makes itself evident by coming to meet the one for whom it is evident. Such 'self-evidence' is original manifestation and original truth. It forms the basis for truth as correspondence between representation and thing. Truth, understood in this way, is a presupposition of Dasein; it is presupposed along with the essence of Dasein. It could not be genuinely 'doubted' except by annihilating Dasein altogether. Thus, there is apodicticity, and therefore truth, insofar as, and as long as, there is Dasein. In a sense, then, Augustine is right to say that anyone who doubts still has a limit to his doubt because he at least knows this one truth, that he doubts. But, in the light of Heidegger's analysis, this does not reduce to the correctness of a true proposition - 'I doubt' - but to that self-disclosedness of Dasein which presupposes truth in such a way as to be prior to any proposition that might be understood and called true.

This original self-disclosedness constitutes the essence of Dasein as *Lichtung*, and in the *Beiträge*, Heidegger says that if truth consists in this kind of *Lichtung*, it is not possible to ask about the truth of this truth (B, 327). However, while Heidegger admits here that there is something appropriate in the original interpretation of this primordial manifestness as 'light', which he recognizes is only an analogy, he also says that this interpretation does not maintain the sense of 'openness' contained in the term *Lichtung* (B, 339-40). But whether this *Lichtung* is conceived as a lighting or as an open clearing, it is still a region in which what-is is unconcealed, in which beings are lit up, or step into the open. In either case, the point remains that the lighting does not light

itself, that the clearing does not clear itself, and that this space is too primordial to be questioned. It simply 'occurs' with the understanding of being, where this understanding is granted and not created or manufactured by a human 'subject'. All truth is then granted by this occurrence, not secured by the subject, but given by something the subject can never get into its grasp.

Because what is granted determines the nature of the clearing as a whole, the 'laws' that bind thinking and what is thought are, for Heidegger as for Bonaventure, one and the same, so that the 'logic' of the space in which things appear and the logic of what appears is necessarily the same. This logic does not, for Heidegger, consist in the 'rules of logic', as ordinarily understood. It is not a matter of there being eternal, immutable and universally applicable laws which can be articulated once and for all. It is, rather, that what *regulates* the order of thinking and of what-is transcends the process of thought, and cannot itself be transcended. Its influence is visible, obscurely and enigmatically, but it is not itself visible in such a way that it could be brought under the rule of concepts and propositions.

Of course, as has already been said, Heidegger does not accept a fixed exemplarity according to which things are ordered. Things are ordered according to an *Entwurf*, but the *Entwurf* is not determined as precisely *this*, and from all eternity. Many sketches are possible, and these vary across history and across cultures. But, as Heidegger repeatedly makes clear, the projected order according to which beings are arranged is not therefore an arbitrary construct on the part of the subject. It responds and corresponds, in each instance and in its own particular and finite way, to the order of being. The 'productive logic' that brings about a new way of understanding the being of beings is still, ultimately, produced by being because it comes to be according to the 'logic' or 'speaking' of being. There are many possible perspectives, but the possibility of Dasein's having anything like a perspective is nonetheless determined by its standing within the original light of being, its being structured by the structure of being. It is this that gives Dasein its 'vision': *Das Sehen bestimmt sich nicht aus dem Auge, sondern aus der Lichtung des Seins. Die Inständigkeit in ihr ist das Gefüge aller menschlichen Sinne* ['Seeing is determined, not by the eye, but by the lighting of being. Presence within the lighting articulates all the human senses'] (Hw, 332/26).

What is intuitively given in this vision, the 'matter', as it were, is not, for Heidegger, any pure data that could be described independently of a form added later on, nor is it a substance whose laws of formation can be set down once and for all. The 'bare substance' of what is given, in fact, is determined by history and tradition. It can be reformed and transformed, but the tradition that presents it as such has a kind of erring necessity which resists new formations. On the other hand, neither the original formations, nor their subsequent reformations and transformations, are arbitrary. Human language is an echo of the speaking of being and what is mysterious is how human beings can hear this speaking in such a way as to correspond to it at all. Put simply, it is true that things may be sliced up in many ways, that the definitions of things are not fixed, but the decisions about these definitions are nonetheless not made *ex nihilo*. They somehow 'fit' the phenomena, and the speaking of being is, for Heidegger, what 'regulates' this fitting. The capacity to hear this speaking, then, this original articulation, is what lets anyone know whether or not an original word is appropriate, whether or not it 'fits' what calls it forth. This capacity cannot itself be justified, for it forms both the end and the basis of all justification.

So far, Heidegger's analysis of the transcendental nature of thinking has been discussed in terms of logic and truth, in terms of understanding as intellection. As a mode of thinking, such understanding is a gift of being. In this gift, being grants itself to thought, and through it thought points back to being as its original source. In Heidegger's conception of memory (*Gedächtnis*) in *Was heißt Denken?*, there is a similar pointing back to a source that is more original than any human faculty. Primordial memory, in which what is to be thought is gathered together and recalled, is not primarily a human capacity, a human capability or faculty (*Vermögen*). The search for the essence of memory, that which is memory in a most original and originative sense, the source of memory, leads beyond human being to a region in which human being as a being possessed of memory already dwells. This region is presupposed with human being. In it, all that is to be thought and is thinkable lies collected, stored, and hidden in a preeminent way (WhD, 97/150).

In this gathering together and keeping, all that is to be thought is kept safe, and it emerges from this safekeeping (*Verwahrnis*) as a gift freely given (WhD, 97/151). Human recall points to and indicates this keeping, insofar as it is discovered as already inhabiting it. Here, what

evokes thought, what, in every instance, gives itself to and in thought is preserved as true (*wahr*), and the essential ground (*Wesensgrund*) of memory is this keeping in which the true is protected and kept in secret. Memory, thought in its essence, is the keeping in safety of the true, and the being true of what is kept in safety (*die Wahr, das Wahrende*) (WhD, 97). It is the keeping of what calls for, calls forth, and is called thinking, being. Memory is the preserve of being and truth. As human being only inhabits being and truth, and does not invent them, so: *Der Mensch be-wohnt nur die Verwahrnis dessen, was ihm zu denken gibt. Der Mensch erzeugt die Verwahrnis nicht* ['Man only inhabits the keeping of what gives him food for thought - he does not create the keeping'] (WhD, 97/151).

What is kept in the keeping as what is most thought-provoking, then, is being, and when what is thus kept gives itself to thought, the issue is knowledge. Therefore, *das Wissen ist das Gedächtnis des Seins* ['knowledge is remembrance of being'] (Hw, 344/36). Being is not the objectivity of objects; it is presencing. The way presencing is bound together with *Gedanke* ['thought'] is suggested by the original meaning of the Old High German word *gidanc*, »*der Gedanc*«, which is: *das Gemüt, das Herz, den Herzensgrund, jenes Innerste des Menschen, das am weitesten nach außen ins Äuserste reicht und dies so entschieden, daß es, recht bedacht, die Vorstellung eines Innen und Außen nicht aufkommen läßt* ['man's inmost mind, the heart, the heart's core, that innermost essence of man which reaches outward most fully and to the outermost limits, and so decisively that, rightly considered, the idea of an inner and an outer world does not arise'] (WhD, 157/144). In this ground of the heart, all that is of concern to human being, all that approaches and touches the essence of human being, is gathered together: *Der Gedanc, der Herzensgrund ist die Versammlung alles dessen, was uns angeht, was uns anlangt, woran uns liegt, uns, insofern wir als Menschen sind* ['The *thanc*, the heart's core, is the gathering of all that concerns us, all that we care for, all that touches us insofar as we are, as human beings'] (WhD, 157/144).

Because this original gathering determines and preserves what reaches and touches human beings, it is the origin of what comes to presence and is held in presence. As such, it is co-essential with the meaning of love:

Im anfänglichen Wort »*der Gedanc*« waltet das ursprüngliche Wesen des Gedächtnisses: die Versammlung des unablässigen Meinens alles dessen, was das Gemüt anwesen läßt. Meinen ist hier in der Bedeutung von minne verstanden: die ihrer selbst nicht mächtige und darum auch nicht notwendig erst eigens zu vollziehende Zuneigung des innersten Sinnens des Gemüts nach dem Wesenden.

[The originary word 'thanc' is imbued with the original nature of memory: the gathering of the constant intention of everything that the heart holds in present being. Intention here is understood in the sense of the Old German word for 'love': the inclination with which the inmost meditation of the heart turns towards all that is in being - the inclination that is not within its own control and therefore also need not necessarily be first enacted as such.] (WhD, 93/141)

Memory, knowledge and love, then, co-define the essence of human being, as they do for Augustine and Bonaventure, and this essence points beyond itself to the presencing of what is present, to the being of beings. This presencing is not, for Heidegger, the simple presentness of a *nunc stans*. It is not 'eternity' as Bonaventure conceives it, or seems to conceive it. It does, however, have a certain kind of simplicity, unity, and steadiness, inasmuch as it is the simultaneity of presencing in the three dimensions of time. In the Schelling commentary, as was pointed out in the last chapter, Heidegger considers such simultaneity to be the genuine essence of eternity.

Heidegger actually always implies, even in his early works, that human existence in some way points beyond itself. In *Sein und Zeit*, Dasein, insofar as it is an essentially futural being, is always already transcending, has always already crossed over beyond itself. It is projected beyond itself towards what it can be, towards its own potentiality-for-being, and this projection in which Dasein is already away from itself (*sich schon vorweg*) is a constitutive element of its existence or transcendence (SZ, 199). While each individual Dasein exists towards its own concrete possibilities, Dasein *per se* has no possibilities in particular.¹² It is, rather, pure empty intention, a pure want of being. And what it wants, ultimately, is - well, *inquietum cor est nostrum . . .*

But insofar as the existence of Dasein is essentially care, what Dasein ultimately wants, which is also that to which it ultimately refers, can never come to pass as something that has been achieved. What stands at the limit of *Seinkönnen* is, rather, Dasein's 'absolute future'.¹³ This is because, in that Dasein is always *being* completed and perfected, its meaning is always in the process of being fulfilled, where that fulfilment, given the kind of being that Dasein has, is accomplished by care. Commenting on a sentence of Seneca's, *unius bonum natura perficit, dei scilicet, alterius cura, hominis* ['the good of the one, namely God, is fulfilled by his nature; but that of the other, man, is fulfilled by care'], Heidegger adds: *Die perfectio des Menschen, das Werden zu dem, was er in seinem Freisein für seine eigensten Möglichkeiten (dem Entwurf) sein kann,*

ist eine »Leistung« der »Sorge« [Man's *perfectio* - his transformation into that which he can be in being-free for his ownmost possibilities (projection) - is "accomplished" by "care"]. Human being is perfected, brought to completion and made whole, through care. Care, as a being towards possibilities, a projection and realization of them, constitutes man's self-achieving, and it is *die Seinsart . . . die seinen zeitlichen Wandel in der Welt durchherrscht* ['the kind of being which dominates his temporal sojourn in the world, and does so through and through'] (SZ, 199). This way of being is essential to human being in that it distinguishes it from any other kind of being, not only from God, but from animals as well. As Rousseau points out, one very specific capability separating *l'homme et l'animal* is: 'the capacity for self-perfection, a capacity which, with the aid of circumstances, develops in succession all the other capacities, and resides among us as much in the species as in the individual'.¹⁴

Since care is essential to and definitive for the existence of Dasein, and since the primary element in it is a being towards the 'can be', it is a process of perfecting where the self is still being achieved, and so where it is, to some extent, always not yet achieved and not yet complete. If completion is taken to mean a state where there is nothing left to achieve, a state in which Dasein has been, and is, all that it can be, then it is not compatible with the being of Dasein as care. From the perspective of this notion of completion, it is apparent that, as long as Dasein, as care, exists, there always remains something outstanding in its account. As long as Dasein is possible, and that means as long as Dasein is, as ek-sisting, it is *noch nicht* ['not yet'], so that this *noch nicht* belongs to its fundamental constitution (SZ, 236). As long as Dasein is in time, and therefore changing, it is exchanging its possibilities, and so throughout its *zeitlicher Wandel*, its temporal change, its account remains open and no final reckoning can be given of it.

If perfection is seen not as a way of being towards the possible but as having no more possibilities of being because they have all already been, Dasein is always imperfect, always incomplete, always still on the way to being. In this case, there always remains in its account something 'owed', something that *ought* to be, but is not yet, for, in any determination of a potentiality-for-being, and it is such determinations that originate action, Dasein refers to itself not as actual but as possible. It refers to the self which it itself, as something accomplished, is not. It refers to the other to which it is always underway. The

authentic determination of that other then provides the ground for what is owed, for what ought to be as what can be, and it is that other, the self that Dasein could never wholly accomplish, that calls in the call of conscience. It is this transcendent self, therefore, this other than itself to which Dasein relates and refers itself, that 'tells' Dasein what is to be done and what can be done. The ground of authentic action, the source of all 'ethical' conduct, although immanent in Dasein as a beginning and an end, a motive, lies in itself beyond Dasein. And it is what Bonaventure calls the highest good, in which all want is fulfilled.

Moreover, if what Dasein wants is that in reference to which its meaning is determined, it must also be that in reference to which, *plene resolvens*, the meaning of the world is determined, because it is then the final for-the-sake-of-which to which Dasein is related in all of its references. This is a consequence of Heidegger's analysis of the worldhood of the world. In the first place, Dasein discovers entities as ready-to-hand (*Zuhandenes*) in reference to an end, an in-order-to (*das Um-zu*). This end is projected in advance and determines a possibility of Dasein itself. Readiness-to-hand, as a kind of being, is discovered in reference to a for-the-sake-of, and the for-the-sake-of is always Dasein itself. Thus, not only is the kind of being possessed by ready-to-hand entities constituted by reference to an end of Dasein, but also its degree. The relative 'goodness' of a ready-to-hand entity is determined with respect to its suitability for achieving the end in reference to which its being is constituted. This means simply that entities uncovered as ready-to-hand are evaluated in terms of, and in reference to, their being capable of allowing Dasein to realize its end, of allowing it to realize a possibility of itself. The significance of the things that are involved in Dasein's projects is bound up, therefore, with the significance of Dasein's own being.

This means that the significance of the world has to do with the ends of Dasein, and it is in reference to those ends that 'defects' of being are uncovered as such. But if the final end of Dasein, the limit of Dasein's reference and so the limit of its projection transcends Dasein itself, then the standard according to which the goodness of entities is measured lies, when thoroughly analysed, beyond Dasein as well. The most original *Worumwillen*, that which all wanting is really about (*Worum*), is the true *Sache*, the true subject matter or end of all willing. It provides the directive for all willing, in that all willing is ultimately directed

towards it and by it, but it is itself never available for analysis as an object of the will, or an object of any sort at all. Standing beyond and away from Dasein, there can never come a time when Dasein 'has' comprehended it, since Dasein, as existing, is always oriented towards it, always on the way to it and thus in the process of comprehending it. The sense of the world lies outside of the world because the sense of being human lies at the limit of what human being desires, and that desire is never wholly fulfilled in the world.

As an aside, it should also be noted that, while Heidegger's analysis in *Sein und Zeit* of the significance of intraworldly beings can easily be read as 'pragmatism', it must be remembered that the involvement of these beings in the being of Dasein also means that their presence is involved in care, remembrance, and love. Human being presents and represents them, and they in turn present and represent being human. That their significance is bound up with the significance of Dasein does not then mean that their being can be measured in terms of 'cash value', not even when one is speaking of something that unambiguously counts as 'equipment', for instance, a pair of shoes. And if the significance of being human lies strangely both within and beyond the world, then it may seem less strange that the significance of these things often seems to do so; too.

A reflection upon these three modes of Dasein's being - understanding, memory, and desire or volition - reveals, then, that Dasein refers and is referred beyond itself in each of these processes, and is not the ultimate source of them. Since these modes constitute the essence of Dasein, and since, in fulfilling them, Dasein surpasses itself, it also follows that to the nature of Dasein this transcendence, this reference beyond itself, belongs essentially and that, as Dasein does not bring itself into being and is not the source of itself, this reference is something into which it is thrown. *Der Mensch ist . . . vom Sein selbst in die Wahrheit des Seins «geworfen»* ['Man is . . . 'thrown' from being itself into the truth of being'] (Hb, 75/210). For Heidegger as for Bonaventure, human being does not determine the fundamental structure of its existence, and it points beyond itself in that existence.

Furthermore, the difference between the three modes of being mentioned above is obviously not a difference of substance or essence. Memory, understanding, and volition are not three separate substances. They articulate a unity, the unity of human existence and the unity of

presencing. Memory, *Gedächtnis*, is not other than human being, and 'the 'keep' in which *Gedächtnis* has its essential ground is not other than being as *das Bedenklichste*, the limit of *das zu-Bedenkende* and *das Bedenkliche*. *Die Verwahrnis ist jedoch nichts neben und außer dem Bedenklichsten. Sie ist dieses selber, ist seine Weise, aus der es und in der es gibt, nämlich sich, das selbst je und je zu denken gibt* ['But the keeping is not something that is apart from and outside of what is most thought-provoking. The keeping itself is the most thought-provoking thing, itself is its mode of giving - giving itself which ever and always is food for thought'] (WhD, 97/151). The drive towards self-actualization is also not other than *Dasein*, and what lies at the limit of this process, at the limit of the *Worumwillen*, is not other than being. As the limit of being-possible, the limit of what can be, it can be nothing other than being itself. It is being fully achieved, which *Dasein*, as a process of self-achieving, as the kind of being for which its own being is an issue (*geht es um*), is always seeking. This being is the ultimate matter of *Dasein*'s concern in every case, and all concerned dealing with entities encountered within the world is ultimately founded upon the care for being itself which *Dasein*, whose essence is care, presupposes. Thus, *Dasein*, like *mens*, is a kind of one in three that points to a one in three beyond itself.

Even though Heidegger does not posit an actually existing entity or 'perfect spirit' as the limit of that to which human being is related, it might still be objected against him that all of these attempts to articulate that to which existence transcends as to its source involve a 'subjectivization' or 'anthropomorphisation' of being, in which the structure of human being is taken as the measure of being itself. For Heidegger, however, such an objection fails to reflect fundamentally enough upon the essential nature of being human. Responding to the possibility of this objection against Schelling's attribution of *Sehnsucht*, 'longing', to the absolute, he says:

Geht nicht jede Wesensbestimmung des Menschen - wie schon allein die Frage, wer er sei, zeigt - über diesen hinaus, so gewiß, wie jede Erkenntnis des Absoluten unter dieses herab fällt . . . Ist nicht der Mensch solcher art seiend, daß er, je ursprünglicher er er selbst ist, er gerade nicht nur und nicht zuerst er selbst ist . . . Wenn denn der Mensch - als das Seiende, als welches es nicht nur er selbst ist - wenn eben dieses Seiende zum Maßstab wird, was heißt dann Vermenschlichung? Heißt es nicht das gerade Gegenteil von dem, was der Einwand herausliest?

[Does not every essential determination of man overreach him - as the question alone who he is already shows - as certainly as every knowledge of the absolute falls short of it . . . Does man not exist in such a way that the more primordially he is himself, he is precisely not only and not primarily himself . . . If man, as the being who is not

only itself, becomes the criterion, then what does humanizing mean? Does it not mean the precise opposite of what the objection takes it for? (SA, 283-4/163-4)

Accordingly, if the nature of *Sein* is indicated 'in terms of' Dasein, this is not a matter of hypothesizing about the attributes of an absolute through likenesses drawn from an entity which in fact has nothing to do with that absolute. The nature of *Sein* can be indicated via Dasein because the essence of Dasein is itself constituted by its being an indication of *Sein*, by its pointing beyond itself to *Sein*. *Sein* is not, after all, a product of Dasein. Dasein participates in *Sein* and points to it. When the essential nature of Dasein consists in being a reference to *Sein*, when *der Mensch ein Anderes ist als nur so ein Mensch* ['man is something other than only a man'] (SA, 217/124), what does it then mean for this entity to be taken as a measure for the dimensions of that transcendent other?

It means that those dimensions are indicated by the dimensions of this entity as by signs, and that the attributes of this entity can, as a consequence, be authentically predicated of the other in a certain way. When applied to the other, they do not then express the 'literal' truth, since, precisely because their nature is to be always transcending towards that other, they never quite reach it, but such predications of the other are not pure fictions, either. When predicated of the other, the truth of these attributes is neither wholly univocal nor wholly equivocal, but analogical. The question of pure subjectivization, on the other hand, only arises if Dasein is conceived essentially as a purely isolated subject, as something severed from and standing against that which is as that which stands against it (the object, *der Gegen-stand*). If Dasein is by nature already involved in what-is, in that its nature consists in being an involvement that always already has a relation to being, such a question loses its meaning.

Thus, just as appropriate interpretation of *mens* requires looking beyond it and beyond the world, so the essence of Dasein in Heidegger's conception cannot be determined purely in reference to itself, nor purely in terms of entities encountered within the world. It must be thought in terms of the relation to being in which this entity always stands. *Die Frage nach dem Wesen des Menschen [ist] keine Frage nach dem Menschen* ['the question concerning man's nature is not a question about man'] (G, 29/58). The essence of man is existence, where *Ek-sistenz bedeutet inhaltlich Hinaus-stehen in die Wahrheit des Seins* ['in terms of content

ek-sistence means standing out into the truth of being'] (Hb, 70/206). And the essential element in this relation is not human being, but being: *So kommt es denn bei der Bestimmung der Menschlichkeit des Menschen als der Ek-sistenz darauf an, daß nicht der Mensch das Wesentliche ist, sondern das Sein als die Dimension des Ekstatischen der Ek-sistenz* ['So the point is that in the determination of the humanity of man as ek-sistence what is essential is not man but being - as the dimension of the ecstasis of ek-sistence'] (Hb, 79/213). What makes human being specifically human, what differentiates it from other kinds of being, is not reason, but that upon which reason itself is founded, the preeminent relation to being in which human being always exists, so that *das Seyn ist der Aether, in dem der Mensch atmet, ohne welchem Aether er zum bloßen Vieh und sein ganzes Tun zur bloßen Viehzüchtung herabfällt* ['being is the ether in which man breathes. Without this ether, he would descend to the mere beast and his whole activity to the breeding of beasts'] (SA, 169/98). The preeminence of human existence consists in its safeguarding the truth of being, in the fact that man is *der Hirt des Seins* ['the shepherd of being'] (Hb, 75/210), and only on the basis of this essential determination of human existence is it possible to understand its 'purpose'.

To express this in other terms, in order to derive a complete and adequate interpretation of Dasein, this entity must be clarified ontico-ontologically, understood in reference not only to its understanding of beings, but also in reference to the prior relation to being that makes such understanding possible, *denn im Lichte des Seins steht schon jeder Ausgang vom Seienden und jede Rückkehr zu ihm* ['for every departure from beings and every return to them stands already in the light of being'] (Hb, 76/211). Dasein is the in-between (*inzwischen*) of the ontico-ontological difference, the place of the jointure between beings and being, and an adequate interpretation of it must take into account both of these 'dimensions', as well as attempting to clarify the nature of Dasein's standing between them.

Proximally and for the most part, however, when Dasein interprets itself ontologically, when it produces an account of its essence, of the nature of its ownmost being, the special relationship to being in which it stands remains covered up, in the same way that *mens* generally does not understand its *a priori* relation to the absolute. This, for Heidegger, is because Dasein tends to interpret its own being on the basis of its everyday way of being, which means that it interprets itself in terms of

the 'the world' (SZ, 15-16). In its daily dealings with the matters that most obviously concern it, Dasein comports and directs itself towards (*verhält sich*) the world of its concern in such a way that it is wholly divided up and absorbed into (*Aufgehen in*) it. It then has a tendency to interpret itself entirely in terms of its relationship to the world, as the whole of its concerned involvement with entities within the world.

That *Dasein hat . . . die Geneigtheit, an seine Welt, in der es ist, zu verfallen und reluzent aus ihr her sich auszulegen* ['Dasein is inclined to fall back upon its world (the world in which it is) and to interpret itself in terms of that world by its reflected light'] (SZ, 21) means that Dasein has an inclination to forget the source of its understanding. It forgets its primordial understanding of, and relation to, being itself. When its attention or care is wholly absorbed in the world, Dasein means only the world, and it takes this meaning as primary. It then sees itself as an image or reflection of the world, and fails to recollect itself sufficiently to see that it can only be such a reflection in so far as it is originally and essentially a reflection of being.

In order for Dasein to remember itself in the ultimate truth of its essence, it has to re-collect itself from the dispersal and distraction (*Zerstreuung*) that characterizes *das »Subjekt« der Seinsart, die wir als das besorgende Aufgehen in der nächst begegnenden Welt kennen* ['the "subject" of that kind of being which we know as concerned absorption in the world we encounter as closest to us'] (SZ, 129). Such recollection does not demand that Dasein consider itself in total isolation from the world. On the contrary, it requires that Dasein concentrate upon its being in the world in such a way that the fundamental structure of that kind of being, its existential and ontological constitution, becomes visible. The more profoundly Dasein is fallen and absorbed into the world, the less it is capable of the kind of concentrated reflection that uncovers the truth of its being-in-the-world, which is also the truth of itself, since being-in-the-world is the kind of being definitive for Dasein and unique to it.

Mens, according to Bonaventure, must gather itself from its common distraction into its many cares in order to 'see' itself in its true nature, where that means seeing *how* it always sees. In a similar way, Dasein, to uncover the truth of itself, must turn its attention towards its own being-in-the-world in a way that gathers and unifies, and that means it must step back from the distraction and dispersal characterizing its everyday mode of being. It must step back from its own involvement in

order to understand the essential nature of that involvement. For instance, it must step back from, and yet concentrate more deeply upon, its daily preoccupation with beings to see the unified ground of that preoccupation, the ground that makes understanding beings possible, the prior understanding of being. It must also collect itself out of the manifold forms of its concern in order to see the unity of their collective totality as the unity of its own structure, in order to see itself, namely, as care.

In *Sein und Zeit* and *Was ist Metaphysik?*, the possibility of this detached self-recollection is said to be given by *Angst*, because *Angst* brings Dasein before the world in bringing it beyond what-is as a whole. A mood like *Angst*, therefore, which is a phenomenon within the world, something that naturally and spontaneously 'comes over' Dasein, can be said to provide an original basis for the *epochē* of a kind of phenomenological reduction. Under its power, the world slips away into nothingness, leaving Dasein reduced to itself. The 'new region of being' discovered by this detachment from the world then has a kind of 'motive' within the world. On the other hand, anxiety or dread does not simply grab Dasein away from the world and throw it into this strange region of being in spite of itself. Dasein must have the courage and resolve to face dread in order to be thus withdrawn. It is possible to claim that as soon as human existence comes to be, dread is there but sleeping, and that the awakening of dread is also the awakening of being human, but people can flee that awakening, and it is not easy to say why they 'should' not. Consequently, the paradox that Husserl faced, that what emerges in the *epochē* is only given through it, and yet a free resolve for the reduction is initially required, a resolve for which it is hard to find a motive since the motive truly becomes clear only when the reduction is performed, is not wholly overcome by Heidegger.¹⁶ Nonetheless, Heidegger does suggest, in dread, some natural basis for withdrawal.

Whatever may provide the original basis for the possibility of self-recollection, this possibility is there, and Dasein must, in order to recollect its essence, turn to itself, as being-in-the-world, with thoughtful remembrance. In terms of the analysis in *Was heißt Denken?*, one could say that it must return to itself in memory, where memory (*Gedächtnis*) *besagt ursprünglich soviel wie An-dacht: das unablässige, gesammelte Bleiben bei* ['originally . . . means as much as devotion: a constant concentrated abiding with something'] (WhD, 92/140). This

remembering is a careful and thoughtful understanding, in which human being pays close attention to itself, not by isolating itself as subject of investigation apart from the world in which it is, but by looking at its being-in-the-world with a gaze free and penetrating enough to lay bare the fundamental structure of that kind of being, to make it transparent to its very ground.

Under the gaze of such a vision, though, the 'substance' of being human is, in a sense, 'separated' from that of the entities encountered within the world, like it is for Augustine and Bonaventure. When Dasein's understanding of itself arises from a withdrawn vision, as opposed to from the concerned circumspection of everydayness, it no longer confuses its kind of being with that of the things within the world intended in daily concern. Dasein then comes to see that it is not itself an entity like the entities which everyday absorption in the world encounters, and that its own nature cannot be understood in terms of theirs. It realizes that its own substance, unlike theirs, is ek-sistence, a constant standing outside and beyond, a constant transcendence.

Human being's authentic recollection of itself thus means its remembering the transcendent to which it always stands in relation, and that means remembering itself as a sign whose ultimate referent perpetually evades it. The ultimate source of the 'thinking thing',¹⁷ once the truth of its substance has been resolved out of its confusion with the substance of things in the world and come to be understood as existence, is the true matter of thought, the 'to-be-thought' that pulls away from thinking in the same movement within which it pulls that thinking towards itself and along with itself. *Das zu-Denkende wendet sich vom Menschen ab. Es entzieht sich ihm* ['What must be thought about, turns away from man. It withdraws from him']. However, *was sich uns entzieht, zieht uns dabei gerade mit, ob wir es sogleich und überhaupt merken oder nicht* ['what withdraws from us, draws us along by its very withdrawal, whether or not we become aware of it immediately, or at all'] (WhD, 5/9). What thinking ultimately refers to is not clear, and so the ultimate meaning of thinking, and thus of human being as essentially thinking, always remains to some degree obscure to thinking itself. But since thinking is always drawn by and towards that to which it ultimately refers, it must be understood in terms of this referring.

The meaning of human existence, therefore, as thinking, resides not in any closed determination, as if it could at some time be fully and finally

accomplished, but in the openness of meaning itself, in the pointing to the withdrawal of what withdraws:

Wenn wir in den Zug des Entziehens gelangen, sind wir . . . auf dem Zug zu dem, was uns anzieht, indem es sich entzieht. Sind wir als die so Angezogenen auf dem Zuge zu dem uns Ziehenden, dann ist unser Wesen schon durch dieses »auf dem Zuge zu . . . « schon geprägt. Auf dem Zuge zu dem Sichentziehenden weisen wir selber auf dieses Sichentziehende. Wir sind wir, indem wir dahin weisen; nicht nachträglich und nicht nebenbei, sondern: dieses »auf dem Zuge zu . . . « ist in sich ein wesenhaftes und darum ständiges Weisen auf das Sichentziehende. »Auf dem Zuge zu . . . « sagt schon: zeigend auf das Sichentziehende.

[Once we are drawn into the withdrawal, we are drawing towards what draws, attracts us by its withdrawal. And once we, being so attracted, are drawing towards what draws us, our essential nature already bears the stamp of 'drawing towards'. As we are drawing towards what withdraws, we ourselves are pointers pointing towards it. We are who we are by pointing in that direction - not like an incidental adjunct but as follows: this 'drawing towards' is in itself an essential and therefore constant pointing towards what withdraws. To say 'drawing towards' is to say 'pointing towards what withdraws.'] (WhD, 5-6/9)

So what human being refers to is not clear because it always pulls away from thought and always transcends it, but human being is related to it precisely in its pulling away and transcending. The essence of being human consists in being this pointing relation.

In that case, the essence of man consists in being a sign whose interpretation can never be completed, since that to which it points constantly recedes from it:

Insofern der Mensch auf diesem Zug ist, zeigt er als der so Ziehende in das, was sich entzieht. Als der dahin Zeigende ist der Mensch der Zeigende . . . Sein Wesen beruht darin, ein solcher Zeigender zu sein. Was in sich, seinen Wesen nach, ein Zeigendes ist, nennen wir ein Zeichen. Auf dem Zug in das Sichentziehende ist der Mensch ein Zeichen. Weil dieses Zeichen jedoch in das Sichentziehende zeigt, deutet es nicht so sehr auf das, was sich da ent-zieht, als vielmehr in das Sichentziehen. Das Zeichen bleibt ohne Deutung.

[To the extent that man is drawing that way, he points toward what withdraws. As he is pointing that way, man is the pointer . . . His essential nature lies in being such a pointer. Something which in itself, by its essential nature, is pointing, we call a sign. As he draws towards what withdraws, man is a sign. But since this sign points toward what draws away, it points, not so much at what draws away as into the withdrawal. The sign stays without interpretation.] (WhD, 6/10-11)

The ground of human being, originating and directing thinking, yet always remains dark. It always shows itself in itself as an abyss into which thinking cannot penetrate, just because thinking is in essence a relation to this ground, and always stretched out and reaching towards it.

The withdrawal of that towards which human being reaches does not, however, signify mere absence. It is a positive event (*Ereignis*) in which

what withdraws, in so far as it refuses to arrive in a final way, refuses to present itself as something that can be definitively named, but is not on this account nothing at all, is *nicht nichts*. What withdraws refuses arrival (*Ankunft*) only because it always *is* arriving, so that, in this event, what withdraws from thought is not only always immanent in thought as evoking and directing it, but also always imminent to thought as constantly arriving to be thought. *Das Denken ist auf das Sein als das Ankommende (l'avenant) bezogen. Das Denken ist als Denken in die Ankunft des Seins, in das Sein als die Ankunft gebunden* ['Thinking is related to being as what arrives (*l'avenant*). Thinking as such is bound to the advent of being, to being as advent'] (Hb, 117/241).

And, for Heidegger, what draws the reach of thought while drawing away from it, far from being utterly remote from thought and so 'unreal', is what lies closest to human being as a thinking being, what is most intimately present to it. The presence of what arrives in withdrawing could thus be the most real presence of all, and the mysterious event in which what evades thought presents itself to thought simultaneously with its hiding of itself could concern the essence of human being more actually than anything that touches it in the daily concerns of its average present (WhD, 5/9).

The task of authentic reflection upon the nature of human being is the task of becoming aware of this event. It is accomplished by entering into the kind of thinking that resolves and holds itself open for the manifestation of truth, into *besinnliches Denken . . . das dem Sinn nachdenkt, der in allem waltet, was ist* ['meditative thinking . . . which contemplates the meaning which reigns in everything that is'] (G, 13/46). When understanding turns this thinking towards itself, its meditation upon itself remains in an openness towards what *sich zeigt und zugleich sich entzieht* ['shows itself and at the same time withdraws'] (G, 24/55), what reveals itself to being-in-the-world and at the same time transcends it. It is in this collected openness, the opposite of the distracted dispersal of everydayness, that the truth of the essence of human being, its mysterious character as a special kind of sign, is revealed.

CHAPTER FOUR

CALL AND CONSCIENCE IN TAULER AND HEIDEGGER

1. *The Call of God in the Ground of the Soul.*

In his sermon, *Fratres, obsecro vos ego vincetus in domino*, Johannes Tauler explicates a Pauline passage (Eph.4, 1-4), which he translates as follows:

Brüdere, ich gebunden mensche in Gotte, ich bitten úch das ir wirdeklichen wandelent in der ladunge als ir geladen sint, mit aller demütikeit und senftmütikeit, und mit gedult vertragen ein andern in der minne. Sint sorgveltig ze behaltende die einikeit des geistes in dem bande des friden, ein licham und ein geist, als ir gerüffet sint . . .

[Brothers, I, a man bound in God, I beseech you that you walk worthily in the vocation to which you are called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience bearing one another in love. Take care to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, one body and one spirit, as you are called . . .] (V, 240)¹

The sermon analyses the nature of this calling by resolving it into four components: 1. *wer der ist der uns hie rüffet und ladet* ['who it is that calls and summons us here'], 2. *war zû er uns rüft, war es uns haben welle* ['what he calls us to, what he wishes of us']. 3. *weles sîn rûf si, wel wise er her zû habe* ['what the call is, what form it has'], and 4. *wie man wirdeklichen volgen sülle disem rüffe in diser ladunge* ['how one should actually follow the call in this summons'] (V, 240).

The first item in the structure of the call, the one who calls in the calling, is said to be 'the heavenly father' (V, 240). The 'who' of the call is thus the being whose nature is defined as perfection, and the call is the summons both of, and to, perfection. For Tauler, the perfection of human beings consists in the achievement of likeness to this perfect being, the achievement of deiformity. Although deiformity is a potentiality of

human beings, then, their highest potential form, its accomplishment is enabled by a transcendent and infinite power which cannot be reduced to the soul's own finite capabilities.

This infinite transcendent power, God, is nevertheless present to human beings as an indwelling principle, drawing them to their, and its, own perfection. The perfection of the absolute beckons with all of its attributes. With its being, its properties, and its power, it invites and attracts towards itself and into itself. It calls upon the soul, the finite spirit, to realize itself, the absolute spirit, and it has want of (*not nach*) the soul for this achievement. Because the absolute is the source of the soul, its creator, in calling the soul to itself, it summons it back to its beginning (*beginne*), but this beginning is not the same beginning with which the life of the soul started out. It is, rather, the end of that life, its completion, perfection and closure, a return to the absolute not as a beginning in time but as an origin (*ursprung*) (V, 240).

The absolute is the origin of the soul's life in that it names what the soul strives for in its struggle to perfect itself. It is thus what gives rise to the struggle, and so to what the soul, as life, is. The soul completes itself when it reaches this origin, when it attains what initiates, sustains, and guides its striving as an existing human life. This is its final destination or ultimate destiny, that towards which it is sent. Therefore, Tauler says elsewhere that that *menschen louf* ['human course'] is *alre edelste und aller volkomenste* ['most noble and perfect of all'] which *aller eigenlichst wider in sinen ursprung get* ['which most truly goes back into its origin'] (V, 9). In the return to its origin, the soul completes the circuit of its life.

The second component of the call, that to which it calls, is Christ. The call calls upon human beings to conform themselves to the image of the perfect, the divine, human being. Christ is the image of God in the world, in human form, and also of deiform humanity, of perfect humanity. In possessing from birth the capability of becoming like this image, all human beings are potential co-heirs with it; every human being is potentially an heir apparent, as it were, to the properties of the absolute. By realizing this capability, by becoming all that it is possible for a human being in the world to be, a person appropriates this potential inheritance, thereby coming to possess by the free gift of the absolute all that the perfect image is by nature (V, 240-1).

The call to this perfection, which is the call of God to the soul,

speaks both outwardly and inwardly, and this is the third constituent of the calling, *wel wise er zû habe* ['what manner it has'], or, as Tauler also puts it, *weles der rûf si und wenne er rûft* ['what the call is and when it calls']. Because the potential for perfection is bestowed upon human beings by God, and is rooted in the fact of God's real presence to the soul as an indwelling principle, it calls inwardly in the ground of the soul (*inwendig in dem grunde*), the 'place' where, for Tauler, the essential presence of God has its true abode. From this ground, it speaks to the soul in a multiplicity of ways. Since, however, it is not only this inward capability which is bestowed by God, but also an individual's concrete situation, and since all that is destined by God contributes to that individual's perfection - or, at least, is capable of doing so, if he or she is rightly related to it - *die starken stimme do Got dem menschen mit rûft* ['the strong voice with which God calls people'] also comes outwardly, through the events (*ufvellen*) which come upon and befall a person (V, 300).

The general decree of the call, the command to perfection, can, for Tauler, be broken down into a series of commandments, *etliche ding die sint uns gebotten und etliche die sint uns verbotten* ['certain things which are commanded of us and certain which are forbidden to us'] (V, 241). These then form ethical principles, the highest and most comprehensive of which is the command, *das wir Got vor allen dingen sullen minnen* ['that we should love God before all things'] (V, 241). These principles for ethical conduct, interior as well as exterior conduct, articulate the last component in the structure of the calling, *wie man wirdeklichen volgen sulle disem ruffe in diser ladunge* ['how one should actually follow this call in this summons'] (V, 240), that is, *was wir tûn sullen zu disem ruffe* ['what we should do in response to this call'] (V, 241).

In the context of this fourth and final element of the calling, Tauler also speaks of *wem Got ruffet* ['whom God calls'], and divides those who are called into three kinds of people. These three kinds of people correspond to three degrees or stages of Christian life, and Tauler arranges these in ascending order of perfection. Each person is suited to one of these ways of life, and each person can see the proper way for him or herself by paying heed to the call inwardly: *Ein ieklichs sehe . . . mit offenen innerlichen ôgen weles sin weg si, und denne in welen in Got welle von disen drin wegen* ['Each person should see, with open, inner eyes, which is his way, and then in which of these three ways . . . God wishes him to go'] (V, 243).

Tauler does not lay down one universal prescription for what all human beings should do in the world. On the contrary, he recognizes and values the variety of lives to which individuals are called, and chastises the individuals in his own audience only for lack of attention and constancy to their call:

Nu enkoment ir in úch selber nüt noch enwissent úwers rüffes nüt, und hütte beginnent ir eins und morn eins anderen, als ir hörent oder sehent von ussen und úch durch die sinne in kumet, und das enist úwer ding nüt. Und dannan von enblibent ir da bi nüt und enwirt nüt drus, alles blindelingen. Wissest das eins menschen leben das ist des anderen tot.

Kerent zú úch selber und sehent wo mit ir umbe gont, und enversument úch selber nüt. Wissent das manig mensche enmitten in der welt ist, und hat man und kint, und sitzet etlich mensche und macht sin schúhe, und ist sin meinunge zú Gotte sich und sine kint generen. Und etlich arm mensche us einem dorffe gat misten und sin brötlin mit grosser surer arbeit gewinnet. Und disen allen mag geschehen, si sullen hundert werbe bas varn und volgent einvelteklichen irem rüffe, und das is doch ein kleglich ding.

[Now you do not come into yourselves and do not recognize your call, and today you begin one thing, and tomorrow another, according to what you see or hear from outside and what comes in through the senses to you. And that thing is not for you, and so you do not stay with it and nothing comes of it, as everything is happening blindly. Know that what is life for one man is death for another.

Turn to yourselves and see what your concern is, and do not deceive yourselves. Know that there is many a woman in the world who has husband and child, and many a man who sits and makes his shoes, and their consideration for God consists in maintaining themselves and their children. And many a poor man spreads manure outside a village, and wins his bread with great and bitter labour. This may all happen so that, if they are simply following their call, they will fare a hundred times better than you, and that is a lamentable thing.] (V, 241)

Where the call articulates that to which an individual is ordered by God, not hearing the call means not hearing God, and inconstancy to the call is an inconstancy to God, an unsteadiness of the self before God.

The call still calls for an imitation of Christ, but it has to be followed according to a person's own limited and particular capabilities, *nach unser möglichkeit*, so that when the simple 'where to' of the call is translated into time, it becomes individualized. The simplicity of the universal and eternal content of this call, the realizing of perfection, becomes, in its working out in number and time - i.e. within the particularity of an individual life unfolding in a concrete situation - various and complex. The universal destiny of human beings is then broken up into the particular destinies of particular individuals, so that, while it is still always a shared destiny, the common destiny of the community of human beings, it becomes one in which each individual has his or her own unique share or part. The call of individual destiny calls a person to

his or her own unique calling within a community. It calls upon an individual soul to fulfill its own finite capabilities, to bring to fruition the gifts which make it suited to a certain kind of work, and so to realize the particular possibilities of itself bestowed upon it by grace. In Sermon 42, *Divisiones ministracionum sunt, idem autem spiritus*, Tauler says:

. . . wir gemeinen cristene menschen wir sullen vil eben war nemen was unser ambacht sülle sin dar zû uns der herre geruffet und geladen hat, wele die gnade si zû der uns der herre gefüget hat.

[. . . we common Christian people should perceive precisely what our duty should be, the position to which the lord has called and summoned us, what the grace is to which the lord has ordered us.] (V, 177)

Everyone is summoned, but each person is not summoned to the same thing. It is therefore not possible to say precisely, in terms of vocation, what the call calls a person to, for this differs from individual to individual. In this respect, the universal content of the call can be articulated no further than to say that it calls upon an individual soul to realize itself before God, to perfect itself in the finite and particular task to which it has been ordered by God.

The spirit that works in these tasks, these different destinies, is one and the same, but its labour is divided: *Nu nemen wir das wort S. Paulus: 'es sint teilunge der werke und der dienst und wûrket alles ein und der selbe geist.'* ['We should note the words of St. Paul: "there are divisions of work and service, and yet one and the same spirit works all"'] (V, 177). The spirit at work here is a binding and unifying one, the spirit of love for God and neighbour, not a particular love, but a love that does not distinguish, *ein ganze minne, ein ganze ungeteilet gunst* ['a whole love, a whole and undivided favour'] (V, 340). Such love is *caritas*, the absolute love of the absolute spirit, the Holy Spirit.

Being with other human beings in the spirit of this kind of love is a form of being in the world while referring to God. When the human spirit is one with the spirit of God in interaction with others, the nature of its concern and thought for others is constituted in reference to the common destiny of human beings in relation to God. It refers to the perfection of all human beings before God, and wills only that perfection. This means willing the good of others along with one's own, while recognizing that good as a progress towards perfection, as a relation of the individual self to God.

Given that conversing is a primary mode of interaction with others,

it is not surprising that Tauler, in various other sermons, especially stresses care for words in the context of being with others. In Sermon 38, for instance, *Estote misericordes sicut et pater vester misericors est*, he admonishes his listeners for their idle chattering (*klaffendes*), and tells them that they should, before opening their mouths, consider three times whether their words *súllen sin zú den eren Gotz und úwers nechsten besserunge und úch selber bringen friden inwendig und uswendig* ['contribute to the glory of God and to the betterment of your neighbour, as well as bringing you peace yourself, inwardly and outwardly'] (V, 149).

Tauler's ideal of human perfection is not one of withdrawal from the world, but is the combination of action and contemplation which is represented in its ideal form in Christ. The perfect imitation of Christ consists here in the achievement of a certain form of unity with God, a unity where the mind and heart are perpetually fixed on God in such a way that only God is meant in all that is said and done. In this form of union, an individual remains within in the presence of God, while going forth into the world, and this results in a perfection or divinization of works (V, 157).

If the presence of God in the soul is realized through contemplation, then so, ultimately, is the generation of the image of God as actual and active in the world, since deiform activity is rooted in the way a person is in the world when God is inwardly present to that person, when God alone is loved and meant. While the final goal is not isolation from the world, realizing this presence does, for Tauler, require periods of withdrawal. In this withdrawal, the soul is to be drawn away from its actions, as well as from its thoughts, as this sentence of Anselm, quoted by Tauler, urges: *entzúch dich von der manigvaltikeit uswender werke und entslaf von dem gestúrme inwendiger gedenke, und sitze und rúwe und hebe dich selber úber dich selber* ['draw yourself away from the manifoldness of outward works and sleep from the turmoil of inward thoughts, and think and rest and raise yourself above yourself'] (V, 244).

It is through such withdrawal that the soul is enabled to hear the call to perfection so as to be capable of following it. To hear God, the soul must withdraw from its preoccupation with the world, and make itself silent and still. *Sol Got sprechen, du múst swigen; sol Got ingon, alle ding mússent usgon* ['if God is to speak, you must be silent; if God is to go in, all things must go out'] (V, 12). The *dú* that must become silent in this process is the self which is made up of things, and thus completely

verdinget, in that its constitution is wholly bound and determined by the things of the world in which the soul is usually submerged. When this self predominates, the soul's 'hearing' is full of the 'noise' of these things, so that it cannot hear the word and voice of God. It then cannot hear within itself the voice that calls it to perfection by calling it into the higher forms of itself.

Transcending this self requires that the soul sink into a *vergessenheit sin selbes* ['forgetting of itself'] (V, 423), so that it may remember God. It must forget the self that is constantly occupied with *frömden usserlichen dingen* ['foreign outer things'] (V, 249), the objects of a person's everyday concerns. To this occupied self, these things, these creatures, generally appear as neither *frömden* nor *usserlichen*, since this self dwells perpetually among them and upon them, and is, consequently, at home with them. When the self lingers exclusively over these things, they are all that is present to it. It only has them in mind and only remembers them. Being filled with the presence of creatures in this way, the memory of the absolute can find no room in it in which to dwell, so that what is foreign or strange to it is the presence of God.

Contemplation, on the other hand, is a forgetting, an estrangement or alienation, of these things, and a remembering of and reconciliation with God. It is *ein anhangen in Got mit eime vergessende aller zitlicher dinge* ['a hanging onto God with a forgetting of all temporal things'] (V, 426). When the *gemüte*, as the *gesamtheit der gedanken und empfindungen* ['totality of thoughts and experiences']² is burdened with the images of creatures and with thoughts pertaining to them, it dwells in nearness to these creatures, and is far from the presence of God. Contemplation frees the *gemüte* from its entanglement in creatures, and binds it instead to God.

To devote attention to God in this way, an individual must first be recollected from all *manigvaltige zerströwunge* ['manifold dispersals'] (V 54, 249), from all that *zerzühet und zerströwet das gemüte* ['pulls apart and scatters the mind'] (V, 128). For prayer, for instance, a person should *vor allen dingen . . . sin gemüte heim holen und rüffen dem von allen den uslöbiffen und zerströwunge do es gewesen ist von allen dingen* ['before all things fetch his mind home and call it from all the going out and dispersal in which it has been'] (V, 280). These outward wanderings are the accustomed abode of a person who *sine gesiht het uzgekert und irre get* ['has turned his sight outwards and goes astray'] (V, 125). They are

the common errors, the *teglliche gebresten* ['daily failings'] which make God *unheimelichen und frömde* ['unfamiliar and foreign'] (V, 126) to the soul. In the confused wandering of this state, the soul has forgotten its end.

Such wandering and confusion is only visible as an erring in view of that end. Those who have never glimpsed this end, those whose vision has never penetrated deeply enough into themselves to see the image of perfection that guides all their striving remain estranged from this, their own end, and so estranged from the truth of their existence. These people are at home in their wanderings; they have never left home. In light of their end, with respect to understanding *disen hohen götlichen dingen* ['these high things of God'], they are rough and immature, *rehte al rinder oder kelber* ['just like cattle or calves'] (V, 10). They have never travelled beyond the state in which they first found themselves, and with which they are now familiar and comfortable. Having never 'gone abroad', they have never seen this state from another, perhaps a more distant, perspective, from which it might appear not as a place of rest but as a place of wandering, not as home-like but as *frömd*. Having never become strangers to the world, the world has never become strange to them.

Spiritual advancement, by contrast, consists in becoming aware of the image of perfection and completion which lies within the soul, and in coming, consequently, to understand the self in its relation to that image. Being perfection itself, this image 'tells' the self of its present condition of imperfection, its actual condition of being not yet complete. It bears witness to the self of both its actual condition, that of an immature being, and of its possible one, that of itself as perfect. This witness in the depths of the soul thus tells the actual self, the self as it has been achieved so far, that it is the child of the possible self, the child of perfection. In so doing, it testifies to the self of both its nearness to God, its perpetual relation to the perfect source and end of itself, and of its distance from God, the unavoidable imperfection of all that it is and has been so far:

In dem himmel sint drige gezúgnisse, das ist in dem indewendigen himmel, das ist der vatter, das wort und der geist; dise bezúgent dir und gebent dir ein wor gezúgnisse das du Gottes kint sist, und lúchtent dir in disen grunt, und der grunt zúget dir selber; und daz selbe gezúget ouch wider dich und alle dine unordenunge und lúchtet dir in dine redelicheit, du wellest oder enwellest, es git dir gezúgnisse von allem dime lebende, obe du es wilt nemen.

[In heaven, there are three witnesses, that is, in the inward heaven, which are the father, the word and the spirit. These testify to you and give you true evidence that you are God's child. They enlighten you in the ground, and the ground shows itself to you, and it in turn gives witness to you of all your disorders. It enlightens

you in your reason, whether or not you wish it, and gives you evidence of all your life, whether or not you wish to accept it.] (V, 302)

Here Tauler is speaking of the presence of God to the soul in terms of the indwelling Trinity, which the soul is said to mirror in its three powers (memory, understanding, will), and in terms of the unified ground of God reflected in the ground of the soul. It is this image of God reflected in the soul that speaks to the self of its guilt, because only in relation to this indwelling but transcendent principle of perfection does the self know the multiplicity of its shortcomings.

The right way to be in response to this guilt is to will its redemption. Since this is precisely what God wills, to will redemption is to come into accord with the will of God, where that will is manifested in the call of God that comes both inwardly in the ground of the soul, and outwardly in the events that befall a person. Coming into accord with God's will means coming into accord with what God destines in the moment (*Augenblicke*) of eternity. In the all-comprehending vision of this moment, the becoming of each individual being, the path every being is to run in the course of its existence in time, is comprehended from beginning to end. Given that this moment is also the moment of creation, in which what is conceived by the absolute understanding is simultaneously willed to be by the absolute will, it follows that all the occurrences which devolve upon a particular being are destined here.

For Tauler, as for Eckhart, the soul is itself both temporal and eternal. It is temporal through its involvement with creatures, an involvement in which it is situated, first and foremost, by the manifold acts of attention and intention on the part of the will. It is also, however, eternal in the freedom of its innermost ground, the dwelling place of the presence of God. Because it is capable of entering into this ground, it is capable of entering into eternity, into the moment in which past, present and future are comprehended, and when it does so it sees what God sees, and wills what God wills. It then wills its own perfection, and in translating that will back into time, it sees in what comes to it an occasion, a means, of achieving that perfection to which it is destined. Peaceful acceptance of what is seen and willed in the moment is thus not an indifference to all events, much less an indifference to one's own activity. It is, rather, an active accord with destiny, a person's willing that God's *ewig wolgevellenclicher wille alleine gewerde in in und in allen creaturen* [eternally pleasing will alone come to pass in him and in all

creatures'] (V, 30). To bring the will into accord with its destiny in this way means to will what God has willed, and does will, in eternity, and this means willing the eternal decree of the absolute, which is to reconcile all things with itself by bringing them to their perfection.

Willing this eternal decree, the self freely binds the whole of itself to the law of God. It orders the freedom of all of its faculties into service to the eternal will of God (V, 32). Free bondage to this eternal will is also bondage to what is eternal in the soul. Through this commitment to the perfection of itself, a perfection known in its particularity through the commanding voice of God in the innermost point of the spirit, the soul exchanges the unsteadiness (*unstetikeit*) of its temporal and changeable life for the stability and constancy (*stetikeit*) of its eternal one (V, 249).

The *krangheit*, the fallenness and thus the imperfection, of the will consists in its lack of steadiness, its constant changeableness, which in turn has to do with the soul's perpetual *uzgelouffen in die zit und in die zitlichen ding* ['going out into time and into temporal things'] (V, 9). Being directed towards, and so divided up into, the multiplicity of objects within the world which it 'loves', the will is distracted from the true object of its love, from its true goal. Those who have merged their will with God, on the other hand, *hant ir herze und iren gunst gekert zû gotte in alsolicher wise das si in für alle minnent und meinent, und begerent von ganzem grunde das si in alleine minnen und meinen müssen für alle ding* ['have turned their hearts and their favour to God in such a way that they mean and love him before all, and want from the whole of their ground to have to love and mean him alone before all things'] (V, 138). In loving and meaning God alone, the will wills only its own perfection. It wills only the redemption of its guilt, and so the the cure of all that characterizes its 'sick' condition.

The 'finite' will here allows the 'infinite' will to work within it. In letting be the achieving of perfection, it allows the absolute to draw it towards itself, and, possessed of this single aim, the will becomes steady and sure. It becomes *unbeweglich* like the absolute will which it seeks, but which, in seeking, it already possesses, given that what is sought in this case is only redemption, the perfection that the absolute will calls towards in calling upon the human will to realize itself. Since, in uniting with the divine will, the human will is subsumed into a higher one, the transfiguration it here undergoes involves a kind of death. This death,

however, is actually a transformation, in which the finite will gives way and surrenders to the absolute will. The creature here gives up its creaturely will; it gives up all *eigenwille*. Becoming an absolute willing is, therefore, from the point of view of the limited being, the creature, a renunciation of will.

The commitment of such bondage to the will of God, and so to what the self has been destined to by God, is a property that love in which a person *ist aller dinge . . . ze friden, wie alle ding koment, und enhat nüt vil wüchelicheit, denne stet in einer stillen rüwe und ist bereit war in der herre füren oder mit im würlen welle, als ein knecht der vor sines herren tofellen stot unde nüt anders entüt denne sicht den herren an, was er von im welle, das er bereit si das ze tünde* ['is . . . at peace in all things just as they come, and has not too much activity, but stands in a still rest and is ready for wherever the lord wishes to lead him or for whatever he wishes to work with him, like a servant who stands before his master's table and does nothing but look at his master to see what he wishes from him, so that he may be ready to do that'] (V, 252). In this love, the self's willing is a willingness, a preparedness to do and to be what it is called to do and to be. This is ultimately a readiness to undertake that to which it is ordered by the order of that which has ordered its being, by the God who has determined its being in both its 'what' and its 'where'.

The necessity of this imposition does not contravene the soul's freedom. The law of God for it is the law of itself for itself. It is the law of itself as spirit, as an infinitely perfectible being which is conscious of its own perfectibility, because it has a relation to perfection itself. In binding itself to the law of God, then, the soul binds itself to the highest law of its own nature, but it is under no obligation to do so. It is obligated to have the nature or law which it has, but it can refuse to fulfill this law. It is always related to God, and yet it can refuse to relate itself to God. In other words, it can relate itself to that relation in one of two ways, either by accepting the task of perfection which the relation imposes upon it (and thus accepting its actual imperfection), or by shunning it, either by being willing to hear and to obey the voice that calls it to that perfection, and so to itself, or by fleeing it.

In calling it to perfection, this voice speaks to the soul of perfection, speaks to it of that to which it is called. Listening to the

call, and following it, the soul is taken away beyond itself. It is thereby taken away not to itself, but to its other. As itself, the soul never is this perfection, but is related to it, and it comes back to itself from its flight to the other with a heightened knowledge of this relation, a heightened awareness of itself in this relation. In being willing to hear the voice, therefore, the soul is willing to see itself as it is and has been in relation to that to which it is called, in relation to what it can be. It is willing to see its own imperfection in relation to that before which it will always, as long as it is itself, be imperfect. Binding itself to the law of its own perfection, it is also willing to take upon itself the task of redeeming this imperfection. That task is an infinite one, and cannot be fulfilled by a finite spirit. The role of a finite spirit within this infinite task consists not in bringing about its completion, but in being willing to undertake it, in the particular form allotted to it and to the best of its ability.

The unwillingness to recognize the relation, the unwillingness to be the self of the relation, which requires the acceptance of being guilty, is the worst guilt. This lack of recognition is obviously not an unavoidable ignorance - which could not be guilt, as something for which the self is responsible - but an unwillingness to know, a not willing and not wanting to know. Since the self, as itself, is always guilty in relation to that to which it is called by the perfect caller of this call, the root of such guilt lies not in unwillingness to be this or that before the caller, but in unwillingness to be before it. Sin is before God, and the worst sin is not wanting to be before God, not wanting to be guilty.² Thus, Tauler says *wanne tusent gebresten die du in der worheit bekennest und dich davon schuldig gebest, enwerent dir nüt also sörglich noch also schedelich also ein einiger des du nüt enwoltest bekennen noch dich nüt woltest lassen wise und nüt jomer noch bankideit darum enhettest, dan dich wolte alles dunken du hettest recht* ['for a thousand failings that you know in truth and accept guilt for are not of so much concern and so harmful as one single one that you do not want to recognize and do not want to allow to be made known to you, so that may not have anxiety and pain thereby, since you want to believe that you are right in all things] (V, 73).

The soul's understanding itself in relation to God, and accepting to be what it is in this relation, is simultaneously an understanding and acceptance of its own nothingness, of both its *natürlich nicht* ['natural nothing'] and its *gebrestlich nicht* ['faulty nothing'] (V, 365), the

nothingness of its own being and the nothingness of its own goodness. The soul's being is nothing in relation to God, because God is the infinite being from which its finite being (its essence as well as its existence) is wholly derived and upon which it is utterly dependent. The soul's perfection is also nothing before God, because the degree of perfection it has and achieves is bestowed by God and enabled by God, and because, in relation to the infinite perfection of God, it is always imperfect. As long as the soul does not recognize these two forms of nothingness, it is in error with regard to itself. It may then will to be what it cannot be, and thereby will itself to eternal pain. It can gain peace for itself only by accepting what it is while binding itself to what it can be, which means binding itself to the universal decree that commands its perfection.

When the soul is wholly reconciled with the will of God, the will that speaks itself in this decree, the gap between 'should' and 'want' is closed for it. What it should be and do, which is what the will of God, the will towards perfection, wills for it and asks of it is now precisely what it wills to do with the whole of itself, what it wants for itself. It is thus perfectly reconciled with itself, and, in this reconciliation, the guilt of the divided will is redeemed.

The 'when' of this reconciliation is an ideal time, since such perfection is the final 'towards-which' of human destiny, and consists in the complete conformity to Christ mentioned earlier. The guilt belonging to being yet imperfect is therefore unavoidable. It belongs to the essence of human existence, although not to the essence of human perfection; that is, not to the nature of the perfect human being, who, in being perfect, is also other than human, is also 'divine'. Because human beings bear the stamp of this perfect image within themselves from the beginning, and yet are not it, they perpetually experience themselves as being in a state of distance from perfection, a fallen state.

Since the guilt which characterizes human fallenness and imperfection is always before God, always in relation to the principle of absolute perfection present to the soul, its total redemption can only consist in being God in an individual human form, i.e. in being Christ. It is certainly not possible, according to Tauler, for human beings to become God, but it is possible for them to be taken away beyond themselves to God, in a moment of ecstasy where the soul is wholly united with the essential being of God present to it in its innermost ground. It then enters into *das edele gotvar fúnkelin, das uns vil innewendiger und noher*

ist denne wir uns selber ['the noble God-coloured spark, which is much more inward and nearer to us than we are to ourselves'] (V, 322). In so doing, it finds *Got mit allem sinem richtum und in sin selbes eigenem wesen und naturen* ['God with all his riches and in his very own being and nature'], since this divine spark of the soul is found *in dem innersten grunde, do Got der selen naher und inwendiger ist verrer wan si ir selber ist* ['in the innermost ground, where God is nearer and more inward to the soul by far than it is to itself'] (V, 144).

This ground is, as has been noted, the 'place' in which the image of God is most truly found within the soul, the image that God in some sense is, *daz selbe bilde das Got selber ist in sinem eigenen luteren göttlichen wesen* ['the same image which God himself is in his own pure divine being'] (V, 146). Tauler, like Eckhart, actually uses a cluster of terms to describe this 'region' of the soul, including *geist, grunt, gemüte, funke*, and *bild*. With respect to the terms *grunt* and *gemüte*, Claire Champollion suggests that, while these are often interchangeable, *gemüte* tends to be more a dynamic faculty and *grunt* more a kind of place, so one could say that '*gemüte* is the spiritual energy of the most intimate part of the soul, the *grunt*'.⁴ This, however, as she admits herself, is a schematisation. In fact, none of these terms literally name a place, as opposed to a dynamic faculty or inclination, and Paul Wyser is doubtless right to say, 'the human spirit, the ground of the soul, the image of God and the disposition (*Gemüt*) which strives for God are one and the same, the one indivisible fundamental condition, understood in a highly dynamic way, of our spiritual life'.⁵

Where this dynamic inclination of the soul is fulfilled, when it unites with the image in its ground, the soul becomes wholly deiform (V, 146). At this point, and only at this point, there no longer remains any distance between what it is in fact and what it can and will be, no gap between actual imperfection and possible perfection. Tauler therefore does say that, in the *widertragen* ['taking back'] and *widerfliessen* ['flowing back'] of *daz edele indewendige fünkelin* ['the noble inward spark'] of the soul *in sinen ursprung do es usgeflossen ist* ['into its origin whence it flowed out'], all guilt is completely repaid. This is pure deiformity, then, and it is attained in a mystical union, but the ethical is not lost in this union. Rather, it is perfected, for there *wurt der mensche ein göttlich mensche, und dis sint die sülen der welte und der heiligen kirchen* ['a man becomes a Godlike man, and these are the pillars of the world and of the

holy church'] (V, 80). There, a person becomes wholly Christlike, both inwardly and outwardly, and the contemplative perfection attained in this ideal time, this moment of eternity, is translated into the active perfection of historical, worldly existence.

The realization of such deiformity is the completion of the identity of human being, the realization its 'ideal essence' as the limit of its striving. However, it is true that, within Tauler's mysticism, the gaining of such an identity within contemplation involves, for the individual and also for the human in general, a complete extinction of identity. When the spirit is drawn into the perfect unity of the ground, which is the limit of what it seeks for itself, what it seeks finally to be, it becomes so wholly God that it is utterly lost as itself. Moreover, the fundamental nature of the absolute, the nature with which the soul seeks to unite itself in its being, is and always remains a mystery to the soul itself. The God is always, in essence, an unknown God, *namelose formelose wiselose* ['nameless, formless, mannerless'] (V, 109), and the ultimate identity of the created spirit corresponding to this unknown God, the ground of the soul, is equally hidden, known only as a nothing and a secret, an *abditum mentis* (V, 357). It thus turns out that, in seeking its own essence and ground, the perfection of itself as the end and completion of its identity, the soul is led, in the end, to a loss of ground. The innermost ground of itself which mirrors the undifferentiated unity of the ground of God is an abyss in which the spirit meets, and loses itself in, the abyss of God. Following to its source the call that recalls it to itself, the soul discovers both the identity of that source and of its own ground, of caller and called, as an unfathomable, unknowable and ineffable darkness. What calls is an abyss, and that to which it calls is an abyss (V, 330). Thus, whoever resolves to remain by the self, and remain with the quest for the self by remaining attentive to the voice that calls the self forwards to its end and back to its beginning, is led, ultimately, in being drawn into the all-encompassing circle of the ground's perfect unity, into a wilderness in which the self is lost, in which all identity is dissolved. Anyone who is willing to remain by the self right to its end is led to the end of the self, its utter dissolution.

The loss of ground to which the soul is led in finding this abyss is connected with the fact that, in being utterly perfected, it is taken in every way 'beyond' itself, beyond all that defines it as a human soul. The absolute perfection of the understanding is a loss of human understanding,

for what this absolute understanding knows in perfect clarity appears to the finite powers of the soul as a total darkness. The absolute perfection of the will is a loss of self-will, the extinction of any will that can be seen as belonging to a human being. The perfection of memory is likewise a perfect self-forgetting, a perfect forgetting, in fact, of all things. Thus, the final realization of the 'essence' of the soul, understood dynamically as a striving and a relation, leads to a transcendence of that essence. Only in such transcendence does the soul achieve perfect stillness.

As a consequence, the finite spirit never actually reaches the infinite one, for it cannot be truly said to undergo the experience of being the absolute if, in its attainment to that absolute, its own experience is lost. The experience of the infinite spirit is then never that of the finite one, since, in the unity of perfection, there is only the infinite spirit's experience of itself. This is the perfect contemplation of God, but it is not any human being's contemplation of God; it is God's contemplation of God, the contemplation of God in and for itself. In the perfection of this vision, the human being is necessarily extinguished - no man can see God and live.

The point here is that the human soul, qua human, never achieves rest or completion. As itself, it is always on the way. The absolute arrival which signals the end of the way is not found in the human, but in the other than human, and it consequently requires the 'unbecoming' of the human, since *nieman mag ein anders werden, er enmlsse denne entwerden daz er do ist* ['no one can become another without relinquishing that which he is'] (V, 68). If it belongs to the essence of human being to seek this other, it belongs to that essence to seek the transcendence of itself. The soul, therefore, can never be said to become God, since what becomes at this end is by definition - in essence and substance - other to the soul. For Tauler, the *unio mystica* consists in this flight to the other, which involves a form of mystical death. However, his ideal of human existence is not described as a perpetual resting in this flight, but includes a moment of return, in which the self, perfected through abstraction from itself, translates itself back into itself and, in so doing, translates this perfection into the world.

As long as a human soul has not reached absolute perfection, it is still striving and becoming and its completion is still imminent, still *futurus*, a thing about to be. Since becoming belongs to time, this

means that being fully accomplished can never, for a human being, wholly come to pass, and be past, in time. The moment of perfection, the moment in which the individual realizes the eternal, is not, for Tauler, a moment that can be permanently accomplished in the time of this life, the time proper to life, which is simply time itself as opposed to eternity. In time, being is always still being accomplished, so that having been accomplished is always something that will be. As that which has been, therefore, perfect being is being that will be until the end of time.

2. *Dasein and the Call of Conscience.*

As is well known, Heidegger, in his analysis of selfhood in *Sein und Zeit*, distinguishes between an authentic (*eigentlich*) and an inauthentic (*uneigentlich*) self, where these describe two ways in which it is possible for *Dasein* to be, or to exist (SZ, 115). The way of being that makes up the character of *Dasein*'s everyday and inauthentic self, *das Man-selbst* ['the they-self'], exhibits the trait of *Verfallen* ['falling'], of absorption in the public world of everyday concern (SZ, 175). To be its authentic self, to be in the world in an authentic way, *Dasein* must fetch itself back (*sich zurückholen*) out of this inauthentic self; it must retrieve the authentic *Selbstseinkönnen* ['potentiality-for-being-itself'] to which its own being attests (SZ, 267), but which has been lost in the way of being of *das Man*. For this to take place, however, the authentic self, the self it is possible for *Dasein* to be - and so which, in the realm of possibility, it already is - must first be shown (*gezeigt*) to it (SZ, 268). The attestation (*Bezeugung*) of this authentic self can be found, Heidegger claims, in a phenomenon familiar to *Dasein*'s everyday self-interpretation as the voice of conscience (*Stimme des Gewissens*) (SZ, 269).

Conscience, Heidegger observes, *gibt »etwas« zu verstehen, es erschließt* ['gives us "something" to understand; it discloses']. A more penetrating analysis reveals it *als Ruf* ['as a call'], which *hat den Charakter des Anrufs des Daseins auf sein eigenstes Selbstseinkönnen* ['has the character of an appeal to *Dasein* by calling it to its ownmost potentiality-for-being-itself'] (SZ, 269). The call of conscience discloses *Dasein*'s authentic self, its authentic potentiality-for-being, and thereby calls *Dasein* out of its inauthentic self, *das Man*. It breaks through the noise of *das Man*'s everyday chatter, and recalls *Dasein* to the self this noise has drowned out, the self whose voice *Dasein* has failed to hear because of its *Hinhören* ['listening away'] to *das Man* (SZ, 271).

Like Tauler's notion of call, then, this voice provides an 'interior', and thus individual, attestation of a higher possibility for the self, and in recalling it to this possibility, it calls the self back in from its everyday lostness and falling, its average absorption in the world. Furthermore, while the actual performance of the call does not, for either Tauler or Heidegger, lie within the self's own power of choice, the failure to hear the call does, at some level, involve a decision for which the self is responsible. In Heidegger's description, the voice of conscience is experienced as a disruptive force effecting a break in the continuity of Dasein's everyday life, but the falling which characterizes that life is already a fleeing, already a not wishing to be met and called back. The voice of conscience does not call from the nearness and familiarity of anything which the everyday self recognizes as itself, so that, in terms of the everyday self, the call comes, unasked, from somewhere else. It calls out of the distance and into the distance. However, it only reaches the self that wishes to be reached. *In der Erschließungstendenz des Rufes liegt das Moment des Stoßes, des abgestezten Aufrüttelns. Gerufen wird aus der Ferne in die Ferne. Vom Ruf getroffen wird, wer zurückgeholt sein will.* ['In the tendency to disclosure which belongs to the call, lies the momentum of a push - of an abrupt arousal. The call is from afar unto afar. It reaches him who wants to be brought back.'] (SZ, 270.)

What is talked about (*das Beredete*) in the call, what is called and appealed to (*Angerufene*) in the call, is *das Man*. The call strikes the way of being of Dasein's inauthentic self, and is of concern for the form of disclosure belonging to it; it reveals that form of disclosure as inauthentic. The *Geredete* of the call, its content, is: *Streng genommen - nichts* ['Taken strictly - nothing'] (SZ, 273). The call does not convey information; it *summons*. Thus, that to which (*woraufhin*) the call calls this self is *das eigene Selbst* ['one's own self'] (SZ, 273). This call to the self cannot be formulated in words, but remains always *dunkel und unbestimmt* ['obscure and indefinite'] (SZ, 273). *Das Gewissen redet einzig und ständig im Modus des Schweigens* ['Conscience discourses solely and constantly in the mode of keeping silent.'] (SZ, 273.) The call of conscience does not thereby lose any of its clarity or audibility; rather, the force of this silent speaking presses the Dasein that is appealed to and summoned into the hiddenness and seclusion, the silence (*Verschwiegenheit*), of its own self.

Tauler's call also does not convey information to the self, but

summons the self forwards. And for him, too, this summoning forwards draws the self into the hidden ground of itself, while, at the same time, calling upon it to be in a certain way in the world. Both of these moments are included in Tauler's version of the 'to what' of the call, which he describes not as the self but as Christ. In this context, however, Christ, as a *war zu*, is also a possibility for the self, and the self, in being summoned to Christ, is being summoned to a form of self-realization. Tauler's call does also, to be sure, articulate some general ethical principles, some universal and positive guides for the *wie* of any particular self-realization. It is significant, though, that these universal principles, if they are themselves a component of the call, must be known in a particular way, for they are then known through a mediation which is itself individual. In any case, apart from the universality of these ethical principles, which are themselves comprehended in the one directive to love God before all things, the universal nature of the call consists only, for Tauler as for Heidegger, in its basic structure, in its character of summoning in, back, and towards, and not in some 'objective' content.

Heidegger notes that, in this summoning call, both caller and called remain indistinct. As already indicated, the self that is called is nothing that Dasein knows itself as in its everyday way of being, and the caller is nothing that can be named, or with which 'worldly' Dasein can ever be familiar (SZ, 274-5). Furthermore, the call is neither planned, nor prepared for, nor voluntarily performed *von uns selbst*. *»Es« ruft, wider Erwarten und gar wider Willen. Andererseits kommt der Ruf zweifellos nicht von einem Anderen, der mit mir in der Welt ist. Der Ruf kommt aus mir und doch über mich.* [""It" calls, against our expectations and even against our will. On the other hand, the call undoubtedly does not come from someone else who is with me in the world. The call comes from me and yet from beyond me.] (SZ, 275.)

For Tauler, the call comes both from the hidden depths of the self, and from the other to the self, from God. Heidegger does not equate the voice of conscience with the voice of God, and he explicitly and emphatically rejects the possibility of any such explanation within his own phenomenological project (SZ, 275). According to Heidegger, both the theological explanation which interprets the voice of conscience as a dominating power, and then either supplies the voice with a possessor or takes it as person who thereby manifests himself, and the explanation which rejects this interpretation and attempts instead to explain the

phenomenon away in biological terms pass over the phenomenal findings too quickly. While these two explanations may appear to be diametrically opposed to one another, they are actually both guided by the same dogmatic thesis, that *was ist das heißt so tatsächlich wie der Ruf, muß vorhanden sein; was sich nicht als vorhanden objektiv nachweisen läßt, ist überhaupt nicht* ['what is (in other words, anything so factual as the call) must be present-at-hand, and that what does not let itself be objectively demonstrated as present-at-hand, just is not at all'] (SZ, 275). These two interpretations rest, that is, upon the same conception of being and truth, where being equals *Vorhandenheit* ['presence-at-hand'], and truth means the objective proving of a present-at-hand entity. In this case, the theological interpretation is a 'scientific' explanation no less than is the biological one, and it, too, attempts to explain the phenomenon away, to render it comprehensible in the sort of terms with which everyday *Dasein* can make itself familiar and at home.

Any attempt to minimize the obvious difference between Tauler's theological account and Heidegger's phenomenological one on this point would only do both a disservice. On the other hand, it would also be a disservice to the depth of Tauler's thought not to point out that his 'explanation', insofar as it can appropriately be called that, does not fit neatly into Heidegger's critique. The caller of the call is, for Tauler, God, but not a God that can ever be made definite or familiar, not a God that can be known in such a way that the caller of the call ceases to be strange. Ultimately, this caller is as strange and hidden as the ground of the soul, as strange and hidden as that to which, and into which, it calls. Thus, it, too, like Heidegger's caller, and perhaps even more so, *hält sich in einer auffallenden Unbestimmtheit* ['maintains itself in conspicuous indefiniteness'] (SZ, 274), and for Tauler, too, it can be said that *der Rufer ist in seinem Wer »weltlich« durch nichts bestimmbar* ['in its "who", the caller is definable in a "worldly" way by nothing at all'] (SZ, 276).

Yet just as, in the soul's inclination towards God, what draws the soul away and inwards can also be described as the fundamental constitution of the soul itself as *geist, bild, gemüte, grunt* and so forth, so, for Heidegger, what calls is actually *Dasein's* ownmost being: *Er ist das Dasein in seiner Unheimlichkeit, das ursprüngliche geworfene In-der-Welt-sein als Un-zuhause, das nackte »Daß« im Nichts der Welt* ['The caller is *Dasein* in its uncanniness: primordial, thrown being-in-the-world as the not-at-home - that bare "that-it-is" in the nothing of the world'] (SZ,

276). Because being not at home is just that state of being-in-the-world which inauthentic Dasein flees from and covers up, the caller that calls from out of this state is wholly unfamiliar to Dasein's everyday self, and its voice is, to that self, a foreign (*fremde*) one (SZ, 277). This bare self, which is not at home in the world, calls Dasein back out of its immersion in *das Man*, and calls into the hiddenness and silence of the potentiality for being which Dasein, as an existing and transcending being, has as its own (*zurückruft in die Verschwiegenheit des existenden Seinkönnens*) (SZ, 277). The call of this self, calling out of the silence of nothing, and bringing Dasein before the nothing of its world, recalls Dasein to the knowledge of itself as not at home, and this understanding first enables Dasein to throw itself into the project of its being, to project to itself the possibility that it can be and to project itself upon the potentiality-for-being which it is (SZ, 277).

The memory of itself as not at home haunts Dasein in the fleeing and falling of its everyday way of being. By threatening to recall Dasein to the fact of its lostness, this memory threatens with extinction the illusion of being at home in its wandering which *das Man* attempts to maintain, and must maintain to retain its inauthentic being. The call that recalls Dasein to its true self then simultaneously imperils the negative being of *das Man*, the false self whose identity consists in Dasein's constantly not being itself and escaping from itself, and whose memory is a perpetual self-forgetting. This false self must be forgotten and estranged in order for Dasein to reverse the self-alienation which is the true condition of *das Man*. Falling into the world, Dasein is, in truth, estranged from itself and has forgotten itself, for the truth of this condition, which the voice of conscience discloses, is strange to the world of *das Man*, and *das Man's* world is strange to it.

Prima facie, it seems obvious that here there is a fundamental difference between Heidegger and Tauler, in that, although for Heidegger the call is said to come 'from me and yet from beyond me', it ultimately reduces to the immanence of Dasein's own being, while, for Tauler, it involves a transcendent dimension of existence. This initial impression is, however, misleading, because, as I will demonstrate shortly, the condition for the possibility of the phenomenon that Heidegger lays bare at this point is a relation into which Dasein is thrown, and which does involve an element of transcendence. For the moment, though, I only want to draw attention to the similarity between Tauler and Heidegger with respect to

the dynamics of self-realization as expressed in the language of home and estrangement. Tauler speaks of this in terms of God and world, Heidegger in terms of being and Dasein, but they both, in their own ways, describe the immediate condition of the self, the condition in which it finds itself in the first instance and for the most part, as a being at home in a wandering which is not recognized as wandering, an erring that errs precisely in not knowing itself to be in error. It could be said that, for both, this is conceived as a condition of alienation in which the self does not know that it is alienated, and that the overcoming of this alienation requires that it first come into view as such. The self must first know itself to be not at home. To the self that does not know this, the self immersed in the world and constituted by the world, the voice that recalls it to the alienation which is the truth of its condition is first heard as alien itself. In recalling the self to the truth of itself, however, this voice alienates what is truly alien; it recalls to the self that the self which has based itself upon being at home in the world is untrue. This self must be alienated, estranged and made strange, if the self is to return to itself. The voice therefore calls upon the self to make this untrue self and its world other to itself by recognizing their otherness. In so doing, it calls the self back home.

Through Heidegger's analysis, *das Gewissen offenbart sich als Ruf der Sorge* ['conscience manifests itself as the call of care'] (SZ, 277), where care signifies the unity and totality of Dasein, the determination of the whole of its being. That being means: *Sich-vorweg-schon-sein-in-(der Welt-) als Sein-bei (innerweltlich begehendem Seienden)* ['ahead-of-itself-being-already-in-(the world-) as being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world)'] (SZ, 192). This formulation also expresses the unity of Dasein's time: Dasein's future is its being-ahead-of-itself towards possibilities of itself, and so towards itself; its past is its being-already-in the world, and so already having been itself; its present is the self of its being-alongside, as concernfully involved with, the beings it encounters within the world.

In this structure, the structure of a becoming being which can explicitly take over the becoming of its being, the structure of Dasein's everyday and inauthentic way of being is also disclosed: *Im Sich-vorweg-schon-sein-in-einer-Welt liegt wesentlich mitbeschlossen das verfallende Sein beim besorgten innerweltlichen Zuhandenen* ['Ahead-of-itself-being-already-in-a-world essentially includes one's falling and one's being

alongside those things ready-to-hand within-the-world with which one concerns oneself'] (SZ, 192). Conscience addresses itself to the way this kind of being spends its time. It calls from out of the truth of Dasein's 'past', from the facticity of its thrownness into existence, and this is a determination of its being over which Dasein has no power: *Als geworfenes ist es in die Existenz geworfen. Es existiert als Seiendes, das, wie es ist und sein kann, zu sein hat* ['As something thrown, Dasein has been thrown *into existence*. It exists as an entity which has to be as it is and as it can be'] (SZ, 276).

That Dasein has to be as it is and can be means, for one thing, that, in the existing becoming in which a certain Dasein achieves itself - or, rather, in which it is in the process of achieving itself - it can only become what lies within it to be, in accord with the characteristics, limitations, and demands of its own unique historical location. The way the call of conscience 'speaks' the 'has' in 'has to be' (*zu sein hat*), moreover, gives that 'has' the nature of an imperative, a *must*, in a twofold sense. Dasein *has to be* what it is and can be in the sense that it can *only* be this, but also in the sense that it is *summoned* to be this, that it must take it upon itself to be what it is and can be, must accept and undertake (*übernehmen*) to be what it has been thrown, determined, to be. It must be determined to be what it has been determined to be, even though it has not, and cannot ever, determine what it has been determined to be *in principio*, even though it cannot ever get behind its thrownness to determine its being from the ground up. It is this determination, this decision, which brings Dasein into its destiny.

Being thrown into existence, and having to be as it is and can be, also means that Dasein must, as this or that particular Dasein, be the *kind* of being that it is in its essence. The essence of Dasein is existence, and existence is transcendence. Transcendence is that projecting of possibilities which is grounded in the prior understanding of being and which makes possible (in the sense of 'is a condition for the possibility of') the being of Dasein, where that being is defined as care. Care, it will be remembered, reveals itself as the structure of a being that is concerned with, and responsible for, its own becoming. Insofar as there is anything like a determinate essence of Dasein, it lies in the inexorable past of this *»das es ist und als das Seiende, das es ist, seinkönnend zu sein hat«* ['"that it is, and that it has to be something with a potentiality-for-being as the entity which it is"'] (SZ, 276), where the *zu*

sein hat has, again, the double meaning of an imperative.

Thus, when the call of conscience gives Dasein to understand the kind of being which it, as Dasein, is and has to be, it also discloses to Dasein the unity and destiny of Dasein in general. The 'purpose' of Dasein is to be that being which explicitly reaches for being and exists for the sake of being. Recalling Dasein to its thrown self, as a self which reaches for being, conscience recalls the self that Dasein is thrown into the world to be. Dasein then remembers itself as a *futural* being. The remembrance of its primordial essence is then, for Dasein, also the remembrance of its primordial future, of the self that exists ahead of itself, and is the 'towards-which' of its existence.

Heidegger, therefore, like Tauler, sees transcendence, in the simple sense of 'going beyond', as definitive of the fundamental constitution of human being. The very being of this being, existence, is characterised as a passage beyond the actual towards the possible, where this passage is made possible by Dasein's *a priori* understanding of being. That is to say, the transcendence constitutive of existence is enabled by an understanding which is itself transcendental and which grounds the understanding of possibility. Tauler sees the movement of the soul towards perfection as a movement towards God, enabled by the presence of God to the soul. But this presence, as the limit of what the self desires, is the limit of its essence, the limit and ground of its possibility. It is, in fact, the limit of all essences, the essence of essences, infinite being, and as such it grounds every possibility of being. It is because Tauler sees God as the limit and ground of essence as pure possibility of being that God is also, for him as for Eckhart, an abyss of being which is 'deeper' than being, an *Ab-grund* of possible perfection out of which finite being arises and into which it returns.

To say that Tauler conceives of God as the ground and limit of all possibility, all essence, is not to say that he does not see God as an actual being. Rather, Tauler, again like Eckhart, conceives of the possible essence, including the essence of the soul and the essence of essences, the essence of God, as the highest actuality. Heidegger does not think of essence as a higher actuality, but he does conceive of possibility as higher than actuality (SZ, 38), and for him as for Tauler (and, for that matter, Eckhart) the understanding which grants Dasein's possibility, and is therefore the ground of Dasein as a free being, a being which can assume responsibility for the task of its own perfection, is itself groundless. In

Sein und Zeit this is simply because it is transcendental, something into which Dasein is thrown and behind which it cannot go. But in *Vom Wesen des Grundes*, Heidegger adds that *die Freiheit stellt in ihrem Wesen als Transzendenz das Dasein als Seinkönnen in Möglichkeiten, die vor seiner endlichen Wahl, d.h. in seinem Schicksal aufklaffen* ['freedom, in its essence as transcendence, places Dasein as potentiality-for-being in possibilities, which gape open before its finite choice, i.e. in its destiny' (WG, 126/128). In freedom, Dasein is essentially related to an abyss of possibility; it is in this sense that freedom is *der Ab-grund des Daseins* (WG, 128).

The abysmal freedom of Dasein does not deliver it into arbitrariness. The call of conscience, in recalling Dasein to its thrown and finite self, calls upon it to take responsibility for that self in the fulfillment of the particular possibilities that make up its unique destiny. The call of God for Tauler summons the individual in much the same way. In both cases, the self is called upon to assume responsibility for its being even though it has not determined that being, and the decision to do so is the decision to accept and undertake a destiny. Because it involves decision, this destiny is itself not necessary, but possible.

With respect to the assumption of responsibility, Heidegger claims that the call which recalls Dasein to itself in calling it forwards to its ownmost potentiality-for-being does so by way of summoning it to its ownmost being-guilty (SZ, 269). The guilt of which conscience speaks is associated with a 'not', a negativity or nullity (*Nichtigkeit*), but that negativity does not indicate a lack (*Mangel*) in Dasein. It has to do, rather, with Dasein's being responsible for a negativity, its *Gründsein einer Nichtigkeit* ['being-the-basis of a nullity'] (SZ, 283). As the basis of a nullity, Dasein is the ground or cause of the 'not' of being. It is this because it is responsible for the *perfectio* of its own being, even though, as thrown, it did not and cannot determine that being. Dasein is essentially being-guilty precisely because the law of Dasein's own being, as existence or transcendence, issues to it the imperative to take over being-the-ground (*Gründsein*) of itself, although it has not lain that ground itself. Its not having determined itself in its ground, along with its having to take over being-the-ground of itself, gives the nothingness, the negativity, of Dasein.

Existence, transcendence, means: understanding being, being understanding. That Dasein exists means that it understands possibilities of being, and, in this understanding, transcends to being. As already

suggested, in order to understand possibilities of being, Dasein must first understand being-possible itself, and it is enabled to do so because it is that entity whose relation to being is such that it always moves within an *a priori* and transcendental understanding of being. The understanding of possibility (understanding being-possible), is what makes it possible for Dasein to be responsible, because it makes it possible for Dasein to choose. Thus, in the final analysis, it is the understanding of being that makes it possible for Dasein to choose possibilities of its own being so as to be responsible. Since this understanding is granted to Dasein, it can be said that Dasein exists, transcends, becomes as a response to a call made possible by something, or by some event, that lies beyond the reach of its power, but at the same time sustains its power in every respect.

Its choosing of possibilities of being in projection, which constitutes Dasein's being-free, adds another form of nothing to the nothingness of its having been thrown, because its choice must always be a single and therefore exclusive one (SZ, 285). When it is the ground of the 'not' of being, then, Dasein cannot help but know itself as such, in knowing the possibilities of being its own choice has excluded. Furthermore, as was pointed out in the last chapter, as long as Dasein is possible, and it is its nature to be possible, there is also a futural 'not' in it, a *noch nicht*, and this is in addition to the 'not' of its past. As long as Dasein exists, therefore, as long as it projects possibilities into a future and is responsible for itself as the thrown being which it is and is to be, its being is permeated by nothingness, pervaded by being-guilty. Guilt is never wholly redeemable in the time that belongs to Dasein.

Thus, Dasein is always guilty in relation to being in much the same way as the human soul is always guilty before God in Tauler's conception. Of course, human beings are guilty before God in any Christian conception, but in this case the similarity is more than merely analogical, and also involves more than a similar understanding of the way human beings experience themselves in the world. It extends to a similarity in nature between Heidegger's understanding of being and Tauler's understanding of God. The soul, for Tauler, is guilty before God because God is that infinite essence in whom every finite essence is gathered up and fulfilled. The presence of that infinite essence to the soul is therefore the ground of its being possible, the ground of its possibility as a transcending being. It is before this ground of possibility that the soul qua human is

always guilty.

Since, for Heidegger, Dasein is being-possible, and so being-guilty, in its very essence, its being its authentic self cannot mean its reaching a state in which perfection has been accomplished and in which guilt is no more. Authenticity consists in choosing to be the authentic self, in Dasein's choosing to be what it can be and what it has been determined to be. To make this choice, Dasein must hear the call of itself correctly; its hearing must correspond to it. In this corresponding hearing, Dasein has to be situated towards itself in a way that enables it to understand the call, a way that makes it possible for it to hear the testimony of that potentiality which calls to it from afar, and from out of the depths of its own being.

That hearing is a willing; it is a willingness to be appealed to by the call and to be called forth to that of which it attests. In such a willing, Dasein becomes attentive and submissive (*hörig*) to *seiner eigensten Existenzmöglichkeit* ['its ownmost possibility of existence'] (SZ, 287). Heidegger describes this choice as *Gewissen-haben-wollen* ['wanting to have a conscience'], which means only *Bereitschaft für das Angerufenwerden* ['that one is ready to be appealed to'] (SZ, 288). Because this readiness means its being prepared to be its own ground, however, Dasein's binding itself to itself in this way also means its accepting being-guilty, for, in being prepared to be the ground of its being, Dasein accepts being-the-ground of a nullity. It accepts being responsible for the 'not', the *imperfectio*, of being, and is thus ready to take upon itself the guilt which is its very own. The willing readiness of this choosing understands the call of the authentic self in that it allows that self to act in Dasein of its own accord; it allows it to speak. Only when the self is allowed to speak in this way can Dasein's actions answer to the appeal it makes, and only then is Dasein truly responsible (*verantwortlich*) for itself and to itself (SZ, 288).

Heidegger delimits the totality of Dasein's authentic way of being as *das verschwiegene, angstbereite Sichertwerfen auf das eigenste Schuldigsein* ['reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety'] (SZ, 296-7). This sentence articulates the authentic potentiality-for-being that constitutes Dasein's genuine being-its-self in being-in-the-world, which Heidegger names *Entschlossenheit* ['resoluteness']. The idea that Dasein wins its true self in resoluteness rests on the notion that only in light of the truth of

There is also a parallel between Heidegger's account of *Seinsverlassenheit* and Ruusbroec's notion of *ghelatenheit*. The two moments of *ghelatenheit*, forsakenness and surrender or relinquishment, find an echo in Heidegger's notion of the forsakenness by being which may be overcome by a relinquishment of the centrality of the subject. For both Heidegger and Ruusbroec, this relinquishment is a willingness to endure absence, and an abandonment of the search for security. But while the *Untergang* which this relinquishment involves for Heidegger can be compared with Ruusbroec's conception of humility, there is, as usual, nothing in Heidegger's thought corresponding to the Christian notion of compassion.

There is, however, in Heidegger's account of *Ereignung*, something corresponding to Ruusbroec's notion of love. The parallel between the giving of *Ereignis* and the outflowing of God as love has already been noted, but there is also a similarity between the ways Heidegger and Ruusbroec describe the response to this giving. For both, the inclination is a reciprocal one. For Ruusbroec, the response to the touch of love is love, while for Heidegger *Ereignung* involves a mutual giving over of being and Dasein. The similarity of some of the language in which they describe the event of this encounter is apparent, and what is important about this language is that it, once again in contrast with Eckhart, places the emphasis on moments of transformation, moments where something that transforms is suffered, something that can in no way be compelled or calculated.

This emphasis on an overpowering power does not, for either Ruusbroec or Heidegger, take away self-responsibility. Just as grace and effort go hand in hand for Ruusbroec, so the turning, for Heidegger, requires a preparation. The giving of *Ereignis* is beyond human control, but while it, and only it, can enable an appropriate response, it does not inevitably compel that response. Correspondance to its sending requires an openness and dedication. It requires something much like the *Denken*, which, in *Was heißt Denken?*, is said to be *Meinen* in the sense of *minne*.

In comparing these features of Ruusbroec's and Heidegger's thought, it is important to steer a careful course between the Scylla of 'identity' on the one side and the Charybdis of 'analogy' on the other. Heidegger is not talking about a personal experience of God, and his thought is historical through and through. But the similarity between what he says and what Ruusbroec says is not a matter of some purely formal analogy, either, nor does it just involve that form of repetition which often

the self is made steady and whole; it is healed of its divisions. The reconciliation and free bondage of the self which Heidegger describes in terms of willingness to be guilty and wanting to have a conscience, means, for Tauler, reconciliation with the will of God.

In being resolute, Dasein constantly relates itself (and that means the whole of its world) to itself as an authentic potentiality-for-being. It then refers all that makes up being-in-the-world to itself as potentiality, and is thereby constant to the self to which its existence truly refers, the potential self which it most genuinely is. As the end to which being-in-the-world is related and referred, this possible self is, in *Entschlossenheit*, the 'for-the-sake-of-which' for the sake of which Dasein exists. The meaning of being-in-the-world is then determined in reference to this possibility, and the way in which all that is within the world is disclosed is thereby radically transformed.

For Heidegger as for Tauler, therefore, the transcending self, when faithful to itself, refers itself constantly to the future of transcendent imminence, and, in so doing, takes 'world' along with it. When world is referred to such a destiny, it is necessarily transformed. The world that Dasein meets when it refers to what can be with faithfulness is not the busy world of everydayness, and the world the soul encounters in referring all things to God is not the world of vanity and distraction. It is the world which is itself imminent, the world of 'transcendent' meaning.

Being resolute does not isolate Dasein from the world, but brings it into the world in a more authentic way. The choice Dasein makes in resolving upon itself is nothing 'selfish' or 'solipsistic'. Far from pulling Dasein away from being-with others, this resolve gives Dasein the vision to see what those others can be, and enables it to help them be this (SZ, 298). And in *Vom Wesen des Grundes*, Heidegger says, *nur das Hörenkönnen in die Ferne zeitigt dem Dasein als Selbst das Erwachen der Antwort des Mitdaseins, im Mitsein mit dem es die Ichheit darangeben kann, um sich als eigentliches Selbst zu gewinnen* ['only the ability to hear into the distance awakens Dasein as self to the answer of its Dasein-with, so that in being-with others it can surrender its individuality in order to win itself as an authentic self'] (WG, 130/131). For Tauler, perfect being with others consists in intending perfection above all things, and the perfection of others as one's own, in loving God before all things and one's neighbour as oneself.

The vision that belongs to resoluteness is indeed one in which Dasein

is 'withdrawn' from the world of its daily concern, drawn back and out of its lostness in *das Man*, but the distant withdrawal of this vision does not shut being-in-the-world away from Dasein. Rather, it makes that form of being transparent. Resolute understanding does not escape from the conditions determining Dasein's factual existence in the world, but 'sees through' them to their truth. To this truth belongs the discovery not only that Dasein can never itself be wholly free from the irresoluteness and falling which make up the world of *das Man*, but also that the unfolding of its potentiality-for-being can occur only within the factual possibilities offered by this world into which it has been thrown. It is this understanding that discloses to Dasein the full truth of its condition, and so brings it into its 'situation' (SZ. 2919).

The situation of Dasein is its *Da*, the 'there' of 'being-there', within which, and only within which, the *Sein* of Dasein is accomplished. It is disclosed as such, however, only when Dasein has resolved upon itself as Dasein, as that entity which accomplishes itself as the 'there' of 'being'. *Entschlossen* to being there, open and willing to be there, Dasein refers the concrete circumstances of its world to the potentiality for being-there which the call of its conscience reveals to it. Only 'in the light of' this reference does it uncover the reason and explanation (*Bewandtnis*) for its circumstances (*Umstände*). Only in view of the relationship to itself which *Entschlossenheit* discloses and for which it makes a decision do chances and accidents (*Zufälle*) devolve upon and fall to (*zufallen*) Dasein, rather than merely occurring in a haphazard and meaningless way (SZ, 299-300).

The call to the self, in Tauler's thought, comes not only inwardly but also outwardly, in the particular events that befall a person. Moreover, each person is 'ordered' to a particular position within the common framework of a community. An individual's 'calling', therefore - which is a call to realize its duty to God, to realize itself before God, thereby translating the presence of God to it into the world - consists, as for Heidegger, in the summons to a unique destiny, which is known through a hearing and seeing that is both 'inward' and 'outward'. That destiny is neither arbitrary nor necessary, neither a matter of blind chance nor of blind fate. It is not arbitrary because it is ordered, and it is not necessary because it must be chosen; it can be either accepted or refused. Thus, this destiny is, once again, a possibility for the self, a possibility to which it can bind itself, or not. And only when the self discloses and

chooses itself as this possibility, which means only when it is open to the call that calls it to the destined place which is its own unique and proper destination in the world, does it uncover the 'sense' of its world. Only when it *means* this destiny in its reference to the world, that is, does its world have meaning.

Tauler, of course, unlike Heidegger, conceives of a supreme being, God, whose ordering activity is the condition for the ordering of being into something like a destiny, where that ordering activity is a 'foreseeing', a pro-vidential, one. It is in following the providential ordering of this being, the 'will of God', that an individual accomplishes the destiny provided for it. It might be thought that Tauler's understanding of destiny here, even leaving aside the issue of a highest being, differs from Heidegger's in positing something that is settled in advance, and from all eternity, by transcendent decree. By contrast, for Heidegger, it could be said, the individual self destines itself through its own foreseeing. It provides itself with its own destiny, and any 'providence' in that destiny is its own doing. After all, is not Dasein's being destined a determination, a decision, a resolve, an immanent *destino* rather than a transcendent *destinatum*? But it needs to be noted, in mitigation (not abolition) of this difference, both that Tauler's notion of accepting the destiny provided by God also involves decision, and that Heidegger's notion of projecting a destiny in resolve also involves a transcendent having-been-ordered-in-advance. Dasein is, after all, thrown into its being-*Da*, and can only resolve upon itself as having-been-thrown-to-be. It, too, is already ordered in its being, and does not order that being itself.

Thus, Heidegger's later talk of the *Seinsgeschick* and *Ereignis*, while it certainly manifests a shift in tone and focus, does not represent a genuine break with the central insights of *Sein und Zeit*, much less a repudiation. It is truly a continuation, as Heidegger himself always maintained.⁷ It only thinks what is unthought, but implicit, in *Sein und Zeit*, that Dasein is sent into its being and its time, appropriated to its destiny by an event beyond its power.

Like Tauler, Heidegger understands the appropriative ordering of this event in the sense of both structure and decree. Dasein, too, is *gefüget* to a destiny, 'ordered', in a dual sense, to a particular position in virtue of the gifts/limitations that it has and the requirements/constraints of its circumstances, i.e. in virtue of its thrown potentiality-for-being

within the factual possibilities of its finite and localized *Da*. Again, this is implicit in *Sein und Zeit*. Heidegger does not speak of *Fug*, and the cluster of terms surrounding it, until later. But it is interesting that when he does, in, for instance, the passages from *Einführung in die Metaphysik* discussed in Chapter One, where he uses it to translate the Greek *dikē*, usually translated as 'justice', it means both *fügende Gefüge* ['governing structure'] and *Fügung* ['decree']. It will be recalled that Heidegger claims in this text that, for the early Greek thinkers, *dikē* as *Fug* is the order imposed by the overpowering power of *physis*, an early Greek term for being (EM, 168-9/160-1). The world of (Heidegger's) early Greek thinkers, the world of Tauler, and the world of Heidegger himself may well belong to different dispensations of being, involving different ways of understanding being, but there is something of the same here, too.

There is also something of the same in the 'advance' of the having-been-ordered-in-advance common to Tauler's and Heidegger's conceptions of being-in-the-world, and it has to do with the relation between being and God. It is brought more clearly into view in the previously quoted line from *Was ist Metaphysik?*, *Im Sein hat sich anfänglich jedes Geschick des Seienden schon vollendet* (WM, 52/392). Being, after all, comprehends all possibilities. As the essence of essences, so does Tauler's God.

To return to *Sein und Zeit*, in that conscience calls *Dasein* forward into its situation, it is not merely negative, but is a kind of being enclosed in the ground of *Dasein* (*im Grunde des Daseins beschlossene Seinsart*) which attests to what *Dasein* is capable of being, and thereby first enables it to be what it can be in its factual existence (SZ, 300). The factual existence of *Dasein* is finite. Two aspects of this finitude have already been indicated: that *Dasein* is limited by the thrownness which determines its being as a potentiality-for-being, and that it is limited to the possibilities available in its situation. The radical finitude of existence, however, is only fully grasped in the knowledge that this existence is bounded not only in its past and present, but, first and foremost, in its future. *Dasein* comes to an end, it dies, and this is disclosed to *Dasein* in the running ahead of anticipation (*Vorlaufen*) which gives rise to its authentic future. Thus, resoluteness, in disclosing the truth of *Dasein*'s existing potentiality-for-being, a disclosure which must encompass the finitude that belongs essentially to such existing, gives an authentic relation to potentiality only in being anticipatory, for *das »kann« des Schuldigseinkönnens versteht die Entschlossenheit erst, wenn sie*

sich als Sein zum Tode »qualifiziert« ['only when it "qualifies" itself as being-towards-death does resoluteness understand the "can" of its potentiality-for-being-guilty'] (SZ, 306).

Taken together, the forms of negativity that are said to be the limiting conditions of Dasein express the same kinds of finitude as the two forms of nothingness mentioned by Tauler. Dasein is also bounded by a 'natural nothing', in that it does not determine the 'that' or the 'what' of its being, neither its arising and passing away, nor its nature and location, and it is bounded by a 'faulty nothing', in that, as a potentiality-for-being, it always lags behind its possibilities. Tauler, like Heidegger, views the understanding and acceptance of these forms of negativity as essential to understanding the truth of existence, and thus essential in the self's becoming transparent to itself, but being towards death is not nearly so important for him as it is for Heidegger. Nor would one expect it to be, since the form of death revealed in anticipation is not, for Tauler, the ultimate truth, the true end of the soul. That end lies, rather, in another kind of death, one which is also a fulfillment and an eternal life.

The 'self' of Dasein's average way of being, Heidegger notes, constantly evades its authentic potentiality-for-being, and interprets itself not in terms of this potentiality but in terms of the world of daily concern. It is still related to this potentiality in its ground, as the being which it is, but its relation to that relation is one of evasion. The present of this self, the present of Dasein's everydayness is 'the being-alongside which falls' (*das verfallende Sein-bei*) (SZ, 328). In resoluteness, Dasein is pulled back out of this falling. It is not thereby taken somewhere else; it does not cease to have a present, but the nature of that present changes. The present of resoluteness is the 'moment' (*Augenblick*) (SZ, 328), in which Dasein is fetched back from the distraction of its average way of being. This moment is not an isolated instant, not a 'now' that has been severed from future and past, but a unity in which the present is held in the future and the past. It is held in authentic temporality, that temporality in which the future, the coming-towards, is in the process of having been, of coming to pass (SZ, 328).

The moment is a rapture, a form of *ecstasis*. Its form is different from that of the *ecstasis* of everydayness, in which Dasein is carried away in bearing away from itself towards the objects of its concern, and thus existing away from itself in the mode of being immersed in the world of

that concern. The ecstasy of resoluteness, on the other hand, is an active being carried beyond the world of daily concern, which is at the same time an authentic way of being towards the matters of concern encountered within a situation.

The vision that belongs to the moment involves the conjunction of both the understanding of that which is in time, and of that which is not. All beings, including Dasein, are in time, but being itself is not (SZ, 17-19, 376). It follows that, if Dasein has an understanding of being, it has, in some sense, an understanding of the temporality of what is not in time. The moment of Dasein is, in fact, the conjunction of a kind of 'time' and a kind of 'eternity'. This traditional formulation can, I feel, still be used in reference to Heidegger, with the caution that time and temporality are to be conceived as he has described them. This requires that all notions of time as the succession of now-points, and all notions of eternity derived from these, which then conceive of it as the infinite succession of such points, as infinite duration or an infinitely perduring 'now', be kept at a distance. The temporality of what is in time is the unity of the time of that which is in time, the unified totality of its past, present, and future. If based on this notion of temporality, the temporality of that which is not in time - i.e. 'eternity' - must be conceived of as the unity of its past, present and future, the unity of the temporal modes of the 'supra-temporal', the 'moment' of being, as was pointed out in Chapter Two.

In *Sein und Zeit*, the moment of Dasein is actually the meeting-point of necessity and possibility, of *Da* and *Sein*. *Sein* is not in time, and it is on the basis of the understanding of *Sein* that Dasein is enabled to project possibilities of being. The understanding of what is not in time, then, is the 'infinite factor' in Dasein's constitution; it is because Dasein understands being that it has imagination.²⁰ Resolute understanding, however, also crashes against limits, and authentic understanding allows its infinite projection to be qualified by these limits, by death, thrownness, guilt, and facticity, by all that makes up the *Da* of Dasein. When resolute and authentic, Dasein knows both of these 'components' of itself. It knows itself to be not merely *Da*, and not unlimited *Sein*, but *Da-sein*. It understands being, and strives to be on the basis of this understanding, but it understands as well the limiting conditions of being *Da*. The moment grants the event that comprehends the temporality of Dasein as the temporality of a conjuncture, of that jointure

of *Sein* and *Da* which *Dasein* is.

Given what has already been said about the nature of destiny in relation to possibility, necessity and decision, the similarity between the transparencies gained in Heidegger's and Tauler's 'moments' does not require much further comment. All I would like to add is a point of emphasis, that Heidegger's moment, while it involves decision, is still a moment of *revelation*, a *visionary* moment, as is Tauler's. Whatever affinities there may be between Heidegger's description of the resolute individual and Nietzsche's notion of the *Übermensch*, and there certainly are some,² the revelatory and transcendently imperative character of the moment (which, in truth, also finds an echo in Nietzsche's thought)¹⁰ must not be overlooked, as it sometimes is in expositions that concentrate exclusively on the 'I resolve' aspect of the 'I am resolved.'¹¹ This suggests that Heidegger's celebrated *Kehre*, manifest, for instance, in the turn from *Entschlossenheit* to *Gelassenheit* is not, once again, a radical break, but a continuation. The moment in which being is revealed to *Dasein* was always, implicitly, understood as an arrival (*An-kunft*), a disclosure (*Erschlossenheit*) of being granted to *Dasein* in virtue of the *Bereitschaft für das Angerufenwerden* that makes up *Entschlossenheit*.

On the other hand, Fergus Kerr, in 1969, writes, 'the Heidegger who quaintly reinterprets *Entschlossenheit* as *Ent-schlossenheit* is the one who, with a hyphen, rejects the arbitrariness of dominating will in favour of an accepting correspondence with deep needs and desires. The stance of subject towards object, man towards being, man towards Nature, one man towards another, which Heidegger once identified as will to dominate, now becomes transformed into letting-be, *Seinlassen*.'¹² Kerr is surely right to point out that some shift takes place here, and that it results from Heidegger's rethinking of his position after his experience with Nazism. John Caputo has made the same point about *Entschlossenheit*, in 'Heidegger's God and the Lord of History'.¹³ But the sense that 'the basic structure of being human is *existenzial*, rather *ekstatisch*: open, receptive, responsive, in a certain sense passive and submissive' (p. 365), which Kerr thinks Heidegger comes to later on, actually has firm roots in *Sein und Zeit*, although it is only one side of an existential account which is admittedly ambiguous. I think it is not so much a matter of Heidegger's having 'changed his mind' (p. 365), as of his having listened more carefully to what he himself had said in *Sein und Zeit*, and of his having decided upon one of the meanings in that work's ambiguous description. In that case,

Heidegger's later reinterpretation of *Entschlossenheit* as *Ent-schlossenheit* is not quite as 'quaint' as it may at first appear.

It is interesting in this context to compare *Sein und Zeit's Augenblick* with the rapture of the seer described in *Der Spruch des Anaximander*, where Heidegger comments upon Homer's portrayal of Kalchas in *The Iliad*. The seer is rapt away from the closest concerns which press upon him in the present, and transported into a distance (*Weite*) which is unified (*einige*), a distance in which past, present, and future dwell together in the unity of a simple presencing. In this rapture, the seer is also carried away to the presencing of what is currently present, of what is arriving and departing in what *Sein und Zeit* calls the situation (Hw, 343/36). This is a vision of what is being sent. It is a vision of the destining of being, and so of the destiny in which the present is involved. What befalls Dasein in the present, the concatenation of current events and circumstances, is comprehensible and meaningful only in the light of this destiny.

When the seer enters into the expanse of this presence, he enters into the truth of the present, for he enters into the preserve of truth itself. In this preserve, what is, was, and will be is gathered together and kept safe in a simple unity in which what comes about always already 'was'. Here, the truth of the whole of presencing, the truth of being, is kept:

Dem Seher ist alles An- und Abwesende in ein Anwesen versammelt und darin gewahrt. Unser altes Wort »war« bedeutet die Hut. Wir kennen es noch im »wahrnehmen«, d.h. in die Wahr nehmen, im »gewahren« und »verwahren«. Das Wahren ist als das lichtend-versammelnde Bergen zu denken. Das Anwesen wahrt das Anwesende, das gegenwärtige und das ungegenwärtige, in die Unverborgenheit. Aus der Wahr des Anwesenden sagt der Seher. Er ist der Wahr-Sager.

[All things present and absent are gathered and preserved in one presencing for the seer. The old German word *war* [was] means protection. We still recognize this in *wahrnehmen* [to perceive], i.e. to take into preservation; in *gewahren* and *verwahren* [to be aware of, to keep or preserve]. We must think of *wahren* as a securing which clears and gathers. Presencing preserves [wahrt] in unconcealment what is present both at the present time and not at the present time. The seer speaks from the preserve [Wahr] of what is present. He is the sooth-sayer [Wahr-Sager.] (Hw, 344/36)

The seer speaks the truth because he speaks from out of the truth of being, insofar as he has seen the totality of presencing, and has knowledge of it: *Der Seher ist derjenige, der das All des Anwesenden im Anwesen schon gesehen hat; lateinisch gesprochen: vidit; deutsch: er steht im Wissen. Gesehenhaben ist das Wesen des Wissens* [The seer is one who has already seen the totality of what is present in its presencing. Said in

Latin, *vidit*; in German, *er steht im Wissen* (he stands in knowledge). To have seen is the essence of knowledge.'] (Hw, 344/36.) What is present is not merely what is, factually, at the time. It is, rather, what is coming to pass, what is happening. True knowledge of the present is therefore the vision of what is coming to pass, insight into the truth of what is happening in the present. Such insight does require 'projection'; it requires an *Entwurf* in terms of which what is happening is understood. But the *Entwurf*, if genuine, *corresponds* to what-is, and lights up the truth of what-is. It illumines. And the illumining *Entwurf* is sent in the rapture of vision, not 'thought up', or calculated, by Dasein.

To the authentic present, the moment comprehending the whole of Dasein's temporality, and the authentic future, the anticipation that understands potentiality and its limit, there corresponds an authentic past, an authentic way of having-been. For Heidegger, this way of having-been, to which Dasein is brought back and brought before through the resolute running ahead in which it comes towards itself while coming back to itself, is *Wiederholung*, 'repetition' or 'bringing back' (SZ, 339). As a way of having-been, repetition brings the past before Dasein, not as an actuality, not as something that once happened and is now no longer of any concern except as a matter of 'disinterested' historiological inquiry, but as a possibility for itself.⁴ In repetition, Dasein fetches back possibilities of itself from the past, and translates them into its situation. In so doing, it inherits its tradition. It discloses possibilities of itself to itself in terms of the heritage (*Erbe*) which it, as thrown, assumes (SZ, 384).

Possibilities do not recur of their own; they must be chosen. Without such choice, history is not repetition, but necessity. The historicity of inauthentic Dasein is one in which the possibilities of the past are constantly forgotten, in which the past as *possible* is forgotten altogether. Everyday being-in-the-world has the inauthentic present, the making-present which disperses itself in the closest concerns of today, as its primary temporal mode. It knows the past only in terms of this present, as the 'actual' (*«Wirkliche»*) which is left over in the present, and which has had an effect upon the present as something actual and active, as a cause. By contrast, *die eigentliche Geschichtlichkeit versteht die Geschichte als die «Wiederkehr» des Möglichen und weiß darum, daß die Möglichkeit nur wiederkehrt, wenn die Existenz schicksalhaft- Augenblicklich für sie in der entschlossenen Wiederholung offen ist* ['when historicity

is authentic, it understands history as the "recurrence" of the possible, and knows that a possibility will recur only if existence is open for it fatefully, in a moment of vision, in resolute repetition'1 (SZ, 391-2).

Repeating is handing down an inherited possibility explicitly. Fetching a possibility out of the past and repeating it, imitating a hero, for instance, is not a matter of some simple copying in which what happened once is actualized again, nor is it a matter of just being determined by the past so as to participate in the working out of its effects. Repetition translates past possibilities into the present, and, in so doing, it responds to them. This response, made from within the moment of vision, is at the same time a revocation (*Widerruf*) of the past's effect on the present, of the way in which the past is working upon, and working itself out in, the present. Repetition, the authentic response to a past possibility, cries out against the way in which the past is being worked out in the present, while at the same time calling the present back to that past, recalling to it the possibility that has been (SZ, 384-5). Through authentic repetition, Dasein is brought immediately before what has already been before it. Moreover, repetition brings Dasein into the real presence of what has been; it brings the past to presence, and into the present, for Dasein. Presenting the past to itself in this way, Dasein hands its inheritance over to itself and accepts the thrownness of its own *Da*. It accepts itself as Dasein.

For the Christian Dasein of Tauler, the inherited repeatable possibility is Jesus Christ. The history of the divine man constitutes the past which is made really present through such repetition. Resoluteness, in the sense of openness and readiness for the the call to the self, discloses this past as possibility, and repetition, as *imitatio Christi*, translates that possibility into the infinite variety of possible individual lives. Only through such disclosure and repetition is this past event really present to Christian Dasein, only, that is, when it is thought out of the future so as to be an imminent possibility.

This possibility is inexhaustible. Christ is the hero who can always be imitated precisely because he can never be imitated. The event is therefore unique, infinitely repeatable because unrepeatable, and so always possible. Since Christ is perfection itself in human form, which no human being is or can be, the repetition is a never-ending attempt, an imminence for all time.

Nowhere in any of Heidegger's works is there a description of a state

quite like that of the completion of the soul in mystical union. In *Sein und Zeit*, Dasein, as existing being-in-the-world, is always incomplete, always lacking and striving. If it were to gain the completion in which mystical union consists, it would no longer be Dasein, would no longer be there (see SZ, 236). In fact, in mystical union, 'human being' is no longer there, and so such union is often described as a form of death, although this death is supposed to equal absolute fulfillment, not the end, in the sense of 'cutting off', of possibility. If such death dies into any kind of life, it then cannot be the life of this world, since absolute fulfillment cannot belong to being-in-the-world.

In *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger's analysis of death is limited to this world, to the 'this-worldly' side of it, where it is always a possibility towards which Dasein exists. Heidegger decides nothing one way or another about what might be after death, but points out that the question of the 'otherworldly' side of death cannot be meaningfully raised until the this-worldly ontological interpretation of death has been secured (SZ, 247-8). This raises the possibility of using the terms of Heidegger's analysis of Dasein and death to interpret the mystical union in which the soul is described as undergoing a kind of death.¹⁵ Heidegger does not himself ever move to speculation about the other side of death, though, and *Sein und Zeit* views death not as fulfillment but as the cutting off of possibility.

Looking only at *Sein und Zeit*, there is another point of disanalogy in that Heidegger speaks only, in this work, of Dasein's being withdrawn by the voice of conscience, and does not speak of the kind of voluntary withdrawal which contemplation involves. Wanting to have a conscience does require resolve, and in this resolve there is a willingness to be withdrawn by the voice that calls away from *das Man*. But Heidegger does not, in *Sein und Zeit*, describe the sort of deliberate drawing in and away of attention from the world of everyday concern and focussing of it elsewhere that characterizes Tauler's notion of contemplative devotion. It is, however, precisely such a movement of the *Gemüt, das Wesende des ganzen Menschenwesens* ['the essential being of all human nature'] (WhD, 95/148) that Heidegger describes in *Was heißt Denken?*. This movement is recollection. It involves memory, the collection (*Sammlung*) of the whole of the mind, *das ganze Gemüt im Sinne der steten innigen Versammlung bei dem, was sich allem Sinnen wesentlich zuspricht* ['the whole disposition in the sense of a steadfast intimate concentration upon the things that

essentially speak to us in every thoughtful meditation'] (WhD, 92/140). Memory in this sense, the concentrated affection of the innermost meditation of mind and spirit, is devotion (WhD, 158/145).

Thinking (*Denken*) is memory (*Gedächtnis*), remembering and commemorating (*Andenken*), thanking (*Danken*) and devotion (*Andacht*). It is the unceasing and concentrated commemorative remembrance of what is most worthy of thought (*das Bedenklichste*), of what gives itself, in every instance, to thought to think, and is itself gathered up and present in the innermost unity of the *Gemüt*. Such concentrated remembrance is *Meinen*, understood in the sense of *minne*. It is devotion to being, a devotion which, in and by itself, gives thanks for the gift of our being (*Wesen*) to that which bestows, and to which we are therefore indebted, for that being. In terms of the later Heidegger's task, such devotion is that *besinnliches Denken . . . das dem Sinn nachdenkt, der in allem waltet, was ist* ['meditative thinking . . . which contemplates the meaning which reigns in everything that is'] (G, 13/46). It is remembrance of being, giving thought to being. This does not, with respect to existence (scholarship is another matter altogether), mean speculating about the nature of being. It means keeping being in mind so as to deliver thought over to it. It means dedication to being.

Such thinking is established outside the realm of willing and arises from *Gelassenheit*. In the work *Gelassenheit*, it is said that this term is certainly not being used in the sense of giving up sinful selfishness, of renouncing self-will in favour of the divine will (G, 33-4/62). Heidegger does not imagine a divine agent having such and such intentions, with which human intentions should be made to coincide. Tauler does, although in a peculiar way, and one far removed from any kind of calculation. One would not want to deny that there is a vast difference between the formulations of the age of theistic faith to which Tauler belongs and those of the god-less age of Heidegger. What I have tried to demonstrate is only that, within this difference, something of the same is present, too.

Finally, in light of the analysis in this section, it may be advisable to add a brief note to what was said about Heidegger and the question of ethics at the end of Section I. Attention to ontic phenomena like suffering and sympathy is no more evident in the works considered in this section than in those considered in the last section. But once again Heidegger does suggest a way of being whose form can include an appropriate being with others, an appropriate being towards the other. The

watchful (*nüchtern*) anxiety of the resolute individual has its roots in the Christian notion of living as if one might be judged at any moment for the way one is, of living with constant vigilance and self-responsibility. That conception decidedly involves responsibility towards others, and this is echoed in Heidegger's analysis in *Sein und Zeit*. Resoluteness individualizes (*vereinzelt*), but this kind of individualization first makes possible an appropriate and genuinely helpful *Fürsorge*. The ethical moment is therefore formally included in this way of being, as it is in *Gelassenheit*. And in both cases, this moment involves allowing the other to be, not in the sense of an indifferent letting alone, but in the sense of a considerate and conscientious paying heed, and one which does not exclude the possibility of opposition. Thus, while, at the end of Section I, it was suggested that the apparent lack of concern for being with others in Heidegger's thought should not be ignored, I wish to end this section with the qualification that it should also not be exaggerated.

SECTION III

THE TRANSCENDENT GOD

The first chapter in this section compares the last three chapters of the *Itinerarium*, in which Bonaventure considers God under the names *esse* (Chapter Five) and *bonum* (Chapter Six), and beyond all names in the divine darkness (Chapter Seven), with Heidegger's reflections on being and the good. The involvement of God in the question of being qua being is present, as Heidegger points out, in the original explicit formulation of this question by Aristotle. For Aristotle, *philosophia* is a striving for the possibility of essential understanding. As such, it seeks to understand what is prior to everything else, prior to individual beings, namely, being. Philosophy as the knowledge of being qua being is therefore ontology. But philosophy, according to Aristotle, is also theology. The knowledge of being qua being, the *logos* of *on he on*, is also, in some way, the knowledge of the divine, the *logos* of *theion* (See MAL, 17-18/13-14).

Given Bonaventure's notion of *ipsum esse*, with which Chapter Five of this section will begin, it is clear how his thought stands in relation to this conception. For Bonaventure, being itself is divine being. The understanding of being itself is, consequently, the understanding of divine being. It follows that, insofar as philosophy seeks the knowledge of being itself, it is *scientia dei*, (natural) theology. Any genuine comparison of Bonaventure with Heidegger on this question must then ask, what is the relation between Bonaventure's notion of being itself as divine being and Heidegger's own notion of being, where that means asking at the same time, to what extent and in what way is Heidegger's questioning of being also a questioning of the divine, i.e. to what extent and in what way is Heidegger's philosophy also a theology? In keeping with the general aims of the present inquiry, this is not meant to be a merely historical question about the relation between Heidegger and some past thinker or thinkers, but an attempt to investigate and further the dialogue between Heidegger and medieval mystical theology in order to shed light on the question of God, and with special reference to the relation between God and being.

Bonaventure says, being itself is God. Heidegger explicitly says that being is not God (Hb, 76/210). The question posed here is, what, in both cases, is meant by being and how does this meaning relate to what is called God? The discussion of Bonaventure on this point will give an account of what being itself means according to him, and why, given this meaning, it must be construed as divine being. It will then look at how the dynamic nature of this same divine being is grasped under the name of

the good. Proceeding, next, to look at Heidegger on this question, I will mainly examine sections from two works, the *Grundbegriffe* (Freiburg lecture course, 1941), and the *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz* (Marburg lecture course, 1928). The examination of the first of these will revolve around the meaning of being, while the second addresses the question of the good. However, the analysis will also assume, and refer to, what has been said in previous discussions of Heidegger's notion of being and its relation to the good.

Bonaventure's claim that being itself is divine being rests on the notion that it is perfect and wholly actual being. Any conclusions about where Heidegger is situated with respect to this notion requires looking at his conceptions of both being and the good. Consequently, these conclusions will be postponed until the consideration of both these conceptions, mainly through the two works mentioned above, has been completed.

In final chapter, I will compare a number of key elements in Jan van Ruusbroec's mystical writings with similar themes in Heidegger's thought. The summary of Ruusbroec's thought with which this last chapter begins draws on three of Ruusbroec's works: *Boecksken der verclaringhe* [*Little Book of Enlightenment*], *Vanden seven sloten* [*The Seven Enclosures*], and *Die geestelike brulocht* [*The Spiritual Espousals*]. This summary will highlight those features of Ruusbroec's mysticism which differentiate it from that of Eckhart, particularly his emphasis on love, conversion, and grace. The discussion of Heidegger that follows will then focus on aspects of his thought that contain similar features. To this end, it will look first mainly at the *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, and will then examine a few later works in which some of the major themes of the *Beiträge* are taken up and expanded.

CHAPTER FIVE

BONAVENTURE AND HEIDEGGER ON BEING AND GOODNESS

1. *Bonaventure on God as esse and bonum.*

Chapter Five of the *Itinerarium* is entitled *De speculatione divinae unitatis per eius nomen primum, quod est esse* ['On contemplating the divine unity through its primary name which is being']. It describes the first mode or stage of contemplating God *supra per lumen, quod est signatum supra mentem nostram, quod est lumen Veritatis aeternae* ['above through the light which shines upon our minds, which is the light of eternal Truth']. The second mode of this contemplation considers God under the name of the good, and forms the subject of Chapter Six. While the contemplation of God under the name of being is concerned with the attributes of the unity of God, the contemplation of God as the good is concerned with the attributes of the Trinity. These two modes of contemplation, taken together, form the third phase of the mind's ascent to God, where, having considered God outside through the *vestigia*, and inside through the *imago*, it looks above and beyond itself, thereby entering into the *sancta sanctorum* ['holy of holies'] (It. V.1, 330-1/94).

According to Bonaventure, contemplating the God whose nature is revealed in the saying, *Ego sum qui sum*, contemplating God as *ipsum esse* leads *mens* to the thought of that which is wholly certain because it excludes all not-being, so that it cannot be thought not to be (*non potest cogitari non esse*). When *mens* concentrates its vision (*defigat aspectum*) on this pure being, it looks to that which is empty of all not-being, to that which has nothing of nothing:

quia ipsum esse purissimum non occurrit nisi in plena fuga non-esse, sicut et nihil in plena fuga esse. Sicut igitur omnis nihil nihil habet de esse nec de eius conditionibus;

sic econtra ipsum esse nihil habet de non-esse, nec actu nec potentia, nec secundum veritatem rei nec secundum aestimationem nostram.

[For pure being occurs only in full flight from not-being just as nothing is in full flight from being. Therefore, just as absolute nothing has nothing of being or its attributes, so contrariwise being itself has nothing of nonbeing either in act or potency, either in objective truth or in our estimation.] (V.3, 332/96)

If *ipsum esse purissimum* 'occurs' only in full flight from not-being, then it will occur for *mens* only when it is in full flight from not-being, when it turns its attention away from all forms of nothing and fixes itself upon what is itself turned away or opposed to all not-being, viz. being itself. The movement that thus turns away from not-being to what is itself turned away from not-being is not a 'mere' thinking, but a turning of *intension*. Only through this kind of turning does the mind genuinely grasp the full content of *ipsum esse*. Only then does this content, as the exclusion of all forms of not-being, truly emerge.

As in Chapter Three of the *Itinerarium*, though, what emerges is only the explicit understanding of what is in truth logically prior in every act of understanding. Everything understood (*intelligitur*) is understood either as not being (*non ens*) or as being in potency (*ens in potentia*) or as being in act (*ens in actu*). But every 'not' of being, whether it concerns simply not being (*non ens*), or not being yet complete (*ens in potentia*), is grounded on the prior understanding of being as pure act. Therefore, *esse . . . est quod primo cadit in intellectu et illud esse est quod est purus actus* ['being is what first comes into the intellect and this being is pure act']. This is a similar point to the one made in Chapter Three about 'defects' of being. All forms of not-being involve a deprivation, a lack or negation, of being, and are understood on the basis of that pure being which they negate. They are therefore understood through being: *Cum autem non-esse privatio sit essendi, non cadit in intellectum nisi per esse* ['Since not-being is the privation of being, it does not come into our understanding except through being'] (V.3, 332-3/96).

The being understood prior to all forms of negation and forming the condition for the possibility of understanding any not-being must, Bonaventure claims, be *esse divinum*, divine being (V.3, 334/96). That is because it must be purely positive being, pure act with no admixture of potentiality or defect. Since the intelligibility of anything whatever rests upon this being, since, that is, the intellect in all of its acts relates in an *a priori* way to pure being itself, *mens* has a latent innate

knowledge of the divine being. It has a remarkable tendency, however, not to realize this knowledge, a tendency not to see that by which it sees:

Mira igitur est caecitas intellectus, qui non considerat illud quod prius videt et sine quo nihil potest cognoscere. Sed sicut oculus intentus in varias colorum differentias lucem, per quam videt cetera, non videt, et si videt, non advertit; sic oculus mentis nostrae, intentus in entia *particularia* et *universalia*, ipsum esse *extra omne genus*, licet primo occurrat menti, et per ipsum alia, tamen non advertit.

[Strange, then, is the blindness of the intellect, which does not consider that which it sees first and without which it can know nothing. The eye, concentrating on various differences of color, does not see the very light by which it sees other things; and if it does see this light, it does not advert to it. In the same way, the mind's eye, concentrating on particular and universal being, does not advert to being itself, which is beyond every genus, even though it comes to our minds first and through it we know other things.] (V.4, 334/96)

On the one hand, the intellect 'sees' being itself first of all, since the visibility of everything else is founded on that prior vision. On the other hand, intent upon what being itself makes visible, the mind does not turn to that which grants the visibility. It does not bring being itself to light for itself or recover in thought what makes thought possible. This is not any particular being, since particular being is always finite, always mixed with the not-being of potentiality, nor is it any universal being, any general category or genus under which a specific region of finite being may be subsumed. It is also not analogous being, since that has the least actuality, and therefore the least being, of all (V.3, 333-4/96). It is rather *ipsum esse* as a transcendental beyond all limitation and determination, and as the all-inclusive unity of the divine essence.

Thus, the mind does not see what lies closest to it. It does not customarily bring into view what is most evident, and because of this, when it does turn away from the shadowy beings to which its sight is accustomed, towards the light that grants the being of those shadowy beings, it is at first blinded and seems to see nothing:

Unde verissime apparet, quod «sicut oculus vespertilionis se habet ad lucem, ita se habet oculus mentis nostrae ad manifestissima naturae»; quia assuefactus ad tenebras entium et phantasmata sensibilibum, cum ipsam lucem summi esse intueatur, videtur sibi nihil videre; non intelligens, quod ipsa caligo summa est mentis nostrae illuminatio, sicut, quando videt oculus puram lucem, videtur sibi nihil videre.

[Hence it is most truly apparent that 'as the eye of the bat is in regard to light so is the eye of our mind in regard to the most evident things of nature.' Thus our mind, accustomed to the darkness of beings and the images of the things of sense, when it glimpses the light of the supreme being, seems to itself to see nothing. It does not realize that this very darkness is the supreme illumination of our mind, just as when the eye sees pure light, it seems to itself to see nothing.] (V.4, 334/96)

That what the mind is accustomed to see lies in truth in shadow and darkness does not mean that it is not factually existent. It means only that what the mind ordinarily sees depends upon something which it does not ordinarily see, something that seems to be nothing in relation to beings, but actually grants the being of beings in that beings could not be without the illumination of this apparent nothing. The exit from the cave, then, is not exactly a journey to somewhere else wholly remote from beings. It is not a journey to some foreign region with which the mind is in no sense already familiar. It is, rather, a journey to what is presupposed along with beings and yet seldom brought to mind. The process of bringing it to mind is a passage to a greater clarity about beings, a greater degree of truth or transparency concerning them, since it involves seeing through to their ground as the condition for their possibility.

To the extent that a person can come to 'see' *ipsum purissimum esse*, certain attributes of it, which are attributes of the divine unity, present themselves. If you can truly think of being itself, Bonaventure says, it will become apparent to you (*occurrit tibi*) that it must be thought of (*necessario cogitatur*) as absolutely first, being through itself (*per se*) and by itself (*a se*); as lacking all *non-esse*, and therefore as eternal, never beginning or ending; as having nothing in itself but being itself, and therefore as simple; as having no possibility, and therefore as wholly actual; as having no defect, and therefore as entirely perfect; and as having no diversity, and therefore as supremely one. These attributes belong to the logic of *ipsum esse* in such a way that: a) their contrary cannot be thought by anyone who understands being itself, and b) one implies (*infert*) the other (V.5, 334-5/97). However, while to 'understand' being itself so as to 'see' these attributes as necessarily belonging to it is, in a way, to raise what is grasped implicitly to the clarity of a concept, the awareness thereby attained involves more than what is usually meant by the notions of conceptual clarity or rational grasp. This in turn suggests that the process of achieving this awareness also involves more than what is usually meant by coming to understand the logic of a concept. Becoming clear about what being itself means consists, for Bonaventure, in accomplishing a vision, achieved with difficulty, whereby the mind is simplified and illuminated: *Si hoc vides in pura mentis simplicitate, aliquantulum perfunderis aeternae lucis illustratione* ['If you see this in the pure simplicity of your mind, you will somehow be bathed in the

brilliance of eternal light'] (V.6, 336/97). The full meaning of being itself is illustrated only when the intellect reaches this form of vision; only then has it truly risen to the thought of *ipsum esse*. In other words, grasping the content of this term means, for Bonaventure, attaining an understanding that is not only rational but intuitive, and what is being put forward here is not only a doctrine but a way.

The contemplation of being presents a number of further determinations, and Bonaventure goes on to list and develop these in a language once again intertwined with references to wonder and light. First of all, being itself is *primum et novissimum*, first and last. It is first because *omnia operatur propter se ipsum*, because it performs all of its works - and its works include all that is and becomes - for itself, for its own sake. It is then itself, as *ipsum esse*, both the origin and the goal of all that is, *finis ultimus, initium et consummatio, alpha et omega* ['the ultimate end, the beginning and the consummation, alpha and omega'] (V.7, 336-7/98). It is the last end of what-is as a whole, what everything seeks insofar as it seeks to be. What everything seeks, after all, is the consummation of its being. It seeks to become what it is. But in order to be sought, what-it-is (*essentia, quidditas*), as that for which something reaches, must be presupposed in the reaching. It must be prior and this priority makes it a beginning as well as an end. The highest and most universal beginning and term of all, *omnium origo et finis consummans* ['the origin and consummating end of all things'], is being itself, *esse purissimum et absolutum, quod est simpliciter esse* ['the most pure and absolute being, which is being without qualification'] (V.8, 337/100). This is a being that, like Plato's *agathon*, surpasses the (finite) being of all actual and possible beings.

Being itself is also *aeternum et praesentissimum*, eternal and most present. Since it is eternal, it brooks no passage, no transition from one state to another, and so no motion. It does not flow from something else (*non fluit ab alio*), nor does it ebb away of itself (*nec deficit a se ipso*), nor does it run from one thing to another (*nec decurrit ab uno in aliud*). It does not flow at all. What does not flow, Bonaventure claims, has no past or future, no having been or about to be, but only *esse praesens*, present being (V.7, 336/99). This present being includes and enters into the presence of what is present for any length of time. It encompasses and enters all durations (*omnes durationes ambit et intrat*) as if it were simultaneously their centre and circumference (V.8, 337/100). Its pure

presence embraces all finite, temporal being. Furthermore, all being present for a while, all duration, participates in present being, so that present beings (the beings that are present for a while) image, in their being present (presence), purely present being. They form a moving image of eternity, where eternity, which encompasses all time, is understood as pure presence, as purely being present.

Next, being itself is *simplicissimum et maximum*, wholly simple and greatest. It is greatest in power (*virtus*) because it is utterly simple in essence, since the more unified power is, the more infinite it is (V.7, 336/99). Being itself, since it is utterly simple, possesses whole and undivided power, infinite power. It is the power containing all power within the simple unity of its essence. As the simple ground of all possibilities, being itself is infinitely powerful and grants every finite power the power it has. Because it is utterly simple and greatest, it is *totum intra omnia et totum extra, ac per hoc «est sphaera intelligibilis, cuius centrum est ubique et circumferentia nusquam»* ['totally within all things and totally outside them and thus "is an intelligible sphere whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere"'] (V.8, 337/100). Its simple power both wholly informs and wholly surpasses all things.

Fourth, being itself is *actualissimum et immutabilissimum*, most actual and most unchangeable. What is most actual is pure act. And pure act, having no unrealized potentiality, can neither acquire anything new nor lose anything it has. It therefore cannot be altered (V.7, 336-7/99). While remaining stable itself, it gives motion to all things (*«stabile manens moveri dat universa»*) (V.8, 337/100). While never altering its nature as pure act, it communicates act to all beings. It is the purely actual source of all actualisation. It is then the pure act of being through which all beings become, the act through which they arise, remain, and pass away.

Fifth, being itself is *perfectissimum et immensum*, most perfect and most immense. As pure act and the last end of all things, it is necessarily most perfect, and as most perfect it is that than which nothing greater, nothing more perfect, can be thought: *nihil potest cogitari ultra ipsum melius, nobilius nec dignius, ac per hoc nihil maius; et omne tale est immensum* ['nothing can be thought beyond it better, nobler or more worthy, hence nothing greater; and such a being is immense'] (V.7, 337/99). Because it is most perfect and immense, being itself is *intra omnia, non inclusum, extra omnia, non exclusum, supra omnia, non*

elatum, infra omnia, non prostratum ['within all things, but not enclosed; outside all things, but not excluded; above all things, but not aloof; below all things but not debased'] (V.8, 338/100-1). It is within all things as their origin, support and end, and all that is, insofar as it is, participates in it, but it is not circumscribed or limited by anything, nor is it contained by anything. Rather, as perfect and immense, being itself surpasses all bounds. It is in itself outside and beyond all finite and imperfect beings, outside and beyond all that is, and yet it is not shut out or remote from what-is, since all that is is from it, through it, and in it. It is below all things as their ground and source, their unconditioned condition, but this being below is at the same time being highest of all.

Finally, being itself is *summe unum et tamen omnimodum*, supremely one and yet all-inclusive, containing within itself all modes. It is 'omnimodal' precisely because it is one. What is one is the principle of many; what is supremely one *est omnis multitudinis universale principium* ['the universal principle of all multiplicity'] (V.7, 336/99). It is the greatest universal, the highest and most simple principle of what-is, containing all within itself in a preeminent way. As the supremely simple and all-inclusive principle of being, it is *universalis omnium causa efficiens, exemplans et terminans, sicut «causa essendi, ratio intelligendi et ordo vivendi»* ['the universal efficient, exemplary and final cause of all things as "the cause of being, the basis of understanding and the order of living"'] (V.8, 337/99). As the efficient cause of all things, it is the universal cause of being, the cause that originates being from out of not-being, the act that creates *ex nihilo*. As the exemplary cause of all things, it is that through which anything is intelligible, since things are understood through that which falls first into the intellect. And they are understood in accordance with the rules for their possibility, where these rules, the rules of being, are granted by the unseen source that regulates both understanding and what is understood because it is the cause of both. As the final cause of all things, being itself orders all living. It is that to which all living is oriented, and thus that from which all seeking to be derives its structure. Therefore, being itself is *omnimodum*, not because it is the essence of all things, but because it is the cause, the ground and origin, of all essences (V.7, 337/100). It is *omnia in omnibus*, the one which, never being anything other than one, yet includes within itself the many in that it, as pure being itself, comprehends every

possible perfection of being. As this all-inclusive but simple one, being itself is singular, for while the all-embracing superabundant gives to all, it is, in its unqualified superabundance, wholly unique (V.6, 335-6/97-98).

These, according to Bonaventure, are the essential attributes of being itself, which is absolute being. His analysis concludes:

ac per hoc, ex ipso et per ipsum et in ipso sunt omnia et hoc, quia omnipotens, omnisciens et omnimode bonum, quod perfecte videre est esse beatum, sicut dictum est Moysi: Ergo ostendam tibi omne bonum.

Consequently,
from him, through him and in him
are all things;
for he is
all-powerful, all-knowing and all-good,
and to see him perfectly is to be blessed,
as was said to Moses:
I will show you all good.
(V.8, 338/101)

For Bonaventure, being itself, rightly considered, is divine being, and its attributes are the attributes of God, the attributes of perfect being. And that is also the highest good.

Chapter Six of the *Itinerarium* considers God under the name of the good. At this point, Bonaventure says, the eye of the intellect is to be raised to a 'contuition' of the Trinity (*elevandus est oculus intelligentiae ad contuitionem beatissimae Trinitatis*), since the good itself (*ipsum bonum*) is the principal foundation for contemplating the emanations (VI.1, 338/102). He begins his consideration by evoking the ontological argument. The highest good (*optimum*), which is *simpliciter*, is that than which nothing greater than be thought, and it therefore cannot be thought not to be, since to be is in every way better than not to be (VI.2, 338-9/103). While Bonaventure simply adopts Anselm's original formulation of the argument here, it should still be seen in the context of his own analysis of being and goodness. In Chapter Five, he had claimed that being itself cannot be thought not to be, where being itself is absolute and purely perfect being, that than which nothing greater can be thought and therefore also the good. The being of God is thus not like the being of any finite entity, since it, rightly conceived, excludes all negativity, all potentiality and imperfection. It is this being which, for Bonaventure, cannot be considered not to be in any way, since it excludes all forms of not-being. Whatever may be the flaws of the ontological argument, it is at least important to keep in mind, as Hegel says, largely against Kant, that the arguments for the existence of God are not just inferences, but involve an elevation (*Erhebung*) of thought to the infinite, and that the relation of concept and reality in reference to the infinite is different

than it is in reference to any finite being.'

Most of Chapter Six of the *Itinerarium* is devoted to explicating the claim that the highest good *non potest recte cogitari, quin cogitetur trinum et unum*, that the highest good cannot be thought of rightly, unless it is thought of as three and one. This is because the good, according to the teaching of Dionysius, is said to be self-diffusive (*diffusivum sui*), so that the highest good must be most self-diffusive. The consideration of the highest good as most self-diffusive leads, according to Bonaventure, to the notion of the Trinity (VI.2, 338/103). The contemplation of being itself led to the notion of absolute and perfect being, which is the good. Understood now as the good, absolute and perfect being is not only static but also dynamic. Otherwise it would not be perfect being, and then it would not be the good as that which gives itself of itself, and, in the end, gives rise to beings by giving itself to them.

The good, then, gives itself. It pours itself out, diffuses itself, and the highest good diffuses itself to the highest degree, and thus totally. In so doing, it generates the perfect image of itself, the image in which its being is perfectly and fully expressed, the Word. This Word, the Son, is the knowledge of the infinite power of God the Father. It is the complete expression of being itself, of the essence or nature of God as the infinite ocean of substance. As such, it contains all that may be, the infinity of possible beings. In this Word, the divine being knows itself in its *ratio*, its reason-principle. It expresses and grasps itself in generating the idea of itself. At this point, it grasps itself as an end, and in that grasp it breathes forth the Holy Spirit, the divine will in which all good is contained, and through which it is chosen and realised. The love of the good, therefore, the act in which it expands itself into its emanations *est diffusio per modum Verbi, in quo omnia dicuntur, et per modum Doni, in quo cetera dona donantur* ['is a diffusion by way of the Word, in which all things are said, and by way of the Gift, in which other gifts are given'] (VI.2, 340/104).² In this way, the three persons articulate the unity of the divine essence as 'the cause of being, the basis of understanding and the order of living'. The Father is the power by which the good is effected, the Son is the knowledge by which it is grasped, and the Holy Spirit is the will by which it is chosen.

Thus, Bonaventure, in keeping with the Neoplatonic tradition, combines the conception of the good as diffusive, an efficient cause, with the conception of the good as an end, a final cause.³ He then postulates the

will as the cause of what is realized, in that it is the ground for choosing between what is to be realized and what is not. This point can be clarified through a passage from the *Commentarium in Sententias*:

Ratio autem, quare voluntati attribuitur causalitas, haec est, quia ratio causandi est *bonitas* et in ratione *effectivi* et in ratione *finis*. Nam «bonum dicitur diffusivum», «et bonum est *propter quod omnia*». *Effectivum* autem non fit efficiens in effectu nisi *propter finem*. Illud ergo, quod dicit coniunctionem principii effectivi cum fine, est ratio causandi in effectu; sed voluntas est actus, secundum quem bonum reflectitur supra bonum sive bonitatem: ergo voluntas unit effectivum cum fine.

[The reason causality is attributed to the will is that the ground of causing, both efficient and final, is goodness. For the good is said to be diffusive, and the good is that for the sake of which all things [are and act]. But an efficient cause does not actually produce an effect except for the sake of an end. Therefore, that which expresses the conjoining of an efficient source with an end provides the explanation for causing an effect. But volition is the act in accordance with which a good is turned towards a good, or goodness. Therefore, it is volition that unites an efficient cause with an end.]⁴

As Gilson says, the dual conception of the good as diffusive (efficient cause) and as that for the sake of which (final cause) fixes the two 'poles' of goodness between which the current of will is placed (p. 163).

These three aspects of the good, power, knowledge and will, are not, of course, substantially distinct. There are not three substantially separate goods, but one good communicating its substance entirely in the plurality of hypostases. The substance of the good is not altered in this communication. The power of the good generates knowledge of itself, not of something different. The knowledge of the good is self-knowledge, and the end for the sake of which it acts is itself. The will that is breathed forth, 'spirated', from the power and knowledge of the good is a will towards the good. It is the will by which the good chooses itself, and the highest good is an end in itself. It is an end that produces knowledge of itself, and chooses itself in choosing what is given in that knowledge.

The self-diffusion of the highest good (the greatest self-diffusion) must, Bonaventure claims, be actualis et intrinseca, substantialis et hypostatica, naturalis et voluntaria, liberalis et necessaria, indeficiens et perfecta ['actual and intrinsic, substantial and hypostatic, natural and voluntary, free and necessary, lacking nothing and perfect'] (VI.2, 339/103). It must be actual in that the highest good, diffusing itself to the highest degree, must actually communicate the whole of itself, so that there is no more potentiality in what is produced by the emanation than there is in what emanates. The self-diffusion of the highest good must be intrinsic

in that it must occur 'within' itself, since what is communicated is the whole substance and nature of the good, so that the distinction arising is a distinction within a single substance and nature. The diffusion must be substantial since, if the good did not communicate the whole of its substance, it could not be said to diffuse itself to the highest degree, and therefore it must be hypostatic, a communication of underlying substance and not merely of attributes, and the resulting plurality of hypostases are then consubstantial. It must occur by the nature of the good, and not by anything outside that nature, and yet it must be chosen. It must, consequently, be both necessary and free. The good must diffuse itself of itself, and so necessarily, and yet it must freely choose itself. Finally, its self-diffusion must be complete and perfect. It must be entire, so that what is communicated is the nature of the good as perfect being lacking nothing.

Bonaventure says that these attributes characterize the emanation of the Trinity, in contradistinction to the *diffusio ex tempore in creatura* ['the diffusion in time in creation'], which *non est nisi centralis vel punctalis respectu immensitatis bonitatis aeternae* ['is no more than a center or point in relation to the immensity of the divine goodness'] (VI.2, 339/103). The outpouring of the divine nature in creation is but a point in relation to the total communication of that nature in the emanations, the total self-diffusion of the good. It follows that while the power, knowledge and will of the highest good are reflected in the finite beings that actually come to be, that reflection is an imperfect one. All actual beings are products of the divine efficiency, understanding, and choice; they follow from the self-emanation of the good. They are the manifold temporal expression, the works in time, of the simple eternal act in which the power of the good generates knowledge of itself and gives rise to the will towards itself. They therefore reflect what being itself, as perfect being or the good, the *fontalis plenitudo* (Sent. I, d.27, p. 1, a. un., q. 2; p. 470) is capable of in terms of its efficiency, understanding, and choice. However, in relation to the immensity of the highest good, the vastness of the divine power, knowledge and will, that reflection is a mere shadow.

The last few paragraphs of Chapter Six, the penultimate chapter of the *Itinerarium*, are devoted to considering the person of Christ, in whom the divine and human natures are conjoined, in whom God and man are reconciled: *Nam admirari debemus non solum conditiones Dei essentielles et personales in se, verum etiam per comparationem ad supermirabilem unionem*

Dei et hominis in unitate personae Christi ['For we should wonder not only at the essential and personal properties of God in themselves but also in comparison with the superwonderful union of God and man in the unity of the person of Christ'] (IV.4, 342/106). Having wondered at the dialectical nature of being itself and of the highest good, one should wonder, next, that these are joined with human nature in the paradox of the God-man.

If one is amazed at the essential attributes of the divine being, one should look at the divine man and wonder that in him the eternal is joined with the temporal, the most simple with the most composite, the most actual with the one who suffered most greatly and died (*cum summe passo et mortuo*), the most perfect and immense with the limited and ordinary (*modico*), the supremely one and all-inclusive with a composite individual distinct from others (VI.5, 342/107). In this ideal paradoxical figure, born in the fulness of time, God is formed into man, and man into God. The figure thus expresses the ideal conformity of the divine and human natures. It expresses the reconciliation of the incommensurable, the reconciliation of eternity and time, simplicity and diversity, activity and passivity, perfection and limitation, infinity and finitude. And if human nature is completed only in the attainment of the divine, the figure expresses the necessary, and necessarily paradoxical, condition of its fulfillment.

According to Bonaventure, in the contemplation of Christ, the perfect image of the invisible God, the mind reaches the perfection of its illumination, *videndo simul in unum primum et ultimum, summum et imum, circumferentiam et centrum, alpha et omega, causatum et causam, Creatorem et creaturam, librum scilicet scriptum intus et extra* ['when at the same time it sees united the first and the last, the highest and the lowest, the circumference and the center, *alpha* and *omega*, the caused and the cause, the Creator and the creature, that is, *the book written within and without*'] (VI.7, 343/108). Christ, the mediator between God and man, is the highest image through which the mind may rise to God, the image that presents God in the form of the divine human being, thereby representing God in the highest image of man, and man as the highest image of God. This is the highest form in which the mind is capable of grasping God, the form in which it experiences the most profound, but still mediated, vision of God. Beyond this highest form, the intellect cannot pass, since there is no form beyond this form, and the intellect cannot grasp what has no form.

The final chapter of the *Itinerarium* does speak of a passage though this form, but this passage is a matter for faith and love, and not for the intellect, which must be left behind. Consequently, the chapter is entitled *De excessu mentali et mystico, in quo requies datur intellectui, affectu totaliter in Deum per excessum transeunte* ['On spiritual and mystical ecstasy in which rest is given to our intellect when through ecstasy our affection passes over entirely into God'] (VII, 344/110). The stage of contemplation considered here begins where Chapter Six ends, with the figure of Christ. The intellect can come to this figure, but it cannot penetrate it. The figure is, after all, a paradox. Its mysteries therefore surpass all penetration by the human intellect (*omnem perspicacitatem humani intellectus excedunt*), and, once the mind has reached this figure, it only remains for it to transcend and pass over not only the sense world but also itself by contemplating the paradoxical things that Christ represents (*restat, ut haec speculando transcendat et transeat non solum mundum istum sensibilem, verum etiam semetipsam*) (VI.2, 344/111).

In representing the highest image of man as the highest image of God, the figure of Christ presents the divine *ratio* in which the one and the many, the ideal and the actual, God and creation, are united and reconciled. Through this paradoxical figure, the mind may pass over to the God who contains all things and is yet wholly remote from them. This wholly remote God can only be reached by the way of remotion, by the suspension of all images and all intellectual activity, and, for Bonaventure, by the transference and transformation of the height of the affection into God (*et apex affectus totus transferatur et transformetur in Deum*) (VI.4, 346/113). At this stage, *parum dandum est verbo et scripto, et totum Dei dono* ['little importance should be given to words and to writing, but all to the gift of God'] and *parum dandum est creaturae, et totum creatrici essentiae* ['little or no importance should be given to creation, but all to the creative essence'] (VI.5, 346/113-4). The ecstasis beyond the mind, necessary for reaching what wholly transcends the powers of the mind, is achieved by the will and not by the intellect, by desire rather than understanding. It is achieved by the forgetting of world and self, and by the fire of affection that inflames and carries over to God. In truth, this fire is itself God, and it can only be enkindled by that for which it inflames desire, by God (VI.6, 348/115).

Because what is sought at this point lies beyond all that may be in any way seen or thought, beyond all that may be lit up for the mind, the

ascent to it is an ascent into darkness. It is an ascent into Dionysius' darkness of unknowing, the superluminous darkness beyond the senses and the intellect, beyond sensible and invisible things, beyond all not-being and being, all essence and knowledge (VI.5, 346-7/114-5). Such passing beyond is a dying to all that is; *Quam mortem qui diligit videre potest Deum, quia indubitanter verum est: Non videbit me homo et vivet* ['Whoever loves this death can see God because it is true beyond doubt that *man will not see me and live*'] (VI.6, 348/116). In the absolute transcendence of this death, and only in it, the soul finds what seeks. Here, the *conatus* of the soul find its completion and cessation, its fulfillment and its rest. With this death, then, the soul's journey into God comes to an end.

2. Heidegger's Consideration of Being and Beyond Being.

The main section of Heidegger's *Grundbegriffe* which I wish to consider is entitled *Leitworte für die Besinnung auf das Sein*, 'Guidewords for Reflection on Being'. Near the end of this section, Heidegger guards against any possible misunderstanding of his thought by saying that these guidewords, these sayings, are not meant to announce a particular doctrine or system, or to develop a theory about being. They are not propositions to be passed around as statements about a certain philosophical standpoint or position, but are *Anweisungen zur Besinnung*, directions towards a reflection, and one which, moreover, can be performed at any time and from any situation, and can take different forms without necessarily having to follow the exact course of Heidegger's own words (Gb, 76-7). These words, then, words about being, are suggestions for thought rather than assertions proposing a determinate view of the meaning of being. They are sayings that point out a direction for thinking.

The first of these sayings is: *Das Sein ist das Leerste und zugleich der Überfluß* ['Being is the emptiest and at the same time the overflowing']. Consideration of the 'is' presents, on the one hand, an emptiness in which thought (*Nachdenken*) can find no hold, and, on the other hand, a richness in which the being of beings is pronounced (*sich ausspricht*). Measured against the determinacy of beings, being appears as the most vacuous of all terms, a term eluding definition because empty of any meaning. But that indefiniteness may also appear as a surplus of meaning, a wealth of possibility whose content is unexhausted and inexhaustible by the naming of any number of beings, and an overflowing abundance that dispenses itself to all possible beings, but against whose

measure every being falls infinitely short. Thus: *Das Sein ist das Leerste und zugleich gar der Überfluß, aus dem alles Seiende, das bekannte und erfahrene, aber auch das unbekannte und erst zu erfahrende, beschenkt wird mit der jeweiligen Wesensart seines Seins* ['Being is the emptiest and at the same time the overflowing, from which every being - the known and the experienced, but also the unknown and yet to be experienced - is presented with the specific character of its being'] (Gb, 49). On the one hand, it appears as an empty abstraction, a mere appendage and shadow of beings (Gb, 69), but it also appears as *das, was in jedem Seienden zuerst und überallhin das Wesende bleibt* ['that which remains first and everywhere the essential in every being'] (Gb, 70).

Given this reflection, it would be appropriate to say, with Bonaventure, that being is *simplicissimum et maximum* and *summe unum et omnimodum*, the *fontalis plenitudo* whose nature both includes and surpasses all possible beings, and from which every possible being receives the determinate, and therefore finite, being which it has. For Bonaventure as for Heidegger, this receiving is a kind of being presented or given. The being of beings arises through a self-giving of being which, as the good, diffuses and communicates itself in flowing over into beings. The all-inclusiveness of being is, for Bonaventure as well, a kind of emptiness, the emptiness of being in no way determinate that constitutes the absolute simplicity of being itself. In relation to beings, being itself does appear as a void, and to eyes accustomed to the sight of beings, it looks at first like nothing. Indeed, in a sense, it 'is' nothing, and at the same time it 'is' all, the simple one that includes the many. Eckhart's notion of the *puritas essendi* is helpful here. Being itself is a purity or emptiness of being, but it is from the overflowing (*Üzfließen*) of that very purity that the being of every possible being is granted. The notion of being as *das Leerste*, however, needs also to be set against Bonaventure's saying that *ipsum esse* is not analogous being, which is lesser in actuality and being than the actual being of any finite being. For Bonaventure, the emptiness of being which Heidegger suggests may appear as the emptiness of what Bonaventure calls analogous being, is not the genuine sense of the emptiness of *ipsum esse*, once *ipsum esse* is rightly understood.

The second saying that Heidegger considers runs: *Das Sein ist das Gemeinste und zugleich das Einzige*, 'being is the most common and at the same time the singular or unique'. In every being, being is found *gleichmäßig und unterschiedslos* ['in equal measure and without

distinction']. While beings are distinguished, displaying many orders and ranks, being is common through all. It is the most common, for what all beings have in common is that they are. What all beings have in common is being. But precisely because beings are distinct one from another, each has a like to itself insofar as each is a being. However much beings may differ, they are like to each other insofar as they are all beings. What, though, of being? Das Sein hat nirgendwo und nirgendwie seinesgleichen. Sein ist gegenüber allem Seienden einzig. ['Being nowhere and in no way has its like. In contrast with all beings, being is singular']. Being is wholly unique. It is not a like (*das Gleiche*), for in order to be a like, there must be multiplicity. Something can only be like if there are others to which it is like. Being, however, is überall das Selbe, nämlich, es selbst ['everywhere the same, namely, itself']. It is different in this and this case, but the different (*das Unterschiedene*) is not, in this case, the distinct (*Verschiedenes*), in the sense that it becomes more than one and therefore has its like (Gb, 50-52). Being is differentiated in itself, but it does not thereby become multiple. In other words, the differentiation of being *in sich* is not a multiplication of being *an sich*. Thus, being is singular precisely because it is common; that which is one in all cannot have another to itself to which it is like, and this not having a like is what makes being unique. Being, one could say, is distinguished by indistinction (Eckhart). It is, as Bonaventure says, *summe unum* and yet *omnia in omnibus*, the one which is never other than one, and is yet the simple principle of the many. Present everywhere and within all things, its essence is wholly simple and singular, and it therefore has no equal.

At this point, Heidegger's reflection takes a decidedly Eckhartian turn. He asks, *Aber gibt es nicht noch ein Drittes, das wir außer dem Sein und dem Seienden unterscheiden müssen - das Nichts?* ['But is there not a third, that we must differentiate from being and beings. - nothing?'] (Gb, 52). The question may be dismissed by saying *daß es das Nichts eben nicht gibt*, that nothing is not, so that there is no sense in speaking of a third. However, while nothing is clearly no thing, *kein Seiendes*, since it is the negation of all things,

die Frage bleibt noch, ob das Nichts selbst in der Verneinung des Seienden besteht, oder ob Verneinung des Seienden schlechthin nur eine Vorstellung vom Nichts ist, die das Nichts selbst von uns verlangt, wenn wir es, das Nichts, zu denken uns anschicken. Dann ist also das Nichts zwar nie ein Seiendes, aber gleichwohl »gibt es« das Nichts.

[the question still remains, whether nothing consists in the negation of beings, or whether the complete negation of beings is only a representation of nothing, which

nothing requires of us when we prepare to think of it, of nothing. So then nothing is in truth never a being, but nonetheless 'there is' nothing.] (Gb, 52-3)

Nothing, that is, *west*. It comes to presence and thereby suggests that it is not merely the absence (*Abwesenheit*) and lack (*Fehlen*) of beings. It is not an indifferent nullity (*ein gleichgültiges Nichtiges*), for if it were, how could one understand terror and alarm in the face of nothing? (Gb, 55)

Nothing cannot be said to be in the way that beings are, but:

das Nichts ist uns nichts Nichtiges: Der Schrecken vor der Ver-nichtung und das Entsetzen vor der Ver-wüstung weichen ja zurück vor solchem, was doch wohl nicht gut als bloße Einbildung und als nur Bestandloses angesprochen werden kann.

[nothing is not a nullity for us: horror in the face of an-nihilation and terror in the face of de-vastation shrink back before something which surely cannot be properly addressed as a mere product of imagination and as having no standing at all.] (Gb, 73)

This horror is in the face of what is no thing and wholly other to all things, what is utterly empty, and unique in this emptiness. These characteristics, however - not being a being, being other to beings, and being empty and unique - are all proper to being. Nothing then shows itself as essentially related (*wesensverwandt*) to being, and perhaps even essentially identical (*wesenseinig*): *Ja, vielleicht ist sogar das Nichts das Selbe wie das Sein* ['Indeed, perhaps nothing is even the same as being'] (Gb, 54).

As was demonstrated Chapter Two, nothing, for Eckhart, is the 'other face' of being. It is being, as what stands against all beings, for, in relation to beings, being is nothing. Being and nothing both 'are' the opposite of beings, and both 'occur' as different from beings. God, for Eckhart, is being, but this God is born in the nothing. To find this God, the soul must venture into the *wüste*. It must be bold enough to endure the nameless nothing beyond all beings in order to find what is other to beings, and this requires that it allow all beings to be *vernichtet*, to be made as nothing, in order to become, itself, as it was when it was not. This is a kind of endurance of total an-nihilation.

Bonaventure speaks of an an-nihilation similar to this not in the context of his reflection on being itself, where he speaks only briefly of seeming to see nothing, but in the last chapter of the *Itinerarium*. Here, the soul, seeking the God who is beyond all names, beyond both being and not-being, chooses the death that brings it into the darkness of unknowing, the darkness of absolute nothing. Although this absolute nothing is described as beyond being, the being of which Eckhart and Heidegger speak

is in itself an absolute nothing much like this, and the wilderness into which, according to Eckhart, the soul enters when it passes beyond all names into the simple essence of God appears, in many respects, similar to this Dionysian darkness. 'Is' this darkness not in some sense also being? What the soul finds there is, after all, not simply not. It finds what exceeds it and all beings. The darkness is also an exceeding light, and so could also be described as *das Leerste und das Überfluß*. This absolute other surpasses all conception, Bonaventure says, but then Eckhart, and at times Heidegger, say the same of being.

After all, what *mens* finds at every stage of its ascent is always the same. It does not find one God when it contemplates creatures, another when it contemplates itself, another when it contemplates being, and yet another when it passes beyond all names into the divine darkness. There is only the one God, and the stages of discovery are degrees and varieties of mediation. Thus, the God beyond being 'is' also *ipsum esse*, in which case the journey beyond *esse* might also be seen as a journey into the heart of *esse*, a journey into the darkness at the heart, the innermost essence, of the divine being. In this journey, all that can be named of this being, including *esse* and *bonum*, must be left behind, but perhaps the full truth of *esse* and *bonum* is actually known in this departure, known, that is, in taking leave of the terms. That would suggest that what is to be known in this case is best known by unknowing - a strange thought, but no stranger, and perhaps not so different, from the thought that being and nothing may be the same.

There might also be an ambiguity in Heidegger's reflections on nothing in the *Grundbegriffe* similar to the one previously pointed out in *Was ist Metaphysik?* Nothing, he says, does not need beings, but it does need being. In *Was ist Metaphysik?*, nothing 'grants' the experience of being, the experience that beings are, and are not nothing. In the *Nachwort*, this experience prepares for insight into the vastness of what allows all beings to be, being itself. The reflections on nothing in the *Grundbegriffe* may also suggest that nothing, the confrontation with annihilation and devastation and the ability to endure these, which is the ability to endure the nihilation of nothing in what Scheler calls 'the abyss of absolute nothing', 'clears' *Dasein* for being. It clears *Dasein* for awe or astonishment in the face of the fact that there are beings, and not rather nothing. *Dasein* would then be prepared to experience the immensity of that which brings beings from out of nothing. In this case, nothing and

being would be essentially related but not essentially identical. They would, in fact, be opposites, and it could then be said that nothing occurs in full flight from being, and being in full flight from nothing.

The problem is, this would suggest that nothing does need beings, since one must then, to have the experience of being, experience that beings are, and the experience that beings are obviously requires that there be beings. This reading would then appear to contradict the text, which suggests that the coming to presence of the absolute other in the form of nothing 'is' simultaneously the coming to presence of being as the emptiest and singular, and that these both 'are' apart from beings. Once again, a distinction must be drawn, though, between being qua presencing and being qua what makes presencing possible. Being qua presencing is suspended in nothing and arises from nothing. Nothing is then the source of all presencing, and so in spite of, or because of, its emptiness, it is an overflowing abundance. But this is being itself, not presencing but the hidden source of presencing, that which lets all beings be, the nothingness of which consists not in nonbeing but in being the impenetrably dark origin of beings.

There is a difficulty in saying, though, as I have, that nothing and being 'are' apart from beings. They are found, presented, in taking leave or de-parting from beings, and this leave-taking and departing does uncover what is prior to all beings, although not in a temporal sense. However, the departing de-parts from what-is, and being as the other to what-is and yet its source (being is in a sense inescapably the being of beings) cannot be what it is, the being of beings, without beings.⁵ If this thought is taken into account, it then makes sense to say, as Dionysius, Bonaventure, and Eckhart do say, that to find the 'itself' which has no relation to beings, one must go *beyond being*, into nothing. What 'is' here cannot properly be called source, because it is un-related, and yet it still has to be acknowledged somehow that it is 'from' this un-related *Etwas* that what-is flows, where only in this flowing does the *Etwas* become related; only then does it become the being of beings. The linguistic problems are insurmountable. Even apartness and unrelatedness suggest relation - apart *from*, unrelated *to* - while the *Etwas* in itself has in truth nothing different from it to which it may be related. It is a one without any many, and therefore not even a one. While, then, it may be beckoned to through partially inappropriate expressions, its proper expression can only be silence.

Before going on to discuss the next saying in Heidegger's list, it should be noted that, in pointing out the commonality of being, Heidegger says: *Der Stein ist, und der Baum ist, das Tier ist, und der Mensch ist, die »Welt« ist, und der Gott »ist«* ['a stone is, and a tree is, an animal is, man is, the "world" is, and God "is"'] (50). For Heidegger, being is common to all beings, including God. The scare quotes around 'is' in the case of God indicate an acknowledgment that God is in a different way than other beings are, but the line still makes it clear that God, according to Heidegger, is in some sense a being and not being. Bonaventure, by contrast, says being itself is a name of God. As stated in the introduction to this section, the question of the precise relation between Heidegger's notion of being and Bonaventure's notion of God will be suspended until the present analysis has been completed, but it may be useful to pause at this point to elaborate a little on Heidegger's own views about the medieval conception of God in relation to the question of being. In his 1931 lecture course on Aristotle (*Aristoteles, Metaphysik* θ 1-3: *Von Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Kraft*), Heidegger notes, in a section discussing Aristotle on the analogy of being, that the God of medieval Christian faith is the highest being, the *summum ens*, and that the doctrine of *analogia entis* occurs in medieval thought in the context of the attempt to differentiate the being of this highest being from the being of all creatures, from *ens finitum*. The *analogia entis* is, however, he claims, not a solution to the problem, but only a formula. He then adds:

Der einzige, der die Lösung suchte, Meister Eckhart, sagt: Gott »ist« überhaupt nicht, weil »Sein« ein endliches Prädikat ist und von Gott gar nicht gesagt werden kann. (Dies war freilich nur ein Anlauf, in Eckharts späterer Entwicklung ist er verschwunden, wenn er auch in einer anderen Hinsicht in seinem Denken lebendig geblieben ist.)

[The only one who sought a solution, Meister Eckhart, says: God 'is' not at all, because 'being' is a finite predicate and cannot be attributed to God. (This was admittedly only a preliminary attempt; in Eckhart's later development it disappeared, although, in another respect, it also remained present in his thought).]"

Eckhart, as was pointed out in Chapter Two, claims in the *Parisian Questions* that *esse* does not apply to God, since God is a *puritas essendi*. However, he also says there that it is possible to call this *puritas essendi* 'esse'. *Esse* is then being used in a different sense to the one proper to all finite beings. At other times, Eckhart calls God *ipsum esse*, and says that *esse* belongs properly only to God. But the point here, surely, is still that God, as *ipsum esse*, 'is' in a different way than all *ens finitum*. And the same could be said of Bonaventure's *ipsum esse*.

Heidegger asserts that in the Middle Ages God is the highest being, which must assume the claim that God is a being. But if, in addition to the notion that God is the highest being, it is said that God is being itself, and that the difference between the being of God and the being of creatures is tantamount to the difference between being itself and all finite beings, the situation becomes more complex than Heidegger's account seems to allow. For being itself is then taken as infinite being, which is not a being, except in the extraordinary sense in which being itself can be considered a being, i.e. the sense in which being itself can be said to be. In a sense, it can, since it is not nothing, and in a sense it cannot, since it is not a being. Which is precisely what Heidegger says about being, that it, in a sense 'is' not, and yet, in another sense, only being 'is' (see TK, 43/46).⁷ Therefore, the dismissal of the possibility that God could be considered as being itself, implicit in the notion that God, as the highest being, is in some sense still a being, is not entirely warranted.

The third saying in the course of Heidegger's reflection runs: *Das Sein ist das Verständlichste und zugleich die Verbergung* ['Being is the most understandable and at the same time the concealing'] (Gb, 55). Whatever we may or may not understand about this or that being or region of beings, and there is always something that we do not understand, we nonetheless always understand the 'is'. *Die Verständlichkeit des »ist« im Satze bleibt uns im voraus so vertraut und sicher, daß wir auf sie gar nicht erst besonders achten* ['The understandability of the "is" in a sentence is so familiar and certain to us beforehand that we do not at first pay any attention to at all'] (Gb, 55). If we did not understand this 'is', if we did not have any understanding of being, beings could not be uncovered so as to be either intelligible or unintelligible. Any failure to understand what a being is, is still grounded in the prior understanding that it is, in one way or another. Being here does not equal actually existing. A being may or may not exist, but it still, in some sense, is. Otherwise it could not even be incomprehensible. However much expectations about beings may be frustrated or surprised, what comes to meet them will still retain the continuity of being. At the very least, what comes to meet an expectation about beings can be expected to be. As Heidegger repeatedly emphasizes, then, since all understanding of beings is grounded upon the understanding of being, then, the understanding of being is the condition for the possibility of any understanding of beings at all. *Denn das Sein hat uns sich zugeworfen als das »Licht«, in dem jeweils*

Seiendes als ein Seiendes erscheint ['For being has cast itself to us as the "light", in which every being becomes visible as a being'] (Gb, 88).

Being is therefore first in the order of understanding, for it is understood prior to any understanding, any 'lighting up', of beings. This understanding is not acquired at some time. We do not recall having learned what being 'is' and means (Gb, 58). Rather, *die Verständlichkeit des Seins ist uns, wir wissen nicht, wie und wann, einfach zugefallen* ['the understandability of being has simply fallen upon us, we do not know how or when'] (Gb, 59). Being is what falls first into the intellect, although the intellect usually does not pay heed to this first.

On the other hand,

Wenn wir nun aber eigens sagen sollen, was wir unter dem also »verständlichsten« Sein denn verstehen, das heißt, was wir uns bei dem wort »Sein« denken, und das heißt, als was wir das Sein »begreifen«, dann sind wir plötzlich ratlos. Plötzlich zeigt sich uns: Wir haben für dieses Verständlichste, das Sein, nicht nur keinen Begriff, wir sehen auch nicht, wie wir hier hinsichtlich des Seins noch »etwas« begreifen sollen.

[But when we are now supposed to say specifically what we then understand by this 'most understandable' being - that is, what we think of with the word 'being', and that means what we 'conceive' being as - then we are suddenly at a complete loss. Suddenly we see: We not only have no concept for this most understandable being, but we also do not see how, with respect to being, we are still supposed to conceive 'something'.] (Gb, 59)

When, that is, the intellect first 'looks' to being, this most familiar of all terms, it seems to see nothing. Being, Heidegger goes on to say, draws away (*entzieht sich*) from all conceiving, and in so doing, it removes itself from all determinability (*Bestimmbarkeit*), from any possibility of being revealed (*Offenbarkeit*). Therefore, to being belongs *Sichverbergen*, self-concealing, and *Das Sein selbst »ist« Verbergung* ['being itself "is" concealing'] (Gb, 60). Consequently, being, the most understandable and yet the concealing, is *näher . . . denn jedes Nächste und ferner denn alles Fernste* ['nearer than the nearest and further than the furthest'] (Gb, 93).

As a transcendental, being, in Bonaventure's reflection as well, draws away from any determination, and its movement of drawing away is visible in the paradoxical sayings that arise in pursuit of it. It is within and yet outside and beyond, both the centre and the circumference, everywhere and yet nowhere. It gives itself to the understanding as the closest and most familiar, and yet pulls away from it as the most distant and remote.

The next saying Heidegger takes up is: *Das Sein ist das Abgegriffenste und zugleich der Ursprung* ['Being is the most worn and at the same time the origin'] (Gb, 60). In every comportment towards beings,

we make use (*Gebrauch*) of being, so that through all this usage being is in a way spent, consumed (*verbraucht*). But it is not thereby used up (*ausgebraucht*). Its constant usage does not exhaust it, but it always remains in stock (*vorrätig*), always still available for use. Thus, the perpetual employment of being leaves it wholly untouched (*unangetastet*). Its usage is a matter of indifference (*Gleichgültigkeit*) for it. While it is never conceived (*begriffen*), it is always grasped for use, always worn (*abgegriffen*). As the most customary habit of thought, it is in fact the most worn. But this habit wears incredibly well, indeed so well that it never becomes either worn-out or wearisome. The self-evident (*das Selbstverständliche*) standing always and at every moment in our understanding, being is the coin that grants us every purchase on beings. It is the most worn coin with which we pay for all of our transactions with beings. But we never throw this coin away; we never become tired of it. Even at the extreme point, Heidegger says, in the wish for annihilation, being makes an appearance. It even has the last word, for the wish is not to be. Even here, and especially here, being steps into the light *wie ein Erstmaliges und Unberührtes, aus dem alles Seiende und sogar dessen mögliche Vernichtung noch her stammt* ['as a first and unmoved, from which every being and even its possible annihilation still originates'] (Gb, 61). Being is the spring from which all beings spring forth as what they are. It is the primal spring, *der Ursprung*, the origin (Gb, 62).

It is, again, an inexhaustible source, and even a kind of unmoved mover. Grasped first in every act of understanding, though never comprehended, it, *esse* or being, lets every being be what it is, while remaining in itself unchanged and unmoved. The oldest of the old, it is yet the very latest, and the constant origin of everything new. It communicates itself always and everywhere, but never expends itself or becomes tarnished in any way. And it is prior to all, prior even to negation.

Heidegger then suggests: *Das Sein ist das Verlässlichste und zugleich der Ab-grund* ['Being is the most reliable and at the same time the abyss'] (Gb, 62). His reflection begins with the thought, *wann immer auch und in welcher Weise und in welchem Umfang Seiendes uns fragwürdig wird und unsicher, das Sein selbst bezweifeln wir nicht*. ['however and in whatever way and to whatever extent beings become questionable and uncertain, we never doubt being itself'] (Gb, 62). As Bonaventure says, being itself is the most certain and most indubitable. Through all the changing

uncertainty of beings, Heidegger points out, being is always reliable. For how could we doubt what is in any respect, if what 'being' means (*heißt*) did not remain reliable? (Gb, 62) So being is the always dependable support for every comportment towards beings, even the comportment of doubting. In spite of this firm reliability, however, being is not something that could ever serve as a foundation or ground upon which we could immediately base any of our daily intentions or acts. It refuses every expectation of being able to serve as a reason or ground (*Grund*), and it is therefore *der Ab-grund*, the abyss (Gb, 63).

For Bonaventure, on the other hand, being is the ground of all grounds, the ultimate reason and end of all things, and the final answer to the seeking of beings. As this ultimate end, though, it is a surpassing ground, a reason beyond or behind which thought cannot go. That is to say, it cannot itself be grounded. Being is for the sake of itself, because nothing is for the sake of anything other than being. Being is therefore the all-encompassing and basic end to which all finite ends are ordered, but precisely because it is so common and basic, it could never serve as a *proximate* reason for any finite task or answer to any definite question. As an answer to a definite question, in fact, it is utterly abysmal, because wholly empty and indeterminate. But once again, that indeterminacy can also be seen as infinite possibility.

Das Sein is also, says Heidegger, *das Gesagteste und zugleich die Verschweigung* ['the most said and at the same time the withholding'] (Gb, 63). Because we rely on it in all our dealings with beings, being comes everywhere and constantly to word. Not only is it there whenever we explicitly use some tense of it - e.g. 'is' and 'are' and 'was' and 'will be' and 'has been' - but we name it implicitly in every *Zeitwort*, every verb, and it is co-expressed every time we refer to any entity at all. It is the pre-given (*Vorgabe*) there in every naming of beings, and there even in silent judging about beings and relating to them. Therefore: *Das Sein ist das Gesagteste in allem Sagen, weil Sagbares nur im Sein zu sagen ist* ['Being is the most said in all saying, because the sayable can only be said within being'] (Gb, 63). This does not mean that the essence of being lies unveiled before us. On the contrary, the most said in all saying is nonetheless silent about its essence. It is *die Verschweigung seines Wesens* ['the withholding of its essence']. But it is from the essential silence (*wesende Schweigen*) of being that every word originates and must originate, insofar as it breaks this silence. Therefore, being, as the

withholding, is also the origin of speech (Gb, 64).

Given that speech is not just a matter of uttering sounds, but of articulating the intelligible, what is the basis of speech must also be the basis of intelligibility. For Bonaventure, that is being itself. As what falls first into the intellect, through which all things are understood, being is the presupposition for all speaking insofar as it is the presupposition for all understanding. It must then be articulated in any utterance, but this does not mean that it is understood in itself. Rather, as the unity of the divine essence, it must always remain hidden, for that essence, the simple yet infinite ocean of substance, exceeds all understanding. It must then also exceed every form of (human) expression, for such expression is always manifold and finite, while the divine essence is one and infinite. Consequently, while every true statement expresses that essence, expresses being and presupposes it, being itself remains unspoken. The word arises from what cannot be uttered.

The penultimate saying presented by Heidegger is, *Das Sein ist das Vergessenste und zugleich die Erinnerung* ['Being is the most forgotten and at the same time the recalling'] (Gb, 65). The comparison with Bonaventure on the first of these characteristics is obvious, and has already been suggested. Intent on particular and universal being, Bonaventure says, the mind's eye does not turn to being itself, even though it comes to our minds first and through it we know other things. Heidegger's point is much the same:

Immer deutlicher wird uns, wie das Sein überall das Nächste in allen Bezügen zum Seienden bleibt, und daß das Sein doch zugleich ganz Übergangen wird zugunsten des Seienden, an dem alles Wollen und Wissen seine Erfüllung sucht. Kein Wunder, daß wir das Sein über dem Seiendem und seinem Andrang vergessen, nämlich als solches, was noch irgendeiner Besinnung würdig wäre.

[It becomes ever clearer, how being remains the nearest in all relations to beings, and is yet at the same time completely passed over in favour of beings, from which all willing and wishing seek their fulfillment. No wonder, that, against beings and their crush, we forget being as anything worthy of reflection.] (Gb, 65)

Being is the most forgotten. And yet, if it were not also in some way constantly remembered, it would not be possible to come across any being, including ourselves. Being is what allows beings to enter into us, and enables us to be among beings. It allows us to call beings to mind and to be called into their midst; *das Sein er-innert uns in das Seiende und an das Seiende* ['being recalls us to and into beings'] (Gb, 66). All that is encountered, whether experienced as present, past or future, is and remains manifest through *die Er-innerung des Seins* ['the recalling of being'].

Heidegger distinguishes this thought from Plato's doctrine of *anamnesis* by saying that, for Plato, *anamnesis* means that we recollect something. Being, on the other hand, is not an object (*Gegenstand*) that we can recall, but is itself *das eigentlich Erinnernde* ['the authentically recalling'] (Gb, 66). Being, the nearest and yet the furthest, is what allows all beings to come close.

According to Bonaventure, the intellect tends not to 'see' being itself because it is generally lost among beings. But if being is the condition for the possibility of any understanding of beings, it could not be thus lost if being were not always, in some way, present to it, since it is through the presence of being to the intellect that beings may be presented to it. It might be thought that the parallel between Bonaventure and Heidegger at this point is offset by an apparent intellectualism on the part of Bonaventure. Heidegger's talk of the awareness, the becoming inward (*innewerden*), of beings through the recalling or 'innering' (*Er-innerung*) of being is linked to the observation that *das Sein geht uns an* (Gb, 65), that being is an issue for us, that it, and therefore beings, matter. The coming close of beings, their being presented and stepping into the open, is a function of this 'mattering'. But the lostness of *mens* among beings is, for Bonaventure too, nothing merely intellectual. It is also a concerned dispersal. Insofar as being is at the same time the good, it is that which matters most, and all finite beings, all finite goods, are dependent upon it. Being, after all, the end and consummation of beings, is that for which all beings long.

The remembrance of being, for Heidegger, the becoming aware of it as opposed to constantly overlooking and forgetting it, means letting it come close in the way that beings are usually close. It does not mean a mere lifting into consciousness as an object of representation, but a being taken into the midst of, a being transported into:

Das Seins innewerden, besagt . . . etwas anderes als der Versuch, das Sein ins Besußtsein zu heben. Vollends ist dies Innewerden kein verlorenes Vorstellen dessen, was man sich bei dem »Begriff« von »Sein« im ungefähren denkt und nicht denkt. Das Sein begreifen, heißt den »Grund« begreifen. Be-greifen heißt hier »inbegriffen werden« im Sein vom Sein.

[To become aware of, to become inward to being, means . . . something other than the attempt to raise being to consciousness. This becoming aware of is altogether different from any vain representing of what one usually thinks, and does not think, with the rough 'concept' of 'being'. To conceive, to take in being, means to conceive or take in the 'ground'. Taking in means here 'being taken in', 'being included' in being by being.] (Gb, 93)

The ascent of *mens* to being itself is also a being taken into being, a

being taken up into that which is the ground, the foundation, reason and end, of all. It does not mean representing an object, since being cannot be an object, nor does it mean forming a concept in the usual sense, since being cannot be appropriately captured by a concept. It is, instead, a being raised to the vision of that which is present everywhere, and in which *mens* must in a way already be included.

However, for Heidegger, the remembrance of being involves a historical reminiscence. Within his thought, the *Anfang* to be recalled is best recalled in its historical beginning, so that the return to being as ground involves a return to a historical source. For Bonaventure, on the other hand, while being is the source of time and therefore has to be in some way the source of history, it is not itself historical in the way that it is for Heidegger. The remembrance of being, for Bonaventure, is truly a remembrance of what is everywhere and at all times the same, and may be recalled as the same at any point. While Heidegger does say that being is *das Selbe*, and that reflection upon it can occur anytime and anywhere, and while his reflection on the historical beginning is nonetheless a reflection on what is in truth always and at all times original, his attempt to search out the genuine sense of being by returning to its earliest conception (the second part of *Grundbegriffe* is a reflection on Anaximander) involves a historical understanding and approach quite foreign to a medieval thinker, as I have often already emphasized.

The final saying in Heidegger's reflection, *Das Sein ist das Verzwingendste und zugleich die Befreiung* ['Being is the most compelling and at the same time the freeing'], also raises points that have been taken up previously, since both of these characteristics of being can be found, in one form or another, in many of Heidegger's other works. For instance, the compelling yet freeing character of being is implicit in the notion of being as the overpowering power which clears a place for its own revealing in 'sending' the 'Da' of Dasein. Here in the *Grundbegriffe*, Heidegger says that, since it is being that lets every being be a being, every being, however it may concern and affect us, remains infinitely behind and under the compulsion of being. All beings are bound to the surpassing necessity of being, so being is the most compelling. On the other hand, we do not 'feel' the compulsion of being; we feel only the press and urgency of beings. Being is as if it were not there, as nothing. We are played about (*umspielt*) and played through (*durchspielt*) by it as by something inexperiencable. *Aber dieses Spiel hat in allem stets doch die einzige*

Eindeutigkeit des Einzigen ['But this play has yet constantly and in all things the single unambiguity of the singular']. For it is being that transposes us into the openness of the *Da* in which being may be differentiated from beings, and beings one from another. Being is itself the opening (*Öffnende*) that first grants the openness (*Offene*) of the 'there' in which being and beings come to presence (Gb, 67-8).

With Bonaventure's comments in mind, it could be said that being itself is the simple and single surrounding of beings. It is the all-powerful power that permits, sustains and rules over the being of all that is. Heidegger also says that *die Versetzung in das Sein ist die Befreiung in die Freiheit* ['the transposition into being is the freeing into freedom'], where *diese Befreiung allein ist das Wesen der Freiheit* ['this freeing alone is the essence of freedom'] (Gb, 68). It will be recalled that being itself, for Bonaventure (following Augustine), is not only the cause of being and the basis of understanding, but also 'the order of living'. As final cause, and therefore the good, being itself is what orients and structures the progress of all beings. Clearly, the way it does so must be different for beings that cannot see the good themselves, and for the being that can. If being and the good are same, the being that can recognise the good and take over its own progress towards it must be the one that knows being. In that case, the falling of being into the intellect must also be the source for the possibility of the free choice of the good, for freedom in general. This point has already been addressed in a certain form in the comparison of Tauler and Heidegger.

That concludes Heidegger's *Leitworte für die Besinnung auf das Sein*. This section of the *Grundbegriffe* is intended as a preparation for the reflection on Anaximander that follows it. It is worth going on to examine that reflection briefly for the light it sheds on how the overpowering, constant and selfsame character of being may be conceived, given that these characteristics are essential to Bonaventure's notion of *ipsum esse* as a name of God. Before doing so, however, it may be advisable to ask, for the sake of clarity regarding the aims of this examination, what the 'may be' in the question of how being 'may be conceived' is supposed to mean. May be conceived by whom, and when, for instance? Heidegger's discussion is a reflection on Anaximander, and it offers suggestions as to how being was conceived in early Greek thought. It thereby also offers a suggestion as to how being may be conceived in general. In so doing, it presents a possibility of being that could hold

promise for the future. This possibility is presented partly in opposition to the way being has been conceived in the metaphysical tradition, where it has been involved with the notion of God, and where, according to Heidegger, it has tended to be thought of as permanent presence. Before 'comparing' - in the sense of setting up a dialogue between - the possible sense of being which Heidegger presents and Bonaventure's notion of being as *ipsum esse*, the question needs to be posed: In what relation does the former stand to the latter, or rather, in what way are these to be related, in light of the task that the present study has set for itself?

As stated in the Introduction, that task is: to search for possibilities of 'God' through a dialogue between Heidegger and a number of figures in a certain strand of medieval thought, and it is this task that determines the way in which the sense of being presented by Heidegger in his reflection on Anaximander is to be related to the sense of Bonaventure's *ipsum esse*. The question of what is the same and what is different in Bonaventure's conception and that of [Heidegger's] Anaximander, therefore, is ordered to this end. In view of the characteristics of being mentioned above, overpowering, constant and selfsame, the question then is: How may these be thought in a way that is phenomenologically *angemessen*, a way that fits the phenomena and does not distort them, if they are taken as being essential to the *ipsum esse* which may be (has been in the past and in some [transformed] form might be in future) called God? The dialogue being set up between Bonaventure and Heidegger at this point is meant to offer some suggestions in response to this question.

This is not simply a matter of reckoning up what Bonaventure says and setting it against what Heidegger says about Anaximander in some purely historicist 'compare and contrast' fashion, but of thinking through what needs to be thought, *die Sache selbst*, if you like, in the light of what these thinkers say. This requires asking not only what Bonaventure says but also what his statements about *ipsum esse* demand and entail, even when he does not explicitly bring those demands and entailments into view, in which case the question of whether or not he actually 'sees' them remains an open one. For instance, if being is the same which may be conceived differently, then how is the sameness of this same to be adequately conceived, given radical historical change and process, including even changes in the conception of being? How is it 'rightly' conceived, in a way that rights itself by the phenomena and is therefore right to them, in accordance with them? How must being 'be', as the overpowering, the

constant and the selfsame? Is permanent presence the best way of conceiving its constancy? Moreover, if it is said that Bonaventure conceives being itself, and therefore God, as permanent presence, how may he think such permanent presence? This means: 1) how may he have actually thought it, where this is not immediately and unambiguously apparent from what he says, and 2) how might he think it, given what a dialogue between his thought and Heidegger's reflection on Anaximander brings to light concerning the matter at issue? These are the questions guiding the following examination.

Because of what may be presupposed from previous discussions, there is no need here to follow through the whole course of Heidegger's analysis. Instead, I will go straight to a passage near the end of the *Grundbegriffe*:

Denn das Selbe, von woheraus das Hervorgehen auf und wohin zurück das Entgehen eingeht, dieses Selbe ist die nötigende Not . . . Dieses Selbe und in seiner Notwendigkeit Eine und in seiner Einheit Einzige und in seiner Einzigkeit Anfängliche ist der *Anfang*. Der *Anfang* ist als die Verfügung über die Anwesenung des jeweilig Anwesenden das Wesen der Anwesenung: das Sein selbst.

[For the same, from which coming-forth arrives and into which passing-away goes back, this same is the need which compels . . . This same and in its necessity one and in its oneness singular and in its singularity initial is the beginning. The beginning, as the ordering over the presencing of what is present at any time, is the essence of presencing: being itself.] (Gb, 117)

Being is presencing, *Anwesenung*, which is lingering awhile, *Verweilung* (Gb, 121). But this lingering awhile, as the *Übergang*, the transition or crossing-over between coming-forth and passing-away, 'includes' both of these dimensions as well: *Der Übergang ist je die Anwesenung, in der das Hervorgehen und das Entgehen zumal wesen*. ['The transition is in each case presencing, in which coming-forth and passing-away especially come to presence'] (Gb, 120). This idea will already be familiar from the discussions of Heidegger on early Greek thought, and on the relation between being and time. What Heidegger specifically says here is, in fact, quite similar to what he says in the 1946 *Der Spruch des Anaximander*.

Being, as presencing, is not merely the being presently present of the while, is not mere persistence in the while, but is the process of coming to be and passing away, presenc-ing. The necessity, unity, uniqueness and initiality of being itself lie in the way these characteristics may be thought in application to presencing, as the arising, enduring and departing of beings. There is, then, as one would expect from Heidegger, an essential relation between being and time, where

the temporality of being has to be thought in terms of the temporal character of presencing in relation to that of present beings. While present beings come to be, linger and pass away, presencing has a certain steadiness. It does not itself come to be or endure or pass away, and is, in this sense, always and at all times the same. This steadiness and sameness constitute its unity and uniqueness. Furthermore, presencing is disposed over by a need which compels, where that need is not something external to it, but is the manner of its happening, the way in which *die Anwesenung* *west*, the way it sends every being that comes to presence and departs into the apportioned portion of its while. This disposing over and ordering (*Verfügung*) is being as *archē*, the first which originates not in the manner of bringing about and then departing, but as a constant holding sway. The necessity and initiality of being are to be thought from this sense of *archē*.

Being as *archē* is also *apeiron*. This term is usually translated as 'the limitless', but Heidegger translates it as *die Verwehrung der »Grenze«*, the refusal of limit, where 'limit' means the closing off of presencing in some final and conclusive presence (*Anwesenheit*), in the subsistence (*Beständigkeit*) of a mere presence (Gb, 114). Being as *apeiron* is infinite in the sense that presencing prevents beings from stiffening into subsistence. This prevention belongs to the ordering of being, which occurs as a surmounting of the disorder of beings, their tendency to stiffen so as to resist dissolution. But this ordering of presencing, as what sends to beings the presence of their while, is also a *Wehrung*, a preserving and protecting, of limit. The ordering of being both sends and refuses limit. It is in this sense that the 'infinite' essence of being is to be thought, as well as its character of determining the essence, the coming to presence, of all limited, all bounded or finite, beings.

It is illuminating to link what Heidegger says here in commenting upon Anaximander with some elements in his analysis of the being of Dasein in *Sein und Zeit*, and especially with respect to the character of being as superior power, which, Heidegger claims, determines the sense of being as the holy and is therefore connected with divinity and God (see MAL, 211, n.3/165, n.6). Since the analysis of the being of Dasein was meant to be preparatory to the task of working out the sense of being, one can ask how the sense of being as an overpowering ordering suggested in this commentary on Anaximander might be 'rooted' in the being of Dasein, in Dasein's understanding of its own being as worked out in *Sein und Zeit*.

There is a clear connection here with Dasein's thrownness and facticity. Dasein is thrown into its *Da*; nobody asks it whether it wants to come forth or depart, or whether it wishes to linger in the while of its own specific while. Nobody asks it if it wants to be Dasein, if it wants to be this being that has 'to be', this being that has to take over being the ground of itself, and thus take over the being (the coming to presence and becoming, the coming to exist which is always finite and determinate) of the ground. Given what such being involves, a *Wesen*, if asked, might well prefer not to ek-sist, might prefer *nicht zu wesen*, as it were, but to remain invisible and dim in the darkness of the ground.²³ And if thrown Dasein happens to inquire about its thrownness, if, given to be there, it asks, what gives? the answer, for Heidegger, can only be being itself, or the the *Es* of *Es gibt Sein* which throws a present being into the place allotted to it, and which, in so doing, holds sway over the totality of its being (becoming) in its past, present and future, and so over the fulness of its time.

Moreover, the self-constancy of Dasein in *Sein und Zeit* consists in the steadiness of becoming, rather than in achieving any final stage. It is this steadiness, the steadiness of constantly originating new forms, that constitutes Dasein's being. And Dasein determines the actualization, the concrete coming to presence, of these forms by choosing to realize a finite set of possibilities. These are chosen from the greater, but still finite, set that it might actually choose. Although it stands in a dim relation to infinity, Dasein, being factual and therefore determinate, can only choose from the limited set of possibles available in its concrete situation. These are not all compossible; otherwise there would be no need for, and no value in, making a choice. If Dasein's understanding of the being of beings is rooted in its understanding of its own being, then one can see how the analysis of Dasein's being on these points links to the analysis of being in the commentary on Anaximander. The steadiness of being consists in the steadiness of *Anwesenung*, of the process of coming to presence. This process is itself not bounded. Its unbounded, in-finite, nature consists, rather, precisely in refusing any final fixity. But determinate realisation, and all realisation is necessarily determinate, requires limitation. The actual form that comes to presence, the *Wesen* that *weset*, involves the 'choosing' or the picking out of a finite set of possibilities from the infinite set that belongs to being as ground, to what has sometimes been described as the infinite sea of substance.

Finally, as suggested in Chapter Four, Dasein's authenticity consists in willingness for the way, in being willing to become what it may be, and that means in being constantly willing to take leave of what it is and has been, to surmount the actual towards the possible. Dasein's dim relation to infinity rests in the 'towards' of this being towards possibility. Furthermore, it is through this willingness, which includes willingness to be there in the way that is given to it, 'settled in advance' (*destinatum*) for it, that Dasein achieves authentic being with others. It is, then, in the surmounting of fixity, the resistance of finality, that Dasein achieves the genuine order of its being. Being as *Anwesenung* orders by surmounting the disorder of beings that lies in their tendency towards fixity, their tendency towards *bloßes Beharren*. Thus, the authentic *Seinkönnen* to which Dasein's own being attests points to the truth of the being of beings, its true nature as *Anwesenung*.

Bonaventure conceives of being itself as a pure presence that enters into all limited being present, all finite duration, and this notion of being is connected with its sense as a pure and self-identical act. He also claims that being itself is all-powerful and the infinite cause of every finite essence. Keeping in mind what was said about the questions guiding the present examination, it can now be asked, how may these characteristics of being be conceived in light of what Heidegger says about Anaximander? The answer has, for the most part, already been indicated. Pure presence would be understood as the peculiar steadiness of presencing, a steadiness which Heidegger especially seems to acknowledge in his later works, in, for instance, his characterisation of the event of appropriation in *Zeit und Sein*.⁹ The pure and self-identical act of being would then be construed as this act of presencing, as coming to presence itself, which, in itself, is everywhere and always *das Selbe*. Its all-powerful character would consist in its being the overpowering power that allots the locations of beings. And it would be the infinite cause of all finite essences in the sense that it would be the inexhaustible source of beings, the original boundlessness which reveals its essence as origin by sending the boundaries to beings and holding sway over them, and which reveals its essence as the boundless by refusing any final *Grenzung*, where the sense of both of these revelations must be thought temporally. Being itself, as the unlimited, the in-finite, would then reveal its essence precisely by withdrawing it, by holding itself back from any conclusive delimitation. Different conceptions of being might

then themselves belong to the finite presencing of its own inexhaustible essence.

But does Bonaventure 'mean' this? Or, for that matter, does Anaximander even 'mean' this? These are not easy questions to answer. In the end, I remain not wholly convinced by Heidegger's assessment of the forgetting of being in the metaphysical tradition, and also unconvinced about the accuracy of his retrievals, the accuracy, that is, of his attempt to recover an 'original' (meaning more than just historically early) sense of being by going back to early Greek thought. Nonetheless, his own commentary in the *Grundbegriffe*, whether it is 'right' about Anaximander or not, is decidedly illuminating about the sense of being, about how certain characteristics of being may be thought in a way that is *angemessen* to the phenomena, which also means a way that is just to the things of time and number. Insofar as Bonaventure's sayings about *ipsum esse* include such characteristics, Heidegger's analysis helps to point out what is demanded by them, demanded, that is, in view of the present situation, and that means in view of what it will now be authentically possible to think, given an honest appropriation of what past thought has brought to light. Justice to the things of time and number, to the value - indeed, the holiness - of life and becoming must be central to this demand. But, as should be clear from the discussion of Bonaventure on delight in Chapter One, it is by no means obvious that Bonaventure's thought is wholly unjust on this point, and it certainly is not so in anything like the manner or measure which is arguably characteristic of a good deal of Western philosophy and theology.

It is important that Heidegger does say that we are only granted access to Anaximander's saying because, however distant it may be historically, it does not concern something wholly foreign, but something that is always close and therefore, in a way, already familiar:

Wäre es nur Inhalt einer längst entschwundenen Lehre, dann müßten wir jede Hoffnung auf ein Wissen fahren lassen. Aber in dem Spruch ist ja das Sein selbst das Gesagte, und dieses, das Sein, bleibt uns das Übernahe, das alle Nähe des Seienden übertrifft. Also muß im Befremdlichsten noch ein Wink in Vertrautes aufbewahrt bleiben.

[If it were only the content of a long vanished doctrine, then we would have to give up all hope of understanding. But in the saying, what is spoken of is being itself, and this, being, remains the most near, surpassing all the nearness of beings. Thus, in the strangest there must still remain preserved a hint leading into what is familiar.] (Gb, 111)

What is being spoken of is something that we already 'know', something in

which we stand insofar as we are what we are. The *Sache* is not distant. Instead, it is so near that even talk of nearness is misleading:

Das Sein ist das Übernahe. Jede Rede davon, es sei nahe und am nächsten, hat es schon entfernt, da auch die nächste Nähe schon wesentlich den Abstand einschließt. Das Sein steht nie von uns ab, weil es das ist, worin wir verstezt sind.

[Being is the surpassingly near. All talk of it which says that it is near and right next to us has already distanced it, since even the nearest nearness still essentially involves a standing apart. Being never stands apart from us, because it is that into which we are transposed.]

(Gb, 102)

The return to the beginning is still a return to what is nearest, what cannot be far from anyone because anyone who is stands within it. Of course, it may be misunderstood and even wholly forgotten, as Heidegger often claims it has been in the Western metaphysical tradition. On the other hand, if it is the nearest of the near, the possibility of being awake to it in an appropriate way, the possibility of being authentically aware of that within which all thinking, saying and doing occur, cannot be wholly closed off to anyone at any time, to anyone, that is, who is willing to heed the call: *Sei inständig im Sein! Innestehen im Sein!* ['Be insistent in being. Stand within being.'] (Gb, 102).

Still, in the *Beiträge*, written a few years earlier than the *Grundbegriffe*, Heidegger does claim quite unambiguously that the sense in which metaphysics, during the long course of its history from Anaximander to Nietzsche, understands the being of beings constitutes a forgetting of being (B, 424). In this history, according to the *Beiträge*, being means beingness (*Seiendheit*), and, as such, it is a *nachträgliche Gattung* (B, 258), a later category added on to what-is. What Heidegger means by being as beingness at this point, however, is what in the Middle Ages was understood as analogical being, and it is from this being that Bonaventure explicitly differentiates the *ipsum esse* which, for him, is God. While much of what Heidegger says in this earlier work is explicitly opposed to many of the metaphysical determinations of being in Bonaventure's account, as well as to some of the suggestions for what being may mean in the *Grundbegriffe*, the opposition is not a simple one, and can just as easily be seen as a retrieval of a sense of being where it is not a shadowy general category, but the simple and unique source of all that is. Where this sense is understood, the metaphysical determinations themselves may be meant in a different way than they are when being is an empty abstraction from beings, what Bonaventure understands as analogous being.

In the *Beiträge*, Heidegger claims that the forgetting of being

consists in the reduction of it to the most general and empty, to the beingness of beings (B, 112), and he rejects a number of metaphysical characteristics that have been attributed to it on the basis of this interpretation. Thus, while in the *Grundbegriffe* he suggests, for reflection, that being is both the emptiest and most common, and the richest and highest, he says in the *Beiträge* that it is the richest and highest rather than the emptiest and most common (B, 118). However, in saying that being is not the most common attribute and emptiest determination of what-is (B, 258), he means that the simplicity of being is not emptiness but the ground of fullness (B, 471). The simple (*das Einfache*) is not the merely empty - it is not empty in the manner of analogous being - but is the inexhaustible which is never exhausted, *das un-erschöpfliche Unerschöpfte* (B, 137). Heidegger also says that being is not the greatest being which causes (*verursachte*) and in one way or another encompasses (*umfaßte*) all other beings (B, 258). But this includes rather than excludes the notion that, in overcoming the misinterpretation of the simple as the empty, *das Einfache, in dem sich alle Wesung gesammelt hat, muß wiedergefunden werden in jeglichem Seienden, nein, dieses in jenem* ['the simple, in which all coming to presence has gathered itself, must be found again in every being, no, ever being in it'] (B, 278). Likewise, that being is not a cause (*Ursache*) or *ratio* means that, being unrepresentable, it cannot be represented in such terms, but it is nonetheless to be experienced and thought as simultaneous with beings as their ground (*Grund*) (B, 288-9). Being should never be made common, says Heidegger, *und doch west es, wo und wann es west, näher und inniger denn jegliches Seiende* ['and yet it comes to presence, where and when it comes to presence, more nearly and more inwardly than any being'] (B, 260). That being is not the most common and familiar then does not exclude this nearness. It only means that being is not the universal category which thought extends to all things, but is the unique and strange which comes to presence in all things (B, 177).

Bonaventure, it is clear, uses many of the terms that Heidegger rejects here, but it is much less clear that he means them in the sense that Heidegger rejects, since what Bonaventure says about being does not seem to be unequivocally oriented to beingness. Heidegger thinks, at least in this work, that metaphysical conceptions necessarily falsify the nature of being. But is it so obvious that to say, for instance, that being is not an all-encompassing cause but a simple and most inward

ground is utterly different from saying, as Bonaventure well might, that it is an all-encompassing cause, but that this is a hard saying whose terms must not be understood as they are when used in reference to finite entities? It is not so obvious to me. Because of such questions, Heidegger's interpretation of the history of philosophy as the history of the forgetting of being, where no element in anyone's thought is excluded from this forgetting, or even thought to be difficult and uncertain with respect to it, is not obvious, either. This study is concerned primarily with medieval mystical theology, but this point could be extended to the thought of many figures within the tradition. As I have said before, that does not mean Heidegger is simply wrong in his account of the history of metaphysics. I only want to suggest that the story may be more complex than he implies.

In all that has been said so far, the one attribute of *ipsum esse* to which nothing has been seen to correspond precisely and explicitly in the course of Heidegger's reflection on *das Sein selbst* is perfection, although one might say that Dasein's relation to the infinite through its relation to being is implicitly a relation to perfection. This was suggested in the last chapter. Still, given that no explicit notion of being as perfect has as yet emerged in this chapter, and given that perfection is utterly essential to Bonaventure's attribution of divinity to *ipsum esse*, and therefore essential to any conception of God that purports to be similar to his, it must be concluded that no such conception has been presented so far. What has been presented may be similar in many ways to what Bonaventure calls *ipsum esse*, but if the attribute of perfection were excluded from *ipsum esse*, Bonaventure would be unlikely to identify this *esse* with God. This is the issue to which I will now turn in discussing Heidegger's notion of the good.

To begin with, although in past chapters some suggestions have been offered about the place in Heidegger's thought of what may be called the good, it must be acknowledged that Heidegger does not have a notion of the good in the same sense as he has a notion of being. That is, he does not usually talk explicitly about the good in the way that he does about being. However, the *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik* ends:

Zum Wesen des Seins gehört wesentlich Grund. Mit der konkreten Einsicht in diesen metaphysischen Zusammenhang habe ich Sie lediglich dahin zurückgeführt, wo Plato stand, als er die Sätze im »Staat« schrieb (Pol. VI, 509b 6-10), mit denen ich schließe . . . 'Und so mußt du sagen: für das erkannte Seiende und mit ihm ist nicht nur zugleich anwesend das Erkennen, anwesend nämlich aufgrund des Guten (das Gute verschafft dem Seienden nicht nur die Erkenntheit und daher den Welteingang), sondern auch das

Sein und das Wassein ist dem Seienden zugewiesen durch jenes (nämlich das Gute). Das unwillen aber (die Transzendenz) ist nicht das Sein selbst, sondern was es überschreitet, und zwar indem es das Seiende an Würde und Macht überschwingt.'

[Ground belongs essentially to the essence of being. With concrete insight into this metaphysical connection I have only led you back to where Plato stood when he wrote the sentences in the *Republic* . . . with which I close . . . 'And so you must say that knowing is not only present for and with known beings, present namely on the basis of the good (the good establishes for beings not only knownness and thereby world-entry) but also being and being-a-what is assigned to beings from that (namely the good). The for-the-sake-of, however, (transcendence) is not being itself, but surpasses being, and does so inasmuch as it outstrips being in dignity and power.' (MAL, 284/219)

In some way, then, this work, composed one year after the first publication of *Sein und Zeit*, involves a retrieval and repetition of Plato's idea of the good, *agathon*, which is beyond being, *epekeina tes ousias*. In that case, an examination of what is said in it should yield further insight into the position of the good in Heidegger's own thought. This examination will then, in conjunction with what has already been said in previous chapters, help to lay a foundation for relating Heidegger and Bonaventure on this issue.

I will confine myself to §§11-14 of this work, which form a section entitled *Das Problem des Grundes*. §11 discusses *Transzendenz*, and helps to clarify what was said about this concept in *Sein und Zeit*. On pp. 211-13 (English 165-7), Heidegger makes the following four points about transcendence:

1. Transcendence is the primordial constitution of the subjectivity of a subject. It belongs to the essence of *Dasein*, and is that on the basis of which *Dasein* can relate itself to beings.
2. Transcendence does not mean crossing the barrier of an inner realm in which the subject is confined. It means crossing over, surpassing (*Überschreiten*) the being itself which can become manifest to the subject. It is through this surpassing in advance that beings come to stand against *Dasein* so that they can be apprehended. In this surpassing of beings, transcending *Dasein* is beyond nature. As transcending, and that means as free, *Dasein* is something alien (*Fremdes*) to nature.
3. That 'towards which' (*»Wohin«*) the subject transcends is not an object or being, since these are surpassed in transcendence, but is the *world*.
4. Because transcendence is the basic constitution of *Dasein*'s being, and therefore primordial, and because this being crosses over to a world, *Dasein*'s transcendence is designated as being-in-the-world.

What these points suggest about the nature of transcendence and world is

familiar from *Sein und Zeit*, and repeated in *Vom Wesen des Grundes*. Entities within the world are disclosed to Dasein on the basis of Dasein's surpassing of them, where what Dasein surpasses towards are possibilities of its own being. Dasein is 'beyond nature' because it, transcending, is beyond the actual in existing towards the possible.

In order to be towards the possible, Dasein has to be free. It is through freedom, therefore, that Dasein surpasses, and what it surpasses is not just beings other than itself, but also, in a sense, itself. It surpasses itself as actual, as what has been achieved so far, and it is precisely through this surpassing of itself as actual and towards itself as possible that Dasein is truly itself, a free being. In its surpassing of itself, the abyss (*Abgrund*) that Dasein is for itself, the abyss of possibilities which it may choose in its coming to be, is opened up (MAL, 234/182).

World, as that towards which Dasein transcends, is connected with these possibilities. It is therefore not the totality of the actual, but is 'beyond' all actual beings, and because it determines the way beings are uncovered in their being, because it determines the way beings are, the being of beings is manifest in the light of this 'beyond'. The nature of transcendence indicated here is, according to Heidegger, visible in Plato's idea of the good, which is even beyond beings and the realm of ideas. This idea, Heidegger claims, is the *ou évexα*, that for the sake of which and because of which something is or is not, and is so or otherwise. The idea of the good, as *das Umwillen*, transcends the totality of ideas and at the same time organises them in their wholeness, and *Welt als das, woraufhin Dasein transzendiert, ist primär bestimmt durch das Umwillen* ['world, as that to which Dasein transcends, is primarily defined by the for-the-sake-of-which']. Since the surpassing projection of a for-the-sake-of-which is only possible for a being that can transcend the actual towards the possible, a being, that is, which can project its own being as possible and on this basis can project possibilities of its own being and choose between them, world is only there for a being that is free. Dasein's freedom and its transcendence are identical (MAL, 257-8/184-5), and they form the condition for the possibility of projecting something like world.

Indeed, *das Dasein als freies ist Weltentwurf* ['as free, Dasein is world-projection'], where world is *das Ganze der wesenhaften inneren Möglichkeiten des Daseins als des transzendierenden* ['the totality of the

essential intrinsic possibilities of Dasein as transcending'] (MAL, 248/192). Because the being of beings within the world is constituted in reference to the world understood in this way, and because the world understood in this way surpasses all actual beings,

Dieses enthüllt sich, wann und wie immer es angetroffen wird - und gerade wenn in seinem Ansich - , immer nur als eine Einschränkung, als eine mögliche Verwirklichung des Möglichen, als das Ungenügende aus einem Überschuß an Möglichkeiten, darin sich das Dasein als freier Entwurf schon immer hält.

[Whenever and however they are encountered, actual beings always reveal themselves - precisely when they are disclosed as they are in themselves - only as a restriction, as one possible realization of the possible, as the insufficient out of an excess of possibilities, within which Dasein always maintains itself as free projection.]
(MAL, 248/192)

The actual is always limited because Dasein is always transcending, always surpassing towards the possible. Because *das Dasein ist in sich überschüssig, d.h. durch eine primäre Ungenügsamkeit an allem Seienden bestimmt* ['Dasein is in itself excessive, i.e. defined by a primary insatiability for beings'], the actual is always, in relation to the possible (and Dasein necessarily constitutes the being of beings through such a relation), finite and insufficient (MAL, 248/192). The world, as the totality of Dasein's possibilities, and that means of all that may be, is *epekeina*, the beyond surpassing all beings while at the same time determining the being of those beings.

As such, the world is, in a sense, nothing. It is not something present-at-hand, and it is not any of the beings Dasein transcends, where that includes Dasein itself. And yet it is not a *nihil negativum*, but is still something. *Die Welt: ein Nichts, kein Seiendes - und doch etwas; nichts Seiendes - aber Sein* ['The world: a nothing, no being - and yet something; nothing of beings - but being']. In asking what kind of *nihil* the world is, Heidegger poses the question about the intrinsic possibility of transcendence, which, he maintains as in *Sein und Zeit*, is time as primordial temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) (MAL, 252/195).

§12, *Transzendenz und Zeitlichkeit (nihil originarium)*, addresses itself to this question of the form of nothingness characterizing the world in relation to temporality as the possibility of transcendence. It begins by noting that, *als freies entwirft sich das Dasein auf das Umwillen seiner als das Ganze der wesenhaften Möglichkeiten seines Seinkönnens* ['as free, Dasein projects itself on the for-the-sake-of-itself, as the whole of the essential possibilities in its capacity-to-be] (MAL, 252-3/196). The whole of the essential possibilities of Dasein's potentiality-for-being is

the world towards which Dasein exists. Surpassing all actual beings, this world is, in a sense, nothing. However, in attempting to determine the nature of this nothing, Heidegger says at this point, perhaps against Scheler, that Dasein in being beyond does not come up against *das absolute Nichts* (MAL, 254/196). Rather, as in *Sein und Zeit*, Dasein's being beyond actual beings brings it into being-in-the-world, and thus brings it face to face with beings encountered within the world. The world, this nothing which is yet somehow being, is not nothing in the sense of absolute nothingness.

The possibility of transcendence, and so of world, is temporality, and temporality is primordial time. What Husserl calls time-consciousness, Heidegger says, is precisely this primordial time, temporality (MAL, 264/204). Primordial time, that is, is the self-unifying unity of the three *ekstases* of time: 1) the future in which Dasein comes towards itself (*Zukunft*), characterized by expectance (*Gewärtigen*), 2) the past in which Dasein is as having-been (*Gewesensein, Gewesenheit*), characterized by retention (*Behalten*), and 3) the present as a waiting towards (*Gegenwart*), characterized by making present or presenting (*Gegenwärtigen*). The 'opening' which occurs in the unified spreading out of these dimensions of time is the space, the clearing, within which beings are manifest as what they are. This primordial temporality is therefore the unitary but tri-dimensional horizon of intelligibility. In itself, it is not some thing, not a being, since the horizon within which the being of beings is constituted, the horizon within which beings are intelligible as what they are, is not itself a being. It is rather the condition for the possibility of the being of beings. Temporality 'is' not, but temporalizes itself. It occurs or happens, one could say, and world arises in and through this happening.

Die Welt ist das Nichts, das sich ursprünglich zeitigt, das in und mit der Zeitigung Entspringende schlechthin - wir nennen sie daher das *nihil originarium*.

[World is the nothing which temporalizes itself primordially, that which simply arises in and with temporalization. We therefore call it the *nihil originarium*.] (MAL, 272/210)

World is the original and originative nothing, holding within itself the possibility for the being of all beings.

In that case, world, as primordial temporality, is the *origo* of transcendence (MAL, 272/210), and it temporalizes itself primordially out of the for-the-sake of (§13, 273/211), and therefore out of Dasein's *Zukunft*, its coming towards itself in its projection of possibility. The ecstasis of the future does not in itself produce this or that possibility.

Rather, it provides *das Künftige als solches, Künftigkeit überhaupt, d.i. Möglichkeit schlechthin* ['just something futural as such, futurity as such, i.e., possibility pure and simple'] (MAL, 269/208). The future is the dimension of possibility in general, 'containing' all that may be, all that 'is' possible in any way.

There are some strong parallels between what Heidegger says here, and elsewhere, about temporality and Plotinus' remarks on time in the Third Ennead. For Plotinus, time arises through the 'unquiet faculty' of the soul which desires to translate potentiality into actuality (*Enneads*, p. 227). Unending time is then originated by 'the ceaseless forward movement of Life'. Time is an image of eternity in that this ceaseless forward movement 'tends, yes, to infinity but by tending to a perpetual futurity' (p. 228). The succession brought about by this tending to futurity, which is in turn a function of the soul's seeking an increase of being, is opposed to the stillness of eternity, the divine sphere of perfect, unchanging and self-identical life. This life, for Plotinus, is the realm of authentic being.

For Heidegger, authentic being is not the 'dense fullness' (p. 227) of unchanging presence, but the steadiness of constant realization. Nevertheless, the structure of Dasein in this regard is rather like the structure of what Plotinus calls the soul. For Plotinus, that soul is a 'world-soul', and its desire for succession originates cosmic time, so that while time is not outside the soul, it is not 'subjective' in a Kantian sense. Given the relation between Dasein and world, a similar point could be made about time in Heidegger's conception. It only comes to be by the ceaseless forward movement of Dasein, but that movement is inseparably tied to the worldhood of the world, and the being of beings. The worldhood of the world is 'relative' to Dasein, but it is not 'subjective', since Dasein is not conceived as an isolated subject translating the world in accordance with its own structures, thereby subjectivising it, but as the *Lichtung* of being-in-the-world.

In the *Anfangsgründe*, Heidegger says that he will not go into the question of the extent to which the interpretation of Dasein as temporality may be conceived in a universal-ontological way, since that question is completely unclear to him (MAL, 271/210). But in his later works, and especially in the very late *Zeit und Sein*, the temporality of Dasein (by this point, 'man') reflects the temporality of being, and thus of *das Seiende im Ganzen*. Moreover, in this work the temporal structure of

both man and being exhibits something like an 'eternal' and a 'successive' aspect. The 'fourth dimension of time' is, after all, Heidegger's revision of eternity.

§13 of the *Anfangsgründe* connects what has been said about transcendence, world and temporality with the question of ground or reason (*Grund*) in a way similar to the later work *Vom Wesen des Grundes*. The for-the-sake-of projected in primordially futural temporalizing transcendence is *das Urphänomen von Grund überhaupt* ['the primal phenomenon of ground as such']. *And wenn das Umwillen als solches das Urphänomen des Grundes ist, dann transzendiert er alles Seiende, nach allen seinen verschiedenen modi essentiae und existentiae* ['if the for-the-sake-of is, as such, the primal phenomenon of ground, then ground transcends all beings according to all their various *modi essentiae* and *existentiae*'] (MAL, 276/213). Since the for-the-sake-of is possible only with freedom, moreover, freedom is ultimately, as in *Vom Wesen des Grundes*, the ground of grounds (MAL, 277/214).

Dasein uncovers beings in 'returning from' the possibilities it projects in surpassing beings. Only a free being, and so a being projected upon temporality, can do this. Only with it is possibility higher than actuality. If this possibility, the towards-which of Dasein's existence, is seen as *seiender*, 'more being', than actuality, then Aristotle is right to say that actuality is prior to possibility (MAL, 279/216). The for-the-sake-of, that is, as the 'may be' is higher and prior, thus *seiender*, than the actual being it surpasses.

The being of beings, then, is always understood in light of a freely projected for-the-sake-of, where the projection of this for-the-sake-of involves a choice and therefore a *potius quam*, a this rather than that, a preference (MAL, 284/219). The for-the-sake-of that is chosen is the primordial ground determining the way beings are uncovered. It determines, consequently, the kind of questions posed of beings and the grounds sought for them in any definite region of inquiry. The definite region of inquiry is broken open, happens, through the projection of a for-the-sake-of as a particular possibility of Dasein, a particular 'world', as it were. The definite possibility of Dasein's being projected in a definite for-the-sake-of determines the definite being of any possible region of beings. But because the world as such is the totality of Dasein's intrinsic possibilities, and because Dasein is never 'finished' - i.e. because insatiability for being belongs to Dasein's existential constitution as a

becoming being, a being in whose being the *sich vorweg* cannot be crossed out - the world is in itself inexhaustible. That is to say, Dasein's freedom places it in relation to a *Grund* which, because it is infinite in the sense of never closed, is an *Abgrund*. It is this constantly surpassing *Abgrund* which must now, in light of what has been said so far, be related to Bonaventure's notion of *bonum*.

The *Abgrund* to which Dasein is related is the true *idea tou agathou*, the pure form of the good. It is the abysmal towards-which of existence, the totality of the possibilities of Dasein's being in the light of which the being of beings is constituted. One way of relating this conception to Bonaventure's notion of the highest good might be to see the latter as a kind of infinite subject. Dasein, in understanding itself, and that means in understanding its own being, projects the for-the-sake-of as an end for which it exists. That end is what it may be, and what it may be is determined through its original self-understanding. If the end is constantly surpassing, and if it 'includes' all of the intrinsic possibilities of Dasein, then it is, in a sense, in-finite - in the same sense, that is, that Anaximander's *apeiron* is infinite. If the being of beings, moreover, is ordered to this end, if the end itself orders the being of beings, then that being is itself infinite in the same sense. However, in another sense it is always finite, since what any given Dasein may choose to actualize in choosing to be (become) itself is always a finite range of the intrinsic possibilities of Dasein. What Dasein comes to be, and so what beings come to be (these are equiprimordial), is at any given time and within any given region, definite and therefore bounded.

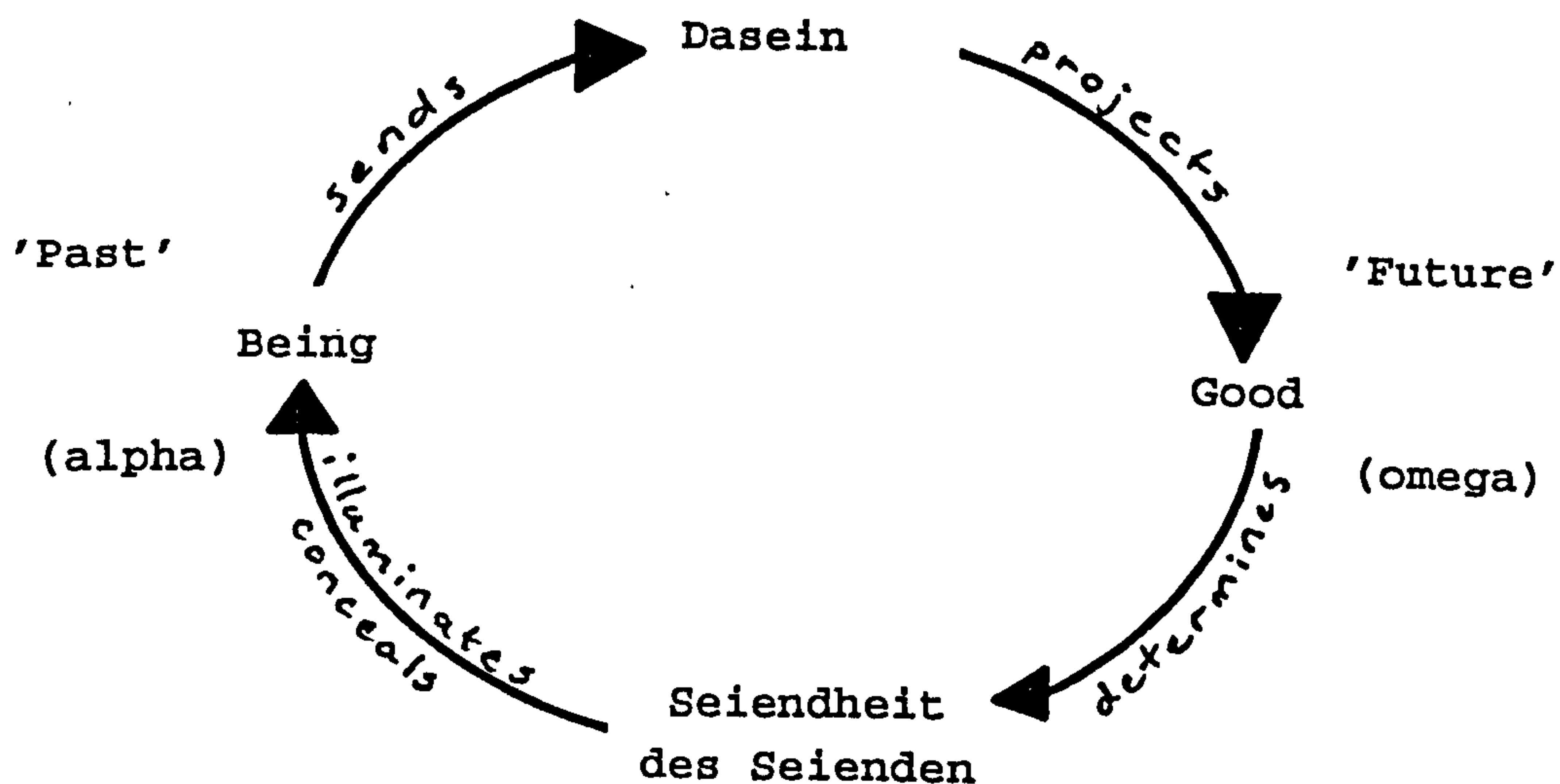
Given this analysis of the structure of the subject, there is even an analogy between Dasein's self-understanding projection and choice, and the generation of the Trinity in Bonaventure's account. What is generated in the word is what *may be*, what may be realised, and this generation flows from the self-knowledge of the infinite subject. Dasein, related to infinity but always finite, generates a finite set of possibilities. An infinite subject, on the other hand, taken as the pure form of the good and so constantly transcending any finite subject, must generate an infinite set of possibilities. That infinite set, for Bonaventure, is the offspring of the self-knowledge of God, the Word. These two members of the Trinity are the *alpha* and *omega* of the good as dynamic and self-diffusive. What 'connects' them is the Holy Spirit, the will by which what is actually realised is chosen. What is chosen by an infinite subject must

be, in a way, infinite. The infinite subject chooses itself as the totality of all that is good, of all that may be realised. But what is brought into being at any time and place is necessarily finite. Conceiving time as a moving image of eternity, one might even say that the being of God as efficient cause, the pure potential or power to produce itself corresponds to the temporal dimension of the 'past' which gives rise to itself as 'future' in the projection of all that may be, and which chooses itself in the 'present' of creation. This, though, is an atemporal, infinite and perfect generation, in relation to which the temporal, finite and imperfect outflowing into creatures is but a point.

It might be objected, and with warrant, that while all this talk of an 'infinite subject' may be of interest for certain forms of speculative metaphysics, Dasein does not have knowledge of any such subject, and to posit such a subject as some kind of *Weltgrund* is something that Heidegger would wholly reject. *Prima facie*, this is quite true. But the comparison of Bonaventure and Heidegger in Chapter Three suggested that Dasein is a kind of indicator. What it indicates is the being of beings; insofar as it points forwards towards the good, what it indicates is also the *epekeina* of *agathon*. Furthermore, previous discussions have already suggested how being itself, or the event, are person-al in an analogous way. Dasein certainly does not 'come across' an infinite subject in the way it does a finite one (itself), but it could be said that it, as a creature of distance (MAL, 285/221; WG, 130-1), does point, obscurely, to something like this. Existing beyond itself in the realm of possibility and never satisfied with what-is, it functions as a kind of forward indicator of the in-finite that may be. This does not constitute anything like a 'proof' for the existence of God qua infinite subject. Indeed, the existential status of what Dasein points towards remains obscure. What Heidegger's analysis points out, rather, is how the notion of something like an infinite, overpowering and perfect subject is rooted in the being of Dasein, and how it might be considered a valid analogy (not hypothesis) in describing the being of beings.

To make this more concrete, it needs to be demonstrated how transcendence, world, freedom and the for-the-sake-of are related to the being of beings as such, and how the being of beings manifests itself as an overpowering power, and is in turn related to the good. This has already been suggested in past chapters, and only needs to be repeated and clarified a little further in the light of what Heidegger says in the

Anfangsgründe. As in *Sein und Zeit*, the interpretation of the being of Dasein in this work points towards an interpretation of the being of beings. The good is that in accordance with which the being of beings is ordered, since it is in light of a freely projected for-the-sake-of that the *modus essentiae* and *existentiae* of things is determined. This projected for-the-sake-of is then what determines them, as in *Vom Wesen des Grundes*. But in Heidegger's later thought, the projection comes more and more to be seen as a reception, a response to what being sends as what is to be willed and thought, and one can see the reasons for this move in the emergence of being as superior power, which is already there, at least implicitly, in *Sein und Zeit*. In that case, the relation between being, the good, Dasein and beings could be represented like this:



Being itself, it will be recalled, is inherently eschatological. It (being itself, *alpha*) stretches itself out towards itself as *eschaton*, as end (the good, *omega*). In each epoch a finite possibility of being is realised, but the essence of being withdraws. In each epoch, a definite world worlds. In the happening of worlds, successive possibilities of being (the being of Dasein:the being of beings) are realized, while the essence of being holds itself back as in-finite. That essence is, like the essence of Dasein, inexhaustible. Being itself is presencing, the sending that both gives and refuses boundary. It grants order in that the being (*Seiendheit*) of beings is intelligible in the light of a particular end, a particular for-the-sake-of of being. Essences are ordered in and through this freely projected end, but that end is not really projected 'by' Dasein; it is

projected through Dasein by what hurls Dasein into its *Da* (being as overpowering power). Factically, the end is always one finite possibility or another. However, the end considered in itself as ultimate, the end of all ends and the world of all worlds, one could say, is the *agathon* as the last end of being. It is 'perfect', for it is the completion of all. And it is hidden; it withdraws. That it is beyond the ideas because the ideas (essences) are ordered according to it, because it orders them, means: a) in every world and region of beings, the factical and finite for-the-sake-of determines 'from above' or *a priori* the order of beings within that world or region, and b) the good, as the final for-the-sake-of which, if achieved, would bring Dasein and thus what-is as a whole to rest once and for all, is always futural, is always coming close and yet drawing away into the distance. Its in-finitude rests in the constant about-to-be-realised (*futurus*) of this approaching withdrawal.'^o

In a sense, although not quite in Bonaventure's sense, it can be said that the self-diffusion of being as conceived here is also both actual and intrinsic, substantial and hypostatic, natural and voluntary, free and necessary, lacking nothing and perfect. Considered from the point of view of the completion of being, a view to which Dasein is related but which it cannot ever quite be said to possess, being contains within itself all that it may ever send to Dasein as what is to be realized. It contains within itself as intrinsic to it the totality of its ends, all that, in an infinite time, it may send to be fulfilled. In the realm of the infinite that may be, these infinite ends, summed up in the *summum bonum*, constitute that actuality which is prior to all possibility. Moreover, while being can be viewed in terms of its power, the power that compels Dasein into its *Da* and sends possibilities to it; in terms of its end, the for-the-sake-of itself that it may send as what is to be; and in terms of its choice, the voluntary sending and holding itself back that constitutes the *epochē* of being, these are not truly separate, just as the capability-to-be (*Seinkönnen*), the projection of a for-the-sake-of to be realized and the choice to realize it, are not truly separate elements of Dasein, although they can be distinguished as structural items. These three, corresponding to past, future and present, and to memory, knowledge and will are substantially identical and yet distinct, a unity with three faces.

In addition, the sending of being happens according to nature and necessity. Or rather, it is nature and necessity, the compelling power that binds and orders. But the *epochē* of being is also a free and

voluntary play, in which being chooses to reveal and conceal itself in one way or another. The very nature of being, qua presencing, is both natural and voluntary, free and necessary. The way this conception is rooted in Dasein's self-understanding was suggested in Chapter Three. Dasein's freedom is at the same time necessity, a binding of itself to its own being, to what it may be as what lies within it to be. While Dasein is always limited in its 'may be' because of the finitude of its particular capacities and its location, being itself, as superior power, is not. Finally, considered, again, from the point of view of its completeness - *sub specie aeternitatis* - being itself is perfect and lacking nothing. It is, after all, that in which all that is sent to be in the world has been perfected from everlasting (WM, 52/392).

The unity of being is the totality, the wholeness, of all possible regions and epochs of being. It is the gathering together of all regions. It must be rooted in the unity of the being of Dasein, since the happening of being itself is reflected in the happening of Dasein's being, because Dasein is the being that understands being, the being with which and for which being is there. But the unity of the being of Dasein, its final wholeness, constantly recedes. Every region and every epoch of being is finite because definite and determinate. It involves a 'choice' among possibilities of being, a this rather than that, a *potius quam*. The end that is chosen, the possibility of being which guides an epoch or region, also grants to it its unity. It is that through which a region or epoch is unified, and thus ordered, gathered into the harmonious unity necessary for intelligibility. This unifying is therefore also truth, for it is that through which anything becomes visible, intelligible as true. Once again, the relation between *ens, verum, bonum and unum* comes to the fore. The in-finite good, for Bonaventure, is the formal unity of all possibilities of being, of all that may be. This is the perfection of the good in relation to which what is actualised in the world, in creation, is always but a point.

The perfection of the good, then, is pure actuality in Aristotle's sense. It is the actuality that is prior to possibility precisely because possibility is higher than actuality, precisely because the projected possibility is the *a priori* that guides actual beings into their proper destinations. The final good, the unmoved mover as the end of all ends, is the ultimate cause of being, the basis of understanding and the order of living, but it is by its very nature always transcendent, always both

revealed and concealed in any finite manifestation.

When this is repeated, and thus transformed, in the light of Heidegger's thought, 'following' the ordering of the good cannot ever mean shoving entities into categories that are supposed to hold once and for all. The nature of the good is such that no final definition of Dasein, and thus of beings, is possible, precisely because definition is always *possible*, always subject to revision in the light of new ends, new possibilities of being. Following the ordering of the good, which is also the ordering of being, is then a responsive openness to possibility, a listening that attempts to accord with what Dasein, and that means all the various groups and regions of Dasein, says it is in saying what it may be. *Gelassenheit* and *Seinlassen* are the stances appropriate to this listening accordance. They do not suggest indifference, but letting-speak, and that means letting entities show themselves from themselves, letting them define themselves in their identity and difference, and in terms of the not yet of their possible and unknown future. Phenomenology then follows the ordering of being insofar as it holds back while attending carefully and concernfully to that to which it addresses itself. This holding back that attends is genuine letting-be, genuine allowing of what-is to show itself precisely as it is, or in the truth of its being. Because the good is always transcendent, because Dasein is always becoming, its 'correctness' has to be understood as the achieving of a correct stance in the midst of becoming, a right way of being on the way.

The essence of Dasein rests in the truth of being because Dasein is the one that is capable of allowing beings to be. It is capable of this because it is the *inzwischen* of the ontico-ontological difference, the 'between' that holds being and beings apart and yet together. The highest figure for the relation of being and beings is actually the understanding of Dasein, since it is in and for that understanding that being and beings are manifest in their relation to one another. In *Aus einem Gespräch von der Sprache*, it is said that the essence of man stands in a *hermeneutischen Bezug . . . zur Zwiefalt von Anwesen und Anwesendem* ['hermeneutic relation to the two-fold of presence and present beings'] (US, 125-6/32-3). The clearing of this twofold is prior, and essential, to all speaking and knowing. It is prior and essential to all that makes man what he is. The truth of being emerges in the clearing of this twofold, and man is the messenger of this truth, the mediator of being and beings.

This idea can be viewed from a number of aspects. For one thing, it

is within the understanding of Dasein that the steadiness of being and the passage of becoming are related to one another, and it is only through this relation, a relation that obviously involves time in the conjunction of the enduring and the changing, that anything becomes intelligible as what it is. Moreover, it is in the understanding of Dasein that the in-finite (possibility) is conjoined to the finite (actuality), and it is through that conjunction that beings are constituted in their being. It is in the understanding of Dasein that unity is conjoined to particularity, for it is in and through Dasein that the for-the-sake-of which binds and orders into an articulated and ordered whole is projected. It is, furthermore, the unity of the being of Dasein that holds together the regions and epochs of being. It is in and through the figure of the *logos*, therefore, the gathering gatheredness which might be described as a *mediatrix* of the one and the many, the infinite and the finite, that the mystery of the wholly other to beings is revealed - insofar, that is, as it can be revealed.

This is, for Heidegger, initially the mystery of the emptiness (*Leere*) which is *dasselbe wie das Nichts, jenes Wesende nämlich, das wir als das Andere zu allem An- und Abwesenden zu denken versuchen* ['the same as nothingness, that essential being which we attempt to add in our thinking, as the other, to all that is present and absent'] (US, 108-19). This 'other' is what Heidegger, for much of his career, calls being. It is the openness in which all that is present and absent comes to pass, and which remains through all passing. But this mysterious other is, in a sense, beyond the twofold of presence and present beings, beyond being and beings. As the source of appearance, it is the source of the two, for *in der Herkunft des Erscheinens kommt auf den Menschen jenes zu, worin sich die Zwiefalt von Anwesen und Abwesenden birgt* ['in the source of appearance, something comes towards man that holds the two-fold of presence and present beings'] (US, 135/40). What holds a twofold must be, in some manner, a transcending one. It is, in fact, the boundless region of regions, which cannot be named, either as being, or as presence, or as nothing.

The question of the essential origin of appearance, the question of the clearing in which man stands, leads into the distance of what is the same in all thinking and speaking. It leads into the boundlessness (*Grenzenlose*), the emptiness, of what the dialogue on language has sought, not to reveal, exactly, for this boundlessness, as the source of revealing, cannot itself be disclosed in the manner in which it discloses, but to

gesture towards, to hint at and beckon to. This gesturing towards the openness which does not disclose itself in its opening is the speaking of language that beckons towards the mystery, without ever being able to name it as anything other than a mystery. If man is the one used for such speaking:

F So wäre denn der Mensch als der Botengänger der Botschaft der Entbergung der Zwiefalt zugleich der Grenzgänger des Grenzenlosen.

J Auf diesem Gang sucht er das Geheimnis der Grenze . . .

F das in nichts anderem sich bergen kann als in der Stimme, die sein Wesen be-stimmt.

[I: Then man, as the message-bearer of the message of the two-fold's unconcealment, would also be he who walks the boundary of the boundless,

J: And on this path he seeks the boundary's mystery . . .

I: . . . which cannot be hidden in anything other than the voice that determines and tunes his nature.] (US, 137/40)

In addition, although it was noted in Chapter Four that Heidegger does not ever move to speculation about the 'other side' of death, and that in *Sein und Zeit*, he views it simply as the cutting off of possibility, this passage at the end of *Moira* suggests another interpretation:

Wer jedoch vom Denken nur eine Versicherung erwartet und den Tag errechnet, an dem es ungebraucht übergangen werden kann, der fordert dem Denken die Selbstvernichtung ab. Die Forderung erscheint in einem seltsamen Licht, wenn wir uns darauf besinnen, daß das Wesen der Sterblichen in die Achtsamkeit auf das Geheiß gerufen ist, das sie in den Tod kommen heißt. Er ist als äußerste Möglichkeit des sterblichen Daseins nicht Ende des Möglichen, sondern das höchste Ge-birg (das versammelnde Bergen) des Geheimnisses der rufenden Entbergung.

[But anyone who only expects thinking to give assurances, and awaits the day when we can go beyond it as unnecessary, is demanding that thought annihilate itself. That demand appears in a strange light if we consider that the essence of mortals calls upon them to heed a call which beckons them towards death. As the outermost possibility of mortal Dasein, death is not the end of the possible but the highest keeping (the gathering sheltering) of the mystery of calling disclosure.]
(VA III, 52/101)

Heidegger says this after a remark on the unending nature of dialogue, which has to do with boundlessness. In *The Science of Knowledge*, Fichte had claimed that the desire to become absolute is self-contradictory, for the subject cannot desire to become absolute 'unless it is to disown reason and demand its own annihilation.' This annihilation, the absolute fulfillment in which the subject is completed but at the cost of being taken beyond itself, is precisely the mystical death of which Bonaventure, and Eckhart and Tauler, speak. It is that to which Dasein is beckoned in so far as it is related to the infinite through its insatiable want of

being. The emptiness of what is wholly other to beings and the negativity of what is the end of all being are actually one nothing, veiling one being.

It would, it seems to me, be misguided to suggest that all human beings, or any human being who does not feel inwardly called to do so, should choose to seek this end beyond nothing, should choose to die before their death. But the testimony of the few who do feel thus called, and who follow the call right to its end, is still valuable for those who do not make that choice - not for everyone, perhaps, but at least for those who, having chosen to bind themselves to the world, are yet not unfamiliar with the 'unutterable sigh, lying in the depths of the heart',² the sigh for that which promises and bestows itself everywhere in the world, but whose final promise might, in the end, only be fulfilled by a flight of the alone to the alone.

CHAPTER SIX

HIDDENNESS AND MANIFESTATION: RUUSBROEC AND HEIDEGGER ON THE SELF-REVEALING ABYSS

1. *Ruusbroec's Mysticism of Love and Rapture.*

Oliver Davies points out in *God Within* that 'the idea of a movement between activity and rest, unicity and multiplicity' is fundamental to all of Ruusbroec's thinking (p. 131). Like Bonaventure, Ruusbroec conceives of the triune unity of the Godhead as containing these two moments, a moment of static unity and one of dynamic multiplicity. God is active and fruitful in the Trinity of the persons, inactive and silent in the unity of the divine essence. The active nature of the Godhead as a Trinity of persons does not, however, indicate a temporal process. The 'movement' of the persons, in which they flow into one another while being held in the embrace of unity, is *sonder tijt, dat es, sonder vore ende na, in .i. ewech nu* ['without time, that is to say, without before or after in an eternal present'] (BV, 138-9). Thus, while the atemporal character of the Godhead is expressed as an eternal now, as it is for Eckhart, this expression does not denote a purely static being. Rather, the atemporal activity of the Godhead includes the modalities of actuality, achievement, and potentiality:

Want in den behelsene in enechheit sijn alle dinghe volbracht; ende in den utevloene der minnen soe werden alle dinghe ghewracht; ende in der levender vrochtbaere naturen sijn alle dinghe mogheleke te gheschiene.

[. . . for in the embrace in unity all things have been consummated. And in the outflowing of love all things are being achieved. And in the living fruitful nature all things have the potentiality to occur . . .] (BV, 138-41)

In the all-embracing unity of the Godhead, all creatures are there as in their eternal origin, one essence and one life with God. They are there

'without themselves' (*sonder hen selven*). Again like Eckhart, Ruusbroec says that all creatures are there in their essences, there where all essences abide in a unity, and where all things have always been, and always remain, complete. But that unity is a fruitful one; it is the source and fount of all life and genesis (BV, 140-41). It is perfect actuality, but it is also all becoming and all possibility.

For Ruusbroec, the name that best captures the nature of this unity is love (*minne*). *God es eene vloeyende ebbende zee* ['God is a flowing, ebbing sea'] (GB, 418-9), and the love of God is *utevloeiende met allen goeden, ende intreckende in enechheit, ende overweseleke ende wiseloes in ewegher rasten* ['flowing out with all good and drawing in into unity and (as) superessential without mode in an eternal repose'] (BV 140-1). The dual action of love as outflowing and indrawing parallels Bonaventure's notion of God as the simultaneously diffusive and attractive good. The unifying nature of love, moreover, not only flows out and draws in; it also binds and holds together. It embraces in unity. With respect to creatures, this embrace is not an equalization of all, but a holding together of what is ordered and distinct (SS, 174-5).

The highest embrace of unity, though, is the superessential essence (*overweseleke wesen*) of the Godhead, the superessence of all essence (*alre wesene overwesen*) (BV, 146). The formulations that Ruusbroec employs to express the character of this highest and innermost nature of God recall themes from Eckhart's descriptions of God as absolute unity and *ipsum esse*. Like Eckhart's wilderness of the Godhead, this essence is modeless and dark, a nameless abyss. It is an *afgrondighe unwise* ['unfathomable modelessness'] comprehending all modes, properties and names in an essential unity that surpasses all understanding. In this *weselijcke bloetheit* ['essential bareness'],

alle godlijcke namen ende alle wisen ende alle levende redenen die inden spiegel godlijcker waerheit ghebeeldet sijn: die vallen alle, in die eenvuldighe onghenaemtheit, in onwisen ende sonder redene.

[all divine names and all modes and all life-giving ideas which are depicted in the mirror of divine truth fall without exception into this simple namelessness, without modes and without reason. (GB, 598-9)]

Here, all distinctions and determinations are dissolved and engulfed in the simple bareness of the essence beyond essence, the *grondelosen wiele* ['groundless whirlpool'] of the superessence (*overwesen*) that encompasses all things, and yet is itself beyond and without all name, mode and reason.

The absolute bareness of this essence corresponds to, and is known

only by, the essential unity in the innermost depths and at the highest point of the spirit. Above all images and multiplicity,

besit de mensche weselijcke ende overnatuerlijcke eenicheit sijns gheeste also sine eyghene woninghe, ende sijns selfs ewighe persoelijcke erachticheit. Altoes hevet hi natuerlijcke ende overnatuerlijcke neyghen in die selve eenicheit.

[<a person> possesses the essential and supernatural unity of the spirit as his own dwelling and as the eternal (and) personal inheritance of himself. He always has a natural and a supernatural inclination towards the same unity.]
(GB, 402-3)

The inclination towards this unity, which, as for Eckhart and Tauler, is the dwelling place of God within the soul, is associated with the inclination towards God at all levels of life and activity. Human beings have *een natuerlijc gront neyghen te gode overmids de vonke der zielen ende die overste redene, die altoes begheert dat goede ende haet dat quade* ['a natural fundamental inclination towards God because of the spark of the soul and because of the higher reason which always desires the good and hates evil'] (GB, 164). While Ruusbroec uses this image of the 'spark of the soul', so common in Eckhart's writings, only infrequently, and then in a rather different sense than Eckhart, the notion of a fundamental interior inclination towards God, and of God as constantly present and active within the soul, are common themes in his works. God is *ons inwindigher dan wij ons selven sijn, ende sijn inwindich driven ochte werken in ons, natuerlijcke ochte overnatuerlijcke, es ons naerre ende innigher dan ons eyghens werkens* ['more inwards to us than we are to ourselves, and his inward impulse, or working, within us, naturally or supernaturally, is nearer and more inner to us than our own work'] (GB, 296-7). This inward presence of God dwells in that essential unity which is always calling or drawing in (*intreckende ochte immanende*) (BV, 140-1), and which abides in God, flows from God, hangs in God and returns to God as into its eternal cause. Were the creature ever to part from God, Ruusbroec says, it would fall into a *puur niet*, a pure nothingness, and the existential dependence of human beings upon God rests in this unity which is their bare nature (GB, 474-5).

Ruusbroec actually speaks of three kinds of unity possessed by human beings, of which this essential unity is the highest. The lowest is the unity of the heart. It is the origin of the bodily life and corresponds to the sensitive and animal life. The second and intermediate unity is the unity of the higher faculties, and corresponds to the rational and spiritual life. The third and highest unity is essential and beyond

intellectual grasp. This is the unity referred to above, in which creatures hang *met wesene, met levne ende met onthoude* ['with (their) being, life, and subsistence'] (GB, 286-9). It is in being raised to the realization of this highest unity that a human being enters into *the overweselijcken, godscouwenden levne* ['superessential life of contemplating God'] (GB, 156-7), into the divine life, which is perfect (SS, 170-2).

The perfection of this highest life is *onse overweseleke saeleheit* ['our superessential beatitude']. It is *die duustere stille die altoes ledech steet* ['the dark silence that is always inactive'] which is *gode weseleec, ende allen creaturen overweseleec* ['essential to God and superessential to all creatures'] (BV, 136-7). A person's vision must always conform itself to that which is to be seen, and, since what is to be seen at the level of the highest life is modeless and simple, the seeing must be correspondingly modeless and simple. It must be a wholly empty and pure insight:

Ende boven alle godleke wise <sal hi verstaen, met den selven insiene sonder wise>, dat wiseloese wesen gods, dat ene onwise es. Want men maechs niet toenen met waerden noch met werken, <met wisen> noch met geliken. Maer het openbaert hem selven den eenvuldegen insiene der ongebeelder gedachten.

[Beyond all the divine modes, with the same in-sight without modes, he shall understand the modeless essence of God which is a modelessness, for it can be demonstrated neither by words nor by actions, by modes nor by signs nor by likenesses. It reveals itself, however, to the simple in-sight of the imageless mind.] (SS, 186-9)

The simultaneously all-engulfing and empty nature of what is seen in this insight is comparable to Eckhart's *ipsum esse* as a *puritas essendi*. Because it comprehends all essences within itself, the essence of God may be thought of as absolute and modeless being, but because in this modelessness all determinate being is surpassed, it may also be thought of as beyond being. In the end (as usual) it depends on what one calls being.

Corresponding to this being beyond being so as to understand it means becoming like it. It reveals itself only to that which, like itself, is beyond word, action, mode, sign and likeness. It reveals itself only to the insight of the mind that is wholly *ongebeelder*, wholly free of all images and concepts. While *men mach oec setten inden wege tekenen ende geliken, die den minsche bereyden dat rike gods te siene* ['we may also set out signs and likenesses along the way, to prepare man to see the kingdom of God'] (SS, 188-9), these are only preparations, and the highest truth of this kingdom, the superessential unity of the divine nature, is *boven begrijp ende verstaen al onser crachte, in dat bloet wesen ons gheests*

['above the comprehension and understanding of all our faculties, in the bare essence of our spirit']. In the sublime stillness (*hogher stillen*) of this bare essence, God transcends and surpasses (*onthoghet*) all creatures (GB, 446-7). Here, there shines an *ombegripelijcke clærheit* ['incomprehensible brightness'] which blinds all created sight in the encounter with it, *om dat si afgrondich ist* ['because it is abysmal'] (GB, 456-7).

According to Ruusbroec, reason (*redene*) and intelligence (*verstannesse*) cannot comprehend this, and fail in the face of it. It is love that goes further, and at this point, Ruusbroec says, *beghint een eewich hongher, die nummermeer vervult en wert* ['begins an eternal hunger that will never be filled'] (GB, 458-61). This is an insatiable inward avidity and craving on the part of the faculty of loving (*der minnender cracht*), and it is through this craving of love that the passage to the innermost unity of the divine essence is achieved. While Ruusbroec claims that the hunger for God can never be satisfied, all striving does cease in the highest unity with God, the unity without difference (*sonder differentie*). However, the creature is not then satisfied as itself. Rather, it surpasses itself and its craving for God altogether, for it then goes beyond even the *weseleec vorwert neighen* ['essential forward inclination'] which Ruusbroec claims is the *hoechste onderscheet dat men ghevoelen mach* ['the highest distinction that can be felt'], and which a person experiences in the stage just below the highest one of perfect unity (SS, 145-6). The creature's desire is, in a sense, never fulfilled, because it can never be said to 'possess' God. Nor, on the other hand, does it become God; it passes beyond itself to God, and this repeats a theme one comes across again and again in the mystics, that the striving of the created spirit is satisfied only when that spirit dies to itself in passing over to an other from itself.

The love that effects this passing over must, like the emptiness of spirit that grasps it, be like that to which it passes over. Therefore, in her ascent to God, love is *wiseloes ende sonder maniere* ['modeless and without manner']. Only such a love could make the soul wander *boven rede<ne> in onwisen ende in onwetene sonder gront* ['above reason in modelessness and in the bottomless depths of unknowing'] (SS, 160-1). Only a modeless and mannerless love could correspond to that unity which, in the return inwards (*weder inkeerne*), behaves *rechte also een duysternisse ende een onwise, ende also eene ombegripelijcheit* ['just like a darkness

and a modelessness, and like an incomprehensibility'] (GB, 518-9).

In the perfect satisfaction of absolute unity, the creature does not comprehend God as an object of its own powers, not even of the power of love, for this is something it can never do. It is raised beyond all the powers it has as a finite spirit, and raised into the divine nature that no finite understanding can capture. Here, it comprehends God with God (GB, 242-3). The essence of God is *unbegripelijcke* because it surpasses all creatures and therefore surpasses every *gescopen begrijp*, which only comprehends creatures. Its vastness then cannot be comprehended by means of the images and concepts proper to finite comprehension and appropriate to the finite objects of that comprehension. This God that is above, but also without and within, all creatures can only be *begripen* by itself and within itself. It can be comprehended only through the understanding's being drawn beyond itself and into it. While at the higher stages below this final one, enlightened (*verclaerde*) people are *met vrien mode verhaven boven redene in een bloet onghebeelt ghesichte* ['lifted up with free mind above reason to a bare vision devoid of images'] (BV, 142-3), the comprehension achieved without difference cannot, when perfect, even be properly called vision in this sense of *ghesichte*, since there is then no distinction between the seeing and the seen.

Ruusbroec describes this surpassing comprehension in terms that are necessarily paradoxical. It is *een weselec instaren boven redene ende sonder redene, ende .i. ghebrukelec neighen, dore lidende alle wisen ende alle wesene* ['an essential inward gazing above reason and without reason, and an enjoyable inclination surpassing all modes and all essence'], and yet it is *alsoe eenvoldech ende alsoe wiseloes, dat daer inne vergheet al weseleec staren, neighen ende onderscheet der creaturen* ['so simple and without mode that therein all essential gazing, inclination and distinction of creatures pass away']. It is a darkness and a bottomless unknowing (*onwetene sonder gront*) (BV, 146-7), but it is also an incomprehensible light (GB, 582-3). The contemplative does not stand before this light as an object apart from the subject, nor is the light only a means of seeing something else. Rather, in the bareness encompassing all things, the contemplative sees and feels nothing but this light, and finds and feels himself to be that very light by which he sees, and nothing else (GB, 582-3). In the one-fold seeing and divine brightness in which contemplative persons contemplate God and all things, they are transformed and at one with that same light by which they see and which they see (GB, 590-1).

Some of the themes and imagery that give Ruusbroec's writings their unique tone and differentiate them from Eckhart's works, with which they nonetheless share a number of fundamental ideas, will be apparent by now. In the first place, the importance of love, *minne*, in Ruusbroec's mysticism, which cannot be overestimated, contrasts sharply with the emphasis on the intellectual faculty in Eckhart's thought. This has to be qualified by noting that the breakthrough to the Godhead described by Eckhart as a function of the highest point of the intellect does not involve a rational, in the sense of conceptual and discursive, comprehension, but is as much beyond reason, concept and image as is the passing over into the transcendent stillness of the divine essence described by Ruusbroec. Moreover, Eckhart does speak of hunger and thirst in relation to the soul's striving for God, and the image of the breakthrough itself suggests intention. Nonetheless, the rather cool process of remotion, of stripping away and detachment, characteristic of Eckhart's mysticism is far removed from the way of passionate love characteristic of Ruusbroec's. Ruusbroec does also speak of achieving bareness and freedom, where these are associated with being without *beelde*, being *onverbeeldet*, but his descriptions of this process are unlike Eckhart's insofar as they are often mingled with the language of rapture and transport, of an ecstatic being lifted up and taken away.² This ecstasy, essential to the experience of union, is brought about by God, and that points to another aspect of Ruusbroec's mysticism which gives it a different flavour from Eckhart's, the emphasis on the action of God, and so on the requirement for grace, at every stage of a person's ascent. This emphasis is nowhere more evident than in Ruusbroec's pervasive and varied use of the image of light, a light that reveals, transforms and illuminates, and is bestowed by God. The rest of this analysis will focus in particular upon these points, and on themes related to them.

The passage into the Godhead, it has already been suggested, requires that the soul go beyond all of its capabilities, and this is effected by the action of God. *Daer des minschen wise gebrect ende niet hoeger en mach, daer begint die wise gods* ['where the human mode is deficient . . . and may go no higher, it is there that God's mode commences'] (SS, 184-5), and it is ultimately 'God's mode' that takes the soul into that highest enjoyment which is *welt ende wuste also een verdolen* ['wild and waste as wandering'], and in which there is neither *wise noch wech, noch pat noch zate noch mate, noch inde noch begin, ochte yet dat men gewserden mach*

ochte getoenen ['no mode, no trail, no path, no abode, no measure, no end, no beginning, or anything one might be able to put into words or demonstrate']. Because this ineffable divine essence is, in relation to human beings, a 'superessence' (*onse overwesen*), to experience it a person must be *ontgeest*, transported beyond his or her own spirit, into that essence. Ruusbroec says of the divine essence that it is the *ewege punct daer alle onse linien in beginnen ende inden* ['the eternal point, wherein all our lines begin and end'] and where they lose all their names and all distinction, *ende sijn een met den puncte, ende dat selve een dat dat punct selve es* ['and are one with the point and the selfsame one that the point itself is']. In this point, a point of absolute unity and the beginning and end of all, *selen wi sijn ons selven onthoecht, ontsonken, onbreidt ende ontlinct in ewege verlorenheit sonder wederkeer* ['we shall be brought higher, deeper, broader, and farther than ourselves in an eternal lostness without return']. Ruusbroec is careful to add, though, that the 'lines' beginning and ending in this point always remain in themselves converging (*toegaende*) lines. That is, in passing over (*overliden*) into their superessence, people nonetheless remain what they are in their created essence (SS, 188-9).

Although the experience of this *overwesen*, an experience accomplished only in unity, is rare, the essence is itself common to all (SS, 190-3). It is the hidden source of all, and the union with it is the realization of what is always there as that upon which all created being, with all of its gifts, depends. But while God is common to all, it does not follow that all realize God to the same degree. Just as only a few attain perfect unity, although this unity overflows equally into all, so, while the spirit's inclination towards God is common to all good people, it remains hidden (*verborghen*) from some all their lives (GB, 480-1). At the lowest stage are *die ghene die udewert gaen, ende van vremden dinghen troest ontfaen* ['those who turn outwards and receive consolation from things foreign'], for *wat hen ontbliven si en ghemessens niet* ['they will not even miss what is lacking to them'] (BV, 152-3).

Ruusbroec describes the hidden source in its action of originating, of being the constant cause (*oersake*) of all gifts and virtues, as a measureless and incomprehensible light. It is the *onghemetene inlichten gods met ombeghripelijcker claeinheit* ['the incommensurable inshining of God, with incomprehensible brightness']. This same light *overformet ende doregheet* ['transforms and permeates'] the inclination of the spirit *met*

onwisen, dat es, met onbegripelijcken lichte ['with modelessness, that is, with incomprehensible light'], and through the transformation by this light and within it, the spirit understands what can never be contained or known through mode and measure. The overflowing of incomprehensible brightness in which the spirit flows away from itself into the wild darkness of the Godhead is the inward call (*<<in> roepen*) where the abyss of God calls in the abyss (*die afgront gods roept in den afgront*). Thus, the transformation through which the spirit 'knows' in a peculiar sense what it cannot know in any ordinary sense is effected by the incomprehensible brightness of God, and involves a being taken up into that same brightness. This is at the same time a darkness before which all the powers belonging to the soul are blind. Since these powers are themselves granted by this hidden brightness beyond and within the soul, this means that the natural powers of the soul are powerless to grasp their own source. The source is therefore 'supernatural', and can be grasped only by a supernatural understanding, and that means by the measureless rest beyond all activity which is the source itself. Only this rest is sufficient to know itself, and only it is wholly sufficient to appease the unrest of the spirit (GB, 524-7).

The dialectic of darkness and light forms a constant motif in Ruusbroec's attempts to express the transformation whereby a person is taken into the bare unity of God grasped in the bare unity of the spirit. The contemplative is shown darkness, bareness and nothingness by the inshining of the simple (*eenvuldich*) light shining out of the unity of God. He is lost and enveloped in the modelessness and bareness of this darkness, in which he is transformed and permeated by a simple brightness (GB, 526-7). In the abyss of the darkness where the loving spirit has died to itself, there begins the revelation (*oppenbaringhe*) of God, for in this darkness there shines and is born an incomprehensible light, which is the Son of God. The bare spirit is modeless and dark, but it is in this simple being of the spirit that the divine light is granted, for it is the place in which the hidden brightness (*verborghene claerheit*) of God is present (GB, 580-1).

The relations between the light in which the contemplative is transformed, the brightness of the simple and unitary ground of God, and the shining out of revelation in the form of the Son are explored in a passage worth quoting in full for the light it sheds on Ruusbroec's conception of divine modes and modelessness:

Ende hier omme, al dat leeft inden vader o(n)vertoent in eenicheit, dat levet in den sone ute ghevloten inder openbaerheit; ende altoes vlijft die eenvuldighe gront ons eewichs beelds in demsterheiden ende zonder wise. Maer die onghemetenne claerheit die hier ute schijnt, die oppenbaert ende brinct voert die verborghenheit gods in wisen. Ende alle die menschen die boven hare ghescapenheit verhaven sijn in eenen scouwende levende, die sijn een met deser godlijcker claerheit ende si sijn die claerheit selve. Ende si sien ende ghevoelen ende venden hem selven, overmids dit godlijke licht, dat si sijn die selve eenvuldighe gront, na wise haerre onghescapenheit, daer die claerheit sonder mate ute sciijt in godlijcker wisen ende na der simpelheit des wesens eenvoldich binnen blivet eewelijcke sonder wise.

[And therefore, everything that lives in the Father (as) unmanifested in unity lives in the Son (as) having streamed out in revelation. And the simple ground of our eternal image always remains in obscurity and without mode. But the incommensurable brightness which shines out from this reveals and brings forth the hiddenness of God in modes. And all those who are elevated above their creaturehood into a contemplative life are one with this divine brightness, and they are the brightness itself. And they see and feel and find, by means of the divine light, that according to the mode of their uncreatedness they are themselves the same one-fold ground out of which this brightness shines forth without measure, in a divine mode, and in which (ground), according to the simplicity of being, this brightness remains simply within, eternally without modes. (GB, 590-1)

The distinction between the Father and the Son in this passage recalls the Godhead/God distinction in Eckhart. The Father is the incomprehensible ground of absolute unity, the modeless simplicity comprehending all essences. Just as Eckhart says that 'I' am in that ground as identical with it, and therefore not as myself but as God, so Ruusbroec says contemplatives are elevated into the simple brightness of this ground with which they are one in their uncreatedness. This ground is unmanifest, 'eternally without modes', but it shines out, reveals itself, in modes. Its shining out is the streaming forth of the Son, the revelation of the Father. It is the revelation in modes of the hidden unity of the ground, which is modeless. The revelation of the Son, however, is a perfect and complete manifestation of the Father, whereas the revelation in creatures is imperfect and partial. The shining out of revelation in the Son is measureless, just as the Father is measureless. This measureless shining out of the simple brightness of the ground is thus a revelation in a 'divine mode'. And just as Eckhart says that all creatures flowed out in 'my' birth, the birth, that is, in which all things are manifested in the simple generation of the Word, so Ruusbroec says that contemplatives see that according to the mode of their uncreatedness they are both the hidden brightness and the light shining out of the brightness, although they never lose what they are in their createdness.²

The hidden truth which is the brightness of the Father is revealed in

the hiddenness (*verborghenheit*) of the spirit. Here, Ruusbroec says, the heavenly Father speaks eternally, without intermediary and without cease, a single fathomless (*grondeloes*) word. That word is 'Siet' ['see'] (GB, 578-9). It is the word of revelation, the going forth and the birth of the Son. The revelation of this word, moreover, is the coming of the Bridegroom in the spirit, a rapid and ceaseless coming consisting in an eternal now, without time. In receiving this coming, the eyes of the spirit are so widely dilated that they will never again be closed, its comprehension so enlarged that the spirit itself becomes the wideness (*wijtheit*) it apprehends (*begrijpt*). In this receptive and enlarged comprehension rests *die verborghene oppenbaringhe gods* ['the hidden revelation of God'] (GB, 584-5).

As has been suggested, the light in which the revelation of God takes place is something a person suffers or undergoes. It first requires the achievement of an *onghebeelden bloeten verstante* ['imageless naked understanding'] in which people go beyond all things to the summit of their spirit (BV, 142-3). But there, their naked understanding is *doregaen met ewegher claerheit, gheliker wijs dat de locht doregaen wert met lichte der sonnen* ['penetrated with eternal clarity as the air is penetrated by the light of the sun'] (BV, 144-5). The pure and simple understanding is receptive to this light, and suffers itself to be illumined and transformed by it.

The light is connected with truth, and both the light and the truth are identical with God. This truth is, again, something to which a person must submit, something suffered. To experience any form of union, a person must *verhaven werden ende sterven in gode, sijns selves ende alle siere werke, also dat hi wike met alle sinen crachten ende ghedoghe die overforminghe der onbegripeleker waerheit die god selve es* ['become exalted through love and die in God to himself and to all his works, so that he yields himself with all his faculties and suffers the transformation wrought by the incomprehensible truth that is God himself'] (BV, 122-3). Such a submitted person becomes perfect in all things, *want hi es to gode gevoeghet* ['for he is joined to God'] (BV, 122-3).

This process of releasement from oneself and joining oneself to God is necessary at all stages of advancement. The experience of God without intermediary (*sonder middel*), the stage below the experience without difference, is possible only for someone who *met gheheelheiden sijns selves ende met allen sinen crachten, op recht ende te gode voeghet met levender*

werkeleker minnen ['raises himself with the totality of his self and with all his powers and turns to God with lively active love'] (BV, 128-9). Ultimately, as already noted, all the powers of the soul must give way, *ende moeten liden ende ghedoghen die doregaende waerheit ende goetheit die god selve es* ['and must suffer and endure the piercing truth and goodness which is God himself'] (BV, 128-9). Thus, the self must surrender itself, join (*voeget*) itself to God, and suffer the transforming power of God, which is truth, where the surrendering and joining are necessary conditions for the advent of this transforming truth. They are the processes through which the self makes itself appropriate to the truth of God.

This truth is something that one realises; the process involves coming to know what is always there, and in the in-turning where the self turns towards its essence, it discovers what is essential to it. It discovers the God that is always within it *aldus es de loecht in den lichte der sonnen ende dat licht der sonnen in die locht* ['in the same way the air is in the light of the sun and the light of the sun is in the air']. Union, then, is a being united with the source that is always present within the soul, and to which the soul always inclines in its striving for the true and the good. When united with it, the soul possesses this source with itself, and therefore knows all truth with the simple knowledge of God, and experiences all good with the simple savor of God (BV, 130-131).

The notion of turning takes a variety of forms in Ruusbroec's thought.⁴ The *inkeeren* where the soul turns towards its essence is also a *bekeeren*, a conversion, and an *af-* and *toe-keren*, a turning away and turning towards. This turning heals and enlightens, and it is a function of the will, of love rather than reason and understanding. It is a function of intention or *meynunghe*. At one level, the turning of love and intention is simply a turning away from sin and turning towards God (GB, 266-8). However, this free conversion which turns away and towards is also a turning in to unity, for, *in desen selven oghenblicke dat hem de mensche van zonden keert, soe wert hi van gode ontfaen in die weselijcke eenicheit sijns self, in dat overste sijns gheests, op dat hi in gode raste nu ende emmermeer* ['in the same instant in which a person turns away from sin, he is received by God in the essential unity of his very self, in the highest (part) of his spirit, so that he may rest in God now and evermore'] (GB, 480-1).

The moment (*oghen blicke*) of turning is often associated with the 'inner flash' (*inblic*) of grace, and there is a constant interplay between these. As I indicated earlier, grace is, for Ruusbroec, necessary at every step of a person's spiritual progress. He claims in one place that the inner flash of grace is the first point that stirs a person and grants vision, where this vision is prior to the gathering of the powers into unity, and both of these are prior to the freedom in which, through an imageless and unhindered (*onverbeelt ende onghehindert*) *inkeeren*, a person may find God at will (GB, 298-9). Grace, for Ruusbroec, is a created light through which the soul is elevated and enlightened (*verhoecht ende verclaert*) to contemplate the uncreated light which is God (SS, 172-3). It is also a light that grants discernment; the 'second stream of grace' is a spiritual clarity that shines in the understanding *met ondersceede in menigher wisen* ['providing distinction, in many a mode']. The illumination of this light is not constant, and it does not lie within the soul's own power, although the light itself is always present in the soul. Ruusbroec says, *want al hebben wij dit licht altoes in onser zielen, god doet swighen ende spreken, ende hi maghet vertonen ende berghen, gheven ende neme in tide ende in stade; want dat licht es sine* ['for though we always have this light in our soul, God makes it keep silent or speak, and he can manifest or conceal it, give it or take it away, in (his) time and place, for the light is his'] (GB, 402-3). The light of grace that grants illumination is a free gift on the part of God, and it may be given or concealed at different times and places.

The enlightenment bestowed by the action of God's grace allows a person to lift up *sine verclaerde oghen . . . in verstandigher waerheit met verlichter redenen, ende merken ende aensien, creatuerlijcker wijs, die hoghe natuere gods ende die grondelose eyghenscape die in gode sijn* ['his enlightened eyes towards intelligible truth, with enlightenend reason, and examine and behold, in creaturely fashion, the exalted nature of god and the fathomless attributes which are in God'] (GB, 404-5). It is grace, therefore, which grants the vision of God, and of what belongs to God. It allows the turning towards the eternal light in the ground of the spirit where *die verborghene waerheit sonder middel oppenbaert* ['the hidden truth reveals itself without intermediary'] (GB, 578-9).

In that case, the action of God is responsible for *raptus*, which Ruusbroec defines as *gherovet ochte overghenomen* ['snatched away or taken over']. Within such rapture, a person is drawn above himself and above the

spirit, but not altogether outside himself, and he is drawn *in een ombegripelijc goet dies hi nummermeer ghewaerden noch getonen en can na die wise dat hijt hoorde ende sach; want horen ende sien es een in dien eenvuldighen werke ende in dien eenvuldigen ghesichte* ['into an incomprehensible good that he can never verbalize or express according to the mode in which he heard and saw it; for in this simple act and in this simple sight, hearing and seeing are one'] (GB, 348-9). In rapture, then, a person is taken over by God and granted a wholly simple understanding. What is experienced in this rapture is necessarily ineffable in itself, and any expression of it is inadequate and inappropriate. It cannot be expressed, in a mode truly proper to it, since no mode is proper to an understanding that is wholly simple and modeless.

God also grants flashes of transforming and enlightening vision, which occur in a moment, like lightning:

Bi wilen ghevet god selcken mensche corte blicke inden gheeste rechte als die blixeme die(s) hemels. Soe comt een cort blic eenre zonderlingher claerheit ende die schijnt ure eere eenvoldigher bloetheit, ende soe wert die gheest verhaven boven hem selven in eenen oghen blicke, ende te hans es dat licht leden ende de mensche comt te hem selven. Dit werket god selve, ende het is seere edel, want dit werden dicwile verlichte menschen.

[At times God gives some people brief glimpses into their spirit, just like lightning in the heavens. Then there comes a brief flash of particular brightness and it shines forth from a simple bareness, and thus the spirit is elevated above itself in the wink of an eye and suddenly the light is gone and the person comes back to himself. God himself produces this, and it is very noble, for these often become enlightened persons.] (GB, 348-51)

The *blic* in which, through the *inblic* of God shining forth from a simple bareness, the spirit is taken beyond itself into an utterly simple vision, is an *oghen blicke* of enlightenment. It is at the same time an in-turning, for *in elcken inblicke gods keert hem de geest in* ['every time God glances within, his spirit turns inwards'] (GB, 534-5). This in-turning into unity is also a renewal. Through it, the spirit visits that essential unity which is *die woninghe ende die raste* ['the dwelling and the resting-place'] (GB, 484-5) that God has prepared within the soul, and which God visits without cease. A person who himself visits this unity without cease realizes the God who *in elcken nuwen nu* ['in each new now'] is *ons gheboren* ['born in us'] (GB, 486-7). Such a person is prepared to meet, at every moment, the advent of the Bridegroom.

Of course, the necessity for grace does not disburden people of the share of work that they must do. Ruusbroec says, rather, that if a person does what he can, God perfects his work. Then there comes the higher

light of God's grace, *rechte al een blic der zonnen* ['just like a flash of sunlight']. From this springs the free conversion (*vri toekeer*) of the will in the wink of an eye (*in eenen oghen blicke*), and charity, the bond between God and the soul (GB, 166-9). There is, in fact, a perpetual interchange between grace and effort. A person must do what is possible, but the instants of turning, enlightenment and rapture granting vision and transformation fall upon a person from above, like flashes of lightning or sunlight. It is ultimately through the simple inshining (*inlichtne*) of God, and the transport (*ontvlotenheit*) through love, that the spirit is united to God and taken over (*overghevoert*) into rest (GB, 534-5).

It is also touched for action and enlightened and enkindled in love at every moment (GB, 534-5). Ruusbroec speaks often of this 'touch' of God, *.i. verborgen gerinen ochte berueren* ['a hidden touch or motion'] which both enlightens the understanding and enflames the will. It takes place at the point where the spirit meets God, the point within the soul where it is conjoined to God (SS, 166-9). It both enlightens the understanding and fires the love necessary for reaching God. Anyone who wishes to contemplate God with God, Ruusbroec claims, *moet van binnen gode aenhanghen met toevoeghender meyninghen ende minnen, rechte also een ontsteken gloeyende vier dat nummermeer gheblust en mach werden* ['must cleave to God within by devoted intention and love, just like a kindled, blazing fire that can no longer be extinguished'] (GB, 580-1).

The most striking and beautiful way in which Ruusbroec describes the contest between the soul and God arising through this inextinguishable fire of love is in the image of the 'storm of love':

In desen storme van minnen striden twee gheeste, die gheest gods ende onzen gheest. God, overmids den heiligen gheest, neyghet hem in ons, ende hier af werde wij in minnen gherennen. Ende onse gheest, overmids gods werc ende de minnende cracht, druet ende neyghet hem in gode, ende hier af wert god gherenen. Van desen tween ontspringhet der minnen strijt: in dat diepste ghemoeten ende in dat innichste ende scaerpste bezuken wert elc gheest van minnen <meest> ghewont. Dese twee gheeste, dat es onse gheest ende gods gheest, blicken ende lichten die een inden anderen, ende elc toent anderen sijn aenschijn.

[In this storm of love, two spirits contend: the Spirit of God and our spirit. God, through the Holy Spirit, inclines himself towards us, and thereby we are touched in love. And by God's operation and the faculty of loving, our spirit presses into and inclines itself towards God, and thereby God is touched. From these two, there arises the strife of love: in the depths of the encounter and in that innermost and most intense visit, each spirit is wounded the most by love. These two spirits, that is, our spirit and God's Spirit, flash and shine each into the other, and each shows the other its face.] (GB, 464-5)

Through this mutual inclination, touching, wounding, flashing, inshining and

glimpsing of one another, a person is so possessed by love *dat hi sijns selfs ende gods moet vergheten, ende niet en weet dan minne* ['that he must forget himself and God, and he knows nothing but love']. The spirit is thus burned up in the fire of love, overcome, and reduced to nothing in all of its acts (GB, 464-6), and the strife of love is ended only in this overcoming and annihilation.

Like the in-flash of God's light, the touch that both gives and enkindles love is not something constant, and not within a person's own control. Ruusbroec speaks of a dark night type of experience in which love is withdrawn, and in which God hides so that a person seems to be abandoned:

Maer wanneer dat die waaghescale der minnen neder sleet, ende hem god verberghet met alle siere ghenaden, dan valt de mensche weder in mestroeste ende in qualen ende in ene donkere ellende, also ochte he nemmermeer vercoveren en[de] soude.

[But when the scale of love sinks and when God hides himself with all his grace, then man falls again into desolation and affliction and in a dark misery as though he might never recover . . .] (BV, 124-125)

In this condition of forsakenness, reason is of no avail. It rather mocks the person from whom God seems to have fled:

Ende hier toe spreect sijns selves redelecheit in heme: 'Waer es nu dijn god? Waer es di ontbleven al dat du van gode ie ghevoeles?'

[And in addition his own reason speaks within him: 'Where is thy God now? Where has all thy experience of God fled?'] (BV, 124-7)

The solution to this condition of abandonment is self-abandonment, a letting go of the self and submitting entirely to God. That means recognizing oneself as a possession of God, as belonging to God rather than to oneself, thereby abandoning self-will to God's will. Such self-abandonment brings healing to the misery of a person's forsaken condition, and with it one brings heaven into hell and hell into heaven (BV, 126-7).

The self-abandonment of which Ruusbroec speaks is not just any form of simple resignation. It is a resignation with love, a joyous, whole-hearted and free surrender, possible only for someone who remains steady and at peace throughout all, suffering without resentment, and with a free and undisturbed spirit (BV, 126-7). There are, then, two moments of *ghelatenheit* or abandonment, a moment of forsakenness and a moment of releasement or surrender. Self-abandonment is the correct response to the abandonment by God, and it prepares for the return of God to the soul and the cure of the soul's distress. Through surrender, a person becomes *gesonde* in being and works (BV, 126-7).

Ghelatenheit in the sense of forsakenness is figured in Christ's moment of abandonment on the cross, when he cries, '*Mijn god, mijn god, waer omme hebdi mij ghelaten?*' ['My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?'] (GB 188-9). Forsakenness means here the withdrawal of God. While Christ's divine nature is eternally conjoined to God, and so cannot suffer such a withdrawal, his human nature can, and the moment on the cross at which it does so corresponds to the moment in the soul's spiritual life when the presence of God, with its gifts and consolations, abandons the soul to need and distress. The second moment of *ghelatenheit* is figured in Christ's attitude upon approaching the Passion, when he says: *Di<n>en wille gheschie in allen dinghen, niet de mine* ['Thy will, not mine, be done in all things'] (GB, 500-1). If a person willingly stays in the *ghelatenheit* in which *het schijnt ochte hi ghelaten ende versmadet ware van gode ende van allen creatueren* ['it appears as though he were forsaken and disdained by God and by all creatures'] (GB, 502-3) with the *ghelatenheit* of self-surrender or submission, he is capable of being enlightened (*verclaert*), of receiving the gift of illumination that heralds the return of God (GB, 504-5).

Die vrocht gelatens willen es altoes meerdre ende edelre dan die vrocht eygens willen ['the fruit of a resigned will is always greater than the fruit of self-will'] (SS, 128-9), says Ruusbroec, and the action of being *ghelaten* is perfect when all self-will is abandoned into the free will of God to such an extent that one cannot and may not will anything other than what God wills. Like Tauler, Ruusbroec says that through this free surrender into a kind of bondage, the will is *vri willens gevaen ende besolten met liefden inden wille gods sonder wederkeer* ['voluntarily imprisoned and enclosed with love in God's will, without turning back'] (SS, 158-9). Self-abandonment in love means giving up security and trusting instead in God, for love is not perfect *alsoe lange else wi lever hadden seker te sine dan gode te betrouwene, ende onse wille niet gode geenecht en es in wilne ende in niet wilne* ['as long as we would prefer to be secure rather than trust in God, and do not unite our will with God in willing and in not willing'] (SS, 158-9).

Surrender springs from obedience, for out of obedience comes *vertijnghe [des] eiyghens willen[s] ende eyghens goetduncken* ['renunciation of one's own will and of one's own opinions'] (GB, 218-21). Through *vertijnghe eyghens willen in doene, in latene ende in lijdene* ['renunciation of one's own will in action and omission and in endurance'],

a person's will is united to God's will so that God is enabled to take control (GB, 220-21). From such *ghelatenheiden van wille*, in which the will is subject to the will of God and of all mankind, comes patience, *eene ghesaette verdrachlijcheit alle der dinghe die opden mensce vallen moghen van gode ende van allen creaturen* ['a quiet endurance of all the things can befall one from God and from all creatures'] (GB, 222-3). From this patience comes meekness and mercifulness, and from mercifulness springs compassion and a common shared suffering with all mankind (GB, 228-9). Free surrender is, moreover, perfect freedom and security, for *die hem overghevet in minnen dat es die vrijste die levet; ende hi levet sonder sorghe* ['he who surrenders himself in love is the freest (person) alive; and he lives without care'] (GB, 502-3).

Those who remain resigned through all things, and who suffer the storms of love and unquietness, yearning for unity but biding the time that God has ordained for them without impatience or impetuosity, will in the fullness of time receive their reward, for *als men des tijts verbeidet ende met allen duechden volleidet, so mach men contempleren ende vlieghe in gods verborgenheit* ['when a person bides his time and time is brought to its term with all virtues, then he can contemplate and fly into God's hiddenness'] (SS 362-3). Essential to biding the time is being without care and anxiety (SS, 156-7). This means being like God in a purity of spirit, *onbecommert van creaturen, in gode gheneyghet ende met hem vereenicht* ['undisturbed about creatures, inclined towards God, and united with him'] (GB, 250-1).

To be always inclined and united to God is to 'mean' (*meyne*) God in all things, and that means to have God constantly present (*jeghenwoordich*), to be intent on God alone (GB, 264-5). For such a person, a person who only means God, all the modes and names under which God is represented are right:

Neemt hi gode behoudere, verlossere, sceppere, ghebiedere, salicheit, moghentheit, wijsheit, waerheit, goetheit, alle onder eene grondelose redene godlijcker natueren, hem es recht. Als es der namen vele, die wie gode toe eyghen, die hoghe natuere gods es een eenvoldich een, onghenaemt van creatueren. Maer om sine onbegripelijcke edelheit ende hoocheit gheven wij hem alle dese namen, om dat wine niet ghenomen noch volspreken en connen. Dit es die maniere ende dat kinnisse hoe wij gode jeghenwoordich hebben selen inder meynighen. Want gode meynen, dat es gheestelijcke god sien.

[If he considers God as savior, redeemer, creator, ruler, beatitude, majesty, wisdom, truth, goodness, all under the fathomless aspect of divine nature, he does right. Though the names which we attribute to God are many, the sublime nature of God is a simple unity, unnamed by creatures. But because of his incomprehensible nobility and sublimity, we give him all these names, since we can neither name him

nor fully express him in words. This is the manner and the science of how we should have God present in our intention. For to be intent on God means to see God spiritually.] (GB, 264-7)

A person who is right to God, in the sense of only meaning God, sees the spiritual significance of the names which both utter and conceal God, for that person sees God spiritually in and through all the names. None of these names are genuinely adequate to the truth of God, since that truth cannot be named adequately at all. But for a person who means God, the meaning of these words is nonetheless clear. The being-righted to God, therefore, is what gives the rightness of the names.

The truth of God is thus not beheld in the external names. It is beheld within, in the hidden unity of the spirit corresponding to the hidden unity of God. That unity is without image and mode, but if it is to be externally revealed, it must be expressed in image and mode:

Al eest dat wij senlijcke ghelijcke setten om grofheit der senne dien wijt van buyten toenen, dit wert doch inder waerheit van binnen ghemerket ende aen<ghe>sien een grondelloes goet zonder wise. Mael alsment van uten toenen sal, soe ghevet men hem ghelijcken ende wise in menigher wijs, na dat des menschen redene verclaert es diet toent ende voertbrinct.

[Even though we set down sensible images on account of the coarseness of the senses, to which we show (such a) marvel from without, it is nevertheless examined and beheld within, in truth, as a fathomless good without mode. But if it is to be shown from without, it is clothed in images and modes in many a way, depending upon the enlightenment of the person's reason which shows and produces it.] (GB, 406-7)

Not only does the rightness and degree of truth mediated to the understanding by image and mode depend upon the rightness of the one who understands, but also the appropriateness of the images and modes themselves depends upon the appropriateness of the person who produces them, upon the enlightenment of the reason which invents the image. How true the sensible clothing is depends upon how close to truth its source is, where closeness to truth means being near and within the fathomless and modeless brightness that cannot be named in itself at all.

While unity with this truth is a complete passing away into the 'dark luminosity' (*doncker clser*) (BV, 152-3) of the divine essence, Ruusbroec's ideal, like that of Eckhart and Tauler, is not a wholly static resting in this inwardness, but a combination of contemplation and action where a person flows in and out with God and like God. This flowing in and out can also be described as an ascending and descending. Ruusbroec uses the analogy of an eagle's flight:

Ende alsoe alsoe die aer vlieecht boven alle <vogele, alsoe vliecht meininge ende minne boven alle> dogede toe den

enen die men meint ende mint. Ende die aer heeft oec een scaerp subtijl gesichte, daer hi mede scout in die claetheit der sonnen sonder vermiden. Also doet die gene die gode meint ende mint: hi scout in die rayen der eweger <sonnen> sonder wiken; want hi mint gode ende alle doechde die cieren ende leiden mogen to gode. Ende hier omme es hi gerecht ende vliecht op daer hi mint, ende altoes weder neder daer he heme oefent in dogeden ende inne goeden werken. Ende aldus es he gaende ende kerende also die blixeme des hemels. Want in opgange ende in nedergange es sijn leven ende sine spise.

[And just as the eagle flies above all birds, so also intention and love soar above all virtues to the person whom one loves and has in view. The eagle also possesses a sharp, keen vision, with which he gazes into the brightness of the sun without flinching. It is the same for the one whose intention and love are for God; he gazes in the rays of the eternal sun without flinching, for he loves God and all virtues which enrich (the soul) and can lead (it) to God. Therefore, he is just and flies up to where he loves and always back down again where he exercises himself in virtue and good works. Thus he goes forth and returns like lightning from heaven. His life and his nourishment consist in ascent and descent.]

(SS, 180-1)

The person who loves and means God alone soars beyond all that is to the simple brightness of the unnameable truth, and returns from that high and simple region like lightning, carrying the brightness of that region back into the world, and translating what is simple, eternal, and modeless into division, time, and mode. The highest good, the good that best conforms to the nature of God, consists in this ascent and descent, in the flight to the still and imageless essence, a flight which does not consider itself too lofty to go down again to the place where that essence may be hiddenly revealed in act and image.

2. *Being and Man at the End of Metaphysics.*

While Heidegger makes few explicit references to love in his writings, many aspects of what he describes as being, or as the essence of being, or as *Ereignis* are comparable with Ruusbroec's notion of God as love. Some of these aspects were discussed in the last chapter. There, it was demonstrated that being is in a sense both self-diffusive and attractive, like Bonaventure's highest good and, it may now be added, like Ruusbroec's God as *minne*. The attractive nature of being is also apparent in *Was heißt Denken?*, where the to-be-thought, which 'is' being as possibility, draws thinking towards it and along with it. Moreover, in the notion of *Ereignis*, Heidegger thinks being itself in terms of giving,⁵ and being 'is' also, for Heidegger, gathering together and unifying, as is love for Ruusbroec. With respect to the relation between being and beings, Heidegger's conception of the unifying of being displays a clear affinity with his interpretation of the Greek *harmonia*. As a gathering into an

identity in which distinction and order are not destroyed but preserved (see e.g. MAL, 84/68; B, 66), this conception of unification is much like Ruusbroec's account of the action of love in the world.

In addition, being itself (*das Seyn selbst*), considered independently of beings or what-is (*das Seiende*), is a form of perfect unity, as is the *alre wesen overwesene* for Ruusbroec. In the *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, as has been pointed out, Heidegger maintains that being is not to be understood in the sense of the common, the universal and the empty, nor as a highest being which causes and encompasses all others. For Heidegger, such determinations belong to the history of the metaphysical understanding of being as beingness. That being is not to be understood in these terms, however, does not exclude from Heidegger's account that it is the innermost, simple, highest, richest, unique and inexhaustible abysmal ground of beings. The unity 'of' being must then be rooted in this understanding of being, which is post-metaphysical. I argued in the last chapter that it is not obvious that what Bonaventure means when he uses metaphysical terms in reference to *ipsum esse* is what Heidegger claims all thinkers in the tradition (before Heidegger himself, that is) must have meant, i.e. the beingness of beings. If Heidegger, in his transitional (*übergänglich*) thinking, is capable of employing and understanding metaphysical terms in a way that is no longer metaphysical in the sense of onto-theo-logical, there is no *a priori* reason to assume that no thinker before him could also have been able to do so, especially a thinker whose metaphysics is not ultimately grounded in an uprooted or unrooted (*entwurzelt*) logic of mere empty concepts, but in an experience which, for lack of any better word, may be termed 'mystical'.

If this is a possibility for Bonaventure, how much more so for Ruusbroec, in whose writings the use of metaphysical vocabulary, which, in any case, is much rarer than in the works of Bonaventure or Eckhart, is never for a moment divorced from the experience of what is being spoken about. Love is not itself a metaphysical term. But the notion of love as describing the God who not only flows out and draws in, but also holds all in the stillness of the *overweselike wesen* does involve elements of metaphysical speculation. The term 'metaphysical speculation', however, is problematic in this context, and it could be argued that the Dionysian origin of such notions points to their rootedness in a form of thinking which is 'metaphysical' and 'speculative' only in a profoundly ambiguous sense. Ruusbroec's own thinking contains metaphysical speculation only in

this ambiguous sense. That is to say, while he sometimes uses a vocabulary that can also be employed in the kind of speculation which is no more than a mere juggling of empty concepts according to the rules of a questionable (perhaps 'dialectical') logic, he is not himself, when using this vocabulary, playing any such metaphysical game. The fruitful unity of the superessential essence, which forms one aspect of the God who may be called love, is not, in Ruusbroec's thought, a logical construct, but an experienced other. As such, it may be compared to the inexhaustibility of the simple (B, 278) which, for Heidegger, is being not as the being (beingness) of what-is, but as the absolutely other to what-is, an other that also makes possible all that is.

In the *Humanismusbrief*, the way being makes possible is explicitly associated with *lieben*, and *lieben* is interpreted as a *Mögen* which is *Vermögend*, a liking that 'possibilises'. This kind of liking is in turn a *Wesenschenken*, a granting of essence. In the *Ereignis* where thinking is appropriated and eventuated (*ereignet*) by being and therefore belongs and listens (is *gehörend*) to being, being itself, as a kind of loving and wanting, makes thinking possible. It thereby makes possible the essence of human being as a relation to being. In the loving that makes thinking possible, therefore, being constitutes the essence of human being in its relation to itself, to being. It is as this *Vermögend-Mögende*, Heidegger says, that being is truly *das »Mög-liche«*, and not in the sense of possibility as understood by logic and metaphysics. Being is the element in which thinking, and so the essence of man, is held and preserved. This element is, for Heidegger, the possible that makes possible by granting itself (Hb, 57-8/196-7).

For Ruusbroec, the essence of human being is granted by God as love, where love is that unity which flows forth into the powers (*crachte*) and makes them possible as what they are, while holding them within itself and binding them to itself. This same creative love is also indrawing. The fruitful unity of love that gives rise to what is essential in being human at the same time recalls human being back to itself as the simple source of that being. It thus also constitutes human being as a relation to itself, while being what makes human being possible at any time.

Love is not, for Ruusbroec, merely an attribute of God, and it is not the 'action' of God, as if God were something apart from such action. It is, rather, a name of God. It is God, for it names the outflowing, indrawing and embracing unity of the divine essence. It names the way the

divine essence is, and names that essence itself. In the *Beiträge*, the way being (*Seyn*) itself is, is *Wesung*, 'essencing' or 'coming to presencing', and *Wesung* is itself being (B, 484). *Wesung*, that is, like *minne* for Ruusbroec, is not something that stands apart from being as a property or act, but names the *Wesen* of being as its *Weise zu sein*. It names the fact that, strictly speaking, *das Seyn »ist« nicht*, but *west*. Moreover, just as the divine essence, for Ruusbroec, does not equal simple presence, but comprehends actuality, potentiality and becoming within its productive triune unity, so *Wesung* names the unity of being in all of its modalities. Being as *das Seyn*, rather than as *das Sein des Seienden*, is not only the actuality (*Wirklichkeit*) of the actual, and not only the possibility (*Möglichkeit*) of the possible, and certainly not only the being of any specific (*jeweilig*) being, but is original *Wesung* in the totality of its 'fissuring' (*Zerklüftung*) (B, 75).

This *Wesung* and *Wesen* is *Ereignis*, and *Ereignis* is the event in which *Dasein* happens, the event in which it is brought into its own by being appropriated, *er-eignet*, into a reciprocal relation to being (B, 7). Being, as *Ereignis*, is this ap-appropriating (*Er-eignung*), whose wealth is immeasurable and whose fullness is incalculable (B, 7). *Ereignis*, as has been said, is a kind of giving, and a giving that 'creates' by granting essence. The essence of being human is the 'product' of this 'creation', where these terms are to be understood metaphorically, and not in the literal sense of manufacturing and making. Human being arises from the giving of *Ereignis*, in so far as it receives and accepts this giving, but human being is not itself apart from this reception, and therefore it can be said, with caution, that its essence is 'created' by the giving.

But here an issue arises which we have often encountered before. Heidegger says that, although being is nothing human, *die Wesung des Seyns*, and that means *Ereignis*, 'needs' (*braucht*) *Dasein* (see, e.g. B, 265). For Ruusbroec, it could never be said that God 'needs' the creature, as this would make God dependent. However, the notion of a dependence (*Abhängigkeit*) of being upon *Dasein* needs to be qualified. It is a notion to which Heidegger himself objects: *Wie dürfen wir aber da von Abhängigkeit reden, wo dieses Brauchen gerade das Gebrauchte in seinen Grund umschafft und zu seinem Selbst erst überwältigt* ['how can we speak of dependence, where this needing first transforms what is needed in its ground, and overpowers it to itself'] (B, 251). This conception of the relation between being and *Dasein* recalls Heidegger's analyses of being as

overpowering power in his interpretations of early Greek thought. Being needs Dasein for its *Wesung* and it is for the sake of that *Wesung* that it 'creates' or throws the *Da*, and throws human being into it, where it is in this throw that human being first becomes human. This suggests, though, that being first 'is' just there and then *west* in and through the *Wesen* of Dasein which it sends, and which it originates through the sending. *Appropriate loquendo*, however, this cannot be said, since being 'is' not, but *west*, and so only 'is' in the *Wesung*. On the other hand, a certain priority of being inescapably announces itself.

The difficulties and ambiguities here can be located in Ruusbroec's thought, too, as they can in Eckhart's. The *overweseleke wesen* is wholly independent from all creatures, both in the order of things and in the order of ideas. But it is therefore also wholly unmanifest, so that what it is in itself, of that nothing whatsoever can properly be said. This is a *Wesen* that *nicht west*. Strictly speaking, such a *Wesen* is not a *Wesen* at all, or is so only in a special and extraordinary sense, in the sense, that is, of an *overwesen*. This wholly unknown God, however, is not different from the God revealed in the Son, and to the soul. While the superessential essence is modeless and nameless, the revelation, which takes place in modes and first permits naming, does require the creature, since it is given to the creature. The creature, though, is not there before this giving but comes about through it and for it. And, in a sense, 'God', too, is not 'there' before this outflowing, as Eckhart says, although the outflowing is not other than God and could not come about without the 'priority' of the God that cannot be named, not least because, with respect to this God, there is no one there to do the naming.

The question about the finitude (*Endlichkeit*) of being can be properly raised only within a context where these difficulties are understood. Being is finite insofar as its *Wesung* in and through what-is is necessarily delimited. But the being that *west* is in itself *ab-gründig*, is *Ab-grund*, and that also means that its *Wesung*, considered in itself, is never closed or ended. It is therefore never-ending, where this does not mean a mere constant continuation (*Fortwähren*) of the same, but the ever-possible return of the simple and unique (*Eine-Einzige*) (B, 371). This point about in-finitude was made with respect to Heidegger's interpretation of Anaximander's *apeiron* as *Verweigerung der Grenze*. In the *Beiträge, die Wesung des Seyns* also involves a *Verweigerung* that refuses any final grounding, any final naming which would constitute it as a

determinate ground or foundation, although it is at the same time an *abgründiger Grund*, and an *Abgrund* holding the original unity of space and time (B, 379).

The *Abgründigkeit* of this *Grund*, the openness of the *Abgrund*, is not groundlessness (*Grundlosigkeit*) (B, 387). Rather, the abyss of the essence of being is an origin whose inexhaustible power consists in the endlessness (an endlessness that is never boring because it is constantly original) of the *Wesung* in which it appropriates what-is to itself, and, in so doing, sends what-is into the truth of its own being, its own proper *Wesen*. *Wesen* in this instance is not 'essence' as opposed to 'existence', but is both *Was* and *Wiesein* in their original unity (B, 289). It is from this sense of being that it may be named as *Möglichkeit*, and it is a sense that, in truth, places it outside the traditional way of formulating the debate about finitude and infinitude. While Heidegger does say at points that being is finite, he qualifies this in the *Beiträge* by saying that the notion of the finitude of being is only meant as a transitional defense against idealism (B, 268). The notion of being as possibility is also transitional (B, 475), since, as the passage from the *Humanismusbrief* discussed above demonstrates, possibility is also not meant in the sense that traditional metaphysics ascribes to it. In view of that sense, it must be added that *Wesung* comprehends actuality and becoming 'as well'.

If the superessential essence of God, according to Ruusbroec, is the absolutely prior (not in a temporal sense) of which nothing can be properly said, and if its outflowing into the Son is its *openbarung*, then similar points about finitude and infinitude can be made in reference to his thought. The superessence is not, in itself, finite, and its manifestation in the Son, which might be conceived as the totality of its *Wesung*, is not finite, either. The superessence is in-finite because modeless. Its revelation in the Son is in-finite because it proceeds according to a 'divine' mode, because this revelation is the manifestation of the whole of itself. However, the revelation of this essence to the creature qua creature is necessarily finite, a revelation 'in modes'. The infinite modelessness of the divine unity is then the simple and abysmal source that makes possible every revelation of itself in space and time, a revelation which is necessarily manifold and finite.

As already indicated, the *Ereignis* in which being comes to presence is, for Heidegger, reciprocal. In the event of appropriation, *Dasein* is constituted in its proper relation to being. In works that have been

previously discussed, Heidegger speaks of this relation as a kind of accepting correspondence. It is a correspondence in which what is sent in the event is appropriately received, where appropriate reception is what constitutes Dasein in the essence proper to it. In the *Beiträge*, that essence consists in a being for the sake of *Wesung* itself, a being related to *Wesung* in a way that is proper to the relation to *Wesung* in which human being already stands. Just as, for Ruusbroec, the return to the origin upon which the soul is dependent is a realisation of what is already the case, so, for Heidegger, the event in which human being turns so as to stand appropriately within the event of appropriation is one where it realises the truth of its essence. In both cases, though, this realisation is a transformative one.

For the Heidegger of the *Beiträge*, Dasein is not man as such, but the way human being is when transformed through this turn. Dasein is then not what it seemed to be in *Sein und Zeit*, but is the being which characterizes man in his possibility, a future *Menschsein* (B, 301). It is the being of human being in 'the other beginning' (*das andere Anfang*), a beginning in which the long night of metaphysics will end and a new history for the West will dawn. This suggests an essential change, and it does involve a change in what has been taken as the essence of man in the history of metaphysics. That history, as Heidegger reads it, is the story of the forgetting of being. It is a story in which thinking is taken, and in some sense mistaken, as the measure and guiding determination for being (B, 215). Through this error, an error that is nothing merely intellectual, being, which is unrepresentable (*unvorstellbare*), is misrepresented by being represented as the being (beingness) of beings, and human being is mistaken in its essence by being constituted as the animal capable of reason, where reason eventually becomes the capability upon which the being of beings is grounded and to which it is delivered over. During the course of this mistaken relating to the relation between being and man, both are pushed out of their essence. Being is forgotten as the simple other to what-is, and falls into beingness, the most general and empty concept of reason. Because beingness is constituted by reason as a human faculty, this fall is a *Vermenschung* of being and its truth (B, 337). Human being, correspondingly, falls away from the truth of its essence as the 'there' of being, and asserts itself as the centre to which the being of beings is related, and on the basis of which it is constituted. The 'true' relation between being and human being is thereby reversed and

perverted, *verkehrt*.

The *Kehre* which rights this perverted relation does not involve correcting some logical mistake. The reversal that rights the relation cannot be prepared through some new doctrine about being, but only through *Dasein* (B, 98), only, that is, through the transposition of the essence of man into *Dasein*. In this transposition, what-is is not grounded on man, but man upon being (B, 184). Human being then 'stands' in a different way with respect to being. It stands in a way that understands itself in its genuine relation to being. It stands as the *Dasein* which is *ereignet* in *Ereignung*. Standing in this way means accepting the *Wesung* of being, but it is not as if, without this acceptance, the powers of which human being is possessed are not supported by being - no more than, for Ruusbroec, it is the case that a person who does not realise the inworking of, and dependency upon, God comes to be genuinely 'independent' of God. Without the *Seinsverständnis* granted to human being, it would not be human in any way at all, just as, for Ruusbroec, the creature, if it were ever parted from God, would fall into nothing. But there are different ways of being parted from the sustaining source. The parting that gives rise to the night of metaphysics in Heidegger's thought, like the parting that is possible in Ruusbroec's, is an ignorance of the source, an ignorance involving more than an intellectual mistake. It is a being in the wrong which, to put it in a non-Heideggerian way, is a function of the will rather than of the intellect. In this case, though, the will is not merely affective, but also noetic, for it is because of the will that the relation is mistaken. The acceptance that reverses the relation is then a kind of conversion in which human being turns into the truth of itself. Turning into this truth means realising, in thought as well as in deed, the true relation to the origin.

For Heidegger, this realisation consists in *das inständliche Wissen, wie das Seyn west* ['the knowledge of how being comes to presence, a knowledge that "stands within"'] (B, 6-7). When human being stands within this *Wissen*, where such *Inständigkeit* means being *Dasein*, it realizes the truth, and that means the *Wesung*, of being. It stands within that truth, within the event of the giving that appropriates: *Ereignis*. Heidegger describes this as *Inständigkeit in der Mitte des Seyns, in der Wesung des Seyns (das Ereignis) als der Mitte* ['standing-within in the centre of being, in the coming to presence of being (*Ereignis*) as the centre'] (B, 12-13). This is also *Innestehen in der Wahrheit des Seyns (als Ereignis)*

['standing-in in the truth of being (as *Ereignis*')] (B, 467). The truth of being *west* only in this standing-within in *Dasein*, and so *in der Erfahrung der Geworfenheit in das Da aus der Zugehörigkeit zum Zuruf des Ereignisses* ['in the experience of thrownness into the "there" from out of belonging to the appeal of *Ereignis*'] (B, 233). In the other beginning, this experience constitutes 'understanding' the truth of being. Understanding is then in-standing, as the stand where *der Mensch* is situated within the sending of *Ereignis*. *Verstehen*, as the in-standing of this stand, is a performance (*Vollzug*) and an acceptance (*Übernahme*). It is a stand that withstands and stands out in (*aussteht*) the in-standing in the truth of being, a stand which accepts the ap-propriation of *Ereignis* (B, 260). Through this acceptance, *Dasein* as *ek-sistere* becomes: *Eingerücktsein in und Hinausstehen in die Offenheit des Seyns* ['being enraptured into and standing out in the openness of being'] (B, 303).

The withstanding in-standing of this out-standing understanding is a suffering, *Er-leiden* (B, 260). It is a *Sich-in-der-Wahrheit-halten*, a holding-oneself-in-the-truth, where the 'holding' is not an assertion of human will and need, but an openness of the self to and within being as *Ereignis*. This stand neither creates nor compels; it only opens the self for *Ereignis*. But not only is the giving of *Ereignis*, the coming to presence of being, not under the control of the self, neither is the transposition into the inwardness which is capable of receiving, or at least not entirely. Rather, Heidegger says, *Wenn . . . das Ereignis in die Selbstheit hereinscheint, dann liegt darin die Weisung zur Innigkeit* ['When . . . *Ereignis* shines into selfhood, then lies therein the directive towards inwardness'] (B, 265). The turning in towards and within the inwardness in which the truth of being hiddenly reveals itself (B, 286) is not effected by the self, but by the inshining of this truth, i.e. of *Ereignis* itself.

Nonetheless, human being can 'attune' itself to and for this event. The attunement for appropriation, which is the fundamental attunement (*Grund-stimmung*) of the other beginning, Heidegger names *Verhaltenheit*. *Verhaltenheit* is *die stärkste und zugleich zarteste Bereitschaft des Daseins für die Er-eynung, das Geworfenwerden in das eigentliche Innestehen in der Wahrheit von der Kehre im Ereignis* ['the strongest and at the same time most gentle readiness of *Dasein* for ap-propriating, for being thrown into the authentic standing-in in truth by the turning in *Ereignis*'] (B, 34). Appropriate attunement to the event of appropriation is

readiness to be turned by the turning that turns into the truth of being. It is readiness for the appeal (*Zuruf*) contained not in the being of man - as *Sein und Zeit* might mislead one to think - but in the essence of being (B, 51). Every authentic *Entwurf* is, as *geworfen*, a response to this appeal, and therefore an instance of the truth of being (B, 56, 252)). In the other beginning, history (*Geschichte*) is this response. It is not the history of the great achievements of man, but the history in which *Jegliches auf seine Einzigkeit sich zusammenzieht und als ein Lichtblick des Denkens eine Wahrheit des Seins in dessen eigenen undurchmessenen Raum verstrahlt* ['each draws together upon his uniqueness and radiates, as a ray of thinking, a truth of being in its own unmeasured space'] (B, 432).

The preparation for the turn in which the other beginning begins is, as has been suggested, a readiness that endures and suffers. What it endures is the truth of being. Turning into this truth, however, it must first endure the darkness of *Seinsverlassenheit*, of forsakenness by being. In this forsakenness, what-is is forsaken by the being that belongs to it. It then appears as object and as present-at-hand, *als ob das Seyn nicht weste* ['as if being did not come to presence'] (B, 115). The endurance in which this forsakenness is comprehended is not the night of metaphysics, but is the dawn of the other beginning, the dawn which first breaks that night: *Die Seinsverlassenheit ist die erste Dämmerung des Seyns als Sichverbergen aus der Nacht der Metaphysik* ['forsakenness by being is the first dawning of being as self-concealing out of the night of metaphysics'] (B, 293). Thus, the first moment of the turn lies in awakening to the night as night, but in that very awakening, the light of the new beginning has already begun to dawn. What the awakening awakes to is the need (*Not*) of being, the reciprocal need of man and being that constitutes the essence of being human as *Dasein*. It is when the awareness of this need begins to dawn upon man that the night of metaphysics, where the subject is the centre, begins to give way to the day of the centrality of being.

The dawn of this awakening, however, as the first moment of the turn, is not 'just' an awareness, but already an alteration in the way human being is situated, the way it situates itself. Being is realised as the centre only when *Dasein* stands within its truth as centre, only when the subject is de-centred. The decentering of the subject is at the same time the realisation of *Dasein*, and that means also the realisation of being not as perfect presence but as a lighting which conceals and shelters (*verbirgt*) truth within itself, a lighting that grants truth to *Dasein*, but

'in modes', one might say - according to the historical finitude proper to Dasein. That *sich verbergen* belongs to the coming to pass of truth then means both that it is sheltered within and granted by being, rather than grounded in the subject as the constitutive centre of all relations, and that its coming to presence is necessarily limited, where it is that very fact which gives it, as *Ab-grund*, the character of the never-ending which is both not boring and no cause for despair. Indeed, the stand where human being relinquishes the quest for truth as permanent presence and full clarity without either despair or resignation marks the completion of the turning that endures (see B, 397, 412).

The understanding characterizing this stand is, as in the *Grundbegriffe*, an *Inbegriff*. Because Dasein, as belonging to the appeal (*Zugehörigkeit zum Zuruf*), as cor-responding to the truth of being, is grounded in *Ereignis*, the innermost element of this *Inbegriff* lies in a *Begreifen* of the turning itself. It lies in the knowledge which, withstanding the need and distress of *Seinsverlassenheit*, stands within in readiness for the appeal (B, 64). Standing within in such readiness is *inbegriffliche Denken*. In the lighting (*Lichtung*) that thus stands within, the fullness of the coming to presence of being hiddenly unveils itself (*sich . . . verbergend enthüllt*) (B, 286).

The thinking corresponding to this understanding is an unsupported and unprotected questioning in the abyss of the truth of being (B, 170). It is renunciation (*Verzichtung*) as an original standing that remains unsupported in the unprotected (B, 487). Those who are capable of the stand of this thinking do not attempt to escape the abyss. Rather, their quest (*Suchen*) loves the abyss, for in that abyss they know the oldest ground (B, 13). These relinquish the quest for the correctness (*Richtigkeit*) of absolute certainty (*Gewißheit*); they give up the quest for security that characterises the history of metaphysics (see B, 203). The relinquishment of this quest, a quest definitive for the essence of man in the history of Western metaphysics, is an *Untergang*, a setting and downfall, a going under. What goes under in this *Untergang* is the essence of man as centre, and with the setting of this essence, the corresponding constellation of being, being as beingness determined in orientation from thinking as *Vorstellen* and *Vernehmen*, sets as well. This *Untergang* gathers all that is great into the moment (*Augenblick*) of readiness for the truth of being (B, 228). The moment is the gift in the ripeness of time. It is the point at which the time is ready for the gift of the

giving (*Verschenkung*) in which *Ereignis* sends itself to man and man is converted into *Dasein*.

In this moment of conversion, then, the subject is no longer the relational centre which, as centre, constitutes the being (beingness) of what-is. The centre, rather, is *Dasein* as *das ungeschützte Inmitten, das den Sturm der Er-eignung entfesselt* ['the unprotected "in the middle", which unleashes the storm of ap-propriating'] (B, 243). When the question, who is man? is followed to the conclusion that surpasses and overcomes the dominion of reason and its logic, it leads into the unprotected, and so allows the storm of being to come over it and overcome it (*und so den Sturm des Seins über sich kommen läßt*) (B, 300). It is through the mutual *Er-eignung* of this storm, in which being and *Dasein* catch sight of and belong to one another, that the essence of man as representing subject and the essence of being as represented object are extinguished. The moment of this turning is the *Erblitzen des Seyns aus dem Beständnis des einfachen und nie errechenbaren Ereignisses* ['lightning-flash of being from the endurance of the simple and never calculable *Ereignis*'] (B, 409). Although the reversal (*Umschlag*) of this transformation (*Wandlung*) extends to all, it is not comprehended by all, for *nur Wenige stehen immer in der Helle dieses Blitzes* ['it is always only a few that stand in the brightness of this flash'] (B, 409).

Heidegger's thought intends to be neither metaphysical nor mystical but *seynsgeschichtlich*, and this necessarily differentiates it from the thought of Ruusbroec, as well as Bonaventure, Eckhart and Tauler. For Heidegger, the moment of turning, while rooted in the decisive vision of only a few, is still a historical moment, one which founds a new history for the West. But there are a number of similarities between this world-historical journey and the individual mystical path described by Ruusbroec. Ruusbroec's emphasis on the need for grace at every step, for instance, which is one of the elements that differentiates his mysticism from that of Eckhart, finds a parallel in Heidegger's emphasis on the dependency of *Dasein* upon the gift of *Ereignis*, a gift beyond its control. The turning in to *Inständigkeit* is a response to the inshining of this gift, just as the in-turning of the soul is, for Ruusbroec, a response to the in-flashing of God. In both cases, the turning is a conversion involving a simultaneous turning away and turning towards. And it is a conversion into truth, a truth which is itself granted and suffered, and into whose hidden brightness the one who turns is transposed.

There is also a parallel between Heidegger's account of *Seinsverlassenheit* and Ruusbroec's notion of *ghelatenheit*. The two moments of *ghelatenheit*, forsakenness and surrender or relinquishment, find an echo in Heidegger's notion of the forsakenness by being which may be overcome by a relinquishment of the centrality of the subject. For both Heidegger and Ruusbroec, this relinquishment is a willingness to endure absence, and an abandonment of the search for security. But while the *Untergang* which this relinquishment involves for Heidegger can be compared with Ruusbroec's conception of humility, there is, as usual, nothing in Heidegger's thought corresponding to the Christian notion of compassion.

There is, however, in Heidegger's account of *Ereignung*, something corresponding to Ruusbroec's notion of love. The parallel between the giving of *Ereignis* and the outflowing of God as love as already been noted, but there is also a similarity between the ways Heidegger and Ruusbroec describe the response to this giving. For both, the inclination is a reciprocal one. For Ruusbroec, the response to the touch of love is love, while for Heidegger *Ereignung* involves a mutual giving over of being and *Dasein*. The similarity of some of the language in which they describe the event of this encounter is apparent, and what is important about this language is that it, once again in contrast with Eckhart, places the emphasis on moments of transformation, moments where something that transforms is suffered, something that can in no way be compelled or calculated.

This emphasis on an overpowering power does not, for either Ruusbroec or Heidegger, take away self-responsibility. Just as grace and effort go hand in hand for Ruusbroec, so the turning, for Heidegger, requires a preparation. The giving of *Ereignis* is beyond human control, but while it, and only it, can enable an appropriate response, it does not inevitably compel that response. Correspondance to its sending requires an openness and dedication. It requires something much like the *Denken*, which, in *Was heißt Denken?*, is said to be *Meinen* in the sense of *minne*.

In comparing these features of Ruusbroec's and Heidegger's thought, it is important to steer a careful course between the Scylla of 'identity' on the one side and the Charybdis of 'analogy' on the other. Heidegger is not talking about a personal experience of God, and his thought is historical through and through. But the similarity between what he says and what Ruusbroec says is not a matter of some purely formal analogy, either, nor does it just involve that form of repetition which often

provides an amusing pastime for source-spothers and a certain species of literary critic, but is otherwise not of much interest. The matter hinges on the relation between what Ruusbroec calls God and what Heidegger calls being, and the question of this relation cannot be avoided if the comparison is to be anything more than wholly superficial. The differences between these two, Ruusbroec's Christian God and Heidegger's being, are clear but what is the same in this difference is that both are a sustaining ground, as well as an abyss of possibility. Unless one is willing to embrace wholeheartedly some peculiar modern version of double truth, what is being talked about under these two names must be, in some sense, not identical, since what is being said is by no means identical, but the same. Unless 'the most abysmal unique ground of history' (B, 430) is something completely different from the abysmal unique ground of the individual? If not, then what is encountered in the experience where the self suffers the knowledge of the sustaining abyss to which it is always related, but to which it does not always know itself to be related, must be, in some sense, the same. It is then not surprising if the ways to this knowledge are described in terms that are similar in certain ways.

But what, for Ruusbroec, is an individual way becomes, for Heidegger, a historical one, and, indeed, one involving the departure of the Christian God, and the absence, for a time, of all gods. The absence of God in this time can be compared with the absence of God in the first moment of *ghelatenheit* (forsakenness), and the preparation for the advent of a new God with the second (relinquishment), but here the absence extends to an age, and requires the conversion of an age. In itself, the transformation of what was once considered an individual progress into a historical one is not new. Hegel does something similar. Furthermore, the nature and product of this transformation, in the case of both Hegel and Heidegger, is markedly influenced by Christian eschatological thought. But, for Heidegger, the end of philosophy, which is also the end of the first history, does not mark the achievement of an ideal state (a notion which, he says, goes against the essence of history) but is a moment of turning into a new beginning (B, 415). And whereas Hegel tells the story of the progress of reason, Heidegger's story is one of the exhaustion of reason. This story reaches its conclusion with Nietzsche, who represents the completion of subjectivity in the metaphysics of will to power and the theory of truth which accompanies it, perspectivism. The reversal that Heidegger attempts to prepare might be seen as turning Nietzsche's thought

inside out. Where the centre is not the subject, but Dasein, a 'perspective' is not a human view, but a view 'of' being, of being itself (cf. B, 447), which both is and is not the being of beings, and so of Dasein (B, 171). *Inständigkeit* names this reversal. What is then manifest in the works of Dasein, for instance, in a work of art, is the truth of being itself, a truth to which Dasein belongs as the being which it is.

That a history is 'a style of Dasein' (B, 34) then means that it is a style of the being of beings, and so a mode of truth. The reversal, in founding a new style of Dasein, founds a new style of being, and so a new style of the coming to presence of truth. It might be thought at first that Heidegger's conception of truth here is rather like Kierkegaard's notion of truth as subjectivity,⁶ but because Dasein is not a subject, but the clearing for the unconcealment of being, and because being is not the being of man, but the being of what-is as a whole, Heidegger's thought is no less an overturning of Kierkegaard than of Nietzsche. While for both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, the way the subject stands determines the nature of the 'truth' which that subject either discovers or creates, for Heidegger the stand of Dasein is not a subjective stance, but a way of being within being, a way of being-in-the-truth. Kierkegaard conceives of subjectivity as a form of being in the truth,⁷ where faith is a matter of subjectivity, and Heidegger does himself describe what he calls *Sich-in-der-Wahrheit-halten* as a kind of believing or faith (*Glauben*) as opposed to knowledge. In this case, though, 'holding' does not mean holding-for-true (*Für-wahr-halten*) in the form of adherence to a particular creed, and it is opposed to what Heidegger describes as *an eigensuchtiges Erraffen einer selbstgemachten Sicherheit* ['self-seeking snatching at a self-made certainty']. Placing itself out in the *Wesung* of being, and therefore experiencing the necessity of the *ab-gründig*, this holding gives up all certainty and security in favour of openness (B, 369-70). It questions, and is therefore always restless, although, in the restlessness of this constant questioning, there is also a kind of rest (B, 397). The steadiness of Dasein consists in this constant willingness for *Wesung*.

What brings Heidegger into proximity with the strand of mystical thought to which Ruusbroec, among others, belongs is the notion of being as an *Abgrund* that refuses and denies any final conceptualization or expression, but which, at the same time, is the source of all the finite modes in which it reveals itself, a source that conceals and shelters the inexhaustible wealth of those modes within itself. 'Correspondence' with

this kind of source then has to mean withstanding the denial of a definitive and final expression in favour of an ongoing accordance, as it does for both Ruusbroec and Heidegger, each in his own way. It means withstanding the abyss while at the same time being 'attuned' to it in its self-manifestation. For Ruusbroec, the abyss is the superessential essence of God, from which the finite manifestations, and so the names, of God arise. For Heidegger, the abyss is being itself, from whose self-withdrawing giving (*Ereignis*) the epochs of history, each of which is a determinate truth of being, arise. This abyss, for Heidegger, is not God, but is that which lets God and gods be.

Enduring the abyss means, for Heidegger, enduring the end, especially, of the God of reason, the God whom metaphysics presumes to understand. It means, also, enduring the end of the absolute, the end of all claims to absoluteness on the part of any creed or doctrine. Because *Seinsverlassenheit* names the condition in which man is abandoned by all such absolutes, it is the ground and more original determination of what Nietzsche first understood as nihilism (B, 119). Enduring the abyss as the end of all absolutes then means, first, enduring nihilism, and the accordance that endures this truth, this manner of the coming to presence of being (the manner, that is, of absence) involves terror (*Erschrecken*) in the face of the abyss, as well as awe (*Scheu*) (B, 14). The submission that willingly endures these attunements prepares for the reversal.

Enduring the abyss, for Ruusbroec, means suffering the end of names, concepts and images, and that also means suffering the knowledge that no name is *wholly* proper to the *overweselike* and *afgrondig* essence of God. The devotion which corresponds to this essence must be willing to endure this knowledge. In the age of faith, this does not require enduring nihilism, although appropriateness to God does require enduring, at times, the distress of the absence of God, and submitting to that absence as a self-withdrawal on the part of God. In the present age, according to Heidegger, appropriate devotion to the abysmal and self-withdrawing truth of being cannot be faith but questioning. But this is faith in the sense of the holding-oneself-in-the-truth that endures the abyss as opposed to faith in the sense of the holding-for-true that refuses the abyss, and that is why, in one of his works, Heidegger makes the seemingly peculiar claim that, apart from Hölderlin, Nietzsche was the only faithful (*gläubige*) man of the 19th century.⁶⁹ While such faith still requires, in the modern age, a kind of fervour, it also requires the coldness of a courage that can

endure the death of all gods, all absolutes, for the sake of the abysmal truth of being. *Nur die Kälte der Kühnheit des Denkens und die Nacht der Irre des Fragens leihen dem Feuer des Seyns Glut und Licht* ['only the coldness of the courage of thinking and the night of the errance of questioning lend the fire of being heat and light'] (B, 430). To find this fire, one must be willing to wander, for a time, in darkness. One must withstand the night, and not run away from it into the 'false day' of everydayness, a day that does not truly end the night, but only attempts to escape from it (B, 487). It attempts to escape from the realization of the ultimate hiddenness (*Verborgenheit*) of being. The willful sleep of this false day opposes awakening to the truth of being, and therefore leaves being in its concealment, where *Seyn in die Verborgenheit lassen und das Seyn als das Sichverbergende erfahren ist grundverschieden* ['to leave being in its concealment and to understand it as what conceals itself are fundamentally different'] (B, 255).

While the abyss can be compared with the unmanifest and unnameable God, and the gods that arise from it with the always finite and specific (and that will mean, when extended to history, localized and regionalised) manifestations of it, God, for Heidegger, never means the abysmal *Wesung* of being, but is always an entity, and one that needs or uses (*braucht*) being. In the age of *Seinsverlassenheit*, no such entity is forthcoming because the essence of man as subject and rational animal, and that means the way man stands in relation to being when standing within this essence, does not permit the experience of being from out of which a god may be born. That experience requires the turning, and therefore requires, first of all, the experience of *Seinsverlassenheit* itself, and in the two moments which have been compared with Ruusbroec's *ghelatenheit*. It requires a realization of abandonment and of dependency, a realization of belonging to being, where this is, at the same time a being ap-propriated by the *Wesung* of being (*Ereignung*). In this realization, the human is not diminished. Rather, Heidegger suggests, it is then that being human first achieves the true dignity and worth of its essence.

In the turning, human being is joined to being, and it then stands at the disposal of the gods: *Und fügend in die Fuge des Seyns stehen wir den Göttern zur Verfülgung* ['And joining into the ordering jointure of being we stand under the enjoiment of the gods'] (B, 18). Such *Fügung* is the rule (*Gesetz*) of thinking in the other beginning, in contrast with the 'system' at the end of the history of the first beginning (B, 310). Here, system

and logical derivation give way to historical readiness for the truth of being (B, 242). Because, in this beginning, thinking is outside the determination of truth as certainty, it is necessarily without system, un-systematic (B, 65). Therefore, according to Heidegger, *alles Schulmäßige* is impossible in the other beginning (B, 179), and there is neither ontology nor metaphysics (B, 59). This thinking is not a quest for certainty according to the familiar rules of logic, but a *schaffende Aushalten im Ab-grund* ['creative holding out in the abyss'] (B, 36) and a *schaffende Verwahrung des Gottes, der je nur in Werk und Opfer, Tat und Denken das Seyn durchgottet* ['creative safekeeping of God, who divinizes being only in work and sacrifice, act and thought'] (B, 252). Through this creation, through the *Wesung* of being as the *Wesung* of truth, 'God' is first brought into being. It is for this reason that being is said to be what the God of gods and all divinization (*Götterung*) need (B, 243). Where God is a divine being for which human being reaches and against which it defines its existence, being is not God but the origin that differentiates (*entscheidet*) man and God and appropriates (*er-eigenet*) them one to another (B, 87). And it is that through which the God comes to exist, and especially through the ones who suffer its truth by dwelling near it as abysmal origin. Within Heidegger's thought, too, it could be said that the flight of these, the ones who stand alone within the *Wesung* of being, involves a kind of *opgange* and a *nidergange*, a reaching into the wealth of the abyss and a bringing of that wealth to birth in thought, work and act. This is the 'creative grounding' in which man becomes *Dasein* (B, 280). Through it, the ones who stand within *Ereignis* assist being in the birth of 'the last God'.

This last God, who is said to be wholly different from all past gods and especially from the Christian one (B, 403), is not the final in a series, but the possibility of a new history. It is the God corresponding to the style of *Dasein*/being in the other beginning (B, 411). In this style, this way of standing, historical man is given a goal once again, to become the founder and preserver of the truth of being, to be the *Da*, the ground used by the *Wesen* of being itself, a ground which, because of its relation to that *Wesen*, is itself abysmal. For this way of being, *Sorge*, which in *Sein und Zeit* was named as the articulated whole of *Dasein*, is for the sake of being, not the being of man, but the being of what-is as a whole (B, 16). *Sorge* is then the fundamental trait of *Dasein* as the *Sucher, Wahrer* and *Wächter* ['seeker, keeper and guardian'] of being (B, 17).

As Dasein, man gives up his lostness in what-is in order to become *der Er-eignete und Zugehörige zum Seyn* ['the ap-propriated and adherent to being'] (B, 251), so that, in this new history, which cannot be calculated but is the gift or withdrawal of *Er-eignung* itself (B, 248), all that is (*alles Seiende*) is sacrificed (*geopfert*) to being, and receives its truth from this (B, 230). It receives its truth from the holding-in-truth that willingly suffers appropriation.

The saying (*Sagen*) of being in this history does not have being for an object but springs from it as origin (B, 473). It speaks from the experience and knowledge of being. Since being, against all that is, is the *Un-gewöhnliche*, the wholly unusual, the uncommonness of this experience and knowledge is not surprising (B, 481). In its average everydayness, after all, Dasein is preoccupied with what-is, and *das Seyn ist . . . allem Seienden abgründig fern* ['being is unfathomably distant from all that is'] (B, 479). Because of this, *jedesmal wird das Denken »des« Seyns durch dieses selbst in seine Ungewöhnlichkeit gerissen und jeder Beihilfen aus Erklärungen von Seienden beraubt* ['the thinking "of" being is in each case torn away into its unusualness by being itself, and robbed of every help of elucidation from what-is'] (B, 471). Thinking in the other beginning knows nothing about the elucidation of being through what-is, and nothing of the conditioning of what-is through being, a conditioning that always also conditions (*verdingt*) being through what-is (B, 480). To know being itself, therefore, we must step out of all habit and custom (*Gewöhnung*), out of all that is usual, and although this is *our* part and work (*Betrieb*), we can never accomplish it ourselves. It must, rather, be accomplished by being itself (B, 481). Only this accomplishment can provide an answer to the question of how it could ever be possible to think the *Wesung* of being itself without being oriented to what-is (B, 429).

Given the distance of being from all that is, the essence of being is never sayable in any finally valid (*endgültig*) fashion, but this does not indicate a lack. On the contrary, the knowledge that does not seek the finally valid holds fast to the abyss, and therefore to the essence of being (B, 460). Dasein is distinguished precisely by nearness to this abyss (B, 487), and the distinction of its saying consists in the renunciation which is ready for the refusal of all finality (B, 22), but ready, too, for the inventive thinking (*Er-denken*) of being, and naming of its essence, which helps the gods into being (B, 460). This inventive

thinking of being does not think up a concept, but achieves that freeing from what merely is which makes one suitable (*ge-eignet*) for the determination (*Bestimmung*) of thinking from being (B, 463). The *Vielnamigkeit* of this thinking in no way denies the simplicity of being, but is a function of *das Ungreifliche alles Einfachen* ['the incomprehensibility of all that is simple] (B, 21). *So reich gefügt . . . das Seyn west, es ruht doch in ihm selbst und seiner Einfachheit* ['However richly formulated . . . being comes to presence, it still rests in itself and its simplicity'] (B, 470). With respect to the task of knowing and naming this simplicity, the supposed 'strictness' (*Strenge*) of logic is of no help. In fact, in this context, logic may be the least strict (*streng*) way of all (B, 461), the way least *angemessen* to what needs to be thought. The lighting/clearing of the *Da* moves instead in the region of *Einbildung*, which is not the name of some faculty, i.e. 'imagination', but the happening of the lighting itself (B, 312). It is the event in which *Dasein*, appropriated by being and standing within it, transforms the forms of beings in an attempt to make them proper to the saying of being.

But if being itself is unfathomably distant from all that is, and if all saying is in some way necessarily bound to what-is, how is the saying of being itself possible at all? Can the truth of being be immediately (*unmittelbar*) said, when all language is the language of what-is? Or can a new language for being be invented? Heidegger's answer is no; only one thing is possible: *die edelste gewachsene Sprache in ihrer Einfachheit und Wesensgewalt, die Sprache des Seienden als Sprache des Seyns sagen* ['(to use) the most finely evolved language in its simplicity and essential power, to say the language of what-is as the language of being'] (B, 78). In this saying, the word is not a sign (*Zeichen*) indicating something else. What it says is meant (*gemeint*), but this 'meaning' (*Meinen*) is only proper, only truly dedicated (*eignet nur zu*) to being as *Da-sein* (B, 80). What is said means being only when the thoughtful questioning and saying of *Dasein* are themselves oriented and bound to being, only when *Dasein* is thinking 'of' being. As is the case for Ruusbroec, then, the word means the other to all that is when the one who speaks it means that other. And the transformation of meaning is granted and preserved only by the transformation of the one who means. The word means truly only when it is formed and spoken (and heard) from within and out of the experience of that to which it refers. Since that is wholly simple, such meaning requires knowing the simple while saying the manifold, where knowing the

simple means standing within it, a standing which signals the end of all logic and which can only be effected by the simple itself.

For Heidegger, this transformation of meaning requires a procedure whereby thinking accompanies the usual understanding of a word, until, at the right moment, there is a sudden reversal (*Umschlag*). For instance, in the case of »*Entscheidung*«, 'decision', it means an act of man until, suddenly, it means the essence of being itself (B, 84). It is then not an act on the part of man, but the differentiation of being from what-is, as well as the *Ereignung* in which *Dasein* is set apart from what-is in its belonging to being. Readiness for decision is then readiness for this difference, not readiness for an act of self-assertive willing. This reversal of meaning does not mean that being is then interpreted in an anthropological way, but the opposite. Man is then placed back into the essence of being, and the chains of 'anthropology' are broken (B, 84).

Heidegger consistently claims, in the *Beiträge*, that *Sein und Zeit*, as a transitional work, is on the way to this reversal, and that, because of the intermediate character it has as a consequence, much of what it says is ambiguous and therefore potentially misleading. The ambiguity rests in the fact that many of its key concepts can be read in either an existential-anthropological way or in a being-historical one. *Entschlossenheit*, for instance, can be read as the resoluteness of an individual or as ecstatic openness to being. *Entwurf* can be read as a human projection, and *Geworfenheit* as the background of shared assumptions, handed down by the tradition, forming the basis of that projection, or *geworfener Entwurf* can mean the throw 'of' being, thrown by being. When thought in terms of this ambiguity, that *Dasein* is *das Sein des Grundes* (SZ, 285) would then mean either that man is the basis of all reasons, or that *Dasein* is the place of the *Wesung*, the coming to presence, of the ground, i.e. of being.

These ambiguities, and many others, are involved in the essential ambiguity of metaphysics, which, for Heidegger, is subject-centred and thinks of being only in terms of what-is. For the sake of communication, Heidegger says, it is often necessary to go in the path of such metaphysical thinking, while yet always knowing the other (B, 430). Fundamental ontology, which founds but at the same time overcomes all ontology, is part of this path. Because it must start out from the known and current, it always stands in the half-light (*Zwielicht*) between the setting of the first beginning, whose history is governed by the *Leitfrage*

about the being of beings, and the dawning of the other one, governed by the *Grundfrage* of being itself (B, 305). The half-light of this way must be endured, because there is no immediate way leading from the being of beings to being itself. Rather, the transition from the one to the other, like the transition from one mode of existence to another for Kierkegaard, requires a leap (*Sprung*) (B, 75-6). This leap is a decision and, as such, it places man, and so history, before an either/or (*Entweder-Oder*) (B, 101).⁹

While metaphysical thinking may be transitional in the sense of temporary, what Heidegger says about the nature of the saying of being suggests that all language, with respect to being, is in a sense necessarily *übergänglich*, because language can only speak of being by speaking of beings while meaning being. For Ruusbroec, the situation with respect to naming the essence of God is the same. In the end, it may actually be the case that metaphysics can be part of this meaning, if it is spoken and heard in an appropriate way. To say that a certain metaphysics is grounded in mysticism would then be no slur, but would point to the highest possibility that a particular reading of it might set free. Perhaps that reading would be a 'poetic' one, and perhaps even, in some sense, a 'religious' one. Is mysticism not, after all, the 'poetry of religion'?¹⁰

Many of the points Heidegger raises in the *Beiträge* are repeated in a variety of ways in a number of his later works. In *Der Spruch des Anaximander*, for instance, which has already been discussed at some length elsewhere, Heidegger again discusses what he sees as the condition of being and man at the end of the first history of the West. This history stands at the *eschaton* of being as the beingness of beings, the outermost point of the essence of being hitherto, which is the point of complete departure (*Abschied*), of *Seinsverlassentheit*. In this outermost point, the destiny of the being of beings is gathered up (*legesthai*, *logos*). It is as a destiny drawn together at the end that being is inherently eschatological (Hw, 323/18). It is then inherently *end-lich*. Through the darkness of the night of metaphysics, the darkness of the history of errance in which the essence of being and man are misinterpreted, the destiny of being awaits the gathering lightning of this end.

This destiny is an attempt which seeks itself and tries itself (*versucht sich an*); its end is by no means decided. Eschatology is not teleology.¹¹ The awaiting holds within it the possibilities of the

appropriately skilfull response, which brings with it the potential for a fortunate outcome, although it can never itself secure that outcome and so must not be secure about it, as well as of the improper and careless response, which might take the form of a lack of response and which precipitates the unfortunate. In short, the destiny of being, and therefore of human being, is not decided because it rests upon decision, and decision, if it is truly free (and freedom lies within the very nature of decision) has to be a decision between possibilities.

The decision that Western Dasein makes or fails to make in the twilight of its history, then, where such failure is itself a kind of decision, cannot decisively determine the nature of the end of the destiny of being to which its own essence belongs. Nor can Dasein guarantee the dawning of a new beginning for itself, since this lies, ultimately, in the self-destining, the granting, of being. But it can at least decide to prepare itself to receive the truth of being by turning itself towards it, as far as it can. Whether being will then turn towards Dasein in its truth, and end the night of the total absence of being, the night which is really only beginning to be in the twilight of being's departure, remains undecided, for Dasein's own decision cannot turn being. It can only turn to being and wait, and hope, for being to turn itself.

Heidegger believes that poets may help to prepare this turning. In *Wozu Dichter?*, which was discussed briefly in Chapter Two (see p. 151), it is suggested that that may be what poets are for in this destitute time, the time of the world-night. The growing destitution of this time is marked not only by the 'default' of God (*Fehl Gottes*) and the extinction of the divine radiance, but, worst of all, by the failure to even discern this lack as a lack (Hw, 265/91). In this work, *Abgrund* means the failure of any ground for the world because of this default, a failure that must be withstood in preparation for the turning (*Wende*) of the age. The poets are the ones who experience and endure this failure of ground, this abyss of the world, and who willingly reach into it. In so doing, they help to prepare a fitting abode (*Aufenthalt*) for God. They help to prepare in the world a place appropriate to God (*gottgemäßer*), a place to which something like a god may return because it is suitable for the dwelling of such an entity. This requires that the radiance of divinity (*Glanz von Gottheit*) begin to shine once more over all that is (Hw, 266/92). The poets help to prepare this by remaining on the track of the gods who have fled (Hw, 268/94).

Heidegger considers Hölderlin to be the primary example of such a poet, but most of *Wozu Dichter?* is dedicated to an interpretation of Rilke, whose poetry Heidegger sees as a development from, but not an overcoming of, the completion of Western metaphysics by Nietzsche (Hw, 271/98). The extent to which this development at the same time helps to prepare a transition will also be, for Heidegger, the extent to which Rilke's poetry answers to the need of the age. Heidegger's interpretation and assessment of Rilke on this point also provides some clues for understanding a number of elements in his own transitional thinking. The comparison of these elements with corresponding ones in Ruusbroec's thought can, therefore, be extended through an analysis of this interpretation.

In the age of the absence of ground, Rilke's poetry suggests 'nature' as the ground of beings, and therefore as the being of beings. Nature is not in this case a specific region of beings, but is the power that gathers and releases all beings. It is the being of beings as will and as life. This ground is an *Urgrund* because it is the ground of the beings that we ourselves are, as well as of what-is as a whole. It sets all beings loose, 'ventures' and so 'wills' them, into what they are. It thereby sets them free into the unprotected and exposes them to risk, but it does not abandon them. Rather, what is ventured is upheld by, and kept safe within, the venturing ground, so that it is actually *sorg-los*, 'care-less', *sine cura, securum*, safe and secure. Thus, the unprotectedness of what is ventured does not exclude, but includes, its being secure in its ground (Hw, 274-7/100-4).

In this venture that sets free while keeping safe in the ground, being, the ground itself, draws all that is towards itself as the centre (*Mitte*). In its gathering release, being holds all particular beings in this drawing relation (*Bezug*) towards itself as an all-attractive gravitational centre, and this draw determines the draft, the relational design, as it were, of what-is. The whole of this draft is »das Offene«, the open, which does not name the unconcealedness of beings, but the drawing in which all beings fuse with the boundless (*Schrankenlose*) and infinite (*Unendliche*). The ambiguity that all metaphysical terms carry is evident, Heidegger claims, in this term, 'the open', as it is in the term 'venture' (*Wagnis*). It rests in the fact that these terms name both being and what-is. The venture names both the venturing ground, or the venture itself which withdraws itself in the venture, and it names what is ventured as a whole. The open, the 'boundless', names both the releasing

from bounds and the whole of what is released, and so both the unbounding and the unbounded (Hw, 277-81/104-6).

Man, for Rilke, is ventured in a special way by the being of beings as will. He is ventured so as to be, necessarily, more venturesome than any other being, but he can be more venturesome in one of two ways, in that he can relate himself to the venturesomeness of the ground in one of two ways. He can be more venturesome either through a self-assertive willing that parts against the open, against the will as the being of beings, or through a willingness that turns into the open and accords with that will. In the former case, seeking absolute security and protection, he actually becomes insecure and unprotected. In the latter case, venturing beyond all protection into the abyss, he becomes secure, *securus, sine cura*. In the former case, he sets himself up as centre, thereby endangering his own essence; in the latter case, he reposes safely in the centre, thereby securing his essence (Hw, 294/120). As in the *Beiträge*, then, the creation arising from turning into the centre is not a production, but a bringing forth of what has been received. *Es empfängt und gibt Empfangenes* ['It receives, and gives what it has received']. It creates out of the source by giving what has been received from that source, by unfolding it in its fullness (Hw, 294/120).

Such a willingness constitutes an inversion (*Umkehrung*) of the aversion (*Abkehr*) against the open, and this turning (*Wendung*) requires having seen the danger threatening the essence of man. But in order to have seen this essential danger so as to be able to turn towards (*zuwenden*) the open, the open itself must first have turned towards us (*uns zugekehrt haben*) in a certain way (Hw, 295-7/122). For Rilke, who speaks, Heidegger claims, *innerhalb des Sphärischen der neuzeitlichen Metaphysik, d. h. innerhalb der Sphäre der Subjectität als derjenigen der inneren und unsichtbaren Präsenz* ['within the spherical structure of modern metaphysics, that is, within the sphere of subjectivity as the sphere of inner and invisible presence'], the turning is a conversion of consciousness into the innermost space of the heart, which is at the same time the inner space of the world (Hw, 302-3/129). It is an *Er-innerung*, an inner recalling in which the self-asserting will and its objects are converted *in das innerste Unsichtbare des Herzraumes* ['into the innermost invisible region of the heart's space'], a region in which *wendet sich uns eines schrankenlos in das andere* ['one thing turns, free of all bounds, into the other']. In this interiority, there is *ein Sichersein außerhalb von Schutz*

['a safety outside all shielding'] (Hw, 305/130-131).

Erinnerung is: *die Umkehrung des Abschiedes zur Einkehr in den weitesten Umkreis des Offenen* ['the conversion of the parting into an arriving at the widest orbit of the open']. It is a turning which reverses the turning against. For Heidegger, the truly more venturesome ones (*die Wagenderen*) are the ones who, among mortals, are capable of this converting recall (*umkehrende Erinnern*) (Hw, 305/131). These are the ones who are not only sayers, but also actually venture saying:

Wenn nun aber beim Schaffen eines Sicherseins der Mensch vom Gesetz des ganzen Weltinnenraumes angerührt wird, ist er selbst in seinem Wesen berührt, darin nämlich, daß er als der Sichwollende schon der Sagende ist. Insofern jedoch das Schaffen eines Sicherseins von den Wagenderen kommt, müssen die Wagenderen es mit der Sprache wagen. Die Wagenderen wagen das Sagen.

[But when, in the creation of a safety, man is touched by the law of the world's whole inner space, he is himself touched in his nature, in that, as the being who wills himself, he is already the sayer. But since the creation of a safety comes from the more venturesome, these more venturesome ones must dare the venture with language. The more venturesome dare the saying.] (Hw, 307-8/133)

The more venturesome ones are not only touched in their nature so as to be sayers, they also dare the saying concerning *die er-innernde Umkehrung des Bewußtseins* ['the inner recalling conversion of consciousness'] (Hw, 308/133). These are the poets and singers who, experiencing the unholy and unwholesome (*Heillose, Unheil*) as such, are on the track to the holy and wholesome, and so on the way to what may bring healing to the darkness and distress of the world-night (Hw, 315/141).

Many of the themes raised in the *Beiträge* are clearly evident in this interpretation of Rilke. Although Heidegger attempts to overcome the metaphysics of will in his own thought, the relation between the being of beings and particular beings in Rilke's poetry, as Heidegger interprets it, can, if understood in a transitional manner, help to elucidate the relation between being and beings in Heidegger's own thought. Being is also a gathering which releases while withdrawing itself and drawing towards itself. As such, it is *Wesung*, and comparable to Ruusbroec's notion of love. To think this gathering release in a non-metaphysical way requires: 1) that it be thought *in itself*, and not as the being of beings, not as the beingness of what-is as a whole, 2) that it be released from interpretation within the framework of subjectivity, of consciousness as an enclosed sphere, and 3) that any account of it be understood as not finally valid, because bound to speak the language of beings while meaning being. Being as attractive-diffusive centre is then not the unity of the whole of

beings, nor the way what-is is structured, nor an inner realm as opposed to an outer one. It is simply *Wesung*, where what that means can only be fully understood by standing within its own lightening giving. For Ruusbroec, God is love, where what that means is known only by the meaning that answers to it, only, that is, by the love which stands within the revelation of love.

The themes of forsakenness, security and turning are also familiar from the *Beiträge*, and again parallel similar themes in Ruusbroec. The two moments of *ghelatenheit* are once more evident, the moment of distress in abandonment and the moment of relinquishment that brings healing. The latter moment is a turning towards which turns in, and which is only made possible by a prior turning towards on the part of that into which the turning turns. It would, perhaps, be going a bit too far to compare Heidegger's *Erinnern* with Ruusbroec's *gherinen*, but both do involve a being touched that converts into inwardness and is effected, and affected, by that which converts. The more venturesome ones, for Heidegger, are the ones who speak from, and of, this inner recalling. If their saying is a singing that beckons to the holy, and if the holy binds the divine which draws the god near (Hw, 315/141), then the sayings of these more venturesome ones may also be the poetry of religion. Religion, in this case, though, does not signify a particular set of beliefs, but the dimension of the holy as such.

The essay *Die Kehre* further clarifies the nature of the turning required to heal the distress of the age. In this work, Heidegger says that what is required is *Einblick in das was ist* ['insight into that which is'] (TK, 44/47), where what truly 'is' is not this or that entity, but only being (TK, 43/46). This insight is a remembrance of what has been forgotten, namely, being. The forgetting of being (*Seinsvergessenheit*) is not merely a failure on the part of man, but a function of the self-concealing of the essence of being in its coming to presence in what-is. In the *Beiträge*, Heidegger had expressed this by saying that the source of *Seinsvergessenheit* is *Seinsverlassenheit* (B, 114). The danger of the age lies in this forgetting of being, which is *das in der Wahrheit seines Wesens sich gefährdende Sein selbst* ['being itself endangering itself in the truth of its coming to presence'] (TK, 37/37).

The 'self-endangerment' of being, which also exposes beings to danger, is the darkening of the essence of being in its lighting up of beings. It is the self-withdrawal of being in its revelation of itself in modes, the

self-withdrawal in the *epochē* of being. The mode of being (*Seinsweise*) of the present epoch is *Gestell*, and *Gestell* is the culmination and exhaustion of that *Entwurf* of being which has reigned over the first history of the West. That *Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst/Das Rettende auch* ['But where the danger is, grows/The saving power also'] means that in awakening to the danger as danger, the power that heals and saves is also awakened. Awakening to the danger as such is a remembrance of *Seinsvergessenheit*, and so the remembrance that the mode is a mode, and is not being itself. It is the knowledge of the hiddenness of being, as opposed to the ignorance that leaves being in hiddenness.

As the danger, being turns away from (*kehrt sich weg*) its essence in its essence, and so at the same time turns against (*kehrt sich gegen*) the truth of its essence. That is to say, in its coming to presence, being hides the truth of that coming to presence itself, the truth of its own essence as both concealing and revealing. But this danger hides and shelters within itself the possibility of another turning, a turning in which the forgetting of the essence of being so turns that the truth of its essence turns in (*einkehrt*) into what-is (TK, 40/41). Nobody knows the time of this turning, or the manner in which it may come to pass. Nor is such knowledge either necessary or desirable, for: *Nur wenn der Mensch als der Hirt des Seins der Wahrheit des Seins wartet, kann er eine Ankunft des Seinsgeschickes erwarten, ohne in das bloße Wissenwollen zu verfallen* ['Only when man, as the shepherd of being, attends upon the truth of being can he expect an arrival of a destining of being and not sink to the level of a mere wanting to know'] (TK, 41/42). Only the relinquishment of the quest for self-certainty in favour of a watchful and uncertain holding-oneself-in-the-truth is appropriately prepared for a second arrival of being.

That in the self-endangerment of its essence, being withdraws in such a way as to expose beings to danger does not mean that it wholly abandons them. Rather, just as, in *Wozu Dichter?*, what is set free and thus ventured into risk is also kept safe in its ground, so here the danger which endangers holds within itself a certain safety. It harbours the favour (*Gunst*), as yet ungranted, of the turning of the forgetting of being into the truth of being (TK, 42/43-4). When this turning comes to pass (*sich ereignet*), it can only do so without mediation (*unvermittelt*), for being, as in the *Grundbegriffe*, has no like to itself (*hat nicht seinesgleichen*) which either precedes it or follows it. It has no cause

and no effect, but only brings itself to pass from its own essence.

Therefore:

Die Kehre der Gefahr ereignet sich jäh. In der Kehre lichtet sich jäh die Lichtung des Wesens des Seins. Das jäh Sichlichten ist das Blitzen. Es bringt sich selbst in die mit- und eingebrachte eigene Helle. Wenn in der Kehre der Gefahr die Wahrheit des Seins blitzt, lichtet sich das Wesen des Seins. Dann kehrt die Wahrheit des Wesens des Seins ein.

[The turning of the danger comes to pass suddenly. In this turning, the clearing belonging to the essence of being suddenly clears itself and lights up. This sudden self-lighting is the lightning-flash. It brings itself into its own brightness, which it itself both brings along and brings in. When, in the turning of the danger, the truth of being flashes, the essence of being clears and lights itself up. Then the truth of the essence, the coming to presence, of being turns and enters in.] (TK, 43/44)

This in-turning (*Einkehr*) turns into being itself, that same being whose mode, in the present age, is the essence of technology as *Gestell*. In the flash in which the essence of being is lit up, the truth of the *Seinsweise* of technology is comprehended as well.

This flash is a glimpse, an inner glance:

«Blitzen» ist dem Wort und der Sache nach: blicken. Im Blick und als Blick tritt das Wesen in sein eigenes Leuchten. Durch das Element seines Leuchtens hindurch birgt der Blick sein Erblicktes in das Blicken zurück. Das Blicken aber wahrt im Leuchten zugleich das verborgene Dunkel seiner Herkunft als das Ungelichtete. *Einkehr* des Blitzes der Wahrheit des Seins ist *Einblick*.

['To flash', in terms both of its derivation and of what it designates, is 'to glance'. In the flashing glance and as that glance, the essence, the coming to presence, of being enters into its own emitting of light. Moving through the element of its own shining, the flashing glance retrieves that which it catches sight of and brings it back into the brightness of its own looking. And yet that glancing, in its giving of light, simultaneously keeps safe the concealed darkness of its origin as the unlighted. The in-turning that is the lightning-flash of the truth of being is the entering, flashing glance - insight.] (TK, 43/45)

Once again, in comparing this moment with the one that Ruusbroec describes in rather similar terms, a careful route must be charted between complete identity and mere analogy. This flashing, illuminating, retrieving glance is, for Heidegger, a historical event, though not one that takes place in any network of cause and effect, and one in which, as the *Beiträge* suggests, only a few individuals may stand. But, as for Ruusbroec, what flashes and glances brings that into which it flashes and glances back into the brightness of its own light, a brightness that yet preserves the hidden darkness of its origin. It thus turns the one upon whom the glance falls into the one who sees the bright-dark origin of what-is. This seeing is in-sight, the coming to pass of the truth, the essence, of being, and it is granted in a turning whose dynamics, with respect to the

interplay between human effort and non-human grant, are described in similar terms by Ruusbroec and Heidegger. The influence of Christian eschatology upon Heidegger's being-historical thinking at this point is too obvious to require any comment. Ruusbroec's description of mutual glancing does not have an eschatological orientation, but it is oriented to a source which, as the simple and dark origin of all the manifold brightness that comes to pass in time, has to be the origin of the lightening turns of history as well as of the individual. This does not mean that those turns, or the opposite ones which turn away into darkness (not the hidden darkness, but the darkness that is all too evident in the course of history and in the lives of individuals) are determined by this source. The turns are enabled by the turning of the source, but what is thus enabled must also be chosen.

For Ruusbroec, the hidden origin both contains and denies all that is manifest in the 'mirror of divine truth', in creation. This mirror is only a mirror for the one who can see, the one who mirrors God in mirroring the world. For Heidegger, for whom the source is not God but being, the truth of being, the coming to pass of its lighting/concealing, is the worlding of world in the mirror-play of the fourfold of sky and earth, mortals and gods. This world, the world in which a god may dwell, comes to pass through the in-flashing of the truth of being into the essence of *Gestell*, the essence of the mode of being that places man in danger by exposing him to the risk of the denial of the mode as a mode, which is at the same time the denial of the truth of its source, the truth of being. Because this exposure holds within it the possibility of the turning, it does not throw man into a helpless abandonment, but ventures him into the hazard of freedom.

When, through the interplay of freedom and gift, the forgetting turns itself about, the truth of being flashes into truthless being. The fourfold of world flashes into the reign of *Gestell*. This in-flashing is the *Ereignis* within being itself, where *Ereignis ist eignende Eräugnis* ['disclosing coming-to-pass is bringing to sight that brings into its own'] (TK, 44/45). It is the appropriating 'eyeing' in which insight into that which is, into being, is accomplished. This insight (*Einblick*) is not any human looking into (*Einsicht*) what-is. It is, as *Einblitz*, the happening of the *Ereignis* within being itself, and in the epoch of *Gestell* (TK, 44/46). In spite of all the disguise belonging to this epoch, the ray (*Lichtblick*) of world still lights itself (*lichtet sich*); the truth of being still

flashes (*blitzt*). Since *Gestell* is still an essential destiny, a destined way of coming to presence (*Wesensgeschick*), and so a mode of the truth of being, a light from the flash of being (*ein Licht vom Blitz des Seins*) still comes to presence within it. *Das Gestell ist, obzwar verschleiert, noch Blick, kein blindes Geschick im Sinne eines völlig verhangenen Verhängnis* ['Enframing is, though veiled, still glance, and no blind destiny in the sense of a completely ordained fate'] (TK, 45/47).

In insight into that which is, the flashing glance of the truth of being glances upon the essence of man, but it can only do so if man corresponds to it by turning away from himself towards it:

Wenn Einblick sich ereignet, dann sind die Menschen die vom Blitz des Seins in ihr Wesen Getroffenen. Die Menschen sind die im Einblick Erblickten. Erst wenn das Menschenwesen im Ereignis des Einblickes als das von diesem Erblickte dem menschlichen Eigensinn entsagt und sich dem Einblick zu, von sich weg, ent-wirft, entspricht der Mensch in seinem Wesen dem Anspruch des Einblickes.

[When insight comes disclosingly to pass, then men are the ones who are struck in their essence by the flashing of being. In insight, men are the ones who are caught sight of.

Only when man, in the disclosing coming-to-pass of the insight by which he himself is beheld, renounces human self-will does he correspond in his essence to the claim of that insight.] (TK, 45/47)

As in Ruusbroec's thought, then, the in-flashing flash of this glance looks into the essence of a person, and catches that person up into its own vision. But only those who are prepared to turn are capable of being caught up. And only the vision of those who are thus caught up corresponds to the insight of what no human power can master or discern.

Finally, the fact that being, for Heidegger, is not God, but that upon which the death and resurrection of God depends, does not prevent him from ending this sermon - oops, essay, I mean, with a line bearing a striking resemblance to a very old formula for supplication to a deity, commonly termed a prayer:

Daß Welt, weltend, das Nächste sei alles Nahen, das naht, indem es die Wahrheit des Seins dem Menschenwesen nähert und so den Menschen dem Ereignis vereignet.

[May world in its worlding be the nearest of all nearing that nears, as it brings the truth of being near to man's essence, and so gives man to belong to the disclosing bringing-to-pass that is a bringing into its own.]

(TK, 47/49)

Amen?

CONCLUSION

The analyses and comparisons in the preceding chapters have pointed out some possibilities for 'God' suggested by a dialogue between Heidegger and medieval mystical theology. In the course of this examination, I have implicitly sought to demonstrate that Heidegger's thought is original precisely in being an authentic retrieval of the past, a repetition of the possibilities handed down by the tradition. Authentic repetition is transformative and critical, however, and, in looking at medieval thought through Heidegger's own confrontational appropriation of it, I hope that what has come to light is not merely the remains of what was once thought, but also some directions for how these past thoughts may be translated into the future. Like Heidegger's reflections on being, these are only a few suggestions. They do not articulate a doctrine, and I have no 'conclusion' to offer on what is to be called God. Indeed, one result of this dialogue is the suggestion that such a conclusion is neither possible nor desirable.

But I do want to maintain, and have consistently argued, that Heidegger's insistence that God is an entity, and never to be equated with being, is highly questionable. Given a certain sense of 'being', some theologians might well want to say, *et hoc dicimus deum*, and many of Heidegger's own considerations of the *Seinsfrage* actually help to open this possibility, in spite of his explicit attempts to close it. Because of this, it could even be maintained with some justice that, in many respects, Heidegger is himself a mystical theologian, as well as being a metaphysician. Whether or not one accepts this appraisal will depend, in part, upon what is considered as 'theology' and 'metaphysics'. As I have indicated, Heidegger's thought is not a mere copying of the past, but a transformative appropriation. To a large extent, the decision as to whether the product of this appropriation can still be called theology or metaphysics is a matter of individual judgement. I believe it can, and have attempted to employ certain aspects of Heidegger's thought as an original contribution to these forms of inquiry, rather than as a destruction of them. In so doing, I have also wanted to suggest that there are forms of metaphysics from which it is not necessary to run as before one smitten with the plague, and that these still have something to offer on the question of God.

NOTES

Notes to Introduction

1. Johannes Tauler is a fourteenth-century German Dominican preacher, strongly influenced by Eckhart. The writings of the Flemish mystic, Jan van Ruusbroec (1293-1381) also contain some Eckhartian elements, although these may not have been borrowed specifically from Eckhart. However, these writings actually belong to a different tradition, one which, Oliver Davies notes, is indebted to the love-based trinitarian mysticism of the Cistercians and Beguines. See *Meister Eckhart: Mystical Theologian* (London: SPCK, 1991), p. 221. For biographies of Tauler and Ruusbroec, see also Davies, *God Within* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1988).
2. Ch. LV, Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXCVI, col. 40. *The Twelve Patriarchs* (Benjamin Minor), trans. Grover A. Zinn, in *Richard of St. Victor*, Classics of Western Spirituality Series (London: SPCK, 1979), p. 112.
3. *Benjamin Major*, I.4, PL, CXCVI, col. 67. *The Mystical Ark* (Benjamin Major), trans. Grover A. Zinn, in *Richard of St. Victor*, p. 157.
4. *Benjamin Major*, I.3, col. 67. *The Mystical Ark*, p. 156.
5. *Benjamin Major*, I.4, col. 68. *The Mystical Ark*, p. 157.
6. *Benjamin Major*, I.5, col. 68. *The Mystical Ark*, p. 158.
7. See 'Phänomenologie und Theologie' in *Wegmarken*, esp. pp. 52-6. *Piety of Thinking*, pp. 9-13.
8. Trans. Bernard Noble (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1972).
9. *Platonic Studies* (Princeton U.P., 1973), pp. 54-5.
10. Athens, Ohio: Ohio U.P., 1978, p. 144.

11. *Aristotle and his Philosophy* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: North Carolina U.P., 1982), p. 132.
12. On this point, see WhD, 101/156.
13. In *Heidegger et la question de Dieu*, ed. R. Kearney and J.S. O' Leary (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1980), p. 196.
14. See Richard Rorty, 'Heidegger, Contingency, and Pragmatism' in *Essays on Heidegger and Others* (C.U.P, 1991), pp. 27-49.

Notes to Chapter One

1. See *Collationes in Hexaëmeron*, 6.2 - 6.6, Opera Omnia, V, edita studio et cura pp. Collegii a S. Bonaventura (Florentina, ad Claras Aquas, Quaracchi: 1891), pp. 360-1. Bonaventure sees Aristotle's rejection of the Platonic exemplary ideas as his cardinal error. It is not quite clear whether or not Bonaventure believes it is possible to demonstrate purely through reason that the world has a *temporal* beginning. However, philosophy unaided by faith can certainly, for Bonaventure, lead the mind to the notion of a first and exemplary cause. The issue of whether or not this cause is temporally prior to the world, as well as being logically and ontologically prior, is a separate one.
2. *Confessionum S. Augustini*, IV.12, PL, XXXII, col. 700. *Confessions*, trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1961), p. 82.
3. See Ninian Smart, *The Philosophy of Religion* (London: Sheldon Press, 1979), pp. 82-3, 142-3.
4. *Saint Bonaventura: The Mind's Road to God*, trans. with introduction by George Boas (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953), p. xiv.
5. *New Scholasticism*, 60 (1986), p. 88.
6. 'St. Francis and Philosophy', *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* (formerly *New Scholasticism*), 54 (1990), p. 256.

7. *Confessionum*, XII.29, cols. 842-3. *Confessions*, p. 306
8. *Confessionum*, XII.29, col. 842. *Confessions*, p. 306.
9. *De Doctrina Christiana*, II.1, PL, XXXIV, col. 35. *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D.W. Robertson (Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), p. 34.
10. *Benjamin Minor*, XVIII, col. 12. *The Twelve Patriarchs*, p. 70.
11. *Mysticism*, 2 vols. (London: Methuen & Co., 1912), II, 305.
12. Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. John W. Harvey (O.U.P., 1928, p. 151.
13. *Frühe Schriften* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1972), p. 352.
14. I prefer this rendering of *Befindlichkeit* to Macquarrie and Robinson's phrase 'state-of-mind'. It is employed by William McNeill in his translation of Heidegger's *Der Begriff der Zeit (1924 Vortrag)*, in which Heidegger, it is interesting to note, translates Augustine's *affectio* as *Befindlichkeit*. See *The Concept of Time*, Bilingual edition, trans. William McNeill (Oxford: Blackwell, 1972), p. 6 and p. 24, p.7.
15. See Introduction above, p. 4.
16. Plotinus, *The Enneads*, 1.6.8, trans. Stephen MacKenna (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 54.
17. J.L. Mehta rightly asks, 'May it not be that, as man - Oriental or Occidental - he has the inherent tendency towards becoming forfeit to the world, losing himself in it, to interpret Being in terms of the essent . . . ?' *The Philosophy of Martin Heidegger* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 252.
18. Boas (see n. 4), p. xix.
19. *Frühe Schriften*, p. 352.

Notes to Chapter Two

1. I have taken the term 'dialectical theism' from John Macquarrie's *In Search of Deity. An Essay in Dialectical Theism* (London: SCM Press, 1984).
2. See also V. Lossky, *Théologie négative et connaissance de Dieu chez Maître Eckhart* (Paris: Vrin, 1960), p. 127.
3. See also Bernard McGinn, 'Meister Eckhart on God as Absolute Unity', in *Neoplatonism and Christian Thought*, ed. D.J. O' Meara (Albany: SUNY Press, 1982), pp. 128-39.
4. *Sermones in Cantica canticorum*, PL, CLXXXIII, col. 798. My translation.
5. The fourfold division of nature which I (not Eckhart) am employing here is John Scotus Eriugena's. See *De Divisione Naturae*, PL, CXXII, col. 441. For a recent discussion of this point, see Dermot Moran, *The Philosophy of John Scotus Eriugena. A Study of Idealism in the Middle Ages* (C.U.P, 1989), pp. 250-7, esp. p. 257, 'The reduction of the first and fourth divisions'.
6. *Seminar*, 8 (1973), p. 160.
7. This idea is an old one. Augustine, for instance, says in *De Civitate Dei* that the earthly city is one *quae cum dominare adpetit, etsi populi serviant, ipsa ei dominandi libido dominatur* ['which, when it seeks for mastery, though the nations are its slaves, has as its own master that very lust for mastery']. *The City of God Against the Pagans*, Bilingual edition, Vol. I, trans. G. E. McCracken (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1957), p. 13.
8. *Mysticism*, II, 255.
9. On this point, see John Caputo, 'The Nothingness of the Intellect in Meister Eckhart's *Parisian Questions*', *The Thomist*, XXXIX (1975), 619-23.
10. Quint doubts the authenticity of this sermon. It is Sermon 3 in Pfeiffer.

11. *Heidegger and Aquinas: An Essay in Overcoming Metaphysics* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982), p. 120.

12. *Meister Eckhart: Mystical Theologian*, p. 180.

13. 'Heidegger Among the Theologians', *New Blackfriars*, 40 (1965), p. 403.

14. Cf. Lossky: 'The median position of the creature - *quasi medium inter Deum et nihil* - supposes a double opposition of the created *ens*: opposed to God, the creature is nothing; opposed to nothing, it is the being (*l'être*) produced *ex nihilo* by the all-powerful action of God, the *omnia* which opposes itself to *nihil*' *Théologie Negative et Connaissance de Dieu*, p. 76.

15. The *Nachwort* was first published in the fourth edition of 1943, and the *Einleitung* in the fifth edition of 1949. In this fifth edition, Heidegger also made some changes to the first version of the 'Postscript'. One of these is very important, and concerns the relation of beings to being. In 1943, Heidegger writes: *zur Wahrheit des Seins gehört, daß das Sein wohl west ohne das Seiende, daß niemals aber ein Seiendes ist ohne das Sein* ['it belongs to the truth of being that being may come to presence without what-is, but that what-is never is without being']. In 1949, this line is revised to read: . . . *daß das Sein nie west ohne das Seiende, daß niemals ein Seiendes ist ohne das Sein* ['that being never comes to presence without what-is, that what-is never is without being'] (WM, 46). It is actually the revised version which accords best with Eckhart's thought.

16. *Beyond Theism and Atheism: Heidegger's Significance for Religious Thinking* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987), p. 70.

17. Reiner Schürmann makes this point in 'Neoplatonic Henology as an Overcoming of Metaphysics', *Research in Phenomenology*, 13 (1983), p. 35.

18. On the question of Heidegger's relation to metaphysics, see Heidegger's own comments in *Aus einem Gespräch von der Sprache*, where it is said that by an 'overcoming' (*Überwindung*) of metaphysics, Heidegger meant *weder eine Zerstörung noch auch nur eine Verleugnung der Metaphysik*

['neither a destruction nor even a denial of metaphysics'], but *nur eine ursprüngliche Aneignung* ['only an original appropriation']. To want the former, Heidegger says, *wäre eine kindische Anmaßung und eine Herabsetzung der Geschichte* ['would be a childish presumption and a demeaning of history'] (US, 109/20).

19. *The Concept of Dread*, trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton U.P., 1957), p. 40. For Kierkegaard, it is through such dread that sin first enters the world.

20. The common root of 'mystical' and 'mystery' is *muo*, to close one's eyes.

21. My translation follows the 1949 edition of the 'Postscript', while the one in *Existence and Being* follows the 1945 edition.

22. *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, Erster Buch, Hrsg. Walter Biemel, Husserliana, Band III (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950), pp. 70-3.

23. Cf. W.J. Richardson, 'Heidegger and the Quest for Freedom', *Theological Studies*, 28 (1967), 286-307.

24. Author of *Martin Heidegger und Thomas von Aquin: Mensch, Zeit, Sein* (Freiburg: Herder, 1975).

25. This is a common distinction among many scholars of Eckhart. Oliver Davies, for instance, employs it in *God Within*, p. 66.

26. These last two sentences allude to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Bilingual edition, trans. C.K. Ogden (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988). See Preface and Propositions 6.41 and 7. As is often noted, however, Wittgenstein's remarks here are offset by his later gloss on Augustine's *Vae tacentibus de te* ['woe to those who are silent about thee'], which runs: *Was, du Mistviech, du willst keinen Unsinn reden? Rede nur einen Unsinn, es macht nichts* ['What, you cowpat, you don't want to talk nonsense? Go ahead and talk nonsense, it doesn't matter']. In F.

Waismann and B.F. McGuiness, *Ludwig Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967), p. 69.

27. *Meister Eckhart: Thought and Language* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), p. 89.

28. *Realismus - Idealismus, V, Gesammelte Werke, Band 9* (Bern: A Francke, 1976), p. 283.

29. Is. 45:15. See *Pensées* (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1964), n. 242, p. 141.

30. For a detailed analysis of this point, see Caputo, 'Heidegger's God and the Lord of History', *New Scholasticism*, 57 (1983), 439-64.

31. Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1986, p. 4. 'The Pathway', trans. Thomas F. O' Meara, in *Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker*, ed. Thomas Sheehan (Chicago: Precedent Publishing, 1981), p. 71.

32. *Deutsche Schriften*, hrg. Karl Bihlmeyer (Frankfurt: Minerva, 1961), p. 332.

33. Hegel, Preface to *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (O.U.P., 1977), p. 9.

34. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, Propositions 6.41, 6.45.

35. 'Neoplatonic Henology as an Overcoming of Metaphysics.'

36. *Heidegger. Through Phenomenology to Thought* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), p. 300.

37. Gesamtausgabe, 43 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1985), p. 126.

38. I am actually taking this from Nietzsche, who quotes this line from Stendahl, commenting, 'Perhaps I am even envious of Stendahl? He robbed me of the best atheist joke which precisely I could have made . . . ' *Ecce Homo*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1979), p. 58.

39. *Der Feldweg*, p. 7. 'The Pathway', p. 71.

40. 'Heidegger and Wittgenstein: A Second Kantian Revolution', in *Heidegger and Modern Philosophy: Critical Essays*, ed. Michael Murray (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1978), p. 263.

41. *Meister Eckhart: Gedanken zu seinen Gedanken* (Freiburg: Herder, 1979), p. 35.

42. I am thinking here of Caputo's *Mystical Element in Heidegger's Thought* and Welte's *Meister Eckhart: Gedanken zu seinen Gedanken*, both of which have already been cited.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. See Gerard O' Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (London: Duckworth, 1987), p. 167.

2. *De Vera Religione*, XXXIX.73, Aurelii Augustini Opera, Pars IV.1, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, XXXII (Turnhout: Brepols, 1962), p. 235. *Of True Religion*, in *Augustine: Earlier Writings*, trans. John H.S. Burleigh, Library of Christian Classics, VI (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), p. 263.

3. See *De Vera Religione*, XXXIX.72, p. 234. *Of True Religion*, p. 262.

4. *Commentarii in quattuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, II, d. 39, a. 1, q. 2, Opera Omnia, II (Quaracchi, 1885), p. 903.

5. Nietzsche's 'will to power', for instance, fits all of these criteria (which does not make it an actually and independently existing being). It is then a full-fledged metaphysical concept, in which case Paul Tillich makes a fair point in claiming that Nietzsche is not an atheist, but has a God which is very different from the Christian one. *Perspectives on 19th and 20th Century Protestant Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1967), p. 198, p. 217.

6. Etienne Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, trans. Dom Illtyd Trethowan and Frank J. Sheed (Paterson, New Jersey: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1965), p. 362.

7. It is not clear in this passage whether Bonaventure means an innate or a sensible species, or both. His doctrine on memory actually attributes to it not only the Augustinian functions of self-remembrance and retaining innate species, but also the Aristotelian function of retaining species abstracted from things known in the past. See J.F. Quinn, *The Historical Constitution of St. Bonaventure's Philosophy* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute, 1973), p. 355.

8. *De Trinitate*, Aurelii Augustini Opera, Pars. XVI.1-11, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, L-La (Turnhout: Brepols, 1968), p. 324. *The Trinity*, trans. Stephen McKenna, *The Fathers of the Church*, 45 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic U.P., 1963), p. 305.

9. *De Trinitate*, X.VIII(11), p. 325. *The Trinity*, p. 305.

10. *De Trinitate*, X.VIII(11), p. 325. *The Trinity*, p. 305-6.

11. Helmut Fahrenbach, 'Heidegger und das Problem einer „philosophischen“ Anthropologie', in *Durchblicke. Martin Heidegger zum 80. Geburtstag* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1970), p. 108.

12. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Jane Rubin, in their comparison of Heidegger and Kierkegaard in the Appendix to Dreyfus' *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I* (London: MIT, 1991; pp. 283-340) also note that Dasein has no concrete possibilities or fixed identity, and is therefore essentially nothingness (p. 310). However, I feel they misunderstand this point in saying: 'Heidegger shares with Kierkegaard the rejection of the Aristotelian and medieval views of the self as aiming at self-realization. There is no human potential' (p. 305). I would say rather that, for Heidegger, human existence as such is pure potential, where this does not indicate that it is 'meaningless', as the nihilistic reading of Heidegger claims, but that its meaning is inexhaustible and constantly open.

13. Cf. E. Schillebeeckx, *God the Future of Man* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1969), pp. 167ff.
14. *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*, in *Les Réveries du Promeneur Solitaire [and other works]* (Paris: Librairie Jules Tallandier, 1969), p. 187.
15. This point will be discussed in Chapter Four. See SZ, 274-80.
16. For a discussion of this problem, see Ludwig Landgrebe, 'Husserl's Departure from Cartesianism', in *The Phenomenology of Husserl*, ed. R.O. Elveton (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), pp. 290-3.
17. In the Schelling commentary, Heidegger remarks: *Die Verständnis der Dingheit der Dinge im Sinne des durch sich hindurch Deutens und Erdeutens des Urwesens erlaubt es, nun auch den Menschen ein Ding zu nennen, ohne Gefahr, jetzt noch von Anfang an sein Wesen zu mißdeuten* ['The understanding of the thinghood of things in the sense of the referring-through-itself of the primal being permits us now to call man a thing, too, without the danger of misinterpreting his nature from the very beginning'] (SA, 214/123).

Notes to Chapter Four

1. I have here translated directly from the Middle High German as literally as possible.
2. Matthias Lexer, *Mittelhochdeutsches Handwörterbuch*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1872).
3. The terms of my commentary here are drawn from Kierkegaard. See *The Sickness unto Death*, trans. Alastair Hannay (London: Penguin, 1989), pp. 111ff.
4. 'La place des termes «Gemüete» et «Grunt» dans le vocabulaire de Tauler', in *La mystique rhénane: Colloque de Strasbourg, 1961* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963), p. 189.

5. 'Taulers Terminologie vom Seelengrund', in *Altdeutsche und Altniederländische Mystik*, hrsg. Kurt Ruh (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964), p. 346.
6. Cf. Kierkegaard, *Sickness unto Death*, pp. 43-4.
7. See, for instance, the letter from Heidegger in William Richardson's *Through Phenomenology to Thought*.
8. Cf. Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death*, pp. 59-65. For Kierkegaard on the 'moment' (*Øjeblikket*) as the conjunction of time and eternity, see *The Concept of Dread*, pp. 78-80. Also, *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. David F. Swenson, revised Howard V. Hong (Princeton U.P., 1962), *passim*, for the moment as the fullness of time, and as a moment of decision.
9. For a detailed analysis of this point, see Michael Zimmerman, 'A Comparison of Nietzsche's Overman and Heidegger's Authentic Self', *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 14, 1976, 213-31.
10. The most obvious example is Nietzsche's account of inspiration in *Ecce Homo*, pp. 102-3.
11. An example is Frederick Olafson's account in *Heidegger and the Philosophy of Mind* (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1987), p. 92.
12. 'Liberation and Contemplativity', *New Blackfriars*, 50, p. 365.
13. *Op. cit.* (see Ch. 2, n. 30), p. 445.
14. Cf. Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, trans. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton U.P., 1941), p. 321.
15. I have attempted such an interpretation in my paper, 'Transcendence in Death: A Heideggerian Approach to *via negativa* in *The Cloud of Unknowing*', in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England: Exeter Symposium V*, ed. Marion Glasscoe (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1992), pp. 179-92.

Notes to Chapter Five

1. See *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, Werke, 16-17 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969), I, 163, II, 528ff. Also *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, Band I, Werke, 8 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), p. 86.
2. Cf. Gilson, p. 165.
3. See Norman Kretzman, 'A General Problem of Creation', in *Being and Goodness: The Concept of the Good in Metaphysics and Philosophical Theology*, ed. Scott MacDonald (London: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 227).
4. Sent. I, d.45, a. 2, q. 1, resp., *Opera Omnia*, I (Quaracchi, 1882), p. 804.
5. It was this realisation, I believe, that led Heidegger to make the aforementioned revision in the 'Postscript' to *Was ist Metaphysik?* (see Ch. 2, n. 15), and it is worth noting that the *Grundbegriffe* was delivered as a lecture course in 1941, prior to the composition of the 1943 'Postscript', and so prior to the revisions in the second edition of 1949. Given the sense of the revised line about the relation between being and beings, to say that nothing needs being, that it is (west) not without being, would necessarily entail that it needs beings, since the line says that neither does being come to presence without beings, nor beings without being.
6. Gesamtausgabe, 33 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1981), pp. 46-7.
7. See below, Chapter Six, p. 349.
8. This distinction between ground and existence is drawn by Schelling. See SA, §17. I am also alluding here to Henry Vaughan's poem, 'The Night', which ends with the lines: 'O for that night! where I in him/Might live invisible and dim.' *The Works of Henry Vaughan*, ed. L.C. Martin, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1957), p. 523.

9. Karl Löwith points this out in *Heidegger: Denker in Dürftiger Zeit*, 3. Aufl. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1965), pp. 33-6.

10. In the *Beiträge*, Heidegger sees Plato's notion of *epekeina tes ousias* in the form of *agathon* as the beginning of the conditioning of being through what-is in the history of metaphysics (see p. 211, p. 480). But here Plato's notion is said to lie at the root of value-thinking, a thinking in which man is taken as the centre and source of value-positing. Where the posit (*Entwurf*) is actually sent by being, the situation is reversed, and the good is then no longer subjectively determined as the highest value. My interpretation moves within this reversal. What Plato himself may have meant, on the other hand, is a question I am in no position to address.

11. Trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs (C.U.P., 1982), p. 248.

12. Quoted by Feuerbach in *The Essence of Christianity*, trans. George Eliot (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 122.

Notes to Chapter Six

1. Davies points out that Ruusbroec follows St. Thomas' definition of this spark as 'the inclination towards the good'. *God Within*, p. 129.

2. This, too, needs some qualification, though, since Eckhart does speak of rapture, although he does not place nearly as much emphasis on the activity of God as Ruusbroec does. See R.K.C. Forman's analysis of Eckhart's term *gezucket*, in *Meister Eckhart: The Mystic as the Theologian* (Rockport, MA: Element Books, 1991), pp. 95-131.

3. On this point, see J.A. Wiseman, 'Minne in Die Gheestelike Brulocht', in *Jan van Ruusbroec: The Sources, Content and Sequels of his Mysticism*, ed. P. Mommaers and N. De Paepe (Leuven University Press, 1984), pp. 97-8.

4. J.R. Crean has compared Eckhart and Ruusbroec on the use of *keren* and its derivatives, and noted that Ruusbroec's use of the verb *inkeren* and its noun *inkeer* have no counterparts in Eckhart's language. 'Studies in

Fourteenth Century Mystical Terminology: The Middle High German of Meister Eckhart and the Middle Netherlandic of Jan van Ruusbroec', Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Yale University, 1966, p. 79.

5. Maria Villeda-Petit makes this point in 'Heidegger est-il »idolâtre«?' in *Heidegger et la question de Dieu*, p. 95.

6. As put forward in II.2 of *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, pp. 169-224.

7. *Ibid.*, see p. 178.

8. *Nietzsche I*, p. 192.

9. Cf. *The Concept of Dread*, p. 76, p. 100; *Either/Or*, 2 vols., trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton U.P., 1971), II, 162ff.; also *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*, Vol. 1, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Bloomington: Indiana U.P., 1967), n. 261, p. 110.

10. Patrick Grant, *Literature of Mysticism in Western Tradition* (London: Macmillan, 1983), p. ix.

11. This is often not understood clearly enough. Charles B. Guignon, for instance, in 'On Saving Heidegger from Rorty', entirely conflates the two. See *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 46 (1985-6), p. 407.

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