

Towards a Christian Philosophy

by

Thomas Wilson McCormick

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy.

Institute for Christian Studies

© Thomas Wilson McCormick 2012

Towards a Christian Philosophy

Thomas Wilson McCormick

Doctor of Philosophy

Institute for Christian Studies

2012

Abstract

The relationship between philosophy and Christianity has, of course, a long history, as do the discussions of that relationship. My own position is not dissimilar to that of many of the early Church Fathers, though of course that position must be elaborated differently for various historical and personal reasons, and hopefully enriched by attention to the history of Western philosophy. As with all such relations, one's understanding of this relation has a lot to do with one's understanding of the terms involved. To promote the possibility of "Christian philosophy" is also to comment on that "and" which might be understood to relate two otherwise distinct and irreconcilable terms. In the end I claim this "and" must be understood as that "love" which defines philosophy as the "love of wisdom" (and finally, the wisdom of love), and does so in terms which (almost) merge—with the surprising assistance of such thinkers as Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, and Paul Ricoeur—with those of the Church Fathers cited. On the one hand, I intend nothing but the historical, orthodox, and catholic understanding of Christianity, especially with regard to the central figure of Jesus the Christ, the Trinitarian God whom He embodies, represents, and reveals, and the Scriptures given as The Bible. On the other hand, I present the specifically philosophical pertinence of this unique Person as such emerges from the texts of the "philosophers" considered, *and* in a manner which I claim does *not* force the issue by reading into their texts what is not there. Attending to a (Christian) philosophical reflection on (Christian) philosophy also offers elaborations of inherited doctrines, both Christian and philosophical, including a way to read and think unique to the outcome. Such is the adventure of this current work.

Preface

This project was begun in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The preliminary form of the manuscript was written in 1993. It has remained mostly unchanged since, with the exception of some additional footnotes in response to various works of which I became aware subsequent to that preliminary form.

The manuscript was submitted as a thesis for the Doctorate of Philosophy degree at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto, Canada. My appreciation for feedback and support is due to Dr. Jim Olthuis and Dr. Bob Sweetman, in particular. Further, I owe a word of thanks for editing to Jennifer Tong and for typesetting to Jelle Huisman.

After initial approval, the manuscript sat for years due to various institutional and personal situations. Now I am reviving it. I had thought of redoing it in light of later reflections, but each time I tried to do so, it became another book, disrupting what had been initially woven together.

So, I make this work available such as it is, knowing that any interaction will help to rebirth the project and advance those further thoughts, those already known to be implicit and those as yet unthought.

Contents

1	Introduction	13
1.1	Preliminary Comments	13
1.1.1	A Christian philosophy?	13
1.1.2	Summarizing outline	27
1.2	Concluding introductory comments	33
1.2.1	General Comments	33
1.2.2	Heidegger and Christianity?	40
1.2.2.1	Heidegger's personal religious history	40
1.2.2.2	Heidegger and God	46
1.2.3	Heidegger's "god" and the Christian God	49
2	What is Philosophy?	51
2.1	Introduction	51
2.2	Heidegger's religiosity	54
2.3	"The Nothing"	58
2.4	Further Endorsements	61
2.4.1	Two Heideggerean Endorsements	61
2.4.1.1	First Heideggerean Endorsement	62
2.4.1.2	Second Heideggerean Endorsement	63
2.4.2	Biblical endorsements	65
2.4.2.1	Introduction	65
2.4.2.2	Discussion	68
2.5	What, then, is philosophy?	71
2.5.1	Heidegger's position	71
2.5.2	Further discussion	72
3	Being At Home	80
3.1	Introduction	80
3.2	Heidegger on "dwelling"	82
3.2.1	Conceptual attunements	84
3.2.2	Further verbal similarities	87

3.3	Biblical background	90
3.3.1	“The ‘templum’”	91
3.3.2	Corroboration	94
3.4	A preliminary portrayal of further dialogue	96
3.4.1	The world	96
3.4.2	The word	102
3.4.3	The law	104
3.5	Preview	107
4	Philosophy as “the Way of ‘Death’”	109
4.1	Introduction	109
4.2	Heidegger on the way of death	117
4.2.1	“Being-Towards-Death”	117
4.2.2	The Ab-grund	123
4.2.2.1	The Ab-grund and the danger	124
4.2.2.2	The Ab-grund and playfulness	126
4.3	Toward a Christian retrieval	128
4.4	Further discussion	134
4.4.1	The law	134
4.4.1.1	The law: Greek and Jew	134
4.4.1.2	The law as “personal”	137
4.4.1.3	The law as command	138
4.4.1.4	The law and justification	139
4.4.2	The abyss	146
4.4.3	Consecration	147
4.4.4	The word	149
5	Representational Thinking	159
5.1	Introduction	159
5.2	Heidegger on representation	159
5.2.1	Introduction	159
5.2.2	Heidegger’s view of science	161
5.2.2.1	Heidegger’s interpretation of the “real”	162

5.2.2.2	Heidegger's interpretation of "theory"	163
5.2.2.3	Summary	165
5.2.3	The subject-object relation and truth	165
5.3	Ricoeur on representation	168
5.3.1	Introduction	168
5.3.2	Representation and Mimesis	169
5.3.3	Mimesis and "Cutting"	176
5.3.4	Summary	179
5.4	Derrida on representation	182
5.4.1	Introduction	182
5.4.2	Representation and faith	185
5.5	Concluding comments	191
6	Thinking and faith	193
6.1	Introduction	193
6.2	Heidegger's understanding of thinking	195
6.2.1	Heidegger's thinking and Faith	195
6.2.2	Heidegger's devotion to the poetic word	198
6.3	The biblical notion of meditation	203
6.4	Ricoeur on thinking and faith	210
6.5	Derrida on thinking and faith	222
7	Of (the) Spirit	231
7.1	Introduction	231
7.2	The "dialogue" engaged	241
7.2.1	The spirit and the nothing	242
7.2.1.1	The "formless void" and the Spirit	242
7.2.1.2	The Spirit and the rebirth	248
7.2.2	The Spirit and the Word	250
7.2.3	The Spirit and the Heimsuchung	257
7.2.4	The Spirit and the resurrection	261
7.3	Conclusions	267

8	Philosophy and theology	269
8.1	Introduction	269
8.2	Various Characterizations of (Christian) Philosophy	276
8.2.1	The Task of Philosophy	276
8.2.2	The Task of Christian Philosophy	279
8.3	Further Illustrations	289
8.3.1	The Form of Unity	290
8.3.2	Justification	293
8.4	Philosophy and Theology	302
9	Bibliography	308

Abbreviations

- AWP Heidegger, Martin. "The Age of the World Picture" in QCT.
- BCPh Heidegger, Martin. 1976 [1940]. On the being and conception of *phusis* in Aristotle's Physics B, I, trans. by Thomas J. Sheehan. *Man and World* 9.3. 219-270.
- BOC Kline, Meredith G. 1968. By oath consigned. Grand Rapids, Mi.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- BPP Heidegger, Martin. 1988. The basic problems of phenomenology, trans. by Albert Hofstadter (revised ed.). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- BT/SZ Heidegger, Martin. 1962a. Being and time, trans. by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- CI Ricoeur, Paul. 1974. The conflict of interpretations. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- CP Balthasar, Hans Urs von. 1993 (Spring). On the task of Catholic philosophy in our time. *Communio* xx.1. 147-187.
- CPR Kant, Immanuel. 1929. The critique of pure reason, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith [=NKS]. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- CR Gaffin, Richard B. Jr. 1978. The centrality of the Resurrection. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Book House.
- CW2 Murray, John. 1977. Collected writings of John Murray, Vol. 2. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust.
- D Derrida, Jacques. 1981. Dissemination, trans. by Barbara Johnson. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- DD Dialogue and deconstruction: The Gadamer-Derrida encounter, ed. by Diane P. Michelfelder and Richard E. Palmer. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- DH Caputo, John D. 1993a. Demythologizing Heidegger. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- DIF Derrida, Jacques. 1973b. Différance. Speech and phenomena, and other essays on Husserl's theory of signs, trans. by David B. Allison, 129-160. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

- DT Heidegger, Martin. 1966. Discourse on thinking. New York: Harper & Row.
- D Derrida, Jacques. 1981a. Dissemination, trans. by Barbara Johnson. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- EGT Heidegger, Martin. 1975. Early Greek thinking, trans. by David Farrell Krell and Frank A. Capuzzi. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- EO Derrida, Jacques. 1985. The ear of the other, ed. by Christie McDonald, trans. by Peggy Kamuf. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.
- F Ricoeur, Paul. 1970. Freud and philosophy, trans. by D. Savage. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- FM Ricoeur, Paul. 1965a. Fallible man, trans. by C. Kelbley. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company.
- FS Ricoeur, Paul. 1995. Figuring the Sacred. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- GD Derrida, Jacques. 1995. The Gift of Death. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- HEPP Derrida, Jacques. 1993. Heidegger's ear: Philopolemology (*Geschlecht* IV). Reading Heidegger: commemorations, ed. by John Sallis, 163-218. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- HHS Ricoeur, Paul. 1981a. Hermeneutics and the human sciences, trans. and ed. by John B. Thompson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ID Heidegger, Martin. 1969b. Identity and difference, trans. by Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- IDA Ricoeur, Paul. 1978c. Imagination in discourse and action. The human being in action, ed. by A.T. Tymieniecka. Boston: Reidel.
- IGEM Ricoeur, Paul. 1965b. The image of God and the epic of man, trans. by C. Kelbley. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- IM Heidegger, Martin. 1959. An introduction to metaphysics, trans. by Ralph Manheim. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc.
- IS Kline, Meredith G. 1980. Images of the Spirit. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.
- IT Ricoeur, Paul. 1976. Interpretation theory. Fort Worth: The Texas Christian University Press.

- KPM Heidegger, Martin. 1962b. Kant and the problem of metaphysics, trans. by James S. Churchill. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- KPM2 Heidegger, Martin. 1990. Kant and the problem of metaphysics, trans. by Richard Taft. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- KTB Heidegger, Martin. 1973. Kant's thesis about Being, trans. by Ted E. Klein, Jr. and William E. Pohl. *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy* 4.3.8-33.
- LH Heidegger, Martin. 1977h. Letter on humanism. *Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell, 193-242. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- MFL Heidegger, Martin. 1984. *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, trans. by Michael Heim. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- MR Ricoeur, Paul. 1981. Mimesis and representation. *Annals of scholarship*, 15-32.
- N1,2 Heidegger, Martin. 1991. *Nietzsche, Volumes 1 & 2*, trans. by David Farrell Krell. San Francisco: Harper.
- N3,4 Heidegger, Martin. 1991. *Nietzsche, Volumes 3 & 4*, trans. by David Farrell Krell. San Francisco: Harper.
- NG Ricoeur, Paul. 1979b. Naming God. *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* xxxiv. 4. 215-227.
- NIV The New International Version of the Holy Bible.
- NIVSB The New International Version of the Holy Bible, Study Bible.
- NJB The New Jerusalem Bible.
- NRSV The New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible.
- OAA Ricoeur, Paul. 1992. *Oneself as another*, trans. by Kathleen Blamey. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- OG Derrida, Jacques. 1974. *Of Grammatology*. Trans. by G.C. Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- ORF Bavinck, Herman. 1956. *Our reasonable faith*, trans. by Henry Zylstra. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.
- OS Derrida, Jacques. 1989. *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the question.*, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby. Chicago. The University of Chicago Press.

- OWL Heidegger, Martin. 1971b. *On the way to language*, trans. by Peter D. Hertz. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- PLT Heidegger, Martin. 1971. *Poetry, language, thought*, trans. by Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- PT Heidegger, Martin. 1976. *The piety of thinking*, trans. by James G. Hart and John C. Maraldo. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- P Derrida, Jacques. 1981c. *Positions*. Translated and annotated by Alan Bass. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- QCT Heidegger, Martin. 1977. *The question concerning technology and other essays*. Translated and with an introduction by William Lovitt. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- RAA Murray, John. 1955. *Redemption: Accomplished and applied*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- RH Caputo, John D. 1988. *Radical Hermeneutics: Repetition, Deconstruction, and the Hermeneutic Project*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- RM Ricoeur, Paul. 1977. *The rule of metaphor*, trans. by R. Czerny. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- RR Ricoeur, Paul. 1991. *A Ricoeur reader: reflection and imagination*, ed. by Mario J. Valdés. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- RtM Derrida, Jacques. 1978 (Fall). *The retrait of metaphor*, trans. by F. Gasdner et al. *Enclitic 2.2*. 5-33.
- SG/PR Heidegger, Martin. n.d. *The principle of reason*, trans. by Reginald Lilly. Unpublished Manuscript.
- SIG McCormick, Thomas W. *Science, the imagination, and God*. Unpublished Manuscript.
- SOR Derrida, Jacques. 1990. *Sending: on representation*. *Transforming the hermeneutic context: from Nietzsche to Nancy*, ed. by Gayle L. Ormiston and Alan D. Schrift, 107-138. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- SR Heidegger, Martin. "Science and Reflection" in QCT.
- TB Heidegger, Martin. 1972. *On time and being*, trans. by Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper Torchbooks.

- TN1 Ricoeur, Paul. 1984a. *Time and narrative*. Vol. I. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- TRD McCormick, Thomas W. 1988. *Theories of Reading in dialogue*. Lanham, Mass: University Press of America.
- WBGH Heidegger, Martin. 1962c [1956]. *The way back into the ground of metaphysics*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann. *Philosophy in the twentieth century*, ed. by William Barrett and Henry D. Aiken, 206-218. New York: Random House.
- WCF Westminster Confession of Faith. 1646. http://www.reformed.org/documents/wcf_with_proofs/. (accessed 11 March 2011).
- WCT Heidegger, Martin. 1968. *What is called thinking?* trans. by J. Glenn Gray. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- WG/ER Heidegger, Martin. 1969a [1929]. *The essence of reasons*, trans. by Terrence Malick. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- WhM Derrida, Jacques. *White Mythology*. *Margins of Philosophy*, 207-271. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- WM Heidegger, Martin. 1977f. *What is metaphysics?*. *Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell, 91-112. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- WP Heidegger, Martin. 1958b. *What is philosophy?* trans. by William Kluback and Jean T. Wilde. n.p.: Twayne Publishers Inc.
- WT Heidegger, Martin. 1967. *What is a thing?* Translated by W.B. Barton, Jr. and Vera Deutsch. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company.

1 Introduction

1.1 Preliminary Comments

1.1.1 A Christian philosophy?

The relationship between philosophy and Christianity has, of course, a long history, as do the discussions of that relationship. Indeed, the New Testament itself comments on this relationship, as did many of the early Church Fathers, the medieval scholars, the Reformers, and as a matter of fact the discussions continue to the present day. Finally, my own position with regard to the possibility of a Christian philosophy is not dissimilar to that of many of the early Church Fathers, though of course that position must be elaborated differently for various historical and personal reasons, and hopefully enriched by attention to the history of Western philosophy. To cite only two of these ancient positions with which I find much sympathy, consider first of all the thought of Clement of Alexandria (215 AD),

Philosophy strives for wisdom of the soul, correct judgment, and purity of life. It is full of inclination toward, and love of, wisdom and undertakes everything in order to arrive at wisdom. Among us, those who strive for the wisdom of the Creator of the universe and Master, i.e., for the knowledge of the Son of God, are called philosophers.

Further, John Chrysostom (407 AD) designated the Christian life in general “the highest and most useful philosophy” (both as cited by Balthasar 1991:334f).

No doubt such an opening claim, and perhaps these ancient views themselves, may appear odd: How could what we mean today by philosophy be upheld as (more or less) identical with the Christian life in general, and knowledge of the Son of God in particular? Bear with me as I try to make this claim plausible in the following chapters through “dialogue” with prominent 20th and 21st Century philosophers. In this introduction I will seek to put my cards on the table without putting off those for whom the relevance of either Christianity for philosophy or (secular) philosophy for Christianity has long since passed from the stage of relevance.

As with all such relations, one’s understanding of the relation between Christianity and philosophy has a lot to do with one’s understanding of the terms involved. As Mark D. Jordan put it, in his discussion of the debate regarding “Christian philosophy” which raged in the decade after 1927, “The scrutiny of terms will turn out

to be the most important in this case. Much of the question's intractability is due to presuppositions that slip in with its articulation" (1985:295). And, as we shall see, one's understanding of the relation between Christianity and philosophy depends at least as much on one's understanding of the "and" which relates such terms. In fact, to return to the 20th Century, no lesser a light than Henri de Lubac defined Christian philosophy as "the *synthesis* of all knowledge, operating in the light of faith" (1992:497; emphasis added). It is this "synthesis" which I associate, and finally identify, with the "and." In my view, this "synthetic 'and'" ultimately must be understood as that "love" which defines philosophy as the "love of wisdom" (and finally, the wisdom of love), and does so in terms which (almost) merge—with the surprising assistance of such thinkers as Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, and Paul Ricoeur—with those of the Church Fathers cited. Such is the adventure of this current work.

The phrase "light of faith" in de Lubac's just cited definition of Christian philosophy raises another problematic issue upon which I also must comment, both in terms of "light" and in terms of "faith." As is well known, it has been this religious/Christian "faith," especially as understood in distinction from "reason," which so often has served to delineate Christianity (and more generally, religion) from philosophy, with "reason" specifying the "domain" of philosophy's uniqueness. In due course, then, I too must take up afresh the faith-reason relation (chapter 6). A consideration of just what this "*light of faith*" might be will also significantly advance my own understanding of Christianity and philosophy. Here Heidegger's thinking regarding *das Lichtung*, particularly in relation to "the spirit" and "the word," is especially helpful (chapter 7).

In this work I am focusing most specifically on one of the terms, philosophy, in order not only to examine the relation of philosophy and Christianity, but also to move toward developing what I will unashamedly call a Christian philosophy. That is, I am convinced that "Christian philosophy" is not simply an oxymoron, a foolish (*moros*) and sharp (*oxys*) contradiction in terms used for rhetorical effect, though "foolishness" and a cutting "sharpness" are very much at the heart of my own concerns. "Foolishness"—the foolishness which characterizes the Apostle Paul's understanding of the mutual perceptions by each other of "godly wisdom" and "ungodly wisdom"—is especially pertinent in chapter 2, while "cutting" becomes

particularly relevant in chapter 4, both with regard to Heidegger's understanding of language and with regard to a "covenantal" understanding of philosophy, in my view a necessary component of any specifically Christian philosophy. Note, though, that to believe in the possibility of "Christian philosophy" is once again to comment, at least indirectly, on that "and" which might be understood to relate two otherwise distinct terms. Finally, I will be saying *something like* "Christianity is the fulfillment of philosophy" (Jordan 1985:303), though I ask that the openness suggested here by this "something like" be honored. I aim to let the meaning of this "fulfillment" emerge from the philosophical demonstrations offered in the following chapters, and would ask the reader to restrain or temporarily suspend any prejudices (arising from either philosophy or Christianity) against such a position until a fair hearing has been granted. Already I can alert the reader that in order to explore the contours of this notion of "fulfillment," as well as develop that unique and determinative notion, I will be using such words as retrieval, "deconstruction," resonance, the "unsaid," the "unthought," etc. Naturally it can only be from the development achieved in and through what follows that my own understanding of such terms can be taken for what it is.

I am aware that the "problems" requiring clarification are manifold, even just those problems implicit in the preceding two paragraphs. Some of these are: the role of belief in philosophy; the legitimacy of antithetic, even apologetic, distinctions between Christian truths and the truths claimed by various philosophies and philosophers, many of whom have been anything but sympathetic to Christianity; the status for Christians of "truths" outside the believing community (the issue raised by the doctrine of "common grace"); and if one grants the possibility of such truths (some, in fact, do not), the relation between those "general truths" and the truths revealed to and within the believing community; and, indeed, the meaning of "truth" itself. I will comment briefly on these matters below in order to indicate my awareness of and interest in such concerns, as well as something of their central pertinence for my own project. More detailed discussions and comments are, however, interwoven throughout the text, for these issues are never far from my mind. First, though, let me comment on the other partner of this Christianity and philosophy relationship.

My treatment of Christianity may well occasion, if not provoke, at least as much

interest, if not disquiet, among my concerned and careful readers. The reason ought not to be because I intend to present some controversial or innovative understanding of Christianity. On the contrary, I intend nothing but the historical, orthodox, and catholic understanding, especially with regard to the central figure of Christianity, Jesus the Christ [= Messiah], and the Trinitarian God whom He embodies, represents, and reveals, though it is true that the following reflections also do offer some possible elaborations of these doctrines. These possible elaborations are one very important reason that the relation between Christianity and philosophy is highly charged for the Christian community and that the development of a specifically *Christian* philosophy is so pertinent.

On the other hand, the difficulty which I anticipate for the reader steeped in the tradition of Western philosophy is that the specifically philosophical pertinence of this unique Person, Jesus of Nazareth, the Crucified and Resurrected One, emerges from our consideration of the texts of the “philosophers”¹ considered, *and* in a manner which I claim does *not* force the issue by reading into their texts what is not there. Thus I can affirm with Mark D. Jordan that “What philosophy promised but could not provide, that is now given forth in the person of Christ” (1985:303); or, as de Lubac put it (1992:487), “It is a matter of affirming that only a Christian philosophy can be truly, wholly philosophy”; or again, with Balthasar (1993:147, hereafter CP), “The finally valid answer to pagan [including neo-pagan] wisdom, the answer equal to it in rank, can lie only in the total Christian wisdom.” I am quite aware that such assertions are no doubt scandalous to many. Nonetheless, though I judge it better for

1 The word “philosophers” was used in quotation marks because whether that is the best designation for Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida depends on our discussion of the meaning of philosophy itself. This issue is quite problematic, if not contentious; it is also the topic of this essay, beginning in the second chapter. For instance, Rorty: “I shall use the word ‘theorist’ rather than ‘philosopher’ because the etymology of ‘theory’ gives me the connotation I want, and avoids some I do not want. The people I shall be discussing do not think that there is something called ‘wisdom’ in any sense of the term which Plato would have recognised. So the term ‘lover of wisdom’ seems inappropriate. But *theoria* suggests taking a view of a large stretch of territory from a considerable distance, and this is just what the people I shall be discussing do. They all specialise in standing back from, and taking a large view of, what Heidegger called the ‘tradition of Western metaphysics’ – what I have been calling the ‘Plato-Kant canon.’” (*Contingency, Irony, Solidarity*, 96). I, however, do favor ‘wisdom’ and ‘love’. On the other hand, Rorty’s concern for ‘*theoria*’ intersects my concerns in SIG.

the sake of honesty to be quite explicit here about my own convictions, I also think that the reader may be not a little surprised at the philosophical demonstrations to follow which are given to illustrate, establish and develop this point.

However, in addition to demonstrating that Christianity is intrinsically pertinent to the enterprise of (Western) philosophy, I am also proposing that there is no principled reason for excluding the Christian Scriptures from the philosophical conceptual arena, especially not if Heidegger is allowed to include the early-Greek and German poets of his preference as philosophically pertinent. That is, in whatever sense Heidegger's use of the early-Greek and German poets is philosophically sanctioned, the Bible is also at least as admissible. That, of course, will not answer all critics, for some, no doubt, reject Heidegger's philosophical use of such poets, even though to excise "poetry" from the early-Greek philosophers, or even Plato (and many others), would certainly do as much, if not more, violence to the tradition of Western philosophy than I (or Heidegger) might be charged with committing. Moreover, this philosophic "use" of poetry is not an extrinsic concern, nor is the issue tied exclusively to one's opinion regarding Heidegger's work, for I find that the relation between philosophy and poetry—or more generally, reason and the imagination—is very much at the heart of my own concern with understanding (and developing) "Christian philosophy." In fact, a fresh understanding of reason itself is offered as a result of these reflections, an understanding much conditioned by my own understanding of imagination. Consequently, I not only feel quite free to "use" the Bible in what follows, but I do so only after first illustrating that Heidegger himself (and in a related manner, Nietzsche) not only "uses" the Bible, but does so in a manner that is philosophically relevant. More on this shortly. Further, with each "use" of biblical material I have sought to demonstrate not only the verbal, but also the conceptual, similarities (or analogies or resonances)² with the more specifically philosophical material. Even more precisely I have sought to show the pertinence and contribution of such biblical material to the on-going philosophical consideration of philosophy per se.

With such views come another kind of difficulty which may await some of the

2 Exactly what is meant here can only be decided together with one's stance with regard to this whole project, thus these words are here meant as what Heidegger might call "formal indications."

Christian persuasion, especially those committed to the tradition that the relation between “Jerusalem” and “Athens” is better severed than courted. I, on the other hand, am proposing that just as “in Christ ... there is no longer Jew or Greek” (Galatians 3:28), so too a Christian (or Jew-Greek/Greek-Jew)³ philosophy is not only possible, but desirable, if not inevitable. The following chapters are designed not only to argue that point, but to demonstrate it by way of actually developing (at least the beginnings of) *a* Christian philosophy. Indeed, “No student of philosophy can forget that the first question in every philosophic dispute is a question about the nature of philosophy itself—about its languages, its aims, its limits” (Jordan 1985:299). Thus a (Christian) philosophical reflection on (Christian) philosophy is not a bad point from which to begin elaborating a Christian philosophy.

* * *

As perhaps already surmised, the work of Martin Heidegger is central to my own meditations in this work. Though any such “starting point” presents both advantages and disadvantages, I am especially grateful for the opportunities for thought opened up by Heidegger’s work. Some of my reasons for choosing Heidegger are: (1) wherever and with whomever I start I am clearly joining a conversation already well under way; (2) hence, due to the magnitude of Heidegger’s continuing influence throughout the 21st Century (and likely, centuries to come), especially on the current state of that conversation, Heidegger is recommended as a much better than random place to begin; (3) Heidegger thought deeply and throughout his career about the question “What is philosophy?,” in fact, that concern is very much at the heart of his entire corpus; (4) Heidegger has also engaged the history of Western philosophy as profoundly as anyone, and therefore consequences with regard to his thought will grant us *a*

3 Here the “and”, that is, “Jerusalem” *and* “Athens” (but also that which they represent: Christianity and Philosophy) is “replaced” by the hyphen to indicate a deeper, though as yet undefined, unity, a unity which no doubt is not a simple or uncritical eclecticism of otherwise irreconcilable elements. It is this “deeper unity” which will then determine the “and” in general. It is also important to say that the better form for this hyphenated expression is Jew/Gentile (=non-Jew), the point being “Greek” not be overly privileged (as it has been in the Western tradition). That the “Jew” is, in fact, “privileged” here I take to be an historical/biblical reality. Actually, I prefer not Jew/Greek but Jew/Gentile, thereby opening the emergence of Christian Philosophy to input from “all the ‘nations’”.

point of access to that history;⁴ and especially pertinent to my topic of “Christian philosophy;” (5) the “Heideggerean religiosity” referred to by the translators of his essay, “What is philosophy?” (WP 7), opens up various points of engagement between (the history of Western) philosophy and biblical Christianity; and yet, (6) Heidegger’s ambiguous relation to Christian thinking, and especially his flat out denial of the possibility of a Christian philosophy—for example, “there is no such thing as a Christian philosophy; that is an absolute ‘square circle’” (PT 21)—provides a fair challenge to my project; thus, (7) interacting with Heidegger in the manner I propose provides both a forum for distinguishing my proposal from (Christian) apologetics and simple (Christian) kerygmatic proclamation (unless Heidegger’s [and all others’] thinking also be taken as a form of kerygmatic apologetics), and a stage on which to develop a Christian philosophy. No doubt some will want to say that such a forum or stage is only a pretense for misreading Heidegger. As such, (8) I have found beginning with Heidegger to be congenial because his interpretations too were often charged with “violence,” that is, a mere, though clever, pretext for his own concerns. These concluding points raise serious issues to which I wish to respond further.

However, before looking more directly at such questions of style, interpretation, violence, etc., it is worth pointing out that in the “Introduction” (1949) to an early piece on the same topic, *What is metaphysics?* (1929)—a question which for Heidegger is practically synonymous with “What is philosophy?”—Heidegger himself introduced a citation from the Bible, specifically 1 Corinthians 1:22, “the Greeks seek wisdom” (Ἕλληνες σοφίαν ζητοῦσιν). Heidegger identified that reference of the Apostle Paul to Greek philosophy with Aristotle’s own characterization of “first philosophy.” Though I discuss this passage in some detail in the second chapter, I mention it here to indicate from the start that it is not just I who am “smuggling” so-called “Christian things” into the philosophical arena. Similarly, it was Heidegger himself who focused on the significance for the entire Western tradition of Nietzsche’s own self-characterization,

⁴ It was, for instance, Heidegger’s claim that his approach offered the only viewpoint from which to “grasp ... the inner and hidden life of the basic movement of Western philosophy” (MFL154). Whether or not that is true, it is my conviction that indeed Heidegger’s work does offer us access to a fresh understanding of Western philosophy.

“Have I been understood?—*Dionysos versus the Crucified*” (also discussed in chapter 2), ‘the Crucified’ being, of course, Christ Jesus.

It is in this manner that something of a dialogue between the Western philosophical tradition and Christianity is introduced, or shall I say uncovered or highlighted or given free play, for that engagement has been already well-begun: both the text of the Bible itself as well as its central figure—the crucified (and risen!) Savior—are interwoven with explicitly and undeniably philosophical thinking, and even such thinking about philosophy per se. The second chapter makes explicit this interweaving of the Bible with philosophy, especially in the thought of Heidegger. The second chapter (and the third) also serves to introduce more concretely both the relevance of Heidegger’s thought, principally with regard to my own purposes, as well as the other main topics to be considered in subsequent chapters.

Further, these first chapters also give a sampling of the varied styles employed throughout this book. Before looking at the variety of styles used subsequently, it is crucial to recognize that the question of style, or perhaps more traditionally, the matter of *method*, is not only not a neutral concern, but is itself radically intertwined with the meaning of philosophy per se.⁵ Chapter 4 seeks to make this plain; it is a central chapter! I must, therefore, ask a certain amount of indulgence on the part of the reader, for if we are not to assume that we already know precisely what philosophy and its method are, but are instead attempting an honest investigation, or at least

5 I am not strictly identifying style with method, for the same method can be practiced with different styles; or so it seems from the popular usage of these words. The matter, however, is not quite so simple. “Method” as defined by Descartes and modeled after the mathematical/scientific method does not, in its ideal conception, afford a great deal of freedom of style. Rather, the axiomatic, deductive method is ultimately machine-like in its aspiration, quite self-consciously seeking to minimize both the involvement and the significance of the person(ality) of its practitioners. Thus “a personal style” or “a poetic (or literary) style” is not really compatible with the modern understanding and practice of method. Having said that I must return to the acknowledgement that an Einstein is not a Feynmann, for example, and that style or flair or personality involvement certainly can be noted. My claim, however, is that such style is understood as merely an adornment and not as penetrating to the essentials of method. The situation is not unlike the understanding that metaphor is best kept out of the scientific arena, a position which is so common as to warrant the label “traditional,” and yet a position which has been practically transformed into its opposite (cf. my SIG, chapter 2 for the details).

a meditation on that very topic, then the method or the way in which we proceed is part of that which we are investigating.⁶ I see no way to advance with such an endeavor except to begin somewhere (in one sense it does not matter where), pausing periodically to reflect upon not only the headway achieved but also the way—the how—of our progress. Thus, some of the varied styles practiced along the way include the exposition of texts, poetic meditations, an interleaving of different texts, the exposition of conceptual and verbal resonances among texts, deconstructive-type meditations, as well as more traditional philosophical argumentation. Again, I cannot really apologize for this meandering way, for I see no alternative. Let me, though, comment a bit more on this procedure.

In choosing to consider the meaning of philosophy per se I am locating my reflections at the point of the reconsideration, if not the unraveling, of many of the most fundamental concepts in the Western tradition. What that “point” might be which allows such a stance, and perhaps even whether there is such a “place,” is indeed at the heart of my concerns. Finally, I say that there is such a “place,” and that that “place” is the Person of “(Jesus) the Christ,” or more precisely in terms to be clarified in due course, the *dvoika* (two-fold) of Word-Spirit. Regardless, if there were such a possibility, we indeed would expect not only a fresh understanding of philosophy, but along with that fresh perspective on past thinking the emergence or birth of something new, something “from the future.” This is not simply an exotic or idiosyncratic or pious hope, for marvelous as such a possibility is, it is also somewhat common. To my mind this “point” of emergence of new meaning which also casts a fresh light on traditional matters is very much like, if not identical with, the active generative “point” of a creative metaphor, the place from which new meaning arises. Indeed there is, I claim, something deeply metaphoric about this thinking. Here again we revisit the relation between philosophy and poetry—or, concept and image/metaphor; even, mind and imagination/spirit—which was not only a deep concern of (especially the later) Heidegger himself, but also of other “post-Heideggerean” thinkers, like

6 Mark D. Jordan: “It is too easy to conceal the question at issue [re ‘Christian philosophy’] by defining ‘philosophy’ or ‘Christianity’” (1985:295).

Paul Ricoeur and Jacques Derrida, both of whom also figure prominently in this work.

It will be, I suspect, this “metaphoric” style of thinking which may be most troubling to some, for it can be difficult to “tie down,” always seeming to hover over or slip away from one’s more traditional conceptual expectations. It is, however, only in this “metaphoric sense” that my work can be considered an appropriation or assimilation of the work of others. That is, just as a creative metaphor introduces a new meaning (usually) for an already existent word, while both “appropriating” aspects of the older meanings and leaving those older meanings intact (though somewhat reordered due to the new element in the “system”), so too I re-create Heidegger, for instance, with all the ambiguity and paradox of that hyphenated word. That is, in what sense can one legitimately use the word “create” with the prefix “re-”? And in what sense can one suggest that one’s recreative reading of such a figure is a faithful reading? Finally I would claim not only that such a “recreation” is an utterly unique phenomenon, but that its very possibility is conditioned by the utterly unique *re*-demption accomplished in Jesus Christ, the Incarnate, Crucified and Resurrected Son of God and Son of Man. Thus one might begin to see how it is that I affirm the conclusions of the Catholic philosophers noted above.

It is only in the light of this “metaphoric appropriation”—about which I will comment further at the conclusion of this introduction—that I am able to respond to the concerns of those who will want to know if I consider Heidegger a specifically Christian thinker, or a Nazi, or whatever other traditional category might be posed. Instead, at least in the light of such expectations, my approach might be a bit maddening with its hovering between affirmation and critique, and its allusions to “resonances,” “echoes,” the “unsaid,” the “unthought,” etc. In this my style is, moreover, similar to Heidegger’s. No doubt that is one reason I have found beginning with Heidegger to be congenial, as I am quite willing to admit.

But does that mean I am a Heideggerean, or that Heidegger was a Christian thinker/philosopher? I will certainly seem to bring Heidegger and my own Christian concerns very close together indeed, no doubt too close for the comfort of both more “main-line” Christians and more traditional Heideggereans, whether right wing, left wing or anywhere in-between. Perhaps the most troubling question might be, Is

there a cross-over? Am I overly Christianizing Heidegger, or at least just as bad, overly Heideggerizing Christianity? For those who might think so, and I myself have not been untroubled by these possibilities, the question naturally arises, What about Heidegger's neo-paganism, and even his seeming repugnance to the Christian Message? Am I saying that some sort of syncretism between Christianity and such a neo-paganism is recommended?

These are not only legitimate, but crucial questions and concerns. I acknowledge them as such upfront here in the introduction, even alerting those not otherwise suspect or troubled. All I can say is that I am committed to being faithful, i.e. true,⁷ to the texts I consider, whether those of Heidegger or the Bible, with such "faithfulness" also being integral to that "love" which defines *philo*-sophy. But that is just to say that the question of reading—how to read?, what is a faithful reading?, is a "non-violent" interpretation possible, desirable, etc.?, in short, the question of hermeneutics, including "what is 'true'?"—is also inextricably intertwined with my central question regarding philosophy per se, as indeed has so often been the case, and quite explicitly so at least since Heidegger. For that reason, too, Heidegger is a convenient "case" to consider for my own interests, which have, no doubt, also been shaped by Heidegger's work.

Something further, however, needs to be said here about these hermeneutical concerns. To respond to the "troubling" questions just mentioned, I want to begin to comment on the terms I used above—"resonances," "echoes," the "unsaid," the "unthought," etc.—for it is upon the clarification of these terms that the answers to those questions depend. To do so, however, I introduce a "visual" figure.⁸

Granting that there is something lens-like about words and texts—that is, something mediatorial and revelational—my concern in this text has been to "see through" the words of others to what I believe is the topic of utmost concern for us human

⁷ The Hebrew *emeth* can be translated as either "faithfulness" or "truth," thus hinting at a more personal understanding of truth, an understanding which nonetheless "accounts for" aspects of both the more traditional correspondence theory of truth and the (more) Heideggerean alethic understanding of truth.

⁸ I am using visual imagery here, but I do not mean necessarily to imply some traditional metaphysics of light prejudice. The role of traditional metaphysics and its "overcoming" is very much thematized in what follows.

beings, and thus also, human thought. It is what Heidegger called that which is most worthy of thought. Finally, again to lay my cards on the table, I take this “topic” of most worthy consideration to be the Glory of God, or if one prefers, the glorious God or the Lord of glory, etc., the One who has been manifested most fully through the Person of Jesus and the New Testament Scriptures, by means of the Holy Spirit. I will be saying more about this “glory” in terms of the two-fold (*dvoika*) of Word and Spirit (and Father), but it is worth noting here that the implication of “word” in/by this “most worthy of topics” (i.e. “glory”) also entails the detailed and respectful textual work I intend to demonstrate in what follows. It is also worth noting that this attention to “words” is not unlike Heidegger’s own procedure, for it was his “vision of Being” which was not only granted by, but also shed new light on, the meaning of traditional words and texts, opening him to the charge of “violence,” distortion, etymologizing, misreading, etc. My own way of thinking likewise reads Heidegger (and others) in the light of my own “vision of Being,” while at the same time remaining as attentive as possible to the dawning of any new light and the clearing-sightings thereby granted in this interactive process. This is not really such an odd procedure as some have imagined, but is, in fact, very much consonant with what the best philosophies and psychologies of reading, as well as literary critics have known for some time.⁹ The most important specifically Heideggerean contribution, however, is to recognize that beyond culture, ideology, history, and personal psychology, etc., there are “determinative” affects and effects of “Being.” The “meaning (or truth) of

9 Cf. my TRD. Indeed, this “confusion” of an accurate versus a “violent” reading of a text is not unknown in philosophy; in fact, a good case could be made that this state of affairs is the “bread and butter” of all textual disciplines. With regard to philosophy, note Langan’s comment on his own “appropriation” of Merleau-Ponty: “What will appear to the reader who does not know Merleau-Ponty as mere paraphrase will strike the student of his works as virtually an original construction, inspired to be sure by his remarks but definitely going beyond them” (Langan 1966:ix). Or again, Ricoeur, answering the concern that he may be “involved in an overinterpretation [=violence?] of Freud”: “... this procedure [of ‘reading Freud coupled with a reading of Hegel’] results in a better reading of Freud ... ” (F 473).

My own experience is that it is not always so easy to decide whether or not one has overstepped the line between “better” and “original” or “violent.” That, in fact, is yet another angle on my own special “point” of interest.

Being” thereby became the point of Heidegger’s own most intimate concern, as it also does for me. These matters will be further explicated and clarified in due course.

The point of all this with regard to the question of my own style, then, is this: I prefer to focus on what I can see rather than on the lens (e.g. Heidegger’s or Derrida’s words) through which and because of which I am enabled to see. However, I am *not* thereby implying that the lens itself might not be faulty or distorted and distorting. Nonetheless, we do not see with just our eyes, or even our minds, and just as we humans have the amazing ability to correct and adjust for physical distortions¹⁰ so too a faulty verbal-lens does not necessarily imply a faulty vision. Thus I am not saying that what I see “through Heidegger” is necessarily “in Heidegger,” either in his person or in his texts. That is the point of the category of the “unsaid” or the “unthought” in what follows; that is also the point of all my talk about “resonances,” etc., about which I must say even more shortly.

As a wearer of glasses, I certainly do not deny that lens makers must be concerned with the quality of lens, and that there is a very high value on attending to the distortions or faults in the lenses themselves, especially with regard to correcting such faults. But how would one be able to recognize in the first place such distortions or faults as distortions or faults? It is true that if someone had independent access to the vision granted by a “truer” light (or better eyes) than that which, for instance, Heidegger’s texts granted, then there would (seem to) be a way of seeing the distortions or faults as such; and no doubt something like this must be operative in any reading, especially regarding its critical moments: It is the necessary contribution of what we as readers bring to the text, together with that which augments our contribution and is bestowed afresh in the process. Ricoeur called this contribution the “conjoint work of the text and its reader,” and it becomes a central point of concern in chapter 6.

Matters are, however, not quite so simple and direct. There is something else happening which I wish to take note of, especially because it grants us access to the process and meaning of thinking itself, and therefore, to a deeper understanding of philosophy. That, anyway, is my claim and wager here. I have in mind the well-known

¹⁰ For instance, a person wearing glasses which invert all that is seen will shortly reinvert the “distorted” images to the right-side-up view of everyday life.

effect of context on the meaning of words; that is, words are, in part, chameleon-like. If, then, there is a “true” or “truer” or even just another or different than usual, even brand new, context which is “seen through” a certain combination of already known words, what happens to those words in the light of that new context? From one perspective we might simply say that the words change their meaning, perhaps adding a new shade of meaning, or even a (somewhat) distinct new meaning, to the existent polysemy. But what if the “context” to which we are granted access and to which we are attending involves a fresh experience of the (in any sense) ultimate, as is claimed by Heidegger’s “Being” (or *es gibt* or *Ereignis*), or my “glory of God”? Then not only would we be dealing with what would likely be a new (shade of) meaning, but also we would be entangled with the problem of determining what was/is “really” or “best” meant in the first place by those supposedly “already known words.” It is again at this point that we would be concerned not so much with the “authorial intent,” but with the “meaning of the text,” that is, the engagement with that which we see through the text, in this case, the “ultimate.” Though any shift in cultural or historical or psychological perspective would highlight this distinction, the situation is further aggravated when we have to do with what we might call the context of all contexts, as in fact is the case, for example, with regard to metaphysical-like¹¹ considerations. If, for instance, there is something “ultimate” about the One “in whom we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28), if He is always already our most ultimate human context, whether we acknowledge such or not, if that “context” even ontologically conditions human being as such, then it is quite possible that the meaning of a text might emerge as distinct from what the author appeared to mean according to the more traditional reading(s); or at least meanings not totally consistent with those more traditional readings might well come to our attention.

Further, inasmuch as the Western philosophical tradition has been influenced

11 I put it this way, “metaphysical-like,” because “what is metaphysics?” is very much part of the following discussions with regard to “what is philosophy?”. Inasmuch as “philosophy” is to be “overcome,” so too is “metaphysics.” And yet, whatever it was that metaphysics was concerned with does not thereby simply go away or dissolve into insignificance or meaninglessness. Thus “metaphysical-like” denotes that which metaphysics was concerned with as understood from the perspective of “Christian philosophy” as I am developing that here.

by the Judeo-Christian tradition, that tradition has always already been intertwined with Western philosophy, and especially, "God-thinking." This is not controversial; Heidegger, for instance, even characterized Western metaphysics as onto-*theo*-logical, explicitly crediting Christianity with a most substantial portion of that *theo*-logical contribution. What, however, will appear to some as more controversial is the claim not with regard to an historical or cultural contextual influence—by Christianity, for instance—but with regard to the contextual influence of the God of Christianity. It is because I believe that it is in fact the case that that God has always been the always already ultimate context of contexts that the matter of reading Heidegger, Ricoeur and Derrida (and even Nietzsche)—thinkers embedded in the Western "Christianized" tradition who explicitly refer both to that tradition *and* to that to which that tradition refers—becomes so problematic. In short, I am saying that the depths required for a sincere and faithful, and therefore "loving," consideration of (the meaning of) *philo(-)*sophy per se entangle us not only with what we "see through" the words of so-called philosophical texts, but also with the meaning of those texts per se. In fact, so entangled are these two aspects that evidently we are dealing with a most fundamental and unique phenomenon, a phenomenon which I am inclined finally to identify with "philosophy." It is what we could quite legitimately (and even traditionally, e.g. with Merleau-Ponty) call the *incarnational* aspect of this entanglement which makes the centrality of "the Crucified" (as suggested by Nietzsche, for instance) so *philosophically* interesting. It is also the reason that I am so sympathetic to the claim of deconstruction that the "transcendental signified" is never (essentially or purely) totally disentangled from the system of "signifiers."

1.1.2 Summarizing outline

I begin chapter 2 with a consideration of philosophy based in Heidegger's 1955 essay "What is philosophy?". Not only is the Greek background introduced, but the Heideggerean reading of this Greek material is broached, as well as my own reading of Heidegger. As noted earlier, of particular interest to me is what the translators of "What is philosophy?" called the "Heideggerean religiosity" (WP 7), especially in relation to Heidegger's own citation of the Apostle Paul on "philosophy," as well as Heidegger's comments on the specifically philosophical significance of Nietzsche's

use of “the Crucified.” At the heart of both Nietzsche’s and Heidegger’s thought is “nihilism,” or in Heidegger’s terminology, the Nothing (*das Nichts*); this too becomes increasingly pertinent, especially in relation to the development of a Christian philosophy which acknowledges the Crucified-Christ as central. One of the challenges left unresolved in chapter 2 is the relation of the “love” of the *philein* (of *philo*-sophy) to this “nihilism.” I do not take up the deeper significance of this “nihilism” again until chapter 4, nor of “love” until chapter 6 from which point it remains central through chapters 7 and 8 as well.

While chapter 2 introduces the topic of the meaning of philosophy beginning with the Greek beginnings of Western philosophy, chapters 3 and 4 are two relatively separate approaches to the meaning of philosophy starting with two key Heideggerean images (or figures or “themes”), dwelling and the way. Because Heidegger recognized Kant’s understanding of metaphysics as *Heimsuchung* as indicative of the original philosophical impulse (KPM228), while reinterpreting this *Heimsuchung* in terms of its more literal-etymological meaning, “the seeking of a home or dwelling,” chapter 3 is devoted to “Being at home,” a theme which I claim connects all the periods of Heidegger’s thought. Once again a new understanding of philosophy is probed, this time in terms of three particular topics central both to Heidegger’s thinking and to Christianity: the world, the word, and the law. The engagement between Heidegger’s thought and that of biblical Christianity begun here is developed in each of the succeeding chapters.

Chapter 4 takes up the importance of method for philosophy, recalling that at least for the modern era philosophy *is* method. While taking note of the significance of method with reference to such prominent figures as Descartes, Kant, and Husserl, I present the Heideggerean retrieval of method in terms of “the way.” Of special interest is the intrinsic relation, for Heidegger, of this way with the role of death, from the early being-toward-death of *Being and Time* to the latter Heidegger’s talk of a mysterious bond between death and language, and especially as such language is credited with the “happening” of the four-fold, including especially Heidegger’s understanding of the human as “mortal.” It is here, too, that “the Crucified” is implicated as at the heart of Heidegger’s retrieval of philosophy as method. My own “Christian retrieval” of Heidegger is advanced considerably in this chapter.

Chapters 3 and 4, then, both begin with doctrines dear to the most influential of modern philosophers, doctrines which Heidegger then subjected to his own form of (*destruktive*) retrieval, demonstrating thereby what he meant by “philosophical thinking,” not only in content but also in form or style. I put “philosophical thinking” within quotation marks here because, as we will see in chapters 5 and 6, according to Heidegger genuine thinking requires something other than what the Western philosophical tradition understood by *philosophical* thinking.

Chapter 5 introduces Heidegger’s understanding of this traditional Western thinking, both philosophical and scientific, specifically in terms of thinking as representational. While Heidegger sought to “overcome” this tradition, heeding instead what he took to be more primordial, both Ricoeur and Derrida give a “softer” understanding of representation. What proves especially interesting in the case of the latter two thinkers is that both developed representation in ways which overlap, and even merge, with their understandings of Christianity. Ricoeur reinterprets representation in terms of creative imitation (*mimesis*), even claiming that the problems posed were addressed in another time by the Doctrine of the Trinity, while I claim that his understanding of the “ontological vehemence of language” is guided and shaped by his understanding of the incarnate-divine *Lógos*. Derrida, similarly, while acknowledging the central role of representation for understanding Western philosophy, presents a deconstructed version of representation. Derrida’s version is determined by his now familiar “supplement of originarity,” which, he claims, is also “the origin of Christianity: the spirit of Christianity or the essence of Christianity” (OS 109). Thus again, two “philosophers”—one of whom (Ricoeur) explicitly and very self-consciously sought to honor the autonomy of philosophy with respect to theological concerns, and the other of whom (Derrida) confesses no allegiance to Christianity, or any other religion for that matter—have found the relation between philosophy and Christianity to be unavoidable.

Chapter 6 continues to develop the topic of thinking, now with reference to the Christian understanding of faith. By attending carefully to the works of Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida, as well as to biblical understandings of meditation and faith, I show that thinking and faith are most intimately related, approaching (at least) a kind of identity. Thinking, then, is not only (obviously!) related to our concern with

understanding philosophy per se, but also thereby provides a most pertinent test site for a consideration of the relation of philosophy to Christianity, or again, the relation between reason and faith. As scandalous as it may appear, Heidegger, for instance, identified original *believing* with “original thanking,” and both with what he meant by “thinking.” Indeed, Heidegger’s devotion to the primal Word (of the Poets) as determinative of thinking per se, especially in that such thinking is held by and beholden to that which it takes to heart as its own innermost core, to my mind is not far from the biblical understanding of faith. Even more is this so in that such “thinking” is especially directed to the holy and the gracious tidings (their “*gospel*”?) spoken by such poets.

The situations with Ricoeur and Derrida are equally intriguing. For Ricoeur both philosophy and theology, both thinking and faith, are forms of appropriation, especially as affected by the dynamics of language itself. Ricoeur’s unique contribution has been to develop such appropriation in terms of the creative imitation of the (human) imagination, however, with intimations of a divine-human logic modeled explicitly on the Resurrection (of Jesus). For Derrida I will claim that thinking is that sacrificial bearing of the friend which gratefully takes-to-heart what has been said (or written). Derrida develops this “hearing-carrying” in terms of the Heideggerian *philo* or *philein*, the very thought which guided Heidegger’s understanding of *philo*-sophy. Perhaps even more fascinating, if not perplexing, is the role of sacrifice in Derrida’s work, even a sacrifice intrinsically tied to “a resurrection to come of the *Menschenschlag* [struck-man],” a term used by Derrida for the Crucified Christ. And further, Derrida also introduced into the heart of these considerations the notion of “the gage”—or covenant, even testament. Thus we will see from a variety of sources that the identification of faith and thinking, and of philosophy with the central figure of Christianity, may not be quite so scandalous nor idiosyncratic as one might initially or otherwise suspect.

Chapter 7 continues to develop the preceding meditations, now in terms of “the spirit.” It was in Derrida’s text *Of Spirit* that the death and resurrection of the *Menschenschlag* became especially pertinent, and with that resurrection, the “promise of *spirit*.” It was also with our consideration of Ricoeur’s understanding of thinking in relation to faith that I introduced the role of “the spirit” as the bond between

text and reader, and as the source and principle of the fitting correspondence at the heart of Ricoeur's notion of creative imitation. I also noted that for Heidegger, the *thanc*—which is so determinative for his understanding of thinking—was also called “the spirit of the spirit.” All that from chapter 6; in chapter 7 I go further to note that “the spirit” brings together most of the key Heideggerean themes from the preceding chapters, and in particular, spirit is that “originally unifying unity” which serves as the key to the “and,” whether of Being *and* Time, or Parmenides' *legein and noein*, or faith *and* thinking, or poetry *and* thinking, or philosophy *and* theology, or Christianity *and* philosophy, etc. Chapter 7 is, therefore, especially important for the dialogue which this work represents. Four topics serve to structure this engagement between the “philosophical” and the biblical material: the Spirit and the Nothing, the Spirit and the Word, the Spirit and *Heimsuchung*, and the Spirit and the resurrection. Obviously such a dialogue also raises the question of the relation between philosophical thinking *and* theological thinking. Chapter 7, therefore, provides the most pointed background for the topic considered in the final chapter: the relation between philosophy *and* theology.

The aim of chapter 8 is still to progress toward our understanding of philosophy per se, and in particular, Christian philosophy. Not only do I take stock of what has been achieved in the preceding chapters, but I attempt both to clarify the task of philosophy in general, though with special attention to the task of a Christian philosophy, and to illustrate afresh the pertinence of Christianity to the general concerns of the Western philosophical tradition. I begin by affirming three aspects of Heidegger's understanding of “philosophy”: it includes a necessary element of “apologetic” (and kerygmatic) *Destruktion* or retrieval; it involves an exploration and charting of a realm Heidegger called “the Between”; and “philosophy” is a way (into that “Between”), including “the way of death.” My own Christian retrieval of these three aspects serves to highlight the personal more than did Heidegger, elaborates an ambiguity in this “Between,” and advances “philosophy” as a way of death *and* resurrection within a covenantal context structured by stipulations of both blessing and curse. Within this context a Christian *Destruktion* displays its unique character.

Having outlined my understanding of (Christian) philosophy, I then develop this sketch using two illustrations especially pertinent to the preceding discussions of

the history of Western philosophy: first, the question of “the form of unity” which figured so prominently in chapter 7; and secondly, I return to the topic of justification as raised by Heidegger in relation to Kant’s “deduction” as well as Nietzsche’s Eternal Return (cf. chapter 4). With regard to “the form of unity” I propose a distinctly trinitarian form of the relation of identity and difference, a form which acknowledges both the centrality of unity in the Western tradition and *something like* Derrida’s *différance*. With regard to “justification” I develop the significance of the Christian doctrine for philosophical concerns and conclude that the biblical understanding of justification by grace through faith offers the most radical access to and the best hope for clarifying such philosophical concerns as the relations between possibility and actuality, existence and essence, identity and difference, form and matter, etc. No mean task!¹² In addition to these traditional philosophical problems I also think that the biblical understanding of justification offers fresh insight into such Heideggerean notions as *Es gibt* (that which gives/enables), as well as such recent post-Heideggerean preoccupations as “the gift,” justice, etc. It would be, in my opinion, with the New Testament understanding of justification that Caputo (for instance, following Levinas and Derrida) would find his hope for “justice as mercy and compassion” fulfilled (DH 187; cf. 186-208): Apart from the Law God demonstrated that He is both just *and* the justifier of sinners (= an exercise of mercy and compassion) through the gift of the sacrifice of atonement (ἱλασμός (*hilasmos*), propitiation) accomplished by Christ Jesus and received by faith in Jesus, and yet He did this so as not to nullify the Law, but rather uphold and establish it (Romans 3:21-31). A stumbling block indeed! And yet our considerations of “law” in chapters 3 and 4, the Crucified in chapters 2, 6 and 7, as well as the resurrection in chapters 5, 6, 7 have prepared us to avoid unnecessary scandal.

With that background I then deal directly with the question of the relation between philosophy and theology. My position is that there is a natural and unavoidable interaction and interpenetration of philosophy and theology, with philos-

¹² It must be noted that the proposed contribution to our understanding of these traditionally paired terms is also dependent upon our understanding of the “and” which links them, a contribution granted from our considerations of “the form of unity.”

ophy always being (or “containing”) a kind of crypto-theology and theology being (or “containing”) a kind of crypto-philosophy. My proposal is that this is so because our starting point is always already something like being-in-the-world-in-God (or being-in-God-in-the-world), with philosophy attending to and highlighting being-in-the-world- ... and theology attending to and highlighting being-in- ... -God, where the “in” must be understood in terms of “the form of unity” considered earlier. Regardless, though, the relevance of each can always be shown for the other, either explicitly or implicitly, and indeed, each is also dependent upon the other. More on this shortly.

1.2 Concluding introductory comments

1.2.1 General Comments

Having briefly acquainted you with my concerns and sketched my itinerary, I conclude this introduction with some final—though still introductory!—thoughts, especially with regard to my “appropriation” of Heidegger (and Ricoeur and Derrida) which follows. Here I wish to respond to the concerns of some that such an “appropriation” could be anything but loving; rather, they would likely claim that my “appropriation” is violent, mis-taken, and quite *inappropriate*. Some even might use the word “rape” (abduction; violent, destructive treatment) rather than “love” for this form of (re-)interpretation. I do not side-step this charge; indeed, this charge of “violence” was well-known to Heidegger himself. Further, though, *pólemos*, often translated as “war,” is, in fact, at the heart of my concerns. Not only has Heidegger rendered *pólemos* as *Auseinandersetzung*, his understanding of the philosophical engagement par excellence, but *pólemos* is also intimately and inextricably united (again, that “and”) with the *philein* of philo-sophy, as Derrida shows in “Heidegger’s ear: philopolemology (*Geschlect IV*)” (1993). Here I only wish to make a few introductory points with regard to these matters which are discussed at some length later (cf. chapters 6 and 7).

It is in this context that I am quite willing to own the patristic metaphor of the *spolia Aegyptiorum*, “the theft of worldly thinking so that it can be made to serve Christian, theological aims” (CP 155). It is at the heart of philosophy as appropriation or retrieval, and it gives expression to the worst suspicions of some with regard to my

approach. It is true, and I admit it, that, as Balthasar put it (155), “the true Christian philosophy is animated very frequently by the passion to retrieve ... [what it takes to be] secularized theological material which has lost its way and to bring it back to its true form.” Underneath this metaphor and this passion is, however, the very orthodox Christian belief in “the all-embracing authority of Christ not only over all creatures in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, but also over all the forms of creaturely truth” (158). I should think, therefore, that a non-Christian (even an anti-Christian) would be able to understand that from the perspective of such a belief, what might otherwise be taken as “violence” also could be taken as a restoration of “its true form.” (I say “could” because there is also always the distinct possibility that such “violence” is indeed ethically culpable violence.) Accordingly, it is not inconsequential that Balthasar (and many others) put forth the claim: “It can be affirmed correctly that, without the secularization of Christian thought, modern philosophy would not have come into existence at all” (165). Indeed, even Heidegger admitted that “... the history of modern humanity readily shows itself as the secularization of Christianity” (N3 240).¹³ I will comment on the situation with regard to Heidegger himself shortly.

Consequently, though it is no doubt true that the charge of “violence” will stand, it is not so obvious who is to own that charge, the Christian or the modern (or the post-modern) philosophers, or perhaps in some sense everyone, conceivably in different ways, even for the same person at the same time. It would all depend—would it not?—on what the “true form” of such matters is, with one possibility being that there is no such (once and for all) “true form.” This appears to me to be the crux of the matter—pun intended! That is, I suspect that some such “violence” is unavoidable, even for the Christian whose ultimate command has to do with “love.” My point, of

¹³ Heidegger’s point is not quite as straightforward as Balthasar’s: While acknowledging that the new sense of modern freedom began as the liberation from the Christian sense of freedom, his own efforts were directed at uncovering that which made such a secularization possible, that is, a new sense of “the world” (and correlatively, truth) which served this secularizing possibility. However, as is often the case with Heidegger (and Nietzsche whom he was here discussing), it is not always so easy to discern whether he was criticizing the historical phenomenon of Christendom or the “gospel heart” of Christianity, that is, Christ Jesus Himself. And further, even when Heidegger was criticizing what he took to be the “essence” of Christianity, it is not clear that he understood by Christianity what I understand by Christianity. I will comment on some such discrepancies in subsequent chapters.

course, is that with the centrality of the (violently!) Crucified (and Risen) One, the violence of the cross is unavoidable. That is, Jesus said, “Love one another as I have loved you,” and He loved us by laying down His life (on the Cross) for His friends. Thus I am inclined to say, with Heidegger, that (at least principally) the “violence” which I endorse can and should be a liberation, thus the *extreme* importance of the quotes around violence. Please don’t miss it: I myself maintain the quotation marks around “violence” to indicate a unique and redemptive form of loving-violence, a point which I trust will not be overlooked.

The special pertinence of this point here is that my own way of reading Heidegger, *et al.*—that is, what I, in fact, mean by philosophy in this context—is “the way of the cross” worked out in relation to the textual history of philosophy and the issues thereby engaged. Briefly, my point is that the “shadow” of this Cross may well penetrate to the heart of, for instance, all words, thus bringing this issue of “violence” to the heart of textual theory. I say “words” here, not to limit the effect or presence of the Crucified Christ to language phenomena, and certainly not to limit language to words per se (but to include all real linguistic structures), but as an especially pertinent illustration in the context of our consideration of philosophy. Later I note that all the Heideggerean and post-Heideggerean talk of “crossed-through” words, being “under erasure,” etc., is not a neutral gesture, and likely not unrelated to the point being introduced here (e.g. OS 134f). As a down payment, and as an indication that my approach is not uniquely new, consider Balthasar’s characterization of his second fundamental characteristic of Christian philosophy, “the art of the clarifying transposition”: “In this reduction [to Christ as the center], it was shown that (as Origen says on one occasion) all words are basically only one single Word” (CP 160).¹⁴ As already mentioned, my own understanding of this “reduction” is developed in chapter 4 in relation to the “methods” of Descartes, Kant, Husserl, and Heidegger.

Though I (and Balthasar) use the word “reduction,” I also would want to be “guilty” of Balthasar’s characterization of Christian thinkers as “affirmative spirits

¹⁴ Balthasar’s first fundamental characteristic of Christian philosophy is “the art of breaking open all finite, philosophical truth in the direction of Christ” (156). More in chapter 8 on these fundamental characteristics of Christian philosophy.

to an eminent degree" (CP 159). It is, in fact, the affirmation which I so often accord Heidegger that is likely to get me into the hottest water with some. Though this affirmation is meant to convey the specific kind of suffering and "violent-love" I am promoting as at the heart of *philo*-sophy, it may well be the deeper conviction mentioned earlier which offends others; that is, that under and over all the forms of creaturely truth is "the all-embracing authority of Christ." Thus, with this form of affirmation, I am also affirming the discovery in Heidegger, *et al.*, of the "faded copy of the original provenance," while attempting "to cleanse it and to polish it until that radiance shines forth which shows that it is a fragment of the total glorification of God" (159). My own suspicion, however, is that "to cleanse ... and to polish" does *not* adequately account for the radicality of the re-creative/re-demptive work characterized by the death and resurrection of the Lord of Glory, a movement which must also be brought to bear on all forms of words and thoughts.

This formulation may be troublesome to Christian and non-Christian alike. For the Christian it is true that "such a methodology may appear dangerous, because the clear and sharp outlines of the evangelical decision threaten to become blurred in it" (159). It is not my intention to blur the Christian distinctives, which are indeed as sharply antithetical to the deepest non-Christian distinctives as blessing is to curse and as eternal life is to eternal death. Rather, my intention is to honestly recognize the always already "all-embracing authority of Christ" over all, which may well offend the non-Christian, though hopefully it remains understandable to all that such must be the case with regard to the One we acknowledge as Lord and God, indeed, the Creator and Redeemer of all. Regardless, this does focus the sense in which I am using such terms as "resonances," "echoes," and even "spoiling." It is also what gives meaning to the earlier citation, "Christianity is the fulfillment of philosophy," as well as what I refer to as "hearing [the works and words of others] with godly ears." But still more needs to be said, first with regard to "resonance," and second, with regard to whether "cleansing and polishing a faded copy" is an adequate characterization of what I am doing.

First, then, I will be claiming, in a manner to be worked out initially in the following chapters, that this "way of the resonances" is a form of the critique of pure reason, where philosophy itself is at stake in our understanding of reason. It is for this reason

that “resonance” operates as something of a “primitive term” whose meaning can only be filled out as we recognize the operation(s) of resonances, label that recognition with the term “resonance,” while all the time (phenomenologically) letting be, reflecting upon, and calling forth (i.e. further enabling) what is observed. I can, nevertheless, report in hindsight something of what I claim to recognize, though in this introductory form this may be tantalizing—if not provocative, even scandalous—to the extreme: I will be considering the relation between “reason” and “resonance,” both in relation to being and thinking the image of “the Christ” who most fundamentally defines human being. Thus “reason” becomes something like re-as-Son, with the repetition of the “re” and the “as” of the spirit-image *dvoika* being conveyed by the resonance [“re-(a)s-(S)on-ance”]. Lest this appear too bizarre let me hasten to note Ricoeur’s use of “the phenomenon of reverberation, of echoing or resounding” (IDA 8) to retrieve the Kantian schematism of the productive imagination, as well as G. Bachelard’s use of Minkowski’s reverberation-resonance couplet to develop a philosophy of the imagination (1964).¹⁵ Further, as noted in the summarizing outline given above, the significance of the “re-” is elaborated in chapters 5 and 6 with regard to philosophy and thinking, while the “as” is another form of Heidegger’s “and,” the original unifying unity which itself is reflected in and manifest(ed) by the ontological structure of human beings (=Dasein, etc.). The “son” (of re-as-son), of course, simply acknowledges the centrality of the Christ as Son—the one Word of Origen—and is finally interpreted in terms of the Father-Son(-Spirit) relation, itself definitive of the meaning of “love,” both as revealed through “the logic of the re-surrection.”

Thus I am proposing something other than Marion’s Gilsonian understanding of reason in relation to that Christian revelation which is received by faith. Marion’s proposal that “it [Christian revelation] *suggests* to reason how it might rationally approach the themes that reason of its own cannot know” (1992:467; emphasis added) still sounds too Kantian to my ears. I myself am more intrigued by the inherently revelational—and “faith-like”—quality of reason itself, because of which reason is able in the first place to “approach the themes that reason of its own cannot know,” and find itself already implicated in and by such concerns. The point at which I agree with

15 Cf. also Sallis 1990.

Marion is that reason inherently, by its own nature, is dependent upon revelation. The difficulty he is sensitive to is, therefore, not so much the distinction between reason and the revelation of/to faith, but the impossibility of humanistic-autonomous-Enlightenment-sinful-(etc.) reason's pretension to know *anything* "of its own," and not just the "great" doctrines of creation, the (Thomistic) "act of being," etc. This is so especially and most precisely because reason qua reason is itself revelational.

Such a conviction, however, opens up and "turns" the metaphor of *spolia Aegyptiorum*, even profoundly, and in such a way that much of the (unnecessary) offense is at least mitigated, even though the "foolishness" of the Christian way is likely thereby magnified. Here I simply report my experience in reading Heidegger, Ricoeur, Derrida, etc., the details of which are given in subsequent chapters. My point is quite simple: philosophy, even pagan (or neo-pagan) philosophy, (often, even usually) has something to offer theology: Philosophy is not simply a poor or dim or faded image of what is seen more clearly in theology, though that certainly can be the case. Again, the important and most interesting point is that there are real discoveries to be made by theologians (and scientists) through (i.e. by means of) philosophical reflection. It is this state-of-affairs that I wish first to demonstrate (though sketchily), and then to account for (chapter 8).

It is at this point of accepting the possibility that the "faded copy" may be of "the original" in a form not yet recognized by the more established theological or ecclesiastical streams of the "Tradition" that the way I am proposing, as well as enacting, may well appear the most dangerous and the most foolish to those of that tradition. I do not deny this; this is indeed a dangerous mission. Thus, I solicit the vigilance and care of my brothers and sisters of the Way. I am simply seeking a genuine interior confrontation with philosophy in its various forms, realizing at the same time that "only a courageous reflection on the most universal structure of what is Christian can show the way out of this [dangerous] situation" (CP 150). This also means that one's own understanding of that "most universal structure of what is Christian" may also (appear to) be jeopardized. For those believing thinkers amongst us, I can only remind you (and myself) that most truly you are called to "trust in the LORD with all your heart, and [to] not rely on your own insight [understanding]" (Proverbs 3:5).

Before turning to the situation of Heidegger himself with regard to Christianity, I wish to affirm with Jordan that “Neither Christian philosophy nor theology is in principle complete,” and even more to the point here, “each points beyond itself” to a new discourse (1985:308). It is not until chapter 8 that I make this point explicit, though no doubt the careful reader may well wonder along the way just what in the world I am up to: Is this philosophy? or theology? or what? Part of the problem is, no doubt, that a consideration of Christian philosophy, especially in relation to theology, “must bring into question the nature of disciplines, with their implicit schemes for human pedagogy, their myths about the intelligible, their assumptions regarding the moral role of knowledge, and so on” (309). Here too Jordan has been most to the point. I myself am quite at home (though a bit lonely) in this nether world “between” the traditional disciplines. My own wager is that not only is (Christian) philosophy not so much a method or a substance (linguistic or otherwise) as a “virtue ... subordinated to the economy of an entire character” (309), but it is also that particular virtue so pertinent to our understanding of philosophy itself, that is, “love.” As Balthasar put it, “The will to understand is love” (CP 163) ... hence my careful attention to the texts of others. I am simply attempting to understand what others have said, thus exercising what I intend to be a “philosophical ‘love’.” In short, this aspect of love as the longing or passion to understand is at the heart of what I understand philosophy to be. Further, though, love “gives the power to see” (163), and what it sees is “everything, right to the margins, because it ‘bears all things’ (1 Corinthians 13:7)” (Marion 1992:472). It is, moreover, this “bearing” which crosses Derrida’s (almost evangelical) understanding of *philein* as “the bearing of the friend” (cf. chapter 6). So germane is this “love” that Marion is bold to assert that due to this enabling power to see, “Loving becomes a *theoretical* [*theorein*, to see] exigency” (470; emphasis added), for only love can grant the kind of understanding appropriate to the new phenomena. The new phenomenon which is at the heart of this new perception and new understanding which I am claiming is not simply new, but that which alone warrants the adjective “true.” I am claiming that this new phenomenon is “the person” (471), and most specifically, the Person of Jesus, the incarnate, crucified, risen, glorified, reigning, and returning Son of God of the New Testament, the One in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. Condensing my conclusions considerably, as Balthasar put it, “the *essence*

of truth in general [is located] in this unique mystery of ... *love* ... , and one is able now to see all other truth as only a reflection of this innermost kernel of truth" (CP 157; emphases added). That which I have elided in the preceding quote is, of course, crucial; it is also "theological." The elided portion is emphasized here: "the essence of truth in general [is located] in this unique mystery of *the love between the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit.*"¹⁶ Thus, once again, the importance of "the spirit" is noted (cf. chapter 7). Nonetheless, and this is the core of my own efforts here, this understanding of truth, love, understanding, etc., is also genuinely philosophical. To demonstrate the philosophical pertinence of this "Trinitarian" love at the heart of philosophy itself is my passion and my aim. The "philosophical" demonstrations to follow—which call to my aid both explicit and implicit references to the Trinity, in one form or another, by one kind or another of philosopher—are devoted to the explication of the Glory of that Love.

1.2.2 Heidegger and Christianity?

1.2.2.1 Heidegger's personal religious history

Nobody really doubts the deeply religious and explicitly Catholic roots of Heidegger's own personal life and thought. Heidegger himself admitted in 1959 that the theological influences were decisive for the "path of thinking" he had pursued: "Without this [Christian] theological background I should never have come upon the path of thinking. But origin always comes to meet us from the future" (OWL 10). Any such lingering doubts have been decisively put to rest by the extensive works by Van Buren and Kisiel.¹⁷ It, therefore, hardly seems necessary these days to rehearse in detail the Christian background—both the specifically Catholic beginnings (and end) and the influential Protestant conversion of 1917—of Heidegger's life and thought. That there has been a profound influence of Christianity upon Heidegger is simply

¹⁶ It is here that truth as correspondence (between word/knowledge and referent), truth as coherence, and truth as revelatory, "lighting," bond find their final "home" (to avoid the more traditional "ground").

¹⁷ Van Buren, John. 1994. *The young Heidegger. Rumour of the Hidden King*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, and Kisiel, Theodore. 1993. *The genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

beyond dispute. As Caputo put it, "Heidegger's tangled but unbroken relationships with the Christian and specifically Catholic tradition, and with the Aristotelianism of that tradition, goes a long way towards explaining who Heidegger is and how he became 'Heidegger'" (1995:129).

What that influence was, however, is another matter. Opinions, of course, vary, from those who answer the question, "Was Heidegger a Christian theologian?" with a definite "No," to those, like Hugo Ott, who insist that "we certainly shall have to leave the question unanswered" (Ott 1995:137), even going so far as to conclude that "Martin Heidegger can, I dare say, be understood adequately only from out of his beginnings in which, I want to assert, he always remained and into which he was later to penetrate even further" (143). The only question of real note now is how much Heidegger's work continued to be influenced by these roots, and even more enticing, though perhaps unanswerable in any final form, is how much Heidegger himself was willingly influenced by, and in agreement with, some form of his Christian roots.

In what follows I will *briefly* review what seems to be a well agreed upon reading of Heidegger's "religious" past. I will only indicate this biographical information, as well as where further detail might be found, first of all because others have already made available this personal history of the man Martin Heidegger. Secondly, though, and more to the point of my own understanding, such biographical information is beside the point. I quite readily admit that biographical information is fascinating, and that indeed it is one type of "explanation" for my own enterprise. Simply put, someone might say that I am only recognizing these Christian roots of Heidegger's own biography, roots whose influence continued to permeate Heidegger's work to the end, even and especially in spite of what seem to be heroic efforts by Heidegger to the contrary. In fact, I would agree with such an assessment, though that too would be beside my point. Such an "explanation," however, would not be the end of the matter, for we might still ask to what extent it was in fact so, and more importantly, how or why this could be so. Various options await us: 1. A psychological explanation, something like "the return of the repressed"; 2. an historical explanation, something like Gadamer's "effective history," i.e. no one within the Western tradition and languages can escape the effect of that tradition on one's thinking; 3. a "theological" explanation: something like I have proposed above, calling on Balthasar (and others)

for support, that is, no one can escape Christianity because basically it's true, in spite of whatever aberrations Christendom might have introduced historically.

How would one decide amongst these (and, no doubt, other) options? It is here that whatever "explanation" is not in keeping with one's ownmost beliefs and/or commitments—one's ultimate "vision of 'Being'," as it were—if put forth as *the* explanation, would appear as "apologetic violence" to those not sharing such commitments. It could not be otherwise.

Nonetheless, some account of the interrelation of Heidegger's personal, philosophical and religious development begs for mention, at least, no doubt, by some (pre-)readers of this text. For my purposes, given my own perspective just noted, the following biographical details and comments are probably adequate for a fair general orientation. First with regard to Heidegger's early Catholic experience: Heidegger studied theology for four semesters at University of Freiburg before turning to philosophy at the time of the modernism debate; Carl Braig, whose work sought to bring Catholic theology and philosophy into a reciprocal relationship, served as something of a mentor; Heidegger's *habilitation* work attended to a medieval philosophical text; Heidegger taught Catholic philosophy for three semesters "under the protection of the theologian Engelbert Krebs"; indeed, summing matters up, Gadamer thought that the real questions occupying Heidegger were from the beginning theological questions (cf. Fehér 1995:192).

For example, as early as 1909-1911 Heidegger confessed a particular excitement regarding the relation between "the Word of Holy Scripture and theological-speculative thinking" (quoted at Kisiel 1993:70 from US 96/9f). For the Heidegger of around 1915-1919, "philosophy was neither theory nor worldview, but rather the plunge into life itself in its authenticity," such that "the 'living spirit' may aim at a 'breakthrough into true reality and real truth' (FS 348)"¹⁸ (Kisiel 1993:18). Such a view is not unlike that of the Patristics cited in the introduction to this chapter. Indeed, Heidegger sought to show that the medieval worldview and modern world were both determined by the same perennial philosophical problems, for which Eckhart's mysticism offered special promise (71). For example, he was "keenly interested in the

18 Heidegger, Martin. 1972b. *Frühe Schriften* (Frankfurt: Klostermann).

phenomenology of religion" (71), recognizing that the key phenomenological notion of intentionality was "first of all a medieval notion" (71). Further, according to Kisiel, the crucial Heideggerean category of "being-in" was likely taken from "the biblical formula 'Christ in me, I in Christ'" (Kisiel 1993:76; cf. also 88, 383).¹⁹

Evidently 1917 was a year of special significance for Heidegger's development, being a "year of turmoil and crisis in Heidegger's inner life" (72) and marking "his religious crisis" (71). By 1919, when he was 30, Heidegger broke with Catholicism and "turned" to Protestantism. This fact is attested to by his January 9, 1919 letter to his friend and (his former) priest Engelbert Krebs. It reads, in part, "Epistemological insights ... have rendered the Catholic *system* problematic and unacceptable to me—not, however, Christianity itself or metaphysics (the latter, though, understood in a new sense)" (quoted at Ott 1995:147), something previously announced by Heidegger's wife on December 23, 1918 in a note to Krebs, reading in part: "My husband no longer has his faith in the Church we both now think in a Protestant way ... without either Protestant or Catholic orthodoxy" (148).

Nonetheless, between 1919 and 1922 Heidegger sought to recover authentic New Testament Christian experience, even identifying himself as a Christian theologian to Karl Löwith in 1921, stating in a personal letter dated August 19, 1921: "I work concretely and factually out of my 'I am,' out of my intellectual and wholly factic origin To this facticity of mine belongs what I briefly call the fact that I am a 'Christian theologian'" (cited at Kisiel 1993:7, 78). Thus "The 'theological heritage' which put the young Heidegger onto the path of thought is thus as much Lutheran as it is Catholic, or simply Christian in the most 'primitive' sense of that heritage" (Kisiel 1993:115). As Kisiel further points out, included amongst these early influences on Heidegger were Schleiermacher (72ff, 89ff), Bernard of Clairvaux (75f, 97f), Teresa of Avila (76, 99f), Luther (76f), Augustine (77f, 105ff), Kierkegaard (77f), scholasticism and mysticism (81ff, 108ff), and Otto (96f).

Notwithstanding, beginning in the 1920s Heidegger began to attack the possibility of a Christian philosophy, insisting instead on philosophy's fundamentally atheistic

¹⁹ Inasmuch as this category is also fundamental for my understanding of philosophy (and theology), this point is especially salient (cf. chapter 8).

character (cf. Bernasconi 1995:340). By 1922 Heidegger was openly confessing the “fundamental atheism indigenous to philosophy” (Kisiel 1993:80). This trend culminated in 1935 with the explicit assertion that “A ‘Christian philosophy’ is a round square and a misunderstanding” (IM 7), while one year later confirming that “the feast of thinking never takes place in Christianity. That is to say, there is no Christian philosophy” (N1 5).

The publication of *Being and Time* in 1927 marked something of a turning point for Heidegger. Caputo is not alone in recognizing that, on the one hand, *Being and Time* was “thoroughly interwoven with theological questions,” even claiming that *Being and Time* sought a two-fold retrieval—of Aristotle and of New Testament life—which Heidegger understood as the *one* task of explicating the “universal *a priori* structures of existential life ... without regard to whether such structures were in actual fact ... Greek or Christian.” Indeed, “it was precisely because *Being and Time* was in part ... an attempt to formalize the structures of factual Christian life that it was greeted with such enthusiasm by Protestant theologians ... [who] found themselves staring at their own image” (Caputo 1993:273f).²⁰ Indeed, this Christian influence continued to be clearly recognizable in Heidegger’s post-1928 reading of the Greeks. As Caputo put it: “Heidegger was giving a reading of the early Greeks that it is impossible to believe was not the result of a transference of the categories of Christianity to early Greek texts,” categories which, according to Caputo, “were quite alien to the Greeks.” For example, “the whole thematics of speaking and answering, claiming and being claimed,” and, with regard to his “history of Being,” Caputo said, “it is clear to everyone but Heidegger’s most fanatic disciples that he is clearly Hellenizing and secularizing a fundamentally biblical conception of the history of salvation. He was in the most literal sense building a rival *Heilsgeschichte* to the biblical one that he had discovered in his New Testament studies” (Caputo 1993:280). This being the case it is no wonder that Christian theologians found Heidegger’s work congenial or that I have found “biblical resonances.”

And yet, on the other hand, shortly after the 1927 publication of *Being and Time*

²⁰ This point figures prominently for me as well, for there is a (New Testament) sense in which in Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew.

Heidegger took a definite turn against Christianity. Caputo's brief summary of these early years of Heidegger's life is as follows (note the emphasized portion):

If he had begun as an ultraconservative Catholic, and if he had after 1917 become deeply involved in a dialogue with liberal Protestant historical theology, he was *after 1928 deeply antagonistic to Christianity in general and to the Catholicism of Freiburg in particular, and he gives indications of having become personally atheistic*. He became in his personal conduct at Freiburg a hostile opponent of Christianity (Caputo 1993:277; emphasis added).

Regarding Heidegger's later thinking, it is undeniable that there is "a religious overtone ... on the whole of his later thinking" (Fehér 1995:221), oriented as it was "toward seeking the right word," a quest which finally "leads him to find that word, eventually, in the dimension of silence This becoming silent in the right moment and place is presumably more able to preserve the religious dimension, that of the holy, than the traditional theological talk or concepts of God" (Fehér 1995:222).

Here too, though, with regard to Heidegger's later thinking, opinions vary. Caputo, for example, claims that "From the 1930s on, Jews and Christians were shown the door and replaced by a pantheon of 'pagan' 'gods,' pure Greeks, and celebrated in an openly mythologizing thinking, which culminated in the hope that one day one of them would come alone and save us" (DH 169). Bernasconi agrees with Caputo that, though references to Christianity can be found throughout Heidegger's work, the place accorded to Christianity certainly diminished, while the role of Hebraic thought "virtually disappear[ed]" (1995:335). On the other hand, Ott notes that Heidegger's *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Gesamtausgabe 65)*, published in 1965, but composed between 1936-1938—a period Caputo designates as Heidegger's "Buddhistic period"—is crowned by "a declaration of blessedness" which is not only "clearly and profoundly religious," but also "nourished above all by the holy texts of the Jews and Christians." Ott holds to this view even though Heidegger describes "the last god" in explicit contrast with the Christian God, convinced that the Jewish and Christian "trace" is there to be "sought out" (1995:139).²¹

²¹ Ott goes on to note that the failure of Heidegger's rectorate coincided after 1935 with Heidegger declaration of the death of the god of Jews and Christians, the vacuum left being "replaced with Being (Seyn), appearing as the last god in his most unique singularity" (139).

In sum, Gadamer's assessment is perhaps the best characterization: "Heidegger's thought took on a religious dimension, a mysterious and suggestive religiosity which was neither the Catholicism of his youth nor the Protestantism of the Marburg years, but which reminds us at once of Meister Eckhardt and Greek religion, of Christian mysticism and pagan religion" (*Gesammelte Werke* 3:445f, quoted at Fehér 1995:223, n. 75). Heidegger's alleged atheism, then, could be understood as "only methodological, that is, it refers to, and urges the adoption of, a certain attitude or comportment, that of not taking over anything blindly from the tradition, from the authorities" (Fehér 1995:219). This is another sense in which I am inclined to understand Heidegger's work as still "modern."

But, as I have already noted above, such matters are not settled by quoting authorities, but finally reside in one's ownmost commitments with regard to the issues raised by such "religious" matters. The topic of Heidegger's "atheism," for instance, will be probed throughout the following chapters, though I must insist that my concerns are focused on Heidegger's texts and *die Sache selbst* (the matters therein raised), rather than on the man himself, about whom judgment is reserved for the only One able to judge justly (as in all such cases), and for which we all have much cause for gratitude.

1.2.2.2 Heidegger and God

So where do I stand with regard to "Heidegger and God"? I suppose a word must be ventured, though I do so reluctantly. I am sympathetic to Ott's caution: "In view of the increasingly unsurveyable literature on the problem of 'the role of God and theology in Heidegger's thinking,' one might well lose the heart even to broach the subject" (Ott 1995:141). It certainly is plausible that Heidegger's thought was influenced, if not determined (from the past and from the future!), by his Catholic origins and Protestant inclinations and influences. And yet, again, in the most decisive sense all this Catholic or Protestant or "merely" Christian or theological/religious background may be beside the point, especially if we were to take Heidegger himself seriously and attend to the texts themselves. Two issues do, though, call for further comment: first the well-known exchange between William Richardson and Hans Jonas; and second, recent comments contrasting Heidegger's "god" with "the God whom Jesus

called *abba* or with the religion of the cross that Heidegger found in Luther" (Caputo 1993:283).

We can be grateful to Hans Jonas for his clear warning against an uncritical acceptance of Heidegger's thought. In essence Jonas' concerns have been raised earlier in this introduction, and my reply largely has been in accord with Richardson's. Nonetheless, let me review the issues.

Jonas notes first of all that "there is much secularized Christianity in Heidegger's thought" (1966:241). To echo my own vocabulary, Jonas cites the "Biblical ring" (243), or, in Richardson's paraphrase, the "profoundly Christian resonance" (1965:19), of Heidegger's thought and language, citing the reason for this similarity as the prior borrowing by Heidegger from the Christian tradition. Jonas holds that this was true for both the early and the later Heidegger. Secondly, Jonas objected to Heidegger's understanding of "fate" (244ff). Third, and of a piece with the above, Jonas charged Heidegger with a paganism that deifies the world while de-divinizing God (Richardson 20).

Jonas' concern is that Heidegger's influence on Christian thinking, the more seductive given its "Biblical ring," would induce a belief, if allowed, in two very non-Christian ideas: 1. "permanent revelation" (Jonas 254), and 2. a rejection of the subject-object distinction. The problem with the first is that Heidegger's thinking offers no norms (247) for distinguishing true revelation from that of "demons" (254), a problem attested to by Heidegger's own "fall" into Hitler's National Socialism (247, 258). The second non-Christian idea leads, according to Jonas, to the rejection of objectifying speech and therefore to a "pneumatic theology," to a "glossolaly ('speaking in tongues')" (255), which not only denies the created truth of the subject-object distinction, but thereby entails a "betrayal of man's task growing from the acceptance of his lot" (258).

The issues Jonas raised have been alluded to already in this introduction and are dealt with quite pointedly in the following chapters. In particular, let me mention by way of review just three, starting with the latter. First of all, yes, "the spirit" does come forward once again as an important philosophical category. For my part such a "pneumatic" form of thinking is not to be denied, but rather must be acknowledged; nor is "glossolaly ('speaking in tongues')" something to be outrightly denied. (Jonas

seemed to think that merely labeling something “pneumatic” or “glossolaly” was a sufficient condemnation in and of itself, without examining either the biblical status of such or the philosophical pertinence of “the spirit.”) This will not do on either theological or biblical or philosophical grounds. Nonetheless, Jonas’ concern regarding the need for norms (“the law”) and for “the discernment of spirits” is quite valid. It is here that my appeal to the inclusion of the text of the Bible, and more specifically, the *dvoika* of Word and Spirit, responds to Jonas’ concerns.

Secondly, Jonas is quite right to alert us to the importance of the subject-object distinction, and in particular, the need to maintain it in some form. I agree that Heidegger is susceptible to disaster on this point even though he actually did not reject the subject-object distinction, but rather sought to explicate that because of which and in terms of which and within which it could function both as a distinction and as a relation. Rather than reject this distinction, Heidegger explicated the “between” as that realm of “pure correspondence” granted by the “clearing,” a phenomenon which I finally understand as a work of “the spirit.” Nonetheless, chapter 6 develops two forms of the retrieval of this (slightly) suppressed, or at least underemphasized, aspect of Heidegger’s understanding of the subject-object distinction. It is this area of weakness in Heidegger which makes me especially appreciative of both Ricoeur’s and Derrida’s alternative elaborations of that “representation” which governs the subject-object relation.

Thirdly, I myself think that attention to the phenomenon of “permanent revelation” is required, for biblical revelation tells us (as does our experience) that all of creation constantly reveals God (Romans 1; Psalm 19; etc.). Further, though, it is not at all non-Christian to believe and know that “God is with us,” and that He is not silent, but communicates to us quite personally by means of His Holy Spirit and His Holy Word. The relation between these forms of revelation, traditionally termed general and special revelation, continues to be an outstanding point of interest in Christian theology, philosophy, and life. I am inclined to listen to Heidegger’s formulations for helpful means of understanding these matters further, while at the same time appreciating Jonas’ cautions.

After elaborating various aspects of Heidegger’s thought relevant to Jonas’ criticisms, Richardson responds to the basic issue raised:

Why are Christians interested in Heidegger's thought though his thought is a God-less thought? Because there is truth in Heidegger and wherever there is truth there is God. For a Christian the Word of God, the eternal Logos, became man, and at one moment in His history, quite aware of the malice of men, He said 'I am ... the truth ... Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice' (John 14:6, and 18:37). We take this to mean "I am the truth. If anyone attends to the truth, it is My voice that he hears" (40).

Here then is my point stated otherwise: We can listen both to and through the words of Heidegger (or any other) for a truer Word, in whose light we see and by whose grace we hear His voice. Not only can the work of a Heidegger help us to hear better, but the light and grace of "the Word of God, the eternal *Logos*, became man" (from other sources as well) can help us understand the truth Heidegger might be both expressing and still groping toward. Heidegger himself often and explicitly termed his own thought as "on the way."

Might this be a dangerous enterprise? Yes, indeed; I have already acknowledged that! Is it an enterprise that can be avoided? In my opinion, no, not responsibly anyway, for reasons to be further explicated, especially in chapters 2 and 8.

1.2.3 Heidegger's "god" and the Christian God

But if we are to allow the possibility that Heidegger might have something relevant to say with regard to Christianity and her God, what are we to do with Heidegger's talk of "the gods"? Caputo, for instance, having taken note of the much debated issue of the status of God in Heidegger's later thinking, notes that "the god that emerges in Heidegger's later writing is a profoundly poetic god ... [who] has virtually nothing to do with the God whom Jesus called *abba* or with the religion of the cross that Heidegger found in Luther" (Caputo 1993:283).

On one level I can certainly see and acknowledge the sense of Caputo's claim. And yet, the readings I am proposing in the following chapters complicate matters considerably, at least to my mind. Not only do I recognize Heidegger's "[generic] religious discourse of giving and receiving, grace and graciousness, saving and danger, address and response, poverty and openness, end time and beginning time, mystery and withdrawal," etc. (Caputo 1993:284), but I also take note of a variety of even more specifically Christian "hints": the destruction of Greek wisdom, the Crucified, the mighty pain, the one born earlier, the two deaths and two ways, etc., and even

indications that the “impersonal” (e.g. *es gibt*) is not really the final word for Heidegger. Indeed, Caputo also noted that the path toward the primacy of the biblical God in and for thinking, and for thinking in relation to religious faith, as followed by Heinrich Ott, for instance, was already indicated by Heidegger himself in his 1959 meeting (PT 22-31; *Gesamtausgabe* 9:68-79) (Caputo 1993:284f). In one sense my project simply takes seriously this otherwise marginal account. The demonstration of these points awaits the following chapters.

2 What is Philosophy?

2.1 Introduction

The question before us is "What is philosophy?" For various reasons I begin with Heidegger's August 1955 lecture, published in English in 1958 under the title, *What is Philosophy?* (hereafter WP). I choose this essay because, first of all, wherever I start I am clearly joining a conversation already well under way; hence Heidegger's essay is as good a place to begin as any. As Heidegger reminded us, this is a peculiarly Greek question both with regard to its form (What is ... ?) and with regard to that after which it inquires (... philosophy). In spite of Heidegger's efforts to overcome such forms of thinking, and as a means to his own end, Heidegger nonetheless pursued that question, concluding at the end of his meditation that philosophy is the correspondence or dispositional attunement between the human being and the Being of beings, specifically as granted by the appeal (or voice) of Being, and as expressly unfolded in language by the one who faithfully responds to that appeal. There are, of course, many expressions in this "definition" which require further attention. Clarifying this wording is, therefore, our next task.

The "correspondence or dispositional attunement" (between the human and Being) coincides, according to Heidegger, with the love of that *philein* which defined *philo-sophy* for the early Greek thinker. It is, said Heidegger, the equivalent of Heraclites' "*homolegein*, to speak in the way in which the *Lógos* speaks, in correspondence with the *Lógos*" (WP 44/47). Not only was this "correspondence" originally that which is in accordance or harmony with *sophon* (wisdom), but it became a striving or yearning for *sophon* due to the need to rescue and protect *sophon* from the attacks of the Sophists (50/51). It is this striving or seeking which will figure prominently in what follows. First, though, continuing with our exposition of Heidegger's response to the question "What is philosophy?", how are we to understand his appeal to the voice of Being?

Returning to Aristotle, Heidegger pointed out that that which the Greeks "sought both of old and now and forever and forever missed is, what is being" (Met. Z 1, 1028 b 2; quoted at WP 52/53). This is that which was "most astonishing" for the Greeks, and it was almost identical (for the Greeks) with both *sophon* and *Lógos* (48/49). Because

of this identification of "Being" (as that in which all being is gathered) with *Lógos* (as that which gathers), "Being" is that which "speaks." Therefore the correspondence or attunement noted earlier is "a speaking [which] is in the service of *language*" (92/93).

Further, this astonishment of the "most astonishing" engendered by *sophon* (i.e. "being in Being") was, for the Greeks, the beginning of philosophy. It was the *pathos* which initiated and also pervaded every step of philosophizing (82/83), and which is itself identical with that original harmony with the *sophon*, what Heidegger called attunement (84/85). This "astonishment" will also figure prominently later in this chapter when we return to these "Greek matters." Philosophy, then, for the Greeks (according to Heidegger) was the tuning of the human to and by the "speaking" of Being as accomplished in language.

Heidegger, however, was not satisfied that the Greeks (at least since Socrates) had yet attended to (or been granted) Being as such. Rather he understood the Greek sense of the "being" toward which the philosophers yearned as "the whole, the totality of being," specifically as gathered into *Hen*, "the One, the unique, the all-uniting" (48/49). That is, for Heidegger, though Greek philosophers understood all being(s) as "in Being," they did not yet understand Being as Being. They were therefore only "en route to the Being of being" (54/55). As he put it elsewhere (and often), the Greeks, and in fact the whole history of Western metaphysics, attended only to Being in relation to beings, and not to Being itself (e.g. WM, WBGGM).

Heidegger, however, sought to overcome metaphysics per se by attending not to the root of philosophy (i.e. metaphysics; cf. WBGGM), but to the ground within which the root is rooted. In this regard philosophy itself, which was identified with metaphysics (e.g. WM 349), is also overcome along with the overcoming of metaphysics. Heidegger called that to which these overcomings reach 'Being as Being' or the truth (or meaning) of Being; and the attunement which corresponds to this truth he called not philosophy, but thinking (e.g. WBGM 208).¹ Our initial question, "What is philosophy?", thus was identical for Heidegger with the question, "What is metaphysics?".

1 "Thinking" is developed a little further in this chapter and those following, though most fully in chapter 6.

Metaphysics, however, has not been able to address this question because its confusion between beings and Being erected a "barrier which keeps man from the original involvement of Being in human nature" (WBG 210). To overcome or surpass this barrier therefore requires reckoning with that very question which demands a "perspective" outside of or beyond metaphysics' understanding of Being as the Being of beings. Thus attending to the question "What is metaphysics/philosophy?" became for Heidegger "the most necessary necessity for thought" (WBG 211), for it is the question which in its own asking raises the question of the "beyond" required for both its own asking and answering (WM 349). Heidegger's wager was that this "beyond" is also the very *place* of "the original involvement of Being in human nature."

Furthermore, attending to this question, and especially to Heidegger's own response to it, will also be useful for my own purposes, for it is here that we encounter quite clearly Heidegger's understanding of "the Nothing," and correlatively, nihilism. Attending to his understanding of "the Nothing," together with the understanding of Greek philosophy sketched above, will prepare us most decisively for our own engagement with the crux of these issues and concerns. After these considerations and engagements I will conclude this chapter by returning to our original question—What is philosophy?—in relation to this Greek and Heideggerean background.

The conceptual move Heidegger made in order to respond to this most necessary of questions is not difficult to understand: in comparison with the metaphysical understanding of Being as "what-is-in-totality", "that which is beyond such Being is "the pure 'Other'" (WM 339). It is, therefore, no-thing; that is, it is not a being/thing, not even all (= the Totality of) beings/things. It is therefore "the Nothing." Thus not only is nihilism (*nihil* = nothing) the essence of metaphysics, since for metaphysics "there is essentially nothing to Being itself" (N 4.211), but that which was withdrawn from and (therefore) forgotten by metaphysics is precisely Nothing in comparison with that which metaphysics understood by Being. Further though, during his early and middle periods "the Nothing" became Heidegger's designation for that to which he himself sought to respond in its own terms, what he otherwise called Being (though that term was itself to be "overcome"). For instance, the ("philosophical") wonder or astonishment which was associated with the *sophon* and *Lógos* of Heraclitus and Parmenides (WP 46/47; 52/53) and the *ousia* ("being") of Plato and Aristotle (54/55),

was recognized by Heidegger as dependent upon this "revelation of Nothing" (WM 348).

It must be admitted, however, that "the Nothing" is itself a contrastive term—as Heidegger put it, "the pure 'Other'" (WM 339; 353, 357, 360)—and thus depends decisively on that with which it is contrasted.² In other words, "the Nothing" does not yet say much at all about Being as such. Indeed, this Nothing is "the veil of Being" (360). There are, though, strong hints already surrounding Heidegger's efforts in these early and middle periods, hints which manifest what I called in chapter 1 his "religiosity." I look first briefly at WM, and second at WBGM.

2.2 Heidegger's religiosity

In Heidegger's 1943 Postscript to WM this language of religiosity is quite obvious. There he spoke of "grace," "Being's favor," "the Word in words," "the voice of Being," "the Word of the soundless voice of Being," "original thanking" as human sacrificial response, etc. As Langan (1959:100) put it, "Heidegger has recourse to religious language here because he is trying to express what has always been the concern of religion," in particular, values which "in the older philosophy ... appeared to derive only from God." Indeed, even the original inaugural lecture to which this Postscript was later appended closed with something of a religious exhortation. It included the following: "letting oneself go into Nothing, that is to say, freeing oneself from the *idols* we all have and to which we are wont to go cringing" (WM 349; emphasis added).

The introduction to WM, itself added in 1949, only intensifies this religiosity, though in a somewhat veiled form. It is this separately titled introduction, "*The way back into the ground of metaphysics*," to which I now turn. One paragraph in particular is of special interest to me because of its explicit reference to the Christian Scriptures and their relevance for a consideration of our question, "What is philosophy/metaphysics?" (WBGM 215f).

While explicating the ontotheological character of philosophy/metaphysics, Hei-

² In the 1949 Preface to the treatise "*The essence of reasons*," which was written at the same time as WM (1928), Heidegger said "Nothingness [*Das Nichts*] is the Not of being and thus is Being experienced from the point of view of being" (WG 2/ER 3).

degger recognized that the theological nature of ontology was not due to the Christian transformation of Greek metaphysics, but rather metaphysics had always been concerned with both "the truth of beings in their universality and in the highest being" (215). It was, in fact, this Greek concern with "the highest being" which Heidegger credited with providing the possibility for the later Christian use of Greek philosophy. Nonetheless it was in this context that Heidegger seemed to go out of his way to identify what Aristotle called "first philosophy" with what Paul the Apostle referred to as the wisdom which the Greeks seek (1 Corinthians 1:22).

Earlier we noted Heidegger's characterization of (Greek) philosophy as a yearning or "striving ... determined by Eros" (WP 51); we also noted Heidegger's reference to Aristotle's "that which is *sought* both of old and now ..." (53, emphasis added). Thus, regardless of whether or not Heidegger intended to consider Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians as giving us either theology proper or philosophy or "thinking," he makes perfectly explicit the relevance of this passage for his own concern regarding the question "What is metaphysics/philosophy?" (WBG 218).

Certainly it is possible to take this paragraph as something of a tangential comment regarding the dependence of Christian theology on certain Greek roots, or more precisely, its dependence on "the manner in which beings as beings have from the beginning disconcealed themselves" (216). We might even take Heidegger's concern here to be a warning to Christian theologians not to forget that according to their Scriptures Greek philosophy ought to be considered "foolishness," and that therefore they themselves ought not be too enamored with it. Nonetheless, it is difficult to suppress the relevance of this Corinthian context for Heidegger's own efforts, as adequately illustrated elsewhere in WBG itself. Four such points follow. Here I only begin to note the relevance of these descriptions.

First of all, Heidegger quoted 1 Corinthians 1:20—"Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?"—in order to explicitly identify this "wisdom of the world" with Greek philosophy. He even returned at the end of the paragraph to again emphasize "the conception of philosophy as foolishness." Why this emphasis? Recall that Heidegger himself was seeking in these lectures to go beyond or overcome this same conception of philosophy, presumably to something other than foolishness. He sought instead to carry out a "more thoughtful" (211), indeed another and different

kind of thinking (211, 217), and he did so by attempting to direct his (and our) thinking "toward a different point of origin" (211). For Heidegger this "different point of origin" was "Being itself" (211), though he also called it "the Nothing," which he said was "the sole topic of the lecture [WM]" (218). For the Apostle Paul, on the other hand, the "point of origin" toward which we are recommended to direct our thinking is Christ Jesus, the wisdom and power of God (vv. 24, 30). What, then, is the relation between Heidegger's "point of origin" and Paul's?

Second, Heidegger called this sought-for overcoming of metaphysics a "*Destruktion*" (WP 70), while the Apostle Paul also referred to the "making foolish" (v. 20) of the wisdom of the world as a "destruction" (v. 19). Quoting Isaiah 29:14 Paul said (God Himself is speaking): "I will destroy (ἀπόλλυμι) the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate (ἀθετήσω)." Just as Heidegger said that "*Destruktion* does not mean destroying but dismantling, liquidating, putting to one side" (WP 70f/71f), or "a critical process in which the traditional concepts ... are deconstructed down to the sources from which they were drawn" (BPP 23), or again, a loosening up of a hardened tradition which dissolves the concealments imposed by that tradition so as to free up the underlying primordial experiences (BT 44/SZ 22), so too ἀπόλλυμι does not mean to destroy but to release, set free, even forgive. Similarly the parallel verb, ἀθετήσω, means make invalid, set aside, even nullify. The areas of semantic overlap between Heidegger's *Destruktion* and ἀπόλλυμι / ἀθετήσω should be evident: "putting to one side"/"set aside"; to free up (the primordial)/to release, set free; "liquidating"/"make invalid"; etc. And the "nullify" (of ἀθετήσω), of course, is not far from Heidegger's "sole topic" of concern, "the Nothing," whose essence is nihilation (WM 338). This association becomes even less avoidable since nullification becomes once again explicit in v. 28, there expressed in terms of καταργέω, to render ineffective, nullify, cancel, destroy, abolish, do away with, etc. Nihilation (and nihilism), then, is a major point to which we will return below, especially in relation to Heidegger's citation of the Apostle Paul.

My third point of comparison has to do with Heidegger's "method" of thinking beyond metaphysics. He called it variously: listening to the "as yet unsaid" in the metaphysical tradition (WBG 208), inducing Being itself to speak (209), or attending to that which metaphysics has systematically ignored, avoided and masked in

oblivion. That to which such attention is granted is "that which conceals itself in the *on* [being]" (216), that is, the Nothing or Being itself. All these expressions (and others) are mutually explicative. In the words of the Apostle Paul (again quoting Isaiah, this time 64:4), Heidegger was concerned with "What no eye has seen, no ear heard, nor the human heart conceived ... " (1 Corinthians 2:9); in short, God's secret and previously hidden wisdom (2:7), a wisdom of which the rulers and philosophers "of this age" were "ignorant" (2:8, NIV). And indeed, just as Heidegger credited this oblivion of Being to the withdrawal of Being itself, the verse between the two quoted by Heidegger says that "in the [secret, hidden] wisdom of God, the world [i.e. this age] did not know [i.e. were ignorant of] God through [its] wisdom ... " (1:21). Once again not only is that of which there is ignorance called Being/Nothing by Heidegger, while Paul considered it God Himself, but the same distinction rules over (or within) the hiddenness as well as its dynamic. Though there are undeniable similarities, and though these thematic strands are interwoven, nonetheless they remain (as yet) quite distinct!

Fourth, consider the "goal" of Heidegger's efforts: "a change in human nature, accompanied by a transformation of metaphysics" (209). Heidegger was quite clear that such a change would be due to Being itself striking, rousing and stirring the human to "respond and correspond to Being as such" (209). It would be the "involvement of Being in man" which might "generate a radiance ... which might lead man to belong to Being" (209). Not only would this belonging implicate individual humans, but this radiance of the unfolding of Being would gather an assembly of those responding to the call of Being appealing to us (WP 97). Later Heidegger referred to "the select" being "set apart," thereby being "gathered up into an assembly" (OWL 186), language not far from that of the Apostle Paul who was concerned with an *ekklesia* of the sanctified (=set apart) and called (1 Corinthians 1:2, 9), those who had received "the Spirit that is from God" (2:12), and who therefore were able to receive and understand the things spoken by that Spirit. As he said elsewhere in the Corinthian correspondence, these "called ones" are "a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) who are continually transformed into greater correspondence with (and by) the radiance of the glory and image of the Lord Himself (2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:4). These compact references will figure prominently in what follows.

Though more similarities could be traced, these four are sufficient to illustrate the intrinsic intertwining, or at least entanglement, of Heidegger's concerns with those of the Apostle Paul. Let me claim here no more than the solicitation of a handshake, an invitation and an introduction to further "dialogue," what Heidegger in fact called authentic philosophizing (WP 67). Such "philosophizing" with Scripture can no doubt appear as scandalous, even foolish, to some. The only justification I can offer will likely be the demonstrations to follow.

Preliminarily, though, and in addition to the four strands already mentioned, consider the "secret kinship" between the "thinking" (?) which Heidegger recommended and poetry (WP 95); then, note that for Heidegger the "thinker utters Being ... [while] the poet names what is holy" (WM 360); and, as a third step, note that this "secret kinship" seems to have already allowed a good deal of "religiosity" in the thinking of Martin Heidegger. Evidently the "abyss" separating poetry and Heidegger's own thinking does not prevent all kinship exchanges: As is well-known, the later Heidegger allowed great prominence to "the poets" and their "naming of the holy" within his own thinking. Here too one might wonder whether Heidegger's approach was not prefigured by the Apostle in his address to the philosophers in Athens, where he also cited the Greek poets (Acts 17). Nonetheless, Heidegger himself never "justified" the choice of his preferred "canon" of poets and early Greek thinkers beyond an appeal to the fruits of his own meditations. Thus my proposal to allow the "voice of Scripture" is not unlike Heidegger's own appeal to his chosen poets. Finally, though, if it is the poets who name the holy, and if such "naming" can give rise to *thought* (as it certainly did for Heidegger), then surely "the *Holy* Scriptures [i.e. writings]" deserve a hearing, even more so given the entanglements already marked out above. The granting of that hearing is the task of this book.

2.3 "The Nothing"

I continue now with a further consideration and development of points already noted above. I begin with Heidegger's self-confessed "sole topic" of the lecture "What is metaphysics?," including the Postscript and the Introduction. That topic is "the Nothing" and its essence, nihilation, which is itself considered the essence of metaphysics proper (N 4.211). This is not Heidegger's final word on the subject, for at the extreme

the Nothing is but a "veil" (214) of "the secret of the promise of Being itself" (227). It is a veil which hides that secret *and* it is a veil which is itself the appearance of that secret as secret, and therefore also the beginning of the appearance of the promise as promise. The veil of Nothing is the "mystery" which "remains concealed in its essence and entirely hidden, though nonetheless it somehow appears" (226). Indeed, the concealment of and by the Nothing is the self-concealment of Being which as itself stays away, or withdraws (213); in short, the "veil ... is the Nothing as Being itself" (214; cf. WM 360). Such a nihilating event of Being therefore prepares for the revelation of Being itself as itself and in its own terms, what Heidegger called the soundless voice of Being. The experience of this nihilating event of Being Heidegger called "dread," while the experience of the heeding of the soundless voice of Being he called not philosophy, but thinking: philosophy (as metaphysics), remember, was to be overcome. I will return to this "dread" shortly; but first I turn again to the nihilating destruction of philosophy written about by St. Paul.

Clearly from Paul's perspective "the wisdom of this age ... [is] coming to nothing" (1 Cor. 2:6, NIV), while God has chosen instead "the things that are not to nullify the things that are" (1:28). The New Jerusalem Bible says God has chosen "those who count for nothing—to reduce to nothing all those that do count for something"; the NRSV also translates, "to reduce to nothing." Paul spoke similarly in two other passages in the Corinthian correspondence, though fortuitously in ways which amplify this sense of nullify or destroy. First, 1 Corinthians 15:24-25,

Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed (from καταργέω) all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed (from καταργέω) is death.

Second, 2 Corinthians 10:5,

We demolish (from καθαιρέω: take down, destroy, overthrow) arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive (αἰχμαλωτίζω: make captive, get control of) every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

These two passages add an important sense to our consideration of the Pauline meaning of "nullifying destruction." In particular, not only is the wisdom of philosophy "undone" or deconstructed, and thus rendered ineffectual, but all such thoughts and powers are made captive and obedient to the reign of Christ Jesus. We might

say that they are not simply deconstructed, but further that they are reconstructed or reassembled in(to) some new and transformed sense: This deconstructive/reconstructive transformation effects a change in which "the old has gone, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The model of that transformation is none other than the deconstructive/reconstructive transformation effected by the death and resurrection of Christ Himself. It was, after all, the resurrection which established Jesus as the firstborn over *all creation* and the reconciler of *all things* (Colossians 1:15, 20; Ephesians 1:19f, Philippians 3:21). My point here is that this deconstructive/reconstructive dynamic does not annihilate the old, but transforms it just as the resurrection did not annihilate the body of Jesus, but transformed it. And evidently there was no part of the old which was untouched by that transformation. This, then, is the Christian sense in which I would understand the "transformation of metaphysics" (WBG 209) to be effected by the "destruction" of the history of metaphysics, the model being the death and resurrection of Jesus.

We must now take special note of this "model." It has already been mentioned above that Heidegger sought to direct his (and our) thinking "toward a different point of origin" (WBG 211) than had traditionally been the case for metaphysics. It becomes quite clear from the Scripture references noted that the "point of origin" which those texts recommend is Christ Jesus, whose Kingdom reign was inaugurated by His resurrection from the dead and whose resurrection actually occasioned a new creation. How is this relevant?

First of all, we have a variety of alternative expressions for what Heidegger called "the Nothing." We must keep in mind that what is called "the Nothing" is so only in comparison with the traditional understanding of Being: "The Nothing" merely redirects our thinking to something which has remained veiled, something yet to be thought. Recalling that "destroying" or "making foolish" or "*nullifying*" the wisdom of the world in 1 Corinthians 1 correlates with and further exegetes both the "destroying" and "putting under his [Christ's] feet" of 1 Corinthians 15 and the "demolishing" and "taking captive" of 2 Corinthians 10, it is not difficult to see that Heidegger's "Nothing" upon which all things depend for their "what-is-ness," at least with regard to or in relationship with our human existence (WM 338ff), is "replaced," according to this reading of Paul, by Christ Jesus Himself. And indeed, the Apostle referred to this Jesus

as "the One who is before all things and in whom all things consist [hold together]" (Colossians 1:17); that is, all things depend on this One for their "what-is-ness" (and indeed, for their "that-ness" as well!), just as with regard to Heidegger's "Nothing."

I must hasten to add that I am *not* saying that Heidegger's "Nothing" and Paul's "Christ Jesus" are identical. I *am* saying that the function which Heidegger explicated as and ascribed to "the Nothing" is recognized as and denominated "Christ Jesus" by Paul; or rather, as may well have been the case (see chapter 1), the function of Paul's Christ Jesus was secularized and replaced by Heidegger's Nothing. Though I am quite willing to endorse such possibilities, personally I do not think the relation between the Nothing and the Christ is quite so direct. And further, though I have been somewhat underplaying the differences here, I am also suggesting a further and more careful consideration of this relation (both similarities and differences), some of which I pursue below.

2.4 Further Endorsements

2.4.1 Two Heideggerean Endorsements

I readily acknowledge that even such a correlation, if not identification, as I have suggested may well seem far-fetched, even scandalous or outrageous. Nonetheless there are several avenues in addition to those traced above which can be offered to further substantiate these inferences. No doubt the theologian, the Christian in general and even the careful reader of the Biblical text may not need any further authentication with regard to the scriptural points raised. However, what likely remains most suspect is the validity of the connection between the proposed reading of the Bible and the texts of Heidegger, and further, the consequent relation between the Bible and philosophy in general. Since it is these latter points with which I am explicitly concerned, I proceed with the following two endorsements from Heidegger's texts; further scriptural endorsements and developments will then follow. My point here is, first of all, to establish further why I think there is something worth pursuing in this conversation, if not "correlation," between Heidegger's thinking and Christianity. This is *not* to endorse a too easy, or thoughtless, identification based only on somewhat vague analogies or suggestions of language or thought. It is, however, a preliminary and unavoidable task: preliminary, in order to establish something as

worthy of thought; unavoidable, because Heidegger's thought appears, to me anyway, as already deeply intertwined with biblical language and thought. Regardless, more careful thinking must be employed as we proceed.

2.4.1.1 First Heideggerean Endorsement

First of all, consider the admittedly controversial reading of Kant's philosophy offered in Heidegger's Kant-book (KPM, 1929). In particular I have in mind §30, "The transcendental power of imagination and practical reason." There Heidegger argued that not only is the transcendental power of the imagination the origin of theoretical reason (as argued throughout KPM), but it is also the origin of practical reason. Specifically Heidegger argued that "the essence of the personality of the person" (KPM2 107) consists of both the idea of the moral law and respect for that law. Practical reason, however, since it is free "gives to itself that for which the respect is respect, the moral law" (109). It was in this self-projecting (i.e. giving to itself the law) together with the self-submitting (i.e. respect for the law) that Heidegger recognized the pure spontaneity and the pure receptivity respectively which he had previously traced to the transcendental power of the imagination in which "both are originally one" (109). Thus he took his point as established: the origin of practical reason is in the transcendental power of the imagination.

My point, however, is that it equally follows (from within Heidegger's thinking) that "the essence of the personality of the person" is also "grounded" in the transcendental power of the imagination, or even that the essence of "the person" *is* what I prefer to call "the Original Image" (replacing Heidegger's Original Time as more consistent with both Kant's and Heidegger's design). I leave "grounded" in quotes not only to highlight this word as Heidegger's own (107), but even more especially to problematize the order of the "grounding." That is, following the more traditional understanding of Kant it would be more natural to "ground" the transcendental imagination of the First Critique in the practical reason, and thus in "the person" of the Second Critique, than vice versa following Heidegger. Nonetheless, as I have argued at length elsewhere,³ there is no need to force a choice between these interpretations: The No-thing which is the ground of all things (both epistemologically and ontologi-

³ My SIG.

cally) is, for both Kant and Heidegger, essentially Person. This point is particularly relevant here since it is precisely in recognizing Christ Jesus as the Original Image who is a Person that both of these competing interpretations find their fulfillment in their reconciliation.

2.4.1.2 Second Heideggerean Endorsement

We noted earlier that from Heidegger's perspective the most pertinent issue at stake in his consideration of "the Nothing" was "a change in human nature" which would thereby at least offer the possibility of an overcoming or transformation of metaphysics (WBG 209). Attending now to what more might be said about this "new humanity" offers us from within Heidegger's thinking the second endorsement for the retrieval of Heidegger's Nothing "as" the Person of Christ Jesus. To that end I consider Heidegger's essay "Who is Nietzsche's Zarathustra?" included as Part Two of Heidegger's *Nietzsche* (N2). There Heidegger revealed something essential about the "new humanity" corresponding to his own "overcoming" (of metaphysics/philosophy) while considering the "overman" which corresponds to Nietzsche's own proposed "overcoming." This essay is especially fortuitous here since Heidegger considered Nietzsche to be the last metaphysician, the one who in fact most clearly recognized that nihilism is the essence of metaphysics. Nietzsche did not, however, at least according to Heidegger, go beyond metaphysics to think Being or even "the Nothing" itself. I begin by noting Heidegger's particular interest in Nietzsche's observation in a posthumously published note: "A *divine* suffering is the content of *Zarathustra* III" (quoted at N2 218). This note was evidently Heidegger's clue to Nietzsche's "unsaid," and will also serve us nicely as a further clue to Heidegger's own "unsaid." The last paragraph of Heidegger's essay reads as follows:

That Nietzsche interpreted and experienced his most abysmal thought in terms of the Dionysian only speaks for the fact that he still thought it metaphysically, and had to think it solely in this way. Yet it says nothing against the fact that this most abysmal thought conceals something unthought, something which at the same time remains a sealed door to metaphysical thinking (233).

What, then, is this "something unthought" which remains concealed in Nietzsche's thinking? This is especially pertinent since if we were able to discover Heidegger's understanding of this "unthought," we would also learn more about his own understanding of "the metaphysical" and its overcoming, and in particular, about "the

Nothing" which served so decidedly as his own guide toward answering the question, What is metaphysics/philosophy? We find our clue to Heidegger's thinking of this "something unthought" a few pages back in his highlighting of Nietzsche's fundamental alternative.

To answer the question, Who is Nietzsche's Zarathustra?, Heidegger first quoted the last line of Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo*: "Have I been understood?—*Dionysos versus the Crucified*" (N2 230). It would appear, then, that the "divine suffering" which overcomes metaphysics, i.e. that which is (according to Heidegger) Nietzsche's "unthought," favors "the Crucified," at least inasmuch as the Nietzschean preference for "the Dionysian" remains trapped in "the metaphysical" (as quoted above from N2 233).

That, however, cannot be the end of the story, for as Heidegger defined it, "the essence of metaphysics" is not just that there is a distinction between the suprasensuous and the sensuous realms, but that that distinction is understood as "a yawning gulf between the realms" and that that gulf "remains primary and all-sustaining" (230). Consequently, Heidegger understood both Plato's prioritizing of the suprasensuous and Nietzsche's prioritizing of Dionysian sensuality as equally metaphysical at heart. For metaphysics to be overcome, then, the important point is that the suprasensuous/sensuous distinction, if retained at all, not be understood as "a yawning gulf." The question then arises: Does "the Crucified" meet this requirement, or is "the Crucified" also trapped in this suprasensuous/sensuous distinction, perhaps on the suprasensuous side?

Though "Christ" also appears in Heidegger's discussion of Nietzsche in WCT (e.g. 69ff), Heidegger himself remained decidedly "unspoken" about the role of Christ in both contexts. Thus we find no answer from Heidegger with regard to the sufficiency of "the Crucified" to bridge, or at least avoid, the "yawning gulf" between the suprasensuous and the sensuous. Nonetheless, Christian orthodoxy in all its catholic forms has never doubted that the incarnation of Jesus Christ accomplished just that (and more)⁴ in the unity of His Person. This is the point of the Chalcedonian

⁴ In that Christ Jesus is truly the mediator between God and His creation, the totality of Uncreated Being was incorporated in His incarnate person. This is not to limit or devalue the Person and Work

formulation as well as that of the Nicene Creed: "truly God and truly man." Again it is "the Person," and in particular, the Person of Christ Jesus which accomplishes this reconciliation.

The point of these "endorsements," then, for the Christian in dialogue with Heidegger, is that the Person of Christ Jesus emerges from a consideration of Heidegger's *unsaid*—I emphasize the "unsaid" here—as that "Nothing" which overcomes metaphysics. This is so for at least three reasons. First of all, Christ is *the* Person toward which "respect" is directed and in Whom receptivity and spontaneity find their original and pure unity. Second, as the personal ground of theoretical knowledge/reason Jesus is the "*a priori*" which alone makes possible any revelation of what-is" (WM 339). Heidegger, recall, had given this role to "the Nothing." And third, as "the Crucified," His was the divine suffering required to overcome the "yawning gulf" between the suprasensuous and the sensuous. He did this first of all in His incarnation, and secondly, through His crucifixion (*and resurrection!*) He became the only mediator between God and human beings (1 Timothy 2:5). It is this "mediatorial" position and function, what Heidegger called "the between" or the realm of pure correspondence, to which I call attention, especially because (recall) Heidegger understood philosophy to be the *correspondence* or dispositional attunement *between* the human being and ...⁵

2.4.2 Biblical endorsements

2.4.2.1 Introduction

We have noted in the above discussion of Nietzsche's Zarathustra Heidegger's explicit concern with the "something unthought" which remained concealed in Nietzsche's thinking. Further, I also attended to what I called Heidegger's own "unthought," or at

of Christ in terms of the philosophical terms as understood within any of the various tradition that use the language of suprasensuous and the sensuous (or the like). Nor is this to limit the pertinence of Mediator to His redemptive accomplishments. Finally, by way of reminder, my claim here is that the relevance of 'the Crucified' (i.e. Christ Jesus) arises from Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche in the context of a consideration of the traditional language of the suprasensuous and the sensuous, rather than being imported artificially into this context.

- ⁵ Earlier I proposed completing this "definition" in this way: ... the Being of beings, specifically as granted by the appeal (or voice) of Being, and as expressly unfolded in language by the one who faithfully responds to that appeal.

least his "unsaid." As noted in the introductory remarks above, this was Heidegger's typical manner of reading the history of philosophy: he sought to bring to expression the "something as yet unsaid, according to which the essence of metaphysics, too, is something else and not metaphysics" (WBG 208). My own method here is similar to Heidegger's. I too am concerned to attend to "the ground" within which the tree of philosophy is rooted. Heidegger's conclusion, however, was only that "once it [the ground] is experienced in its own terms" it is "presumably something else" (208). Finally he explicated this "something else" as *Es gibt* and especially *Ereignis*: presumably these were the closest Heidegger came to what he considered "Being's" own terms. I, on the other hand, am claiming that the "ground" in which not only the tree of philosophy, but human beings as such are "rooted and grounded" is the Person of Jesus the Christ, or more generally, God as Love (as mediated by Jesus). There is no doubt that this New Covenant truth has special reference to those who have "received Christ Jesus as Lord" (Colossians 2:6f; Ephesians 3:17), and not all do, not even those who might otherwise be considered "his own" (John 1:11). Nonetheless, there is a more general application which the Apostle Paul drew upon in his speech to the philosophers on Mars Hill: "'For in him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we too are his offspring'" (Acts 17:28). Even more particularly does this have reference to the God and Father of Christ Jesus whom He expresses perfectly. Further, as the Image of the invisible God, Jesus Christ is not only the prototypical Image of human beings, understood as created in the image of God, but also "the firstborn of *all* creation" (Colossians 1:15).

Elsewhere I have developed these points with careful attention to Heidegger's writings;⁶ here my point is to bring the language of the texts of the Bible into close proximity to the language and thought of Heidegger. My hope is that by engaging Heidegger and the Bible in "dialogue" we might further unfold Heidegger's "unsaid." In addition, if Heidegger was right that in such a process we primarily have to do with the history of Being itself, then such an unfolding would thereby be the unconcealment of Being itself. To continue this "dialogue" I therefore now turn to a further consideration of this process of unconcealment, what Heidegger called truth.

⁶ My SIG.

Recall our previous allusions: for Heidegger "*metaphysics as such is nihilism proper*" (N4 211) because it has to do with beings as beings and has *nothing* to do with Being itself. That is, metaphysics' concern with Being only *as (in relation to) a being* already takes for granted the unconcealment within which a being appears, and does not attend to that *a priori* Nothing (no-thing) which alone makes possible the revelation of any such thing (WM 339). Thus the "unthought" of metaphysics is the essence of this unconcealment, the consideration of which was also to uncover the essence of nihilism proper. This, of course, led Heidegger to focus on the "ground" of metaphysics as "the truth of Being" (WBG 208), and more specifically on truth itself as *a-letheia* or un-concealment. The corollary forgotten by metaphysics, however, is that while giving Being *as beings* into unconcealment, Being itself withdraws into concealment. Consequently Heidegger did not blame metaphysics for neglecting something; rather he claimed that the unthought of metaphysics (i.e. that Being itself was not thought) has been due to the fact that "*Being itself stays away*" (N4 213).

As introduced earlier, Holy Scripture is not unsympathetic to the problematic of the (past) "hiddenness" of that which is most vitally necessary and most determinative of human being as such. To substantiate that "sympathy," which is, in the first place, only to note a form of structural similarity, consider, for instance, the following texts (all emphases added): "the mystery that has been *hidden* throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed" (Colossians 1:26); or "the revelation of the mystery that was *kept secret* for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known ... according to the command of the eternal God" (Romans 16:25); or "he has made known to us the *mystery* of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ" (Ephesians 1:9); or "the *mystery* was made known to me [Paul] by revelation ... the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was *not made known* to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ... the mystery *hidden* for ages in God who created all things" (Ephesians 3:3-5, 9); or "I make you hear new things, *hidden things* that you have not known" (Isaiah 48:6); and finally, the words of Jesus Himself, echoed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 1, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have *hidden* these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants" (Matthew 11:25).

In particular note (1) that there was something which had been unknown, even unknowable, since it had been hidden by God Himself; and further, it had been "hidden *in God*." Thus something "of God" was also hidden, and that too *by God*; (2) that "something" has now been revealed; (3) the revelation was accomplished "by the Spirit [of God]"; it was accessible in no other way. On each of these particulars there is a definite and precise point of comparison with Heidegger's concerns, though the third point likely appears as the most problematic (cf. chapter 7). There are, however, also many points of difference. These are worth emphasizing for they lead me to Heidegger's own "unsaid."

2.4.2.2 Discussion

Perhaps the best way to highlight these differences is to consider the content of this biblical "mystery." Note, for instance, the following: Ephesians 1:9-10, "the mystery ... to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ" (NIV; "to gather up all things in him," NRSV); Colossians 1:27, "this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory"; Colossians 2:2-3, "God's mystery, that is, Christ himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"; 1 Timothy 3:16, "The mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory" (NIV); Ephesians 3:6, "This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles [the nations] are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus" (NIV).

Once again, the Person of Christ Himself emerges as this mystery, once hidden, now revealed (though not fully). Four further points call for special emphasis in this context. First, this Christ is "philosophically relevant": in Him are "hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," including no doubt all specifically philosophical treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I will return shortly to the relevance of this insight for our understanding of the central question of this chapter, "What is philosophy?" The following points also substantiate this relevance.

Second, the mystery is not just Christ Himself (as incarnate, crucified, resurrected, exalted, etc.), but in a specifically relevant sense, "Christ *in you* [who believe and

receive Him]." As demonstrated in detail elsewhere,⁷ something like this "Christ in you" is required simply on the grounds of consistency and coherence in order to make sense of Heidegger's notion of the *Dasein*, especially in its various forms (*Dasein*, the *Dasein* in us, *Da-sein*, the *Da* as the place of human being *in which* we are, etc.). No trivial point for Heidegger scholars!

Third, the mystery of Christ provides for the inclusion of "the Greeks" (as well as the other "nations") together with "Israel." "The Greeks" were, of course, Heidegger's special interest. There has been, though, increasing concern among those who find Heidegger's thought worthy of continued attention that "the Greeks" is not all there is to Western civilization (the prominence of Judeo-Christian influence must also be acknowledged), nor is the "Western" tradition the only philosophically relevant tradition (cf. Bernasconi 1995). The "puzzle" presented by that acknowledgement is how to "integrate" the "Jew" and the "Greek" (where Greek = non-Jew). Here too the required treasure is "in Christ," in whom "there is no longer Jew or Greek, ... slave or free, ... male and female" (Galatians 3:28).

Finally, this Christ within is called "the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Two further themes are thereby introduced for expanded consideration: with "hope" we rejoin Heidegger's prioritizing of temporality, and specifically futurity; with "glory" we rejoin the prominence Heidegger accorded "radiance," and the associated themes of the meaning/sense/truth of Being, unconcealment, *aletheia*, the Open, and finally, the Spirit. It was, after all, "the light of Being," that is, "its revelatory essence," which Heidegger recognized as the truth of Being forgotten by metaphysics (WBG 207f). Though forgotten, this truth was the ground of metaphysics within which and from which all (Western) philosophy has been nourished; though unnoticed, metaphysics has always owed its understanding of beings to the sight provided by this "light" (of Being) (207f). What, though, is this "light" which Heidegger called the meaning or truth of Being itself?

Returning to the scriptural text we find that the Christ within, "the hope of glory," is "the Lord of glory" who was crucified (1 Corinthians 2:8), the One who also said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12; 9:5). Further, He who is "the true light that gives

⁷ My SIG.

light to every human" was from before the beginning of the world the *Lógos* (John 1:1, 9). This identification of the *wisdom* and power of God (1 Corinthians 1:24, 30) with the eternal *Lógos* will serve us well when we return below to our initial question, "What is philosophy?". First, though, I continue with the light/glory/revelation theme.

The initial Scriptural text to which Heidegger drew our attention⁸ made clear that those things which had been hidden—what no eye had seen, what no ear had heard, what no mind had yet conceived—were subsequently un-hidden or revealed by the *Spirit* of God (1 Corinthians 1:9ff). It is the Spirit, then, who reveals the things of God to us, enabling us to "understand what God has freely given us" (2:12, NIV). Further, this Spirit is identified (in some mysterious way) with the glory of Christ Jesus, the Lord of glory (2 Corinthians 3:17f); indeed, the Spirit of God is "the Spirit of Truth" (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13) who dwells in those who belong to Christ (Romans 8:9f). He is the One who rescues us from orphanage (John 14:18), bonding us to Christ and the Father, guiding us into all truth, and speaking to us the words of truth (16:13f). As such he also "rescues" the words of the Lord of Glory from orphanage.⁹ These are all themes to which I will return in subsequent chapters. Here, though, my concerns are the following:

First, our interest in Heidegger's Being has led us not only to Christ Jesus, but also to "the Spirit." Though I am not identifying Being with these Personages, I am noting fascinating, even astonishing, correspondences—and from both sides of the "dialogue." Second, these correspondences lead me to wonder if Being is therefore not so simple, but rather at least "duplex." I will call this two-someness constituted by the Christ/Spirit "complex" the *dvoika*, following the Russian theologian Sergei Bulgakov. Third, a careful delineation of these interactions itself reveals what might be called "the structure of light," a "structure" within which a further revelation of the structure of beings/things will emerge. Here we will once again be guided by

⁸ I refer to Heidegger's "Introduction" (1949) to *What is metaphysics?* (1929) discussed in chapter 1. There Heidegger introduced 1 Corinthians 1:22, "the Greeks seek wisdom" ("Ἕλληνες σοφίαν ζητοῦσιν), identifying that reference to Greek philosophy with Aristotle's own characterization of "first philosophy."

⁹ The allusion here is to Plato's *Phaedrus* where "writing" is portrayed by Plato as an orphan. Cf. also various reflections on this point, e.g. Derrida's in "Plato's Pharmacy" (in D.)

"the Son [who] is [both] the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being" (Hebrews 1:3, NIV). In Heidegger's language we will be retrieving the fundamental metaphysical notion of representation.¹⁰

2.5 What, then, is philosophy?

Before pursuing these various themes further I conclude this chapter by returning to our initial question: What therefore, given the intervening meditations, is philosophy? I undertake a response to this question by returning first of all to Heidegger's essay *What is philosophy?* I will expand a bit on my earlier presentation since Heidegger's position serves as the background against which my own concern will stand out most clearly.

2.5.1 Heidegger's position

Heidegger began by considering the Heraclitean sense of the adjective *philosophos*, presumably because it was Heraclitus who first coined the term. Heidegger's own understanding of philosophy, which we have already considered above, was initially a retrieval or *Destruktion* of this Heraclitean sense of *aner philosophos*, the philosopher. Heidegger began simply enough by considering the *aner philosophos* as "he who loves the *sophon*" (WP 46/47). The question "What is philosophy?" was thus distilled into a consideration of *philein* and *sophon*. Heidegger took the meaning of *philein* to be love or *harmonia* or accord, and in the Heraclitean context, "correspondence with the *Lógos*," i.e. *homolegein* (46/47). What, then, about this "correspondence"? Heidegger was quite explicit: "This correspondence is in accord with the *sophon*" (46/47). *Prima facie* it may appear that Heidegger was equating the *Lógos* and *sophon*, but this is not the case. The correspondence with the *Lógos* is itself "in accord with the *sophon*"; that is, the philosopher speaks in the same "way in which the *Lógos* speaks," but the "way" or correspondence itself is "in accord with the *sophon*." The *sophon*, then, is the speaking of the philosopher which is in correspondence with the "speaking" of the *Lógos*. *Sophon* is therefore what we might mean these days by philosophy, the words of a philosopher. As already intimated, later we will discover that even for Heidegger

¹⁰ Recall the role of 'light', 'light of faith', *das Lichtung*, etc., as introduced in chapter 1.

this "correspondence" is a matter not merely of "words," but also of the "unsaid," and of "the spirit" (chapter 7).

Nonetheless, as already noted, the *sophon* of the early Greeks was, according to Heidegger, only "en route" (54/55), on the way, and its "philosophy" only "a path" (28/29) determined first of all (for Heraclitus, etc.) by that "original loving harmony" with the *Lógos*, and secondly (for Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, etc.) by the "[erotic; from *Eros*] striving towards the *sophon*" (50/51). As "a path" that *sophon* of the early Greeks said *Hen Panta*, "One (is) all," or as Heidegger interpreted it, "all being is in Being" (48/49); but the early Greeks did not consider that Being itself as it is as *Lógos* (48/49).

It is against this "Greek" background that Heidegger's own understanding of philosophy noted earlier stands out most clearly. As I summarized it earlier, Heidegger understood philosophy to be the correspondence or dispositional attunement between the human being and the Being of beings, specifically as granted by the appeal (or voice) of Being, and as expressly unfolded in language by the one who faithfully responds to that appeal. It is against this Heideggerean background that my own understanding of philosophy stands out most clearly.

2.5.2 Further discussion

Heidegger's "dispositional attunement" ["*Gestimmtheit (disposition)*," 76] is the basis (*Grund*, 76) of the language of correspondence, that is, of the *sophon*, the words, the *homolegein*, of philosophy. Clearly it is "from the Being of being" as de-termined (*be-stimmt*, 76) by "the voice of the appeal ... of Being" (76/77) that human being is "disposed" (or not) to receive and reflect that appeal. Heidegger's language here is almost Calvinistic, especially if we retrieve his thought forms as suggested above. One such suggestion correlates neatly with Heidegger's "dispositional attunement." In particular I have in mind the "dispositional attunement" affected by "the Spirit who is from God," the One who has been received by those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord. Evidently it is due to that Spirit that such human beings are "disposed" and thereby enabled to "understand what God has freely given" (1 Corinthians 2:12). And indeed, "The one without the Spirit ($\psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$) does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand ($\text{o}\acute{\upsilon}$ $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\tau\alpha\iota$ $\gamma\acute{\nu}\omega\tilde{\nu}\alpha\iota$)" (2:14, NIV). Here, then, "foolishness" again enters the discussion: evidently

either the wisdom of the world (that which the philosophers seek) is recognized as foolishness, or the wisdom of God and even God Himself will be considered foolishness. In the currently overwrought, though Biblical language, this question of fundamental "dispositional attunement" is a matter of being "born (again; or, from above) of water and the Spirit" (John 3:5); in Heideggerean language it is a matter of those in whom the new beginning has already begun, though we will see in a later chapter that Heidegger too referred to this as re-birth. In both cases the passive voice speaks clearly. For Heidegger, for instance, "being de-termined, *etre disposé* ... here means literally set-apart, cleared, and thereby placed in relationship with what is" (76/77). What, though, is that between or among which this attunement obtains? Which is to say, what are the consequences of our suggested retrieval of Heidegger for our understanding of philosophy?

For Heidegger this fundamental correlation or correspondence or attunement was between human being and what he variously called Being, the Nothing, etc. My "outrageous" suggestion was that that to which human being is most fundamentally correlated is better understood as Christ Jesus Himself, or perhaps a bit better, God in Christ. This is abundantly supported by the Biblical text and traditionally has been formulated in terms of human being as the image of God, of whom the prototypical Image is Christ Jesus Himself (Colossians 1:15). Not so incidentally that Colossian hymn also acknowledges this same Christ-Image as the One who is before all things and in whom all things hold together (1:17). It is therefore even more plausible that this Christ can re-place (in both senses) Heidegger's *a priori* Nothing upon which all things depend for the revelation of their "what-is-ness" (WM 339). Further, Heidegger made it quite plain that what he meant by the "Nothing" is not what Christian dogma has meant by that "Nothing" "out of which"—or perhaps better, "into which" (the *ex nihilo*)—God created all that is (345). Rather, for Heidegger the Nothing is "integral to the Being of what-is" (346). Again, Christ Jesus "fulfills" these Heideggerean exigencies as well as going beyond them, both with regard to being "integral to the Being of what-is" (via Colossians 1:17) and with regard to transcending "what-is-in-totality" (via Colossians 1:15ff, etc.) as the fundamental attunement of human being per se, together with being 'No-thing'. Nonetheless, and in spite of all that has been said, I am not yet willing to endorse too easy an identification between Heidegger's Being and

the Person of Christ Jesus, not even as the *dvoika*. The reasons for my hesitancy begin to emerge as we consider the decisive role played by the appeal (or voice) of Being in Heidegger's understanding of philosophy. As I have tried to substantiate above, my point is not that Heidegger sought to avoid or (totally) replace what might seem the obvious Christian retrieval of his "voice of Being," what the Westminster Confession of Faith called the voice of the Spirit speaking in the (written) Word of God. Though I am arguing that the philosophical relevance of that "voice of the Spirit" cannot be avoided, I am also trying to demonstrate two further points: first, Heidegger did not (totally) avoid that "voice of the Spirit" (e.g. his use of 1 Corinthians 1 in WBG, etc.); and second, that Heidegger's "voice of Being" is *both* related to and different from the voice of the Spirit *speaking in the (written) Word of God*, i.e. the Bible. However, is this understanding of Heidegger's "voice of Being" really an option for those committed to the voice of the Spirit speaking in the (written) Word of God? I think it is. Here I only introduce this possibility by reference to Psalm 19; a poem often alluded to in Heidegger's work. I will develop this contention further in subsequent chapters, especially chapter 3.

In Psalm 19 we read that "The heavens declare the glory of God," presumably a "glory" having something to do with "the Lord of glory," i.e. the crucified Jesus. Interestingly, the mode of this declaration is a "voice" which proclaims "words" which "the *silent* heavens speak" (NIVSB 803; emphasis added). The New Jerusalem Bible is no doubt correct to recognize here an allusion to the stars as "the silent 'writing of the heavens'" (NJB 831). Perhaps even all creation is the writing (silent or otherwise) of God. However, if this is so, we still must ask, who or what, therefore, is thereby voicing the glory of God? All the Psalm says is "the heavens," "the skies," and perhaps also both "day" and "night." What is especially remarkable is that these "agents" of the voice are impersonal, like Heidegger's Being. Similarly, the Apostle Paul wrote of "what has been made" as revealing the invisible qualities of God, attributes often summarized in terms of God's glory (Romans 1:20). Paul, though, further clarified that finally it is God Himself who makes plain to us humans that this revealed glory is His glory, and as such it entails a true knowledge of Himself (1:19-23). In fact, correlating directly with Heidegger's reference to 1 Corinthians 1 (WBG), Romans 1 says that this glory and knowledge of God is first of all known by all as "the truth";

subsequently it is suppressed (by human wickedness), and thereby it is exchanged for a *foolish* lie (cf. vvs. 18 & 21-25).

We must say, then, that whatever this "voice of Being" is which soundlessly speaks to us not from the text of the Bible but from "what has been made," that of which it speaks must in some final sense be acknowledged as not just the glory of the Lord, but the Lord of glory. Given the complexities of this situation I am willing, though only provisionally, to admit the phrase "the voice of Being" as legitimate. As is well-known Heidegger finally abandoned the term "Being," and we will too. Just what can still be said about this "voice (of Being)" must, therefore, as yet remain an open question. And further, until we can adequately respond to that question, the meaning of philosophy will also remain unclarified, for "philosophy" (including Heidegger's "thinking") is a response to that "voice." We do, however, already begin to see how it is that we will want to distinguish, as well as interrelate, philosophy and theology, for without a doubt (Christian) theology has to do primarily with the voice of the Spirit speaking in the (written) Word of God, rather than with any other "voice." As we will continue to see, however, it will prove difficult, if not impossible, to confine this "voice of the Spirit speaking in the (written) Word of God" to the domain of theology, if we thereby intend to exclude it from the domain of philosophy.

Nonetheless, regardless of this relation between theology and philosophy, my own attempted retrieval of Heidegger's retrieval of the meaning of Greek "philosophy" requires further attention to two final, related themes: first, the philosophical seeking or yearning; and second, that which was sought. The first theme was the point at which Heidegger evoked 1 Corinthians 1:20 & 22, correlating the Apostle Paul's use of *Ἕλληνες σοφίαν ζητοῦσιν* ('the Greeks *seek* wisdom') with Aristotle's *ζητούμενη* (what is sought) of his "first philosophy" (WBG 216; WP 52/53). Heidegger, recall, sought (I use the word purposely!) both to distinguish this sense of seeking-yearning-striving as specifically and uniquely philosophical from the earlier "non-philosophical" thinkers (WP 50ff/51ff), and further, to overcome that philosophical sense in his own *Destruktion* of that history. In his earlier work KPM (1929), Heidegger recognized this original philosophical impulse in Kant's understanding of metaphysics as *Heimsuchung* (KPM2 28); while in WM (1929) he further retrieved this *Heimsuchung* in terms of its more literal meaning, "the seeking of a home." He wrote, for instance, of

that "creative longing" (WM 343) which "clears and enfolds that region of human being within which man endures, *as at home*, in the enduring" (355; emphasis added). The link between these two passages is the "original dread" or "awe" which properly attunes humans to the "Nothing." I will return to this "dread" shortly; here my point is that Heidegger retrieved the properly philosophical sense of seeking-yearning-striving (Kant's *Heimsuchung*) with his own version of a creative longing for and dwelling in/at home. The latter theme, dwelling, clearly became prominent in Heidegger's later works, and in the next chapter I will attend to it more directly. The reason for introducing it here is that the yearning for a dwelling/home so nicely focuses both Heidegger's retrieval of philosophy as well as my own. Note, for instance, the texture of motifs and figures in the following Biblical passages, especially the overlapping of "seeking" and "dwelling" here with Heidegger's concerns summarized above. These texts (and others) will guide my own meditations and efforts to further retrieve and clarify the meaning of philosophy in subsequent chapters.

One thing I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty [glory] of the LORD
and to inquire [meditate] in his temple
(Psalm 27:4, my translation.)

Or, Psalm 63:1, (my translation),

O God, you are my God, I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
Thus I have looked upon you in the sanctuary
beholding your power and your glory.

Or, again Psalm 84:1-2 (NIV),

How lovely [beautiful] is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty!
My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God;

Or again, Matthew 6:33, "But strive [seek, NIV; ζητεῖτε] first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness" Here too the seeking of a dwelling place is sanctioned as of first importance, culminating finally in "new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13).

The difference between these Biblical recommendations and Heidegger's falls out along the same lines already noted, what I have been calling the differing senses

of "religiosity," especially as focused by the different points of origin to which our thinking is directed. The further interweaving of the explicit themes of such Biblical texts—e.g. asking, seeking, dwelling, gazing, beauty, meditating, etc.—with the same in Heidegger, together with the prominent role that such themes play in Heidegger's own *Destruktion* of the history of metaphysics, will more than justify (and reward) further attention in subsequent chapters. There is, though, still the matter of "the Sought" to be considered here.

Clearly, for Heidegger, "the Sought" of the Greek philosophers was the *sophon*, especially as formulated by the question, What is being? (WP 50f/51f). This, then, was the "most astonishing thing" (50/51). For Heidegger's retrieval, however, this astonishment, which for Plato and Aristotle was the *pathos* and beginning of philosophy (78f/79f), became in WP the fundamental tuning which remains "hidden from us" (88/89), and in WM, that "hidden dread" (WM 343) which tunes us to the Nothing. Once again it is the "character" of this "Nothing" which is determinative, for as Heidegger put it, this "*pathos* is connected with *paschein*, to suffer, endure, undergo, to be borne along by, to be determined by" (WP 83). I will say a bit more about this "Nothing" shortly, but first I am concerned to note that this "hidden dread," Heidegger's version of "astonishment," is determined by its "correlate" (the Nothing); and second, that just under the surface of this "hiddenness" resonates the Biblical "fear of God," also understood as "the beginning of wisdom." The difference, of course, is again the "correlate": just as Heidegger's "dread" is uniquely "defined by" his Nothing, so too "the fear of God" is uniquely determined by its absolutely unique "correlate."¹¹

This is not the place to develop this notion, though it is of more than passing interest that this "fear (of God)" includes delight and hope in God's love (Psalm 2:11; 112:1; 147:11), as well as both the awesome reverence and terror included in Heidegger's "dread." Further, this "fear of God" is intimately related to that "making foolish" of philosophy referred to in 1 Corinthians 1:19ff, which quotes Isaiah 29:14b.

11 The difference in the "correlates," of course, makes all the difference for the distinctive differences between Heidegger's "dread" and the Biblical "fear of God." Nonetheless, part of my thesis throughout is that a 'redemptive retrieval' can make much not only of the differences but the analogical similarities. There would, then, be something like a radical but not complete or absolute discontinuity between Heidegger's "dread" and the Biblical "fear of God."

Isaiah 29:14a reads: "Therefore once more I [Yahweh] will astound these people with wonder upon wonder." Isaiah 29:15 continues with the third of the six covenantal "woes" or curses of this section (28:1-35:10). With these "woes" comes the "terror" of this "fear of God" so often minimized, if not ignored completely. The specific point of introducing these covenantal "woes" and this "terror" here is that the veil of Heidegger's Nothing is lifted (or penetrated) just a bit. If the drift of my retrieval is allowed, then such a lifting is, in fact, what Heidegger called "philosophy," that "correspondence to the Being of being ... [which] is actually fulfilled and thereby unfolds itself and expands this unfoldment" (WP 75).

Attending, then, to this lifting-unfoldment, two ways are revealed which if not clarified continue to (dangerously) ambiguate Heidegger's own thinking. In brief, these two ways are, using the Biblical language of the covenant, the ways of blessing or life and curse or death. As Derrida has shown in *Of Spirit*, this covenantal en-gage-ment is integral to Heidegger's thought; and as I have shown elsewhere this covenantal structure is needed to understand the ongoing disputes, misunderstandings, and missed engagements between deconstruction and (philosophical) hermeneutics.¹² It is this inclusion of "the way of death" which holds special interest for Heideggerean and post-Heideggerean thinking. In chapter 4 I return to a further consideration of both Heidegger's "being-toward-death" and the figure of the abyss, so prominent for the post-Heideggereans as well. Here, though, it is worth noting that the context in Isaiah (28-30) of the passage quoted at 1 Corinthians 1:19 includes a (false and ineffectual) covenant with death (28:15, 18) which the LORD annuls by humbling the parties of that unholy alliance, reducing Judah's speaking to a "ghostlike" mumbling or whispering from the dust of the earth itself (29:4). My concern is that

12 My SIG, chapter 6. Briefly, some of the pertinent invitations for further engagement and understanding cluster around: (i) a fundamental bifurcation of responses (of which the non-dialogue between Derrida and Gadamer would be an illustration), as well as the dual structure of Heidegger's concealment, i.e. as mystery and as errancy, (ii) Derrida's understanding of Heidegger's "imputability" (rather than responsibility or culpability), the '*Schuldigsein*' before any "moral consciousness" (OS 133) as well as Heidegger's "piety", (iii) Derrida's promise, especially in relation to 'spirit', and gift, (iv) "the constitution of structurality" (D 161), in particular, "on the composition of the same and the other, the one and the multiple, the finite and the infinite" (162), (v) the 'spirit' understood as 'wind' and/or 'fire.'

there may well be a spiritistic imitation and mocking of what I tentatively, though I think legitimately, acknowledged above as "the voice of Being." It is not the covenant arrangement itself, nor (in a manner of speaking) even the covenant with *death* which is problematic here; it is rather the *unholy* alliance which sought to imitate and replace the *holy* covenant which is problematic and which is finally revealed as futile, indeed as annulled, broken, brought to nothing, and destroyed along with the wisdom of the wise. Indeed, this "unholy covenant with death" (Isaiah 28:15, 18) is practically identical with "the wisdom of the wise" referred to in 1 Corinthians 1:19-22 (quoting Isaiah 29:14).¹³ In other words, collapsing these converging themes and figures, the "covenant with death" of the philosophers coincides with the way of curse and death of the *holy* covenant instituted by that crucified (and risen) Christ who is the wisdom and power of God, the One in whom we are to be "rooted" and on whom we are to be "grounded" (Colossians 2:7). Eventually some of us will want to retrieve Heidegger's thought in greater detail in terms of this explication of his "unsaid," and if Heidegger, then much of the history of Western philosophy as well. Such a task would be part of the fulfillment of 2 Corinthians 10:5 referred to above. Some of this I will begin to undertake in the following chapters. As we will see, such a task is not simply apologetic (nor kerygmatic); the "dialogue" with Heidegger (and other post-Heideggereans) will also be "productive" with regard to my own task of advancing (toward) a Christian philosophy. In addition, this "dialogue" is required for all those who wish to further sort out whether or not, and if so exactly how, Heidegger's thinking itself may or may not be an example of that "hollow and deceptive philosophy" (Colossians 2:8), that is, the "foolishness" which even he (evidently) sought to avoid.

¹³ A key link here is between "covenant with death" (Isaiah 28:15, 18) instituted by the rulers of the people (28:14) and the men who taught the vain commandments (29:13), seeking to "hide deep from the LORD [their] counsel" (29:15). The passages quoted in 1 Corinthians 1:19 (to which Heidegger referred us), comes from the intervening verse, Isaiah 29:14.

3 Being At Home

3.1 Introduction

Already I have noted that in KPM Heidegger recognized Kant's understanding of metaphysics as *Heimsuchung* as indicative of the original philosophical impulse (KPM228). In particular, we noted that Heidegger sought to retrieve this *Heimsuchung* in terms of its more literal meaning, "the seeking of a home or dwelling." If a common theme were sought to link the various periods of Heidegger's life and thought, "being at home" could be a leading candidate.¹ In chapter 2 we attended to Heidegger's understanding of metaphysics as that "going beyond" or "surpassing" of what-is, even what-is-in-totality. The crucial point is that this "going beyond" is the essence of human being as *Da-sein*, where the "Da-" is itself "that region of human being within which man endures, *as at home*, in the enduring" (WM 355; emphasis added). He said, for instance, that this "being beyond" (*Hinaussein*) is not only called transcendence, but that *Dasein* is "in its essential basis transcendent" (339). Or again, "*In* surpassing, *Dasein* first attains to the being that *it* is; what it attains to is its 'self.' Transcendence constitutes selfhood" (WG 38/ER 39).² My task now is to attend more carefully to this "Da" or region within which the human being is essentially "at home."

I noted earlier that Heidegger called that into which this transcendence is essentially, and therefore always already (and "from the start"), projected "the Nothing" (e.g. WM 339). In other works of this early period Heidegger had called this essential anticipation or "correlate" of human projection "the world" (e.g. BPP 161ff; BT/SZ §'s 9ff). Consequently he had "defined" distinctively human being as being-in-the-world, in which this hyphenated phrase expressed an *a priori*, primordial, structural whole (BT 65/SZ 41).³ In short, human existence is "a unitary phenomenon" (78/53), bound

-
- 1 As something of a bond to my SIG, consider Derrida: "The metaphor of the home is really 'a metaphor for metaphor': expropriation, being-away-from-home, but still in a home but in someone's home, a place of self-recovery, self-recognition, self-mustering, self-resemblance: it is outside itself—it is itself" (WhM, 55).
 - 2 Similarly throughout BPP, cf. especially 294-302.
 - 3 Cf. for instance, "That toward which *Dasein* transcends, we call the world, and we can now define transcendence as being-in-the-world. World goes to make up the unified structure of transcendence; the concept of world is called transcendental because it is part of this structure. We use the term

up essentially with the world as “that wherein *Dasein* already understands itself” (119/86). Being-in-the-world, then, was Heidegger’s terminology for “the *genuine ontological* sense of transcendence” (BPP 299) peculiar to human being and upon or within it was founded human knowing. In KPM Heidegger did not talk the same way, but the problem of ontological knowledge and its explication was the same problem as the explication of what he had earlier called being-in-the-world. In KPM he referred to this primordial region as “the Between” or the realm of “pure correspondence.”

In the 1930’s and early 1940’s Heidegger also spoke much about this “realm,” calling it “a dimension ... which lies between the thing and man, which reaches out beyond things and back behind man” (WT 244). In fact, he credited Kant with opening up the exploration of this “domain” or “land of truth” by means of his “critique” (124f). Similarly in his Nietzsche lectures he highlighted that “place” which is a “shelter,” “the very abode for the proper essence of both [concealment and unconcealment; i.e. truth]” (N4 217). He called that “place” *Da-sein*, ascribed its essence to Being itself, recognized that essence as “in man,”⁴ and human being as essentially “ecstative in it” (218), “ecstative” being another term for human transcendence.

Already in the thirties and forties Heidegger recognized that the creative abiding in this “openness of the locale of Being is the essence of thinking” (N4 218), and indeed, the fulfillment of the transcendental method so prominent since Kant. He said, for instance, that the non-metaphysical thinking corresponding to the essence of human being “transports the man of the future into that ‘between’ in which he belongs to Being and yet remains a stranger amid that which is” (QCT 136; 1938).⁵ This became in SG/PR (1955/56) his explicit retrieval of Kant’s transcendental method as that surpassing leap which leaps through the realm between beings and Being (SG 134f). In the lectures of the 1950’s on language and poetry this became that way-making which is given a way by the *Tao*, which has been translated (inadequately, according

‘transcendental’ to designate everything that belongs by its essence to transcendence, everything that owes its inner possibility to transcendence” (WG 40/ER 41). Cf. also Heidegger on Kant’s “Refutation of Idealism,” BT §43, 247ff.

⁴ Heidegger had also used the phrase “*Dasein* in man” in KPM.

⁵ Already in BPP (summer of 1927 lecture series) Heidegger has designated the fundamental ontological constitution of *Dasein* “an antecedent ‘transposition’” (161).

to Heidegger) as “reason, mind, *raison*, meaning, *lógos*” (OWL 92). Heidegger had even said, “All is way” (92). And finally, in KTB (1962) he again affirmed that his profoundest concerns had to do with both following after and into that essential realm (19), and residing therein (30). I will attend more directly to this “way” as such in the next chapter; first, though, I remain with our considerations of this primordial region within which human being is most “at home.”

3.2 Heidegger on “dwelling”

It was in the essays of the late 1940’s and 1950’s that this theme of dwelling was developed most explicitly and most fully, and it is the consideration of a few points in those essays relevant to my own concerns to which I now turn. To establish immediately the explicit identification between what he had called *Dasein* and dwelling, Heidegger noted that “The way in which ... we humans *are* on the earth [is] dwelling,” even tracing the root of the German verb “to be” to the “old word *bauen*,” to dwell (PLT 147). And again, “Dwelling ... is *the basic character* of Being in keeping with which mortals exist” (160). Here we note the changed emphasis characteristic of Heidegger’s famous “turn”: the center of gravity shifted most decidedly from the modernist-like concern with man to the “post-modern” concern with, in Heidegger’s case, Being: dwelling, which is how “we humans *are*,” is a “basic character,” not of humans, but of Being. Attending to this shift with regard to “dwelling” embroils us once again in the concerns of the previous chapter, specifically the correlated meanings of “Being” and “philosophy,” and Heidegger’s “religiosity,” as well as my own. We will find our previous directions both confirmed and advanced.

Interestingly, Heidegger related both the representational thinking of metaphysical philosophy and his own concern with the thinking of Being to the Greek word *temnein* (to cut, divide) and the Latin *templum*. First of all, in tracing the Greek *theoria* into the modern age so dominated by science and its theories, Heidegger noted that the Greek *theoria* was translated by the Latin *contemplatio* which became via the Greek *temnein* (to cut, to divide), “a looking-at that sunders and compartmentalizes” (QCT 166). In this way theory, that is, modern scientific thinking, became normative as a kind of knowing which he characterized elsewhere as representation, itself the

essence of metaphysics.⁶ I am not so much concerned here with Heidegger's understanding of science as I am with the significance of this *templum* which served as Heidegger's link between the Latin *contemplatio* and the Greek *temnein*, and which is that place whose own character is determinative for human being.

Heidegger understood *templum* as meaning originally

... a sector carved in the heavens and on the earth, the cardinal point, the region of the heavens marked out by the path of the sun. It is within this region that diviners make their observations in order to determine the future from the flight, cries, and eating habits of birds (QCT 165f).

He gives as his authority for this etymology the etymological Latin dictionary of Ernout-Meillet which he quoted as follows:

Contemplari is derived from *templum*, i.e., from [the name of] the place which can be seen from any point, and from which any point can be seen. The ancients called this place a *templum* (cf. QCT 166, n. 18).

Already we have a clear point of contact between Heidegger's concerns and the Biblical poem referred to in chapter 2, specifically, Psalm 19. In particular I want to draw attention to Heidegger's phrase, "the region of the heavens marked out by the path of the sun," in relation to David's poem (Psalm 19:4-5, NIV):

In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun,
which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion,
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.
It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;
nothing is hidden from its heat.

And yet it must be remembered that here Heidegger was criticizing an understanding of philosophy/metaphysics which he found inadequate and sought to overcome. More interesting, therefore, are the references to the *templum* and the path of the sun which we find after "the turn."

In those later writings with their characteristic concern for "Being itself," Heidegger said, for instance, that "Being, as itself, spans its own province, which is marked off (*temnein*, *tempus*) by Being's being present in the word. Language is the precinct (*templum*), that is, the house of Being," or as he called it later in the same paragraph, "the temple of Being" (PLT 132). Most striking is the utilization of the

⁶ Cf. e.g. "The word of Nietzsche," (1943; QCT 53ff), "The age of the world-picture" (1938; QCT 115ff), etc. This point is developed at length in chapter 5.

same two words, *temnein* and *templum*, previously employed to guide his elucidation of representational thinking. I will return to this designation of “language” as the *templum*. But first, what about this spanning of Being as marked off by Being itself? It is here that I hear so clearly the resonances to/of David’s poem just mentioned above. However, before attending to the frequently occurring verbal similarities I want to establish the specifically conceptual congruence between Heidegger’s concerns and those of the Psalmist. These concerns converge around the notion of dwelling.

3.2.1 Conceptual attunements

While meditating on lines 24 to 38 of Hölderlin’s poem “In lovely blueness,” especially the phrase “... poetically man dwells ...,” Heidegger wrote of the “spanning” of the dimension between sky and earth as that by which “man is man at all” (PLT 221). This “spanning” is constituted, according to Heidegger’s understanding of Hölderlin, by that “upward glance” directed away from the merely earthly realm upward “toward the divinities” (220). It is this dimension of “the between” (221) which is the true home of human dwelling. Dwelling therein, then, is understood as “the basic character of human existence” (215); it is what Heidegger had also called transcendence and meant by *Dasein* and being-in-the-world.

To further gauge this dimension which “man is” (223), Heidegger chose to listen to Hölderlin’s poetic words. These words say not only that the basic characteristic of human existence is a poetical dwelling, but that the gauging or measuring of that dimension depends upon the manifestation of what Hölderlin called “the measure of man” (219). What, then, is this “measure of man”? This, in fact, is the crucial question, for according to Heidegger (and here I am concerned only with Heidegger’s understanding of Hölderlin),⁷ *poetry*—that which qualifies human being/dwelling—is a measuring (221). What, then, is this measure which determines that poetical “mea-

⁷ That is, I am not concerned with what Hölderlin might have intended, nor with the history of Hölderlinean interpretation. Whether my interpretation of Heidegger here is sufficiently “Heideggerean” would be another matter of potential dispute. If such a concern were put to Heidegger (as it often was), he would no doubt say, we are concerned here with the “unsaid”, what Gadamer would call *die Sache selbst*, not (only) with the intention of the author. I have already raised this issue in chapter 1, and the nature of this essay enacts the same concern continually, seeking to reflect upon it along the way. It is the matter of “resonances,” a “retrieval”, and finally, the meaning of doing philosophy.

sure-taking by which man first receives the measure for the breadth of his being" (222)? It is Heidegger's explicit response which recalls so clearly David's Psalm: "the measure consists in the way in which the god [Hölderlin's God] who remains unknown, is revealed *as* such by the sky" (223). As Heidegger went on to say, it is "only this measure [which] gauges the very nature of man" (223), i.e. the meaning of *Dasein*, transcendence, dwelling, etc.

This allusion to Psalm 19 is only further strengthened in the continuation of Heidegger's explication of Hölderlin's "measure." He asked, for instance, "What is the measure for poetry?" and answered, "God" (224). Though, on the one hand, he deferred to the difficulty of knowing God, on the other, he turned to another Hölderlinean verse which answered the question "What is God?" thusly: "Unknown, yet full of his qualities is the face of the sky" (225). And what are these qualities? First of all, Heidegger included the shimmering, shining "brightness of the sights of the sky and every sound of its courses and breezes" (225); in short, "heaven's radiant height" (229). Again, is this not to say, with David, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands" (Psalm 19:1), including the soundless voice, or writing, of its movements? And not only the shimmering and shining, but the blooming "in the sky" (225), including, presumably, that (church) steeple with metal roof which blooms in lovely blueness mentioned in the first line of Hölderlin's poem (213).

We still might object to this association of poems, claiming that for Hölderlin God is decidedly unknown, while for David it is precisely the glory of *God*, and thus God Himself, which is known. We have not, however, reached the end of Heidegger's exposition of Hölderlin's poem, to which I now turn, recalling that we are still attempting to gauge Heidegger's understanding of human dwelling/being, or as I am calling it, "being at home," whose essence he claimed is "the poetic" (228).

Finally, for Heidegger, that upon which human dwelling depends for its authenticity is "that which itself has a liking for man" (228). What might that be? First of all, Hölderlin called that which man is fundamentally like as its image, the Godhead (219, 226). In somewhat uncharacteristic fashion, especially in the works since KPM, Heidegger too affirmed this sense of "image" (226).⁸ Secondly, though, Heidegger

had purposely deferred until the end of his essay calling attention to Hölderlin's characterization of authentic poetry, and therefore, authentic human dwelling/being. That which "has a liking for man," that which is itself the gauge of that authentic appropriation which is the heart of poetic dwelling, that which must "stay with his [the human's] heart"⁹ if man is not to unhappily measure himself against the Godhead, that is, if human beings are indeed to be the image of the Godhead ... that is what Hölderlin called "Kindness, the Pure" (229). Kindness and the Pure, therefore, are descriptions of that realm in which human being dwells most authentically, yet as with being-in-the-world, not just that within which human being dwells, but that which most fundamentally defines human being as such. Thus, just as Heidegger had "defined" human being as "out *beyond* itself" in BPP (1927; 299), and as "a *creature of distance*" on the last page of WG/ER (1928; 130/131), he closed the essay " ... Poetically man dwells ... " by again defining human life as a dwelling "in that far distance" (PLT 1951:229).¹⁰ And yet, that "far distance" was described as a pure kindness, even grace (*charis*, 229), which "stays with his [the human's] heart" as its only hope of authentic life; it is also "the nearness of the near."

Just how "unknown," then, is Hölderlin's God, and therefore just how different is Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin from the perspective of Psalm 19? If the human is the image of the Godhead, and if, therefore, that against which man is to measure himself is also the Godhead, and further, if that which must stay with man so that that imaging-measuring can be authentic and appropriate is "Kindness, the Pure," does it not follow that the Godhead itself must also be "Pure Kindness," even "love" (223)? And if this is so, and I think it is, then not only is Hölderlin's God not strictly Unknown, but that which is known is retrievable (without undue violence) in biblical terms and in accordance with biblical thought forms.^{11 12}

8 Heidegger was hesitant to use the traditional language of imagery, image, imaging, imagination, etc., because of its enmeshment in the "two and a half millennia" old idea of language (PLT 193; cf. 196f for the association of the image, etc. with this tradition).

9 "Heart" is here first of all a Hölderlinean idiom, though Heidegger himself seems to have adopted it as well; e.g. cf. PLT 132, 229.

10 The priority and centrality of this "distance" is one sense in which authentic human dwelling is also *unheimlich* (i.e. un-home-y as well as uncanny).

3.2.2 Further verbal similarities

As alluded to above, there are not only these conceptual affinities between the meditations of Heidegger and David, but there are also many frequently occurring verbal similarities. These similarities are almost all organized around Heidegger's understanding of "the sky" as belonging to the four-fold *Ereignis*. We find, for instance, such language as "The sky is the vaulting path of the sun" (PLT 149), "The sky is the sun's path" (178), and references to "the sun's course" (OWL 168, 184). At least one reference indirectly links "the sky" with the *templum* via the "augury of the flight of birds" (174; cf. above, QCT 165f), while another network of verbal and conceptual overlappings links the *templum* both to "the God" and to the human as fundamentally dwelling therein.¹³

11 These Christian resonances continue to affirm our reading of Heidegger in chapter 2, especially in terms of the characterization of that mediatorial role of "Being" (between God and man) as Kindness and the Pure. The matter is only further sanctioned by the Apostle Paul's use of Psalm 19:4 to describe, or perhaps even to verify, the publication of the good news of God's graciousness "to the ends of the world" (Romans 10:18). For more on Heidegger's use of "grace," cf. PLT 201, where, meditating on Trakl's "*A winter evening*," he specifies "grace" as the "unearned-holy, saving, loving toward mortals" of "heaven's blessing." Nonetheless, Heidegger also insisted that he did not intend a "secular representation nor the theologically conceived creation" (201)! Whether Heidegger was altogether consistent in this insistence is part of my concern throughout this book, and further, I am proposing that something like a "theologically conceived" retrieval of Heidegger's thought is not only more consistent with the matter under consideration, but also provides access to a productive and enlightening "reading" of Heidegger's work itself.

12 While it would certainly be possible rightly to claim that this association of divinity with the sky and the sun's courses through the sky is common to many, if not most, forms of ancient near eastern paganism (including ancient Greek paganism), as well as the Psalmist of Israel. That being said, there is no need nor claim here that either Hölderlin or Heidegger had the Psalmist in mind. Whether that might have been likely would be impossible to determine, especially given the pervasive role of Judaism and Christianity in European history.

Nonetheless, I venture two further lines of comment: (i) see footnote #7 above, and (ii) (quoting here, Wright 2006) the Wisdom literature of the Bible is "the most overtly international of all the materials in the Bible" (443), dealing with "common human concerns" and "welcoming the wisdom of the nations" (445). As such, it also both critiques that wisdom, as well as providing a bridge, or point of contact with other wisdoms (446ff). Wright claims that that bridge is "not in itself redemptive" (447). I could say that this essay explores the nature of this bridge and this welcome, while also asking if there might be a redemptive form of hospitality which Christian philosophy can extend.

It is more than a little uncanny to find that Heidegger's references from the sky to "this appropriating mirror play [*Ereignis*] of the simple onefold of earth and sky, divinities and mortals, [what] we call the world," also lead us to the same topic celebrated in the second part of Psalm 19, the law.¹⁴ Heidegger said, for instance, that "appropriation [*Ereignis*] is *the law*" (OWL 128). Further though, he identified (*ho nomos*, the law, though translated here, "the directing need") with "That which is yet above the gods and men," and suggested attending to "that place from which" *ho nomos* came into manifestation or appearance (139f). This latter reference to "that place" both tightens the weave of my own text, recalling our concern for understanding more fully that *Da* within which we dwell most fundamentally, and advances that enterprise. It advances my venture because it not only knits "the law" with *Ereignis*, but does so in the context of Heidegger's essay "Words" which joined Stefan George in his search for the word for the word. Before joining that quest ourselves it is worth noting that in another Stefan George poem noted by Heidegger it was "a word" which was likened to "a stellar trace" (73)—like the sun passing through the sky—and the cutting of a trace by which Heidegger characterized the "unity of the being of language" (121). Though he linked this "cutting" to the fundamental design of language by means of the Latin *secare* rather than the Greek *temnein*, the thought is the same, especially since, as noted earlier, language is the precinct (*templum*) or temple of Being marked off (*temnein*, *tempus*) by Being's relation to the word (PLT 132). Our query about the *Da* of human dwelling, then, shifts to understanding language. Ricoeur was precisely right to note that "The word represents in the later Heidegger exactly the same problem as the *Da* of *Dasein*, since the word is the *Da*" (CI 233). As Heidegger put it, not only is language "the most delicate and thus the most susceptible vibration holding everything within the suspended structure of appropriation," but "we dwell in the appropriation inasmuch as our active nature is given over to

13 Compare OWL 90, 121 with both *temnein* and *templum*; cf. also WCT 9, 16 as well as the association/identification of "the infinite" with "the Divine" in KPM.

14 Recall also Kant's conjoining of "the sky" and "the law": "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and the more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me" (Kant, Immanuel. 1956. *The Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. by Lewis White Beck. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 166).

language" (ID 38). In short, "Language is the primal dimension *within which* man's essence is first able to correspond at all to Being and its claim, and, in corresponding, to belong to Being" (QCT 41).

It would be hard to overestimate the importance of this shift to language as represented by the preceding citations. For one, the event of appropriation [*Ereignis*] is, for Heidegger, not only that through which human being achieves its truest nature, but it is also that by which we, through our active participation as "given over to language," overcome metaphysics (ID 37). It is, therefore, that which we must understand if we are also to understand "philosophy," as discussed in the second chapter. Secondly, however, Heidegger intimated that this "place from which it [*ho nomos*] came" is also "That which is yet above the gods and men" (OWL 139f). And yet *Ereignis*, which is the four-fold of gods-mortals-sky-earth, is also identified with *ho nomos* (128). Add to this mix language as *the primal dimension* together with Heidegger's insistence that *Ereignis* be understood as "self-generated," thereby evoking what others meant to say (metaphorically) by the phrase *causa sui*, used of God, and we have an intriguing puzzle, indeed.¹⁵ We will need, then, to clarify further the relation between *Ereignis* and *ho nomos* (the law; §3.4.3) ... and language.

Collecting and summarizing my thoughts on Heidegger's *Ereignis* we note the following characteristics of that key notion: it is (and is-not) the law, though in a sense other than "an ordinance which orders and regulates a course of events" (128); it is "self-derived," and responsible for "the origin" (129) not just of beings, but of Being itself; it is evidently both beyond and equivalent with the four-fold of earth, sky, divinities and mortals; it is that primal dimension within which human-mortals (and evidently the other three "folds" as well) dwell most fundamentally; it is primordially and inherently related to, and in some sense the same as, language; and, it is that

15 Heidegger was quite explicit that "There is nothing else from which the Appropriation [*Ereignis*] itself could be derived, even less in whose terms it could be explained" (OWL 127). It is even that which "gives us such things as a 'there is,' a 'there is' of which even Being itself stands in need ... " (127). Heidegger, in an important footnote, said that "Being" is not to be thought of as appropriation because appropriation is "different in nature" from Being and also "richer than any conceivable definition of Being." Nonetheless, "Being ... in respect of its *essential origin*, can be thought of in terms of appropriation" (OWL 129; emphasis added).

within which *everything* is suspended and because of which *everything* holds together. Evidently it is both beyond “the Between” and it is the same as “the Between.” And if the allusions noted earlier are granted, it *is* (and is-not?) the infinite-Divine. Though I now want to correlate these “conclusions” with the Biblical text, I also want to propose that such “conclusions” have been reached entirely from within the Heideggerean corpus; that, anyway, has been my intention. That is, I am claiming that this reading of Heidegger, as with that offered in chapter 2, is immanent and faithful to (at least the spirit of)¹⁶ what Heidegger in fact wrote.

3.3 Biblical background

Several further issues arise from these conceptual and verbal harmonies between Heidegger’s thought and that of the Psalmists and other biblical writers. I will now continue to think these topics together, and together with, though differently from, Heidegger. I will think these themes in a different mode than Heidegger thought them. As Ricoeur suggested (RM 312), Heidegger’s thought was “tuned more attentively to the Greeks than to the Hebrews.” Though I will reverse this preference—attending more to the Hebrew than the Greek—I have tried to begin in the “spirit” of Heidegger in at least four senses: etymological, poetic, thematic, and methodological. First, I plan to follow the same kind of “etymological” thinking—the quotation marks are essential—found throughout the works of Heidegger. Second, I plan to follow the same kind of thinking from or based on poetic works. Third, I will follow up on those Heideggerean themes which I identified above as central to his own concerns. And fourth, I too claim, as did Heidegger, to be listening to the “unsaid” in others’ works. The explicit differences which I recognize and acknowledge between what follows and what I have read in Heidegger’s works have to do with (1) the choice of language studied (Hebrew rather than Greek) and (2) the choice of poetry/literature attended to (Hebrew Psalms, and Koiné Greek epistles rather than Greek philosophy

16 Cf. chapter 7 below with regard to the significance of “the spirit.” The relation between “the spirit” and “the word” (i.e. as referred to above as “what Heidegger in fact wrote”) was introduced in chapter 2 as the *dvoika* and will be further discussed in various ways in what follows. Cf. especially the “and”/“as” of chapter 6. Heidegger’s “unsaid”/“unwritten” is of a piece with this concern.

and German poetry). Other differences may be credited to the “force” of the object of study and/or personality orientations.¹⁷

3.3.1 “The ‘templum’”

I begin with a trace already explicit in Heidegger, and already alluded to above: the region marked or cut out by the path of the sun, the perceptual Archimedean point, the place which becomes the temple, and, as noted in chapter 2, “the place” which is determinative for thinking. Later we must reckon with Heidegger’s conclusion regarding *contemplatio*, i.e. that it came to mean “a looking-at that sunders and compartmentalizes.” Let us begin with the “path of the sun” and listen to the Hebrew poet-King, David son of Jesse:

High above, he pitched a tent for the sun
 who comes forth from his pavilion like a bridegroom,
 delights like a champion in the course to be run.
 Rising on the one horizon
 he runs his circuit to the other,
 and nothing can escape his heat (Psalm 19:4b-6, NJB).

Here too the sun cuts a path across the heavens, and leaves its threatening and life-giving trace upon the earth.¹⁸ The vault which it opens and reveals itself houses¹⁹ that which joins all within and beyond to proclaim a message of the One who speaks without speech, whose silent writing touches even the ends of the (inhabited) world:

-
- ¹⁷ In spite of these differences I will eventually argue for a type of Jew-Greek synthesis. Such a ‘synthesis’ is quite pertinent in the literature, both for Ricoeur’s characterization of his distinction from Heidegger (RM) and for Derrida, Lyotard, Levinas (borrowing the term ‘jewgreek’ from James Joyce). Caputo’s DM, chapter 11, “Heidegger and the Jewgreeks,” provides on point of entry for this discussion. My use of the terms takes on a more biblical reference point and context.
- ¹⁸ Like the law of God (v. 7), the sun is “life-giving”; but like the law (v. 11; etc.), the sun is threatening, especially in the Middle East (e.g. Psalm 121, especially v. 6). The link between “the sun” (Psalm 19:1-6) and “the law of God” (Psalm 19:7-11) is rendered quite tight by the recognition that the sun in the ancient East symbolized justice (NJB Psalm 19a; cf. Wisdom 5:6, Malachi 3:20 [NIV 4:2]).
- ¹⁹ The Hebrew noun for “pavilion,” אֹהֶל, also translates as “tent, hut, habitation, family,” and is used in the constructions the “tent of congregation,” and the “tent of the law” (a fitting comment in the context of Psalm 19). The verb, “to pitch (a) tent” is, interestingly, homonymous with a verb meaning “to shine, to be bright.”

No utterance at all, no speech,
not a sound to be heard,

but from the entire earth the design stands out,
this message reaches the whole world. (vv. 3-4a)

There is no escaping this tracing of the sun whose “heat” not only warms and “hatches” the life beneath its rays (v. 6), but also threatens²⁰ with the exposure of “hidden faults,” even as does the Law of whose Maker it speaks (v. 12). It reaches all with its silent, written message. It speaks not of itself; nor does it alone speak: Even in its absence (at night) the knowledge is passed on:

The heavens declare the glory of God,
the vault of heaven proclaims his handiwork,
day discourses of it to day,
night to night hands on the knowledge. (vv. 1-2)

The theme which unifies the presence of the sun and its absence is the glory of God. Here is the “point”: the declaration of the glory of the maker; the power and the presence of the mighty One, the champion, the bridegroom who delights in the daily (and nightly) display of the strength of His love; the shining forth and summoning of the whole earth to righteous judgment, covenantal faithfulness, and saving justice (Psalm 50:1-6ff). Finally, this is the messianic sun of righteousness rising with healing in His rays (or wings; Malachi 4:2), summoning all the earth from east to west.

The summons is first of all a call of beauty (Psalm 50:2) which proceeds from the place of God’s habitation (50:2), the place where His glory dwells (Psalm 26:8). But the path of the sun declares through its marking out, through its arc-ing out from east to west, is “the glory of God.” Just as there is no escaping from its heat nor its message which reaches all the earth, just so does God make his presence felt (“heat,” NIVSB n. 19:4b-6) and His glory known. And where the glory of God dwells, there is His temple: David declared along with Isaiah (6:3), “His glory fills the whole earth.”²¹

The path of the sun indeed cuts out an arc, a vault, which reveals (and lays claim to) the whole earth as the temple of God.²² As such the very nature of the

²⁰ The noun used for “heat” in Psalm 19:6 is derived from the Hebrew root חָמַח; (*chammah*). In the Piel (the intensive form), this verb means “to warm, to hatch.” As a noun, חָמַח also means anger, wrath, and prison.

²¹ Or as Jonathan Edwards and others insightfully and correctly translated the Hebrew, “His glory is the fulfillment of the whole earth.”

“divining” permitted to the Hebrews is defined in accordance with Mosaic sanctions. In particular, the kind of divining common to the other nations throughout the history of Israel, and to the Latin-speakers who used the words *contemplatio* and *templum*, was expressly forbidden (Deuteronomy 18:9-14). This prohibition was not against seeking knowledge of the divine; rather it was a question of how to attain access to the words of God and the knowledge of the future. Rather than divining “the flight, cries, and eating habits of birds,” the way of access to divine knowledge was defined by the office of the prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15-22). Life which is faithful to the God whose message the vault of heaven proclaims demands refraining from pagan *templum* practices. The very creational design (Psalm 19:4) which the sun illuminates and the very message which the heavens declare required for the Hebrew a different notion of *templum* and a different notion of *contemplatio*.

Before summarizing the components of this Hebrew *templum* in relation to Heidegger’s treatment, a final point is required. Not only does the arc of the sun claim all above it and beneath it as a manifestation of the glory of God, but because the sun can (and does) proclaim its message to all the inhabited earth, it itself *is* “the place which can be seen from any point, and from which any point can be seen.” As such it is a (perceptual) Archimedean point. However, because its shining is but a sign of a glory which it both reveals and points to, indicated in part by its nightly disappearance, it is not the final Archimedean point. Rather the final Archimedean point is the glory of the God who neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psalm 121), the glory which the sun reveals and the heavens declare, even at night. “Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You” (Psalm 139:12); therefore, “Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?” (139:7). Nowhere.

Thus far the *templum* has been reconceived, or as Heidegger might put it, retrieved, in terms of “the glory of God.” I have suggested above that even from within Heidegger’s texts, “God” has been implicated, not only through the explicit references to and comments on Hölderlin’s poems, but also by means of the *conceptual* similari-

22 The “house/temple” of God is elsewhere closely associated with the whole earth; cf. NIVSB notes on Psalm 24:2 and 36:8.

ties with (aspects of) the traditional philosophical understandings of “God.”²³ What now appears from a consideration of the Biblical data as distinct from Heidegger’s thought is the world itself considered as *templum*, and that *templum* as the place of the manifestation of the *glory* (of God), even as “defined” in the first instance by that manifestation. This, of course, strikes to the heart of Heidegger’s “being-in-the-world,” and that is close to his own “one thought,”²⁴ as well as his thinking of it.

However, by invoking “the glory of God” here it might be thought that I am merely returning to that popular and traditional philosophical use of the term transcendent, that is, using the terms with reference to God. Those versed in Heidegger would be right to point out that not only did Heidegger recognize this sense, but that he developed his own understanding in explicit distinction from it (e.g. BPP 298ff). I acknowledge, therefore, that I have not yet taken into account those unique Heideggerean concerns regarding “dwelling” raised, for example, in section 1 above. For instance, Heidegger’s understanding of dwelling included his profound concern with the fundamental place determinative of human being as such, that is, as *Dasein*. Correlatively, he understood human being as “a creature of distance,” and further, as essentially “poetic.” Further still, this place of “distance” in which we dwell was, for Heidegger, fundamentally and inherently structured by language and law, and was that “pure correspondence” which enables and conditions all things and all human relations to things. In the following corroborative Biblical data and (preliminary) dialogical engagement I respond to these concerns.

3.3.2 Corroboration

First of all, it is not difficult to find in the Bible texts which resonate with Heidegger’s concern for that fundamental “place” determinative of human being as such. Consider, for instance, “Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations” (Psalm 90:1); or,

²³ Further, and different, implications were considered in chapter 2.

²⁴ Heidegger often expressed the opinion that each thinker had been given to think just one thought.

You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
 who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
 will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress;
 my God, in whom I trust."

...

Because you have made the LORD your refuge,
 the Most High your dwelling place ...
 (Psalm 91:1-2, 9).

If "the LORD" is as the Biblical text portrays Him, then there could be no more fundamental "place" determinative of human being as such: He alone is "the Most High"; there is none like Him (Exodus 15:11).

The same idea is, of course, found in the New Testament, amplified through various figures. It is put most baldly, and also perhaps most to the point of Heidegger's concerns, by the Apostle Paul in his speech to the philosophers on Mars Hill, Athens. Quoting the Cretan poet Epimenides (c. 600 B.C.), Paul said, "For in him we live and move and have our being." The Apostle John put the same idea most figuratively in his Gospel, recalling Jesus' words about the disciples dwelling in Himself as branches abide in the vine (chapter 15). And perhaps the most "conceptual" approach comes again from the Apostle Paul who contrasted "being-in-Christ" with "being-in-this-present-world" (cf. e.g. Ridderbos 1975).²⁵

My aim here is not to develop this possible dialogue between the Biblical text (and its traditions) and Heidegger's works (and through Heidegger, much of the history of Western philosophy). Rather, I seek merely to establish the plausibility, indeed naturalness, perhaps even the necessity, of such an engagement, and further, something of the advantage of so doing. Before previewing the promised benefit of such an arduous and no doubt sometimes perilous *Aus-einander-setzung* (confrontation, engagement), I continue with further corroboration that perhaps this interlocking and interweaving of words, concepts and themes has already begun.

In addition to the rich Biblical metaphors and thematics of dwelling (to which I will return shortly), consider, for instance, the Apostle Paul's designation of "we" (those "in Christ") as "God's workmanship [*poema*] created in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:10). About this word "workmanship" [*poema*] even the conservative editors of the

²⁵ Recall from chapter 1 that according to Kisiel, the crucial Heideggerean category of "being-in" was likely taken from "the biblical formula 'Christ in me, I in Christ'" (Kisiel 1993:76; cf. also 88, 383).

NIVSB admit as relevant that "The Greek for this word sometimes has the connotation of a 'work of art'" (note on Eph. 2:10, p. 1793). To conclude, then, with Heidegger, that "poetically 'we' dwell" need not stretch too severely either the (biblical) imagination or credulity.

Nor need it be difficult, unwarranted, or unwise to retrieve and elaborate Heidegger's understanding of human being as transcendent, that is, "a *creature of distance*." Certainly no orthodox Christian (or Jew or Muslim) doubts the importance of the "distance" separating humans from God as the transcendent One. However, if human being fundamentally dwells "in God," if that is perhaps even the fundamental ontological determinant of those called "the image of God," then no doubt, being creatures "of" that distant One, we too are creatures of distance. The Apostle Paul evidently even experienced this "distance" as a poignant existential reality (2 Cor. 5:6-9, 13; Phil. 1:23; cf. "ecstatic").

3.4 A preliminary portrayal of further dialogue

The preceding presentations of the participants in this proposed dialogue on "being-at-home" are sufficient at least for my purpose of portraying with some substance, though still preliminarily, the gain such an engagement holds both for philosophy and for theology, especially Christian theology. I now advance this dialogue a bit with the further development of three "categories" central to both sides. I begin with the crucial Heideggerean category, being-in-the-world.

3.4.1 The world

Earlier I noted in passing that the Apostle Paul contrasted "being-in-Christ" with "being-in-this-present-world"; here I want to take up that contrast in relation to Heidegger's understanding of being-in-the-world. Included in Heidegger's survey of the history of the concept of the world is a brief three-page treatment of Christianity's understanding of "world," particularly that of Paul, John, Augustine, and Aquinas. As with each of the phases of this history, Heidegger's understanding was governed by his own ontological construal of this phenomenon, "world." It was, evidently, that Heideggerean "vision of Being," operating independently of the authority of Christian revelation, which he continually sought to bring to expression. In his early work, like *The Essence of Reasons/Grounds* (ER; 1929, hereafter WG/ER), this

“independence” was expressed by considering the Christian understanding of world as but one of several stages in the history of that concept. Yet even in ER Heidegger’s relation to that Christian notion is ambiguous.

On the one hand, Heidegger clearly sought to develop, and so go beyond, even overcome, the Christian formulations. To that end he was particularly appreciative of the Kantian innovation, especially the identification of knowledge about *man* with knowledge about the *world* (WG/ER 74/75). Indeed, Heidegger devoted his most extended treatment to the Kantian position (20 pages). In the end Heidegger too, at least in this early period, accepted the modernism represented by Kant, though somewhat unwittingly, it would seem, given his extensive critiques of both Kant and modernism.²⁶ He wrote, for instance, that “that for the sake of which *Dasein* exists is itself” (84f/85). On the other hand, Heidegger introduced his own contributions to this history of the concept of world by affirming that the Kantian understanding of “‘world’ ... as the name of the essence of human *Dasein* ... corresponds perfectly to Augustine’s *existentiell* concept” (78/79), which earlier he acknowledged can be found in both New Testament writers, Paul and John (52f/53f).

This ambiguity between overcoming and affirming the Christian contribution to the understanding of “world” is focused most precisely by considering those components of the New Testament concept of “world” which “dropped away” in the course of the history Heidegger reviewed. Though at least two such components “dropped away” (78/79), Heidegger acknowledged only one, while at the same time reinterpreting the “forgotten component.” Along with Kant, Heidegger quite explicitly let drop the “sinfulness” of the “worldly” notion of world. What he did not so explicitly acknowledge, but which he reinterpreted as essential to his own understanding of “world,” was that this “sinful worldliness” was itself defined with reference to God, specifically as a way of life or being “estranged from God” (50/51). This is highly pertinent for it was precisely “the relationship of *kosmos* to human *Dasein*,” that is, the human “stance *with regard to* the cosmos” (50/51; Heidegger’s emphasis), which

²⁶ Certainly Heidegger himself recognized this “modernism” in his early work and sought to overcome it after “the turn.” The core of “modernism” as understood here is the centrality of human ‘ego’ or subject as the primary reference for ‘the real.’

Heidegger both recognized as a uniquely Christian contribution and highlighted as that which previously had been “only vaguely understood” (82/83). It was, of course, his own conception of *Dasein* as “being-in-the-world” which was to clarify, and so remedy, this vagueness. As he put it, “world belongs to a structure of *relations* which marks *Dasein* out as *Dasein* and is entitled being-in-the-world” (*ibid.*). What has “dropped away” unannounced is, of course, the New Testament sense that the human relationship to the world is itself mediated by the more fundamental human relationship to God. Four additional points further constrain our attention to the pertinence of this Heideggerean omission or avoidance.

First of all, in this context Heidegger himself referred to the same passage from 1 Corinthians discussed in chapter 2, and specifically the relevant phrase, the wisdom of the world (50/51). We are, then, still embroiled in our concern about the meaning of philosophy, including, for instance, the contributions of ancient philosophy and Kant as cited in Heidegger’s brief history of the concept of the world. In addition, it must be noted that the Apostles John and Paul, as well as the theologians Augustine and Aquinas, are also included, along with, and even at least partly determinative of, Heidegger’s own innovations. Here it is Heidegger, and not just I, who blended philosophy and “theology,” and even the biblical text.

Secondly, the long passage which Heidegger quoted from Augustine highlights the concern of this chapter, the fundamental place of human dwelling/being. Augustine wrote about this in terms of the place where “we dwell ... in heart” (54/55). The relevant distinction for Augustine was whether the heart dwelt primarily “in the world” or primarily “in heaven” (56/57). Heidegger, however, misinterpreted Augustine’s understanding of “world” by again suppressing the knowing (or not) of God as essential to the very meaning of world (56/57).²⁷

Thirdly, in agreement with Augustine, we must reckon with the biblical understanding of the world as “creation” as itself (ontologically) constituted in and in relation to God as the Creator. Not only are all things “in Christ” (e.g. Colossians

²⁷ Likely this “suppression” was due to Heidegger’s inclusion of God within “being in its totality,” while for Augustine the Creator was not to be included in one category together with created being (in its totality).

1:17), but all things manifest and testify to their Creator (e.g. Romans 1:20). In short, “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen” (Romans 11:36).

Fourthly, it will be of more than passing interest that Heidegger’s defiant refusal of an authoritative text, in this case specifically the Christian Scriptures, was reneged upon as he increasingly devoted himself to the interpretation of carefully chosen, and (for him) seemingly authoritative texts. In fact, finally it would seem that he replaced the Biblical canon with a canon of his own made up mostly of early Greek thinkers and German poets. It is this latter point which leads on to my next topic of further dialogue; before taking it up directly, though, it is worth summarizing the state of the preceding discussion with regard to “the world.” I am concerned to emphasize three main points.

First, both Biblical and theological conceptions and texts have already been included by Heidegger in his survey of the history of the concept of the “world.” What I am proposing, and to some extent engaging in here, ought not then to seem so strange. Secondly, though, I have been trying to show both that “God” has been an integral part of philosophical discourse and that “He” has simply been “dropped out” of the conversation without argument or explicit rationale. Or, to be more precise, though “dropped out” or “suppressed” “He” is still there, both implicitly and explicitly, though often only marginally so. My demonstrations of this fact have been carried out both from within the Heideggerean corpus as well as with regard to other philosophical texts (cf. my SIG). My third summarizing point is that “He” cannot be so “dropped out” without specifically *philosophical* consequences. Note, for instance, that for Heidegger,

The ontological interpretation of *Dasein* as Being-in-the-world tells neither for nor against the possible existence of God. One must first gain an *adequate concept* of *Dasein* by illuminating transcendence. Then, by considering *Dasein*, one can *ask* how the relationship of *Dasein* to God is ontologically constituted (WG/ER 90/91, n. 56).

Obviously, however, if human transcendence is itself ontologically constituted by the relationship of *Dasein* to God (as would be the ‘world’, in the biblical understanding), then Heidegger’s suggested (and actual) approach to the question of God is already expressive of a fundamental commitment which is at least as “theologi-

cal" as philosophical. As such, consideration of that "fundamental commitment," together with all its philosophical relevance, could (at least) quite naturally include consideration of the Biblical text.²⁸

My conclusion, then, is that there is (still) much in the Biblical text (and Christian theology) to advance our understanding of "the world." In particular I have noted the phrase "in Christ" as of potential interest. In addition I might add "in the heavenlies," as well as the polysemic value of "*kosmos*." The lines leading to this conclusion have been diverse and convergent; the lines leading from this convergence throughout the Bible are no doubt even more diverse than I have noted. Let me mention just three by way of a "downpayment" toward the richer "dialogue" promised, and a fourth which will lead into the next topic.

First, being-in-Christ is spoken of as "a place," a "where" (John 17:24), even as a "home" (14:2). Because Christ is "the King of kings," the One who is sovereign in power, majesty, authority, and wisdom, His "place" is a Kingdom. Those "in Christ" are in that Kingdom (Colossians 1:13), and, most significantly in the context of a dialogue with Heidegger, they *are* "a kingdom"; that is, they are "the place" where the King's kingdom authority and power and life are manifest, and therefore they are those who "will reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10). The future tense is important here, for as yet that place, indeed their very lives, is veiled or hidden or not yet fully manifest (Colossians 3:3-4; 1 John 3:1-3; etc.). There is no triumphalism here.

Ultimately, the way to that place, which I will consider in greater detail in the next chapter, is both a choice initiated by God Himself and a call which "translates" the Christian believer out of the world. As such they do not belong to the world (cf. John 15:19, 17:14, 16-19).²⁹ It is, in fact, this radical break with the world that Paul called both a crucifixion of the "*Dasein*"-world relation and a new creation (Gal. 6:14). My own supposition here is that this is exactly what has been sought under

²⁸ To the response, Why should it?, I could reply with equal right, Why not?

²⁹ "Belonging," remember, was Gadamer's and Ricoeur's preferred "translation" of Heidegger's being-in-the-world: "Despite the density of meaning in the expression being-in-the-world', I prefer, following Gadamer, to use the notion of belonging, which immediately raises the problem of the subject-object relation and prepares the way for the subsequent introduction of the concept of distancing" (HSS 106).

the philosophical name of “the reduction” in the case of Husserl (and his followers), and the “true step back” or the “erasure of Being” in the case of Heidegger (and his followers). The next chapter develops this point at length.

Second, the “being of this place” pre-exists “the world” in all its varied senses. In particular, and especially in light of Heidegger’s understanding of the Christian contribution to the concept of “the world,” this place in which those in Christ “are” existed at least “from the foundations of the world” (Mt. 25:34), if not from before (Eph. 1:4; John 17:5, 24). Certainly the Biblical data is that the Christ in whom believers “are” pre-existed the creation of this world (e.g. John 1; Col. 1), even (in some sense) as the Crucified One (1 Peter 1:20; Rev. 13:8). Further, that choice by which Christian believers are rooted and grounded in the love of God in Christ “occurred” before the existence of this world (in any sense) and before time. As is well known, Heidegger was much occupied with “time” and the “before time,” that is, the *a priori*. My own suspicion is that any understanding of Heidegger and dialogue with his thought regarding time must engage this realm of the One who is before all things and in whom all things hold together (Col. 1:17), that realm “defined” and opened by the manifestation of His glory (John 17:22, 24).

Third, the key word for both Heidegger’s being-in-the-world as well as being-in-Christ is the word “in.” Heidegger attended to “Being-in as such” in chapter 5 of Division 1, sections 28ff of *Being and Time*, explicating to the best of his ability “the existential constitution of the ‘there’.” The point of engagement with Biblical revelation would be not only the “being in” of the human life in Christ, but the “being in” of the eternal ontological Trinity to which it is likened (John 17:21-23, etc.) and which no doubt is its archetype. Whether—and if so, just how—this Trinitarian “being-in” grounds the “worldly” and/or “atmospheric” (or spatial) quality not usually associated with the interpersonal, which is the aspect usually and quite rightly highlighted by a consideration of the intratrinitarian relations, is left for that future dialogue.

Fourth, and finally, by way of transition to the next major subject of my concern, the “dwelling (at home) in” to which we have been attending has much to do with “the word” and the human relation to it. In fact, not only is language the “house/temple of Being” for Heidegger, as already noted, but the rich indwelling of the words of Christ Jesus, Himself understood as the *Lógos* in whom we are to dwell, is practically

identified with the indwelling of Jesus Himself (cf. Ephesians 3:16f and Colossians 3:16). And indeed, as the NJB puts it, we are to make His word our home (John 8:31).

It is because Heidegger attended so carefully and so uniquely to “the word,” especially in his latter writings, and because “the Word of God” is obviously so central to the Judeo-Christian tradition, that this point now deserves fuller elaboration.

3.4.2 The word

Along with Stefan George, Heidegger sought the word for the word and together with George he acknowledged that it “escapes us” (OWL 86). Thus, for Heidegger, we are always only “on the way to language.” I will attend to this “way” and the “way-making” of language in the next chapter; here my concern is, Why was Heidegger so concerned about the word, and more particularly, the word for word? As he put it elsewhere, “To reflect on language means—to reach the speaking of language in such a way that this speaking takes place as that which grants an *abode* for the being of mortals” (PLT 192; emphasis added). That is, to “find” or “reach” the word for the word would be the consummate achievement of a reflection on language, an achievement which would also grant mortals “an abode.” In short, to find the word for the word would be for humans to achieve their being in fullness, i.e. to dwell poetically.

Without rehearsing the meditation accomplished elsewhere,³⁰ two points are worth special mention here. On the last page of “The nature of language,” Heidegger paraphrased (by way of supposition) George’s “Where word breaks off no thing may be” as, “An ‘is’ arises where the word breaks up” (OWL 108). What is of special interest to me is Heidegger’s “breaks up,” for not only did he recognize “language” as some form of “the prime mover” (cf. 107f),³¹ but he also surmised an “essential relation between death and language” (107). That is, not only was Heidegger skirting with traditional philosophical conceptions of God, but he was also evoking, more or less explicitly, the “death of (that) God” ... at least. Evidently it is this relation between death and language which the breaking up of the word articulates. I say

³⁰ Cf. SIG, chapter 5.

³¹ In fact, “the mover ... rests in [language as] Saying” (108; emphasis added), recalling the significance of the “in” noted above.

“at least,” though, for two reasons: Heidegger’s conception of *Ereignis*, especially in relation to language, is *not* the traditional conception of “God”; and further, the death in question is not the “final word,” but rather that “breaking up/death” gives rise to an “is,” a new beginning, a kind of “resurrection” (cf. also PLT 178f).

The importance of “death” within Heidegger’s own thought is not to be minimized, as attested by §§ 46-53 of BT, Heidegger’s attention to dread and the Nothing, as well as by the later Heidegger’s preferred term for human beings, i.e. “mortals.” It is even “death” which “binds” the mortal within the fourfold belonging of *Ereignis*; it is the point at which “what reaches out for us, touches us” (OWL 108), and therefore the point at and from which the fundamental belonging of our human “being-in-the-world” is most authentic and fruitful. I say “fruitful” because it was, after all, with this “death-like” breaking up of the word that an “is” arises, an “is” which evidently is not what he had meant by “Being” (87). In addition to the importance of this “essential relation between death and language” just mentioned, Heidegger also affirmed that “this breaking up of the word is the true step back on the way of thinking” (108); that is, this search for the word for word culminating in the death-like breaking up of the word is also at the heart of Heidegger’s understanding of philosophy and its overcoming.

It is here with this talk about searching for the word for the word, the death of the word reaching out to us, “new being” arising from this breaking up of the word, etc., that the Christian might quite naturally, and not without good reason, want to exclaim, “What you’ve been seeking, I’ve found!” I say “not without good reason” since both Jesus and Paul explicitly affirm such a possibility. Jesus: “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure” (Matt. 11:25f). Paul: “God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him” (1 Cor. 1:27-29). And, rejoining the concern raised above regarding Heidegger’s own replacement of the Biblical canon with a canon of his own, the prophet Jeremiah wondered (rhetorically)

just what kind of wisdom could be rightly claimed once the words of God had been rejected (Jer. 8:9).

Whether Christians might claim a specifically *philosophical* right to profess knowledge of as well as some sort of “possession” of that which the (Western) philosophical tradition has sought, and if so, how, continues to be the burden of this book. The beginnings of further clarity, both with regard to how this might be so and with regard to how it is not, are afforded through returning to a topic introduced above, the Law.

3.4.3 The law

Recall that in §3.2.2 above we noted that for Heidegger not only is “appropriation ... *the law*” (OWL 128), but also *ho nomos* is above the gods and humans, two “constituents” of the four-fold *Ereignis*. Indeed, the “Saying” of language conveyed “the message” sent not by Zeus, but by “*ho nomos*,” conveying it from a “place” which precedes or preexists the radiance of the appearing of that same “*ho nomos*” (139f). Evidently the “lawgiver” or Speaker/Sayer is both the One who or That which sent the message and is also somehow identified with that which is sent. In short, *ho nomos* both said the primordial Saying (139) and is the message which “arises” from the saying (140). Further, not only did *ho nomos* send that message (rather than Zeus for instance, 140), but its own primordial “place” is “that place” which is “above the gods and men” (139). Apparently, then, the law is both identical with *Ereignis* and it is the matrix within which and because of which *Ereignis* “happens.”³²

A bit more, though, can be said about just why “the law” is appropriation, or more precisely, what it is about “the law” which was of special interest to Heidegger. In particular, Heidegger insisted that he understood this law neither “in the sense of a norm” nor as “an ordinance” (128). Rather, “appropriation is *the law* because it gathers mortals into the appropriateness of their nature and there holds them” (128f). It is this “gathering” and “holding,” then, which are the relevant constituents.

Before returning to these highlighted “components” we well might question just what it is that is objectionable about these rejected senses of “norm” and “ordinance.” Especially is this the case because the usual sense of “norm” is not far from Heideg-

³² Cf. also BCPH 222.

ger's notion of a gathering-holding which, in the case of humans, "releases human nature into its own" (129). The same is also true for all "things" (PLT 182). That is, the guarding and granting of the uniqueness of "each thing in its nature" (149), what Heidegger elsewhere called "this fourfold preserving" (158f), is not far from the meaning of "normativity" as that which determines the standard or most essential meaning for the "ownmost" of each "thing." The same is true with regard to "ordinance," especially when Heidegger's understanding of the role of language is integrated with his understanding of this gathering-holding *Ereignis*.

Heidegger's objections, then, need to be more precisely located. Evidently his denunciation of "norm" had to do with "norm" in the sense of that which "hangs over our heads somewhere," while his rejection of "ordinance" had to do with that which "orders and regulates a course of events" (128). In the case of "ordinance" this objection requires further qualification in the light of Heidegger's own understanding of "the rule of the word" (OWL 153) which, we might say, orders and regulates in its own way. However, rather than being a "rule" which "orders and regulates a course of events," the rule of the word is "higher," being that which "first lets a thing be as thing" (151): "The word's rule springs to light ... [beginning] to shine as the gathering which first brings what presences to its presence" (155). Heidegger went one step further, actually suggesting a word for this word which so rules: "The oldest word for the rule of the word thus thought, for Saying, is *lógos*" (155).³³

With the conversation thus prepared, the Christian once again might well venture to join the dialogue. Certainly Heidegger's understanding of "the lawgiver" is not far from that of God Himself as understood in the Mosaic tradition, at least under a Christian interpretation. For instance, God Himself is both the One who sent the message—as law and as gospel—and the One who is also identified with that which is sent, first in terms of the law as a reflection and manifestation of His own character, and then in terms of the "Sent-One" as God Himself incarnate. Further, responding to Heidegger's understanding of the law as that which gathers and holds, that "Sent-One" was understood by Paul both as the One under whom all things are

³³ Similarly, "The word is *lógos*. It speaks simultaneously as the name for Being and for Saying" (OWL 80).

gathered together (Eph. 1:10) and the One in whom all things hold together (Col. 1:17). And, as is no secret, He is also called *Lógos* (John 1:1, 14).

What, though, about the objectionable senses of norm and ordinance? Here too the Christian can say, Yes, I'm sympathetic. With regard to "norm" Heidegger's objection was focused against "the law in the sense of a norm which hangs over our heads somewhere" (PLT 128). The Apostle Paul, I imagine, would reply that though there had been a sense in which the law "hangs over our heads," those who now believe in the Anointed One sent by God are no longer "under the law," because He is "the end (*telos*) of the law ... for all who believe" (Rom. 10:4). Rather than being "under the law" such believers are "under grace," further recalling Heidegger's own emphasis on "Kindness [*charis*], the Pure" (228f) noted earlier. With regard to the objection to "ordinances," especially as qualified above, Heidegger's deeper concern was actually two-fold. First, any ordering and regulating of the law must not conflict with that setting free according to one's own nature; that is, "freedom" is a higher law than any sense of law as ordering and regulating; or perhaps even better still, any ordering and regulating must be understood as ruling "from within" (BCPh 228; cf. also 233). Second, the law must not be understood as a mere propositional ordinance.

In response to the first concern the Christian again need not be put off; as a matter of fact, the "royal law," understood in its "perfection" is "the law that gives freedom" (Jas. 1:25; 2:8, 12; literally "the law of liberty"). Indeed, Jesus Himself said, "If you make my word your home ... you will come to know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31f, NJB), and "Your (The Father's) word is truth" (17:17). Further, Heidegger's insistence on a ruling "from within" is fully met by an enriched understanding of the Incarnation and its implications. In response to the second concern, "the law," even (and especially) the inscripturated law, was never understood by the Biblical authors as merely propositional ordinances. Returning to Psalm 19, for instance, we read that the law revives the soul, makes wise, gives joy and light, was experienced as sweet, and was treasured with a devotion which exceeded that afforded gold. Much more could be said about the "non-propositional" aspects of the word of God, and no doubt will need to be once the dialogue is fully engaged. Here I have only wanted to establish the propriety of such a continuing exchange.

3.5 Preview

There are, though, further themes which emerge from even the beginnings of juxtaposition, if not dialogue, which I have already put forward. In preparation for returning to these matters in the next chapters I only introduce three such topics here. Once again it is Heidegger's religious, or at least quasi-religious, language which serves my purposes. However, as before, I am concerned that the points of similarity which are providing the bridge over which, or perhaps "on which," the proposed *Auseinandersetzung* is to take place are not merely verbal similarities. That, of course, is where the real task of thinking must take place.

First of all I take note of Heidegger's use of "to save" as practically synonymous with the guarding and granting of the uniqueness of "each thing in its [own] nature" (PLT 149) which characterized the fourfold *Ereignis* as law. He said, for instance, "to save really means to set something free into its own presencing" (150). And, returning to the central concern of this chapter, this "saving" is what Heidegger meant by the dwelling of the human, especially with regard to our relation to "the earth" (150f). Heidegger amplified this sense elsewhere noting that "saving is an offering and a releasing" with the same qualities as language (OWL 154; cf. ID 38), itself the house or temple of Being.

Secondly, Heidegger quite explicitly distinguished the modern scientific understanding of law from his own understanding (QCT 120ff), while at the same time (also explicitly) identifying the heart of this modern scientific understanding with "justification" (88ff). *Prima facie* one would do well to be suspicious of a religious reading of Heidegger's use of "justification" in this context were it not that Heidegger himself evoked "God" and "salvation" (90), noting that "this question of the certainty of salvation is the [same] question of justification" which he had introduced on the preceding pages with reference to "modern metaphysics." This, he went on to say, is the basis of Kant's critical enterprise as "the *quaestio iuris* of the transcendental deduction" (90). It will be of interest later to take up this Kantian question, especially the role of judgments and more especially synthetic *a priori* judgments, in light of our reinterpretation of Heidegger's understanding of both "the law" and "the word." In particular I will wonder whether Heidegger's concern with that which is more than "the mere propositional" (PTL 216) character of language is not more an indication

of the determinative role of “faith” and the object of faith than any objection to the propositional as such. It is this train of thought connecting “the law,” “justification,” (modern) metaphysics, and the judgment—all as reinterpreted and transposed first by Heidegger and then through the engagement between Heidegger and the Biblical text—which arises from within this concern with the “propositional,” and which I will follow out shortly.

Thirdly, that which drove Heidegger’s reinterpretations and transpositions was finally his understanding of language as responsible for “holding everything within the suspended structure of appropriation [*Ereignis*]” (ID 38). Of special interest, though, is not only the “essential relation between death and language” noted earlier, but also the recognition of language itself as a (way-making) way. With regard to the first point, Heidegger spoke of death as “the shrine of Nothing” and as “the shelter [home] of Being” (PLT 178f), just as he had spoken of language as the home/temple of Being. Further, there is even some indication of the necessary mediation by death/Nothing of “the presencing relation of Being as Being” (179). That is, the sought for central philosophical relation to Being as such is, in Christian terminology, conditioned by both death and resurrection. It is in this light that the “way” to this specifically philosophical achievement is of special pertinence. For Heidegger this “way” was his final understanding of what has been known in the Western philosophical tradition as the transcendental method, though we must not forget that, somewhat paradoxically, “The way in which ... we humans *are* on the earth [is] dwelling” (PLT 147), thus linking these two “figures” (dwelling and the way) most intimately. I will pick up and follow these themes, as well as the more specifically Christian resonances, in the following chapters.

4 Philosophy as “the Way of ‘Death’”

4.1 Introduction

That Heidegger’s thinking is most fundamentally “a way” or “underway” rather than a settled set of “doctrines” is obvious to all who read even a little of Heidegger’s work. At least from *Being and Time* until the very end, Heidegger insisted that his investigations were “on the way” (BT 488/SZ 437; OWL; TB). What is of special interest to me now is the unique role played by “death” in keeping us “on the way,” if not in some sense, being that way. We will see that our way is determined as the appropriate response to the movement of Being itself. It is because Being is different—even difference itself as characterized by the four-fold, interpenetrating mirror-play of Ereignis—that the response of human being is “thinking,” understood as a cutting, drawing, tracing response to “the drawing [and withdrawing!] of the being of language” (OWL 121). It is because humans are mortals who “dwell in the nearness of death” (SG 186) that “being-towards-death” is the human way of that thinking-being which “cuts furrows into the soil of Being” itself (OWL 70). Heidegger’s understanding of death as the ownmost way of human being shifted along with the development of his own understanding. In particular, this shift is characterized by an increasing de-emphasis on the significance of human projective anticipation as definitive for human being as such.

In chapters 2 and 3 we saw how the themes of Language and Being (and the Nothing) in Heidegger have lead us to a consideration of both ‘the way’ and ‘death’. How this becomes ‘the way of death’ and how this way is integral to Heidegger’s understanding of philosophy is now our topic of concern. We have taken note of Heidegger’s understanding of philosophy as that responding to the silent voice of Being, otherwise understood as the Saying of Language (i.e. the *lógos*), which grants humans a way into the primal dimension of our ownmost belonging. In fact, for Heidegger, “Language is the primal dimension *within which* man’s essence is first able to correspond at all to Being and its claim, and, in corresponding, to belong to Being” (QCT 41). We also noted that this “primal dimension” was called *Ereignis* and that it was characterized by “Law” in Heidegger’s special sense.

Before advancing these considerations, especially with regard to philosophy as

“the way of ‘death,’” it is worth pausing briefly to remind ourselves that Heidegger’s elaborations are themselves creative reinterpretations, or retrievals, of philosophy as understood by other “giants” in the Western tradition. Thereby Heidegger’s understanding of philosophy as “the way of ‘death’” will be seen as a retrieval and elaboration of ‘the tradition’; noting that retrieval and elaboration will also highlight one important aspect of Heidegger’s own philosophizing. I will consider only two such figures here, Kant and Husserl, and that only briefly. A bit later I will take up Aristotle and Descartes.¹

With regard to Kant, the key is to note that Heidegger transposed and radicalized the transcendental method (ὁδός [(h)odos; the way], *meth-odos*, method) into the *way* (ὁδός) of thinking granted by the *way*-making call of the four-fold *Ereignis*, especially as understood as (granting) the *Es gibt*. Little more need be said by way of summary than that already touched upon in chapter 3: Not only did Heidegger credit Kant’s “critique” with opening up the exploration of the primal domain of human belonging, but in effect, he went beyond the “horizon” of transcendental thinking to that which grants the horizon as horizon.

Just as Kant’s transcendental method explored “the land of truth” and explicated its discoveries in terms of the transcendental *a priori* conditions for the possibility of the appearance of any object as such, Heidegger’s “way” recognized a more primordial belonging together of Being itself and human being as *Dasein*. This “primal relation” preceded even the Kantian preestablished horizon as projected by human being, that horizon within which objects might appear in the first place as candidates for human knowing. Heidegger appreciated that whatever enabling capacities for knowing constituted human being as such, those capacities were themselves dependent upon that more primordial relation. He did not so much criticize the Kantian transcendental method as a way to philosophize as recognize that that method had

1 Certainly more could be said about these figures, and others included, e.g. Plato, Leibnitz, Nietzsche. With regard to Plato-philosophy-death relation, cf. Derrida’s *GoD* (1995), 11ff, e.g. “The *Phaedo* explicitly names philosophy: it is the attentive anticipation of death, the care brought to bear upon dying, the meditation on the best way to receive, give, or give oneself death, the experience of a vigil over the possibility of death, and over the possibility of death as impossibility” (12f). I will comment on Derrida’s *GoD* later.

itself been one particular epochal bestowal from a more primordial realm and by means of a more primordial bond between human being and Being. His concern, then, was to uncover this more primordial realm and bond. To do so he sought “the way” into that realm, or perhaps better, the way to best cor-respond to that which itself first of all opened the horizon as explicated, for instance, by the transcendental method (as one historical way). Heidegger called his new “method” *Gelassenheit*, that kind of thinking which lets the horizon open as horizon in the first place and which grants us access to that pre-horizonal realm of the Open. In effect, Heidegger sought to say something about the other side of the horizon by carefully listening both to that which had been granted as horizon in the past (the epochs of Being) and to that which might even now be dawning afresh. What will be of special interest to us shortly is that this call from beyond the horizon has much to do with pain and with death.

Heidegger’s understanding of philosophy’s way is also a retrieval of Husserl’s central philosophical method, the transcendental reduction. Heidegger understood this reduction in terms of its component parts, that is, “the leading back or re-reduction of investigative vision from a naively apprehended being to Being” (BPP 21; Latin, *ducere*: to draw or lead). Heidegger’s central concern was not that we be led away from beings through some kind of “pure aversion,” but that “we should bring ourselves forward positively toward Being itself” (21). As initially sketched this process of “re-reduction” therefore also included *phenomenological construction* “in a free projection” as well as the *destruction* already introduced in chapter 2. Though Heidegger’s emphasis on construction through projection tended to diminish throughout his career in favor of the “letting be” of *Gelassenheit*, the importance of *destruction* continued in prominence, though the terms in which it was explicated shifted a bit, as we will see shortly. In effect, Heidegger’s *Destruktion* was essential to his reworking of Husserl’s phenomenological reduction, especially as explicated by the latter in terms of *Abbau* (dismantling; cf. *Experience and Judgment*). Equally important, though, especially in light of the preceding chapters, was Heidegger’s understanding that the reduction could be accomplished only in language. As he put it, clearly echoing Husserl’s understanding of the transcendental reduction,

... all beings, each in its own way, are *qua* beings in the precinct of language. This is why the return from the realm of objects and their representation into the innermost region of the heart's space can be accomplished, if anywhere, *only in this precinct* (PLT 132).

Earlier on the same page he had said, in the passage already quoted in chapter 3, "Language is the precinct (*templum*), that is, the house [temple] of Being." It is here too that the marking off or "cutting" (*temnein*) of the horizon, defining it as horizon-*templum*, entered our own dialogue. Heidegger's special concern was this "cutting" "by Being's being present in the word" (132), the signs of which are everywhere throughout Heidegger's writings, especially as signaled by the hyphen (e.g. re-duction; *Ge-Stell*). In this way Heidegger sought to uncover the language of Being as the Being of language, or more compactly, the inherent and intimate belonging together of Being and Saying (the *Lógos*). He called this "unity of the being of language ... the design," where "The design is the drawing of the being of language" and "To design is to *cut* a trace" (OWL 121; emphasis added). It is this "drawing" and "cutting" of language and by language (in its intimacy with Being) which is, therefore, the condition for the possibility of the transcendental reduction. But it is also a later characterization of "the Between" as that ownmost dwelling ("place") into which we are bidden by "the speaking of language," especially as rendered more precisely by "the dif-ference" (PLT 202ff).²

As I have just left matters, an ambiguity remains: Is "the dif-ference" the more precise rendering of "the speaking of language" or of "the Between"? Certainly, for Heidegger, the dif-ference is "the Between" as such, precisely in its character of between-ness: "the Between" is precisely "the Between of the dif-ference" (206). But it is also the case that "the dif-ference is the bidder" (207), that which calls and thus, it might seem that "the dif-ference" is also "the speaking of language." This, however, is evidently not quite true. Rather than being "the bidder," "the speaking of language" is the "bidding" which is itself called out from the dif-ference as command (206f). The situation here is akin to that relation between Zeus and *ho nomos* noted in chapter 3. The distinction seems to be between Being and Saying, with dif-ference on the side

² Though the dif-ference at PLT 202ff has to do especially with the thing-world "relation," the following discussion takes dif-ference in the general sense of the two-fold developed elsewhere (e.g. OWL 26ff).

of Being and the bidding on the side of Saying. And yet, what Heidegger said about the four-fold is also applicable here with regard to both the precise two-fold of the dif-ference and the relation of Being and Saying: “They penetrate each other” (202).

As it turns out, this “penetration” is the crucial point, both with regard to Heidegger’s own exposition and with regard to my own purposes. As Heidegger put it, this penetration is the intimacy (206) whose “pain is the dif-ference itself” (204). And further tightening our thematic weave, this dif-ference/pain/intimacy is also Heidegger’s Law: It is “the *command* out of which every bidding itself is first called” (207; emphasis added). Further still, this “mighty pain” is, for Heidegger, both “the benignity in the nature of all essential being” and “the great soul’s fundamental trait” (OWL 183).³ It is also essentially “akin” to “the twilight, the night, and the years,” especially in terms of their “spirituality.” The special pertinence of this kinship here, particularly in light of the preceding chapter, is that Heidegger’s mention of “the sun’s course *on its way*, its risings and its setting” is correlated with that “mighty pain” which “starts man *on the way*” (184; emphasis added). It was with a discussion of “the way,” ὁδός, *hodos*, meth-odos, philosophical method, remember, that we began this chapter, considering Heidegger first in relation to Kant, then Husserl.⁴

To summarize, then, dif-ference as “mighty pain” is “the rift” (PLT 204) which characterizes “the Between,” “the middle,” that dimension of intimacy which mediates essentially, and we might say, beforehand, rather than “after the fact” (202). But this “rift/pain” is also “the bidder,” that which issues the call within which human being always already is (as *Dasein*) and to which humans must properly respond if we are to correspond most fundamentally to whom we (already) are. Dif-ference, then, is another name for Being, to whose “voice” philosophy must attend (cf. chapter 2), for it is this “call” itself which sets in motion human being and thinking. As Heidegger put it, “The Greek verb κέλευειν [*keleuein*: to call, command, order, direct] properly means to get something on the road, to get it underway. The Greek noun *keleuthos* means way” (WCT 117).

³ Having since read Caputo 1993a, 1993b, I do wish to affirm a “demythologized” understanding of pain. For me, as should already be clear, the point of reference for my own understanding of all such terms is the crucified flesh/body of Yeshua (= Jesus).

⁴ The special pertinence of “spirituality” is the topic of chapter 7 below.

We have now come close to the central concern of this chapter, philosophy as “the way of ‘death,’” for the three contexts just cited refer to death, the first two directly, the third indirectly. First, this “pain” is the pain of apartness, like that of “being dead,” but also “more than merely the state [of death]” (OWL 177, 184ff). Second, this “pain” presents the way to that which “man’s naked hurt ... craves”: “God’s bread and wine” (PLT 195). Here Heidegger quoted a preliminary version of Trakl’s poem, “A Winter Evening,” though he sought to suppress, even deny, the specifically Christian reference to the Eucharistic pain of the Crucified.⁵ Third, Heidegger understood the call or bidding issued by Being as dif-ference to be “an anticipatory reaching out,” a command which is “a letting-reach,” in this case, specifically the call of Being which reaches us as humans and “lets our nature reach thought” (WCT 117, 118). This, then, is another description of that “dimension ... which lies between the thing and man, which reaches out beyond things and back behind man” (WT 244). But more to the point here, as already noted in the preceding chapter, that which “reaches out for us [and] touches us” is not only the Saying of language (in its essential relation with Being), but more precisely, death in its “essential relation” with language (OWL 108).

It is not difficult to hear the Christian resonances here, either in Trakl’s first draft, or in Heidegger’s secularized rereading of the final version, or in the apartness (or consecration) of pain and death. Nevertheless, I will not rest my own case on these echoes alone. Before developing that rationale, however, let me summarize these introductory remarks: Heidegger’s “way” included a retrieval of the philosophical methods of both Husserl and Kant. First, with regard to Husserl, Heidegger understood the transcendental, phenomenological reduction as the re-duction by which we are led back to Being itself, and finally, beyond the horizon of Being to what he called variously the Open, “the Between,” dif-ference, *Ereignis*, the four-fold, etc. In effect, he took what had been understood as horizon, even his own previous understanding of the hermeneutical circle, as but an image of something more primordial, in particular, the relation between Being and human being which was itself given from beyond Being. Thus, instead of seeking to further explicate the transcendental

⁵ Cf. especially OWL 192ff.

horizon as such, Heidegger attended to that of which that horizon is an image *and* to how that image is given in its various “dispensations.”

As an inherent aspect of being “led back” by the re-duction to “Being,” Heidegger also recognized the necessity of a “critical process in which the traditional concepts ... are deconstructed down to the sources from which they were drawn” (BPP 23). Thus Heidegger’s deconstructive retrieval, as an intrinsic and necessary part of the reduction, went beyond, while also incorporating, Kant’s understanding of “critique.” And yet, this reinterpretation of Kant was not simply an *Aufhebung*, as especially highlighted by Heidegger’s exposition of the way of philosophy as the way of the “mighty pain.” Instead of simply gathering up and overcoming the Kantian “critique,” Heidegger sought to take a further “step-back” to that which granted Kant’s “critique” as one particular elaboration of the relation of Being to beings. In the process, Kant’s “critique” is itself “deconstructed” as “merely” one way, legitimate in its own right, even inescapable for those following Kant, but still not yet granting us our truest home beyond the transcendental horizon. As we shall see shortly, in *Being and Time* Heidegger’s “way-beyond” intrinsically included “being-toward-death,” and in the later Heidegger it had to do with the primordial relation of mortals (i.e. those who die) to the *Ab-grund*, neither of which had been fully embraced by Kant. Indeed, the embracing of this “way” entails going beyond both Kant and (at least) the Hegelian *Aufhebung*.

There are, then, many converging strands by which Heidegger’s understanding of philosophy as a “way of ‘death’” can now be further explicated. In the next section (§2) I develop this Heideggerean way a bit further. My task will then be to once again engage Heidegger’s thought with a certain biblical perspective. Already we have seen that Heidegger’s understanding of the deconstructive re-duction led us to the remembrance of the bread and wine of the Crucified. Interestingly, Heidegger also recognized this “pain” as the true “home” of the human soul’s greatness (OWL 180; also 191), and via its coincidence with “spirit,” “pain” was taken as synonymous with what he had earlier called (human) transcendence. In short, “pain” is another designation for human being as *ek-static* being (cf. 179), just as Being itself is “the *transcendens* pure and simple” (PLT 131; BT 62/SZ 38). Thus Heidegger’s “Being” again converges upon “the Crucified,” the same point reached from different angles

in chapters 2 and 3. The consonance of the biblical pattern of such motifs as cutting, the law, apartness, death, pain, the abyss, the way, spirit, grace, and language with Heidegger's own design fashioned around the same motifs will prove striking beyond coincidence.⁶⁷

-
- 6 For a further, and independent, treatment of the significance of death for (Western) philosophy, cf. Derrida's *The Gift of Death* (GD). I give here a few quotes and comments from Derrida's text, especially with reference to platonic philosophy:

The *Phaedo* explicitly names philosophy: it is the attentive anticipation of death, the care brought to bear upon dying, the meditation on the best way to receive, give, or give oneself death, the experience of a *vigil* over the possibility of death, and over the possibility of death as impossibility (GD 12f).

Philosophy isn't something that comes to the soul by accident, for it is nothing other than this vigil over death that watches out for death and watches over death, as if over the very life of the soul. The psyche as life, as breath of life, as *pneuma*, only appears out of this concerned anticipation of dying (GD 15).

The Platonic philosopher triumphs over death in the sense that he doesn't run from it, he looks it straight in the face. His philosophy is *melete thanatou*, concern for death; the concern of the soul is inseparable from the concern for death which becomes authentic concern for life; (eternal) life is born from this event of looking death in the face, from the triumph over death (*perhaps it is nothing but this 'triumph'*). Yet when that is combined with the relation to the Good, with the identification with the Good and with deliverance from the demonic and the orgiastic, it signifies *the reign of responsibility and, along with it, of freedom*. The soul is absolutely free, it chooses its own destiny" (Patochka 115, quoted at GD 16 with Derrida's emphases).

Philosophy is born out of this form of responsibility [as awakened by 'a conversion with respect to the experience of death'], and in the same movement philosophy is born to its own responsibility. It comes into being *as such* at the moment when the soul is not only gathering itself in the preparation for death but when it is ready to receive death, giving it to itself even, in an acceptance that delivers it from the body, and at the same time delivers it from the demonic and the orgiastic. By means of the passage to death the soul attains its own freedom (GD 40).

Yet for Derrida too, as with Heidegger, death evidently precludes "every possible substitution" (GD 41). While I would agree that there is an irreducible sense in which "no one can die for me if 'for me' means instead of me, 'in my place'" (41), there is another sense in which the "for me" as "instead of me, 'in my place'" is exactly what orthodox Christianity has claimed in its understanding of the vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice of Christ Jesus. Derrida's own meditation on death (via a consideration of Heidegger's meditations on death) takes up the possibility of sacrifice, even recognizing "the fundamental and founding possibility of sacrifice" (42). It is here that I hope to take up afresh these concerns, yet in another context, for Derrida remains within Heidegger's "logic" while at the same time recognizing that it is not necessary to do so, and indeed, that others have not (e.g. Levinas and perhaps Patochka). This is **a**, if not **the**, crucial point, for here is the ground of responsibility, indeed "that responsibility of responsibility that relates me to what no one else can do in my place" (44). The crucial links here, to my mind, are: (1) the "logic" which insists "that mortal can only give to what

4.2 Heidegger on the way of death

I look, now, first at “being-towards-death” in BT, and second, at the role of the *Ab-grund* (the abyss), in his later writings.

4.2.1 “Being-Towards-Death”

In *Being and Time* Heidegger introduced his analysis of “Being-towards-death” in order to more accurately and completely discern the contours of authentic human existence. “Being-towards-death” is uniquely serviceable to this end because it is by facing death as a real possibility that we face that which is our “ownmost.” As Heidegger put it, “Death is *Dasein’s ownmost* possibility. Being towards this possibility discloses to *Dasein* its *ownmost* potentiality-for-Being, in which its very Being is the issue” (BT 307/SZ 263). That which is disclosed by “Being-towards-death,” then, is that *Dasein* is that being whose being itself is the potentiality-for-Being. Death is the unique means of this disclosure since death is both “*the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all*” (BT307/SZ262) and “pure potentiality.” That is, for Heidegger, death cannot be actualized, since with death the possibility of all existing ceases, and yet, “*Being-towards-death*” is the act of being in potency. That, said Heidegger, is the disclosure of authentic human being, and not just authentic human being, but human being as a whole (BT309/SZ264): *Dasein* is, fundamentally and authentically, “*potentiality-for-Being*” (*ibid.*), that is, openness to the possible. It is in this sense that

is mortal since he can give everything except immortality, everything except salvation as immortality” (43); and (2) death is understood as “the one thing in the world that no one else can *either give or take*: therein resides freedom and responsibility” (44). The examples which must be considered in any further dialogue with this important presentation include Enoch, Elijah and Jesus, both his Person and his words, such as “everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die” (John 11:26). And, of course, we must eventually face head on the traditional orthodox Christian understanding of Christ’s death as precisely “substitutionary.” Regarding “salvation as immortality,” we must also face 1 Corinthians 15, especially vv. 53f.

- 7 And, from Derrida’s *The Last Interview*: “So to answer your question, without further delay: no, I never learned-to-live. Absolutely not! Learning to live ought to mean learning to die- to acknowledge, to accept, an absolute mortality- without positive outcome, or resurrection, or redemption, for oneself or for anyone else. That has been the old philosophical injunction since Plato: to be a philosopher is to learn how to die. I believe in this truth without giving myself over to it. Less and less in fact. I have not learned to accept death.” And again, “We are all survivors on deferral.... But I remain impervious to learning when it comes to knowing-how-to-die, I have yet to learn anything about this particular subject.”

Heidegger affirmed that “Higher than actuality stands *possibility*” (BT63/SZ38; also 183/143f; 279/236; etc.). What is of special interest to me here is the relation of this “Being-towards-death” to the way of philosophy. Here too it is a question of Heidegger’s retrieval of the thought of previous philosophers. Two such figures will be considered, Aristotle and Descartes. The significance of “human being as a whole” becomes most pertinent in the discussion of Descartes’ method. We begin, however, with Aristotle.

As pointed out by others,⁸ Heidegger’s understanding of “Being-towards-death” as the primordial act of being toward potency is “simply” a paraphrase of Aristotle’s definition of motion. As Heidegger put it in his essay on Aristotle’s *phusis, kinesis* (motion) is the being-on-the-way of a “not yet” to a “no more”; it is the “becoming-present of a becoming-absent” (BCPh 266f). Finally, this is Heidegger’s understanding of Being (and Truth) itself as “the self-concealing revealing” (269). Thus it is not surprising that he spoke of Being and death in identical terms. Having just characterized Being as “*the transcendens pure and simple*,” Heidegger went on to say, “the transcendence of *Dasein*’s Being is distinctive in that it implies the possibility and the necessity of the most radical *individuation*” (BT62/SZ38); and with regard to death, he said, it “individualizes *Dasein* down to itself. This individualizing is a way in which the ‘there’ [the *Da-*] is disclosed for existence” (308/263). It was, then, quite correct for the translators of BT to capitalize Being in “Being-towards-death”: death is itself inherent to Being; Being itself is “structured” by death. In short, Heidegger retrieved Aristotle’s understanding of Being, what Aristotle took to be the primary task and defining characteristic of philosophy itself, as that “kind of being-moved” which is a “being-on-the-way” (BCPh 263), specifically, “Being-towards-death.”⁹

It is also remarkable that Heidegger’s exposition of authentic “Being-towards-death” contains a retrieval of Descartes’ philosophical method. Just as Descartes sought a method or way to certain knowledge, and grounded such knowledge in the certainty of the *cogito* as achieved through methodical doubt, so too Heideg-

⁸ For example, Thomas Sheehan and John D. Caputo; cf. RH 199, and references cited there.

⁹ Heidegger alluded to the significance of death in his essay on Aristotle’s *phusis*, “Indeed, dying can be the highest ‘act’ of life” (BCPh 267).

ger expounded a “way to be certain,” indeed, to achieve a “kind of certainty ... more primordial than any certainty which relates to entities encountered within-the-world, or to formal objects” (BT309/SZ264f). Thus, contrary to Descartes’ formal *cogito*, Heidegger insisted that we can only be certain of the “*Dasein* itself, which I myself *am*” by way of anticipation, i.e. “as a potentiality-for-Being” (310/265). His criticism of Descartes’ method, then, is not because it was not “rigorous,” but because it insisted on accepting as true only that which was present, when, in fact, the “I” which “I am” (*sum*) “can be authentically only by anticipation” (*ibid.*). In short, “Being-towards-death” was recommended as the more certain way/method, in fact, the only way to certainty, especially because human certainty can only be achieved if the whole of human existence is taken into account; otherwise, there is no assurance that the certainty in view might not be subverted by that which had not been taken into account (as in fact was shown by “the masters of suspicion,” Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche, *et al.*). It is only “Being-towards-death,” then, by facing up to “the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all,” that can grant that most primordial of certainties.

Thus, “Being-towards-death” was Heidegger’s retrieval of both Aristotle’s and Descartes’ understandings of philosophy, as it was also his answer to the philosophical methods of Kant and Husserl, as noted earlier. Yet there is something of a paradox in Heidegger’s answer: To “ground” certainty in an always futural death, and that understood as the possibility of impossibility, is to cut the ground out from under any ordinary understanding of “ground.” Heidegger was certainly aware of this difficulty, even in BT. To now consider this difficulty will prepare us both for a consideration of the later Heidegger on death and for my own retrieval of the significance of death for philosophy.

Heidegger understood quite clearly that the certainty achieved by way of “Being-towards-death” is “*indefinite* as regards its certainty” (310/265). This was especially the case because of two other traits inherent in Heidegger’s understanding of “Being-towards-death,” both of which are, for me, non-necessary assumptions revealing Heidegger’s own (religious) prejudices.

First of all, death as our ownmost possibility as humans was, for Heidegger, non-relational. That is, when our ownmost potentiality-for-Being is the issue, all Being-along-

side things and all Being-with Others will fail us (308/263). Certainly it is true that our ownmost Being is not to be found amongst or upon the “they-self” of everyday existence. And yet, if the dimension of our ownmost Being were *not* “the ‘nothing,’” but rather One with whom we do find ourselves “*face to face*” (310/265)—that is, if our most primordial correlation is with Another who is like us, who has a face with whom we might be “*face to face*—and if that Other has Himself experienced death (even our ownmost death!),¹⁰ then death as our ownmost possibility need not be, indeed, would not be, non-relational.¹¹ Certainly the language of the New Testament reveals just that state-of-affairs: “we have been crucified with Christ,” “we have died with Christ,” “we have been buried with Him through baptism into death,” etc. Christ being that “*Da*” of our ownmost potentiality-for-Being as noted earlier.¹²

¹⁰ Cf. Hebrews 2:9-18.

¹¹ Heidegger would most likely have responded in terms of his own “ultimate,” the *Ereignis* (OWL 127), and does so rather explicitly at OWL 104. He said, “Yet being face-to-face with one another has a more distant origin; it originates in that distance where earth and sky, the god and man reach one another.” He went on to cite Goethe and Mörike, both of whom used face-to-face “not only with respect to human beings but also with respect to things of the world” (104). Two points call for comment here: first, it is notable that Heidegger said here “the god,” by which he usually meant God; second, this is evidence for Heidegger’s preference for the impersonal (cf. RM 312). These points continue to be “challenged” (i.e. retrieved) in the following sections.

¹² This is not to say that the “face of Christ” is fully experiencable to us now (though at the point of death that may be a different matter). Indeed, Paul made it quite clear that now we see through a glass darkly (or in a mirror dimly), then (i.e. later, in the future) face to face (1 Corinthians 13:12). Similarly, Colossians 3:3f (both “faces” are now [partially] hidden) and 1 John 3:2. It is at this point that Levinas is both correct—the face of the infinite other is accessible and central—and in need of correction—that infinite-face is not that of (though it may be “on”) the finite (human) creature. It is here too that Derrida’s thought is so appealing. To mention only a few points pertinent in this context: (1) The “*Da*” has become “the essence of the heart, that is, there where the heart is what it must properly be, ... the place of true riches, a place of treasures” (GD 97; Derrida’s text of concern at that point is Matthew 6, and secrecy/the hidden, his topic; further, recall that “in Christ ... are hidden all the treasures” [Colossians 2:2f]); (2) the new economy Derrida seeks—an economy beyond exchange, calculation, reward, recompense, payback, etc.—climaxes in “the resurrection of the son” (Derrida says, the giving back to life of the beloved son [Isaac-Jesus], 96) and “what it means to give for Christ, of what giving means to Christ, and what it means to give for Christ, to him, in his name, for him, in a new fraternity with him and on his terms, as well as what it means to be just in so giving, for, in, and according to Christ” (99); (3) Derrida concludes GD with a provocative (though [thinly!] veiled) crediting of the central place to credence, “the irreducible experience of belief,” the

Secondly, Heidegger insisted that the certainty of our ownmost possibility is indefinite because death is “*not to be outstripped*” (308/264). Here too I can readily agree that our authentic existence cannot and ought not evade death through any of the illusions of the “they.” In that sense death is “not to be outstripped.” And yet, to conclude that death “signifies the possibility of the measureless impossibility of existence” of any sort and in every way (307/262) is to reveal one’s own (religious) conviction about “the afterlife”; in particular, Heidegger therewith denied the philosophical significance of the resurrection, especially as an always already historical event conditioning human life (*Dasein*) and affairs.

If, on the other hand, the pain and Death of the Crucified Christ, as the One in

“accreditation [granted] by being believed” (115). This third point will be of special interest in the following two chapters.

Nonetheless, even if (in GD) Derrida is being as sympathetic as possible to the (Christian) thinking of Patocka, he does not wholly endorse (or understand) various key points with regard to Christian belief (again mentioning only a few of the most pertinent points, some of which will be taken up in later chapters): (1) Christians do not “work towards” or “work for their salvation” (56), but as the King James version chosen by the translators put it, “work out.” (2) Similarly, “the real heavenly treasure” is not “paid to those who have been able to raise themselves above [the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees]” (99f). It is here that the “purity” of the gift as gift (=grace) is at its purest (which is precisely the goal sought by Derrida). I take this point up in chapter 8 with regard to justification by faith (alone). (3) Grace does not deny Christian justice (as with Nietzsche)—“a self-destruction of justice by means of grace,” (113)—but rather fulfills and establishes “the law,” while delivering the believer “from being under the law”; it is not “the law” which is destroyed, but the condemning charge of the law against sin(ners). To be fair, Derrida’s characterization of Nietzsche’s project as an integration of justice with grace (113f) offers further possibilities for retrieval; (4) the infinite Person who “fixes [us] in his gaze” is *not* entirely “beyond the reach of the gaze of that soul” (94), contrary to a point Derrida repeatedly underlines; cf. e.g. Matthew 5:8 (cited by Derrida, 99), John 3:3, 1 Corinthians 2: 9-16, Psalm 63:2, etc.; and, most importantly, returning to the body of the text above, “the impossibility of substitution” (of the death of one for another) is not quite so simple, touching on the central mystery of the redemptive atonement of the death of Jesus; cf. John 11:25f. Inasmuch as death has been and is central to (Western) philosophy, the development of a Christian philosophy is dependent on this very point, and indeed, even Derrida’s efforts likewise come back to this: “when we once defined dissemination as ‘that which doesn’t come back to the father’ we might as well have been describing the instant of Abraham’s renunciation,” (96). It must be said, though, that Derrida is here using Kierkegaard’s understanding of “Abraham’s renunciation,” a reading which is fatally flawed at the point of its most profound insight, at least for those who take the biblical record to heart (cf. Hebrews 11:17-19).

whom one's ownmost possibilities are to be found, *fulfills and re-replaces* Heidegger's Being (in the sense sketched in the introduction and elaborated since), then we also must take account of that Christ as the Resurrected One in whom death has indeed been "outstripped," swallowed up, overtaken, out-distanced, etc. If that were so, then we might indeed pitch our tent beyond death, in which case death itself would not be our ownmost, most primordial, possibility. However, it must be said that even if all that were true, it would *not* follow that Heidegger was wrong to say that the uttermost possibility of authentic existence lies in the possibility of giving itself up (308/264). It would simply mean that *the way* in which death is outstripped is by means of and through death; and indeed, the Bible claims that through the death of Christ the power of death was rendered powerless (Hebrews 2:14); or again, the death of death was accomplished through the death of Christ.

Certainly questions remain, for instance, how does that death of Christ become significant with regard to *my* death? I will return to that question in a later section. My point here, though, is that death need not be considered either non-relational or "not to be outstripped." That Heidegger did take as true these two traits indicates something of his own assumptions, especially with regard to the "character" of his Being. Most to the point of my concern in this chapter, however, is the implication that if these two traits are non-necessary, then so too is his understanding of *certainty*, and more specifically, the *way* to that more primordial certainty of his concern. In brief, speaking somewhat traditionally, "the way of the cross" offers itself as a retrieval of Heidegger's philosophy as "the way of 'death'."

Nonetheless, Heidegger's understanding of death in BT was not his final word on the subject. In fact, in his later work Heidegger even expressly contradicted his understanding of death in BT, thereby opening "death" to the retrieval just proposed, even if just a crack is introduced by Heidegger's texts. He said, for instance, "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" (EGT 101). Here too, the "essential relation between death and language" (OWL 107) is intimated, as already noted in chapter 3; and once again, the meaning of philosophy is at issue. It is to his later elaborations of the significance of death that I now turn my attention.

4.2.2 The Ab-grund

Just as in the previous sections we found that death has its most fundamental home in Being, both as “Being-towards-death” and as “pain/rift/dif-ference,” we also discover that in his later works Heidegger understood Being itself {a new notion of Being? Beyond Being? the self-surpassing of Being by Being itself (131)} as abyss. More precisely, Heidegger understood Being as *Ab-grund*, a-byss, where he thought “the *Ab-* as the complete absence of ground” (PTL 92). As is so often the case, however, Heidegger was not so much denying grounds per se as retrieving the traditional meaning of grounds. Thus it is more accurate to say that Heidegger offered a new understanding of “ground,” a non-metaphysical understanding in line with his step beyond the horizon of transcendental metaphysics (cf. OWL 151).

Specifically, then, Heidegger understood the abyss as that into which, letting ourselves fall, “we fall upward, to a height. Its loftiness opens a depth” (PLT 191f). Indeed, the depth of this abyss, together with the height into which we “fall upward,” span “a realm in which we would like to become *at home*” (192; emphasis added). We have, consequently, returned afresh to the consideration of our ownmost place of belonging, the *templum*, and therefore also to our concern with the meaning of philosophy. And, as before, here too, this “place,” now understood as essentially correlated with the a-byss, is “language.” This is not all, however, for Heidegger also concluded that Being/Saying as *Ab-grund* must be thought in terms of play. Before attending to a consideration of “play,” it is first of all worth noting how intimately this abyss—and its play—is related to “Being-towards-death.”

Already in BT Heidegger had underlined *freedom* toward death as the heart of our ownmost possibility, while two years later in WG/ER he had identified freedom as “the ground of grounds,” that is, as “the ‘abyss’ [*Ab-Grund*] of *Dasein*” (WG/ER 126f/127f). Death and the abyss were, therefore, correlated (via freedom) from early on. That correlation remained in the work of the 1950’s as well. For instance, in SG (1955/56) he said, echoing the language of BT, that the play which characterized Being as the a-byss engages mortals as those determined by our proximity to death, that most radical possibility of existence. Indeed, he said that death is the standard of that play in which humans are themselves at stake (186f). The *Ab-grund*, then, was

the later Heidegger's preferred way of developing his exposition of the significance of death.

What, then, is this new sense of "ground" which evades the horizon of metaphysics while at the same time retrieving Heidegger's earlier understanding of "Being-towards-death"? Our true "ground," it would seem, is the *lógos* in which we are "suspended" (ID 38), a ground which, in comparison with the metaphysical understanding of ground, is an abyss. Rather than being a solid and fixed undergirding, this "ground" is that within which we are always already suspended and sustained. The figure, then, is more like living in a houseboat, or better, a space-station, than an earthly dwelling firmly planted on *terra firma*.¹³ Much like Being is Nothing in comparison with the metaphysical understanding of Being, the *Ab-grund* is "groundless" in comparison with the metaphysical understanding of Ground. In fact, "Death [one of the names of the abyss] is the shrine of Nothing" (PLT 178).

Heidegger's task, then, as a philosopher (or better, a thinker) was to find and follow the way "into the abyss" (92, 117) in which "we would like to become *at home*" (192). That a-byss is indeed the realm within which, or at least from which, our essential nature as humans is determined in authentic relation to Being itself (116ff). The way "into the abyss," therefore, is but another designation for what Heidegger had earlier called "Being-towards-death." What he found on that way was both danger and playfulness, the exposition of which will conclude this preliminary account of the *Ab-grund*.¹⁴

4.2.2.1 The Ab-grund and the danger

First, the danger: Heidegger was quite clear that authentic human being might "be-fall" us only if we were willing to expose ourselves to the danger by venturing "into

13 Here is another sense in which authentic human dwelling is *unheimlich*, i.e. un-home-y in the usual sense of "home."

14 I recommend chapter 5 of John Sallis' *Echoes*, "Mortality and imagination: the proper name of man." He says, for instance, "*mortal* becomes, in this text [*Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, 1951 (121, n. 2)] and beyond, the name of man, displacing, if not entirely replacing, *Dasein*" (E 121); "Could the renomination of *Dasein* as mortal be made to broach a certain reversion from *Dasein* to imagination?" (E 122); "Abyss and excess—in a word: death" (E 118). The connection with the imagination is of special interest in relation to my SIG, while the significance of the "abyss" in relation to death is developed in the following sections (2.2.1, 2.2.2). And "echo," of course, resonates with my "resonance."

the abyss" (PLT 119). That is, we must go beyond understanding Being as the *ground* of beings to "where all ground breaks off" (119). It is only *there*, face-to-face with the danger of the abyss, that the "salvation" (Heidegger's word, 118) of authentic human being might be found. All other salvations, he said, are "still within the unholy" (118). That salvation which is on "the track to the holy, the hale and the whole" (117) is the one which willingly submits itself to the rule of "the pure forces' gravity" (119). The "there" of authentic *Da-sein* is, therefore, "'there,' where the gravity of the pure forces rule" (120). That is our true abode as mortals, for it is "there" that we are drawn upward by "the pure forces"; it is "there" that we are groundlessly suspended in language; and it is "there" that our true nature "flashes up before us" together with the "essential relation between death and language" (OWL 107).

Suspended within language, "near a grave" (136), awaiting the key to the abyss (PLT 191), that is where "a wholly other, wholly new language" is revealed (OWL 136), and with it our own new and essential correspondence to Being (41). Inasmuch as this authentic correspondence is from beyond Being as ground, "death and the realm of the dead belong to the whole of beings as its other side" (PLT 124). That is, death occupies the ambiguous transition point *between* "the whole of beings," i.e. the "horizon" and all within it, *and* the "other side" of that transcendental-metaphysical horizon. Heidegger even said that "that realm [of the dead] is 'the other draft,' that is, the other side of the whole draft of the Open" (124). It is this dual nature of death which must now engage us.

Not only is death "two-faced," but "the way of death" opens into two ways. In BT these ways were characterized as authentic and inauthentic; in later works death was elucidated as both "itself ... something negative" and as "*without* negation" (PLT 125). The former was integrally associated with the "self-assertion of technological objectification" (125), while the latter had to do with a "willing ... different in nature" (from the self-assertion just mentioned; 119), a being-willing also called *Gelassenheit*. Or again, the former had to do with metaphysics, representation, calculation, and science, while the latter was equivalent to "where the Law touches us" (126), which, remember, is itself equivalent to that point at which difference/pain/intimacy call us into "the Between." Finally, for Heidegger, these two ways have to do with Truth itself in its two-fold movement of concealment and unconcealment: the one way

satisfies itself with that which is unconcealed; the other lets itself be drawn by and into the draft of the concealing withdrawal of "Being."¹⁵

Death, fully faced, yielded to, and embraced is not only what touches mortals in their ownmost nature, but is also that which "sets them on their way to the other side of life" (126). It is this "*way* to the other side of life" which is Heidegger's understanding of "philosophy" as "the way of 'death'"; it is that adventurous, daring, even "heroic", yielding of mortals to the self-surpassing of Being by Being itself (131). Finally, what is dared is language itself especially in its essential relation to death: we must "go through" language (132), just as we must "go through" death. Both are ways, and both make a way for us mortals toward "the other side of life." But along that way there is a bifurcation so fundamental as finally to be "grounded" in "Being" itself. One way goes down into the abyss of death (OWL 167), goes under and loses itself (171), departing from "the traditional order of days and seasons" (172), only to die the kind of death which is life (173). In short, this going down and under gives way to "falling upward." The other way is, for Heidegger, simply "the state of being dead," complete with decay, dissolution, destruction, "unholy fragmentation," and the cessation of all human possibilities (179). Both ways involve being set apart: the second is the apartness of opposition to and separation from that with which humans are most fundamentally related (WCT 84); the first is the apartness of a new beginning, the "saving of man's essential nature" (89), the unfolding of "what is yet to be borne" (OWL 175). One way is "evil" (179), the way of "the Accursed" (173),¹⁶ the other is "in another direction" (173).

Thus far we have considered "the danger" inherent in "the a-byss." Fundamentally, this danger is that of alienation or separation from our ownmost humanity. Now I turn to consider that playfulness which Heidegger also associated with "his way."

4.2.2.2 The Ab-grund and playfulness

In SG Heidegger formulated Being as Being in a non-metaphysical manner. "Being

¹⁵ To take only a lesser known reference, cf. BCPH 264ff: There the two ways are identified with *phusis*, while in PLT, *phusis* is not only identified with these two ways (42ff), but the human will is characterized in two ways in relation to *phusis* (cf. 120). Cf. also SG 173ff re "ratio" as a "forked-word." Heidegger's new tonality for the principle of reason/ground opens an even more profound "fork."

¹⁶ Cf. Heidegger's "on the other hand" here, OWL 173.

qua Being," he said, "is ground-less." In short, "Being: a-byss" (185). The "principle" (*Satz*) of reason thereby became for Heidegger that leap or jump (*Satz*) which he elsewhere called "the step back" of thinking and the upward fall into the a-byss. This leap is a backward glancing leap (119) which not only does not allow us to fall into the fathomless void, but first allows thinking as such to respond to the truth of Being (185).

To explicate that thinking-response to Being as Being Heidegger closed SG by introducing "play." The thinking-response is, for instance, to play along with and join in the play of Being itself (188). As he had put it a few years earlier, mortals are to take/play their part in the four-fold mirror-play of the "round dance of appropriating" (PLT 180).¹⁷ Thus what was said in 1962 as "appropriation appropriates" (TB 24) was in SG, It plays, because it plays (185). In both cases there is no "because," no "why," no deeper ground in terms of which a reason or explanation could be given. For Heidegger, *Ereignis* was an Ultimate: "There is nothing else from which the Appropriation [*Ereignis*] itself could be derived, even less in whose terms it could be explained" (OWL 127). It is that which "gives us such things as a 'there is' ... " (127); indeed, even "the essence of language ... rests in Appropriation" (130), with "the nature of language" being understood as "the mode of Appropriation" (135) and "the arch-tidings of Appropriation" (135).

Or so it seems. The difficulty with completely accepting such pronouncements, to which might be added those of TB, can be focused from within the last pages of SG itself. First of all, Heidegger's playful-Being, i.e. *Ereignis*, replaces Leibniz's God. He suggested, for instance, that perhaps we should translate the Leibnizian sentence "*Cum Deus calculat fit mundus*" more appropriately as "When God plays, a world comes to be" (186).¹⁸ Earlier he had highlighted Hölderlin's use of "the

¹⁷ Throughout these pages, Heidegger developed the idea of the four-fold mirror-play as the new "ground," the a-byss (cf. PLT 179ff). He also made quite explicit that this "appropriating mirror-play ... we call the world" (179).

¹⁸ Similarly note Heidegger's epigram to his Nietzsche lectures, "The eternal recurrence of the Same": "Nietzsche's thought must first be brought before us if our confrontation with it is to bear fruit: our lecture course will take as its guiding thought the following words of that thinker: 'Everything in the hero's sphere turns to tragedy; everything in the demigod's sphere turns to satyr-play; and everything

calculus" as synonymous with "the law" (172), of which, remember, Heidegger had said, "appropriation [*Ereignis*] is *the* law" (OWL 128).

Secondly, while explicating this play, especially its who or what and its why, Heidegger turned to Heraclitus' Fragment 52. Heraclitus had said it is the royal child who plays; and for Heidegger, the *Geschick* [fate, aptness] of Being "was" a child that plays (188). Earlier Heidegger used this same fragment to comment on that danger which must be risked if the salvation which is not "unholy" is to grow (PLT 102). And yet, ten years later he shifted his translation of Heraclitus' *paidos he basileie* from "the kingship is a child's" (102) to "the greatest royal child" (SG 188).

Adding to these two references two others from the same lecture, makes a Christian (re)interpretation almost irrepressible. First, Heidegger insisted that death is the standard, the measure, of this most elevated play (187), while one page later he identified "the royal child" with the mystery of the play itself (188). Would this death, then, not be most especially the death of the royal child? Second, the *Satz* itself, understood in the first place as "principle," the First, is identified with the Greek *lógos* as the *to proton hothen*, "the first from which," that because of which all things exist and are sustained (182). Heidegger might have been paraphrasing the hymn about the royal Christ "child" as recorded in Colossians 1, verses 15ff. *Satz* in Heidegger's new tonality, i.e. as leap, might then echo the "transference" mentioned in the preceding sentence (v. 13), the "leap" accomplished first by Christ's own death and resurrection, and second, made real in our lives by the action of that Christ's Father. That is, after all, the "holy salvation" as understood by Christians for almost two millennia.¹⁹

4.3 Toward a Christian retrieval

Whether the Christian interpretation just proposed is the best take on Heidegger's "unsaid," or even if it is at all related, is the burden which this book is considering from diverse perspectives and in relation to a variety of Heidegger's own central concerns.

in god's sphere turns to ... to what? "world" perhaps? ' (*Beyond Good and Evil*, number 150; from the year 1886)" (N2 3). And for Heidegger, this would be "world-play."

¹⁹ "...for almost two millennia [at the time of Heidegger's work]." Heidegger spoke of this transference elsewhere, e.g. N3 215.

Certainly it is worth noting Heidegger's own protests against such a rereading of his thought. He asserted, for instance, that his path of thinking "refuses to be a path of salvation" (PLT 185); or more moderately, the openness to Being which Heidegger everywhere recommended is "a necessary though not sufficient condition for saving him [the human]" (WCT89). Nonetheless, authorial intention need not rule our efforts any more than it did Heidegger's own. In both cases, though the focus is textual, attention is being given to the "unsaid," even possibly "unthought." We are "listening"/looking through and in the words themselves, attentive to that which manifests. Heidegger is not alone in being vulnerable to the charge that his ventures of thinking may appear to some as "lawless caprice" (PLT 186).

Such concerns notwithstanding, it is possible to continue the dialogue of thought which we have already begun. I proceed to a further consideration of "the way of 'death,'" pondered now from the perspective of what I called above the "holy salvation" as understood for centuries by Christians. The contrast is, of course, with what Heidegger termed unholy salvations (118). To pick up the dialogue at this point I turn to the priority of law in the history of redemption, especially with regard to the covenantal structure of that history. I attend only to the "theological" aspects pertinent to my dialogue with Heidegger, first of all filling in the relevant background necessary for the more in-depth discussions pursued in the following section.

The claim is made, rightly I think, that law "constitutes the *ground* structure of redemptive covenant administration" (BOC 30; emphasis added).²⁰ Even the dispensation of the New Covenant instituted by Christ Jesus, the dispensation of grace by faith, is grounded in the principle of law, i.e. life and blessing for obedience, curse and death for disobedience. In the latter case, it is the obedience of the One "representative" head of the covenant which *grounds* the promise of grace, just as the disobedience of the first "representative" head grounded the reality of curse and death for all (Galatians 3:18; Romans 5:18-21).

As just emphasized I wish to take quite seriously, i.e. as philosophically relevant, this understanding of law as the "*ground*." Why? First of all, it brings us close to

²⁰ I here acknowledge, with much gratitude, the work of Meredith G. Kline, which I will be following (in part) throughout these discussions.

Heidegger's own understanding of *Ereignis* as law; but secondly, it also takes us beyond Heidegger, not just to the law of *God* as the ground, but to the obedience of the One "representative" head of the covenant as the "ground." Further though, "covenant law" as the ground presents us immediately with two ways, and even more particularly, two ways of death. The signs of the covenant even present us with the figure of the abyss. Though more interweavings will follow, I first take up the two ways of death, then the abyss.

Within the context of the law covenant, that "holy salvation" which Christians call redemption is but one of two inherent ways. Even the total activity of Christ must be seen as "a two-sided judgment in which the blessing of the covenant comes always through the covenant curse" (BOC 35). In all of God's covenants with humans, even the first covenant with Adam and Eve, there are two ways, the way of blessing and the way of curse (cf. e.g. Genesis 2:16f; Deuteronomy 28; Joshua 23:15f; John 15). However, so central is the way of the curse (due to the need for redemption from sin and its curse), that the ratification of the covenant, even the covenant itself, was characterized in terms of the curse. Not only in biblical covenants, but also in the international treaties of that era, the oath sworn as ratification was especially the curse-oath. And, in particular, and most to the point here, that oath-curse typically involved the cutting off of an animal from the herd, and further, the sacrificial cutting into pieces of that animal, as a sign of what would happen to those who broke the covenant.²¹ So typical was this procedure that to make or sign a covenant was termed "cutting a covenant" or even "cutting a curse" (39ff). To ratify a covenant was, therefore, to invoke the self-maledictory oath of death.

Thus the "cutting" of death was inherent to the covenant structure and its ratification rituals; in short, the covenant way was, and still is, the "way of 'death'." In fact, both ways of the covenant are ways of death. Here we must return to an earlier statement about the redemptive work of Christ: it was (and is) a "two-sided judgment." The key is that "The satisfaction of the divine law underlies every administration of

²¹ For example, Jeremiah 32:18ff: "And those who transgressed my covenant and did not keep the terms of the covenant that they made before me, I will make like the calf when they cut it in two and passed between its parts: ... all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf shall be handed over to their enemies and to those who seek their lives."

divine promise" and redemptive grace (33); as Paul put it, "the wages [by law] of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Because that satisfaction requires death as the fulfillment of the self-maledictory oath for all covenant breakers, and because the Bible reveals that "in Adam" all have sinned, Heidegger was quite right to highlight the "way of 'death'" as crucial and inescapable for human being. Nonetheless, death is not the deepest concern of the divine covenants. Rather, God's covenants with humans have always been primarily concerned to consecrate a people to God Himself, and thus to life. The "knife rituals" associated with the "*cutting* of the covenant," including Old Covenant circumcision, had to do most profoundly with the setting apart of consecration. Even the joyful consecration to the Lord of the fruit from fruit trees in their fourth year was called circumcision (Leviticus 19:23ff). Thus the "cutting off" ceremonies of Genesis 15, 17, and 22 (the sacrifice of Isaac) all symbolized the necessity of passing through the judgment curse of death in order to enter into the promised covenant blessings of life.

For the Christian, of course, it is finally the circumcision of Christ in His crucifixion which fulfilled the reality of these symbols (Colossians 2:11). Thus the "way of life" is through the One who in His *death* satisfied the self-maledictory oath-curse under which all sons and daughters of Adam and Eve reside. It is, however, not just the historical death of the Crucified which is of relevance here, but also His death for and within those who are His (2:11; 2 Corinthians 4:10-14), that too in fulfillment of the law (Romans 8:4). To round out the picture, finally even the (other) way of death, the one that does not lead to life, is considered a consecration. In that case it is a consecration to utter destruction (cf. e.g. Joshua 6:16-24). As Kline put it, "Either way man's consecration is the manifestation of God's lordship and so the fulfillment of the covenant" (BOC 38). I will return to these two ways of consecration, not only in relation to Heidegger's two ways of death, but also in relation to his concern for "apartness."

It is not, however, only Heidegger's "Being-towards-death" which is here being retrieved, but also his *Ab-grund*. First of all, in both biblical and extra-biblical covenants the fulfillment of the oath-curse ratified sanctions meant that those receiving the sign of the covenant committed themselves to the ordeal of judgment in cases of suspected or real violation. In the case of the biblical covenants this meant that the

circumcised (in the Old Covenant) or baptized (in the New Covenant) was consigned by the oath-curse to “the ordeal of his Lord’s judgment for the final verdict on his life” (48). In short, covenant membership meant “trial by ordeal” (48).

Even in the Old Covenant, as well as in neighboring cultures (Kline cited Sumerian Ur-Nammu, Hammurapi’s Code, and Ugaritic mythology, 55), the water ordeal was one of the two common elements employed (the other was fire). In that light our understanding of the (redemptive) deliverances through the Sea of Reeds and the Jordan is enriched as specific acts of covenantal trial by ordeal. Kline also recommended interpreting the baptism of John the Forerunner along similar lines: John came to announce the coming messianic judgment, with his baptism being the sign and seal of one’s own verdict as “forgiven,” much as those passing through the Re(e)d Sea with Moses (1 Corinthians 10:2) and through the deluge with Noah (1 Peter 3:21) were also considered “baptized” (50ff), and thus included in the redemptive deliverance.

It is with the “symbolism” of baptism as the covenantal sign and seal of trial by ordeal that the associated rich biblical imagery communicates most profoundly with Heidegger’s understanding of the abyss, which, remember, is itself tightly interwoven with his “Being-towards-death.” Drawing on the redemptive experiences of Noah, Moses, and Joshua, as well as creation imagery, the Psalmists and the Prophets make especially extensive use of the associations among trials, ordeal, death, and the Abyss. The common biblical term for the “Abyss” is “the pit,” and it is regularly identified with the grave (e.g. Psalm 18:16-19; 30; 32; 69; 74; Jonah). Even Heidegger’s understanding of language as that abyss over which we hover and within which we are suspended is cross-referenced to this biblical imagery through Heidegger’s own citation of Hamann’s allusion to “an apocalyptic angel with a key to this abyss” (PLT 191; cf. Revelation 20:1, 9:1). The Greek used at that point in the New Covenant means “very deep,” even “bottomless” –Heidegger would say “groundless” –and it is the word used in the Septuagint for the primeval deep of Genesis 1:2 and 7:11, as well as in the creation account in Proverbs 8:28.²² The significance of these allusions

²² It was over this deep that the Spirit hovered in Genesis 1:2. We will return to the significance of “the Spirit” for Heidegger in chapter 7, and of such a “hovering” for our understanding of philosophy in chapter 8.

to creation itself will emerge shortly when we return to Heidegger's "law" in relation to biblical law.

We have mentioned the various "baptisms" of the Old Covenant, as well as the baptism of John the Forerunner. What, though, about the uniquely New Covenant baptism? That uniqueness is, of course, focused by the "baptisms" of Jesus himself. First of all, Jesus submitted to the baptism of John the Forerunner. By doing so, Jesus identified with those who had committed themselves by faith to the Lord, so that "they might be assured of emerging from the overwhelming curse with a blessing" (BOC 61). As Kline pointed out, the baptism of Jesus was God's own promise, through identification with His people (as with the covenant "cut" in Genesis 15), that

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.
When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned;
the flames will not set you ablaze (Isaiah 43:2).

It was *not* a promise to relieve His people of these ordeal-trials, but rather to be with them through the fulfillment of the law-curse in their lives, thereby assuring them safe passage. In effect, the curse of trial by water and fire was itself to be "cursed," that is, "cut off" just as those in the ark were "cut off" from the waters which executed God's covenant curse on the earth.²³

Jesus' baptism by John in the Jordan River was, however, just the beginning. The end, of course, was accomplished by the Crucified One at the ordeal of the cross, which the Apostle Paul interpreted as the circumcision of Christ (Colossians 2:11). It is precisely here that Christian baptism gains its fullest significance. Christian baptism is being united together with Christ in the circumcision of His death: Having been buried with Him in baptism, in Him you were also circumcised with a spiritual circumcision (Colossians 2:11-12).²⁴

²³ It is important to realize that this "way of the cross" which Christians are called to "walk" can well include the profoundest sense-experience of "the sharing of his [Christ's] sufferings," even "becoming like him in his death" (Philippians 3:10). Nonetheless it must be distinguished from "the other way" of bearing the judgment-curse-ordeal, the way of the "second death." In the former the Christian is no longer "under law," but "under grace" because of being "in Christ" who has gone before us on/as this way.

²⁴ "Spiritual circumcision," which is the translation of the NRSV, is literally, "a circumcision made without hands." The importance of "Spirit" is the topic of chapter 7.

That is, Christian baptism is the New Covenant sign of consecration into the One whose Name is received (=the Triune God; cf. Matthew 18:19). In particular, though, baptism is the oath-*curse* sanction by which those baptized accept the malediction side of the judgment. However, in that Jesus was/is the Second and Last Adam, He exercises a unique representative capacity. Thus in addition to the self-maledictory oath-*curse* assumed by those baptized in Jesus' Name, there is also the unique possibility of vindication for those who obey the Lord under whose authority they have been placed by baptism. The promise of such vindication is to those who are also raised up with Christ *through faith* in the power of God who raised Him from the dead (Colossians 2:12). This is not so much a new promise, or a new means of receiving that promise, as the fulfillment of the promises also extended through (and to) Noah, Moses, Joshua, Jonah, John the Forerunner, etc. Nonetheless, Christian baptism is a consecration to the Lord, which, like the older covenants, will be accomplished, either unto glory, honor and that eternal life which is triumphant over death or unto tribulation, distress and the eternal second death of the Abyss (Romans 2; Revelation 20, 21). In the following chapters I attend to this "unique representative capacity" of the Last Adam (especially chapter 5) and to the significance of the phrase emphasized above, "*through faith*" (especially chapter 6). We must, however, now attend more closely to some of the themes raised above, specifically the law, the abyss, consecration, and the word.

4.4 Further discussion

4.4.1 The law

4.4.1.1 The law: Greek and Jew

The objection naturally arises that what Heidegger meant by "law" certainly was *not* the Law of God as understood by both Jews and Christians. This is true; but that is not the end of the story, just the beginning. As is well known Heidegger's concerns were focused on "the Greeks." As such, my contention is that the starting point of

Kline also discussed the baptism of/by Jesus' disciples as an overlapping continuation of the baptism of John. This early "Christian" baptism ceased, evidently at the time of John's death, as if to say "the time of warning is over; the time of judgment has come."

Heidegger's own "Greek" meditations was that which paralleled for the non-Jews the role the Law played for the Jews. In particular, I have in mind what the Apostle Paul called "the elemental spirits" (NRSV) or "the basic principles of the world" (Galatians 4:3, 9; Colossians 2:8, 20; NIV). First of all, for the Apostle these "principles" are the basis of those human philosophies which he contrasted with the knowledge of Christ (Colossians 2:8). This is the same contrast we considered in chapter 2. Further though, just as the Law both imprisoned and led to Christ (Galatians 3:23f), so too these "basic principles of the world" enslaved (4:4). These "basic principles of the world" may also lead to Christ, though the text is not explicit on that point. Indeed, the Apostle's treatment of these "basic principles of the world" is not only parallel to his understanding of the law, but the two strands are inextricably intertwined as well (cf. Galatians 4:1-7; Colossians 2). I am attempting, therefore, to think the philosophical implications of another of Paul's statements, also from this biblical context: "There is neither Jew nor Greek ... for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). To continue this Jew-Greek (or better, that which is both as well as neither Jew nor Greek) engagement I return briefly to Heidegger's understanding of the law. My purpose now, though, is to consider Heidegger's *ho nomos* in relation first to the Jewish law and second to the elemental spirits or basic principles of the world just noted.

Ho nomos, the law, was, for Heidegger, that "directing need" which arises, or appears "into radiance" within that realm of the "un-finite intimacy of the strife between men and gods" and is that which prevails through this strife because it is "That which is yet above the gods and men" (OWL 139f). With this talk of "strife" we have returned to what earlier we considered as the difference, i.e. the "mighty pain," "the rift" (PLT 204), and we anticipate a key point to be picked up later (chapter 8) with regard to our understanding of philosophy: "strife" is "polemos", which reorganizes the meaning of *philein*, the love of *philosophy*. There is no doubt that for Heidegger there is a primal radiance involved in this appearing of *ho nomos* within the strife between the gods and men. In fact, it is precisely in this splendor that "the god" is present (PLT 44). Further, this splendor is that "lighted realm" of unconcealment (52) within which and because of which propositions can be true in the first place, i.e. as conformed to what stands within unconcealment (51f). It is what Heidegger called the Open, "the Between," etc., and the Greek temple was, for Heidegger, its

privileged illustration (37, 41ff). It is the place of our ownmost “home” (68; cf. chapter 3); and yet it is “an abyss” (50).²⁵

It—*ho nomos*—is an abyss primarily because of “That which is yet above the gods and men.” In short, together with the radiant unconcealment (and the truth of correspondence which it makes possible), there is concealment, the simultaneous withdrawal of that which grants the radiance. The “directing need of the law,” therefore, dwells most primordially beyond the radiance of any propositional form of the law. There is an abyss, then—and “the law,” remember, exists as abyss—because there is an essential veil which hides the rift-design lying within nature (63, 70, 83).

To my mind this Heideggerean understanding of *ho nomos* is not unlike the Apostle Paul’s understanding of the Old Covenant law on two particular counts: 1. its radiance is fading, and 2. its more primordial truth remains veiled (2 Corinthians 3:7-18). That, anyway, would be my proposed retrieval of Heidegger’s “law.” In fact, I am even willing to entertain the possibility, following the parallel between the Law and “the basic principles of the world” suggested above, that just as the (Jewish) Law’s “directing need” was to lead us to the Crucified Christ, so too hidden in nature’s design is the “rift-design” of an “essential sacrifice” (PLT 62; WM 358).²⁶ If there were to be a full retrieval of “the Greek” such that in Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew, such might even be expected. And indeed, we are not left without Scriptural indications to encourage further consideration of this proposal. How else could the “natural” life/death/life process of a grain of wheat provide a fitting illustration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Himself (John 12:24)? That the same seed imagery is used for the word of God generally, especially as explicative of all the parables, is therefore likely no accident (Mark 4:1-20). Consequently, my own suggestion would be that Paul’s use of Psalm 19:4—a creation Psalm linked to the Law!—in Romans 10:18 for the universal proclamation of “the word of Christ” (10:17) may well have been meant more “literally” than is usually acknowledged. Hearing and heeding that “call of Being” would then be the “unsaid” Greek way of losing one’s own life like the kernel of wheat (John 12:23-26): both would be “the (same) way of ‘death,’” though

²⁵ Here too we have the *unheimlich* (uncanny; “un-home-y”) character of the “home.”

²⁶ Perhaps nature’s “red of tooth and claw,” otherwise puzzling, reflects this fact.

for the Greeks no doubt this way remained veiled, unfulfilled, in itself deficient, just as Christ remained veiled in the Old Covenant.

4.4.1.2 The law as “personal”

To continue this exploration I return to an early exposition of the law which Heidegger accomplished while critiquing Kant, especially his *personalitas moralis* (BPP 131-137). The key is that Kant’s human personality, properly speaking, is taken by Heidegger first as “the true mode in which man’s existence becomes manifest” (137), and second, as manifest primarily as and in respect for the law. Thus we see that “the law,” i.e. Kant’s moral law, was understood by Heidegger as the fundamental correlate of human being, synonymous with his “world” (i.e. “being-in-the-world”), *Ereignis*, “the Between,” etc. In that we have already seen that *Ereignis* is the law, this is not surprising. We could even trace the preliminary forms of the *Ereignis* in Heidegger’s treatment of Kant’s feeling of respect as that submission to the law which is simultaneously a “self-submitting self-elevation” of myself to myself (136): Just as “the god” is manifest in the dignity and splendor of the temple (PLT 44); just as men and gods appear in their mutual belonging in the “intimacy of the strife” of the difference (OWL 139; etc.); just as language is the “temple of Being” within which *Ereignis* as the four-fold “happens” (ID 37f; etc.); just so human being appears in its “ownmost dignity” as a person in this “curiously counterstriving double tendency in the intentional structure of respect” for the (moral) law (BPP 136). In keeping with his analysis in KPM, BT, and even his later emphasis on *Gelassenheit*, Heidegger stressed the primacy of that self-submitting which is “in a certain way a standing in fear of, a yielding to it [the law] as to a demand” (136).

My point in returning to this treatment of Kant in BPP was not to introduce the specifically *moral* law, nor the moral law as propositionally formulated (as the categorical imperative), nor even the law as “a demand” to which we must submit. My principal concern is to note that this understanding of the essence of human personality—as autonomous self-responsibility through self-subjection to the law as to myself as the free self—“personalizes” the law itself. That is, the achievement of this “ownmost dignity” through self-subjection to the law-self is that self-acting which honors the law as the heart of my own personhood as such. The modernist

context of Kant's own work especially highlights this personal or pre-personal or proto-personal character of the law itself. Even Heidegger's later efforts to leave the modernist context were not able to escape this "personal" aspect of the law. We have already seen that in previous chapters, especially with regard to the "emergence" of Christ from within Heidegger's texts.²⁷

4.4.1.3 The law as command

Already in the previous chapter we noted Heidegger's objections to understanding the law as "norm" and "ordinance." Along the same lines he also "objected" to understanding the law as command, at least insofar as "command" meant "to give commands and orders" (WCT 118). Nonetheless, Heidegger continued to insist upon a proper sense for "to command," specifically, "to commend, entrust, give into safe-keeping, keep safely" (118). Further, Heidegger maintained that the "command of the difference" which rules "the Between" is "not anything human" (PLT 207). This point is crucial for on it depends Heidegger's own bidding that his philosophy is neither metaphysics (ID) nor humanism (LH). It is also here that Heidegger is less than convincing.

Consistently throughout his career Heidegger recognized the primacy of "a yielding ... as to a demand" as encumbent upon humans (BPP 136). Whether interpreting Kant or recommending *Gelassenheit* there had always been in Heidegger's understanding That with which we must reckon, That by which we are called-commanded and to which we ought to respond authentically. Indeed, we can even say, using the words of Heidegger's own objection, that this Something "hangs over our heads somewhere" with the same inevitability and threat as does death.²⁸ Actually, for Heidegger this "call" or command with which we have to do means "way" (WCT 117), which as we have seen, is more specifically "the way of 'death'." It was, in fact, because this danger is real, assaulting and threatening the destruction of man's ownmost essential being

²⁷ "For Christ is the end (*telos*) of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes" (Romans 10:4).

²⁸ This is not to say that this "Something" is out there in a way which is not also inherent to human being as such. I am only wanting to emphasize that this "Something" is not us, it is "other" (and thus is in some sense "out there"), and that we are beholden to "it," our own authenticity being dependent upon a "proper" response.

(e.g. PLT 117), and precisely at the point of the most abysmal danger and destitution, that Heidegger invoked Hölderlin's hope of (a holy) salvation: "But where there is danger, there grows also what saves" (118). Indeed, the play of "the child-king" to which we are called is a "high and dangerous game and gamble in which ... we are the stakes" (WCT 119).

Consequently, though Heidegger certainly attempted to mitigate, or even deny, the sense of the law as a giving of orders, he was unable to suppress the two ways presented by the law, and the ensuing need of a choice. One of the ways clearly resounds with Heidegger's mitigations: The call is an invitation to "safe-keeping," "commendation," "helpfulness and complaisance," and to one's "essential destiny" and "abode" (117-125). The other way is quite other, as already noted in §2.2.1 above. Thus, rather than somehow avoiding the law as a giving of orders, Heidegger sought to rehabilitate that "realm from which any rank and recognition [*ordo*] could possibly arise" (PLT 117). His objection to the law as a giving of orders, therefore, was not to "the giving of orders" per se nor to yielding to something "over us" (as "not anything human"), and not even to "orders" as events of language mediated by propositional formulations, but only to that kind of ordering which destroys the dignity and splendor of each unique "thing" (44, 182).²⁹

Though this reading of Heidegger does not conflict with my understanding of "God's law," there are aspects of "God's law" which are not included in Heidegger's account. The next section attends to two of these aspects while advancing toward our consideration of consecration, or "apartness."

4.4.1.4 The law and justification

Having expanded on Heidegger's understanding of the law, especially in relation to a biblical understanding, we are now ready to return to the topic of justification as introduced at the end of the last chapter. There we noted that Heidegger understood modern metaphysics as the attempt to establish "the certainty of salvation"

²⁹ I take this concern and care for the dignity and splendor of each unique "thing" as an indication of that within Heidegger which is not in conflict with, for instance, Caputo's (1993a, b) understanding of justice. I too am concerned to fully "liberate" (i.e. retrieve) that sense of "law," what I refer to shortly as "the law of a new lawfulness" and in chapter 8 as "the law of [which grants] liberty."

in a manner other than that achieved by the Middle Ages in relation to God (QCT 90). Here “salvation” means “continuance” (90), i.e. eternal life, and the certainty sought replaced what Christians call “the assurance of faith.” Heidegger highlighted Kant’s critical enterprise as the justification (what Kant meant by “deduction”) accomplished by the “self-justifiedness of its ‘I think’” (90), and especially Nietzsche’s will to power as justice, in the sense of the will to eternalize the momentary, to preserve and establish the right as eternal (= the Eternal Return of the Same; 91ff). Heidegger was quite explicit that for Nietzsche the will to power was a new freedom understood as “an escape from the Christian Church’s assurance of redemption based on belief in revelation” (N3 239), and again, “the liberation *from* the Christian, otherworldly certitude of salvation” (240). Though begun so clearly by Kant (cf. §4.1.2), Heidegger claimed that it was only with Nietzsche that the “full essence” of the modern project was consummated as “the law of a new lawfulness” (240). That is, justification, justice, and the law all attain a novel sense in Nietzsche’s work.

My purpose here is not to engage Nietzsche’s work directly; rather, I am still concerned with Heidegger’s understanding of the law, especially in dialogue with the biblical text. Heidegger’s own dialogue with Nietzsche is introduced to advance that goal, particularly with regard to the correlated idea of “justification.”

As already noted in chapter 2, Heidegger understood Nietzsche as the last metaphysician who, though he thought of metaphysics as nihilism, did not think the essence of nihilism in terms of “the Nothing.” We also looked at Nietzsche’s preference for “the Dionysian” as contrasted with “the Crucified.” In effect, Nietzsche “newly determined” or revalued the fundamental place or dimension within which human being “happens,” and did so in terms of what he called “a divine way of thinking,” the divinity in question being Dionysus (208; QCT 95). It was from this “place” that all Nietzsche’s thinking was determined (N3 247).

In keeping with the understanding that it is the word which first opens such a “place,”³⁰ Heidegger identified Nietzsche’s essential word: “God is dead” (QCT 53ff), and not just “dead,” but killed, murdered “[by] you and I [me]” (106). “God” in this

³⁰ We will modify this understanding a bit in chapter 7 where the relation between “word” and “spirit” must be further elucidated.

case is the suprasensory world of ideals, which determines human life “from above” and “from without” (64), highlighting again Heidegger’s “objectionable” sense of the law. Throughout his readings of Nietzsche Heidegger was quite insistent that though Nietzsche’s nihilism might, and in fact did, speak against Christendom, this did not necessarily touch the Christianity of the New Covenant (e.g. 63f). Thus Heidegger included “the Christian god” (61; NB “god,” not God)³¹ within the suprasensory world of ideals which, according to Nietzsche, had “died.” Nonetheless, Heidegger also insisted that there is an “essential realm belonging to God,” a realm which the essence of human being never reaches (100), and therefore cannot be touched, let alone killed, by humans. Further though, and most significantly here, Heidegger finally took Nietzsche’s thinking as not just “the secularization of Christianity” (N3 240), but as a cry from *the depths* of “a thinking man” who sought God (QCT 112). It was, after all, the same madman who announced, “God is dead,” who also cried incessantly, “I seek God! I seek God!”³² Not only does the madman seek God, but Heidegger interpreted his de-rangement as a dis-lodging from the unreal realm of metaphysical/philosophical thinking hitherto. If this is true, what becomes of Nietzsche’s “place” from which all his thinking is determined?

For one, this “place” is the place of homelessness, at least as far as previous metaphysical “homes” are concerned. In brief, for Nietzsche metaphysical *Heimsuchung* was unsatisfied. Secondly, it is a “place” between the place of metaphysical man and that “essential realm belonging to God”; it is, said Heidegger, the place of man’s essential subjectivity (100). Once again, it is the *Da* of human *Dasein*; the “home” of human being as such. Thirdly, it is the “place” of “a new lawfulness” (N3 240; also QCT 98), a lawfulness in keeping with “a divine way of thinking,” for it is “not a human artifact” (N3 249). It is not difficult to see Heidegger’s “destructive retrieval” at work in this reading of Nietzsche; nor is it difficult, especially after the preceding sections, to hear the echoes of Heidegger’s own understanding of *Heimsuchung*, the *Da*, and the law. We might even wonder if Heidegger has not already rehabilitated—at least in part, though not without ambiguity and inconsistency to be noted shortly—the

³¹ The small “g” follows Lovitt’s translation, as well as Heidegger’s exposition, 60-64.

³² *The Gay Science*, §125, quoted at QCT 59.

significance for philosophy of the Christian (Crucified) God (capital "G"). Certainly the new *way* about which this chapter is inquiring was explicitly called "a divine *way* of thinking," with Heidegger's (somewhat veiled) objection to Nietzsche's Dionysian preference already noted in chapter 2.

It is by the "new lawfulness" of this "divine *way*," together with Heidegger's allusion to the *de profundis* of Psalm 130:1, that these quandaries are addressed most pointedly. It is here too that the topic of justification returns most directly. First of all, what is this lawfulness of Nietzsche's "divine way of thinking" which determines human subjectivity as nothing human (249; cf. PLT 207)? In short, it is "justice."

But what is "justice"? "Justice" was, for Nietzsche, the way of freedom which justifies itself as having the right to be one's own law, judge, and avenger of that law. Thus Nietzsche's "modernism." But "justice" is also that freedom which freely goes out beyond itself "into the void and into ... isolation" (N3 142, 241; QCT 91). It was this "going out beyond oneself" (into the Nothing) which Heidegger identified both with the de-rangement of the madman and with that which the madman (and Heidegger's Nietzsche; ... and Heidegger?) sought, i.e. God, even perhaps the Christian God.

Nonetheless, a troubling question arises: Is the Christian God thereby characterized as the One who is to be sought, but who can never be found, not even in principle? That He is to be sought follows from Heidegger's interpretation of the madman's cry (111f); that He cannot be found follows from Heidegger's conception of "the essential realm belonging to God" (100). Heidegger not only believed that "the essence of man never reaches the essential realm belonging to God," but that both man and the Overman enter places which are *not* "the place of God" (100). Though I certainly agree that man cannot *be* God and that man may well have an appointed place, it does not follow that man cannot enter into, i.e. reach, God's essential realm (cf. Psalm 100), nor that there is any place where man can be which is not essentially already within God's realm (cf. Psalm 139). It is for such reasons that I take Heidegger's understanding of God to be deistic, and determinative of his "philosophical" position.

It is important to note that I am also claiming that I am not simply thinking "theologically in the manner of apologetics" (QCT 63), nor simply proclaiming kerygmatically. The reason is that I do not understand "[Nietzsche's] word 'God is dead'

only as a formula of unbelief" (63). In chapter 2 I have already affirmed something "inevitable" about the happening of "the Nothing." That does not mean, however, that I am not also recognizing "unbelief" in Nietzsche's position; after all, the state of Christendom does not excuse any of us from reckoning with the Truth, even if that Truth may be in some essential sense the Person of Christ Jesus.

There are, though, two further reasons for my unwillingness to relinquish a dialogue between the texts of Heidegger and the Bible. First, Heidegger's understanding of biblical Christianity is often faulty on crucial points. For instance, he understood redemption as the rescuing of creation from the Fall and its elevation to the suprasensuous realm once again (N3 240). I, however, find nothing in the Bible to indicate that sensuous creation ever was or is to become suprasensuous, at least not if the sensuous and the suprasensuous are somehow opposed to each other.³³ There is, indeed, to be a new creation, but that redeemed creation is best understood as the old (sensuous) creation both restored (from the Fall) and consummated. This, of course, is the crucial point in understanding Nietzsche's "God is dead," and therefore it is also crucial for rectifying Heidegger's misunderstandings of biblical Christianity. Further, I also find no indication that the certitude of salvation which Christians enjoy is strictly "otherworldly," as Heidegger claimed (240). Though more points could be added, my suggestion would still be that while the views which Heidegger (and Nietzsche) criticizes may well have been (and still be) prevalent in Christendom, such views are not endorsed by the canon of Scripture.

Secondly, though, I hesitate to abandon "my theology" because it so well incorporates, even explains, the legitimate concerns of Nietzsche and Heidegger. For instance, while explicating the "new lawfulness" Nietzsche proposed, Heidegger presented what I take to be his own properly philosophical, or at least non-theological, concern. Though willing to acknowledge the history of modern humanity as the secularization of Christianity, Heidegger's attention was directed to the condition for the possibility of such secularization, i.e. the unconcealment of the Being of beings, especially as subjectivity. However, while Heidegger saw the Judeo-Christian tradition as itself

³³ Perhaps this indicates Heidegger's own nature/grace schema, which, no matter how pervasive throughout Christendom it may be, I would contend is not a biblical schema.

determined by the epochs of such unconcealments, I am inclined to understand the epochs of the history of Being in light of the revelation(s) of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Thus, for instance, the “happening of the Nothing,” rather than being something outside the domain of, let me say, the Kingdom of God (rather than Christendom), is a function of the oath-curse of the “law covenant” which structures the rule of that Kingdom. In light of this oath-curse of the covenant-law, our dialogue regarding justification can finally be brought into focus.

It is here that Heidegger’s position is afflicted with both ambiguity and inconsistency. It is especially the latter which calls for special attention to his “unsaid.” (I return to a retrieved sense of ambiguity at the end of §4.4.2.) I have already noted the “inconsistency” involved in affirming the madman’s desire and quest to know God while denying humans access to that which is sought. It is here that Heidegger’s deistic conception of God introduced a profound (and glaring) inconsistency. Even though he better than anyone has shown us the necessity of the “circularity of ontological knowledge,” how, then, could the madman seek God if he did not already have some “knowledge” of God? My own “solution” is to recognize this “God-knowledge” as constitutive of Heidegger’s “Between” (itself constitutive of human being as *Dasein*), that realm which also mediates between God and man. In the preceding chapters I have noted the “emergence” of Christ Jesus as that mediator; the topic of justification lets us begin to focus both on what may be the reason for Heidegger’s inconsistency and our own retrieval of Heidegger’s retrievals.

First of all, I welcome Heidegger’s own allusion to the *de profundis* of Psalm 130, especially since it was just such a cry from the depths by which he characterized Nietzsche, both the man and his work. It was also, remember, facing the danger of the abyss which characterized Heidegger’s own path, which was to avoid “unholy salvations” while itself being on “the track [way] to the holy” (OWL 117ff). In addition, that Psalmist too was concerned with “justice” and “justification.” His concern, though, had to do with what is almost completely lacking from Heidegger’s thinking, the notion of moral fault, in short, sin, which could also be “defined” as lack of conformity to the Image of God of which human being *is* (i.e. ontologically constituted as) image. Thus “sin” is not merely moral fault, but also (and most profoundly) ontological “distortion”; or again, “sin” is moral fault because the ontological “distortion”

is “distortion” with reference and in relation to the One who is holy, righteous, good, etc. For the Psalmist the cry from the depths was, therefore, a cry for mercy (v. 2), precipitated by the “record of [his] sins” (v. 3) together with the knowledge of the LORD as the One before whom he stood as accountable. The cry—*de profundis*, for mercy—was, accordingly, the petition of the penitent for forgiveness of sins addressed to the Lord of the covenant, who the Psalmist evidently believed could and would not only hear him, but also (favorably) respond both personally and concretely in his life.

We have already alluded to this abyss—the depths of Psalm 130—as inherent in the covenantal life experience of those who had “cut the curse” with God. I return to develop this in the next section. Later I will also consider the biblical means of appropriating the promised redemption, especially in relation to Heidegger’s non-metaphysical, “commemorative thinking.” There we will find that Heidegger’s understanding of thinking expresses almost exactly that biblical “faith” which he also valorized (cf. chapter 6).

With regard to justification, then, we have found that it depends upon one’s understanding of both justice and the law, and even more precisely on the “origins” of such. In the “modern” case, whether Descartes, Leibniz, Kant, Husserl, or Nietzsche, the “lawgiver” was conceived of as the autonomous human being. “Salvation,” then, was a function of the self-positing, self-asserting, self-subjecting, self-elevating activity of the human being. Theologically speaking, modernism is auto-soterism. Heidegger, on the other hand, recognized within this activity of the self a more fundamental self-surpassing which “defined” human being as “passively” correlated with that which is “nothing human.” This fundamental correlation, then, became the germ by which he sought something other than the modernist way. His justification thereby became that yielding to the demands of *Ereignis* as law, a yielding, even “confessing” (*homolegein*; e.g. WP 44/47), which promised a certainty more primordial than that offered by modernism, more primordial even than death. Nonetheless, just as Heidegger’s way was an always being-on-the-way, his justification is also not definitive; it too is always “on the way,” never quite yet at home. I return to this topic of justification in chapter 8.

Though even Heidegger’s retrievals left us looking and listening for his “unsaid,”

we have once again found marginal references within his texts which recommend the philosophical pertinence of the Bible and bid us to continue the dialogue. I do so now in terms of the "*de profundis*" and Heidegger's a-byss.

4.4.2 The abyss

Already we have said much about the abyss, both from within Heidegger's works and in terms of the trial by ordeal to which the people of God consigned themselves through covenant membership. In both cases "the abyss" is associated with severe troubles, and finally, death; in both cases, death is inevitable, though not necessarily the end. I will now highlight three further aspects of the biblical "pit" or "abyss."

First of all, it is remarkable to note the interweaving of creation and redemption in the language of the covenantal trial-ordeal. On the one hand, this is not surprising since redemption itself is characterized as a new creation (Isaiah 66:22; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 2 Peter 3:10-13; etc.). On the other hand, though, it is remarkable to find the original waters of the "formless void" of Genesis 1:2 so "confused" with the redemptive-judgmental waters, for instance, those of the Exodus (cf. Psalm 65:6-7; 74:12-17; 89:9-11; etc.). I say "confused" because there is no indication in the Genesis account that the primeval water-deep offered any opposition or threat to the creative word of God, while it is precisely that opposition or threat which is the concern of the suffering psalmists.³⁴

I am not just concerned to note the linkage between the biblical watery abyss of suffering and Heidegger's abyss of suffering, both set as it were in a redemptive context. My concern now is once again, from another angle, to raise the possibility that the "abyss" of Genesis 1:2 is the biblical equivalent of Heidegger's Being. Clearly Heidegger's Being is abyssal [*ab-gründig*; N4 193]; but just as clearly it is "chaotic," though not in the sense of "blindly raging confusion" (N3 214). Rather, Heidegger understood the "chaos" of Being as "always pressing for the ordering of power, always demarcating boundaries of power, and always weighted toward a decisive outcome in the struggle to delineate power" (214). That, anyway, was Heidegger's understanding of Nietzsche's understanding of "chaos." My point is that even there,

³⁴ There are, of course, arguments both for and against understanding the waters of Genesis 1:2 as requiring some sort of pre-redemptive conquering. My concern, however, is elsewhere.

with the recognition of a “metaphysical projection” (214) which was finally to be overcome, the biblical echoes are clearly discernible. How much more would this be the case for Heidegger’s own understanding of “chaos” for which the *Ereignis* is *the* law! This possibility will again present itself in chapter 7 where we will discover both the primeval watery-deep as an image of the Spirit hovering over it (Genesis 1:2) and the significance of “(the) Spirit” for Heidegger.

Secondly, the biblical waters are clearly “two-faced.” The judgment-waters of the Exodus are the prototypical example, destroying the enemies of God while serving as the means of deliverance for the people of God. Indeed, under some scenarios the deep waters are themselves the enemy (e.g. Psalm 18:16ff). It is in this latter sense that the ordeal-trial of the covenant symbolized by the waters culminates in death itself, the last enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26).

Thirdly, though the ordeal-trial of the covenant is as inevitable as death, that death is not the end. Here too there are two senses of this “end.” In both cases death itself is swallowed up: in one case death is swallowed up by the resurrection victory of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:54-57); in the other case death is “swallowed up” by the lake of fire. In the latter case, death is swallowed up by “the second death” (Revelation 20:14; 21:8), with the “lake of fire” combining and confirming both the water and the fire ordeal, indeed, making it permanent.

The two ways of death, then, apparently constitute an essential ambiguity. Biblically speaking, we are all “consecrated” to the Lord. Because we are all under the sanctions of the divine Law, we are either consecrated unto eternal (second) life or unto eternal (second) death. I return, therefore, to the topic of consecration.

4.4.3 Consecration

Heidegger spoke of consecration, both with regard to “the Open” manifest by works of art, like the temple-work (PLT 41ff), and with regard to “apartness” as the site of Trakl’s poetic works (OWL 159ff). In both cases Heidegger was concerned with that realm as the “holy precinct,” that site of “apartness” where “the great soul’s fundamental trait” is manifest as “spirit” (179, 183; PLT 41ff). Evidently Heidegger found Trakl’s poetry especially useful for discussing this “precinct” because his language is essentially ambiguous, rigorously leaving “what is as it is” (OWL 192), i.e. revealing

Being itself. Apparently the “spirituality” of this place of apartness is essentially two-fold (195), presenting “the possibility of *both* gentleness *and* destructiveness” (179; Heidegger’s emphases). Trakl’s ambiguity, then, faithfully maintains both possibilities; his poetic word is two-edged. Most concisely, that word is *pain*, “the mighty pain” introduced earlier, and the ambiguity it presents is the double-path: Is the departure of death to be understood “in the sense of being cut off, or has he [the departed] been set apart because he is one of the select—gathered up into an assembly ... ? ” (186). “Cut off,” “set apart” ... this is the language of consecration, in fact, dual consecration.³⁵

Nor did Heidegger mask the religiosity of this language; he was quite explicit that Trakl’s language echoes “biblical and ecclesiastical ideas” (193). Thus, for instance, “the wandering stranger,” which Heidegger took as the focus of all of Trakl’s poetry (172), oscillates between the biblical figures of pilgrim and accursed wanderer (like Cain, Genesis 4), while the site of “apartness,” the place of “belonging” of the stranger, wavers between a “petrifying pain” and a speaking pain (182), a destructive disintegration and the place of “rebirth” (179, 185), the madness of “unholy fragmentation” and the madness of “another direction” (173, 179), the flame of destruction and the flame of the living spirit; in short, this consecration is either mere death or a living death with hints of hope (177, 173). It is here that Trakl’s ambiguity coincides with the ambiguity in the title (and topic) of this chapter, especially as developed in the last section.

Heidegger honored this ambiguity, and in light of the developing dialogue with Heidegger, I too am inclined to recognize the “lawfulness” of this ambiguity as resident in the Being of beings, and even in Being itself. In biblical language we might say that all of creation is covenantal, two-edged, forked, and revelational

³⁵ Later, in chapter 6, we will consider Heidegger’s understanding of thinking as *thanc*, that fundamental devotion which is both “the spirit of the spirit” (WCT 149) and that by which “the transaction of a matter is settled, or disposed of” (146). In the light of the meditations of this chapter, we might say the most fundamental characteristic of human being has always already “cut a covenant,” pledging itself to “the keeping” of that covenant. Here too the “of” is essentially ambiguous; both the “objective” and the “subjective” genitives are intended. Incidentally, Trakl’s “pain” figures prominently in the passages just cited from WCT; cf. WCT 149.

of two fundamental possibilities and their attendant and promised ends. In fact, according to the biblical account all of creation is itself consecrated to the Lord. The Old Testament offering of the fruit of flock and field, the blessing and cursing of the Land itself, as well as the promises of a fiery end for both heaven and earth (2 Peter 3), all point to this consecration.

Interestingly, it is “the word,” the same creative word of the beginning, which the Apostle Peter understood as both preserving the present state of heaven and earth (cf. 2 Peter 3; also Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:17), and reserving it for that future fiery destructive consecration. It is also the word of promise, the other branch of the covenant structure, which will bring the new heavens and earth (2 Peter 3:13). In the case of human beings this same structure is especially clear: either we are “under law” and “wrath” or we are “under grace,” the new beginning having already begun (2 Corinthians 5:17; John 3), and that by “the word” (1 Peter 1:23ff; James 1:18, 21; cf. chapter 7, §2.2). It is, then, “the word” which receives our final attention in this chapter.

4.4.4 The word

The “word” will continue to be the point of our most focused engagement with Heidegger’s thought. Certainly it is at the core of Heidegger’s own work, a fact highlighted most graphically by the topic(s) of this chapter. First of all, the significance of language is highlighted because it is, for Heidegger, the “other,” non-metaphysical, “ground.” Though *Ereignis* is “that realm ... through which man and Being reach each other in their nature, achieve their active nature by losing those qualities with which metaphysics has endowed them” (ID 37), it is language that “[holds] everything within the suspended structure of appropriation [*Ereignis*]” (38). Thus Heidegger could say both that “language ... is the foundation of human being” (OWL 112) and that it is the “element” within which humans exist most humanly (84, 112). By his use of quotation marks and qualifications, Heidegger was at pains to indicate something quite unique, and certainly non-metaphysical (ID 37).

Most to the point in this chapter, language itself also became for Heidegger the new philosophical method: Language is *both* that which grants humans our essential humanity, i.e. our “speaking” (OWL 90), and therefore is that foundational “correlate”

with which we correspond most profoundly, *and* language is the way-making way to itself as that which grants us that “there” within which space and time and all things can appear.³⁶ As Heidegger put it, “In truth, the way to language has its unique region within the essence of language itself” (130). To yield to, or join in with, that way-making movement of language is *the way*, the “method,” ordained or destined for humans (133): “We dwell in the appropriation inasmuch as our active nature is given over to language” (ID 38). As we will see shortly, that *way* of language is also “the way of ‘death.’”

With regard to my own “biblical” dialogue with Heidegger, the most fruitful point of engagement has to do with the relations between language and *Ereignis*.³⁷ On the one hand, language is the movement at the core of the four-fold *Ereignis* (OWL 104ff), just as *Ereignis* itself is that “moving force” of language (127). Similarly, both *Ereignis* and language are identified with “the way” (129, 108) and with the primordial “realm” (84; ID 37f), and thus, it would seem, with each other. On the other hand, as we have seen, language and *Ereignis* are not identical. Indeed, language is both the “relation of all relations” responsible for the unity of the four-fold (OWL 107) and

³⁶ That is, time and space in the conventional senses. The opening *e*/affected by language reveals a deeper sense of both space and time (PLT 157; OWL 106).

³⁷ Again, it might be suggested (or objected) that I am having Heidegger speak Paul’s thoughts where Paul is understood to have read and absorbed Heidegger’s vocabulary. That would be odd, indeed, though a pertinent concern. It is a question of echoes and resonances and translation of words and thoughts, a dialogue of sorts, though for Heidegger it would be an *Auseinandersetzung*, his understanding of the philosophical engagement par excellence, as introduced in chapter 1, and further addressed in chapters 7 & 8. As noted in chapter 1 and in those latter chapters, this is a ‘taking captive’, and the concern, of course, would be who is ‘winning’ here ... and if ‘winning’ is even the right concern. An alternative approach might be proposed here, that of analogy, whereby both similarities and differences are clearly identified as such, and any blending of one set of thoughts and vocabulary with another is recast instead as the constructive philosophizing of the current author. Surely there is (intended to be) constructive philosophizing for which I must assume and not avoid (some) responsibility. The concern I am raising, on the other hand, is that that more traditional approach is not as faithful to the dynamics of interpretation and philosophizing, and thus the meaning of philosophy, as I seek. Thus, I continue with this issue in mind, attempting to address it in what is to come, though in the context of ongoing demonstrations and exercises. My objection is not that analogical thinking is inappropriate, but rather that the line of similarity and difference is not as clear cut as needed to sustain that more traditional approach.

that which grants mortals the experience of *Ereignis*, yet in such a way that *Ereignis* is “not the out-come (result)” of language (127). In fact, *Ereignis* is even understood as “the way-making for Saying to come into language” (130). Further still, even though “*Ereignis* is the law” (128), it is “the higher rule of the word” (151) which “saves” that law from the objectionable metaphysical conceptions noted earlier. Not only, then, is there *ho nomos* which is above “the gods” of the four-fold, but there is a word which is “above” *ho nomos*. A complex situation indeed!

In order to further explore this mystery, I continue to focus on “the word.” Heidegger was quite concerned to find the “word for the word,” and so “bring the being of language to language” (154). Here we rejoin the quest introduced in chapter 3. Curiously, following Stefan George, Heidegger characterized “the word’s hidden essence” as “rich and frail,” which under Heidegger’s interpretation meant capable of offering and saving (154). However, even more essential was the self-veiling of the word, the “fading” of the word for the word’s own hidden essence (154). Indeed, it was precisely at this point of fading that Heidegger introduced the “essential relation between death and language” (107f), finally interpreting this “veiling” / “fading” as that “breaking up of the word” because of which Being arose as granted (108; 129). It was, then, this “breaking up of the word” which opened up the possibility for that “true step back on the way of thinking” (108). The way of philosophy, therefore, is that true step back which yields itself to the death of language, i.e. follows that “break up” into the groundlessness which is the a-byss of language itself. Such is Heidegger’s own retrieval of the “way of death” from BT, etc., as well as his retrieval of the philosophical methods of Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, and Husserl, as noted earlier.

By way of returning more directly to my own dialogue, I pick up several pertinent points. First, because this “word” rules over “the law,” and because this word “breaks up,” if we follow Heidegger we are compelled to admit that propositional judgments (e.g. Kant’s synthetic *a priori* judgments) are *not* an adequate starting point, at least not alone. Just as the word “breaks up,” so too the “well-formed” proposition is subjected to a more primordial analysis (breaking up) and therefore also a “deeper” account of its synthetic structure. This is not unlike the Apostle Paul’s recognition that the Old Covenant (Law) cannot be understood until one “turns to the Lord”;

indeed, a “veil” covers the mind/heart until it is removed in Christ (2 Corinthians 3:14-16). To paraphrase both Heidegger and Paul in light of the meditations already accomplished, the law must first be known as Person if it is to be truly understood as proposition.³⁸

Second, if that Word as Person is considered as “breaking up,” we are not far from “the Crucified.” As we left the matter in chapter 2, the problem with Heidegger’s discussion of Nietzsche’s “Dionysos versus the Crucified” was the necessity that “the Crucified” not be taken as simply “suprasensuous” to the exclusion of the “sensuous.” To do so would relegate such a conception to metaphysics rather than participating in a new, non-metaphysical beginning. Consider, though, the complex relationships among language (the word), *Ereignis*, “Being,” the bidding and the bidder as already sketched. This complexity is neatly “explained” if, in fact, “the Crucified” (as the broken Word) is that mediator who shares equally in the (different) natures of both “the bidder” and “Being” (as [determined by] *Ereignis*), and, while Himself being in the Image of the bidder, is the One in whose image all beings “are,” each in their own way, especially humans. And that, after all, is in line with the traditional Chalcedonian conception of the Person of “the Crucified.”

Third, not so incidentally, the word of the cross, or better, faith in that word, appears as that way which meets both Husserl’s requirement for a “method” by which philosophers can be delivered from the “natural attitude” and Heidegger’s preference for a “method” which makes a way into that realm of our ownmost belonging while always being “on the way.” It is also here that the “cutting” themes return most pointedly. I must now elaborate this claim.

First of all, for the Apostle Paul it was “the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Galatians 6:14). Indeed, that separation from the world is likened to the cutting off of circumcision. It is quite true that in context that which is being “cut off” is human sinfulness together with “the world” understood in terms of its complicity with that evil (Colossians 2:11f). And yet, Paul also went on to liken that crucifixion/circumcision to the beginning

³⁸ This is not to say that knowledge or meaning coming via the “propositions” is not involved in the process of knowing the law as Person.

of a “new creation” (Galatians 6:15) just as radical as the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It was, in fact, “faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead” (Colossians 2:12) which is the locus and the means of that “new creation.” Since for biblical symbolics that “new creation” entails the old creation both passing away and finally being destroyed³⁹ by fire, it is unlikely that the meaning of “the world” as quoted from Galatians 6:14 can be confined simply to the sinful structures, customs, and ways of this present world: the newness of the new is too new for that, as is the thoroughness of the destruction of the old.⁴⁰

Secondly, it is the *word* of the cross which is to be believed. That is, it was “the message [lit. λόγος *logos*] of the cross” which was contrasted with “the wisdom of the wise” in 1 Corinthians 1 (cf. chapter 2) and with “hollow and deceptive philosophy” in Colossians 2:8, etc. Interestingly, not only is this word described as “the sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17), “sharper than any double-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12), but its “cutting” activity of “circumcision”-consecration is also clearly described in its dual role: “the aroma of Christ” disseminated by the gospel message being the smell of death to those who are perishing and the fragrance of life to those being saved (2 Corinthians 2:15f). In this context the essential ambiguity of Trakl’s poetic word is less strange. In fact, both Heidegger and (my understanding of) the Bible would agree that all words manifest this dual (covenantal) design.⁴¹

Moreover, “design” is actually Heidegger’s word for the “unity of the being of language,” which means, he said, “to cut a trace” as when “we cut a furrow into the soil to open it to seed and growth” (OWL 121). In fact, this design of language is “the drawing of language” of and to (and perhaps “by”)⁴² that which is most worthy of thought (121; WCT 16f). Thus, for Heidegger, “thinking is not a means to gain knowledge. Thinking cuts furrows into the soil of Being” (OWL 70). That is not all,

³⁹ 2 Peter 3:10-12. The verb is λύω (*luo*), and the sense is very close to Heidegger’s “*Destruction*”.

⁴⁰ This understanding of the new and the old is not necessarily contrary to the understanding that grace restores and fulfills nature, though that paradigm likely also requires “retrieval”.

⁴¹ This is not to say that this essential “covenantal ambiguity” is the only kind of ambiguity, nor even the only kind of essential ambiguity.

⁴² Actually the phrase “the drawing of language” is itself ambiguous, and that essentially: the action of language inscribing the design; the design so inscribed by language; and the pull or attraction exerted by language into its own withdrawal.

as we will see shortly; but first, more must be said about “the being of language,” especially in relation to Heidegger’s “cutting,” then in relation to the covenantal “knife rituals.”

One key point of Heidegger’s essay “The nature of language” –indeed, the self-confessed “crux” (95)–is that a consideration of “the being of language” must include a consideration of “the language of being.” Following that way Heidegger “concluded,” much as he had earlier in dialogue with the Japanese (OWL 1-54), that language is a blossoming (of the mouth) in which “the earth blossoms toward the bloom of the sky” (99). My point here is that human speaking is not only a saying-again of a more primordial Saying, but that that saying-again unfolds the potentialities or possibilities of Being itself as “hidden” in the earth. That is, the Being of the earth (“in all things,” 101) responds because the being of language *is* the language of Being; in short, Being and Saying are the Same, in Heidegger’s sense of belonging most essentially to each other.

What, then, is Heidegger’s cutting of furrows in the soil of Being? It is certainly a preliminary stage of “farming” the possibilities of Being. Elsewhere he recognized this task as preceding and opening up the possibilities which the sciences then further unfold. That the sciences unfold previously unheard of possibilities and “exploit” those possibilities for human culture is not difficult for us to understand. Heidegger’s claim, though, is that thinking as the “cutting of furrows” for that scientific harvest is the more fundamental task. There is, though, apparently an even more fundamental cutting upon which this “cutting of furrows” depends: It is the cutting of being “cut off” by the “mighty pain.” We have covered this ground before and need not reiterate it here. The point now is that what I referred to above as the “way of the cross” is the “word of the cross,” or at least a certain relation to that word. A consideration of the means of appropriation of that word/way will conclude this section.

Here I only introduce a topic which will receive extended treatment in chapter 6. For Heidegger the appropriate part for mortals to play within the four-fold is that thinking which both is put on the way by the call of language/Being and whole-heartedly yields itself to the call/way, though that way is the way into the “abyss of Being” (PLT 97). Hidden within this realm of the abyss is not only the belonging together of “pain and death and love” (97), but from this abyss springs the gracious blossoming

of language with its “holy, saving, loving” arch-tidings (201; OWL 45, 99, 154; WM 358).⁴³ In the “face” of such graciousness, the appropriate mortal response is that “sacrifice” called “original thanking” (WM 358) which is constituted by this “way of ‘death.’” “Original thanking,” however, is the most primordial response of our most primordial “heart’s core” (WCT 144: OWL 128); it is also what Heidegger meant by “essential thinking” (e.g. WM 359ff).

With such talk of thanksgiving (i.e. eucharist; εὐχαριστία: thankfulness, giving of thanks) and sacrifice⁴⁴ it is not surprising to the Christian that Heidegger turned to poems about “bread and wine” by both Hölderlin (PLT 91ff; OWL 99ff) and Trakl (PLT 195ff). Around these poems are gathered all the central themes of this chapter: the way, death, abyss, the law, language, etc. And yet, without denying the Christian experience “in individuals and in the churches,” Heidegger did deny the significance of that experience for “the world’s history” (PLT 91). The alternative account of the destitution with which Heidegger and his poets were fascinated is, of course, that the oath-curse of God’s covenant is being fulfilled. (Compare, for example, Deuteronomy 28 with Heidegger’s accounts of this destitution.)

Nonetheless, Heidegger did talk about the gods, especially the tracks left by their flight, and the traces of those tracks which it is the task of the poet and thinker to follow into the abyss, and to name: “The thinker utters Being. The poet names what is holy” (WM 360). In fact, for Heidegger, these tracks are “the holy,” itself understood as “the element” “in which alone the gods are gods” (PLT 94). Elsewhere, of course, this “element” was called *Ereignis*, the four-fold, the Saying, etc. Here though, Heidegger also admitted a further “name”: “the godhead” (94).

While discussing another Hölderlinean poem elsewhere, Heidegger recognized this “godhead” as both the one in whose image man is called (219, 226) and the One who is the measure of man’s heart (228; there “godhead” is capitalized in the English

⁴³ These are rather uncharacteristic Heideggerean references to “love.” We must not lose sight of the relevance of “love” as embedded in *philo*-sophy, a point to be further developed (with Derrida’s help) in later chapters.

⁴⁴ The Christian Eucharistic Sacrament (Lord’s Supper, Communion) is traditionally understood as a remembrance by the Christian community (as directed by Jesus: “Do this in remembrance of me”) of the gift (χάρις) of the sacrifice of the Crucified Saviour. It is thus a thankful (worshipful) remembrance of that gift.

translation). (It is the same passage from which in chapter 3 we highlighted “Kindness [grace], the Pure.”) One might well assume, therefore, that it is this “measure” which is revealed as that “standard” which guided Heidegger’s understanding of the (primordial) Saying to which human words, including especially his own, were beholden and to which “we owe thanks for the endowment of our nature–thinking” (WCT 146; cf. also OWL 128). The gods, i.e. their tracks and traces, then, would be “the beckoning messengers of the godhead” (PLT 178).

Heidegger, of course, did not exactly say that, not in so many words, not if we name that godhead as the Trinitarian God of the Bible; at times he even seemed to deny it, as when he affirmed the “default of God” or the absence of Christ to this destitute world (91). What is missing from Heidegger’s account is at least two-fold.⁴⁵ First of all, according to the Christian account, Christ is not absent; in fact, His parting words promised that He would always be with His disciples (Matthew 28). That promise was fulfilled, of course, at Pentecost with the sending of the Holy Spirit, whose identity with Christ is so intimate that the Apostle Paul said both that “the Lord is the Spirit” and designated that Spirit, “the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:17).⁴⁶ This is not inconsequential for our dialogue, for while Heidegger said that the Original Thanking-Sacrifice was “born of the abyss of freedom” (WM 358), Jesus spoke of being “born of the Spirit” (John 3:6) and the Apostle noted that “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (2 Corinthians 3:17).

Nor is that Spirit unrelated to “the abyss.” In 1 Corinthians 2:10 the Apostle recorded that the Spirit searches out the depths, even of God Himself, and in Genesis 1:2 the Spirit hovered over the abyss, which elsewhere was likened to “the womb” from which creation was “born” (Psalm 90:2; Job 38:8),⁴⁷ much as for Heidegger “the world” was “born” from the abyss of the four-fold (PLT 179f, 200). Similarly, just as it was from the “abyss of Being” that love was to grant a new beginning out of pain

⁴⁵ Here I am only concerned with points especially pertinent in this context.

⁴⁶ Heidegger, in fact, referred to the Acts 2 account of Pentecost (PLT 96f). One could only have hoped that Heidegger’s understanding of the Bible had been as profound and astute as, for instance, his understanding of Aristotle or Hölderlin.

⁴⁷ Psalm 139:13-16 reverses the order of this comparison, likening “the womb” (v. 13) to “the depths of the earth” (15), even calling the initial state of the human “my unformed substance” (16).

and death (97), so too for the Christian “new birth” is from above, by the Spirit (John 3), “through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3), “through the living and enduring word of God” (1 Peter 1:23). Evidently, in both cases, this “new birth” is also a betrothal (PLT 93, 180; Revelation 19:7, 9; 2 Corinthians 11:2): In the Christian case the betrothal is to Christ, with the Eucharistic celebration of His death (and future coming) understood as the foretaste of the wedding feast; in Heidegger’s case one is left wondering how one is betrothed to the four-fold (and what understanding of marriage animates that figure). If, on the other hand, the “hidden fullness and wealth ... of the divine in the world of the Greeks, in prophetic Judaism, in the preaching of Jesus” (PLT 184) were, in fact, gathered into the Godhead, then perhaps Heidegger too might agree that in “the Crucified” there is neither Jew nor Greek.

The second factor which is missing from Heidegger’s account, at least for Christian belief, is the written word of God. Though Heidegger often valorized “New Testament faith” (e.g. QCT 63), he evidently did not consider that faith as tied in any essential way to the written text of that New Covenant. One must wonder, however, what he knew about that faith “before the writing down of the Gospels and before the missionary propaganda of Paul” (63), and how he knew it independent of and unconstrained by those documents.⁴⁸

Nonetheless, Heidegger’s account everywhere calls for “a word from God”; at one point he even referred to “God’s speaking” as that which alone “saves mankind” (OWL 196). However, despite such a recognition he seemed to include the lack of that word together with his own acceptance of “the default of God.” For the Christian, however, the presence of the historical covenant documents, in short, the book called *The Holy Bible*, is just further evidence that our God has not defaulted. Heidegger, of course, rejected the claim that that book presents the pure words of God Himself, as do many who follow him. The evidence to the contrary, however, is far from trivial or difficult to find. My task here is not to argue that point.⁴⁹ Indeed, those sympathetic

⁴⁸ Indeed, my own conviction is that any such knowledge is speculation at best, and regardless, such a position expresses a decided religious preference and belief.

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. Carson, D. A. and John D. Woodbridge, ed. 1983. *Scripture and truth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

to Heidegger are unlikely to demand such a demonstration; at least one might expect them to be at least as charitable with this claim regarding the Bible as they are toward Heidegger's own regarding "the poem" as the purest example of words we have (194). Further, Heidegger "simply" *assumed* (his word) that there is a preferred class of poets which is worthy of our special attention (94); indeed, from the works of such poets he was even willing to select that which he considered "valid poetry" (96). I am not here disputing Heidegger's claims or choices; I am only maintaining that there are many who find less presumption in the traditional Jewish and Christian preferences for the Bible, especially given the thousands of years of historical testimony which constitute the Judeo-Christian traditions.⁵⁰

Regardless, my point here is that Heidegger recognized "the voice of Being" calling from or in or through this "valid poetry." Not only that, but it is this call which gives rise to thinking itself, whether we acknowledge and honor it or not (WCT). Paraphrasing the Apostle Paul, for Heidegger, thinking, that appropriate mode of appropriation for mortals, comes by hearing, and hearing comes by the word/call of Being (as articulated especially by "valid poetry"). I plan to show, then, that what Heidegger called "thinking," the Apostle called "faith" (Romans 10:17). So outrageous might such a claim appear that I plan to develop it at length in chapter 6. However, to prepare for that demonstration I will first consider that kind of thinking with which Heidegger contrasted his own, what he called metaphysical or representational or calculative thinking.

50 There is at least a third crucial "missing factor," the "ethical" dimension of obedience to "the word"; not so much the yielding of submission to "the word," but rather to the kind of obedience called for by and together with such submission. The "problem," of course, is the particular (poetic) word(s) which Heidegger chose as his canon. Principally, I have in mind the importance of the "good works" of love and mercy enjoined by the biblical documents, but omitted from the words of Heidegger's canon. Here Caputo 1993a is a very (!) helpful guide, though his understanding of Heidegger seems to me rather "reactive," or worse, infected with unnecessary *ressentiment*. As is the case with such a response, the position objected to is not actually "overcome." In Caputo's case I find his "anti-Heideggerean" views still too Heideggerean; for instance, his preference for the "impersonal" (1993b:226, 237), and a deistic understanding of God (108), including his often repeated objection to an actual word(s) from God Himself (e.g. 96). These preferences are very Heideggerean ... and very non-"Jewish" (in his sense of the term). Here too the difficulty seems to be one's choice of "canon," including the "reading" given to that which is taken as expressive of one's most important "obligations" (Caputo's focus).

5 Representational Thinking

5.1 Introduction

A consideration of what Heidegger called representational thinking will not only prepare us for a further consideration of thinking in relation to faith as just promised at the conclusion of the preceding chapter, but it also once again raises our concerns about philosophy per se. The reason is quite simply that, according to Heidegger, “the traditional nature of thinking has received its shape from representations, that thoughts are a kind of representational idea” (WCT 44f). And indeed, such representational thinking is what “constitutes the metaphysical basis of the age called the Modern Age” (83). In fact, representational thinking *is*, for Heidegger, essentially metaphysical thinking, i.e. philosophy.

After briefly reviewing Heidegger’s thinking about representation I will consider two contemporary reflections on the same issue, the first by Paul Ricoeur, the second by Jacques Derrida. These three steps will prepare us to once again engage this central and expressly philosophical issue with biblical thought forms. The result will further advance my own project of progressing toward a specifically Christian philosophy.

5.2 Heidegger on representation

5.2.1 Introduction

According to Heidegger the significance of representation came to its greatest clarity in the modern age, especially with the metaphysics of Descartes. In fact, “the whole of modern metaphysics taken together, Nietzsche included, maintains itself within the interpretation ... prepared by Descartes” (QCT 127). In particular, Descartes is credited with redefining “what it is to be” in terms of “the objectiveness of representing” and truth as “the certainty of representing” (127), both in relation to the human *ego cogito*:

... to represent means to bring what is present at hand before oneself as something standing over against, to relate it to oneself, to the one representing it, and to force it back into this relationship to oneself as the normative realm (131).

There are three points in relation to this understanding of representation which call for further comment:

First, to represent is that human act which establishes what is commonly known as the subject-object relation. What Heidegger referred to as that act of bringing the present at hand before oneself establishes that present at hand as “standing over against,” i.e. as *Gegen-stand* or *objectum*, but only and at the same time as it establishes “oneself” as *subjectum*, i.e. as that “over against” which and in relation to which the object is object.

Second, it is helpful to contrast this modern understanding of the thing as object with both the Greek understanding and the medieval understanding. By so doing we see more clearly the distinctiveness of the modern understanding of representation. For the Greeks, then,

That which is [the thing/object], is that which arises and opens itself, which, as what presences, comes upon man as the one who presences, i.e., comes upon the one who himself opens himself to what presences in that he apprehends it. That which is does not come into being at all through the fact that man first looks upon it in the sense of a representing that has the character of subjective perception [the modern view]. Rather, man is the one who is looked upon by that which is; he is the one who is-in company with itself-gathered toward presencing, by that which opens itself. To be beheld by what is, to be included and maintained within its openness and in that way to be borne along by it, to be driven about by its oppositions and marked by its discord—that is the essence of man in the great age of the Greeks (131).

The important point is that for the modern understanding of representation it is first of all the human taken as the normative reference point who “looks out upon (the object)” which serves to define “what is.” For the Greeks, on the other hand, the human was first of all the one who is looked upon by the other of “what is.” For the Greeks, “what is” was the primordial reference; for the modern, human being is itself that primordial reference. Similarly, as we shall see, the modern position assumes the “object” is to be controlled (preferably beforehand) while here, with the Greek experience, man is “driven about by its [the “thing’s”] oppositions and marked by its discord.”

The contrast with the medieval understanding further sharpens our understanding. Contrary to the medieval sense of a prior commitment to the authority of the Church and of Sacred Revelation, the modern human freed “himself to himself” (127), making himself the “normative realm.” We have touched on this point in the previous

chapters, most pointedly in terms of Kant's "self-subjecting self-elevation" of myself to myself (BPP 136).

Third, the important point for Heidegger was that this new sense of the human as subject and the thing as object arose together and in reciprocal relation, each conditioned by the other. The subject is subject as the ground for, or as that in relation to which, the object is object as that which stands over against it (*Gegenstand*). It is this subject-object relation to which I will return shortly, especially in terms of the modern understanding of truth defined relative to it. Before doing so, however, I wish to develop Heidegger's understanding of representation in terms of modern science understood as the highest expression of the modern age. To do so not only elaborates Heidegger's understanding of representation as the necessary background for the discussions to follow later in this chapter, but also provides the decisive setting within which and the perspective from which to take up the question of thinking and faith in the next chapter.

5.2.2 Heidegger's view of science

Heidegger's views regarding science will be gleaned from the essays collected under the title *The Question concerning Technology and other essays* (QCT 1977), especially the essays entitled "The Age of the World Picture" (AWP, QCT:115-154) and "Science and Reflection" (SR, QCT:155-182). Of special interest is Heidegger's conception of the essential relation between modern science and representational thinking on the one hand, and on the other, the essential importance of "reflection" in distinction from "the knowing that belongs to science" (SR 180). It is this latter distinction which will lead to our concern with faith. These relations will emerge slowly in what follows.

"Science," for Heidegger was quite simply "the theory of the real" (SR 157). The weight of this definition of science, then, rests with the words "real" and "theory." Heidegger expounded these words in his typical, *Destruktive* manner, which Gadamer characterized as indicative of Heidegger's genius, his "penchant for restoring to words their hidden, no longer intended sense, and then from this so-called etymology to draw fundamental consequences for thinking" (DD 107f).¹

¹ Gadamer further characterizes Heidegger's etymologizing maneuvers as "clearly acts of violence com-

5.2.2.1 Heidegger's interpretation of the "real"

Heidegger began his exposition of "the real" by relating the German word for the real [*das Wirkliche*] to the German word for work, *wirken* [to work]. Thus the "real brings to fulfillment the realm of working, of that which works" (SR 159). Heidegger said that "to work" means "to do" with "to do" traced to its Indo-Germanic and Greek root-meanings of setting, place, position. Reality, then, "means ... that which, brought forth hither into presencing, lies before; it means the presencing, consummated in itself, of self-bringing-forth. [It is that which] comes to stand and to lie in unconcealment" (160). Heidegger was explicit that the "working" which is associated with "the real" is not only human activity, but also includes biological growth and elsewhere, even, and especially, the "activities" of Being (QCT 36ff).²

Heidegger then traced a shift in the meaning of "the real" which closely parallels, in fact comes about together with, a shift in the meaning of "theory" as well as new developments in the meanings of both "subject" and "object." These shifts are the topic of the next section. Anticipating the conclusions to follow we note here that as a consequence of the shift which for Heidegger characterized the modern age, "the real" became the "object" and the "factual": the "object [became] that which stands over against [*Gegen-Stand*] a subject" (SR 162) and the "factual" "connotes assurance,

mitted by a swimmer who struggled to swim against the current" (DD 108). Heidegger himself in discussing his etymological "method" notes that the

... mere identifying of old and often obsolete meanings of terms, the snatching up of these meanings with the aim of using them in some new way, leads to nothing if not to arbitrariness. What counts, rather, is for us, in reliance on the early meaning of a word and its changes, to catch sight of the realm pertaining to the matter in question into which the word speaks. What counts is to ponder that essential realm as the one in which the matter named through the word moves. Only in this way does the word speak, and speak in the complex of meanings into which the matter that is named by it unfolds throughout the history of poetry and thought (SR 159).

I think Gadamer is quite right to say "In the name, in the naming power of words and their labyrinthian paths to error, Heidegger found precious veins of gold, in which he could only recognize again and again his own vision of Being: that 'Being' is not to be construed as the Being of beings" (DD 105). Heidegger's etymological method has itself not been free of the charge of "arbitrariness." Caveat lector!

- 2 Some of these "activities" of Being include "turning" (QCT 41), the granting of favor (43), inflashing (45), gathering (47), uttering (48, 27), and stilling (49).

and means the same thing as ‘certain’ and ‘sure’” (162). These are themes touched upon in the above introduction which will be developed in the following section.

5.2.2.2 Heidegger’s interpretation of “theory”

Following Heidegger’s etymological methodology we first consider the Greek words from which our word “theory” comes, words which Heidegger said reveal “a lofty and mysterious meaning” (SR 163). According to his own peculiar way of exegesis Heidegger concluded that “*theoria* is pure relationship to the outward appearances belonging to whatever presences, to those appearances that, in their radiance, concern man in that they bring the presence [*Gegenwart*] of the gods to shine forth” (164). Further Heidegger claimed that the Greeks “were also able to hear something else in the word *theoria*,” in particular, the Greeks discerned the root words *theá* = ‘goddess’ and *oora* = “the respect we have, the honor and esteem we bestow” (164). Thus *theoria* became “the reverent paying heed to the unconcealment of what presences” (165). Heidegger then claimed that this is the “essence of theory as thought by the Greeks” (165). Further, and to the point of our concerns here, Heidegger believed that our modern understanding of theory still retains traces of this “shadow of the early [Greek] *theoria*” (165). Later we will see the importance of this “shadow” with regard to “reflection.”

Nonetheless, Heidegger claimed that something was lost in the transition from the Greek to the Latin. Heidegger noted, for instance, that the Greek *theoria* was translated by the Latin *contemplatio*. Then, and here we rejoin our meditations from chapters 3 and 4, Heidegger traced the Latin *templum* to the Greek *temnein* (to cut, to divide). Thereby, according to Heidegger, “*contemplari* means: to partition something off into a separate sector and enclose it therein” (165). Thus the Greek *theoria* became through its translation in Latin as *contemplatio* “a looking-at that sunders and compartmentalizes” (166), and indeed a type of “looking-at” which becomes “normative in knowing” (166). Though Heidegger further traced this transformation through its translation into German, already we see emerging the modern understanding of theoretical or representational thinking as a looking-out-at rather than a being-looked-upon. Nonetheless, the further translation of *contemplatio* into German as *Betrachtung* added a decisive sense to the modern understanding of theory.

Since *Betrachtung* [view, observation] derives from the root *trachten* [to strive], Heidegger understood observation [*Betrachtung*] as “an entrapping and securing refining of the real” (167). The key pivot here is that *trachten*, to strive after something, was taken to mean “to work one’s way toward something, to pursue it, to entrap it in order to secure it” (167).

Modern science then, according to Heidegger, “sets upon the real” (167), and despite its claims to disinterestedness, “is a refining of the real that does encroach uncannily upon it” (167). This “encroachment” is precisely that “work” which makes the real appear as object or representation or “interacting network” (168) or “system.” “The real” is “entrapped,” “secured as object,” and “recast in advance into a diversity of objects [in a system] for the entrapping securing” (168). Thus, the representational thinking which characterizes modern science is that “striving-after,” “entrapping-securing procedure” which we call method (169). Here too we can recall our meditations on “the way” (*meth-odos*) from the previous chapter.

Finally, Heidegger characterized this methodology as “a reckoning-up” which means in his vocabulary “to set [something] up as an object of expectation,” which is also the root meaning of “mathematics” (170), quite apart from the role of numbers. Consequently, the mathematization of modern science, numbers included, was seen by Heidegger as essential to the conception of modern science. This “essence” is “predictability,” “to calculate in advance with precision” (172); it is also the “essence” of modern representation. In the following citation Heidegger clearly expressed his understanding of such representing as “calculation”:

To represent means here: of oneself to set something before oneself and to make secure what has been set in place, as something set in place. This making secure must be a calculating, *for calculability alone guarantees being certain in advance*, and firmly and constantly, of that which is to be represented. Representing is no longer the apprehending of that which presences, within whose unconcealment apprehending itself belongs, belongs indeed as a unique kind of presencing toward that which presences that is unconcealed. Representing is no longer a self-unconcealing for ... , but is a laying hold and grasping of What presences does not hold sway, but rather *assault rules* (149; emphasis added).

5.2.2.3 Summary

Our previous consideration of the “real” (§5.2.2.1) culminated in the term “object-ness”; these just completed considerations of *theoria* (§5.2.2.2) have intimated that the modern conception of theory culminates in an act of the “subject.” This is the case, and in fact with the shift characteristic of the modern age Heidegger noted the birth of the modern notion of the subject. Indeed, “the essential foundation of the modern age” (AWP 128) is this “necessary interplay between subjectivism and objectivism. It is precisely this reciprocal conditioning of the one by the other that points back to events more profound” (128). I shall now examine these more profound events, first in terms of the “subject,” then in terms of the “object” as the “subject’s reciprocal.” From the consideration of this reciprocity will emerge the significance of modern representational thinking, especially with regard to modern science.

5.2.3 The subject-object relation and truth

Heidegger understood the “reciprocal relation” between subject and object on the basis of the Greek *hypokeimenon* of which the Latin *subiectum*, and the English “subject” are translations. The Greek *hypokeimenon* means “that-which-lies-before, which, as ground, gathers everything onto itself” (AWP 128). Initially *hypokeimenon* had “no special relationship to man and none at all to the I” (128). The modern age, however, is characterized, according to Heidegger, by the co-opting of this metaphysical concept of *hypokeimenon* by man. Man then became “the primary and only real *subiectum*” and thus “that being upon which all that is, is grounded as regards the manner of its Being and its truth. Man becomes the relational center of that which is as such” (128), “the measure and center of that which is, which means of objects, of whatever stands-over-against” (151).

With this shift in the conception of man as *hypokeimenon*, the comprehension of all that is as a whole also changed: the “world,” then, was

... conceived and grasped as picture. What is, in its entirety, is now taken in such a way that it first is in being and only is in being to the extent that it is set up by man, who *represents* and sets forth. Wherever we have the world picture [i.e. the world as picture], an essential decision takes place regarding what is, in its entirety. The Being of whatever is, is sought and found in the *representedness* of the latter (129f; emphases added).

Here then is “representation” in its essential relation not only to modern science

but in the first place to “the modern age,” and secondly, to science as the highest expression of that “modern age.”

As noted earlier, it is precisely the reciprocally conditioning relation between subjectivism and objectivism that Heidegger took note of as indicating a more profound event. This interplay between subject and object also provided the clue which Heidegger followed back to the discernment of “the Between” (etc.), and the unconcealing-concealing happening of the Truth as *Ereignis*. Nonetheless, just as Heidegger noted that the modern sense of truth as the clear and lucid certainty of the correspondence between the represented (object) and the representing (subject) was derived from the (historically) former sense of truth as the correctness of a representing, now with the addition of the *cogito* as the standard of that clarity (89), we ourselves must ask what it is about Heidegger’s understanding of Truth which assures, or better, grants the appropriateness of the correspondence between “subject” and “object.” Further, just as Heidegger did not so much challenge truth as correspondence as concern himself with the more profound event of *Ereignis* as its condition, my concern is not so much to challenge Heidegger’s understanding of the four-fold “happening” of the Truth as to wonder about the more profound unity of that four-fold. In particular, I want to explore the kind of unity which obtains amongst the four “elements” of the four-fold, for this unity is the “ground” for the correspondence of subject and object, and therefore is directly relevant to our understanding of representation. Already we have acknowledged that for Heidegger, “There is nothing else from which the Appropriation [*Ereignis*] itself could be derived, even less in whose terms it could be explained” (OWL 127). This is the claim which I am investigating here. Our subsequent attention to Ricoeur and Derrida on representation will help us to advance this inquiry.

First, though, there are clues in Heidegger’s own work of which we must be mindful. There are five principal figures which Heidegger used to convey his sense of this unity. First, there is the betrothal (PLT 180), the marriage (172), and the wedding (93). Second, Heidegger used “the mirror,” though in something of a unique sense. “Each of the four,” he said, “mirrors in its own way the presence of the others,” though this is *not* the portrayal of “a likeness,” as might otherwise be expected from the figure of the mirror (179). Rather than likeness this mirroring directs each of

the four-fold to each of the other three in such a way that each is set free “into its own” while also being bound “into simple belonging to one another” (179). Third, this mirroring is the play discussed in chapter 4 (cf. especially §4.2.2). Fourth, the figure of the dance, specifically the round dance, was used interchangeably with and for the mirror-play (180). Fifth, and finally, Heidegger used mutual indwelling to characterize the simplicity of the fourfold, what he called “the onefold of the fourfold of the four” (173). Though these figures could be construed as different, Heidegger evidently understood them as overlapping and mutually explicative, even as the same. He said, for instance, “The fouring, the unity of the four, presences as the appropriating mirror-play of the betrothed, each to the other in simple oneness. The fouring presences as the worlding of world. The mirror-play of world is the round dance of appropriating” (180). Here betrothal, the mirroring, the play, and the dance are all used to amplify his understanding of the unity in question.

The point for our purposes is that, for Heidegger, representational thinking fails to “reach to the simpleness of the simple onefold of worlding” (180), and most importantly, that failure highlights Heidegger’s distinctive understanding of representation. Specifically, Heidegger claimed that explanation as the mode of understanding peculiar to modern scientific thinking is not the kind of thinking which “responds and recalls” or co-responds to the dance or play of appropriating. In short, scientific or representational thinking does not play its part authentically (or appropriately) in the mirror-play of the four-fold. Condensing Heidegger’s understanding of such thinking, we could say that the kind of corresponding of subject and object characteristic of representational thinking is an entrapping, ensnaring pursuit which disposes of the resources thereby gathered as motivated ultimately by the spirit of revenge (WCT 84f; QCT 126f; PLT 180f; etc.). Its correspondence is both not “deep” enough and in some sense “perverse.”

My own claim, finally, will be that Heidegger’s co-responding is also not deep enough. Furthermore, I am also concerned to retrieve Heidegger’s notions of representation and explanation. Even Heidegger himself insisted that his own overcoming of “representation” was not a rejection: “The step back from the representational thinking of metaphysics does not reject such thinking ... ” (PLT 185). It may yet be, for instance, that the representationalism of “modernism” is not itself responsible for that

vengeful entrapping, ensnaring pursuit which characterizes Heidegger's understanding of modern science. In fact, it may turn out that some sort of representationalism is required for the deepest understanding of human being in relation *both* to beings *and* to "Being." At stake is nothing less than our understanding of Truth, as well as human being as such, not to mention the possible rehabilitation of the sciences, which, under Heidegger's understanding are threatened with abandonment, if not annihilation. As with Heidegger, though, I too would understand the sciences as a derivative matter, dependent in the first place on our (ontological) understanding of ourselves and the Truth. In effect I too am attending to "the appeal of the trueness of Being in which the responding always takes place," what Heidegger meant by the "step back" of thinking (PLT 185). Once again the issue has to do with what that "appeal of the trueness of Being" actually says, or in other (more philosophical) words, the meaning of "Being." To pursue these tasks I turn now first to the thinking of Paul Ricoeur on representation, and then second, to the thinking of Jacques Derrida on representation.

5.3 Ricoeur on representation

5.3.1 Introduction

Ricoeur largely accepted Heidegger's critique of representation (MR 15); and yet he also undertook his own retrieval of that concept. Ricoeur's retrieval of representation is most pertinent for my concerns in that it overlaps with several matters which have already proved central while at the same time challenging Heidegger's understanding of representation. Ricoeur even challenged Heidegger's understanding of truth as concealment/unconcealment, arguably the overarching (or undergirding) notion of Heidegger's "philosophy." In particular, Ricoeur admitted that "philosophy's most serious attempts to question itself" converge upon the concept of representation (31). We are, then, still on our way toward understanding, if not retrieving, philosophy itself. More particularly still, it is that "way" as such which Ricoeur's thinking helps us to both clarify and reconceive.

Before considering Ricoeur's rehabilitation of representation, I very briefly indicate how his considerations and concerns overlap with my own, especially as related to our preceding meditations on Heidegger. Most specifically Ricoeur linked the

method of the (Kantian) schematism to the productive imagination, which itself served as Ricoeur's central concern throughout most of his career (1979a; FM xiii). Finally, it is this understanding of the imagination which is at *play* (Ricoeur's word; MR 15) in his retrieval of representation in terms of *mimesis*, the central strategy of his essay, "Mimesis and representation" (MR; RR 137-155).

In particular, Ricoeur understood the (Kantian) schematism as "a method for giving an image to a concept" (IDA 8); that *method* itself, though, was understood, following G. Bachelard, as "the phenomenon of reverberation, of echoing or resounding" (8; also 6, 15). As Ricoeur expounded this "method," the reverberating imagination is the operative condition "behind" the "Husserlian transcendental reduction" (5), which, as noted in the previous chapter, was reinterpreted by Heidegger as that way of the step-back into "the between" which characterized his retrieval of the transcendental methods of both Kant and Husserl. Ricoeur himself confirmed this convergence with Heidegger's thinking by referring to this process both in terms of suspension or neutralization (8) and as a "leap outside" into a "nonplace" or a "nowhere" (19; also HHS 153; 216). The first two terms respond to Husserl's concerns; the latter terms respond to Heidegger's *Satz* (leap) "into" the Nothing.

Perhaps even more significantly in light of the preceding chapters, Ricoeur understood the imagination's neutralizing-leaping method as exercising a "cutting function" (MR 21; RR 143), especially with regard to the "world" in which we are ordinarily embedded. This is a pivotal point to which I will return. Ricoeur, however, differed from Heidegger in regard to the "location" of this cutting. While for Heidegger the most fundamental "cutting" was the effect of "Being's being present in the word" (PLT 132), thereby tracing language itself (the *Lógos*) as horizon-*templum*, for Ricoeur this "cutting function" was tied directly to representation and to that "explanation" by which Heidegger characterized modern science. Ricoeur did not thereby either refute or replace Heidegger's understanding; rather he proposed an integration of representation and explanation with "Being." We are ready now to take up directly Ricoeur's retrieval of representation.

5.3.2 Representation and Mimesis

The key to Ricoeur's thinking on representation, especially in relation to Heidegger's

“Being,” is his concept of *mimesis*. In short, *mimesis*, for Ricoeur, means “creative imitation” (HHS 180; MR 16; RR 138); it unifies and characterizes Ricoeur’s understanding of the hermeneutic process, itself taken as paradigmatic for understanding human being and activity. While the earlier Ricoeur had designated the three stages of his hermeneutic arc preunderstanding, explanation, and self-understanding, his later works have preferred the terms *mimesis*₁, *mimesis*₂, and *mimesis*₃. Perhaps the greatest gain in this shift of terminology is the unity of the process that results, a troublesome aspect of the earlier conceptions (cf. TRD).

More specifically though, at least as a first approximation, it is the reader who appears as “that operator *par excellence* who takes up the unity of the whole traversal from *mimesis*₁ to *mimesis*₃ by way of *mimesis*₂ through his or her doing something: reading” (MR 18; RR 140). Left as such, this notion would be subject to a form of “modernism.” To avoid such, Ricoeur returned to his own exposition of “that indestructible symbol” which early in his career he also identified as “the striking power of human creativity” (IGEM 110f), identifying this “power” with the imagination according to its “metaphysical function” (126). That “symbol” is human being as “the image of God.” Thus we once again overlap with Heidegger’s meditations, especially the meditations on Hölderlin considered in chapter 3.

We are therefore encouraged to continue to explore just how it is that the “reader as mimetic” provides the needed unity to the tripartite process of *mimesis*. Ricoeur was quite insistent that it is “the language of *praxis*” which allowed him to grant unity to the process while at the same time escaping the difficulties in the traditional conception of representation. That difficulty and its overcoming (or retrieval) is my concern here, while attention to the required “unity” is the clue I will follow.

Stated most pointedly that difficulty is the impossibility of accounting for the unity of or correspondence between the subjective, interior mental reality (whatever form such a subjective state might take) and the objective, exterior real by means of the single term representation whose truth would be the “fitting” correspondence between subject and object. No doubt this difficulty states the problem, and even points to some deeper event as its solution, as Heidegger noted; but it does not itself solve the problem.

It was at this point that Ricoeur introduced the key to his overcoming of “rep-

resentation understood as re-presented presence" (30). That key is the recognition, already noted above, that "it is the reader—or rather the act of reading—that, in the final analysis, is the unique operator of the unceasing passage from *mimesis*₁ to *mimesis*₃ through *mimesis*₂" (MR 28; RR 151). That is, it is *not* just the reader who is responsible for the unity of the process, but "the *act* of reading" which instead of being the act of the reader alone is "the conjoint work of the text and its reader" (29; RR 151). Once again, then, it would seem that we have both the subject (the reader) and the non-subject or object (the text), united in a "conjoint work," but still as an interior and an exterior reciprocally related to each other. Does the parenthetical insertion—"or rather the act of reading"—therefore reintroduce the interior/exterior split which Ricoeur recognized as the difficulty to be overcome? Ricoeur, obviously, would answer "no." Why?

By focusing on the "act of reading" and not just on the act of the reader, Ricoeur sought not only to be phenomenologically precise, but in so doing uncovered that "act" within which, from the perspective of the reader, "invention and discovery can no longer be separated" (30; RR 153). That is, the reader is not simply active, thereby inventing or creating; rather, the reader *also* comes upon and is given that which is found, being in some sense created in that encounter. This is the sense in which *mimesis* as "creative imitation" is the key, for as so defined *mimesis* is both "active" and "passive," both innovative and imitative, and most to the point with regard to retrieving the notion of representation, *mimesis* is thereby an act which "dissolve[s] the opposition between inside and outside" (28; RR 151).

Accordingly, rather than simply reintroducing the interior/exterior split, Ricoeur claimed that the "creative imitation" at play in the human *praxis* of reading testifies to the fact that this "split" "can no longer be separated"; that is, the interior and the exterior do "correspond," but they do so because both are mimetic, both are "active" as creative imitations. The key here is the modifier "creative," for the point is that that which is re-presented is not the real nor the present as that which is "already there and available" (30; RR 152); rather, "the real is everything already prefigured that is also transfigured" (30; RR 153). Ricoeur's point is that though humans never create *ex nihilo*, at least not from (and/or into) an absolute Nothing, we do "create" in a manner which both augments or magnifies the "already there" and discovers

(and participates in the presentation of) that which has not already been present. The “re-” of representation, then, signifies that that which has already been is renewable, that is, it can be made new, really new, without ceasing to maintain continuity (in some sense) with that which it has been. Thus, both continuity and discontinuity, both identity and difference, are equally ultimate in this conception of *mimesis*. The “re-”, then, designates the “unfolding” of an original which has not yet been; it is a repetition which repeats something which has not yet already existed prior to the repetition; it is the re-presentation which makes present what had previously not been present; it is the re-figuration which transfigures what had previously been prefigured. This is the paradox that the modern understanding of representation only partly understood, and its “activity” is the more profound event indicated.

Here too, as with Heidegger, this newness emerges from language, or at least from the conjoint work of “the text and its reader.” In effect, Ricoeur has claimed that the “more profound event” pointed to by the interior/exterior split of representationalism is “that structuring operation that begins in life, is invested in the text, then returns to life” (28; RR 151). Put most pointedly, Ricoeur claimed that “life” and “word” are always already “no longer ... separated.” As evidence of this he spoke of the basic or preliminary readability or figuration of the (human) world (19, 28). It is, then, only because “life” and “word” are mutually implicative and explicative that the correspondence of representationalism can be true, and it is only in terms of this “life-word” that the difficulties of representationalism can be overcome.

I will return to this “life-word” shortly; first, though, it will be useful to consider the sharpest point of contrast between Ricoeur and Heidegger. That contrast has to do with the role of explanation, for while Heidegger identified explanation with representation(alism) (QCT 120f; 127), for Ricoeur explanation is synonymous with *mimesis*₂, the “pivot term” in the mimetic process, indeed, the mediating function of the imagination *par excellence*. Ricoeur’s rehabilitation of representation therefore depends on his understanding of *mimesis*₂.

Without intending to fully elaborate Ricoeur’s understanding of *mimesis*, I begin my consideration of his mimetic retrieval of representation with two highlighted aspects of *mimesis*₂. The first is Ricoeur’s identification of *mimesis*₂ with Aristotle’s understanding of *mythos*, which he translated as emplotment. It is specifically with

this configuring work of *mimesis*₂ that the inside/outside distinction dissolves: “emplotment is an operation about which we may say equivalently either that it draws an intelligible story *from* the various events or incidents ... , or that it makes these events or incidents *into* a story” (MR 23). It is this equivalency which makes discovery and invention indistinguishable.

Secondly, Ricoeur was quite explicit that this configuring act of *mimesis*₂ is practically identical with Kant’s understanding of judgment. The key point is that in both cases it is the transcendental productive imagination which is operative, specifically in its function of “grasping together” (24). Once again we see that it is the imagination which is Ricoeur’s crucial concern, though now understood as a “conjoint work,” that is, as freed from the modern framework of subject and object. That at least has been Ricoeur’s intention. How, though, can the transcendental productive imagination be a “conjoint work”?

“Synthesis” will be the key for answering this question, for in both cases Ricoeur has focused on “synthesis”: for Aristotle, it was “*mythos as synthesis ton pragmaton*, the arrangement of the incidents” (16); for Kant, especially under Ricoeur’s preferred reading (cf. FM), the transcendental productive imagination was uniquely responsible for synthesis. By following Ricoeur on this point we both learn more about the “conjoint work” essential to retrieving representation and discover that Ricoeur’s retrieval is also ultimately very religious, even specifically Christian. It will also lead us to further development of the idea of “cutting.”

I begin by noting with Ricoeur that the creative imitation of *mimesis*₂ finds its “transcendental meaning ... not so much in joining a subject and a predicate as in placing some intuitive manifold under one concept” (MR 24).³ Stated more generally, this is the philosophical problem of identity and difference, which figures so prominently throughout the work of both Heidegger and Ricoeur, and which Ricoeur also identified with both emplotment and synthesis (cf. NG). Earlier I noted that “creative

3 We must remain alert to the notion of ‘concept’ which emerges from these considerations. Fundamentally for Kant (and Ricoeur) a concept is ‘a unity’. Noting this process of “placing some intuitive manifold under one concept” highlights the ‘multiple-ness’ which constitutes the oneness of the concept. As Derrida was fond of noting: there is no unity which is not always already divided, i.e. also multiple as constitutive of its unity.

imitation" is but another name for this "problem." The specifically religious "twist" to Ricoeur's "solution" came in his essay "Naming God" (NG). There Ricoeur confessed that for a previous epoch of thought the doctrine of the Trinity was the "solution" to this philosophical problem (225). The rethinking of that doctrine is, evidently, one way to characterize Ricoeur's own "dialectical labor" (225), a labor which thus far has culminated in the exposition of "the most primordial, most hidden dialectic—the dialectic that reigns between the experience of belonging as a whole and the power of distancing" (RM 313), what he called elsewhere "the fundamental dialectic of discordant concordance" (TN1 73).

No doubt some might object that this religious turn is suspect, if not invalid, especially since in NG Ricoeur had, without further justification, specifically chosen to consider the Bible as his text of preference. Naturally, then, God as the Trinity might emerge, especially for someone of Ricoeur's Christian heritage. Nonetheless, this objection would prove serious only if Ricoeur had not elsewhere admitted that, at least for him, biblical hermeneutics became paradigmatic for all interpretation. It's not that he failed to acknowledge the profound insights of the more specifically philosophical hermeneutics; rather, he claimed that biblical hermeneutics "transforms philosophical hermeneutics" even while incorporating its profound consequences (1979a:xviif). Furthermore, these religious references are not confined to NG. In IGEM, for instance, Ricoeur associated, if not identified, language in general, especially in regard to its more than individual character, with "the Lord [who] allows himself to be called the *Lógos*" and with the Word by which creation proceeded (113). And even in MR he referred to "The Word [who] dwelt among us, was with us, and we did not receive him" (30; RR 152) in order to illustrate the "dangerous" language, whose possibility *mimesis*₂ accomplished by its cutting off function.⁴

It is true that Ricoeur himself has always been quite discreet about his religious preferences and references, even basing such discretion upon his insistence that theology and philosophy are themselves discrete. Nonetheless, if we are to penetrate

⁴ Evidently Ricoeur withdrew this endorsement of the paradigmatic role of biblical hermeneutics. In his latter years he also clarified his personal commitment to Christianity. See TN, Ricoeur 1998; Ricoeur 2009.

the current obscurity of Ricoeur's all important "conjoint work" in order even to understand his mimetic retrieval of representation (and thus, "philosophy's most serious attempts to question itself"), we must continue to press for greater clarity with regard to the contribution of the non-reader to this "conjoint work." What we find is that Ricoeur has rather consistently credited "Language" with being the source of the new meaning of a text, even to the point of minimizing the contribution of the reader.⁵ He said, for instance, that this "act" is an "act of the text" (HHS 162) which is a "process which is at work in the text" (164). It is an action by language on language (163), and it is an "action of language on things" (162) motivated by the ontological vehemence of language itself (218; RM 299f). Ricoeur's description of this "vehemence" hints at "something other than the poet which speaks even as he speaks" (RM 254) and which "seeks to be expressed" (300) "beyond the control of the poet" (254), beyond even the experience of the poet (300); something evidently also operative in all human actions (MR 24). The religiosity of such philosophical, and therefore (for Ricoeur) decidedly non-religious expressions, tells against Ricoeur's strong distinction between philosophy and "religion" (and theology), and in favor of taking his explicitly religious "hints" with more philosophical seriousness.

The perhaps deceptively simple "solution" to understanding Ricoeur's retrieval of representation therefore arrives at the same point we have achieved in the preceding chapters: Understood as the Image of God, representation is itself that more profound event to which the modern philosophical conception of representation points. The problem with the modern understanding of representation, then, is that it does not acknowledge that the human *cogito* as reference point and standard for defining both the subject and the object as well as the representational relation which serves to establish the correspondence between them is itself a representative image of Another. Further, it does not acknowledge that what it has understood as object exists also *in* this Image of God and in some sense *as* itself an image of God. That is, both the modern subject and the modern object exist in and as images, with that which they both image (and/or manifest) being the more profound event, in this case an interPersonal "event," which both establishes human knowledge (of beings)

⁵ E.g. RM 311; HHS 19, 94, 143f, 182, 190-193; IT 94.

as correspondence *and* points to the fulfillment of that knowledge in the knowledge of “Itself.” This, then, is the “mimetic” foundation of Ricoeur’s philosophy and the basis of the unity of his three “stages” of *mimesis*.

5.3.3 Mimesis and “Cutting”

Ricoeur also admitted that the possibility of the unity of the three “stages” of *mimesis* depends in a unique manner on *mimesis*₂. This is not surprising given the mediatorial function of *mimesis*₂; it is the gateway from *mimesis*₁ to *mimesis*₃. Moreover, *mimesis*₂ is Ricoeur’s response to both the Heideggerean “Nothing” and the post-structural concern with the text. In brief, *mimesis*₂ is responsible for “the production of a quasi-world of action through the activity of emplotment” (MR 21); it “opens the kingdom of the *as if*” (TN1 64). We have already touched on the kinship of emplotment with both Aristotle’s *mythos* and Kant’s transcendental imagination. A consideration of this “quasi-world of action” leads us directly to what Ricoeur called the “cutting function of *mimesis*₂” (21; RR 143f).

This “cutting function” is directly related to the status of the text as a text, i.e. its “triple autonomy”: with regard to the original author (the presumed intention), the reception of the first audience, and the original socio-cultural conditions of its production. *Mimesis*₂, then, accomplishes a transference into the “nowhere” noted earlier, what Ricoeur, as early as 1960, had called the realm of “the inherent possibilities of man” (IGEM 127). On the same page Ricoeur also referred to literature, that “worldless place” (HHS 216) “cut ... off from the world of actual action” (MR 21), as “the *sword* of denunciation and scandal” (IGEM 127; emphasis added). In fact, it is precisely the characteristics of language highlighted by semiotics and modern poetics which Ricoeur credited with this “cutting function.” In particular, Ricoeur emphasized the atemporality and universality of language as *la langue* (HHS 192; 94), even using language itself as the model for the intelligibility of *mimesis*₂ (153; 216ff). Because there is this non-place and non-time which literature can elaborate and narrate, there is the possibility of both critiquing and augmenting the real. In fact, for Ricoeur, the possibility of augmenting the real serves as the basis and condition of the critique of the actual.

What, though, is the condition for the possibility of this “cutting” which opens

new possibilities of (human) being while at the same time separating us from the more traditional and established ways? Ricoeur has given two such conditions. First, there must be a realm of human possibilities which is somehow both specifically human and transcendent, at least in the senses of the atemporality and universality inherent in "language." I have already referred to this as the realm of "the inherent possibilities of man." Ricoeur also referred to this "realm" as the "reservoir of meaning" (HHS 119, 181), Being, the generative matrix of the productive imagination (TN1 68), and even as life-giving (RM 303).

The second condition for the possibility of "cutting" is Being itself understood as "being-as" (RM 313; TN1 xi). In MR Ricoeur expressed this priority of the "as" by saying that "*mimesis* ... is ahead of our concepts of reference, the real, and truth" (31). *Mimesis*, then, is ("on the deepest ontological level," TN1 xi) yet another designation for that *a priori* realm of all human possibilities. Indeed, because Being itself is "being-as," the configuring activity of "*mimesis*₂ opens the kingdom of the *as if*" to human beings (TN1 64). This is especially the case because *mimesis*₂ is the "conjoint work" of the reader and the text; or more generally, following Ricoeur's use of the text as the model for all meaningful human action (HHS 197ff; OAA), *mimesis*₂ is the "conjoint work" of the human and "language." The "as," then, expresses the kinship between humans and Being/"language"/the generative matrix, etc.; it is the fundamental "likeness" expressed as the "in" of Heidegger's being-*in*-the-world, etc. It is also that realm in which Heidegger said "we would like to become at home" (PLT 192); and, following Hölderlin, it is essentially related to the Godhead (219, 226).

Because of the "religiosity" which has consistently intruded throughout these meditations—or better, though relegated to the margins of philosophy, shown itself to be both central and determinative—I am now willing to wager that the heart of Ricoeur's *mimesis* is best located from his "more explicitly religious" essays. It is here that we return to the centrality of the "life-word" noted earlier.

Evidently, the conjoint actor which acts along with the human "reader/actor" is language, understood both as atemporal and universal (as with the "object" studied by semiotics) and as the living realm of all human possibility and meaning. Just as Ricoeur expressed the unity of the three-stage process of human understanding/being alternatively in terms of *mimesis*, *praxis*, and the "life-word," we are warranted

in considering these expressions as mutually explicative variants designating the same referent. For instance, the same *a priori* universality, necessity, and atemporality are proclaimed by both the “life-word” and *mimesis*, understood as “ahead of our concepts of reference, the real, and truth” (MR 31).⁶

Interestingly, then, Ricoeur’s special contribution to our understanding of these central philosophical categories of reference, the real, concepts, and the truth is due to this *a priori* mimetic quality of the “life-word.” In particular, he recognized that the priority of *mimesis-praxis* introduced a “split” into each of those categories, opening our human being-in-the-world to its most profound referent and thereby also introducing a “split” into human being itself. Here we confront Ricoeur’s determined effort to maintain the suspension of the transcendent to which he remained committed as proper to philosophy per se. Therefore to press beyond that intentional suspension (or perhaps, to simply relax this suspension as unnecessary, and maybe even an ethically suspect suppression) once again puts philosophy itself into question, a point which Ricoeur himself clearly recognized (31). Indeed, it raises the question of the condition for the possibility of that same intentional suspension and the “splits” it introduces.

Already we have some indication of Ricoeur’s position: human being exists within the vast generative matrix of meaningful possibilities granted to it by that always prior “being-as” known as *mimesis-praxis*—“life-word.” It is this vastness, the super-abundant surplus, which is the immediate bearer of “the sword” which splits our traditional concepts; and yet that “cutting function” always finds “fault-lines” within that which is determined by its relation to that always already split “being-as” known as *mimesis-praxis*—“life-word”.

It is here that Ricoeur’s essays “Naming God” (NG) and “The image of God and the epic of man” (IGEM) prove decisive, especially if we acknowledge with him that biblical hermeneutics is paradigmatic for all human interpretation-being. In the first

6 Similarly, one wonders about the “overlap” between *praxis* and the life-word suggested by Goethe’s translation of John 1, “In the beginning was the Act.” Before such a suggestion is dismissed too hastily, it would be wise to consider the range of meaning of the Hebrew *דְּבַר*, the personal activity of that Word, and the Scriptural “description” of the written word of God as “living and active.” Note also Ricoeur’s own linkage of *mimesis* with *wirken*, *Wirklich* (MR 30).

of those essays he recognized that the “ultimate” and “overarching referent” of the Biblical text must be acknowledged as God (NG 217; 225). Even more is this the case if we allow Ricoeur’s admission that God is “the meaning of meaning” (222). In the second essay, the Lord Jesus was confessed as the Divine *Logos* who is not only “the orthodox answer” to the question regarding the superabundance of grace, the *Lógos*-grace which now constitutes the vast realm of human possibilities, but is also likened to language itself in its more ordinary acceptations. If we allow these references to overlap, as Ricoeur’s confession permits, then we once again find that “the orthodox answer” quite naturally fits the philosophical descriptions and even follows the barely disguised hints left by Ricoeur himself (e.g. IGEM 113, 120).

Evidently, then, we might expect to be driven by the “ontological vehemence” of language itself, mediated by the vast possibilities inherent in the incarnate-Divine *Lógos*, to yield to that sacrificial “cutting leap” (MR 21, 30; IDA 19) which defines human being itself as finally the creative imitation of its ownmost and most “originary referential function” (NG 218), a creative imitation of “Being” which finds epistemological expression in every human act, of reading or otherwise. It is in this sense that Ricoeur has elaborated “the striking power of human creativity” which he took to be the heart of that “indestructible symbol” entitled “the image of God” (IGEM 110f). Our remaining task is now to bring this elaboration to bear more precisely on our philosophical understanding of representation and representational thinking.⁷

5.3.4 Summary

For Ricoeur, then, the three-fold polysemy of *mimesis* enriches representation, thereby liberating it from the subject-object schema of modern philosophy, replacing or retrieving it by means of a new understanding of reference, the real, and truth, all as governed by the *a priori* of *mimesis*. Ricoeur’s unique contribution is taken to its limit by the resultant understanding of truth which claims to circumvent the modern “model of truth as adequation,” while also challenging Heidegger’s understanding of truth as manifestation (MR 31). Considering Ricoeur’s new model of truth, which he admitted is still insufficient (31), will focus my own concerns.

⁷ Incidentally, Ricoeur’s understanding of the image of God also incorporates the two ways of good and evil noted with regard to “cutting” in the last chapter; cf. IGEM 112.

The reason that *mimesis* breaks free from the modern understanding of representation is the same reason it thwarts the illusions of truth as a subject-object correspondence founded in the human *cogito*: the “representation” which *mimesis* presents is not a re-presented presence pre-conformed to any existent, culture-bound standard of human “subjectivity,” but rather “a fitting production” produced by the conjoint work of the mimetic human being and a universal “necessity” within which human *mimesis* acts vigorously and freely (31). That is, that which is “represented” by *mimesis* is neither just invented nor discovered; it is neither just “inside” nor “outside”; it is neither entirely “old” nor entirely “new”; it is *both* prefigured in the given *and* transfigured by creative imitation.

There is, then, a correspondence according to Ricoeur’s understanding of truth, just as there is for Heidegger’s. The difference between Ricoeur and Heidegger is not really that Heidegger emphasized or overemphasized the priority of the manifestation of “Being,” while Ricoeur gave more of a role to the inventive activity of human beings, for Ricoeur too admitted that even the sense of invention gives way to a kind of “fitting-necessity” (30f), while Heidegger also placed mortals within the ultimacy (and intimacy) of the four-fold. Nonetheless, Ricoeur was correct to sense a “decisive” difference between them.

The major difference, rather, is between whether or not Heidegger’s *Ereignis/Es gibt* is ultimate or derived. As noted earlier, for Heidegger “There is nothing else from which the Appropriation [*Ereignis*] itself could be derived, even less in whose terms it could be explained” (OWL 127). For Ricoeur, on the other hand, this more profound event pointed to by the modern understanding of correspondence is itself mimetic, that is, it is in some sense “derived,” though not in such a way that it is not also “original.” This “derived originality” which is equally an “original derivation” is, therefore, the key to understanding Ricoeur’s mimetic overcoming or retrieval of representation.⁸ In the next section we will find that it is also the key to understanding Derrida’s thinking.

I said above that this difference between Ricoeur and Heidegger is “decisive,”

⁸ It must, however, be admitted that from Heidegger too there are hints that the *Ereignis/es gibt* is not, in fact, ultimate. Cf. the discussions of *ho nomos* in chapters 3 and 4 above.

purposely using the quotation marks. The quotes are themselves decisive, for the way I am reading Heidegger and Ricoeur points to a convergence, especially in terms of their unsaid, or barely hinted at, "religiosity." No doubt there are gains of explicitness in this regard from Ricoeur's work. In particular, Ricoeur's Christian references "correct" Heidegger's preference for the Greek-neutral in favor of the Hebrew-personal (RM 312), or perhaps better, given the centrality of the "Doctrine of the Trinity" noted above, in favor of the Christian-intra/interpersonal. This latter point is crucial for it is the means by which we would be able to advance our understanding of truth in the ways already sketched by Ricoeur. Specifically, we would be able to maintain valid aspects of both truth as adequation and truth as manifestation, while also elaborating a "multivocal concept of truth, one that would fuse, at its margins, with the concept of rightness" (MR 31). It would also "fuse" with a "giving" which would be the giving of "a body, a contour, a face to discourse" (IDA 7). Such giving is both intrinsic and explicit in Ricoeur's understanding of mimetic-figuration. This is also the mimetic notion of truth prefigured above with Ricoeur's help, a prefiguration which I am reconfiguring so as to quite literally merge with the body-face of "the orthodox answer," the Person of Christ Jesus, the incarnate Second Person of the Eternal Trinity.⁹

What, therefore, becomes of "representational thinking" under this Ricoeur-Heidegger exchange? Certainly Heidegger's strong distinction between representational, scientific calculation and reflective or meditative thinking is softened. Representation per se no longer appears as the culprit responsible for that vengeful, pursuing, entrapping, storing up, compartmentalizing by which Heidegger so often characterized modern science in particular and the modern age in general. Instead "representational thinking" became under Ricoeur's retrieval a poetic-like process likened to the reverberating-resonating sensitivity charted so richly by G. Bachelard. I will postpone until the next chapter the further elaboration of this new form of thinking,

⁹ It must also be admitted, however, that Ricoeur's formulations are also further corrected, or at least liberated, through juxtaposition with Heidegger's. I have in mind especially the greater clarity Heidegger brings with regard to transcendence, still so muted in Ricoeur's work. Nonetheless, Heidegger's own understanding of transcendence is itself corrected, or at least liberated, by giving Ricoeur's "Christian references" greater play, indeed, greater play than Ricoeur himself has allowed.

only noting here that it promises both a retrieval of the scientific method and a *rapprochement* between faith and reason. Our consideration of Derrida's understanding of representation in the next section will advance our discussions even further in that direction.

5.4 Derrida on representation

5.4.1 Introduction

Derrida's discussions of representation are intrinsic to my own concerns for a variety of reasons. First of all, he has written on the topic with special reference to Heidegger's understanding of representation (SOR). Secondly, he too has recognized representation as itself representative of Western philosophy as such. Thirdly, and most to the point here, Derrida's understanding of representation merges with his explicit treatment of Christianity (OS). Without repeating a detailed discussion accomplished elsewhere,¹⁰ several points are worth reiterating here.

First of all, Derrida linked western philosophy with a certain understanding of the origin of truth, the origin of truth with a certain understanding of origin in general, and origin in general with representation. Derrida's "strategy," then, has been to "deconstruct" philosophy, truth, origin, and representation together. I will focus particularly on his deconstruction of origin in general and its relation to representation. Then I will briefly elaborate his deconstructed understanding of representation. We will find that here too both "the crucified" (Derrida's *Menschenschlag*) and the trinity (his own version of father-son-spirit)¹¹ emerge as determinative, and perhaps most surprisingly to some, without any special pleading. However, before pursuing that direction, I must add a bit more to the linkages just mentioned.

Derrida made it quite plain that Western philosophy is practically synonymous with ascribing the origin of truth to the *lógos* understood as speech. This is the characterization of the Western tradition as logocentric and phonocentric for which Derrida is well-known. He wrote, for instance, that

¹⁰ Cf. SIG, chapter 7, especially §5.

¹¹ Derrida's "trinity" only begins to emerge in this chapter, especially in terms of the *Menschenschlag* (as "son") and "the spirit." The specifically, and more fully, trinitarian "structure" comes to further expression in chapters 6 and 7.

The history of (the only) metaphysics, which has, in spite of all differences, not only from Plato to Hegel (even including Leibniz) but also, beyond these apparent limits, from the pre-Socratics to Heidegger, always assigned the origin of truth in general to the *logos*: the history of truth, of the truth of truth, has always been ... the debasement of writing, and its repression outside "full" speech (OG 3).

Following up on this traditional speech/writing relation, Derrida thereby introduced both the role of representation in that tradition as well as the problematic of "the origin." Here too I quote Derrida himself, this time with reference to Saussure's understanding of writing as a *representation* of speech. Given the privileged place of the *lógos*-speech-writing relations in Derrida's understanding of the history of Western metaphysics, his rethinking of the speech-writing relation likewise entails the simultaneous renewal of representation, as the following citation makes clear:

Representation mingles with what it represents, to the point where one speaks as one writes, one thinks as if the represented were nothing more than the shadow or reflection of the representer. In this play of representation, the point of origin becomes ungraspable. There are things like reflecting pools, and images, an infinite reference from one to the other, but no longer a source, a spring. There is no longer a simple origin. For what is reflected is split *in itself* and not only as an addition to itself of its image. The reflection, the image, the double, splits what it doubles. The origin of the speculation becomes a difference. What can look at itself is not one; and the law of the addition of the origin to its representation, of the thing to its image, is that one plus one makes at least three (OG 36).

Later I will return to this implicit reference to Derrida's trinity alluded to by the last sentence.¹² Here, though, I want to continue to explicate his understanding of this origin (in general), which is "no longer a simple origin," noting in due course the different sense of representation which emerges along with Derrida's understanding of the "origin."

Rather than being "simple," this origin is *différent*; it is Derrida's explication of that curious "re-" which we also noted as determinative of Ricoeur's mimetic retrieval of *re*-presentation. Derrida's burden has been to show that "There is no longer a simple origin. For what is reflected [or represented] is split *in itself* and not only as an addition to itself of its image. The reflection, the image, the double, [the representation] splits what it doubles" (OG 36). Or, approached from the perspective of "the double" rather

¹² Cf. especially chapter 7, § 7.2.4.

than “the simple,” Derrida described this double as “... a double that doubles no simple, a double that nothing anticipates, nothing at least that is not itself already double” (D 206). Essentially Derrida has been claiming and demonstrating (for a long time now) that representation is as equally ultimate as that which is represented by the representation.¹³ In place of the simple origin upon which the traditional philosophical understanding of the represented-representation relation depends, Derrida offers “an irreducible and *generative* multiplicity” whose “turbulence” always “fracture[s] the limit of the text, forbidding an exhaustive and closed formalization of it, or at least a saturating taxonomy of its themes, its signified, its meaning” (P 45). Otherwise stated, Derrida’s annotates this “re-” as “the movement of play that ‘produces’ ... differences” (DIF 141). We have, then, returned to another take on the Heideggerean mirror-play, which also served to replace the traditional understanding of representation.

Derrida’s exposition or display, however, goes “behind” mirror-play as such to what he called “the tain” or backside of the representing mirror. In effect, Derrida has combined the Heideggerean “mirror-play” with Heidegger’s concern to go beyond the “horizon” of transcendental thinking to that which grants the horizon as horizon. The structure—and Derrida has been very concerned with “structural” issues—of the deconstructed version of representation is, therefore, the same as the “structure” of that “tain,” what he also called the infrastructural chain(s) “composed” of the “re-”, *différance*, the supplement, iterability, the re-mark, etc.

Remembering that for Heidegger “To represent means ... a calculating, *for calculability alone guarantees being certain in advance*” (149; emphasis added), this deconstructed notion of representation amounts to a “‘revenge’ of the incalculable.” This

13 Cf. also, “What is is not what it is, identical and identical to itself, unique, unless it *adds to itself* the possibility of being *repeated* as such. And its identity is hollowed out by that addition, withdraws itself in the supplement that presents it (D 168). Similarly, Gasché: “... the unity of these originary syntheses is not unitary” (TM 224); “To explain duplicity and doubling presupposes an originary doubling, which would not be preceded by any unity, and which thus annuls the traditional restriction of doubling to a matter of accidentality and secondariness” (225); “... an *a priori*, and from the start irreducible, double, ... ‘a double rootedness’, ... a duplication that constitutes the simple” (226). I might add that though I said “Essentially Derrida has been claiming ...,” the meaning of “essence” is itself “structured” by this same claim.

means that an irreducible, ineradicable, and therefore unavoidable “undecidability” must be acknowledged at the heart of all philosophical concepts, indeed, all reality. As Derrida put it, “the point of origin becomes ungraspable.” What Heidegger had recognized as the invisible shadow of the incalculable¹⁴ returns to make tremble the very ground of the Cartesian security which established the real as the representable within the modern epoch of science and technology. In this regard Derrida joins the Heideggerean project, though not thereby accepting the mirror-play of *Ereignis* as ultimate.¹⁵

By challenging the ultimacy of Heidegger’s *Ereignis*, Derrida also crossed paths with Ricoeur’s *mimesis*, which, as we saw in the preceding sections, also involves a pointing back to something more ultimate. My concern here is not to compare Derrida and Ricoeur on these matters.¹⁶ Instead I am intrigued that more recently Derrida has associated this unavoidable “undecidability” with the “faith which defeats any narrative,” indeed a faith beyond “erasure” (OS 130). As promised, then, we find Derrida’s deconstructed notion of representation merging with “faith.” I turn now to amplify this merger.

5.4.2 Representation and faith

Interestingly, in *Of Spirit* Derrida wrote that not only is this deconstructed version of representation that which “makes all this [=his] thinking hum” (108), but this “supplement of originarity” (90), this “origin of the origin,” this “*origin-heterogeneous*,” is also, at least according to Derrida’s understanding of Heidegger, “the origin of Christianity: the spirit of Christianity or the essence of Christianity” (109). This is so because it is “earlier,” more original (107).

It is at this point in Derrida’s text that he turned to a constructed dialogue between “Heidegger and certain Christian theologians” (109), the point of which was to show that Heidegger’s thinking was not really so distinct from Christianity as he

¹⁴ E.g. “This becoming incalculable remains the invisible shadow that is cast around all things everywhere when man has been transformed into *subiectum* and the world into picture” (AWP 135).

¹⁵ Though this shadow is invisible, it still “points to something else, which it is denied to us of today to know” (AWP 136). That “something else” which is “denied to subjectivity itself to experience” (153) is the “disclosing event [*Ereignis*]” (153).

¹⁶ Some of that comparison I have done elsewhere (cf. SIG, chapter 6).

often seemed to insist. Finally these theologians, who are given the final word, say to Heidegger: “you hear us better than you think or pretend to think” (113). The crucial point, and the note on which this pretended dialogue (as well as OS) ends, is that the “path of repetition” which Heidegger recommended, what we have called retrieval, “crosses the path of the entirely other” (113). It returns to “the land of pre-archi-originary” (111) by means of “a resurrection to come of the *Menschenschlag* from the dawn” (110). This not only rejoins Ricoeur’s own deployment of the resurrection’s own logic, a deployment which “obviates the logic of repetition” (CI 412) and which is identical with what he later called “creative imitation,” but it also confirms our earlier understanding of “the Crucified” in Heidegger’s understanding of “Being.” While referring to that “cross-shaped crossing-through under which one leaves Being or God to suffer,” Derrida was quite explicit that “crossing is not a neutral word” (OS 112).

Thus, Derrida’s own link between representation and faith is also this *Menschenschlag*, though it comes by way of what he called the gage, “a sort of pre-originary pledge [gage]” (130), itself responsible for any “thought about *Ereignis*” (135). It is this event “before any other event” (including *Ereignis*!) to which “we are linked by a faith which defeats any narrative” (130). This is the pre-originary “will have been” (130) by which Derrida characterized his work, *Of Spirit* (127), and by means of which our (pre-originary) faith is also linked to the *Menschenschlag*. Three separate lines converge on this conclusion.

First of all, Derrida’s biblical allusions are irrepressible, even though he admitted that “all this seems ‘a little comical’” (125):¹⁷ “In the beginning—no beginning [*pas de commencement*: also ‘a beginning step’]. ... in the beginning, there *will have been*, ghost of the future perfect ... *de l’esprit*” (127). This reference will also be of special interest to us later, for as is well known, the original reference alluded to refers to the

17 It is not clear to me just what to make of this “a little comical.” For myself, to take this as some sort of disparagement of Christianity would be premature, if not uncharitable, particularly in light of Derrida’s own constructed dialogue between “Heidegger and certain Christian theologians” noted above, especially given Derrida’s own evident deep respect for Heidegger and his work. This, however, is not the end of the story, for above I take further note of Derrida’s faulty understanding of Christianity.

Lógos, whose origin has been ascribed to “the Most High, the sole and unique origin of language” (77).¹⁸

Might we then recall, by way of mimetic resonance, “In the beginning was ...”?; or, “before Abraham was, I am”? If so, however, could we then still affirm such a “One,” such a “will have been,” both as the incarnate Word of John 1:1, 14 and as “pledge [gage]”? Inasmuch as that *gage* is—according to Derrida, though contrary to the claims of Heidegger—not “*origin-heterogeneous* to all the testaments, all the promises, all the events, all the laws and assignments which are our very memory” (107), such an affirmation need only echo the great prophecies of Isaiah (e.g. 42:6; 49:8).

Secondly, Derrida himself closed his important long footnote dealing with the *gage* (f.n. #5; OS 129-136) by quoting Heidegger’s own reference to the act of *Ereignis* “as that Saying [*Zusage*; promise, pledge] in which language grants its essential nature to us” because “It has in fact already struck its target—whom else but man?” (OWL 90). The “struck-man” ... is this not the *Menschenschlag*, the one afflicted with the greatness of “the mighty pain”?¹⁹ Quoting Heidegger (on Trakl) here almost sounds like a set-up: “God’s speaking is the speaking which assigns to man a stiller nature, and so calls on him to give that response by which man rises from what is authentic ruin up into earliness,” that “earliness” which “saves mankind” unto that “stiller home of the homecoming generation” (196). It was, after all, that “earliness” which guided Derrida’s translation of “the structure of the gage ... [as] ‘it is already too late, always too late’ ” (OS 132), the reason being that the beginning always “will have been” (130). One well might think, then, that the above quoted “God’s speaking” is, therefore, another Heideggerean expression for that (in)famous intersecting of poetry and thinking like “parallels ... in the infinite” (OWL 90). Regardless, this “striking”-Saying-*gage* is the link between ourselves and the “originary alliance” of the always “will have been” of language to which “we [as human beings] must have in some sense already acquiesced, already said *yes*” (129); we might call it the

¹⁸ This overlaying of “the word” with “spirit” also recalls the *dvoika* introduced in chapter 2.

¹⁹ This *Menschenschlag*, then, is the one de-signed by that cut itself engraved by the intersection of the poetic word and thinking at the infinite (90)? Struck by the word, and split ... these are picked up by Derrida’s series of *Geschlecht* essays; cf. e.g. OS 106; also OWL 195.

“mark of faith,” which after “its wandering” re-replaces faithless Cain’s mark with “homecoming” (196).

Thirdly, I hyphenate “re-replaces” because Derrida has also been quite insistent that “we cannot take seriously the [i.e. Heidegger’s] imperative of such a recommencement,” i.e. beginning our thinking (and our lives) again “taking as the point of departure the en-gage [*l’engage*: cf. *langage*]” (OS 131). I have already acknowledged that this insistence does validate the two ways of the biblical covenants (“gages”), especially the way(s) of apartness. It is here, though, that Derrida’s own convictions support his faulty understanding of Christianity as put into the mouths of those “Christian theologians” who had difficulty distinguishing their beliefs and understandings from Heidegger’s thought (OS 109-113). In particular, Derrida’s constructed dialogue rests on the crucial “resurrection to come of the *Menschenschlag* from the dawn” (110). Certainly if that “resurrection” is only future, perhaps always only future, if it has not already occurred, then naturally “we cannot take seriously the imperative of such a recommencement.” It is with regard to this particular point that the Christian *kerygma* is especially *philosophically* pertinent!

Thus I say that our (pre-originary) faith is linked to the *Menschenschlag*. How, though, is that faith linked to representation?

Derrida closed his article “Sending: On Representation” (SOR) with a consideration of the unrepresentable, what Heidegger had called the incalculable. It was at that point that he introduced the possible significance of the second of the Ten Commandments: You shall not make for yourself any ... “representation” as an object of worship (“representation” is Derrida’s suggestion of a more or less legitimate translation, SOR 135). Derrida took up this Commandment again in his final paragraph, linking our problem of representation with both “the law” and with “death.” Further, just as “the wholly-other, the God of the Commandments” figures prominently in this discussion in SOR (135), so too is it the note on which OS ends.²⁰ We are, then, also still very much involved in the concerns of the preceding chapters.

In characteristic fashion, then, Derrida made quite explicit that the “hum” from

²⁰ The last two sentences of OS are: “The spirit which keeps watch in returning [*en revenant*, as a ghost] will always do the rest. Through flame or ash, but as the entirely other, inevitably” (113).

which his thinking was generated and to which all his considerations of representation have been “ceaselessly referring” is that *différance* which does not have the “structure of representatives or of representation” (135f). Nothing, however, is ever quite so simple with Derrida’s *différance*.

Even though Derrida admitted, while referring to Kafka, that his concern has been with that which is “neither presentable nor representable” (137), the typical “logic” of *différance* is the logic of “both ... and” + “neither (just) ... nor (just) ... ” where the “+” itself means “both ... and” + “neither ... nor,” endlessly. Nonetheless, it is true I think that Derrida often overprioritizes his insistence on multiplicity, as he has also done here.²¹ And indeed, while claiming that “This divisibility or this *différance* is the condition ... of the present and of representation” (136), he also readily admitted that such a “condition” is *not* like the “original and transcendental conditions on the basis of which philosophy traditionally” has carried out its thinking (136). Accordingly, *différance* (together with its infrastructurally chained “relatives”) is therefore the condition for the deconstructive retrieval of representation. Though in SOR Derrida did not actually provide such a retrieval, he did point the way. Here too, though, we find that Derrida’s faulty understanding of, or resistance to, the Christian *kerygma* is philosophically determinative.

I begin a brief demonstration of that point by first of all linking Derrida’s treatment of “the entirely other” on the last page of OS with his treatment of “the prohibition of representation” on the last page of SOR. In OS Derrida had Heidegger say that his concern with the conditions for “the possibility of metaphysics or pneumato-spiritual religions opens onto something quite other than what the possibility makes possible” (113). Thus just as Heidegger’s “path of repetition which adds nothing [=No-thing?]” (112) grants access to this possibility, so too Derrida’s own *différance* is the possibility of representation, etc. (SOR 136). In that metaphysics and representation are practically synonymous for both Heidegger and Derrida, the two perspectives have crossed: the point which Heidegger took up in terms of the overcoming of metaphysics, Derrida addressed in terms of “the prohibition of representation.” Just as in the former case Derrida had Heidegger say “the path of a repetition ... crosses the path of the entirely

²¹ Cf. SIG, especially chapter 7 (§3.2.3.2), for further argumentation and documentation of this point.

other" (OS 113), in the latter case Derrida acknowledged that "perhaps law itself [i.e. the Prohibition] outreaches any representation" (SOR 137) because it has to do with "the wholly-other" (135).

It is wholly legitimate, then, to wonder just how this "wholly-other" to which "the law" points in outreaching any representation is related to that *différance* to which Derrida had "at once insistently and elliptically" been referring throughout SOR (135). A second wonderment arises from Derrida's allusion to death as "the 'entry' into it [i.e. that to which the law outreaches]" (SOR 137). I now consider these two wonderments, the second first.

Within a parenthetical remark Derrida brought together the Jewish "guardian of the law" and "the man from the country," doubtless a reference to Heidegger (likely as also, somewhat paradoxically, the quintessential "Greek") (SOR 137). These two are conjoined (by the "and") as both being "before the law ... at the cost of never coming to see it, never being able to arrive at it" (137). The "it" here is "the law" understood as outreaching representation; "it" is also Heidegger's *Es* of the *Es gibt*, just as "the law" is also his *Ereignis*. It is Derrida who is here bringing together, if not fusing, the law of the Jews (the Ten Commandments/Words) and Heidegger's *Ereignis*, a point which has already gained plausibility in the preceding chapters. Further though, Derrida (still within parentheses) also drew attention to what he called in OS "the thinking *access*" to the "*origin-heterogeneous*," which, if not identical with "the entirely other," at least crosses its path (113). In SOR, on the other hand, that "'entry' into [that which outreaches representation]" is recognized as "death" (137). Here too we have already acknowledged that Heidegger's "path of repetition" is also the "way of 'death'" (cf. chapter 4).

It is, however, at this point that representation returns. As noted earlier Derrida has not banished representation; rather he "deconstructed" the traditional philosophical notion in favor of a *différent* version. His telling of "this story differently" has been to introduce *différance* into representation, and perhaps even more to the point, representation into *différance* (SOR 136). That is, the pre-original split or doubling of *différance* "is" the pre-original origin of representation; split, doubling, *representation*, reflection, image, etc., therefore, all say the same thing. The point is, first of all, that Derrida has in fact provided a non-representational version of representation; and

secondly, according to the reading just offered, his *différent* notion of representation coalesces with, or at least “crosses the path of,” the “wholly other.” The quotes around “wholly other” now take on another, and even more pertinent, meaning: if this crossing is acknowledged, then the “wholly other” is not *wholly* other. And even more particularly, my proposal is that *différance* thereby becomes a (*différent*) representation of that Other. I mean that in two senses: first, the whole of this (*différent*) Other is reflected in *différance* as the representation of that Other; and second, the specifically *différent-ness* of *différance* is also a representation of the *différent-ness* “internal” to or inherently constitutive of this Other. These two senses are not really distinct, but instead seek to preserve what I have been calling the equal ultimacy of identity and difference. In effect, then, I am saying that Derrida’s *différance* is his elaboration, in Ricoeur’s terms, of “the doctrine of the trinity” (NG 225), whose reflections and functions he has discerned within texts with uncanny astuteness.

It is in this way, then, that I find that Derrida’s consideration of the “supplement of originarity” (OS 90), the “origin of the origin,” the “*origin-heterogeneous*,” not only blends with his understanding of Heidegger on “the origin of Christianity,” but the latter also blends with the “heart” of Derrida’s ownmost concerns. My own undertaking of introducing an engagement of philosophical thinking about representation (and representational thinking) with biblical categories, especially faith, likewise proves to be already well under way, for at the heart of Derrida’s understanding is an “en-gaged” and non-deconstructible faith (130). Only a few concluding comments need now be offered.

5.5 Concluding comments

We have found in the three cases considered—Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida—that a careful consideration of the traditional notion of representation has developed into a new and different understanding of representation. For Heidegger that retrieved understanding of representation took the form of the four-fold mirror-play; for Ricoeur representation was retrieved in terms of *mimesis*; and for Derrida, representation became decidedly *différent*. In all three cases representation retained something of the traditional notion of the image.

Further though, the philosophical purport of certain Christian “doctrines” contin-

ues to emerge. These doctrines have to do with “the Crucified” representative, the Trinity, the image of God (both as the God-man and as determinative of human being), the covenant, and faith. The point of these meditations and demonstrations is that these doctrines, or better, that which they have sought to articulate, have a specifically philosophical pertinence. My supposition, then, is that such meditations, what might be called a Christian retrieval, already give indications of what a specifically Christian philosophy might be without yet elaborating those intimations.

In what follows I will continue to interweave philosophy (and the Heideggerian-like “post-philosophy”) with the corresponding Christian thought forms. The next chapter continues our thinking about thinking, especially in relation to faith, and again, with special reference to Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida. Chapter 7 takes up another key notion for both the philosophers being considered here as well as for more traditional Christian thinking, in particular, spirit, and for Derrida, his “trinity” (chapter 7, § 2.4.). Chapter 8, then, addresses the concern as to whether these thought forms are philosophical transpositions of theological themes or whether here too a distinction, this time between philosophy and theology, is proving inadequate to the nature of the case being demonstrated.

6 Thinking and faith

6.1 Introduction

Earlier I claimed—admittedly, somewhat provocatively—that what Heidegger called “thinking,” the Apostle Paul called “faith.” Nonetheless, it continues to astound me that others would find this claim either unbelievable or unthinkable. Recall, for instance, that the original 1930’s version of Heidegger’s much reworked essay, “On the essence of truth” (pub. 1943; Ger. 4th edition, 1961), bore as its main title “Philosophizing and believing,” with “The essence of truth” given in parentheses as its subtitle. Furthermore, Heidegger was quite explicit in his opening paragraph that

... the task of the lecture is stated by the main title. The main title says what is to be dealt with, philosophizing and believing, thus not philosophy and theology. The subtitle states how we are to set about the task ... , [viz.,] by questioning concerning the essence of truth.

As Sallis has pointed out, Heidegger identified “original believing” with “original knowing” as that most profound of human relations to “the essence of truth” (1993:43).¹

Moreover, almost from the beginning of his published works until the end, Heidegger explicated his preferred method of thinking as a “letting oneself go into ...” (WM 349), even calling it the “sacrifice” of “essential thinking” (358). It is this “essential thinking” to which we have already attended as Heidegger’s retrieval of philosophy per se. Shortly I will return to this sacrificial yielding or beholdenness to the opening (and withdrawing) Openness to show its structural and conceptual similarity, if not identity, with believing.

As is also well known, Heidegger identified this sacrificial thinking with “original thanking” (358; WCT 138ff).² Since “the original word ‘thanc’ is imbued with the original nature of memory” (WCT 141), thinking for Heidegger was essentially commemorative or meditative (DT; WCT). Derrida, citing the *Vorlesung* of June 20, 1952,

¹ I am grateful for Sallis 1993, “Deformatives: Essentially other than truth,” for these references; cf. pp. 42ff.

² So uncharacteristic is it, given his excessive appreciation of the Greek and German languages, that Heidegger’s evocation of the close relation between the “Old English” *thencan*, to think, and *thancian*, to thank is worthy of note (WCT 139).

even translated such commemorative or meditative thinking as “*faithful thinking*” (HEPP 186; emphasis added).³

Finally, lest the essentially religious tones be doubted, Heidegger himself stressed that this commemorative thinking “means as much as devotion: a constant concentrated abiding with something” (WCT 140), “the inclination that is not within its own control,” the “[giving] itself in thought to that to which it is held (141), what the “religious” person might recognize as entrusting and surrendering oneself in a sacrificial devotion. To what, though, is this devotion devoted? Heidegger was quite explicit: To that which calls upon us to think and gives us “that which is to be thought,” including “our essential nature” (142).⁴

To elucidate the “religiosity” of this “that which” I turn to Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant’s “Beautiful” as “what we find honorable and worthy, as the image of our essential nature” (N1 112). Indeed, with special relevance to this context, Heidegger elsewhere reckoned this “our essential nature” (of which Kant’s Beautiful is an image⁵) to be a meditating, commemorative being (DT 47, 56; WCT 31, 138ff). Further though, Heidegger understood that which “we find honorable and worthy” to be “that upon which we bestow ‘unconstrained favor,’ as Kant says, and we do so from the very foundations of our essential nature and for its sake” (N1 112).⁶ Such “unconstrained favor” which *we* bestow is, however, for Heidegger (in distinction from Kant) but “the echo of Being’s favour” which Heidegger had all along designated “original thanking” (WM 358). That kind of commemorative devotion is, therefore, “worship,” that most fundamental, most essential ascription of worth (and honor) to the “Other,” a worship which is granted to that which most fundamentally, most essentially, grants (essential) human nature to be “its” image. That, anyway, seems to me to be a fair reading of Heidegger, a reading which rejoins our own meditations in chapter 3 regarding Hölderlin’s “Kindness, the Pure” as the “Godhead” which “itself

³ “Thinking is faithful thinking. (*Denken ist Andenken*)” (HEPP 186).

⁴ Note that Heidegger’s concern is “to think” rather than, for example, to do or to love, etc. This appears to me as a remnant of a modernistic orientation.

⁵ Reflected by or reflecting our essential nature? ...or both?

⁶ Thus we might suppose that Heidegger’s “thinking” is not primarily “for its [own] sake,” as with Kant, as just quoted from N1 (112).

has a liking for man" (PLT 228) and whose image man is (219, 226). Indeed, while discussing the Beauty of the art-work, employing the Greek temple as something of a privileged example, even a paradigm for the work of art in general, Heidegger called this thankful devotion that "dedication and praise" which does "honor to the dignity and splendor of the god" to whom the temple is consecrated (44). Such honoring is that "noble-mindedness" which is not only "the nature of thinking" (DT 85), but, as already noted, the nature of human being as such.

We have, then, *prima facie* a good case for considering Heidegger's thinking in relation to faith, even a specifically religious faith. Before unfolding this case, however, it is worth reminding ourselves by way of recapitulation that this attention to commemorative or meditative thinking simply focuses afresh the concerns of the preceding chapters. It was, after all, thinking which, for Heidegger, re-placed philosophy, as noted in chapter 2. Further, Heidegger's exposition of "the nature of thinking" everywhere overlaps with what we considered in chapter 3 as "Being-at-home" and in chapter 4 as "the way." To further substantiate that point, mention need only be made here of the place of "in-dwelling" in DT (81ff) and the two essays "Building Dwelling Thinking" (PLT 145ff) and "... Poetically man dwells ..." (213ff), as well as such explicit statements as "Thinking itself is a way" (WCT 168; 168-171). Indeed, Heidegger's thinking-way is also that fundamental "attunement" introduced in chapter 2, and developed differently, though to my mind also with convergence, by Ricoeur's "creative imitation" and Derrida's pre-originary gage.

We are now ready to clarify Heidegger's understanding of thinking, not by means of the "figures" of home and way as has already been done, but first of all by means of Heidegger's understanding of *noein* (i.e. thinking) as developed in WCT, and secondly, with regard to Heidegger's own devotion to the poetic word.

6.2 Heidegger's understanding of thinking

6.2.1 Heidegger's thinking and Faith

For Heidegger the "*thanc*" finally is another name for that "Between" within which "both memory and thanks move and have their being" (WCT 140). In short, it is that to which our human devotion is owed (140f); it is that which calls us to thinking

and gives rise to thought; it is that to which we are “*beholden* because its [the heart’s] devotion is held in listening” (141; emphasis added).⁷

Such listening-hearkening-dwelling-way-making-thinking-devotion is not a new thought for us; it is that characteristic Heideggerean form of philosophy which we have considered throughout the preceding chapters. What is new, and what I’d like to correlate with “faith,” is this *beholdenness* of the human heart. It is “the heart” which gives thanks, and thus gives “thought to that to which it is held”; indeed, the heart not only gives thought to ... , but it “gives itself in thought to ... ” (141). The heart’s submissive and grateful recognition of itself “as beholden,” i.e. as held, and its consequent yielding of itself to that which has always already laid hold of it, is that “original thanking” which elsewhere Heidegger called the sacrifice of thanksgiving (141; cf. WM), and as noted above, “essential thinking” (WM 358).

Later in WCT, while meditating on Parmenides’ Fragment 6, Heidegger translated *noein*, to think, as “taking-to-heart.” In fact, he claimed that “The noun to the verb *noein*, which is *noos*, *nous*, originally means almost exactly what we have explained earlier as the basic meaning of *thanc*, devotion, memory” (203). Further, though, Heidegger understood *noein* as that “authentic divination” which is “man’s scenting,” though he admitted “we use the word mostly of animals”; it is “the mode in which essentials come to us” and by which we take them to heart, holding and guarding them under our care and protection (207).

Heidegger’s treatment of *noein* is subtler still, entwined as it is by its conjunction with *legein* in Parmenides’ Fragment. I will return to this entwinement shortly. Here I simply want to note that it has been the clear opinion of many theologians that it is faith which appropriates or “takes to heart” (e.g. Warfield, 421; Hodge, 42; CW2 167). Further, that which faith receives is, according to the theologians, that which is O/other than the human subject, and with which the human is most fundamentally correlated (Warfield, 427; Calvin 3.3.1). In addition, it is “the call” from that O/other

⁷ Similarly, “Scholar: Noble-mindedness would be the nature of thinking and thereby of thanking. Teacher: O that thanking which does not have to thank for something, but only thanks for being allowed to thank” (DT 85); “Teacher: ...the *nature of thinking* (that in-dwelling releasement to that-which-regions) which is the essentially human relation to that-which-regions, something we presage as the nearness of distance” (87).

which activates faith as both receptive and responsive, much as Heidegger's *noein* is both passive and active (WCT 203).⁸ And with equal significance Hodge correlated the trust of faith with truth: "the primary idea of truth is that which is trustworthy" while "the primary idea of faith [is] trust" (III.43). Faith, then, is that taking-to-heart of the truth. This corresponds almost exactly with Heidegger's constant prioritizing of the Truth as *alethea*, or unconcealment, and thinking (*noein*) as the taking-to-heart of that which is thereby unconcealed, as well as the openness to the drawing of that which thereby also withdraws into concealment.

As we know, Heidegger was quite explicitly opposed to such a confusion of "Christian faith" with thinking. Restricting myself at this point to references from WCT alone, he said, for instance, that "the unconditional character of faith, and the problematic character of thinking, are two spheres separated by an abyss" (177). We might do well, however, to wonder just how "problematic" thinking is, especially when conceived as "devotion," and just how "unconditional" Christian faith is, especially if it is not considered to be "thoughtless." I will return to a preparatory exploration of these concerns shortly, especially in terms of this "abyss" which is purported to separate faith and thinking. Preliminarily, though, I am proposing that this "abyss" is no more decisive in separating faith and thinking than the "abyss" which Heidegger claimed separated poetry from thinking (WM 360). Even from within WCT, however, this faith/thinking division becomes insubstantial. While Heidegger seemed to want to distinguish "Christian faith" from thinking because the former "cannot be proved by thinking, nor is [it] in need of proof because it is faith" (165), it also is perfectly clear that the same could be said about the thinking-thanking of which Heidegger spoke in WCT.

The reason Heidegger was confused on this point seems to be that he failed to recognize that though "sin exists only in the sphere of faith" (105), the opposite is not necessarily true. If instead faith is the receptive, obedient, and therefore authentic, "taking to heart" response of the human to the One in and according to whose image each human being has been created, then "saving faith" is but a redemptive

8 Not so incidentally, in this context Heidegger discussed this simultaneous activity/passivity as akin to Kant's imagination.

restoration of and variation on this more primordial “relation.” Though Heidegger would be right to suppose that now, in our current human world, faith does exist only in the sphere of sin, he would be wrong to conclude that faith was not a, even *the*, fundamental human determinative prior to “the (biblical) Fall,” not to mention after “the consummation.”

It is here too that we might recall Heidegger’s characterization of thinking as *homolegein*. In chapter 2 we noted that Heidegger understood Heraclites’ *homolegein* to be equivalent to both the deepest sense of “philosophy” and what he called that fundamental correspondence or dispositional attunement between humans and “Being” (cf. also EGT 66f). *Homolegein*, as no doubt is also well-known, is likewise the New Testament word for “confession,” itself the counterpart of faith, comprising together the single movement of turning toward that which calls and away from that which might retard such a response. Prior to the Fall, of course, there would have been no repentance per se, and therefore no *homolegein* in the sense of the confession of sin(s); consequently, faith and *homolegein* (in the preredemptive sense) would have been equivalent. It is in this regard, then, that I concur with Derrida’s translation of Heidegger’s *Andenken* as “faithful thinking.”⁹

We are ready now to turn our attention more directly to that with which *noein* is conjoined in Parmenides’ Fragment 6, which is usually translated, “One should both say [*legein*] and think [*noein*] that Being is.”

6.2.2 Heidegger’s devotion to the poetic word

Because of the mutual penetration and in-dwelling of Being and Saying noted in previous chapters, thinking means, for Heidegger, “to respond to *the appeal* of its [‘Being’s’] presencing” (PLT 183; emphasis added). It is in this way that *homolegein* as

⁹ What Heidegger did not reckon with with regard to *Andenken*, at least not in his explicit treatments (e.g. DT, WCT), is the necessity of redemptive *Andenken*. I say “in his explicit treatments” because we have already seen the importance of “the Crucified,” “the mighty pain,” “saving,” etc., from elsewhere in Heidegger’s work. Nonetheless, I acknowledge that one well might prefer to emphasize this distinction, highlighting Heidegger’s failure to adequately reckon with the radical necessity of redemption. It would, though, remain true that “deeper” than “the Fall” is the (very) good creation whose “underlying” structure has not been totally obliterated by Sin. It is likely this point which itself underlies my claim in the introduction to be able to “see through” Heidegger’s constructions to something I personally find (more) believable.

“to speak in the way in which the *Lógos* speaks, in correspondence with the *Lógos*” (WP 44/47) coincides with thinking as that fundamental attunement whose “speaking” response corresponds to the “soundless voice of Being” (WM 358; cf. WP 92/93; 88/89; etc.). As summarized in chapter 4: Suspended within language, “near a grave,” awaiting the key to the abyss, that is where “a wholly other, wholly new language” is revealed, and with it our own new and essential correspondence to Being, what we now recognize as Heidegger’s “thinking.”¹⁰

Given such convictions about these most “fundamental” of matters, Heidegger naturally required “something that is spoken purely rather than ... just any spoken material at random.” “What is spoken purely,” he said, “is the poem” (PLT 194). We have touched on this issue previously, referring to it as the quandary of Heidegger’s “canon.” There are five further points I will now add.

First, Heidegger’s devotion to the texts of his “canon” is, in many ways, exemplary. I use “devotion” here in his own strong sense of “*thanc*,” meaning “man’s inmost mind, the heart, the heart’s core, that innermost essence of man,” “the gathering of all that concerns us” (WCT 144), especially as concentrated “upon the holy and the gracious” (145). It was, after all, “the poet [who] names what is holy” (WM 360). Already, though, we can see the difficulty Heidegger had with maintaining the separateness of the poet and the thinker, for while, on the one hand, in contrast with the poet—“[who] names what is holy”—“the thinker utters Being” (360), on the other hand, here (in WCT) it is thinking itself which is “defined” as that thankful response to the holy and the gracious. And indeed, Heidegger freely admitted that his thinking was bound by a “binding ... bond” (PLT 194) to what “his poems” told him. Presumably then, his own *homolegein*—which determined his overcoming retrieval of (Greek) philosophy, as we saw in chapter 2—utters not only Being, but something of “the holy and the gracious” named by his poets to whom he listened. Accordingly, I take Heidegger’s own practice as exemplary of a (kind of) religious devotion to the language and matter of his chosen texts.

Second, Heidegger was committed to what I will call an always already preexistent Word.¹¹ He referred to this Word as “the tidings of what we are committed to

¹⁰ These references are from OWL (136), PLT (191), OWL (136), and QCT (41), respectively.

beforehand by being human beings" (WCT 145), perhaps what Derrida meant by "the gage," a point I take up again later. Such "tidings" are Heidegger's retrieval of Kant's synthetic *a priori* judgments, and as with all such retrievals, Kant's understanding of judgments is not destroyed or abolished or totally devalued, but rather fulfilled and revalued from a deeper "ground." Without reproducing Heidegger's meditation, the key to this deeper ground is the "as" which is also the "and" (WCT 162, 209). The "as" of the proposition (understood as affirming something *as* something) is retrieved as the conjunction, the "and" which conditions the propositional "as." Parmenides' Fragment 6 served as Heidegger's guide for understanding this "and," for a reason which will appear shortly. The significance of this point for my purposes is that further clarity with regard to this "and" will also grant us further understanding of thinking due to its determinative role as the "relation" between thinking *and* poetry, Being *and* Saying, Being *and* Thinking (KTB; WCT 240ff), and Saying *and* Thinking (Fragment 6), not to mention Being *and* Time (cf. KTB 29ff) nor my own Christianity *and* philosophy. It is principally the 'Saying *and* Thinking' of Fragment 6 which concerns me here.

Third, Parmenides' Fragment 6 conjoined *legein* and *noein*, specifically with reference to Being, *eon*. For Heidegger this *eon* is especially significant because it is the participle for the word for being. Not only is *eon* thereby the "participle in which all the rest have their roots" (221), but all "participles take part in both the nominal and the verbal meaning" (220). All propositional judgments, structured as they are by the conjunction of noun and verb (or at least, subject and predicate), are therefore "grounded" in the structure of Being itself, as manifest by the Saying of the Greek *eon*. Based upon his meditation on Parmenides' Fragment 6, Heidegger understood the structure of that Being to be the conjunction of *legein* and *noein*. What finally turned out to be of greatest significance, even more than the terms conjoined, is the conjunction itself, what Heidegger elsewhere called the difference, the (consecrating) cut that gathers, the intimacy of the mighty pain, etc. (cf. chapter 4 above). As

11 Heidegger used the term "pre-existent" (his quotes) to characterize the projective character of the transcendent ek-sistence of *Dasein*, expressed variously. In N3 (97) he said, "This means that Nietzsche too must retain the poetizing character of reason, the 'pre-existent,' that is, preformed and prestabilized character of the determinations of Being, the schemata."

explicated in WCT this conjunction is that which tacitly disposes one to the other, that of each which both enters into the other and surpasses it, that which makes each connatural with the other, each unfolding out of the other while keeping within it, etc. (208ff). In short, the “and” is the deeper structure of Being which restores to the propositional structure of “something *as* something” its truer form. It is, then, the conjunction—indeed, especially the conjunction—of *legein* and *noein* which reveals and determines the fundamental characteristic of thinking, that is, “That to which their conjunction conforms” (230); and that, of course, is the “That,” the “It” of both Parmenides’ *Χρη* (“It is useful”) in Fragment 6 as well as Heidegger’s own *es gibt*.

A bit more can now be said about this “It,” especially in light of our earlier considerations. In WCT Heidegger complained that though many infer something “non-personal” and genderless from the form of “impersonal subjectless sentences,” he himself was not satisfied that the “it” had thereby been thought properly. Exercising what he no doubt considered “the necessary reserve,” he nonetheless drew our attention to the impersonal expressions regarding the weather, e.g. it is raining, it is windy, etc., recommending further thought about these “atmospheric conditions and storms that show on the face of the sky” (WCT 188). Earlier we took note of this “face of the sky,” especially with the help of Hölderlin. In particular we noted the Hölderlinean verse which answered the question “What is God?” thusly: “Unknown, yet full of his qualities is the face of the sky” (PLT 225).¹² It is far from forced, therefore, to hear Heidegger’s unsaid with “godly ears.” Accordingly, we must acknowledge that it is this “It,” which remains “veiled” in *eon*, which issues “the call that calls into the thinking of the West” (WCT 239f). “It” is “the element in which they [*legein* and *noein*] belong together” (241). Indeed it is only if *legein* and *noein* “conform and join themselves to ... and remain dependent and focused on the *eon* ... [that] their conjunction [will] be sufficient to the nature of thinking” (239). Consequently, thinking too is “defined” in terms of this conjoint conformity and focused dependence on the “It,” which again we must conclude is at least dual, indeed tri-une, encompassing the two *relata* together with their conjoined relational unity (the “and”).¹³

¹² There too Heidegger was quite deferential before the difficulty of knowing God.

¹³ While it is certainly true that triadic structures in themselves (often) are not tri-une in the sense of

My fourth point with regard to Heidegger's devotion to the poetic word has to do with the "and" which relates poetry *and* thinking. We have already seen a certain "bleeding" across the abyss which was to separate these two. The problem is not that Heidegger acknowledged that poetry and thinking are "the Same" in his sense of "belonging together." It is rather that such a belonging together entails the mutual interpenetration noted in the preceding point with regard to the "and." And indeed, Heidegger did admit quite explicitly that "All reflective thinking is poetic, and all poetry in turn is a kind of thinking" (OWL 136).¹⁴ My concern here is that therefore thinking and believing are also mutually interpenetrating, especially in light of the "cross bleeding" noted in the preceding points. But even more significantly, the distinction between thinking and poetry vanishes at the depth at which Heidegger considered that relation; perhaps that deep place is the abyss of "the valley" which not only separated but joined the twin peaks of poetry and thinking. As he put it elsewhere, "Poetry and thinking are not separated if separation is to mean cut off into a relational void. The parallels intersect in the infinite" (OWL 90).

Fifth, and finally, Heidegger's devotion to (his chosen) poetry offers us a fresh understanding of the relation between faith and reason; indeed, reason is retrieved as practically equivalent with faith, itself understood as that taking-to-heart which submissively and gratefully devotes itself sacrificially to that to which it is most fundamentally beholden. For Heidegger, reason became that thinking which conforms to the *lógos*; it became that "harkening attunement" [*Gehören*] of the human hearing of the *lógos*, a hearing which as *homolegein* is also a saying; it became the "fateful" coming to pass of "the wise" (*sophon*), the unconcealing of the Truth (e.g. EGT 67f). Even for Heidegger's Greeks this determinative *lógos* was "the highest of gods" (72), and yet not without ambiguity. Finally, that "unique One unifying all," the *lógos* of Heraclitus, is also not yet Zeus as the highest Greek god (72f). It is here that we return to *Ereignis* as that Law which is "above the gods and man" considered in chapter 3, as well as to "the royal child" of chapter 4.

the Christian Trinity, the form of Heidegger's "and" / "as" here is more than a little uncannily tri-une. That anyway is my claim. I take it up again in the next two chapters, especially chapter 8, § 8.3.1.

¹⁴ For a defense of this position against the counter position of Ricoeur, cf. SIG, chapter 6.

Though Heidegger steadfastly refused to acknowledge the dependence of *legein* and *lógos* on “the second Person of the Trinity,” preferring instead to highlight the dependence of that doctrine *as a theological conception* on “the *legein* and its *lógos*” (WCT 204), I have been proposing that of which that doctrine speaks as Heidegger’s own unsaid.¹⁵ If that proposal were granted, then Heidegger’s *noein*, which via *reor* and *ratio* became “reason,” would be retrievable as that conjoint conformity and focused dependence on that divine second Person, the royal Son. Such an understanding of reason would include the meanings of submission, receptivity, cor-respondence, sacrificial devotion, taking-to-heart, etc., as developed above. If you would permit my own playful hyphenations, thinking would thereby become reason as re-as-Son, especially as revealed by His own “purely spoken” Word. The “unique One unifying all” would then be the One in whom all things are destined to be gathered, and in whom we who believe have been destined to be adopted as children, predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son (Ephesians 1; Romans 8).

The ambiguity introduced into the heart of reason so understood by the phrase “His Son” does unseat the final reign of reason, as does “the image,” which is inherently “of” another. This displacement of reason by the imagination was the point of Heidegger’s retrieval of Kant in KPM, serving Heidegger as that from which Kant “shrunk back.” On the other hand, the displacement of “the imagination,” even understood “ontologically,” by this Image of/as the Son, is what I have argued is that from which Heidegger himself “shrunk back” (cf. SIG, especially chapter 4). The further displacement toward the “His,” even as affected by the Son Himself, has yet to be considered. In order to proceed in that direction, I turn now to the Word of the “Other” partner in this dialogue between thinkers which I am pursuing.¹⁶ Following the introduction of this biblical-partner I will return to the (post-Heideggerean) notions of thinking and faith as developed by Ricoeur and Derrida.

6.3 The biblical notion of meditation

My own point of entry to this engagement of Heidegger’s thought with biblical

¹⁵ This “unsaid,” of course, is the key, as a category or notion, and as applied to Heidegger, in this case.

¹⁶ I designate this partner “Other” because (1) the self-attestation of the Bible shows it to be divine, and yet (2) I, who definitely am not divine, am presenting this Other; thus, “Other.”

notions is Heidegger's understanding of thinking as commemorative meditating. Most significantly, the most common word used in the Bible in close relation with "meditate" is זָכַר, "remember." In fact, זָכַר is used in parallel with both key Hebrew words for "meditate," הִנְהַךְ (Psalm 63:6; 77:12; 143:5) and שִׁיחַ (1 Chronicles 16:9; Psalm 77:3; 143:5). So close is this parallel that many theologians have concurred with Childs' judgment, "to remember is ... to meditate upon" (1962:65).

For my purposes of tracing and sounding the biblical resonances¹⁷ of Heidegger's understanding of thinking-meditation it is of more than passing interest that the tightest parallels between "remember" and "meditate" occur in what might be called Psalms of Distress or Complaint. Evidently, it is in the midst of the suffering of "mighty pain" that the commemorative character of thinking appears most clearly. And, given Kline's account of covenant membership as "trial by ordeal" (by water and fire), it is not surprising that such suffering would be so centrally prominent in the biblical text. As already noted in chapter 4, such suffering is finally understood as the embracing of death, which due to the entanglement of creational and redemptive language is itself understood in relation to the redemptive promise of deliverance from suffering as recreation, i.e. resurrection. My point here is that while this "embrace of death" is synonymous with "commemorative meditation" in the Old Testament, it is synonymous with faith in the New Testament.¹⁸ In particular, the

¹⁷ Resonance, remember, is something of a 'technical term' or at least I am developing a specialized usage which appears as most fundamental (even if 'groundless'). Though my 'method' may appear as close to that of thinking by analogy—i.e. noting similarities and differences—these are always similarities with internal differences, and differences always with internal similarities, which we might call similar differences and different similarities. It seems to me that this phenomenon of "resonance," therefore, is prior to and that which gives rise to analogies. The thematizing of "resonance" will continue throughout the rest of this essay. Regardless, it would be true to say that any such tracing and sounding of resonances is subject to error. This is the same charge of "violence" brought against Heidegger's readings. Finally, as noted elsewhere, one 'hears' (no doubt imperfectly) in tune with one's own highest or deepest or most valued understanding of the highest or deepest or most valued. When there is by the nature of the case no 'court of higher appeal', one must rest one's "case" on the descriptive presentation, which to some could appear kerygmatic and/or an exercise in apologetics.

¹⁸ I do not mean to indicate a strict division here between the Older and the New Testaments on this point, for faith is certainly central to the Older Testament and meditation is present in the New Testament. Nonetheless, the New Testament speaks much more prominently and pointedly about faith than it

call to which we are to hearken is the call of God the Father “into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:9), the One whom in chapter 2 we considered as “the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1:24). More particularly still, this is the Christ who “died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, ... was buried, and ... was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures” (15:3,4). The “philosophical” point here is that just as the commemorative meditations of the suffering Psalmists tended to focus on the Exodus as the historical event by which their God had identified Himself as the One pledged to see them through their covenantal ordeals, so too the faith of Christians unites them in covenantal solidarity with the One who has already died and been raised to life as the (historical) pledge of God to human beings. In short, the New Testament term for hearkening to and heeding that call issued from and by the most fundamental correlate of human being is faith. In the redemptive context of the “mighty pain” which afflicts us all, what Ricoeur called the human condition of misery (FM), that call is, of course, “the gospel,” the call from and to the One in whom we live and move and have our being (Acts 17).¹⁹ If there is a distinction to be highlighted here with regard to thinking *per se*,²⁰ we might say that Heidegger was concerned with “faithful thinking” (Derrida’s translation of Heidegger’s *Andenken*) while the Bible is concerned with “thoughtful faith.” However, before developing this distinction, which finally may also characterize the distinction between philosophy and theology, seven further similarities between biblical meditation and Heideggerean thinking are especially worth noting.

does about meditation. It must also be said, however, that once the contours of the Older Testament’s concept of meditation is understood, it is not difficult to find the same notion in the New Testament. The similarities of meditation to faith are only noted in passing in this work.

- 19 Inasmuch as “the gospel” is “the gospel of the Lord Jesus” who is the eternal and prototypical “Image of God,” I am inclined to identify (in some way!) Heidegger’s “tidings of what we are committed to beforehand by being human beings” (WCT 145) with this “gospel of the Lord Jesus.” No doubt to some this would seem to be “expropriation” rather than “appropriation”—i.e. “spoiling the Egyptians”—in the extreme. And I would tend to agree, if it were not for the many other convergent lines supporting the “naturalness” of such a “Christian re-reading” of Heidegger.
- 20 I say “with regard to thinking *per se*” to indicate (more or less) the “structure” of thinking. There are other distinctions which cannot be underplayed in any complete comparison, some of which are mentioned at the close of this section.

First of all, biblical meditation and Heideggerean thinking are both practically synonymous with dwelling. We have already made this point with regard to Heideggerean thinking. With regard to biblical meditation note, for instance, Psalm 27:4:

- (a) One thing I ask of the LORD, that will I seek after:
- (b) to dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,
- (c) to behold the beauty of the LORD,
- (d) and to meditate in his temple (my translation).

Here “in the house” of 4b parallels “in his temple” of 4d; thus “to dwell” (4b) likewise parallels “to meditate” (4d). Similarly, because the *shekinah* (dwelling) beauty-glory of the Lord dwelt in the temple-house, “to behold” therefore also parallels both “to dwell” and “to meditate” (or inquire).

In addition to the biblical references already noted in chapter 3 I now add John 17, a passage from which I take the ultimate “foundation” and meaning of such in-dwelling. There Jesus said that this (highest?) unity is that “composed” by the mutual indwelling of God the Father and Himself (v. 21). Interestingly, similar language is used to describe the unity which obtains between Christ Jesus and his disciples in chapter 15 (v. 4) with “abide” there replacing the “in” of chapter 17 (especially vv. 23, 26).²¹ Not only is this unity of mutual in-dwelling described elsewhere as faith (Romans 6:5ff; Colosians 2:12), but it also corresponds to, if not “grounds,” the mutually interpenetrating unity of Heidegger’s four-fold. As noted in chapter 4, that penetration is the intimacy (PLT 206) whose “pain is the difference itself” (204); and, as noted in chapter 5 (§ 5.2.3), this unity is the core of Heidegger’s retrieval of representational thinking, especially as indicated by the reciprocally conditioning relation between subjectivism and objectivism. My point, then, is that faith is the core from which Heidegger’s own thinking, both the process or way and its results, is to be retrieved.

The second point of similarity between biblical meditation and Heideggerean thinking is that the longing for and seeking of this dwelling characterizes not only what Heidegger recognized as Kant’s understanding of the original philosophical

²¹ Note the added “dimensionality” indicated by John 17:23 and 26. Incidentally, I would be surprised if Heidegger did not somewhere relate the Greek for dwell, *menein*, to the Greek for Being *eon*: *emmenai*, just as he noted the relation between the German *bauen* (dwell) and “to be” (*bin*; PLT 147).

impulse (KPM2 28), but what might be called the original human impulse. In the Christian tradition this original human impulse has been most neatly expressed by Augustine's characterization of the human restlessness which can find its rest only in God Himself.

The third point is that both come from and are determined by what is heard, in the first place, by "the call." In both cases the appeal is not simply to some course of action, but to "the heart," the most fundamental and essential characterization of human being as such. In both cases "what is heard," that is, the Word, is both to dwell richly within (Colosians 3:16) and to be our home or *templum* (John 8:31, especially NJB).

Fourth, and closely related to the preceding point, both forms of meditation are uniquely concerned with "the innermost" aspects of human being. Heidegger, for instance, said that the *thanc* which determined thinking as thanking is "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" (WCT 144). The biblical language for this domain includes the "inner man/self," the heart, the spirit, the soul, the mind, etc.; further, these expressions are especially salient in the passages which speak of biblical meditation.

Fifth, both biblical meditation and Heideggerean thinking involve thanksgiving, as both sacrifice and as song. We have already recognized this with regard to Heidegger (e.g. OWL 135, "appropriation speaks ... as the melodic mode"). The biblical references correlating meditation and song are also not difficult to locate: Colossians 3:16f, Ephesians 5:18-21, Psalms 104:33f, 105:1-5, 77:6, 42:8, 119:54, 172, as well as the Eucharistic Feast of remembrance all link meditation with song and/or thanksgiving and/or sacrifice.

Sixth, both Heidegger's commemorative thinking and biblical meditation are dependent upon some form of disclosure or revelation of a preexistent Word.

The seventh point of similarity between biblical meditation and Heideggerean thinking is that both are especially concerned with "the law." We have seen that for Heidegger *Ereignis* is the Law and that meditative thinking is especially attentive to the unfolding of the four-fold, including the mortal participation in that process.

Biblically we need only recall Psalms 19 and 119 to remind ourselves of the special relation between meditation and the law.

Nonetheless, in spite of these similarities there are seemingly indisputable distinctives between biblical meditation and Heideggerean thinking; no doubt advocates of each would insist upon clarity at this point. I now will take note of some of these distinctions, though already we must admit that our previous considerations of such Heideggerean distinctives as the "It," "Kindness, the Pure," the "holy," the "mighty pain," "the Crucified," the "A-byss," etc., trouble the incontrovertible sharpness of this differentiation. Especially is this the case if we take seriously what Heidegger has taught us about the retrieval of the unsaid, applied in this case to Heidegger's own works and words.

Perhaps the most important distinctives between Heidegger's thinking and biblical meditation have already been mentioned, reiterated here for convenience: Heidegger's textual canon does not include the Bible, while biblical meditation obviously favors the Bible with special, though not exclusive, attention. The point of special pertinence here is that biblical meditation is concerned specifically with knowing God. The distinctiveness of this biblical concern, however, does not follow automatically from the canon chosen, for Heidegger's attention to Hölderlin and Trakl, for instance, could well have turned in the same direction.²² Heidegger evidently did not think that the knowledge of God Himself was so accessible; in this he remained modern. And indeed, without accepting the authority of biblical revelation, including its understanding of the human condition, it is no doubt the case that God is "inaccessible," sin having effected a separation. Consequently, biblical meditation is often indistinguishable from prayer, including the direct address to a personal God. Here Derrida too has suspected that the God beyond the ontotheology which Heidegger identified with metaphysics and sought to overcome is "the God that would no longer be the God of philosophers and scholars [*savants*], ... the God that is called by prayer and can hear (*Erhören*), indeed answer the prayer, ... a God to which it is possible and no

²² Others easily could be added to this list, e.g. Parmenides, Heraclitus, Descartes, Leibnitz, Kant, even Nietzsche.

doubt necessary to offer sacrifice" (1993:215). This also is not far from suggesting this "God of prayer and sacrifice" as Heidegger's unsaid.²³

Thus, while Heidegger's thinking is attentive to the "soundless voice of Being," biblical meditation is *especially* attentive to the Word of God as recorded in the Scriptures; indeed, the Bible is taken as God's own Word(s) to humans. Thus the *noemata* (that which is being thought about) of Heideggerean "commemorative thinking" and biblical meditation could be quite distinct. It is quite clear, as already mentioned several times now, that any such distinctions finally make all the difference. This came up, for instance, with regard to the comparison of Heidegger's "dread" with the biblical "fear of God." The specific point to note with regard to "commemorative thinking" has to do with the "historicity" of that which is being commemorated. It is quite true that זָכַר (*zakhar*, remembrance) is focused upon the historical activities of the Almighty God. And yet it ought not be overlooked that not only is this focus on *the historical activities* of the Almighty God, but on the historical activities *of the Almighty God*, who not so incidentally is not simply confined to the space-time of historical activities. Nor can one honestly conclude that biblical meditation is exclusively confined to historical events. At the beginning of this paragraph I emphasized *especially*, the reason being that meditation as called for in the Bible is also attentive to the Word of God in creation, as well as in providence and redemptive history. Nonetheless, it remains true that these other, non-historical "objects" of meditation, as well as the Lord Himself, are (to be) interpreted through the "lens of Scripture," especially the *kerygma* of the New Testament. This, in fact, is a decisive difference.

As also already noted, the *homolegein* of biblical meditation includes the confession of and repentance from sin. Biblical meditation is, therefore, decidedly and unapologetically conditioned by and expressive of ethical concerns. Heidegger, on the other hand, seemed to think he had discovered a realm which preceded specifically ethical concerns (cf. LH). Nonetheless, Heidegger's own exhortations, both explicit and by example, urge us to enter the way of sacrificial thanking as a decidedly ethical obligation. Similarly, while for Heidegger thinking was something like an end in

²³ Heidegger: "Man can neither pray nor sacrifice to this God [of metaphysics]. Man can neither fall to his knees in awe before the *causa sui* nor can he play music and dance before this God" (ID 72).

itself, even though in the service of “Being,” biblical meditation issues not only in love for and worship of God Himself, but also in love for “the neighbor,” especially the widow, the orphan, and the stranger. That is, Christian meditation culminates in knowing God as Father and ourselves as either sons or daughters of that Father, as well as presenting the face of that Father to others. Even though Heidegger hesitated to dissociate the “It” from the personal (cf. § 6.2.2 above), he also hesitated (or shrunk back from) claiming knowledge of God Himself; the New Testament shows no such hesitancy, not even with regard to addressing God as “*abba*, Father.”²⁴

Finally, the means to this goal of loving and sacrificial obedience is, for biblical meditation, certainly spiritual. In fact, parallel to the “let the word of God dwell richly within you” of Colossians 3:16 is the “be filled with the Spirit” of Ephesians 5:18. I will postpone until the following chapter a consideration of Heidegger’s understanding of the spirit. Preliminarily, though, it is worth noting that Heidegger understood the *thanc*, “the heart’s core” (WCT 144), as “the spirit of the spirit” (149).

Nonetheless, though I do clearly recognize decisive differences between Heidegger’s “thinking” and biblical “thinking,” these differences do *not* void the recognition of the (structural, at least) similarities noted, nor the consequent susceptibility of both learning from and retrieving Heidegger’s thought.

6.4 Ricoeur on thinking and faith

As noted in the preceding chapter, Ricoeur’s understanding of thinking is governed by his understanding of *mimesis*: Human thinking is finally that mediatorial (representational) creative imitation which responds simultaneously to both “Being” and beings. Indeed, we said that for Ricoeur human thinking is fundamentally a yielding to that sacrificial “cutting leap” which defines human being itself as the creative imitation of its ownmost most “originary referential function” (NG 218); or better, that ownmost most “originary referential function” is itself a creative imitation of “Being,” whatever it is to which that function refers. My task now is to explore the relation of such a notion of thinking to “faith.”

²⁴ Regarding the relation of the ethical to Heidegger’s thought, I am inclined more toward Levinas; or, in more general terms, I take the most determinative of concerns to be thoroughly ethical, rather than, for instance, understanding the ethical as “only” one (more or less isolatable) dimension or aspect.

First of all, *mimesis* as creative imitation is the schematic matrix within which and from which the (productive) imagination “generates” those second-order references (*mimesis*₂) about which Ricoeur affirmed that what might otherwise be called “heuristic fiction is not an innocent pretence,” but that “so long as imagination has not been limited and denied, it is indistinguishable from true belief” (RM 252). Though Ricoeur sought to sort out such “true belief” from “bad faith,” the interpretation of “the imagination” as mimetic (human) being does not allow of being “limited and denied” along the lines Ricoeur proposed. That is *not* to say that no distinction between “true belief” and “bad faith” is possible; but it is to say that the distinction is not to be made in terms of the limitation or denial of “the imagination,” especially not if “the imagination” is understood in terms of an “original (divine) Image,” as noted in chapter 5. That being the case, “belief” or “faith” would be as primordial and as coextensive as the most primordial relation to the “original Image” inscribed in and as human *Dasein*. We should not be surprised, therefore, to find that primordially emerging from Heidegger’s thought (as in the preceding sections), or from Ricoeur’s thought (my concern here).

To further elaborate this perspective I turn to Ricoeur’s understanding of appropriation. Just as appropriation (as *Ereignis*) is crucial for understanding Heidegger’s thinking, so too appropriation is no less important in Ricoeur’s philosophy. For instance, with regard to his overall project appropriation serves as the basis of his definition of philosophical reflection: “reflection is the appropriation of our effort to exist and our desire to be by means of works which testify to this effort and this desire” (CI 329).²⁵ With regard to his specifically hermeneutic philosophy, appropriation is the “grounding” pillar which completes his hermeneutic arc(h); it is that which “closes” the hermeneutical circle making it a circle, or better, a spiral, thereby both incorporating and advancing the preceding mimetic stages.²⁶ Finally, with regard to philosophy in general, appropriation is determinative of “the order of grounding” per se, thereby serving to generate and make available the “‘great genera,’ the ‘categories of being,’

²⁵ Cf. also CI 256, 264f, 325, 327; HHS 17f, 158; 1970:54, 57; 1967:215; cf. also Ihde 1971:11; Bourgeois 1971 CP:239.

²⁶ Cf. HHS 161-164, IT 43; with regard to appropriation as the “aim,” cf. HHS 185, IT 91.

the 'categories of the understanding,' 'philosophical logic,' the 'principal elements of representation,' or however one wants to express it" (RM 300). Thus, from Ricoeur's perspective also, a consideration of appropriation promises to clarify not only the relation between thinking and faith, but also our understanding of philosophy per se. Indeed, in that Ricoeur himself discussed "faith" as a theological implication of appropriation (1975b:31), we are also once again embroiled in the relation between philosophy and theology.

What, then, is appropriation for Ricoeur? Appropriation is placed by Ricoeur as the final stage, the culmination of the hermeneutical-reading process (HHS 23, 154, 182). It is the return to the understanding and naivete which our initial belongingness (= *mimesis*₁; Heidegger's being-in-the-world) prefigured. No doubt that belongingness is transformed by the mediation which *mimesis*₂ effects—it is characterized no longer by pre-understanding but self-understanding (IT 94f; HHS 193); it is not the first pre-critical naivete, but a second, post-critical naivete (Ricoeur 1967:356)—but appropriation is nonetheless still a belongingness, a "making one's own." Thus that crucial (and cutting) moment of *mimesis*₂ is not only "a moment of belonging," as Ricoeur has made abundantly clear (cf. HHS 111, 243, 245), but it is also "within the interior of appropriation" (113). In this way the two poles of the hermeneutic arc(h) display their similarity, and the whole hermeneutical-reading process its unity.

More to the point of our concern with the relation between faith and thinking is Ricoeur's characterization of the dynamic of appropriation itself. He was quite insistent that though it may take an effort to reconstruct the "meaning of the text" (174), appropriation is first of all the humble task of responding, not initiating or projecting: The work is first of all the work of language and by language (162f). In other words, the dynamic quality of meaning which is finally imparted to the reader as the goal of the hermeneutic appropriation is first of all the dynamism of the text itself. Indeed, the subjectivity of the reader is subordinate to the text itself. Far from dominating the hermeneutical process by imposing "our finite capacity of understanding," the reader instead must expose oneself "to the text and receive from it" (143). So radical is this receptivity that it is even conceived of as a "letting-go," an "allowing itself to be carried off toward" (191). The Heideggerean echoes here are not concealed by Ricoeur; he even referred to this letting-go as an offering (=sacrifice) of oneself (177).

One more characteristic of appropriation must now be considered before once again correlating Ricoeur's appropriation with faith. In particular, I now ask, what is it that the reader receives from the text? Ricoeur has given two main variants as answers to this question: The text "gives the subject new capacities for knowing himself" (HHS 192; cf. also IT 94); and even more radically, the text "gives a *self* to the *ego*" (HHS 193; IT 95), where "ego" is taken as "the egoistic and narcissistic" self which precedes this process, and is dispossessed en route (94).²⁷ For Ricoeur, this culmination of reflection in self-understanding is the goal sought in hermeneutics. To have been given not only a new capacity of knowing the self, but also a new self signals the completion of the process, or at least a new (temporary) place of dwelling.

Our correlation with faith is now immediate. First, Ricoeur's own words: faith is "the experience of being created by the word" (FS 72). Or, if one prefers contexts which present Ricoeur's more specifically *philosophical* hermeneutics, one need only consider Ricoeur's crucially placed citations from G. Bachelard referring specifically to the creation of the human being as a new being by means of the (poetic) word (e.g. F 15f; RM 214f; RR 124, 126, 128). My point is simply that what Ricoeur called "faith" in one context matches the description given of appropriation in many other contexts.

Secondly though, Ricoeur's descriptions of appropriation very closely match the descriptions of faith given by various theologians. In the theological universe of discourse appropriation is also a common and familiar term. There it is unanimously faith which appropriates (Warfield, 421; Hodge, 42; CW2 167), which receives the alien (Warfield, 427; Calvin 3.3.1) and makes it our own. Amongst Christian theologians that point is hardly controversial.

It is not, however, simply the appropriation-stage of Ricoeur's hermeneutics which reflects the theologians' understanding of faith. Just as Ricoeur insisted that appropriation is "the [dialectical] counterpart of a concept of distancing" (HHS 183; 185) and thus is itself thoroughly conditioned by distance, so too ("theological") faith also acknowledges distance. As Calvin said, " ... what we understand by faith is yet distant

²⁷ Perhaps Ricoeur takes this giving one step deeper by designating that which is given as life itself (RM 43).

from us and escapes our view" (3.2.14); and Hodge, "it [faith] is the pure receptive correlate of the word of promise, a means of approaching again to God, which as the word itself, is appointed through the distance of God in consequence of sin" (1975: 45, volume III). Jonathan Edwards likewise said that "faith is that by which those who before were separated and at a distance from Christ ... cease to be any longer at such a distance, and come into that relation and nearness ... " (1834:626).

No doubt there are different notions of "distance" and "nearness" involved here (ontological, ethical, textual); yet Ricoeur's understanding of the appropriation-distanciation dialectic overlaps with the theological notions just cited. With regard to the ontological distance, the issue revolves around the relation between Being and God. I have touched on this point throughout the previous chapters; here it is perhaps sufficient to note that "For Ricoeur, we must assume that being still encompasses the realm of the transcendent, that God and being are not outside each other" (van Den Hengel 1982:222). Because of this "not outside each other," as well as the interanimation of the diverse universes of discourse which Ricoeur affirmed (RM 302), ultimately I will find Ricoeur's preference for a clear distinction between philosophy and theology to be suspect, if not untenable. Especially would this be the case the more the word to which we listen and by which we are created approaches a primal or ultimate word, and certainly if that word were God's Word.

With regard to the ethical distance which separates the reader from that to which the text refers, the theologians spoke specifically of sin. We have already noticed "sin" as something of a stumbling block in our dialogue with Heidegger. Ricoeur, on the other hand, included an "ethical" moment in his hermeneutical arc(h). In particular, he noted that "the egoistic and narcissistic" ego was to be replaced by the truer self of self-understanding. He even referred to that "cutting function" (MR 21) exercised by the distanciations inherent in text-reading process, as a "function" to which the reader must or ought "offer myself" if the text is to be understood. It is this "offering of myself" to the text and to that of which the text "speaks" which the theologians have called the *fiducia*, or personal trust, of faith.

It is here that Ricoeur's understanding of hermeneutics again merges with the theologians' understanding of faith. In particular, I recall the decisive and mediatorial role of Ricoeur's *mimesis*₂, especially the necessity for constructing the sense of the

text with which a reader is confronted. In short, there is no appropriation of *mimesis*₃ without the knowledge of that text achieved by *mimesis*₂. This is what Ricoeur has also referred to as that distancing “which is linked to any objective and objectifying study of a text” (HHS 183), and it is the dialectical counterpart of appropriation. Similarly, the theologians have been consistently insistent that *notitia*—that is, knowledge or “intelligible information” (CW2 258; cf. also Ridderbos 1975:242) of the object of faith, especially as given by the text of Scripture—is a necessary component which mediates both *assensus* and *fiducia*.²⁸

We have, then, seen both faith as *notitia* and faith as *fiducia* strongly represented in Ricoeur’s understanding of all hermeneutical thinking. What, though, about faith as *assensus*? In a sense this is the key, for with *assensus* we return to Ricoeur’s crucial notion of creative imitation. Perhaps the best place to start is with a question: How, according to Ricoeur, does the text give the new capacity and the new self? That giving by the text, which Ricoeur referred to as “creation by the word,” was, remember, the very point noted above by which I began our exposition of the inherent similarity, if not deeper identity, between faith and appropriation. Otherwise stated, the question before us now is, How is the bond between the text, its meaning (ultimately, its world), and the reader constituted? In Ricoeur’s terms this is to inquire further into that “conjoint work of the text and its reader” in terms of which the representational illusion is overcome and “explanation” (*mimesis*₂) is reintegrated into our understanding of “Being.” As introduced in the preceding chapter, this is the crucial move in Ricoeur’s own philosophical project. This was also the point around which my own retrieval of Ricoeur’s thought justified its turn to his more explicitly religious texts. The convergence of my understanding of Ricoeur there with the orthodox Christian understanding of the Trinity and the Person of Christ Jesus as the incarnate Second Person of that Eternal Trinity makes our consideration of certain Christian theologians here that much more pertinent.

I turn now to Jonathan Edwards in particular, for he has perhaps been most to

²⁸ It is interesting to note that the same vacillation which Ricoeur displays regarding whether explanation is itself interpretation proper (cf. Ricoeur HHS 164 where he distinguishes the two) is found in the theologians regarding whether *notitia* is properly faith (Kuyper 1973:400).

the point of my concern. Said he, it is faith which unites (Edwards 1834:624), which brings near (626), which renders it meet, suitable, fit, congruous, condecant, agreeable that the alien should come near and be received (624, 626).²⁹ It is faith, then, which is “deeper” than the correspondence between reader and text for which it is responsible, at least in part. Further, faith is not only responsible for the bond which unites, it is the bond: Faith constitutes the likeness of the otherwise irreconcilables and unites the alienated (625, 627). We might say faith *is* the creative imitation of the “conjoint work,” or at least the human component of that work.

But why is this so? Because, according to Edwards, it is a “natural” principle that likeness unites (627; also Hodge 1975:43); that is, it is the nature of faith so to operate (628). Such a notion of fitness is operative in Ricoeur’s theory too, and though he himself is not quite so explicit, Madison takes him as referring the fitness appropriate to the productive imagination to “a way of the being of things” (1977:425). Ricoeur expressed the idea of this naturalness which unites in terms of “the phenomenon of reverberation, of echoing or resounding” (IDA 8; also 6, 15) by which he himself retrieved the (Kantian) schematism of the productive imagination, the heart of his life-long philosophical endeavor. It was at this point, remember, that Ricoeur recognized the indistinguishability of the imagination and true belief. Madison, referring specifically to metaphor as the product of the productive imagination, made the same point: “Reality is nothing other than a metaphor which is taken literally and is *believed in*” (427, emphasis added).³⁰

The *assensus* of faith, therefore, is but the acceptance or letting-be of the “echo” of *notitia* as it reverberates throughout one’s being. It is, in fact, with *assensus* that the theologians have also recognized that a logic of correspondence rules (CW2 258).³¹ Stated otherwise, recognition reigns in assent: “The information conveyed is recognized by us to be true (cf. Romans 10:9, 10; 1 John 5:1) ... [and is] believed as applicable to ourselves” (CW2 258). The fitness within the text, i.e. the sense

²⁹ Murray used similar language: “exact correspondence,” “exactly suited,” “fits in perfectly” (RAA 111); “the congruity” (CW2 216), “perfectly dovetails” (217).

³⁰ Cf. also cf. Ridderbos 1975:232f, 251.

³¹ Also CW2: “it is faith that perfectly dovetails ... ” The point is again to emphasize the role of “correspondence” or “fittingness.”

discerned by all the explanatory procedures, becomes a recognition of truth which implicates the self. Because of the fitting application of that sense to “the nature of things,” including ourselves, consent is given. Here too we join Ricoeur’s idea of appropriation: the playful presentation of fiction “elicits recognition ... according to the truth” (HHS 187). In the language of the theologians, this “elicitation” of faith is “forced consent” (Warfield 1968:376; CW2 237); it is that point at which Ricoeur too admitted that even the sense of “creation” or invention gives way to a kind of fitting-necessity produced by the conjoint work of the mimetic human being and a universal “necessity” within which human *mimesis* acts both vigorously and freely (MR 30f). It is also the point at which we left our considerations of the “life-word” in the preceding chapter. By raising that point again here we can now take one more step toward answering the question introduced above: How is the bond between the text (its world) and the reader constituted?

We have already said that that bond between the text (i.e. its world) and the reader is constituted by faith; we even said that faith itself is that bond. That, however, cannot be the whole story, either for Ricoeur or for the theologians, for in both cases something decidedly other than the human being is decisively involved in the constitution of the bond in question. In Ricoeur’s case we noted with van Den Hengel that “God and being are not outside each other,” while in the previous chapter I have argued that some more specifically Christian notion is called for. The theologians, of course, are also not satisfied with a consideration of the bond between the reader and the Bible as being simply faith. The union of belonging which precedes faith as a human act must be accounted for. Murray went to the heart of the matter: “the bond of this union is the Holy Spirit himself” (RAA 166). And in the language of Edwards, the Holy Spirit is the source and principle of fitness (or correspondence) *par excellence*. The following chapter is devoted to the topic of “the spirit,” which I only mention here by way of introduction. It is, however, worth mentioning that the introduction of “the spirit” here does offer further insight into Ricoeur’s understanding of both appropriation and what I referred in the last chapter as the *mimesis-praxis*-life-word. Once again our inquiry is guided by the question, How does the text give the new capacity and the new self? How is the bond between the text and the reader constituted?

With regard to appropriation this “how” question is answered by Ricoeur’s under-

standing of the ontological vehemence of language itself. In fact, the dynamism of meaning inherent in that vehemence is, for Ricoeur, the “cornerstone” of hermeneutics. It is “the link between appropriation and revelation” (HHS 191) or “disclosure” (IT 93), that is, the point of mediation between the taking or invention and the giving or discovery, the “as” of the “taken as given.” The text gives because its meaning is dynamic (92), because it carries us (HHS 191), because the word has power to disclose a world variously expressed as a “new mode of being” or “new forms of life” (IT 94; HHS 192). Though this indicates what the text gives and what the reader appropriates, the “how” question has not been directly addressed, except to say that language or the *lógos* is immediately active on and with “the reader.” The “word” is, therefore, explicated or described as living and active (*praxis*-life-word) and as mimetically fitted to so interface with “the reader.” The introduction of “the spirit” allows further discrimination within this *mimesis-praxis*-life-word complex, especially if our understanding is to be guided by the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity. That is, we have returned to what in chapter 2 I called the *dvoika* of Word-Spirit. I leave that for now, picking up the discussion afresh in the next chapter.

Finally, though, what is thinking for Ricoeur, and how is it related to faith? The least that I want to conclude from the preceding considerations is that the structures of Ricoeur’s hermeneutical arc(h) and faith, as well as much of the decisive content of those two forms, are isomorphic. We can at least say, therefore, that faith and thinking (i.e. Ricoeur’s thinking, including his [philosophical?] thinking about philosophical thinking) are, according to Ricoeur, also isomorphic, that is, they are “resonant.” This, however, once again raises the question of the relation between philosophy and theology. As with the topic of the spirit, a full chapter will be devoted to discussing this matter. A few introductory comments, however, can be offered here.

Evidently Ricoeur would not be pleased with this “confusion” of the philosophical and the theological in his work. Instead of either bracketing his own Christian beliefs or subordinating “his philosophy to theology,” Ricoeur has consistently sought a third alternative which he called “the autonomous way” and “the philosophical approach” (CI 403). Though he readily admitted that such a task “begins with listening” (e.g. to the Christian *kerygma*), he still insisted that this “work of thought” is accomplished “within the autonomy of responsible thought” (403). In short, Ricoeur understood

philosophical thinking as “both a work of listening and an autonomous enterprise, a thinking ‘in the light of ...’ and a free thinking” (411). The result of such an endeavor is what Ricoeur called “a philosophical approximation” of the *kerygma* of hope (411) and a “philosophical *analogon* of the *kerygma* of the Resurrection” (424). The “conversion” (403) and “confession” (426) of the philosopher, therefore, occurs “in a neutral manner, in the manner of the ‘as if’” as affected “by sympathy and through imagination” (426), though always within and subordinated to the “internal exigencies” of philosophy itself (403). There are, though, problems with this position which present themselves from within Ricoeur’s own self-professed philosophical thinking.

Consider, for instance, Ricoeur’s claim that because “there is only one *lógos*, the *lógos* of Christ requires of me as a philosopher nothing else than a more complete and perfect activation of reason; not more than reason, but *whole* reason” (403).³² There are two coordinated difficulties here, one theological, the other philosophical. Theologically, it is eminently doubtful that “the *lógos* of Christ” allows the kind of autonomy Ricoeur thought existed for human existence, including philosophical thinking. If that *Lógos* is, in fact, the One revealed by the New Testament, then He “is all and in all,” all things are gathered in Him, He is the head over all things, all thoughts are to be taken captive to obey Him, etc. (Colosians 3:11; Ephesians 1:10, 22; 2 Corinthians 10:5; etc.). Indeed, if He is the Image in Whom humans are ontologically constituted as images of God, then there would be no escape from living and moving and having our being in Him. Philosophical thinking, therefore, would not finally be subordinated to its own autonomous “internal exigencies,” but to that *Lógos*. If Ricoeur only meant that we are called to respond in a “creatively” imitative way, then we could grant his point; though here too, as noted above, he finally bowed to a universal “necessity” within which human *mimesis* acts vigorously and freely (MR 30f), thus affirming my point.

The philosophical difficulty with Ricoeur’s affirmation of “*whole* reason” has to do with the meaning of “reason” which results from his “philosophical approximations.” In particular, I have been putting forth the notion that Ricoeur’s entire

³² Ricoeur said “If there is only one *lógos* ...”; I take the “if” as rhetorical, not thereby introducing any doubt or suspicion as to whether or not this is so.

philosophical enterprise as characterized by his hermeneutics is at least isomorphic with faith. Perhaps this is only saying what he intended to affirm, i.e. that his philosophy is a “philosophical *analogon*” of faith. There are, though, three philosophical considerations from within Ricoeur’s own work which speak against this.

First, philosophy’s autonomy derives from what Ricoeur called the neutralized realm of the “as if.” And yet, if the mimetic character of “Being,” human being included, is that which grants the “as if” its “as-character,” then there would be no more escaping into a neutralized realm than there would be escaping “Being” itself.

Second, “the setting in proximity” of philosophical discourse and the “work of listening” by which “the philosophical approach [=approximation, 403]” is characterized as itself a metaphor-like process. That is, the interaction between theological (or Scriptural) discourse/thinking³³ and philosophical discourse/thinking involves that same kind of interanimating interpenetration so characteristic of metaphor as studied at the sentence level. Ricoeur, in fact, was quite explicit about this:

My inclination is to see the universe of discourse as a universe kept in motion by an interplay of attractions and repulsions that ceaselessly promote the interaction and intersection of domains whose organizing nuclei are off-centred in relation to one another; and still this interplay never comes to rest in an absolute knowledge that would subsume the tensions (RM 302).

It is especially this “interaction and intersection of domains” which I have in mind here. Elsewhere Ricoeur described this “interaction and intersection of domains” as an “interanimation” (RM 258, 259), “juxtaposition without confusion” (310), and a “mutual accord of resonance that respects their difference” (310). If some sort of autonomy is thereby still to be granted philosophy per se, it is certainly a very unique and relative autonomy.

Third, this “mutual accord of resonance that respects their difference” returns us afresh to Ricoeur’s understanding of philosophy per se, especially in terms of his own retrieval of the transcendental method. As noted in the preceding two chapters, Ricoeur expounded this “method” as the reverberating-resonating (mimetic)

³³ Ricoeur has made a strong distinction between listening to the Bible as primary and listening to theology as a secondary endeavor. I do not draw the same distinction, especially since the work of theology proper was already begun within the canon of the Bible. Cf. chapter 8, § 3.3 for some elaboration of this point.

imagination which provides the operative condition “behind” the “Husserlian transcendental reduction” (IDA 5). Several points follow from this. First, the “mutual accord of resonance” between various domains of thought and discourse “derive” both their identity and their differences from the imagination, and especially from that which the (human) imagination most fundamentally images. As noted previously, it is precisely the relation of identity and difference which focused Ricoeur’s problematic at this point, a problematic consonant with the Trinity. Second, the neutralization ascribed both to Ricoeur’s “as if” and Husserl’s reduction depends upon the phenomenological and ontological “correlate” of the human imagination understood most primordially. It is here that we once again confront the fact that for Ricoeur “God and Being are not outside each other.” It is also here that we return to the meaning of “the world” (as in Heidegger’s being-in-the-world), especially since Husserl’s reduction was to deliver us from the natural understanding of and relation to “the world” into that more primordial “place” from within which we could once again experience things as they are. What, though, is that “place”?

“Faith” once again offers an answer: “May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Galatians 6:14); “for whatever is born of God conquers [overcomes] the world. And this is the victory that conquers [overcomes] the world, our *faith*. Who is it that conquers [overcomes] the world but the one who *believes* that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4-5; emphases added). And why does faith in Jesus overcome the world? Because Jesus “conquered the world” through His own sacrifice and resurrection (John 16:33); “because you [who are His disciples] do not belong to the world, but I [Jesus] have chosen you out of the world” (15:19); because faith (and the Spirit) unites His disciples to Him who was not of this world but who came into this world and has also already left this world to be seated “in heavenly places.” That is, so profound is the overcoming of the world accomplished by Jesus, and participated in by faith in Him, that only the Kingdom of God described as a new creation is adequate to convey the radicality of that overcoming. Here all senses of “the old world” are overcome simultaneously; in particular, “world” cannot be confined to mean simply the “*sinful* world system.”

The least that can be said here, and it is all I want to say at this point, is that

Ricoeur's retrieval of the philosophical method is fulfilled in this believing-way of the Cross. Whether this believing-way of the Cross is what it means for a Christian to philosophize or whether there is still an acceptable philosophical *analogon* of this "theological" way is a question I postpone until the final chapter. To answer that concern we will have to clarify the relation between God and Being; and to do that we will have to become still clearer about "the meaning of Being."

6.5 Derrida on thinking and faith

To now turn our attention to what we might call Derrida's understanding of thinking will bring together the key concerns raised above. We will see that here too thinking is practically identical with faith. I will not, however, either attempt to fully reconstitute Derrida's texts (or "arguments") or follow what he called "the classic pedagogical procedures" (EO 3).³⁴ I rest my case for such not only on Derrida's own brilliant demonstrations, but also on the confirmatory nature of the direction suggested in this context by Derrida's work: no strictly new point hinges on this section. Nonetheless I will present my reading of certain Derridean texts on thinking and faith, citing those texts sufficiently to lend (at least) some credence to my proposal. That proposal is, in brief, that thinking for Derrida is that sacrificial bearing of the friend which gratefully takes-to-heart what has been said, even bearing the "sins" committed, carrying them to death and thereby freeing the friend's thought, if not name-reputation, from those problematic, unfavorable, and inauspicious elements without in any way condoning evil done. The issue becomes quite "personal" with regard to the relation of Heidegger and Heidegger's texts to National Socialism. It is here that the "ethical" dimension, even what "non-religious" philosophers might be willing to designate "sin," becomes unavoidable. To demonstrate this proposal from Derrida's texts is now my task.

³⁴ In this I am to a certain extent following Derrida's example: "I would like to spare you the tedium, the waste of time, and the subservience that always accompany the classic pedagogical procedures of forging links, referring back to prior premises or arguments, justifying one's own trajectory, method, system, and more or less skillful transitions, reestablishing continuity, and so on. These are but some of the imperatives of the classical pedagogy with which, to be sure, one can never break once and for all. Yet, if you were to submit to them rigorously, they would very soon reduce you to silence, tautology, and tiresome repetition" (EO 3f).

I begin to lend credence to this overture with reference to Derrida's 1989 lecture published as "Heidegger's ear: philopolemology (*Geschlect* IV)" (1993; hereafter HEPP). The key text which Derrida meditated upon is from *Being and Time* (BT 206/SZ 163): "... as in hearing the voice of the friend whom every *Dasein* carries with it." Derrida's meditation on "Heidegger" not only explicates something of what he takes this "hearing-carrying" to be, but demonstrates this "hearing-carrying" as that "love" which Derrida himself has for his friend, Heidegger. This "love" is not only the *philo* of Derrida's title, *philo-polemology*, but also "the Heideggerean thought of *philein*" which governed Heidegger's understanding of *philo*-sophy and thinking (HEPP 171). In particular, Derrida has interwoven and interpenetrated Heidegger's understanding of philosophy and thinking, as well as his *Ereignis* and *es gibt*, with his own understanding of the "hearing-carrying" of the voice of the friend. In short, Derrida has retrieved Heidegger's thinking (in both senses, his works of thought left to us as texts and his understanding of thinking) as the bearing-carrying *to term* of the friend.

For Heidegger, this "carrying to term" has to do, finally, with the worlding of the world and the thinging of the thing, etc., as Derrida has shown from various Heideggerean texts (166ff). Lest we think this is just wild speculation or some form of unwarranted word-play imposed by Derrida,³⁵ I quote Heidegger:

By thinging, things carry out world. Our old language calls such carrying *bern*, *bären*—Old High German *beran*—to bear; hence the words *gebaren*, to carry, gestate, give birth, and *Gebärde*, bearing, gesture. Thinging, things are things. Thinging, they gesture—gestate—world (PLT 200; quoted by Derrida, HEPP 168).

As Derrida also pointed out, Heidegger was there moving toward the explication of "the between" or "the middle," what we noted in chapter 4 as the interpenetrating difference of "the mighty pain." Again, Heidegger: "the intimacy of the difference [*Unter-Schied*] is the unifying element of the *diaphora*, the carrying out that carries through" (PLT 202; HEPP 168). Derrida's point, though, is to understand-hear Heidegger's "carrying of the friend" in terms of this *diaphora*, "the carrying out that carries through."

³⁵ A common complaint about "deconstruction" which I consider to be largely unfair.

Derrida went on to rightly note that “this singular friend that every *Dasein* carries ‘*bei sich*’ [with it]” (HEPP 174), turning now to Heidegger’s own words, “constitutes the primary and authentic way in which *Dasein* is open for its ownmost potentiality-for-Being” (BT 206/SZ 163). This obedient-hearkening-carrying, then, is what “constitutes” being-in-the-world; in short, *Hörigkeit* (listening obedience, even subjection) constitutes *Zugehörigkeit* (belonging), the interpenetrating and interpenetrated “in” of being-in-the-world. We are, therefore, focusing here on the “roots” of Heidegger’s own thinking, including especially his understanding of thinking itself. It is what we called in section 2 above Heidegger’s sacrificial (listening-hearkening-dwelling-way-making-thinking) devotion.

The “sacrificial” aspect of this devotion can now be further underlined by noting the practical identity of Heidegger’s description of “hearing the friend” with his understanding of “Being-towards-death”: both have to do with, in fact, *are*, *Dasein*’s “ownmost potentiality-for-Being.”³⁶ In this regard Derrida pointed out that Heidegger’s friend “no more represents friendship in general than it is necessarily friendly”; more fundamental than “the friendly characteristic” is this “belonging” (HEPP 174) which finally threatens as *polemos*, the threat of death itself. The “loving-carrying” of the friend is a *philo-polemos*. It is also that listening which is the core of Heidegger’s understanding of the *Destruktion*, we might now say “the destruction of death” (i.e. “by means of” death),³⁷ which takes or carries us beyond the tradition of philosophy per se to thinking. As Derrida pointed out, citing Heidegger’s “What is philosophy?”, “Destruction means—to open our ears [*unser Ohr öffnen*], to make ourselves free for what speaks to us in tradition as the Being of being. By listening to this interpellation we attain the correspondence” (WP 72/73). Derrida translated this: “Destruction means: to open our ear, to render it free for what, handed over to us in the tradition, is

36 Compare, for instance, the description of “carrying the friend” noted above—“the primary and authentic way in which *Dasein* is open for its ownmost potentiality-for-Being” (BT 206/SZ 163)—with “Death is *Dasein*’s ownmost possibility. Being towards this possibility discloses to *Dasein* its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, in which its very Being is the issue” (BT 307/SZ 263) as noted in chapter 4.

37 I have touched on the other sense of “destruction of death,” i.e. the destruction which destroys death (“the death of death”), in chapter 4 (§ 4.2.1). I return to this alternative meaning in chapter 7 (§ 7.2.4).

addressed to us or addresses to us its injunction as being of beings" (HEPP 180), thus further highlighting "destruction" as synonymous with Heidegger's thinking. We are, then, still very much focused on our own primary question, What is philosophy?

Leaving aside for a moment the destruction-death-*polemos* just noted, I will return to its importance by way of various allusions to Derrida's understanding of metaphor, a "theme" which overlaps with Heidegger's "as/and" considered earlier. In particular, I focus on Derrida's understanding of Heidegger's understanding of "being at home." First of all, Derrida took note of the somewhat traditional metaphor of the home as "a metaphor of metaphor; an expropriation, a being-outside-one's-own-residence, but still in a dwelling, outside its own residence but still in a residence in which one comes back to oneself, recognizes oneself, reassembles oneself or resembles oneself, outside oneself in oneself" (WhM 253). It will be important in a moment to recognize this as a fair description of Heidegger's own understanding of *Dasein* as transcendence. Secondly, though, Derrida also took note of Heidegger's 1960 text on Hebbel ("*Sprache und Heimat*") in which Heidegger recognized "the homeliness of being at home" [*das Heimishche des Zuhaus*] as rooted in *Sprache* as not only "the mother tongue" but most particularly, "the mother of language," indeed, the "essence of maternity" (RtM 18). It is here, then, that the "carrying to term" of gestation and the "carrying to term" of thinking coalesce with the "being-outside-one's-own-residence, but still in a dwelling" (cf. chapter 3) as well as with the metaphoricity of metaphor. Human being itself (i.e., for Heidegger, *Dasein* as transcendence) is, therefore, taken as essentially metaphoric and maternal with reference³⁸ to both "the word" received and the "Sayer" of that word. These are not new insights. Transposing these figures in the direction of the topic of this chapter, we might say that thinking is, accordingly, the faithful receiving of the implanted word of "Being" and the faithful carrying of it to term, i.e. to its re-iteration (*homolegein*) in creative imitation. Once again, though, "the word" is thereby distinguished from that "maternal womb" which receives and carries that word. I will come back to this, especially because it has much to do with

38 I prefer to not overload the body of the text by hyphenating this word, re-ference, noting the root meaning of "carry" pre-fixed by the "re" discussed in the preceding chapter.

the meaning of "Being" and the "singular friend that every *Dasein* carries 'bei sich' [with it]" (HEPP 174).

There are, however, two further moves which Derrida makes which both retrace our earlier concerns with death and open the way toward further understanding "friendly 'Being'" or "Being" as "friend." First, again following Heidegger, Derrida noted that *die Sprache* is the "house of Being in which man ek-sists by dwelling [there]" (LH 213; RtM 25). It is, though, because the word for the word withdraws along with the withdrawal of Being that Heidegger insisted that "house" here is not a metaphor, that is, it is "no transfer [*Übertragung*; translated by Derrida as "metaphor," RtM 24] of the image 'house' to Being" (LH 237). Rather than "being-at-home," then, we can at best yield ourselves to the draft of that withdrawal, being both drawn along and drawn—i.e. engraved, fashioned, formed, born, "written"—in the process. "Being as home" therefore gives way or yields to "Being as way." That is, that which carries us, and that by and in which we carry the friend, is the draft left in the wake of the withdrawal of the word for word. Before "being at home" we are, accordingly, carried and borne along in and by that which bears us, that is, that which gives us birth while itself withdrawing, thereby drawing us "on the way" to being at home in language (*die Sprache*). In this regard it is not quite accurate to say that *die Sprache* is the "essence of maternity"; rather, that which draws us to language in its own withdrawal, that which gave us birth, would be the "essence of maternity." Shortly I will attend to this "mother" more carefully, even beginning to name "her." Fortunately or not, death intervenes.

Finally, Heidegger named those of us who are thus carried and given birth by the word "mortals," recognizing that with this withdrawal "the essential relation between death and language flashes up before us, but remains still unthought" (OWL 107). In fact, Heidegger reckoned that probably "death belongs together with what reaches out for us" in that withdrawal (107f). As such the en-graving and wake just mentioned could not be denied their funereal connotations. And yet, is not that which "reaches out for us" the "friend," the one (One?) "every *Dasein* carries 'bei sich' [with it]"?

The second Derridean move I wish to recall and follow here picks up this Heideggerian concern with death and moves it toward the topic of our next chapter, the

spirit; in between is “the friend.” First of all, Derrida’s HEPP closed with a passing reference and a warning. In passing Derrida noted that

... the unstable and multiple title I would have liked to give this reading [is] ‘le sacrifice *de* Heidegger,’ not only the sacrifice in general, but *Heidegger’s sacrifice*, *the sacrifice of Heidegger*, what he has thought or not of sacrifice, of his own, for example, that he may have offered himself to or that one may still offer him to (HEPP 216).

What might that be? Derrida did not say, not explicitly anyway, but instead ended with the warning: “let the hearer beware” (216). Nonetheless, as noted earlier, in this same context Derrida did draw our attention to Heidegger’s own “rare and discreet” allusions to sacrifice, which as we have seen, are at the heart of his understanding of thinking. Derrida’s own comment, however, was, as already noted, to the effect that that which is beyond “the God of philosophy or of ontotheology” (215)—that is, that to which we might be recommended to turn, those of us who are concerned to follow Heidegger “beyond metaphysics”—is “the God that is called by prayer and can hear,” indeed, the “God to which it is possible and no doubt necessary to offer sacrifice” (215). In fact, Derrida had just finished calling our attention to the French translation of that which offered a way beyond metaphysics, this carrying-hearing-dif-ference we have been discussing: the French translator of Heidegger’s ID suggested “conciliation,” with Derrida even proposing the further confluence with that “reconciliation” accomplished between *polemos* and *philia* by the *lógos* (214). Hearer beware indeed! This, though, is not my main concern, though I will not be able to suppress these Christian resonances. Instead I wish to attend to the draft which is left in and as the wake of the withdrawal of the word for word, a withdrawal which as withdrawal (at least) begins to withdraw the withdrawal. (Heidegger himself, after all, did offer *lógos* as a word for word.)

To continue now with the second move I am considering here: Derrida himself carried the carrying of death, perhaps especially the death of the friend, to the recognition of that “contract which falls due only upon the death of the one who says ‘I live’ in the present” (EO 10f). And he did so while again considering “the ear,” this time Nietzsche’s ear, especially Nietzsche’s *Ecce Homo*, a book, as Derrida emphasized, whose “final words (as we have already noted with Heidegger) are ‘Have I been

understood? Dionysus versus the Crucified" (11). Finally, it is the "versus," "the combat," the *polemos*, which interested Derrida, at least in 1979, the date of the delivery of "Otobiographies" (EO). Or perhaps more accurately, it is not just the combat which is the focus of Derrida's concern, but "some powerful utterance-producing machine that programs the movements of the two opposing forces at once, and which couples, conjugates, or marries them in a given set, as life (does) death" (29).

"As life (does) death" (29), "life the dead" [*la vie la mort*] (17), "life-death, the-dead-the-living" (22) ... finally it is even more accurate to say that it was "a phoenix motif," "the vitalist theme of degeneration/regeneration" (26) which occupied Derrida's listening to Nietzsche, lacking as it seems they both did, the belief in a resurrection by means of which and through which not only "the name," but "the living" might inherit the fruit borne of that contract with language in which we are all implicated (7, 9). My concern here is this "nominal contract which falls due only upon the death of the one who says 'I live' in the present" (10f), also called "the language contract" (22). We took note of this in the last chapter: It is what Derrida called the gage, "a sort of pre-originary pledge [*gage*]" (OS 130); it is the event which is "before any other event" (including *Ereignis*, 135!). And most to the point here, it is that to which "we are linked by a *faith* which defeats any narrative" (130; emphasis added). My final task, then, is to take up the relations between this pre-originary faith and thinking as that carrying of the friend considered earlier. The key is "the gage" as that "powerful utterance-producing machine that programs the movements of the two opposing forces at once," especially in relation to the "phoenix motif."

Again, without rehearsing the details, both Nietzsche (via his "eternal return") and Derrida (via his "resurrection to come of the *Menschenschlag* from the dawn," OS 110; cf. chapter 5 above) finally rely on some form of a "resurrection." As noted both above and more precisely in the preceding chapter, Derrida's understanding falls short of the (orthodox, catholic) Christian understanding. And yet some "life" beyond "death" is called for, and even treated by Derrida, what he referred to as the withdrawal of withdrawal, recalling Heidegger's flashing up of the essential relation between death and language (RtM 31; cf. also QCT 36ff re "in-flashing"). Though sometimes Derrida seemed to equate this withdrawal of withdrawal with "the unveiling" of Heidegger's *a-letheia* (31), at other times, this withdrawal of withdrawal is

more closely aligned with “the *parousia*,” the “second coming” in Ricoeur’s translation (RM 289, quoting Derrida’s WhM 253), referring to the “event” because of which metaphysics does not have the kind of unity usually supposed (RtM 30) and within which language as the “house of Being” delivers on its inherent “promise of *spirit*” (OS 94). That is, “language always ... comes down to [*revient à*] the promise,” i.e. the pledge, the gage, the language-contract, and that promise is a “promise of *spirit*.” And yet, that “promise of *spirit*,” of “the yes” to life beyond death (94; EO 14, 20), is always because of or in face of death. In EO this death is the death of the father, my death as my father, and as contrasted with my life as my mother. As Nietzsche put it, “I am ... already dead as my father, while as my mother, I am still living and becoming old” (quoted at EO 15), that “mother” whose essence was acknowledged as *die Sprache* in RtM.³⁹ In OS, however, the death in question is the death of the *Menschenschlag* to which our (pre-originary) faith is linked, and the resurrection is likewise “a resurrection to come of the *Menschenschlag* from the dawn” (110). In EO “the cure or *resurrection*” (18; emphasis added) is a two-step ordeal, which may actually be “a single step” (19): first, the repetition by the “only son” of the father’s death, making it his own (18); and second, “a certain step beyond” (*pas au-delà*, both “step(s) beyond” and “not beyond,” translator’s note, 19), the step “beyond the opposition between life and/or death” (19). Though Nietzsche, and certainly Derrida as well, insisted that this overcoming of the life-death opposition definitely was not by means of a dialectical *Aufhebung* (18), Derrida suggested “resurrection” as the model, linking it with his exposition of the *pharmakon* (the “cure”/poison), a linkage to be considered in the next chapter.

From these somewhat diverse expositions I retain as specifically Derridean, the submission (Derrida does not assert!) that the pre-originary faith-pledge which binds humans with a bond beyond deconstructibility or erasure (OS 139) is not only a bond to language, but more specifically to language as “It has in fact already struck its target—whom else but man?” (OWL 90). That “struck-man” is, of course, the *Menschenschlag*, the One whose resurrection is, according to Derrida, yet to come, though

³⁹ In passing then, since it is the topic of the next chapter, that essence of maternity is called “spirit” in OS. The “problem,” once again, will be the identity and the difference of spirit and word.

he explicitly meant to nominate “the Crucified Christ” (OS 110ff). We return, then, to another name for that “singular friend that every *Dasein* carries ‘*bei sich*’ [with it],” and to thinking, that is, Derrida’s retracing of Heidegger’s “essential thinking/thanking,” as “the sacrifice of Heidegger” (HEPP 216).

My purpose in this somewhat Derridean-style meditation, remember, was to probe from yet another perspective the relation between thinking and faith. I take it as sufficiently established that, for Derrida, thinking is that sacrificial bearing of the friend which gratefully, and we can now say, faithfully, takes-to-heart what has been said. What has not been sufficiently established is that aspect of my proposal which claimed that in so doing the thinker even bears the “sins” committed by his friend, carrying them to death and thereby freeing the friend’s thought, if not name-reputation, from those unseemly, unfavorable, and inauspicious elements without in any way condoning evil done. That this is the case as illustrated by Derrida’s gracious, yet uncompromising, treatment of “his friends” (including Nietzsche and Heidegger amongst many, many others) is beyond doubt in my mind. Nonetheless, it is just as clear that Derrida was unable to account for that mysterious conjunction of graciousness and uncompromising truth. I, however, have suggested that “Derrida’s way” is also leading me toward, if not already indicating, a Christian philosophy.

Such “conclusions” remain hovering somewhere between clarity and the unsaid, and may well have presented “the word” as “breaking up” (due to one’s own reading), thereby calling for—or at least demarcating the need for—a “resurrection” in order to make sense of what’s being alluded to here. Nonetheless, I have left various strands dangling, strands which I will pick up and weave into this text in the following chapters. In particular, I have in mind maternity, the effacing withdrawal, and above all, the promise of spirit, especially in relation to the word and its withdrawal. These are the concerns of the next chapter. In addition, we must finally once again face head on the question of philosophy, especially in relation to theology. It is there that the unsettling hovering with which I close this chapter will become especially pertinent.

7 Of (the) Spirit

7.1 Introduction

The topic of the Spirit brings together practically all of the key themes considered in the preceding chapters. To start with, even, and perhaps especially, the notion of “bringing together” is itself gathered by “the Spirit.” With regard to Heidegger’s work we have already seen such key topics as Being, *Dasein*, the *lógos*, the law, *Ereignis*, death, mighty pain, the *thanc*, thinking, etc., as all dependent at their core on this “gathering.” In OWL, however, Heidegger called that “gathering power” (185) or “hidden ... unifying force” (195) which gathers by the name “spirit,” in Trakl’s language upon which he was there meditating, “the ghostly night’s gathering blue” (195). And in his course on Schelling, Heidegger emphasized the essence of spirit as the “originally unifying unity [*ursprünglich einigende Einheit*]” (1985:128).¹ Further, in WCT “the gathering of thinking that recalls” is not only called “memory” and “*thanc*,” but those “originary words” are recognized as designating more fully what might otherwise be called “the spirit of the spirit” (149f). I will return to the importance of this gathering shortly, but first it will be useful to take note of the significance of “spirit” for other central Heideggerean topics.

First, *Dasein*: This *thanc* which designates more fully “the spirit of the spirit” also reiterates Heidegger’s understanding of *Dasein* as “that inmost essence of man which reaches outward most fully and to the outermost limits, and so decisively that, rightly considered, the idea of the inner and an outer world does not arise” (WCT 144); in other words, this is *Dasein* as “being-in-the-world.” Just as in WCT he identified this understanding of human being with Trakl’s “use [of] the word ‘soul’ in an exalted sense” (149), so too in OWL Heidegger referred to “the essential being” of what Trakl called soul as what goes “forward to somewhere else, underway toward ... , onward to the encounter with what is kept in store for it” (163). It is what Derrida called the “spirit ... [as] the scout (*Schrittmacher*)—it draws and, once again, *leads* the soul whose path it breaks” (OS 74), thereby simply paraphrasing Heidegger (OWL 180). Is this not simply a redescription of “the ek-static character of *Dasein*” (LH 207),

¹ I owe this reference to Derrida’s seminal work on “spirit” in Heidegger, OS 77.

that “standing-out” of *Dasein* which is a “standing in the lighting of Being,” what Heidegger meant by “the ek-sistence of man” (204)? In fact, Heidegger explicitly affirmed Trakl’s understanding of spirit or ghost as “a being terrified, beside himself,” and most importantly here, “*ek-static*” (OWL 179). And finally, tying such *ek-stacy* with that “originally unifying unity” considered above, Heidegger noted that it is precisely this “being toward one another” which “primally” gathers and unites the four of his four-fold *Ereignis* (PLT 199).

If, then, *Dasein* is to be understood in terms of “spirit,” what becomes of that into which *Dasein* stands, what Heidegger called “the *Da* [as] the lighting of Being” (LH 207)? As Heidegger put it in IM, “The world”—i.e. the “world” of *Dasein*’s being-in-the-world—“is always a *spiritual* world” (45), though, as Derrida rightly pointed out, “the spiritual character of the world itself remains obscure” (OS 55). That is, in the language of BT, both the primordiality and the obscurity of “spirit” is affirmed: “‘Spirit’ ... *exists as the primordial temporalizing of temporality*” (BT486/SZ436); in short, “spirit” is that within which *Dasein* ek-sists most primordially and most authentically (*ibid.*). The primordiality is, obviously, explicit; the obscurity is imposed by Heidegger’s quotation marks around “spirit,” which arose, no doubt, at least in part, from Heidegger’s on-going criticism of Hegel’s thought in these final pages of BT. This, however, is not the whole story, I submit, else Heidegger would not have persisted in the use of the word “spirit,” as is the case in his latter “poetic” thinking.

Some of this obscurity is partly relieved by returning to Trakl’s phrase quoted above: “the ghostly night’s gathering blue” (OWL 195). Shortly we will see what further clarity is granted to us at this point. Regardless, Heidegger’s meditations on Trakl do not relieve “spirit” of its primordiality. In fact, “the *Da*,” which is explicated by (Heidegger on) Trakl as “apartness,” was understood by Heidegger as “active as pure spirit” (OWL 185). This active, pure spirit, then, names the *Da*, the site of the happening of the “lighting-clearing of the There” (PLT 61). Further, though, not only is this apartness spiritual, that is, “determined by the spirit” (I will return to the further importance of this phrase shortly), but its spirituality is decidedly not to be understood “in the sense of the language of metaphysics” (179).

My own concern with the question “What is philosophy?” is further advanced by considering afresh Heidegger’s efforts to overcome this metaphysical tradition, this

time in terms of his focus on the significance of the night in Trakl's work, as in the phrase "the ghostly night's gathering blue."² In fact, it was precisely "the night"—as well as "the twilight," and "the years" as determined by "the ghostly twilight of the night" (168)—which is "akin to this spirit," which kinship "starts man on the way" (184). This is, therefore, once again the "spirit ... [as] the scout" cited earlier, as well as philosophy as a way. While this "scout" does describe the "inmost essence of man," as noted above, it is not so clear whether the spirit now being considered is the human-*Dasein* understood as spirit or that *Da-sein* which is nothing human. Heidegger's understanding of "the ghostly night's gathering blue" seems to favor the latter. Most to the point, Heidegger understood the *Da* as that "spirit of apartness" (188) with which the great soul remains in "pure harmony." While the "great soul's [most] fundamental trait" is "pain," now recognized as "the joining agent" (PLT 204), it would seem that the most fundamental trait of the "spirit of apartness" is "holiness," in fact, "the holiness of the blue" (183). We might then say, without forcing Heidegger's texts, that the "lighting-clearing of the There" is not simply "the ghostly twilight of the night" which is "akin to this spirit," but more primordially still it is a holy spirit which determines this kinship. This "holy spirit," then, would be that "lighting of Being" within which and into which *Dasein* understood as spirit *ek-sists*. It would be what Heidegger elsewhere called "the openness of this Open, that is, truth" (PLT 61). This holy spirit, therefore, would also be '*the*' (i.e. Heidegger's) spirit *of truth*, particular, determined, and determining. It is in this sense that I will now begin to refer to this spirit as "(the) Spirit," that is, with a capital "S" though with the "the" still in parentheses, and all in quotation marks.

This "(the) Spirit" is further determined by its "kinship" relations, especially its "pure harmony" with the mighty pain of the great soul, and not just in general, but a specific great soul. In particular, it is the "concealed relation" between "the nature of pain" and "the blue" which Heidegger sought to articulate (OWL 183). In that context he referred to the "yonder dead one toward whom the 'ghosts' of early victims have

2 Recalling the title of Derrida's work on Heidegger, *Of spirit*, it was in fact the "twilight of the spirit and the night of the spirit" which Heidegger suggested as the contexts within which to retrieve the metaphysical sense of "of the spirit" (OWL 178f).

died” and his (the yonder dead one’s) “still-withdrawing earliness” (184). His is the “gathering power of apartness” (185) because he not only “died early” as a young man, but in dying he entered into, or at least opened the path to, the apartness of “an open region that holds the promise of a dwelling” (194). Heidegger called that “open region” “the primal earliness” (190) of that “land” which is “older [and] earlier and therefore more promising than the Platonic-Christian land” (194). This is that death which “leads not to decay” (197) nor the “desolation of the departed dead” (186) nor to “being cut off” (186), but to “being set apart ... [as] the select–gathered up into an assembly” (186). This is “the mighty death” which has embraced the mighty pain and which “leads the way” (197) to “the beginning of the dawn” (194) which is not just any dawn, but “the first dawn–the earliest dawn,” which evidently is an always “prior beginning” (182). Heroic language indeed! And yet, it is also that “region” of Derrida’s “gage,” a “region” which always will have been, as noted in chapter 4. Here, then, we have not only the confluence of the dwelling, path, and death themes considered earlier, but also the focusing and personification of these themes in ‘the yonder dead one who died early.’

It is not difficult to hear the Christian resonances in such language, and in fact Heidegger readily acknowledged that Trakl’s words are frequently “from the world of biblical and ecclesiastical ideas.” Nonetheless, he steadfastly denied that “Trakl’s poems speak in a Christian fashion” (193). It was, however, at this point that Derrida, who evidently was *not* a Christian apologist, admitted that “the gestures [Heidegger] made to snatch Trakl away from the Christian thinking of *Geist* seem to me laborious, violent, sometimes simply caricatural, and all in all not very convincing” (OS 108). He went on, then, to construct an imagined dialogue between Heidegger and certain Christian theologians (109-113), his point being, in the words of his imagined theologians, that “you [Heidegger] hear us better than you think or pretend to think” (113).³ And in particular, Derrida’s theologians identified Heidegger’s “yonder dead one” with the Crucified Christ, the *Menschenschlag* [the smitten One], whose resurrection is that dawning of the always “prior beginning,” “the land of pre-archi-originary” (111). (This too is a profound retrieval of a key philosophical notion, in particular,

³ Here I rejoin the discussion introduced in chapter 5, §5.4.2.

Kant's beautiful and famous "land of truth" [*Critique of Pure Reason*, A235/B294 NKS 257].)

It is also here, with the *Menschenschlag*, that we rejoin Derrida's listening-bearing of the friend considered in the last chapter, for Heidegger characterized his own task as that listening after the "spirit of apartness" which spoke to the poet Trakl (OWL 188). Three further points call for additional comment. First, this is the same listening by which Heidegger characterized that thinking which overcomes traditional Western metaphysics-philosophy. Not only is this "overcoming" again identified with "the way of death," now characterized as that "going under ... [of] the mighty death" (197), but it is the "voice" of "(the) Spirit" rather than "the voice of Being" to which he hearkened. This is no small detail, for as Gasché (1993) pointed out, for Heidegger, it is finally this *Stimme* (the voice) which determines (*bestimmen*) that attunement (*Stimmung*) of human being with its most fundamental (and all determinative) correlate. Throughout these chapters this correspondence or dispositional attunement has provided a thread which has guided our considerations of the meaning of philosophy. Now genuine and faithful thinking is characterized by hearkening to the voice of "(the) Spirit" speaking in the words of the poets. As Gasché also noted, Heidegger's *Stimme* therefore recast and replaces "Kant's notion of transcendental apperception": It is "the ultimate *a priori* of all connecting" (18), and therefore is utterly determinative of synthesis as a gathering together (15). Just as in KPM Heidegger, following clear Kantian suggestions, identified the imagination as responsible for that "original unifying" (KPM240), now the "imagination" becomes decidedly "spiritual"; or perhaps better, now we have the equiprimordiality of "(the) Spirit" and what I might call "(the) Image," following Heidegger's ontological interpretation of the Kantian imagination.⁴ But with such an equiprimordiality comes an equiprimordial difference within that original unifying-unity. We have visited this point previously in terms of both the *dvoika* and "the Trinity." Here too, though, "(the) Spirit" as such is implicated, for as Derrida recognized, "the essence of spirit" is also the "difference of difference" (OS 26). Heidegger's "dif-ference" as spirit-pain says the same thing; in short, there

⁴ Cf. SIG, chapter 4, for further details.

is a “multiple ambiguousness” about “(the) Spirit” (OWL 192). I must return to this “ambiguity” later.

Second, Heidegger’s listening after the “spirit of apartness” introduced a piety which is “more pious” than that piety of questioning, which itself occupies an intermediate position in Heidegger’s thinking about thinking between the representational thinking of philosophy and this greater, “more pious” piety of meditative-commemorative thinking (OWL 188). Finally, Heidegger recognized something “more promising than the Platonic-Christian land” (194; and I must insist that Heidegger’s hyphen be honored), that of which we took note in chapter 4 as Derrida’s recognition of “the gage,” something like a fundamental, non-deconstructible covenant which precedes and sustains any other representational or questioning form of thinking. The point here is that this pre-originary gift of the language-gage is decidedly spiritual: It is ‘of “(the) Spirit”’. This is the pledge-gage which is always the promise of spirit given by and in language, both the promise given by “(the) Spirit” and the promise that “(the) Spirit” will yet be further given from or by or through language. Here the cloud veiling the two-fold *dvoika* begins to dissipate. This too must receive further attention later. Here, though, my point is that a *spiritual* piety is at the heart of Heidegger’s thinking; and further, that this piety is also “hymnal.” As Heidegger put it, the task of thinking is “to say again the music of the spirit of apartness” (188); it is what Derrida’s theologians refer to as “the concert or the hymn” (OS 111), addressed, I suppose, to what Derrida called that “God to which it is possible and no doubt necessary to offer sacrifice” (HEPP 215). Thinking, then, is what we might now call a hymnal sacrifice of thanksgiving. In chapter 6 we referred to this spiritual and hymnic piety as worship. Here too I want to reaffirm the inherent significance of what I have been calling, admittedly, somewhat lamely, Heidegger’s “religiosity.” (Would “Heidegger’s ‘spirituality’” express this point more adequately?)

Third, Heidegger’s listening after the “spirit of apartness” is also a “bearing”: It is a “*carrying* the music of his [the poet’s] path over into the sounds of spoken language” (OWL 188; emphasis added). In fact, that original harmony with the *sophon* which we considered in chapter 2 as founding the early meaning of philosophy became in OWL the “harmony of mutual bearing” by which the unifying-unity of belonging

together happens (181).⁵ It is indeed this “gathering power of apartness [which] holds the unborn generation beyond all that is spent, and saves it for a coming rebirth of mankind out of earliness” (185); it prepares a “stiller childhood” (188) by differing from that “old degenerate generation” (191) which “never *carried* the unborn to full term” (189; emphasis added). The soul so gifted as to bear this “mighty pain” and the “mighty death” thereby becomes “the giver of life” (181). This listening-bearing, then, is a sacrificial thanking which both bears and dies for the other(s), even, and perhaps especially, the unborn generation(s). Here too one wonders, together with Derrida’s theologians, whether Heidegger was more Christian than he pretended to think, for such thinking was already echoed in the Apostle’s “living sacrifice ... which is your spiritual (λογικός) worship” (Romans 12:1; NRS, ESV, NAU, NIV; “reasonable,” N/KJV; “sensible,” NJB), not to mention, not yet in detail anyway, the creedal affirmation of the Holy Spirit as “the giver of life” (Nicene Creed), nor the saving rebirth accomplished by that Spirit (John 3), nor even the Apostle’s own “pain of childbirth” through which others were “formed” (Galatians 4:19), nor the life-giving “carrying” of the death of the Other for the others (2 Corinthians 4:10-12).

It is, nonetheless, difficult to believe that this convergence of language use and themes is simply accidental. Nor are these the only themes which invite a Christian engagement. However, before reengaging such a dialogue, even more of the significance of Heidegger’s “(the) Spirit” can be reconstituted. Only two further points will now be made.

The first point follows from a fuller characterization of that “harmony of mutual bearing” just considered, and it rejoins Ricoeur’s elaboration of a “multivocal concept of truth” considered in chapters 5 and 6 (MR 31), as well as Jonathan Edwards’ understanding of the Spirit noted in chapter 6. In particular, it is “(the) Spirit”-pain which animates or empowers or enables us to be “*fit to join* in that harmony of mutual bearing ... ” (OWL 181; emphasis added). It is this “power to be fit” which underlies truth as correspondence and thinking as representation; we have already taken ad-

⁵ Bearing, therefore, is yet another figure for that playful-conjugal-mirroring which unities the four-fold, as considered in chapter 5. In fact, Heidegger did say that “the play ... is pain” (OWL 153). (One suspects that this “play” is not unrelated to the “play” of the four-fold mirror-play.)

equate note of this “pure correspondence.” Here we are simply calling attention to this fittingness as the gift of “(the) Spirit” about which Heidegger elsewhere said, it is “the first law of thinking” (LH 241). We might even say, echoing Ricoeur’s words, that the most basic determinant of truth is this “fitting production” (MR 31) achieved by “(the) Spirit”; or, as we might now say, “earlier” than all other notions of truth is “‘(the) Spirit’ of truth.”

In fact, the convergence at this point of Ricoeur’s thought with Heidegger’s is remarkable. Even though Ricoeur doubted that “Heidegger’s substitution of truth as manifestation for truth as adequation responds to what *mimesis* [as fitting production] demands,” it is precisely here that the “multivocal concept of truth” which Ricoeur sought—“one that would fuse, at its margins, with the concept of rightness” (31)—is answered by Heidegger’s “relation of fitness [by the grace of which] everything that lives is fit, that is to say, good” (OWL 181). Heidegger even went on to say that it is only due to this fitting-goodness emerging from “(the) Spirit”—pain that we (or any fellow being)⁶ can be truthful (181). That is, this “(the) Spirit”—pain is the matrix⁷ within which even the “letting-be” of *Ereignis* happens; in short, this “law of fittingness” is earlier than, and therefore precedes, both “the saying of Being [and] the destiny of truth” (LH 241), and it does so as an “ethical principle” that determines what is “fit” as what is “good” (OWL 181), and therefore what “ought to be said” (LH 241; emphasis added). Accordingly, it is most likely more than a coincidence that the “new adventures of thinking” (MR 31) which Ricoeur claimed his notion of *mimesis* made available is precisely the issue to which Heidegger was responding at this point in terms of fittingness: “How can we preserve the element of adventure that all research contains without simply turning philosophy into an adventuress?” (LH 240f).

Lest the importance of this point be overlooked or minimized, let me underline the fact that this power of “(the) Spirit” to render “fit to join in that harmony of mutual bearing” (OWL 181) corresponds to the condition for the possibility of Heidegger’s “and” as considered in the previous chapter. It is also here that we return

6 I use the words “any fellow being” here instead of Heidegger’s “living things” since one page later Heidegger referred to “the stone [which] is speaking” (OWL 182). Cf. Annie Dillard’s *Teaching a stone to talk*, as well as Luke 19:40 (simply hyperbole?).

7 This word is chosen intentionally; cf. below, §7.2.1.2.

to that "Spirit"-voice, that music of the Way (188), which determines not only the deeper structure of "Being," but also all notions which depend upon it, e.g. synthesis, connection, relation, etc.

And how is such thinking-saying of "(the) Spirit" of truth to be achieved? For Heidegger, it is "(the) Spirit," the spirit of apartness, which gets "the soul ... underway to where it leads the way" (180). Underway to where? Where does "(the) Spirit" lead? Heidegger did not hesitate to answer: "(the) Spirit" of apartness "carries the soul toward the One and only" (180). And what might that be? "The One and only" is that with which the great soul remains in "pure harmony," in short, "the holiness of the blue," or better, that which shines from "the blue" by "withdrawing into its own depth" (181); in a word, Trakl's word, "God" (180).

Though Heidegger doubted the Christian quality of Trakl's work, he nowhere opposed "God" as that home-coming to which "(the) Spirit" of apartness led. Nor did he do anything but affirm "pain" as the way toward becoming "at home in pain" (180); no doubt a pain which was also attuned to and penetrated by joy (153), but pain nonetheless. It is especially here, in lacking the commitment to the eschatological sense—though not thereby confined to the future—of the triumph of joy over pain that Heidegger's thought was, as he claimed with regard to Trakl, not Christian.⁸

Second, the final point of these introductory remarks has to do with the role of "(the) Spirit" in relation to Heidegger's understanding of philosophy. Though the significance of "(the) Spirit" for Heidegger has not been obvious to many, Gadamer, to name but one, has argued that Hegel's philosophy was always the ultimate object of Heidegger's "overcoming" of Western philosophy; and certainly, as the first sentence of Alan Olson's remarkable book on *Hegel and the Spirit* puts it, "Spirit (*Geist*) is Hegel's grand philosophical category" (Olson 1992:3). It is not so surprising, then, that "(the) Spirit" also continues to emerge as exceedingly important in Heidegger's own work. Further, as I move more directly toward the engagement of Heidegger's thought with Christian thinking, it is especially notable that Olson has argued that it

⁸ It is worth wondering if perhaps this "(musical) note" more than any other matter is that which distinguishes Ricoeur's thought from Heidegger's. If so, this distinction would be a matter of the "'tone' of the music," i.e. the discernment of spirits would be determinative.

was Luther's *Small Catechism*, and especially "the incipient transcendental dialectic informing Luther's exposition of the Trinity" (41), which must be viewed as "the foundational symbol-text in the future development of German Idealism," including, of course, Hegel. In short, Olson has maintained, and I think persuasively demonstrated, that "Hegel's conception of Holy Spirit and of Absolute Spirit are one and the same" (13). However, regardless of the final status of that bold claim, the least that I am here acknowledging—and it is all I need for my own concerns—is that the Christian "conception" of the Holy Spirit (which, of course, includes the Trinity) is *not* philosophically irrelevant with regard to understanding Heidegger's understanding of philosophy and its "overcoming."

There are, then, several further points with regard to the relation between "(the) Spirit" and philosophy which must be taken up afresh in what follows. Three such points are introduced here. First, we must wonder anew just how crucial "(the) Spirit" is to Heidegger's understanding of philosophy as *Heimsuchung*, recalling both Kant's characterization of metaphysics as *Heimsuchung* and Heidegger's retrieval of this notion in terms of "home-coming," dwelling, etc. The incisive edge with regard to "(the) Spirit" is, of course, the meaning of *Heimsuchung* as "haunting," translated as such in Heidegger's KPM2 (28), alluding as it does to a "ghostly presence." In light of the preceding introductory comments regarding "(the) Spirit" in Heidegger's thought, this allusion appears as anything but what might otherwise be considered unwarranted or simply frivolous word-play.

Second, I must return to Heidegger's understanding of Being as abyssal (*ab-gründig*; N4 193) and "chaotic" (N3 214), especially in relation to the primal "formless void" over which *the Spirit* hovered, as recounted in Genesis 1. In particular, I will raise the possibility that this dark and deep "formless void" might be an "image" (perhaps an "imageless 'image'") of the Spirit. It is in that context that "the voice of the Spirit" and "the voice of Being," as well as Heidegger's "Nothing," must be reconsidered.

Third, and finally, at the heart of Heidegger's thought lies "the withdrawal" of Being; it is central to his understanding of Truth, as well as such notions as *Ereignis* and *es gibt*. Is it not, though, precisely the Spirit whose functioning is that of the withdrawing, self-effacing, revealing of the Other? This is a path which must be further explored, and in doing so, we also must revisit what Derrida called the

“essence of maternity” (RtM 18), and what, following Nietzsche, many others have called “truth as a woman.” Might such notions also point toward “the Spirit of Truth” in its specifically philosophical relevance?

Thus far I have only introduced “(the) Spirit” in Heidegger’s work, especially in relation to the themes and key issues raised in previous chapters. As has been the case throughout, I have (be)labored the details with regard to Heidegger’s texts. My reason for doing so continues to be the substantiation of my concerns, especially because the relation between the texts of philosophy (so-called) and the text of the Bible has been a highly disputed matter, as also has been the relation between philosophy and (Christian) theology. Though I realize that this “dispute” is to some extent inevitable and inescapable, I am attempting to not aggravate the situation by being (unnecessarily or too) eccentric with regard to either Heidegger or the Western tradition of philosophy: Thus the abundance of textual references. Nonetheless, it can only be the fruit of such an engagement which might reintroduce the significance of the Christian Scriptures for “philosophy.” It is, therefore, to this encounter which I now turn my attention.

7.2 The “dialogue” engaged

In what follows I engage Heidegger’s thinking with Christian thinking on four specific topics. Though there are certainly more such topics which are worthy of further attention, and to which such attention hopefully will be paid in due time, these four have been chosen as sufficient for three specific purposes: first, to further substantiate the propriety (to choose a word with Heideggerean resonances) or fittingness, even the inevitability, of such a “dialogue”; second, to demonstrate the mutual benefit promised to both philosophy and to Christian thinking; and third, to continue to prepare for the explicit reflections on the relation between philosophy and theology which follow in the final chapter. It is, then, especially the propriety and the productivity of this encounter which is my concern here, an encounter which I am convinced is more than a mere juxtaposition of opinions. Nonetheless, my aim is still an understanding of the question—What is philosophy?—and ultimately an answer which is adequate to my own Christian faith. In short, I am still moving toward both understanding and “doing” a Christian philosophy.

The four topics to now be considered are the Spirit and the Nothing, the Spirit and the Word, the Spirit and the *Heimsuchung*, and finally, the Spirit and the resurrection.

7.2.1 The spirit and the nothing

The suggestion which constitutes the point of engagement between Heidegger's Nothing and the Spirit begins by juxtaposing Heidegger's Nothing and the "formless void" of Genesis 1:2. We have already seen something of the pertinence of this proposal in chapter 4.⁹ There "the Abyss" served as the common denominator, the significance of which will be further elaborated below. More specifically, though, the Spirit of God who hovered over "the face of the deep" thereby becomes not only the prototype or model or paradigm for the ensuing creation, but the deep and dark formless void itself—that is, "the Nothing"—becomes the first and most basic creational—"image" of the Spirit. The quotes around "image" are essential here, for a point of utmost importance is that both the Spirit and this dark "Nothing-deep" are formless, i.e. imageless as many understand the term.^{10 11}

The key inspirations for this proposal come not only from Heidegger, but also from yet another seminal work by Meredith G. Kline, *Images of the Spirit (IS)*, as well as my own meditations on the text of Scripture. My first task is to demonstrate the theological plausibility of this proposal. To a large extent I depend on Kline's presentation for this point, even though my own meditations (on the Scriptures and on Heidegger's work) suggest a crucial modification of Kline's position.

7.2.1.1 The "formless void" and the Spirit

Without reconstituting his argumentation, Kline held that "the Spirit of God hovered

-
- 9 I explore the "scientific" feasibility of this proposal in another manuscript, "The field and the spirit: preliminary explorations," unpublished first draft, May 1995.
- 10 Further, though not precisely pertinent in this context, the "Being" which this Nothing veils can be taken as "the Law of God" understood as a pre- and proto-incarnational "form" of the Word of God who subsequently became incarnate as Christ Jesus.
- 11 It is exceedingly pertinent that Sallis (1988) has focused on a text from Nietzsche which expounds the Dionysian state, and in particular, Dionysian mimesis, in terms of both "proto-reverberation" and "imageless reflection" (*bildloser Widerschein*). It is, in fact, precisely this point which explicates a mimesis which is "in excess of metaphysics" (11). To my mind, then, this is confirmation from a somewhat unlikely source for the proposals I am suggesting in this book.

over the primeval **תֹּהוּ** (*tohu*) [formless ‘chaos’] not only as a creating power but as a paradigm for creation. The theophanic Glory was an archetypal pattern for the cosmos and for man, the image of God” (IS 17). Therefore, not only is “the world of the Glory theophany ... a dimensional realm” (17), but that “Glory was a Spirit-temple” (21) which creatively reproduced and represented itself in a variety of “images of the Spirit” which Kline’s book delineates, beginning with the entire creation itself including in a special sense “the earthling made in the image of God” as its culmination (21). Within the redemptive sphere these images include the pillar of cloud/fire, the tabernacle, the temple, the priestly vestments, and especially the person of the prophet. What Kline did not say, but what is perfectly consistent with the genius of his insight, is that the created primeval *tohu* and *bohu* (“formless void”) over which the Spirit hovered was already itself the first and best “image of the Spirit.”

Such an adjustment does indeed have profound consequences for Kline’s position, best summarized as follows: What Kline has taken as images of the Spirit are better understood as images of the *dvoika*, the two-fold of Spirit and Word. And, as a matter of fact, Kline was sometimes forced to the too simple expedient of depending on the oneness of God: “What Genesis 1:2 identifies as Spirit, Hebrews 1:2, 3 identifies as Son; God is one” (16). I certainly do not dispute the truth of this affirmation of the unity of God, a kind of “Christian *shema*.”¹² Nonetheless, not only does Kline’s approach negatively affect his otherwise creative and accurate exegesis,¹³ but he too acknowledged that finally the Glory theophany is God present as “Logos-Wisdom and Spirit-Power” (23; emphasis added). My point, then, is likely the same as Kline’s, at least as far as the *theophanic* aspects of the Spirit are concerned; nevertheless, his (over)emphasis on the Spirit as such tends to downplay the two-foldedness of such

12 The OT *Shema* (the Hebrew for ‘hear’): “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

13 e.g. IS 16 (there is no indication in Genesis 1 of “glory-light” prior to v. 3; the exclusion of “the eternal ontological reality” from Hebrews 1:3a is forced; the “bearing” of Heb. 1:3b is by “the word,” which does not occur in Genesis 1 until v. 3, thus the claim of an allusion to Genesis 1:2 is likewise forced) and IS 33f (Kline seems to have overlooked the relevance of 1 Corinthians 11:3 in this context).

theophanies (which would reach their most perfect manifestation in Christ Jesus, the Spirit-anointed Incarnate Son).

This is, however, not simply a quibble; there are consequences to the adjustment I am proposing. For one, I doubt that the Spirit can be accurately designated “Spirit-Glory-Face” (21),¹⁴ in particular, though the effects of the Spirit can be manifest, the “Face” of the Spirit is never manifest. This is not to deny the Personhood of the Spirit; it is only to recognize a different “mode of operation and/or presentation.” Not only is my claim in keeping with the traditional recognition that “the Holy Spirit testifies of the Son and glorifies Him (John 15:26 and 16:14)” (ORF 156)¹⁵ and not “Himself,” but we have already seen the possible philosophical significance of this point, both with regard to the Second Commandment (no images!) in relation to representation (chapter 5) and with regard to Heidegger’s understanding of Truth in relation to the essential “withdrawal [or ‘self-effacing’] of ‘Being.’” (On this point also depends the adequate appreciation of what Derrida has called the operation of *différance*, etc.) I will return to these concerns in the next section.

First, though, there is more to be said about the “formless void” and the Spirit. I will take as my clue other Old Testament occurrences of the key words from Genesis 1:2. First, the only other use within the Pentateuch of both *tohu* (wasteness, nothingness, etc.) and the verb רָחַץ (rhp) (shake, tremble; piel, brood, hover over), is Deuteronomy 32:10-12:

He sustained him in a desert land, in a howling wilderness waste [*tohu*]; he shielded him, cared for him, guarded him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, and hovers over [from *rhp*] its young; as it spreads its wings, takes them up, and bears them aloft on its pinions, the LORD alone guided him; no foreign god was with him.

Kline’s conclusion from this unusual linguistic and imagistic situation is that “the ‘Spirit of God’ in the creation record is surely to be understood as a designation for the theophanic Glory-cloud” which guided the people of Israel through the desert

¹⁴ The “renewal” Kline credits to this “Spirit-Glory-Face” includes “the Word” (Psalm 147:15, 17), so once again what Kline credits to the Spirit is more accurately ascribed to the *dvoika* of Spirit and Word.

¹⁵ Bavinck, Herman. 1956. *Our reasonable faith*, trans. by Henry Zylstra. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.

as the pillar of cloud and fire (IS 15). For my purposes two further points are of special interest: first, the “primal creational wilderness” has become an experiential reality, perhaps even the typical experiential reality for post-Edenic humanity; and second, there is a way through this howling wilderness waste (*tohu*), a way provided and guided by the LORD himself. The significance of these points for the dialogue at hand is further unfolded by Isaiah’s prophetic adaptation of the key words from Genesis 1:2, especially the words for the “formless void.” Two passages are especially relevant.¹⁶

In Isaiah 45:18 the prophet used *tohu* to underline the Creator’s intention for his creation: “he did not create it a chaos [*tohu*], he formed it to be inhabited!” However, in Isaiah 34:11-12 the prophet spoke of the LORD’s “day of vengeance” (v. 8) this way: “He shall stretch the line of confusion [*tohu*; NIV, chaos] over it, and the plummet of chaos [*bohu*; NIV, desolation] over its nobles. They shall name it No Kingdom There, and its princes shall be nothing.” About this state of affairs, including a reference to these verses, Kline said, “The day of judgment announced by the prophets is a day of both light and darkness, of creative restoration as well as desolating destruction, a day of realization of a Sabbath-consummation of the cosmos as well as of *reversion to a chaotic deep-and-darkness*” (118; emphasis added). These, then, are the two ways delineated by the covenant relation between the Creator and his creation as discussed in chapter 4, the way of blessing and the way of curse.

There are, though, even further Heideggerean echoes which are now perhaps obvious. First, the alternatives presented in both cases are “dwelling” versus “chaos,” with the goal conducive to “the essence of human nature” being that of dwelling. Second, in both cases the “abyssal” is the “chaotic,” though as also noted in chapter 4, not in the sense of “blindly raging confusion” (N3 214). Rather, Heidegger understood the “chaos” of (the abyss of) Being as “always pressing for the ordering of power, always demarcating boundaries of power, and always weighted toward a decisive outcome in the struggle to delineate power” (214).

Third, in both cases there is something unavoidable about facing the abyss: for

¹⁶ Contrary to much contemporary scholarship I take the linguistic and thematic evidence as pointing overwhelmingly to the unity of Isaiah.

Heidegger it was the necessity of “owning” death as one’s ownmost possibility; for the Scriptures it is the necessity that the “just requirements of the law might be fulfilled” (Romans 8:4). In the latter case that means not only that one’s death must be faced (Romans 6:23a), but also, in the words of Kline, that the “*reversion to a chaotic deep-and-darkness*” is inevitably an aspect or moment of all human experience, even the experience of the redeemed. One traditional Christian expression calls this “the dark night of the soul.” Earlier we called this the ordeal-trial of the covenant, and noted its association with both circumcision and baptism.¹⁷

Fourth, the bringing to nothing of “the princes” announced in Isaiah 34:12 is echoed in 1 Corinthians 2:8 (also 1:26), the very context which Heidegger used to delineate the significance of philosophy per se, as noted in chapter 2. Further, the “plummet-line” of Isaiah 34:11 also occurs in the Isaianic context (28-30) from which the Apostle Paul quoted in the passage from 1 Corinthians, itself quoted by Heidegger in WBGJ. There, in Isaiah 28:17 justice or righteousness is the plummet-line. Heidegger, in fact, brings these two senses together in the context of his own meditations on Nietzsche: “*justice is the ground of the possibility and necessity of every kind of harmony of man with chaos, whether such harmony be the higher one of art or the equally necessary one of knowledge*” (N3 149; emphasis added). And, as noted earlier, “*chaos is the name for a peculiar preliminary projection of the world as a whole and for the governance of that world*”; further, “it means the concealment of unmastered richness in the becoming and streaming of the world as a whole” (80). It ought not escape our attention that this sense of “chaos” is quite similar to my proposal that the primeval “formless void,” often referred to as “chaos,” was the first and most fundamental “image of the *dvoika*,” itself understood as “a dimensional realm” which, in fact, rules as “the Majestic Way” (IS 72).

Fifth, in both cases there is “the voice” which is determinative. In fact, not only does the Hebrew for “voice” (*qol*) bear some similarities to the word for “line” (*qav*),¹⁸ but the Septuagint, Jerome and the Syriac texts of Psalm 19:4, as well as the contempo-

¹⁷ Nonetheless, the way of faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ... “Who will descend into the abyss?” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)” (Romans 10:6f).

¹⁸ The letters for the transcribed “o” and “v” are often interchangeable.

rary NIV and the NRSV, actually translate the Hebrew *qavam* ("their line") as "their voice." Most significant for my purposes here, though, is that: (1) the "line/voice" of Psalm 19:4 is a "creational voice"; (2) as Kline pointed out, the sound (*qol*) of the voice of the Lord signaled the *parousia*-advent of the Day of Judgment, that is, the imminent fulfillment of the two covenantal ways; and (3) as suggested in chapter 4, that "creational voice" is not unrelated to the proclamation of the Word of Christ, the Gospel, especially now after the Death and Resurrection of One who "sustains [bears along] all things by his powerful word" (Hebrews 1:3). Earlier we noted the essential ambiguity in Heidegger's understanding of Trakl's language, especially the two sites of apartness. It is now Isaiah's line-voice of desolation/chaos as a specifically covenantal curse, as distinguished from the line-voice of blessing, which relieves Heidegger's "ambiguous ambiguousness" (OWL 192) of its unnecessary confusion.

Sixth, in both cases there is the hope (at least)¹⁹ of a way through the "howling wilderness waste" (*tohu-bohu*). For Heidegger there was the dangerous, yet playful, way toward the rebirth into the childhood of a "still, brighter earliness" (OWL 188, etc.); for Isaiah there is a "highway ... the Holy Way" (35:8) through "the wilderness and the dry land" (35:1) whose hymnic exposition follows only a few verses after the pronouncement of the chaos-curse (34:11).

Seventh, and most to the point in this chapter, that way-making way through the wilderness was, according to Kline, the Glory-Spirit. In fact, as he pointed out, the Hebrew word for "way" (*derek*) can in some cases best be translated by "'(royal) Splendor' or 'Majesty,'" even occurring in parallel with "glory" (*kabod*) and "Glory-Presence" (*panim*, face), notions which Kline expended considerable effort to identify with the Spirit (IS 72, especially note 53). In fact, Kline's claim is that just as the Spirit hovered creatively over the "formless void" in the beginning in order to make it habitable so too "He" now recreatively hovers over (Deuteronomy 32:10-12) the howling wilderness waste of our lives, embedded as they are in this "world," in order to make a way to restore, to make fit, not only the world, but especially our bodies-lives, as "His" temple.

¹⁹ It is perhaps of some interest that the unpointed Hebrew for "to hope, to trust" (*qava*) is identical with the unpointed form of one variant for "line" (*qav* = *qava*).

And finally, eighth, some sort of 'deconstruction' and/or 'nihilism' is implied here.

7.2.1.2 The Spirit and the rebirth

There is, though, yet another aspect of the Spirit's hovering which calls for further attention. We have already touched on it above with regard to Heidegger's dangerous, yet playful, way toward the rebirth into the childhood of a "still, brighter earliness"; it is also the reason I have been placing the masculine pronouns referring to the Spirit in quotation marks.

As is well-known, Jesus Himself likened the entrance into the Kingdom of God with a rebirth from above, a birth by the Spirit (John 3). However, before considering that "rebirth" I wish to focus on the "renewal of all things" of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 19:28. This is the "cosmic rebirth" or "renewal" (παλιγγενεσία, in the regeneration, rebirth, new age, etc.) which underlies my interpretation of the use of Psalm 19:4 in Romans 10 as given above; but more to the point here is the evocation of the original creational pattern which Kline's work sanctions. In particular I have in mind the hovering of the Spirit from which the Word of God proceeded. Extending the scope of this point Kline said, "In creating all things, the Word of God who was in the beginning thus proceeded forth from the Spirit of God—as did also the incarnate Word and the inscripturated Word. We are confronted again with this mystery of the Son's identity with the Spirit and his personal distinctiveness and his procession from the Spirit ... " (IS 16f).²⁰ The key link for my purposes is Kline's reference to "the incarnate Word."

Though Kline himself did not develop this point, he did note that the "overshadowing" of the Virgin by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35) followed the same pattern as the providential renewal of the earth (Psalm 104), the redemptive restoration of the People of God as pictured by Ezekiel 37, and the original hovering of the Spirit over the

²⁰ This is a "procession" which has not traditionally been a part of the orthodox understanding of the Trinity, for in that doctrine it is the Spirit which proceeds from the Father (and the Son), while the Son is "generated" from/by the Father. In parentheses is the important, much debated, and perhaps still relevant, filioque, affirmed by the Western church, yet challenged by the Eastern church. Often the "economic" relations amongst the Persons of the Trinity have been taken as clues with regard to the "ontological" relations. Why this has not been the case at this point here remains an open question.

“formless void” (IS 21f). My point is that with regard to the new creation the womb of the Virgin evidently replaced the “formless void” of the first creation.²¹ The implication, then, is that that original “formless void” was (is?) itself also womb-like;²² and further, if that “formless void” is itself the first and most primordial “image” of the Spirit, then the Spirit “Himself” is also decidedly “maternal,” perhaps even what Derrida meant by “the essence of maternity” (RtM 18).²³ It is for this reason that my masculine pronouns referring to the Spirit have been within quotation marks. Before, however, discussing the obvious concerns which arise with regard to the relation(s) between the Spirit and the Word, three further points need be mentioned.

First, Derrida has consistently identified his “infrastructures” (*différance*, *retrait*, etc.) with this “essence of maternity,” and in particular, with “the mother [as] the faceless figure ... [who] gives rise to all the figures by losing herself in the background of the scene like an anonymous persona” (EO 38). He also referred to this “losing herself” as “effacing itself,” as an “*a priori* withdrawal,” even explicitly identifying it with “*différance*” (RtM 29). And, to tighten the weave with Heidegger’s work, Derrida also identified this “withdrawal” with “the *Ereignen* of the *Es gibt*” as well as “the mirrorplay of the Fourfold” (30). It could seem, then, almost predestined that Derrida would be the one to highlight “(the) Spirit” in Heidegger, whose Truth as *a-lethea*, therefore, might better be called “(the) Spirit of Truth.”

Second, the “pre-incarnation theophany” which Kline sought in the hovering Glory-Spirit²⁴ would, then, be better recognized in/as that primal light which issued from/by the Word which itself proceeded from that hovering Spirit. “Light” would be the first and most primordial image of “the Word” much as “the formless void”

-
- 21 I admit that this privileges the Virgin Mary, while at the same time it is not “her womb” which is the new creation, but that which she bore. In her role as Mother of Jesus, then, she would occupy an intermediate position between the old and the new, something like the position of John the Baptizer with regard to the Old and New Covenants.
- 22 In chapter 4 we noted other references which lends further credence to this suggestion; in particular, Psalm 90:2, Job 38:8.
- 23 Here we would be wise to recall a Heideggerean pattern of insight: the essence of maternity need not be maternal just as (for example) the essence of technology is (understood by Heidegger to be) nothing technological, etc.
- 24 For example, IS 16.

corresponds to the Spirit. The Incarnate Word did, after all, later identify Himself as “the light of the world.” The dual sense of Heidegger’s *Lichtung*, as clearing and as lighting, would then reflect this original and often repeated (as no one has shown better than Kline) pattern of first, the Open of the “formless void” (which remained dark, if not invisible), and then, the light-giving word. As Heidegger surmised, “the name for the task of thinking then [must] read instead of *Being and Time: Opening and Presence*” (TB 73). With the assistance of Derrida’s work on “(the) Spirit” in Heidegger we could now say that most fundamentally this pattern finds its archetype in the relation between the Spirit and the Word.²⁵

Third, this linkage between the Spirit and the Word is also operative in the human rebirth as understood by the New Testament; and remember that for Heidegger the stake for thinking is “a change in human nature,” even a new humanity.²⁶ Already we have mentioned the role of the Spirit in such a change (John 3). Peter, on the other hand, ascribed the new birth to the “imperishable seed, ... the living and enduring word of God ... the good news that we announced to you” (1 Peter 1:23-25), while James wrote of “birth by the word of truth” (1:18) and receiving “the implanted word” (1:21), once again invoking the “womb” imagery.

We are, then, well prepared to turn our attention to this relation between the Spirit and the Word.

7.2.2 The Spirit and the Word

I begin my consideration of the philosophical significance of the relation between the Spirit and the Word by noting the notional²⁷ and verbal similarities, if not identities, between the understanding of spirit and word by the philosophers considered and

²⁵ And, inasmuch as “presence” here is only “part” of the “and,” this approach would not (necessarily) fall prey to a critique of the metaphysical of presence. Note, as well, that my reinterpretation of Heidegger’s paired “and” would also escape the charge of logocentrism, as “the Word” is also “only” “part” of the “and.”

²⁶ Cf. chapter 2, §2.4.1.2.

²⁷ I use the word “notional” instead of the word “conceptual” because the latter is thoroughly entangled with the “history of metaphysics” which is at issue in these considerations. “Notional,” on the other hand, has been less specified by that tradition, though of course it too is not absolutely pristine. I, however, am using it in a somewhat vague sense which intends to communicate specifiable meaning which may or may not escape unwanted metaphysical complications.

that of the Scriptural record. It is, perhaps, appropriate to let the theological background which no doubt has interacted from the start with my reading of Heidegger, Derrida and Ricoeur continue to emerge with greater explicitness. I am well aware that I am subject to the charge of imposing a (Christian) reading on these philosophical texts. Nonetheless, this charge is inevitable and unavoidable, especially since it has been Heidegger more than any other who has made the issue of “violence” in interpretation a central philosophical concern; in short, in the form of his *Destruktion* or retrieval, understood finally in terms of his “mighty pain,” the “rift,” “dif-ference,” etc., Heidegger has insisted that such “violence” is at the heart (=the *thanc*) of authentic thinking, and therefore, interpretation. It is for that reason that in previous chapters our discussion has focused time and again on the “the Crucified One,” as well as on the “crucified” word, the word of the cross, the crossed-out word, etc. The point here is that there is a “violence” inherently associated with this focus. (Please, though, note the continued use of the quotation marks around “violence.”)

The first similarity between Heidegger and the Christian Scriptures has to do with Heidegger’s key notion of the “withdrawal” or self-concealment of Truth, Being, etc. Here I focus on that notion only with regard to the topic at hand: This withdrawal is, in other words, what above I called the self-effacing of “(the) Spirit.” In Heidegger’s words we humans are “drawn to what withdraws, we are drawn into what withdraws” by “this draft, this current” of the self-concealing of what I am now calling “(the) Spirit” (WCT 17). This is, in fact, another description of “our essential nature”: our being drawn-toward (what withdraws) constitutes “man [as] a sign” (9, 16), a “pointer pointing toward (what withdraws)” (9). How, though, is this “drawing” related to what I will call Heidegger’s understanding of “(the) Word” (parallel to the graphics applied to “(the) Spirit”)?

The multiple meanings of the English “drawing” well serve Heidegger’s thought. In particular, because “man is a sign” (16) the hand of man both “designs and signs,” for instance, through gesture (16). This design is, however, what Heidegger also affirmed as the “unity of the being of language” (OWL 121).²⁸ The essence of man (as sign) is, therefore, related essentially to “the being of language” (as de-sign). This is

²⁸ The “signing-gesturing” of the human hand as essentially related to the essence of language does

not a new point; nor is it new to note that this sign nature of the design is “related to *secare*, to cut” (121), apartness, etc. (cf. chapter 4). What is new, however, is not only that this drawing into and by the draft of the withdrawal [of “(the) Spirit”] determines the essential nature of human being (as sign), but now especially that this drawing (= draft) of “(the) Spirit” designs humans by its drawing (= engraving).²⁹ Conflating these two meanings of drawing, we might say that the withdrawing-draft of “(the) Spirit” is the (Kantian-like) schematism which pre-sketches “(the) Word.” Or, using Heidegger’s own figure, which itself is prefigured by Jesus’ parables, the withdrawing-draft of “(the) Spirit” “cut[s] a furrow into the soil to open it to seed and growth” (121). It is in this regard that thinking, as the saying again (*homolegein*) of “the music of the spirit of apartness” (188), “cuts furrows into the soil of Being” (70).

Still, though, what is the relation between this work of “(the) Spirit” and “(the) Word”? First, “(the) Spirit” draws to and gives “(the) Word”; the self-effacing withdrawal of “(the) Spirit” both prepares the soil for and pre-sketches “(the) Word”: that was the point of recognizing Heidegger’s understanding of the being of language as “the design” because of which and in terms of which man is determined as sign through the withdrawal [of “(the) Spirit”].³⁰ This is not unlike the “emergence” of the Word from the “hovering” Spirit noted earlier. And, in fact, the Word Incarnate said, “No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me” (John 6:44; also 65). Further, it is evidently the Spirit, indeed “the Spirit of truth,” who is active as “the draw” (e.g. 16:13-15). I will return to this reference to “the Father” shortly.

There is, though, a second aspect or moment to this relation between this work of “(the) Spirit” and “(the) Word,” and it too is reiterated in the Christian Scriptures. Not only does “(the) Spirit” pre-sketch “(the) Word,” and thus give it in a preliminary

highlight written language in particular, perhaps a Heideggerean clue which Derrida in particular has developed.

²⁹ Perhaps it would be best to not overly complicate matters here by hyphenating this word, en-graving, thereby highlighting the issue of death, though that is where I am headed.

³⁰ I am well aware that the words “because of which and in terms of which,” “through,” and others like them thereby become the focus of the need for further explication. I am only beginning or sketching that explication here.

form, but “(the) Word” also reciprocates, though not symmetrically: It withdraws, and because of and through its withdrawal it gives, or gives rise to, “(the) Spirit.” In particular, for Heidegger this was the withdrawal of the word for word. It was, in fact, while meditating on this withdrawal of the word for word that Heidegger caught a glimpse of the “essential relation between death and language” (OWL 107): It is what he called the “breaking up of the word” (108).³¹ Not only is this “breaking up of the word” a withdrawal of language; not only is it “the true step back on the way of thinking” (108), and thus the heart of my own concerns; not only does it *draw* us into its concern and so relate us to itself (107); not only is it related essentially to death (107f), thus itself a kind of death; but this “breaking up of the word” gives rise to an “is” which conditions all things (108; cf. PLT 181). “It” is Heidegger’s unconditioned; “it” is the “it” of the *Es gibt*; “it” is “the giver which itself is never given” (OWL 88). “It” is an “it,” or better, is known as an “it,” because in not being given Heidegger did not know how else to refer to “it.”

Later I will wonder about this emergence of the “is” following the “death of the word” in relation to resurrection. In that light it is of even greater interest that in this context Heidegger referred to man as the *Menschenschlag*, man as the one who has always already been struck; and in particular, struck by “the promise of language” (OWL 90); that is, by what Derrida called the *gage*, of which he said, “language always ... comes down to the promise. This would also be a promise *of spirit*” (OS 94). Though there are many directions in which to develop this point,³² I here draw attention only to the overlap of this “promise *of spirit*” with the “is” which arises from the “breaking up of the word.” My point is that this “breaking up of the word” precedes and somehow founds the “promise *of spirit*.” And even more to the point of the dialogue

³¹ Cf. also “In death the supreme concealedness of Being crystallizes. Death has already overtaken every dying” (PLT 200).

³² I would include here Heidegger’s hints about his hintings (OWL 96), especially the hintings relating to the “tongues as of fire” and the “holy spirit” which follow (96f), but also the relation of this “striking” not only to death, as already noted, but to “the abyss,” especially within the context of Hölderlin’s “Bread and Wine” (99f). Further, Hölderlin’s use of the “metaphor” of the flower for language (99f) relates not only to the Japanese for language (45f), but also to the “springing up” of the “is” as *phusis*. It is the latter point which relates to the Scriptural (Old and New Testaments) language which pre-sketches the Incarnation of the Eternal Word.

with the Christian Scriptures, this “breaking up of the word” is what Heidegger elsewhere indicated by his cross-wise striking through (*kreuzweise Durchstreichung*) of words, especially “Being” itself, what I (and Derrida) have related to the “word of the cross,” i.e. to “the Crucified One,” the *Menschenschlag* par excellence. Once again, then, it is not surprising that just as the One whom “we accounted ... stricken, struck down by God” (Isaiah 53:4) died and rose again; just as He was raised by the Spirit, and sent that Spirit to his disciples (John 16:7); it is not surprising, I say, that the very same pattern should be discerned in “lesser reality” by those who love and seek to know the truth. It is not surprising because if that Crucified and Resurrected One is He who the Christian Scriptures claim He is, then not only words, and not only Heidegger’s understanding of that “language (which speaks),” should be expected to reflect and reveal the (cosmic) consequences of His life and death and life (again), but even all things. Just as Heidegger, with the help of the poem of Stefan George, discerned that “the word is what holds the thing there and relates it and so to speak provides its maintenance with which to be a thing” (OWL 82), so too the Apostle Paul had already said that “in Him all things hold together” (Colossians 1:17) and the writer to the Hebrews that the Son of God “sustains [upholds, bears along] all things by his powerful word” (Hebrews 1:3). If something as cataclysmic as the death and resurrection of *that* “Son” were to occur, ought we not expect some sort of consequence to register in the things which depend entirely upon Him for their coherence or sustenance or, using the traditional language, synthesis, that is, their “holding together”?

Nonetheless, it is with this reference to “the Son” to which the writer to the Hebrews referred in chapter 1, verse 2 that we can now return to our early reference to “the Father.” Here too we find that both Heidegger and Derrida have prepared the way.

With regard to the Christian doctrines (as inherited) in question the Father is the One responsible for both “generating” (ontologically-eternally) and sending (economically-redemptive historically) the Son. Further, it is the Father who raised Jesus from the dead and who gave the Spirit to the Son (John 14:16), thereby participating in the sending of the Spirit (14:26, 15:26; cf. §7.2.4). In addition, it is the Father to whom the Son “withdrew” (= ascended) following His resurrection and it has always been the

Father whom the Son reveals: just as the Spirit “withdraws” so as to reveal the Son, so too the Son reveals the Father. As Bavinck put it,

The relationship in which Christ stands to the Father corresponds fully with the relationship in which the Spirit stands to Christ. Just as the Son speaks nothing and does nothing of Himself but receives everything from the Father (John 5:26 and 16:15 [and 12:49-50]), so the Holy Spirit takes everything from Christ (John 16:13-14). As the Son testifies of the Father and glorifies the Father (John 1:18 and 17:4,6), so the Holy Spirit testifies of the Son and glorifies Him (John 15:26 and 16:14). Just as no one comes to the Father but through the Son (John 14:6), so no one can say that Jesus is Lord except through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3) (ORF 156).

Therefore, there is not only the Son, who claimed “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6), and the Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth (14:17; 15:26; 16:12), but there is also the Father. So far we have noted that which roughly corresponds philosophically to truth and the spirit of truth. What about “the Father”? Only a few thoughts will be introduced here; more will follow in §7.2.4 below.

I take as my guide Derrida’s article, “Heidegger’s ear: philopolemology” (HEPP 204ff). In the last chapter we attended to the significance of the first morpheme in Derrida’s *philo*-polemology; here I am concerned with the *pólemos*, for it is Heidegger’s understanding of “the Father” which is my concern. In particular, Heidegger understood “the Father” in terms of *pólemos*, based on his understanding of Heraclitus’ Fragment 53: “*Pólemos* is the father [*pater*] of all things, the king [*basileus*] of all things”

However, Heidegger did not translate *pater* as father nor *basileus* as king; rather Heidegger preferred generator and guardian. Not only is this Heideggerean “twist” of interest with regard to the Christian understanding of the Father as the begetter or the generator in relation to the Son; not only does it resonate with the Judeo-Christian understanding of God as the Sovereign King who is also the Shepherd-Guardian-Provider; but it is equally important with regard to our question—what is philosophy?—especially in light of Heidegger’s thinking-retrieval of the tradition of Western philosophy. And, perhaps even more to the point, our understanding of this issue will be decisive with regard to determining the legitimacy of my own retrieval of that tradition, starting with Heidegger. In short, Heidegger rendered *pólemos* as *Auseinandersetzung*; that is, “it is a matter of explicating oneself, of struggling, of debating with the other agonistically” (HEPP 205). In other words, the whole meaning of

this “Christian *dialogue*” (=‘destruction,’ ‘retrieval,’ engagement, *Auseinandersetzung*) with Heidegger depends upon this *pólemos*, at least if I am to claim any real engagement with the “actual” Heideggerean partner-perspective. Our understanding of philosophy, and especially a Christian philosophy, likewise depends on this point.

Fortunately, it is not difficult to engage Heidegger’s consideration of *pólemos* with our previous concerns. Three points will make this especially evident, the last of which returns us directly to our concern with “(the) Spirit”-“(the) Word” relation. First, for Heraclitus *pólemos* had to do with the origin; as Derrida put it, “*pólemos* is clearly situated by Heraclitus *at the origin*, before the gods and before men” (204). Thus, just as with our earlier consideration of Zeus (chapter 3) and difference (chapter 4), here too we are concerned with the prior matrix within which and because of which the four-fold happens as *Ereignis*. Second, just as Derrida had alluded to John 1:1 with regard to Heidegger on “(the) Spirit,” even as something of a focused summary of his own meditations—“in the beginning, there will have been, ghost of the future perfect, *Get Geist: de l’esprit*” (OS 127)—so too with regard to *pólemos*: “In the beginning, there will have been *pólemos*, a ‘*waltender Streit*,’ the reign of a conflict that is not a war in the human manner” (HEPP 209). Thus *pólemos* and “(the) Spirit” (or at least Derrida’s “spirit,” whatever that might be) are no doubt “the same” (in Heidegger’s sense of inherently belonging together). Third, nor is the original wording of John 1:1 very distant from these references: “*pólemos* und *logos* sind dasselbe”: “*pólemos* and *logos* are the same” (EM 47; quoted at HEPP 209). The fuller context reads: “The *pólemos* (*Auseinandersetzung*) does not dissociate the unity, even less does it destroy it. It forms the unity, is gathering (*lógos*). *Pólemos* and *lógos* are the same.” Not only does this reunite *pólemos* with “(the) Spirit” as the original unifying unity noted in the introduction, but *pólemos* can even be replaced with *philein* or *philia* “without the least inconsistency” (HEPP 209). *Pólemos*, therefore, is a kind of friendship, a kind of love; in fact, it is the very same “love” which governs our understanding of *philo*-sophy.³³

Is it too neat, then, to hear all of this with a Christian ear? This originary origin

³³ Further, what would it be, in Heidegger’s understanding, that *pólemos* as “father” generates or “makes bloom, rise, come to presence” (HEPP 205)? Most to the point, it is language as *koto ba* (OWL 45; 99). It is perhaps also worth noting that Derrida points out that modern Greek translates this *philein* (which the same as *pólemos*) with *agapé* (HEPP 180).

prior to the “ultimacy” of *Ereignis* is God Himself understood as Triune: there is an original “dialogue” between the Father and the Son, a “dialogue” of love. It was Augustine who already likened the Persons of the Trinity to the Lover, the Beloved, and Love Itself. It is the latter which he associated with the Spirit. *Pólemos, ho nomos, dif-ference, love, de l’esprit*: All this has already been said within the Christian tradition, and long ago at that. Almost anyway; it will be this “almost” which will continue to occupy us, especially in the next chapter. The following section will prepare us to more readily recognize whether or not philosophy is therefore just some form of theology.³⁴

7.2.3 The Spirit and the Heimsuchung

Already we have recognized *Heimsuchung* as indicative of the original philosophical impulse, both with regard to Kant’s understanding of metaphysics as well as with regard to Heidegger’s reinterpretation or retrieval of philosophy in terms of dwelling. We have also acknowledged that *Heimsuchung* connotes something “spiritual,” a haunting or a ghostly visitation. While contextual constraints might sometimes legitimately filter out various degrees of this “ghostly” or “spiritual” sense, given the prominence of “(the) Spirit” in Heidegger’s work it seems quite appropriate to raise the question of the relation of “(the) Spirit” to this *Heimsuchung*. And regardless of the outcome with regard to Heidegger’s work, the Spirit and the recommended dwelling are most intimately related in the Bible.

³⁴ It is worth noting that the context of the passage from 2 Corinthians 10 cited in chapter 2, and a passage which figured prominently in Heidegger’s discussion with certain Protestant theologians in 1953 (cf. PT), is a “warfare” context. (The Greek words used, though, are related to *strateía* rather than *pólemos*.) Contrary to Heidegger’s understanding of *pólemos*, it is likely that both “ways” of the fulfillment of God’s word are evident in this “Christian warfare”: both the total destruction or annihilation (of the way of “curse”) and the restorative “taking captive to obey Christ” (of the way of “blessing”). I will continue to point out this “ambiguity,” which does not achieve sufficient clarity in either Heidegger or Derrida. Nonetheless, the “nihilistic” implications of Heidegger’s (and Derrida’s) position have not been lost on others, and that in spite of Heidegger’s explicit efforts to retrieve *pólemos* from such a reading. Because this point directly affects one’s understanding of philosophy, as noted in the text above, my concern with a Christian philosophy must, therefore, take into account the kind of disambiguation indicated by the Scriptural text. It may also be of interest to some that the “weapons” used in such “warfare” are those wielded by what the NIV translates as “craftsmen” (Zechariah 1:20; NRSV, “blacksmiths”).

Instead of simply reiterating what has already been said in chapters 3 and 4 with regard to our human being as a “being-at-home”—and especially a “consecrated” or set-apart dwelling in a “temple,” i.e. a “holy” dwelling—I pick up this matter in terms introduced earlier in this chapter: Heidegger’s understanding of the essence of spirit as the “originally unifying unity,” that “gathering power” or “hidden ... unifying force.” My reason for this choice is two-fold.

First, the people of God are described in the Bible as “members of the household of God”; more to the point, though, they are “a holy temple,” a “dwelling place for God” who dwells within and amongst them “*in the Spirit*” (Ephesians 2:19-22; also 1 Corinthians 3:16). It is not, then, just humans who dwell, but God who dwells in humans “in the Spirit.”³⁵ Further, it is worth recalling that just as the Bible describes the people of God as the Church, i.e. those chosen, set apart and gathered together, so too Heidegger spoke of the consecrated ones as “the select—gathered up into an assembly” (OWL 186; similarly, WP 96/97). Thus, not only is the spiritual nature of dwelling emphasized, but that dwelling is both a selection and a gathering. The “unifying” aspect of this dwelling, while no doubt fundamental to “gathering,” is further emphasized in my second reason for choosing to focus on “(the) Spirit” as the “originally unifying unity.”

This second reason is that the “form” of dwelling presented by the Bible reopens a topic of crucial philosophical interest, both within Heidegger’s work and within the broader philosophical tradition, as well as introduces an additional matter which will turn out to be especially pertinent in the next chapter. Returning afresh to Heidegger’s understanding of the *Dasein* grants us further access to this “form” of dwelling. Earlier we saw the determinative role played by “the voice (*Stimme*) of ‘(the) Spirit’”; more particularly, Heidegger’s “(the) Spirit” thus recasts and replaced Kant’s notion of transcendental apperception as the most fundamental synthesis or

³⁵ It is worth recalling that for Heidegger too dwelling is not simply a matter of human dwelling; rather, “Dwelling ... is the basic character of Being in keeping with which mortals exist” (PLT 160). Here too, in keeping with Heidegger’s “turn,” the emphasis is on that which is “not anything human” (PLT 207), “not a human artifact” (N3 249). Heidegger even said, “*Aletheia* is nothing mortal, just as little as death itself” (TB 68). In the first case Heidegger’s concern was language, the temple of Being; in the second case, it was metaphysics itself, i.e. *Heimsuchung* per se.

gathering together. In chapter 2 I mentioned the need for further understanding Heidegger's various usages related to *Dasein*, for instance: *Dasein*, *Da-sein*, *Da-Sein*, *Da sein*, the *Da* as the place of human being *in which* we are, etc. At that point it was the biblical phrase "Christ *in you*" which served as our clue, and it continues to do so here. Two further points can now be added, the second of which returns directly to the Spirit as the "originally unifying unity," though in a "mysterious" sense prepared for in the first point. Both points further unfold the "form" of dwelling in relation to *Heimsuchung*.

First, then, the phrase "Christ *in you*" (Romans 8:10) is further explicated as synonymous with "the Spirit of God dwells in you" (8:9, 14), "have the Spirit of Christ" (8:9), and "the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you" (8:11); see also "the Spirit" (8:6, 13). The first point, then, is that this in-dwelling is decidedly spiritual; even "Christ *in you*" evidently means the same as "the *Spirit* of Christ."

With regard to further understanding *Dasein*, arguably a key to Heidegger's work, the following implications of this first point begin to assist us with sorting out Heidegger's multiple usages. If humans are (ontologically) "the image of God," if the prototypical Image is the Son of God Himself (perhaps together with the Spirit, i.e. as with "Jesus *Christ*"), and if *Dasein* is inherently related to that Image, then there is a legitimate sense in which the human image "is" that Image. I say "is" with quotation marks since this is most certainly not a strict identity; and yet the human being is nothing but that Image, though "as image." It is here that it makes sense to refer to a certain transcendental illusion as well as a doubling, for we are both image (= *Dasein*) and that Image is "in us" (as image; "*Dasein* in us"). Further, though, the Image would also be that *Da* which we are not, but within which we are; we might even refer to that Image as *Da-sein*, likewise insisting that it is "not anything human," at least not strictly just or simply another human like us. In addition to the above, however, which theologically we might refer to as the creational sense of the "in" expressing the human-Image relation, there is the revealed redemptive sense of the "in" cited above from Romans 8. It would seem that not only does this redemptive sense restore, and in some sense magnify, the creational sense, but there is also the indwelling of the Persons of the Trinity Themselves, not simply as "reflections," but as a personal reality or actuality. The sense of these words—personal, reality, actuality,

etc. –naturally must be taken as totally determined by the absolutely unique situation referred to. This, in fact, is the mystery introduced in chapter 2 (§2.4.2.2); it is at the very heart of the Christian Scriptures.

My second point with regard to understanding Heidegger's *Dasein* can now be made: In the process of sorting out Heidegger's multiple usages we have focused on the form of unity, the essence of which, remember, Heidegger said is "(the) Spirit." In the previous point this unity was expressed as the redemptive form of the "in." In John 17 this unity is expressed as follows:

I [Jesus] ask ... that they [his disciples] may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one (20-23).

Further, that form of unity which Jesus prayed for His people is that unity which obtains between the Father and the Son: "that they may be one, as we are one" (11). As noted earlier from another perspective, the "model" for this unity is the mutual indwelling of the Persons of the Divine and Eternal Trinity.³⁶ The point here is that it is the Spirit "Himself" who is that unifying unity, and thus the Spirit is not only the unity, but also is *différent*: That is, the One Spirit is both the Spirit of God (the Father) and the Spirit of Christ (the Son), while "the Father" ≠ "the Son". In the language of deconstruction this is an always already divided unity—both unity and divided—and it is this point more than any other which serves the deconstructive rereading of the history of Western philosophy, including, of course, the meaning of philosophy per se.

Above I announced an "additional matter" related to these concerns. It can now be introduced: This unity is multi-dimensional, as indicated by "I in them and you in me." Granted, this is but a glimpse; but I would claim it is a true insight. Heidegger might call it a "flashing glance" (QCT 45). The significance of this will become clearer later; here I only want to introduce this multi-dimensionality, as well as note its occurrence in Heidegger's work. For instance, Heidegger's "dif-ference is neither distinction nor relation. The dif-ference is, at most, dimension for world and thing"

³⁶ Heidegger agreed that not all thinking in "models" is "technological thinking," relating the necessity of using "models" to "language" (TB 50).

(PLT 203). That is, this “dimension” in which world and thing “penetrate each other” is not simple; that’s the point of calling it “the dif-ference”: there are (at least) “two modes ... [which] are different, but not separate” (202; similarly, ID 65). It is the “unifying element” of “the intimacy” which “mediates” the two in and as “their being toward one another, whose unity it carries out” (PLT 202). It is “the true and sole dimension of the mirror-play” (181), which as four-fold requires some sort of multi-dimensionality beyond the two-fold: It is at least as multi-dimensional as space and time which occur within it (LH 213; TB 14f, 23). In short, this multi-dimensional dimension is Being itself as that “placeless dwelling place” (QCT 43); and, in a special sense, this “primal dimension” is language (41).

My conclusion, then, is that the most “primal dimension” in which humans can dwell, and which therefore is also the most primal home for which our “creative longing” yearns and within which is its only hope of truly and appropriately belonging ... this most “primal dimension” is the Spirit, a multi-dimensional “originally unifying unity.” And yet “It” is not simple, especially because it is not only that within which dwelling most appropriately occurs, but it is also “the Spirit”³⁷ “who” most fundamentally dwells within ... within “language,” within us, etc. This is indeed an absolutely unique form of unity, which, I am claiming, must be determinative for our understanding of philosophy as *Heimsuchung*, under whatever interpretation. I develop this point further in the next section, for any decidedly Christian understanding of philosophy must reckon with the relation between the Spirit and the resurrection of the Crucified One.

7.2.4 The Spirit and the resurrection

Already we have noted the importance of the resurrection, or something like it, for the philosophical concerns considered, and specifically with regard to our understanding of philosophy itself. For instance, in chapter 2 we highlighted the death and resurrection of Christ as the “model” for Heidegger’s deconstructive/reconstructive transformation or retrieval of the philosophical tradition, serving therefore as the

³⁷ I am using this form, “the Spirit,” as a more general term than either “(the) Spirit,” which refers to Heidegger’s work, or the Spirit, which refers to the Christian Scriptures. As “the Spirit” is therefore also somewhat nondescript, context will have to decide the precise sense intended.

decisive determination of the meaning of philosophy itself. In chapter 3 we noted Heidegger's indication of the necessary mediation by death-Nothing of "the presencing relation of Being as Being" (179), thereby giving something of a hint for the need of "life" beyond that death. In chapter 4 we saw both that Heidegger's understanding of death in BT fell short of acknowledging the philosophical significance of resurrection, insisting as he did that death is "*not to be outstripped*" (BT 308/SZ 264). Further, we noted that (something like) resurrection is needed for understanding the essential ambiguity of his two-ways of death, one of which went beyond "petrifying pain" and "unholy fragmentation." In chapter 5 we registered Derrida's attention to "a resurrection to come of the *Menschenschlag* from the dawn" (OS 110) as crucial to Heidegger's understanding of representational thinking and its "overcoming." At that point Derrida's meditations also merged with Ricoeur's retrieval of representation by means of and in terms of *mimesis* or "creative imitation," which Ricoeur also referred to as the deployment of the resurrection's own logic. In chapter 6 we noted problems for Ricoeur's attempt to restrict the *kerygma* of the Resurrection to the analogical basis for what he called his philosophical approximations. In addition we attended to the necessity of some sort of "withdrawal of withdrawal" (where withdrawal was correlated with death), if thinking were to attain to its true nature beyond "the end of philosophy." Derrida even called this "certain step beyond" "the cure or resurrection" (EO 18).

Though the philosophical pertinence of "a resurrection" has certainly been well substantiated in these preceding chapters, my task here is to develop this pertinence in terms of "the Spirit." It is, however, at this point that we are confronted almost entirely by Heidegger's own "unsaid"; the relation between "(the) Spirit" and a resurrection was elaborated even less than either "(the) Spirit" or a resurrection. And yet, putting his insistence of "the way of 'death'" together with his conviction that "a change in human nature," even a new humanity, is the stake or wager at issue in the philosophy-thinking relation, a resurrection is, in fact, all but said.

To begin to elaborate the philosophical pertinence of "a resurrection" I will eventually turn to the Christian Scriptures which are so obviously replete with contributions at this point. Here, however, I only begin such an elaboration, which depends so crucially on the acceptance of the relevance of the voice of those Scriptures as disclosed

through the preceding intertwining integration with “philosophical” concerns.³⁸ There is, though, the final thread of the role of “the Spirit” which must first be woven into our text. I return, now, not to Heidegger, but to Derrida.

I take as my clue Derrida’s reference to “the cure or resurrection” (EO 18), following it, especially “the cure,” back into his “Plato’s Pharmacy” (D 61-171). This is not the place for a thorough meditation on this rich essay, which would also require further attention to both Plato and Heidegger’s readings of Plato. In preparation for such I simply take note of various topics of special interest in this context. In particular, Derrida established from within Plato’s written works that *pharmakon* is both cure and poison, both life and death, both death and resurrection (85, 93, 105, 123, etc.), and, given the prominence of Plato in the Western philosophical tradition, one would think that such notions are thereby legitimized as of special philosophical pertinence. Further, though, Derrida noted that *pharmakos* was used for “the one sacrificed in expiation for the sins of a city” (D 132), while sacrifice also played a role in understanding “play,” especially with regard to the relation between God and man, and most especially with regard to obtaining the “ability to gain heaven’s grace” (*Laws* I, 803 b-e; quoted at D 158). Given the significance Derrida gave to “the sacrifice of Heidegger” noted in chapter 6 (§6.5) and recalled in the introduction above, these are much more than passing allusions.

This compounding of references, and the tightening of the weave of the words and themes referred to, can also be focused around and on “the Spirit.” For instance, even in this early essay (D,1972) Derrida associated the *pharmakon* with “a ghost” (103), identified it with “the supplementary relation between father and son” (153), alluded to it as the essence of maternity (160ff), referred it to that “disappearance of that face [which] is the movement of *différance*” (167), and even hinted at a ghost-like presence, or better, non-presence, at play in written discourse, the “non-presence” or disappearing presence of another like the word (142-155).

I am willing to admit a fair degree of hindsight in such remarks. And yet, the

³⁸ The reason for the quotation marks around “philosophy” announces a problem which is not directly addressed until the next chapter, chapter 8: am I addressing philosophical concerns, theological concerns, confessional concerns ... or what? And what is happening to the traditional notions of philosophy along the way? That, of course, is the core of my own concerns in this book.

references to the ghost-like *pharmakon* harboring death within itself, as well as the (deconstructive) “overcoming” of the death/life dichotomy by way of the “god of resurrection” are explicit (93, 142, etc.). In addition, Derrida was much concerned to trace the fate of that “*lógos* [which] issues from a father,” a fate which included, if not the death of that son-*lógos*, at least its abandonment or orphanage, its consignment to a certain ghost-like existence (143).

Such concerns are, of course, also very much a part of Plato’s own texts, not simply some supposed “fanciful find.” The advantage of Derrida’s treatment for my present purposes, however, has to do with the recognition of the *pharmakon* as the poison-cure, that is, the death-resurrection correlation as central to the Western philosophical tradition as such. Not only is this so with regard to Plato’s work, but (for one) Derrida also tied the *pharmakon* directly and explicitly to Kant’s transcendental imagination, though as its “prior medium” (126). And returning to “the Spirit,” this “prior medium” was then identified with that maternal “third something” operative in addition to and as both medium and supplementary relation between the father and the son (161-165). I am certainly highlighting the trinitarian aspects of Derrida’s considerations, not an unwarranted emphasis, I would claim, especially since Derrida’s concern was that this “third” disrupts as well as somehow reforms (he would likely say, re-marks) the usual “rules of concordance and discordance” (165), thus precipitating the necessity for his *différance*. My point merely echoes Ricoeur’s claim: The formulation of such an unorthodox concordance-discordance historically has been precisely the task of the doctrine of the Trinity (NG 225; cf. chapter 5, §5.3.2).

There is, though, another advantage of Derrida’s contributions. In particular, he has better than anyone traced the operations of what I am inclined now to call the work of “the Spirit” in the written word-text. That is, instead of what Heidegger called the voice of Being, what I renamed the voice of “(the) Spirit,” Derrida has attended to what we might call the voice of “the Spirit” *speaking in the text*, or if not the “voice,” the trace of that voice. You may recall that in chapter 2 I raised the question of the relation between Heidegger’s “voice of Being” and the Christian “voice of the Spirit speaking in the (written) Word of God.” Derrida’s thinking has certainly moved the Heideggerean position in the direction of a Christian understanding. It at least lends

further credence to my proposal that the Bible at least be given full voice within the philosophical forum.

Though there are important resources within Derrida's work (as well as Heidegger's) for discerning traditional metaphysical-philosophical influences operating within Christendom, especially with regard to its understanding of their Scriptures, my task here is rather to further identify points of philosophical pertinence within those Writings. Up to this point I have been "building the bridge" from the side of "philosophy." I will continue to do so, though now sliding more and more toward the resonant contributions from the Bible. This point moves us not only toward that Book, but also back to Heidegger via those Writings.

Derrida (following Plato) has accented the *stoikheia* of written letters. Indeed, finally his *pharmakon* (*différance*, re-mark, re-iteration, hymen, etc.) gives expression to this "*graphics of supplementarity*" (D 168). It is that "going out of itself to come home to itself" (168), which as "supplement" is also "life going out of itself beyond return."³⁹ *Death rehearsal*" (169; emphasis added). Not only is this Derrida's form for the Heideggerean *Dasein*-transcendence which we noted in the introduction as synonymous with "(the) Spirit," but Derrida identified this irreducibility of "difference and relation" (163) with the "structure" of a "generalized writing" (168), the "scriptural 'metaphor'" (163). Thus *stoikheion-pharmakon* is that "spiritual *ek-stacy*" which makes a difference, a difference which via death is a (supposed) permanent difference.

What is remarkable, and what this has been leading to, is that we have already encountered such *stoikheia* in our dialogue with Heidegger (chapter 4, §4.4.1.1). There we recognized these *stoikheia* as the "elemental principles of the world," translated by the NRSV (as well as many other English translations) as "the elemental spirits of the world" (Galatians 4:3, 9; Colosians 2:8, 20). At that point my proposal was that these "elemental spirits" parallel for the non-Jewish peoples the place and role of the Jewish Law and touch Heidegger's understanding of *Ereignis* as *ho nomos*. Here it would

³⁹ Derrida was here commenting on "tautology," which not so incidentally is the form assumed by Heidegger's final thinking, attempting as it does to Say the Same-ness (cf. e.g. KTB 32f). As pointed out elsewhere, I call this "Sanctus-thinking," and see it as the basis of metaphor, metaphoricity, metaphorical-thinking, etc. (cf. SIG, chapters 5 §5.3.3.2.3] and chapter 6 [§6.4.1.2]; cf. e.g. PLT 191; TB 22-24).

seem, given all that has preceded, that Derrida's *stoikheia* could quite legitimately be translated *within Derrida's own writings* as "the elemental spirits of the world."

But would such a translation violate the spirit of the Scriptures, most particularly with regard to Derrida's association of such *stoikheia* with the "scriptural 'metaphor'" of writing? While it may be difficult to say with regard to these "elemental spirits" of Galatians and Colossians, the Christian "replacement" and/or fulfillment for such "spirits," that is the Holy Spirit, is presented as "the ink" of Christ's writing upon the hearts and lives of His people (2 Corinthians 3:1-3). And what does He write? Presumably, the Law of God (Hebrews 8:10, 10:16; Jeremiah 31:33), which finally means restoration and conformity to the Image of Christ Himself as Glorified-Son, the One who is "the end (τέλος) of the law" (Romans 10:4). And indeed, Derrida too called his *pharmakon* an "ink" (D 152).⁴⁰

The Spirit of the Scriptures is, however, strictly speaking (though not thereby exclusively) the Spirit of Christ, that is, the Spirit of Him who raised Christ Jesus from the dead, the same Spirit who dwells in "you" and gives "life to your mortal bodies" (Romans 8:11). Or, even more precisely, this is the Spirit who not only was the agent of Jesus' resurrection but the One who was also subsequently given and sent by the Father and the Son to the disciples of that Son as the "Spirit of adoption" (8:15-17). With this precision comes a distinction which needs to be noted, especially with regard to this engagement with the thinking of Heidegger and Derrida (and Plato). Both Jesus and Paul make the same point: "This is the Spirit of truth, *whom the world cannot receive ...*" (John 14:17; emphasis added):

... now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God ... Those who are unspiritual [*psuchikos*, natural] *do not receive* the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:12, 14; emphasis added).

Once again we return to the "wisdom and power of God" being taken as "foolishness," the same point considered in chapter 2 around Heidegger's discussion of 1

⁴⁰ "Sperm, water, ink, paint, perfumed dye: the *pharmakon* always penetrates like a liquid; it is absorbed, drunk, introduced into the inside, which it first marks with the hardness of the type [pre-sketch?], soon to invade it and inundate it with its medicine, its brew, its drink, its potion, its poison" (D 152).

Corinthians 1:22. Here, though, the “reason” for the frustrated efforts of “the Greeks” quest for wisdom (as, according to Heidegger, engendered by and at least implicitly engendering, Aristotle’s “first philosophy,” understood as “being in Being” as the most astonishing) is given: The true wisdom is attainable only by those who receive the Spirit (of Christ) (Romans 8:9-11), and in particular, the Spirit of the Resurrection (of Christ).⁴¹

7.3 Conclusions

It might be thought that all this is simply apologetics/kerygmatics; that I am simply pointing out that what “philosophy” has been trying to say has already been said in the Bible. And it is true that I consider the revelation given in the Bible to be the unsurpassable Word of God which reflects, presents and co-governs as that “true light, which enlightens everyone” (John 1:9), even though those in “the world [who] did not [and often still do not] know him” (1:10). There is, though, also a contribution from “philosophy” to theology, in general and in particular. If then I am practicing “apologetics,” this would be a new form and style of that venerable discipline. I have in mind, for instance, the “orphan doctrine” of the Spirit which has been given further thought forms for its articulation. And more particularly still, even the Doctrine of the Trinity is affected: perhaps we now need to consider even more seriously that the generation of the Son is not only from the Father, but is also (in a different sense, a more “maternal” sense) from the Spirit.

There is, though, another kind of objection. It might run something like this: “So what? Of course Heidegger has been influenced by Christian language and thought forms; but that doesn’t make him any more Christian than he claimed, for instance, with regard to Trakl. You have simply recognized the historical relations

⁴¹ I have resisted the temptation to enter into a Derridean style meditation on “the withdrawal of withdrawal” in which the various senses of “draw” noted earlier are given full play, especially in relation to “the Spirit,” death, and resurrection. I am also leaving for another occasion the development of the Spirit of the Resurrection in terms of “world” (in this case, the Kingdom of God), “Glory” (in relation to *Lichtung*, both as Opening and Shining, as well as “the Beautiful”), “Righteousness” (especially in its “political” dimensions, including “Power”; e.g. Amos 5:24 [John 7:37]), and with regard to the “scriptural ‘metaphor’” (so important for understanding Derrida and deconstruction, as well as the Phaedrus).

of Heidegger's thought, call them resonances if you wish; you have, however, not thereby appreciated the *geschichtliche*, epochal quality of his endeavor."

First of all, I am not claiming that Heidegger's thought is Christian any more than he claimed such with regard to Trakl's thought: Even though Heidegger's understanding of Trakl might be faulty on this point, as suggested by Derrida for instance, and even though Heidegger's thought might also be more Christian than he pretended, as also suggested by Derrida and others, I myself am not making that claim. What I am claiming, or at least proposing, is that Heidegger's "unsaid" is more Christian than he may have been willing to admit openly. Regardless, I too have sought to "acknowledge and respect" Heidegger's "unthought," being quite willing to admit along with him that "what is unthought in a thinker's thought is not a lack inherent in his thought," even acknowledging that the "unthought is the greatest gift that thinking can bestow" (WCT 76). With regard to the man Martin Heidegger we must be content to leave the matter there; with regard to the works-texts left to us, I have documented more than a few indications that what he called "god-less thinking" is indeed "more open to Him ['the divine God'] than onto-*theo*-logic would like to admit" (ID 72). And clearly, though Heidegger's thought does often appear "god-less," he nonetheless sought to "overcome" that uniquely godless form of onto-*theo*-logical thinking called philosophy.

Nonetheless, I am also willing to admit that though I have introduced the Bible into what might otherwise be called a philosophical discussion, the contribution of those Writings still seems to hover somewhere between the said and the unsaid as well as somewhere between philosophy and theology. If that voice of the Spirit speaking in the written-Word (of God) is beginning to be heard with a pertinence that it would be difficult to deny, it is equally unclear whether "She" is speaking "philosophy" or "theology." Or perhaps better, it is clear that it is neither "philosophy" nor "theology," at least if these traditional disciplines are understood as some sort of scientific and/or "systematic" endeavor, and the more so to the extent they are strictly distinguished. This admission, however, leads to the topic of the final chapter.

8 Philosophy and theology

8.1 Introduction

I am now ready to take stock. What has been achieved in the preceding seven chapters? What, after all, is philosophy? And more particularly, what sense does it make to speak of a Christian philosophy? As is well-known, at one point in his career Heidegger asserted quite unequivocally, “there is no such thing as a Christian philosophy; that is an absolute ‘square circle’” (PT 21). We, on the other hand, have been given much pause to wonder if instead there is anything but Christian philosophy, at least if we are to heed what I have been calling Heidegger’s own “unsaid,” if not “unthought.”¹ Indeed, while both Heidegger and the Protestant theologians whose 1953 conversation is summarized in *The Piety of Thinking* (59-71; hereafter, PT) continually reasserted that thinking and (Christian) faith “cannot be made to coincide” (67), in chapter 6 I claimed (and I trust demonstrated some plausibility) that the thinking of the sort Heidegger favored is qualified, and strongly so, precisely as “*faithful* thinking.” If there is a difference it is that Heidegger’s thinking is attuned to “the voice of ‘Being’” while (Christian) faith is attuned to the voice of the Spirit, especially as speaking in the written Word of God. But even there Heidegger’s “voice of ‘Being’” was finally replaced by “the voice of ‘(the) Spirit’ speaking in the written word of (certain) poets.” Not only is Heidegger’s “(the) Spirit” attended with ambiguities which themselves favor a more “covenantal” reading, but even Heidegger’s own favored poets were highly “Christianized,” so highly that Heidegger’s protests to the contrary do not ring very true. To reiterate, as Derrida put it with regard to this precise point, such “gestures ... seem to be laborious, violent, sometimes simply caricatural, and all in all not very convincing” (OS 108).

Are we then dealing with a phenomenon peculiar to Heidegger? Did Heidegger’s Christian background, if not personal Christian faith (he did, after all, choose to be

1 I am not alone with regard to this seemingly presumptuous judgment regarding Christian philosophy: “Instead, it is a question of the philosophy, which, to be truly and integrally philosophy, must, in a certain way, be Christian” (Henri de Lubac 1992:486). “The end of philosophy, judged by philosophy’s own promises, is to be found in Christianity” (Jordan 1985:303). Further citations were offered in the Preface.

buried as a Christian), finally just get the better of his philosophical commitments and efforts to the contrary? Or is there something inherently “Christian” about thinking, if not philosophy, something so inherent that no personal commitments or efforts to the contrary, philosophical or otherwise, can totally deny or obliterate it? And if so, would such “thinking” therefore be inherently theological?²

In Heidegger’s 1953 conversation with the Protestant theologians he (evidently³) continued to assert that “Thinking knows nothing of a ‘revealed God’” (68), while the theologians continued to conclude that “Thinking is a ‘foolishness’ for faith (according to 1 Corinthians 1:20-21 and 2:7-15) *only because* the ‘wisdom of this world ... does not recognize God in his wisdom’ without revelation” (70; emphasis added). The implication for the theologians was that “*faithful* thinking,” that is, “a thinking in obedience to faith (2 Corinthians 10:5),” would “not have to close its shop” (70) contrary to Heidegger’s assertion (64). There seem to be two obstacles to mutual understanding at this point, and to my mind they are two errors in Heidegger’s assessment of the situation. A consideration of these two Heideggerean objections to the theologians will prepare for my own further discussion of our central concern.

First, Heidegger insisted that “Philosophy engages in a kind of thinking of which man is capable on his own. This stops when he is addressed by revelation” (64). It is, however, odd in the extreme—if not simply a glaring inconsistency—for Heidegger to claim any thinking “on his own,” and that for two separate but related reasons. The first reason arises from within Heidegger’s own thinking: If his thinking about thinking has said anything it has asserted in the clearest terms possible that such thinking is a gift; if it is anything it is *not* some sort of accomplishment “on its own.” To think otherwise would be to fall back into the kind of metaphysical, onto-theo-logical thinking of which Heidegger’s own work has been the most rigorous and consistent, we might even say “heroic,” effort to avoid, if not overcome. The whole point of Heidegger’s corpus seems to have been to find an alternative to such thinking “on his own.” I should have thought that if Heidegger wanted to testify to anything, it

2 Though “theological” does not necessarily mean “Christian,” “Christian” does imply “theological,” at least in some sense which is further clarified below.

3 It is difficult always to be sure who said what from the manner in which that conversation was reported.

would have been to the utter incapacity for a human to think “on his own,” and to the unqualified hubris and blindness to claim otherwise. So blatant a contradiction to the central thrust of Heidegger’s thinking (his “one thought” he had been given to think) is such a statement that one must wonder if by “philosophy” Heidegger did not mean just that form of traditional thinking his thinking was to “destroy.” And yet, as reported, he seemed to mean that kind of thinking which was decidedly *not* metaphysical. The second reason that such a statement is objectionable is decidedly “theological,” though it is so similar to the first reason that one must once again wonder if Heidegger’s thinking is not itself “theological”: In a discourse to his disciples Jesus made the point, which could be easily generalized to all others, “without me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).⁴ It is the similarity of these two reasons—one “Heideggerean,” the other biblical—which will occupy us further shortly.

The second Heideggerean objection to the theologians’ attempt to find something theologically worthwhile in his thinking went as follows: “Within thinking nothing can be achieved which would be a preparation or a confirmation for that which occurs in faith and in grace. Were I so addressed by faith I would have to close up my shop. Within faithfulness one still thinks, of course; but thinking as such no longer has a task” (64). Again there is a strong distinction between what thinking can achieve and what is accomplished “in faith and in grace.” And yet here too the distinction deconstructs itself from within Heidegger’s own work. Each of these three sentences has its own difficulties.

First sentence: “Within thinking nothing can be achieved which would be a preparation or a confirmation for that which occurs in faith and in grace.” One might well think that Heidegger’s thinking, or at least his self-testimony to the best he might have been able to achieve, occurred “in grace” if it occurred at all. Was that not his point of highlighting Hölderlin’s “Kindness (*charis*), the Pure” as well as his spiraling focus on the *Es gibt*? And if thinking (the *thanc*) is that unique conjunction of *noein* and *legein* as explicated by Heidegger (cf. chapter 6), then we could also say that if Heidegger achieved thinking at all, then it was also “in faith.” Therefore we might

⁴ The same difficulty was addressed in greater detail with regard to Ricoeur’s thinking, especially his understanding of the relation between philosophy and theology, in chapter 6, §6.4.

well conclude that of course “nothing can be achieved [within thinking] which would be a preparation or a confirmation for that which occurs in faith and in grace” because there is no thinking which does not already occur “in faith and in grace.” Accordingly it would be tempting to play Heidegger’s own game of hearing a different “tone” in this first sentence, translating it something like: Within thinking Nothing [*Das Nichts*] can be achieved—that is, *Das Nichts ereignet*—which would *be* [serve as] a preparation or a confirmation for that which occurs in faith and in grace.⁵ And yet, if that were so, the sort of “confirmation”⁶ achieved in this first sentence is seemingly disconfirmed in the second and third sentences. Those sentences, however, are not without their own difficulties.

Second sentence: “Were I so addressed by faith I would have to close up my shop.” First of all, Heidegger’s phrase “addressed by faith” is troublesome, perhaps even nonsensical, and certainly misguided, at least as far as Christian faith is concerned. The Christian is not “addressed by faith”; rather, we all, and not just the Christian, are addressed or called *by God* (Romans 8:30; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Timothy 1:8, 9; 2 Peter 1:3; Psalm 19; etc.). If we were to transpose Heidegger’s phrase “addressed by faith” into the domain of his own work and vocabulary, we would have to speak about being “addressed by thinking.” And surely Heidegger would object: We are not addressed by thinking; we are addressed by “Being,” to which we respond receptively by carrying the “music” of that “voice” into language; thinking, then, is that whole process of receiving, responding, and carrying that address.

If this were simply a verbal infelicity we could certainly overlook it; but it seems not to be. For instance, Heidegger understood theology as “founded [or, grounded] primarily in faith” (PT 16; emphasis removed). Recognizing how important such “grounding” was to Heidegger’s whole enterprise highlights the importance of this misunderstanding: Simply recall our discussions of Heidegger’s *Ab-grund* and *A-byss*. Perhaps we might say that this is just “a manner of speaking,” for it is not the full story on Heidegger’s understanding of “faith,” as we will see shortly. And yet, for one

⁵ Why and how that could be remains to be seen.

⁶ Regardless of this “playful” reading, it must be said that Heidegger’s latter thinking both confirmed “grace,” as just noted, and affirmed its own “preparatory” character of “awakening a readiness in man for a possibility whose contour remains obscure, whose coming remains uncertain” (TB 60).

who was so careful with words, one who never dreamed of promoting the grounding of philosophy, for instance, in (human) thinking, but rather sought to escape such “modernism,” this “manner of speaking” about theology, and more importantly, about faith, belies a significant prejudice. I will return to this point later, there seeking to defend Heidegger a bit on this score; I will not, however, entirely succeed.

Secondly, though, even if we accepted this “manner of speaking” as actually meaning “addressed by God,” or as Heidegger himself put it in the same context, “addressed by revelation,” why would that require that he “close up his [thinking] shop”? Why indeed, especially since so many theologians and even “Heideggerean philosophers” have recognized so many similarities between this “addressed by revelation” and the disclosure or unconcealment (and withdrawing concealment) of *Ereignis* and *Es gibt*? Why would not such an “addressed by revelation” prove instead to be the very occasion for thinking?

I can think of two reasons. The first has already been mentioned: Such an address by the Almighty God would indeed lay claim to one in a manner most disruptive of a thinker’s capacity to think “on his own,” challenging to the root any pretension to autonomous freedom. If one’s notion of thinking were, in fact, committed to such an autonomous freedom, that kind of thinking would indeed get “shut down.” Secondly, though, Heidegger insisted on the distinction between “the God of the poet” and “the revealed God” (PT 65), referring specifically to his own discussion of the relation between “the holy” and “the God” in LH. While this distinction is in principle legitimate, it is especially suspect in the cases of Trakl and Hölderlin, as already noted: Simply because there might be a clear distinction between “the God of a poet” and “the revealed God,” there is no necessity that this be the case. It clearly is not so in the case of biblical poetry (the Psalms, various prophets, New Testament hymns, etc.); nor need it be the case with regard to a particular poet (e.g. Herbert, Donne, Hopkins), or a particular poem. In fact, I’d be inclined to interpret Heidegger’s “valid poetry” as that poetry for which this distinction is not valid; but that simply raises the issue of the basis of such judgments: It is the issue of one’s “canon” which we have already touched on repeatedly.

There is, though, another matter which this point brings to prominence. I would suggest that Heidegger’s thinking about philosophy, especially in its relation to the-

ology and faith, is determined by a very medieval understanding of Christianity which he criticized. In particular I have in mind the relationship between nature and grace. Within that nature-grace schema it makes sense to claim a certain autonomy for philosophy and for the poets, both of which are thereby distinguished from the realm of revelation and grace. Not only has that nature-grace schema been subject to profound (biblical) theological critique, but in much of his writing Heidegger himself seems to have thought his way beyond it. Much of the evidence I have been citing for Heidegger's "religiosity" or "spirituality" accumulates to make the same point. Only two such strands of evidence need be recalled here: First, the philosophical significance of "the Crucified," especially since in PT Heidegger also said, "for the 'Christian' faith, that which is primarily revealed to faith, and only to it, and which, as revelation, first gives rise to faith, is Christ, the crucified God" (9). Second, recall Heidegger's "philosophical" preoccupation with "a change in human nature" (chapter 2, §2.4.1.2) and rebirth (chapter 7, §7.1 & §7.2.1.2), especially since he also insisted that "*Faith = Rebirth*" (PT 10), "faith is rebirth" (18), even using that Christian "rebirth" as the model for what he meant by "to overcome," that is, retrieve, destroy, etc. Though Heidegger was there arguing within and in favor of the nature-grace schema, he could have as well concluded that just as "faith is rebirth," Christian rebirth is the rebirth of faith; that is, faith is not simply a "regional," ontic concern, but rebirth gives rise to an ontological understanding of faith. That, anyway, seems to be the import of his thought as it unfolded.

More precisely, then, his more mature thought unfolded the notion that grace does not simply supersede nature by restoring some limited, though essential, aspect which had become inaccessible to (human) nature "unaided" by grace—he called it "autonomously functioning reason" (18); but rather, grace grants a kind of rebirth of nature, a redemption which both restores the original nature (Heidegger's sense of *Destruktion*) and completes it in a radically new way (his sense of "a *new* beginning"). These are two very different notions, and I would submit that though Heidegger began within a nature-grace schema and understood (and objected to) Christianity in terms of it, he worked out of that schema toward the more biblical creation-fall-redemption-consummation schema. The third and final sentence we are considering

both develops this perspective and opens up my own understanding of Christian philosophy.

Third sentence: "Within faithfulness one still thinks, of course; but thinking as such no longer has a task." First of all, it strikes me as a bit incongruous, if not bizarre, for Heidegger to worry about the "task" of thinking. In the same context he admitted that "Today thinking has taken the most tentative form imaginable" (PT 64), seemingly by choice, favoring instead the so-called "task" of "the surrender of previous thinking to the determination of the matter of thinking" (TB 73). A "task-orientation," it seems to me, is precisely what Heidegger's thinking recommends relinquishing or renouncing or forgoing or abandoning in favor of *Gelassenheit*, the taskless task, if I may put it that way. As he put it elsewhere, this thinking is "without effect" (72); and again, ... reflection remains more provisional, more forbearing and poorer in relation to its age than is the intellectual cultivation that was fostered earlier. Still, the poverty of reflection is the promise of a wealth whose treasures glow in the resplendence of that uselessness which can never be included in any reckoning (181).

Secondly, though, what did Heidegger say about this "taskless task," and why would "faithfulness" threaten such? The key to both these concerns has to do with "the matter of thinking" to which "the task of thinking" is to yield. Perhaps Heidegger's latest and clearest statement of the task of thinking came in the essay "The end of philosophy and the task of thinking," published first in 1964 (TB 84). There he said, rhetorically, "Does the name for the task of thinking then read instead of *Being and Time: Opening and Presence?* But where does the opening come from and how is it given? What speaks in the 'It gives'?" (73). I have already commented on each of these questions. In chapter 7 I said regarding "Opening and Presence": "With the assistance of Derrida's work on '(the) Spirit' in Heidegger we could now say that most fundamentally this pattern finds its archetype in the relation between the Spirit and the Word [the *dvoika*]." And with regard to "What speaks in the 'It gives'?", I pointed out in chapter 6 that Heidegger drew our attention to "the face of the sky," and in particular to the Hölderlinean verse which answered the question "What is God?" thusly: "Unknown, yet full of his qualities is the face of the sky" (PLT 225).

My point here is that unless these references and allusions are entirely mistaken, there would be nothing in Christian faithfulness to threaten "the task of thinking."

On the contrary, it even seems that only such Christian faithfulness which attends thankfully, even sacrificially (and worshipfully), to its Scriptural Revelation could duly honor that which is most worthy of thought. It is for this reason that I opened this chapter by noting that we have been given much pause to wonder if there is any “philosophy” other than Christian philosophy. As the Apostle Paul put it, “For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth” (2 Corinthians 13:8), especially when that “truth” is understood to encompass the two ways discussed earlier.

More, though, can and needs to be said regarding the “task of thinking,” specifically now with regard to my own understanding of (Christian) philosophy. I therefore begin a series of characterizations about (Christian) philosophy with the issue of its “task” in mind.

8.2 Various Characterizations of (Christian) Philosophy

8.2.1 The Task of Philosophy

First of all, there is no reason not to affirm various of Heidegger’s own characterizations about “philosophy.”⁷ For instance, I too want to affirm a kind of *Destruktion*, in particular a loosening up of hardened traditions, as well as a dissolving of the concealments which mask “those primordial experiences” which have been determinative of our understanding (BT 44/SZ 22). The difficulty, of course, is that if one’s own most primordially determinative “vision of Being” differs from that of the reader,⁸ then the exercise can appear to be simply apologetic, if not unwarranted violence. As is well known, and as has been noted in earlier chapters, this is a charge with which Heidegger himself was very familiar. There is no escaping it, and less and less so the “more profound” the issues at stake. Finally it would seem that Heidegger’s only

⁷ Generally I refer to Heidegger’s own philosophy as “thinking”—for the reasons already given in previous chapters; thus “philosophy” is in quotes here, for to refer to Heidegger’s work as philosophy is not quite fair to him. I myself, however, am still willing to talk about philosophy, both with reference to the traditional characterizations and in a retrieved sense, which I am calling Christian. In some cases this can create some notational perplexities, though context is usually sufficient to sort out the difficulties.

⁸ It is here that I locate the most important difference between myself and the approach taken by Caputo, etc., and that in spite of all that I appreciate, even love, in such approaches.

“defense” was the following appeal: “We all still need an education in thinking, and before that first a knowledge of what being educated and uneducated in thinking means.” He then quoted Aristotle: “For it is uneducated not to have an eye for when it is necessary to look for a proof, and when this is not necessary” (TB 72); and he might have added, not only “not necessary,” but not possible, at least not in the ordinary sense. The Apostle Paul’s appeal was similar: “My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God” (1 Corinthians 2:4-5). As noted, the Westminster Confession of Faith similarly rests its case on the voice of the Spirit speaking in the (written) Word of God (WCF 1.5; 1.10). And Jesus simply said, “He who has ears, let him hear,” and “My sheep know my voice.” The preceding chapters have illustrated the “philosophical” pertinence of these confessions and proclamations.

While myself believing this as well, I have run the risk of attempting to make my case at least appear plausible through careful documentation from the texts of various “philosophers.” Finally, though, I am quite willing to admit that there is the inescapable element of “demonstration” and “proclamation” upon which I too must rest my case. I do not think this simply transforms “philosophy” into *kerygma*, but it does recognize that rhetoric and philosophy are unavoidably overlapping and interpenetrating, and not easily distinguished or compartmentalized. Thus, in this regard as well, Ricoeur’s effort to confine philosophy to an “approximation” of the Christian *kerygma* is suspect: “approximation” is not yet close enough to account for the “overlapping and interpenetrating” noted.

Thus I affirm with Heidegger that philosophical thinking includes a kind of “apologetic” *Destruktion*. Further, though, I also concur with Heidegger that philosophical thinking includes the “care for” and exploration of “the Between.” That is, philosophy can be the preliminary charting, as well as unfolding or opening up of the realms of “Being,” prior to and serving to enable scientific activity. As Heidegger put it,

Such thinking, which recalls the truth of Being, is no longer satisfied with mere metaphysics, to be sure; but it does not oppose and think against metaphysics either. ... it does not tear up the root of philosophy. It tills the ground and plows the soil for this root (WBG 208).

Elsewhere he said, “Thinking is not a means to gain knowledge. Thinking cuts fur-

rows into the soil of Being" (OWL 70); "we cut a furrow into the soil to open it to seed and growth" (121). I am, therefore, affirming the "existence" of this realm of "the Between." More, of course, needs to be said about this "realm" from a decidedly Christian perspective, and I will do so shortly. I have, though, already offered some preliminary indications of my own current views, especially with regard to the "formless void" of Genesis 1 as at least like or an image of this "Between," the further unfolding and cultivation of which would therefore fall under the "cultural mandate" given to mankind by God Himself (Genesis 1:28). This would be philosophy (in my retrieved sense) as participating in the call to display God's glory through the unfolding and cultivation of the wonders of His creation. For that reason I am not overly concerned by what some have objected to as Heidegger's "*phainesthetics*."⁹ Even though this may be considered a "theological intrusion" by some, my point here is that philosophy is like science in this regard: Though different, both are legitimate and necessary means to the fulfillment of that mandate; and both are distinct from theology per se—on this point philosophy is no more equivalent to theology than science is.¹⁰ More on this relation between philosophy and theology follows in section 4 below.

9 It is no doubt true that Heidegger's "essential thinking is devoted to a history of *phainesthai* and thinks everything in its terms" (Caputo 1993a:164), and that though the primordial bond of belongingness has been both "drawn from biblical sources" and "made over into a matter of responding to a shining *phainesthai*," it does not seem to me that Caputo is correct to conclude that this belongingness and *phainesthai* have been "utterly purified of its biblical content and made over" (211). Whatever Heidegger's (or Caputo's) conscious efforts or intentions might have been to utterly erase that biblical content, my purpose in the preceding chapters has been to show (1) that such an erasure has not been complete, and (2) that a Christian retrieval is more than simply possible. Perhaps of special interest to Caputo would be my claim that such a retrieval also includes a profound obligation to "the least," the "disasters," the marginalized and disenfranchised, etc. No doubt, though, he would object that I am claiming to know too much, and in particular, that I know God. That, after all, seems to make all the difference. Further, though, I expect Caputo would object that I am taking Heidegger too seriously, while at the same time not taking seriously enough Heidegger's own (political and moral) "disaster." Cf. chapter 6, §5; and with regard to "disasters" (the loss of the guiding star) and Caputo's revalorizing of the proper name, cf. Psalm 147:4, Isaiah 40:26, and Matthew 2:1-2ff, though let's also attend to the cries of the children, Matthew 2:16ff. A fine bit of mythology, these references, or something more?

10 Nonetheless, philosophy is not thereby a form of science (cf. chapter 5). Further, more follows in

The third aspect of philosophy as understood by Heidegger which I too wish to affirm is that philosophy is a way into, and perhaps even beyond, that realm of “the Between.” This is Heidegger’s “step back” as the fulfillment of the transcendental method. I also want to affirm this way as a way of death, though with this consideration of philosophy as a “way” we broach the need to consider a distinctively Christian philosophy, for we discovered that this “way of death” is ambiguous: it is really two ways, and death need not be the terminus.

I therefore turn to a reconsideration of these characteristics of philosophy, now from the perspective of Christian philosophy. I consider these characterizations in reverse order: first, “the way” (as Person); second, the ambiguity of “the Between”; and finally, a bit more with regard to a Christian sense of the *Destruction*.

8.2.2 The Task of Christian Philosophy

Already in chapter 4 we have looked carefully at Heidegger’s own “way” and there noted the similarities which I said converged with the Christian way (of the cross), a convergence which appeared striking beyond coincidence. We noted that Heidegger sought a way which not only entered into the realm of “the Between,” but went beyond that transcendental horizon to that which granted the horizon as such. In short, his “step back” from “previous thinking to the determination of the matter of thinking” (TB 73) affirmed that “the matter of thinking” which is most worthy of thought is the *Es gibt*. Again, as already indicated, Heidegger’s confession at this point need not conflict with my own that there is but One who is worthy of such honor and devotion, “the Lamb that was slaughtered,” the Lord God the Almighty (Revelation 5:12, 9f, 13; 4:11; etc.).

The philosophical point here is that for a Christian philosophy the “step back” is a faithful turning to that Crucified Lamb who is *par excellence* “the yonder dead one who died early” thereby opening a new and living *way* into heaven itself, the house of God (Hebrews 9:24; 10:20f). Further, though, to fully make this point we must also recognize that this “yonder dead one” is no longer dead, but is now “seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (8:1), “far above all rule and

section 4 below regarding the relation between theology and philosophy, especially with regard to the difficulties engendered by considering theology a “science.”

authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come" (Ephesians 1:21). And further yet, "God [also] ... made us [who thus turn to Jesus] alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (2:4-6). That is, not only is He Himself "the [new] beginning, the firstborn from the dead" (Colossians 1:18), but He is "the firstborn within a large family" (Romans 8:29); in short, "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The point, then, is that Heidegger's new beginning "whose contour remains obscure, whose coming remains uncertain" (TB 60) has already begun in Christ. My claim is not that all the contours thereby have lost all obscurity nor that there is now no uncertainty with regard to this "coming" (especially regarding the "timing"). Nonetheless, I am claiming that this new beginning already begun in Christ does have implications for philosophy. Those implications with which I am here concerned have to do especially with the "step back" and "the Between."

These implications are considerable. Most importantly, that "way" into and beyond "the Between" is a person, the Person whose historical name is (in English) Jesus or (in Hebrew) Yeshua. Each designation of His self-attestation—"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6)—therefore rings with philosophical significance. Such an affirmation also offers the possibility of a rich rereading of the phenomenological tradition, whose "principle of principles," as Heidegger rightly noted, "requires reduction to absolute subjectivity as the matter of philosophy" (TB 63). In chapter 4 we already considered that re-duction as the way of death (the cross); here we can note in good conscience that there is One, even One who is fully human, who deserves the title "absolute subjectivity." The key, though, to breaking with the discredited modernism within which this tradition has been cast is to recognize that none of us is that One. Further, we can even affirm with Heidegger that the reduction could be accomplished only in the precinct (*templum*) of language (cf. chapters 3 & 4): For the Christian the Word of God, and faith in that Word, is the key to being united to Christ (Romans 10:14-17; etc.), thereby becoming partakers of "the powers of *the age to come*" (Hebrews 6:5; emphasis added).

To summarize: the (Christian) philosophical "step back" is a "step" of faith in the

gospel which is “the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16). In this regard Christian philosophy is very evangelical since the evangel—the good news, the glad tidings, the gospel—is very much at its heart; it takes the place of, as well as is the means of access to, what Heidegger called “the *tidings* of what we are committed to beforehand by being human beings” (WCT 145, emphasis added; cf. chapter 6). And indeed, as noted in chapter 4, for Heidegger that Saying which is “the same” as “Being” was understood as not only “the mode of Appropriation” (135), but “the arch-*tidings* of Appropriation” (135), tidings which “spring” from the abyss of pain and death as the “holy, saving, loving” and gracious blossoming of language (201; OWL 45, 99, 154; WM 358). At this point, at least to my mind, the distinction between “faithful [= devoted, heeding, thankful] thinking” and “thoughtful [= thinking God’s thoughts after Him] faith” is minimized to the point of vanishing. The “step back” of thinking, therefore, becomes that “obedience of faith”¹¹ which earlier I called “the way of the cross.”

What, though, thereby becomes of the “method” of philosophy? How does it do its task (which we have yet to clarify)? The “evangelical” answer is that the faith (which renders us present participants in the coming age) works, that is, does its task, through and by love (Galatians 5:6). We have already noted with both Heidegger and Derrida that “love” is also at the heart of *philo*-sophy. Especially “evangelical” was Derrida’s exposition of “love” as the “carrying of the friend” (chapter 6). If we add to that Heidegger’s own associations of “love” with (a retrieved understanding of) the essential nature of pain and death (PLT 97), as well as with the “golden-blossoming” of the holy and the saving, and through the latter, with “the word’s hidden essence” (OWL 154; also 45, 99; WM 358), we are not far from the “evangelical” definition of sacrificial love as defined by its Savior: “Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another” (John 13:34); “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (15:13); etc.¹² What, though, might that mean with regard to philosophy? There are two answers—one more textually oriented, the other more

¹¹ Cf. Romans 1:5 and 16:26.

¹² This is even more so the case if we accept Caputo’s “correction” of Heidegger’s “essentializing” of pain (cf. Caputo 1993a:148ff).

“phenomenological”—both of which help us to further clarify the task of (Christian) philosophy.

There is no doubt in my mind that *an* irreducible aspect of Western philosophy has always been the “dialogue,” or interaction, with the thought of other recognized philosophers, especially as recorded for us in texts. There are, of course, a variety of modes of such interaction, from “sheer” commentary to “creative” reinterpretation, all of them likely legitimate (within some ethical limits); but regardless, it is beyond dispute that philosophy (of whatever sort) operates within and in more or less explicit relation to the tradition of (Western) philosophy. As Kant put it, “We can only learn to philosophise, in accordance with its universal principles, ... on certain actually existing attempts at philosophy ... ” (CPR, A 838/B 866, NKS 657). This centrality of “the textual,” at least as one “aspect” of philosophy, hardly needs further defense these days: The inescapability of the intertextual is everywhere demonstrated, thanks especially to “deconstruction.” Further, though, we also have many examples of what that kind of “philosophical-textual” *love* might be, that is, what *philo*-sophy might be given this understanding of “love.” In particular, we have Heidegger’s examples of his meditations on the texts of various philosophers and poets; we have Derrida’s examples of the same, including his expositions of Heidegger’s texts (e.g. HEPP); and I would submit that this text you are now reading is also demonstrating and illustrating (however poorly) what philosophy means, at least with regard to this “textual aspect” we are discussing now.

However, in addition to these demonstrations and illustrations we have also reflected upon and brought to articulation an understanding of this “method” of philosophy. I think particularly of the reference in chapter 2 to 2 Corinthians 10:5—“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ”—discussed there with specific reference to understanding philosophy as *Destruktion* or retrieval.¹³ There is no doubt that there is a certain “violence” which is even explicit in this approach; and yet, it is also equally clear that such “*polemos*” is inherent in both

¹³ This reference to 2 Corinthians 10:5 also recurred often in Heidegger’s conversation with the Protestant theologians (PT).

Heidegger's and Derrida's understanding of "philosophy," especially with regard to the integrality of death and the *Auseinandersetzung* of philosophical dialogue: Such dialogue is an "agonistic explication of the other" (HEPP 208). It is a "taking captive" of the said through the "agonistic explication" of the "unsaid" and the "unthought," hopefully, at least if our "violence" is to be "loving" and "saving," in accordance with and in the light of a "fuller and truer vision" of that which is most worthy of thought. Consequently I maintain the quotation marks around "violence" to indicate a unique form of loving-violence.

The second answer to the significance of "love" for the "method" of philosophy is less "textual" and more "phenomenological." I am not intending to introduce or defend a strict distinction between these two, but I do now want to highlight that phenomenological principle of "back to the things themselves," that is, the consideration of the matter of thought itself, not just what others have recorded about it in their philosophical texts. Immediately, though, I must insist that our concern with the "unsaid" of *texts* already has directed us not just to texts, but to that which is itself most worthy of thought. By turning now to the more "phenomenological" I am only wanting to highlight that point, and by doing so to consider further the task of philosophy, now more in terms of the *-sophy* of *philo-sophy*.

For Heidegger, recall, the *sophon* of the Greeks was to reach its fulfillment in "Being," especially in "the Word of the soundless voice of Being," the heeding of which would escape the foolishness of the wisdom of the world. Indeed, beyond the Greek understanding of *sophon* as "the whole, the totality of being," specifically as gathered into *Hen*, "the One, the unique, the all-uniting" (WP 48/49) for which the philosophers yearned, Heidegger recommended attending to "the voice" or "the music" of "(the) Spirit" whose essence he understood to be the "originally unifying unity [*ursprünglich einigende Einheit*]." The "spirit of the spirit" (WCT 149), then, is that *thanc* which is also the heart of *Dasein*, yet nothing human, but rather that to which human *Dasein* is beholden because the heart's devotion is held by it in *ek-static* listening.

Throughout the preceding chapters I have been presenting the interpretation of this remarkable state of affairs in terms of "the image of God." I will not reiterate that rendition here, except to say that for me the fulfillment of that *sophon* which beckons

to philosophy is the “Lady Sophia” of Proverbs 8. Or perhaps better, since I wish to avoid the tangled exegetical and hermeneutical history of that particular passage, Christian philosophy attends to the soundless “voice-line [which] goes out through all the earth” declaring by means of “the things he has made” “the glory of God,” even God’s own “eternal power and divine nature” (Psalm 19; Romans 1:20). The further elucidation of this “voice-line” will go a long way toward accounting for the sense of “hovering” which has occurred throughout the preceding meditations, and to which I will attend explicitly in section 4 below.

It is perfectly clear from the biblical record that this “voice-line” is “the voice of God”—“God has shown it to them” (Romans 1:19)—and that it “speaks” about God—“what can be known about God” (1:19), “the glory of God” (Psalm 19:1), etc. It is also perfectly clear that this is *not* the voice of the Spirit speaking in the (*written*) word of God, but instead “through the things he has made” (Romans 1:20), which nonetheless, themselves have a certain “textual” or “written” quality.¹⁴ It is also clear that this is a “wisdom” which is being proclaimed (Job 28, 38-41), and that it is being proclaimed to all humans “through all the earth” (Psalm 19:4; Romans 1; Proverbs 8).

Further, though, this “voice-line” no doubt does not contradict the voice of the Spirit speaking in the (*written*) word of God—both “speak” of God’s own “eternal power and divine nature”—and moreover it is not clear (to me anyway) that this “voice-line” does not now also proclaim some version of the glory of the *risen* Lord, that is, the gospel (Romans 10:18 quoting Psalm 19:4). The latter detail is not strictly necessary for my point here, which is this: Christian *philosophy* is not just a listening to the voice of the Spirit speaking in the (*written*) word of God, but more particularly a listening to the voice of the Spirit speaking in the (*written*) word of God *in some sort of symphonic harmony with* the voice of the Spirit speaking in and through “the things he has made.”¹⁵ It is because of this “some sort of symphonic harmony” that philosophy can seem to hover without the kind of dogmatic certainty often ascribed

¹⁴ In chapter 2 we noted the allusion in Psalm 19 to the stars as “the silent *writing of the heavens*” (NJB 831; emphasis added). I added that perhaps all creation is the writing (silent or otherwise) of God.

¹⁵ It is no doubt worth underlying that this attention to “the things he has made” includes, but is not restricted to, the voice, especially the cry, of the other. I would add that all such attention includes

to and expected from Christian theology, focused as it is on and by the explicitly written word of God. It is also for this reason that (Christian) philosophy can seem to be crypto-theology, for it is in harmony with that theology which listens to the written word of God, and those “theological tones” (or harmonics, resonances) can be discerned, though in a somewhat concealed, or “unsaid,” form (thus “crypto-”). It is also for this reason that Christian philosophy takes on something of a parabolic–Ricoeur would say “approximate” or analogical–quality: It hovers still as “some sort of symphonic harmony,” a potentially very rich harmony indeed, all the more difficult to “pin down” for its fecund richness. Philosophy, therefore, participates in the unfolding, manifestation, and explication (or “charting”) of that richness, which I am now inclined to call, following Psalm 19 and Romans 1, the richness of God’s glory (Ephesians 1:7, 18; 2:7; 3:8, 16; Philippians 4:19; etc.).

To shift the figure slightly so as to highlight more clearly the special relation to the human per se, (Christian) philosophy is “poetic” in the sense that it is located at the intersection of three kinds of images, and in addition, an imageless movement. The three kinds of images are “the things he has made,” the human being as image of God, and the (crucified and risen) Christ as the Image of God (especially as revealed by the written word); and the imageless movement—actually there is more than one—is that revealing-carrying from these images to that which is imaged, in short, to the invisible God (1 Timothy 6:16), as effected by the (Holy) Spirit, who self-effacingly withdraws in the process (cf. chapter 7).

There are three specific points which I wish to emphasize here: first, this *philosophical* process, in that it is essentially the mediation of various images (by the human being as image), is at heart also “poetic,” inasmuch as the “poetic” has to do with the imagination and images, verbal and otherwise. Heidegger, therefore, was not wrong to “go poetic”; nor are those (like Ricoeur) who wish to highlight instead the imageless movement to the (ultimately imageless/“invisible”) Imaged.¹⁶ Second, the

an obligation to respond. It would also include attention to the upholding reality of “the Christ” “in, with, and under” the things made (Colossians 1; Hebrews 1).

¹⁶ For Ricoeur, this is the conceptual or speculative heart of philosophy; as such it is still too rationalistic and modern for me.

human being—in this case, the philosopher as image—plays a unique mediatorial role. It is for that reason that “modernism” is not entirely misguided; yet to ignore that the human mediator is but an image (“of” an Image[d]) is to arrest and truncate the most primordial philosophical impulse (*Heimsuchung*).¹⁷ And third, “the other” to which we attend is like us in the most important sense, especially (though not exclusively! cf. above with regard to “the things he has made”) when that Other is another human, and most especially when that other human is suffering. This is “most especially” the case because the *Imaged* is the *Crucified* “Suffering Servant” (of Isaiah) who has commanded us to love one another as he loved/loves us. It is here that (Christian) philosophy blends with action, especially the deeds of love, mercy, justice and compassion: “Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. ... the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy” (James 3:13, 17). Or as James put it earlier in his letter, those “deeds” are especially “to care for orphans and widows in their distress” (1:27).¹⁸

There is, though, one further aspect of this “hovering” view of philosophy which I now wish to expand upon. It has to do with the recognition of an ambiguity related to “the Between.” My own thesis is that there has always been something “incarnational,” or at least pre- or proto-incarnational about “the Between.” This is seen most clearly in Heidegger’s work with regard to the emergence of “the Crucified” in the place of “Being,” whether as Word or Being (crossed-out) or as Law (*Ereignis*) or explicitly as “the Crucified.” Indeed, to recognize “the Between” as incarnational also makes sense out of both the claim of many, many critics that Heidegger’s “Being” is (his substitute for) God and Heidegger’s vehement denial of that claim. I am inclined

-
- 17 Descartes is often charged with confining human subjectivity unto itself, thus founding modernism. This understanding of Descartes, however, ignores the more profound founding role of “God” in the latter meditations. It is, I think, this image-Image-Imaged nexus which Descartes sought to explicate.
- 18 The verse continues, “and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (James 1:27), recalling Augustine’s sense of “the world” noted in chapter 3, §3.4.1. James’ perspective here is very much in line with the Old Testament prophets, for instance, Micah 6:8 “He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness [mercy], and to walk humbly with your God?”—as well as the teachings of Jesus, e.g. Matthew 25:31ff.

to say that "Being" is not God in that "it" is both too creational and too human, being the subjectivity of (human) subjectivity, as well as too "thingly," being the objectivity of objectivity. Further though, "it" is "nothing human," therefore being even more God-like than human being understood as "image of God." Thus "it" is proto-incarnational, being *both* the heart of humanity per se (or at least some form of its "proto-image") *and* "nothing human." More precisely, according to my scenario this "Between-Being," the true topic of philosophy-thinking, is the "conjoint work" (to use Ricoeur's phrase) of the "voice-line" of the Spirit speaking in and through "the things he has made" and the human being who has been given the task of caring for and cultivating those things, not just as a "care-taker," but as a "co-creator," though always in radical dependence upon both the Creator and the way He has made (to be and to become) the things He has made. Heidegger has nicely said that we have the "task" of setting things free to be what they are and will be. I suspect this "setting free" is also a calling forth.

What, though, is the ambiguity with regard to "the Between" to which I alluded? It is this: A new creation has already begun, effected by the recapitulatory death of the old creation in the Incarnate-Crucified-Creator Lord and the resurrection of the same as "Second (and Last) Adam." So, even though the "plan for the fullness of time [is] to gather all things in him [Christ Jesus], things in heaven and things on earth" (Ephesians 1:10), and even though all things are now subject to Him, "we do not yet see everything in subjection to him" (Hebrews 2:8). Thus "the Between" is both the field which our thinking furrows and cultivates, and it is a battleground calling for the "violence" referred to in 2 Corinthians 10:5. Or to combine the figures, there is not only "good seed" and "good fruit" being cultivated, but there are also many "thorns and thistles" (Matthew 13:25). Or again, the "abyss" upon and within which we are afloat is often much in turmoil; at times it is even a raging sea. And yet Jesus still comes to us "walking on the water," saying, "Peace, be still; be of good cheer, I have overcome the world and its tribulations." As the writer to the Hebrews put it, "we do not yet see everything in subjection to him, *but we do see Jesus*" (Hebrews 2:8; emphasis added). To some incomplete extent, then, the kingdoms of the world are becoming the Kingdom of our God at the same time that the cultural mandate is being redeemed in and through Christ: new possibilities continue to unfold, but

now they more specifically declare His glory, the glory of the crucified and risen Lord of glory. The “step back” is therefore into Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; philosophy thereby participates in bringing those treasures to bear both as “the weapons” by which 2 Corinthians 10:5 is fulfilled and as gifts for mankind from the gracious King (of kings) and Eternal Son.

And so (Christian) philosophy too must learn to reckon with and navigate this ambiguity. At times it would seem that the “voice-line” of the Spirit speaking in and through “the things he has made” is barely discernible, if at all, due to the raging turmoil. At such times it is perhaps very difficult, if not impossible, to present some sort of symphonic harmony. Sometimes that “raging turmoil” is within our own lives, as we ourselves endure the covenantal “trial by ordeal”; at other times that turmoil is evident in the texts or persons with whom we are philosophizing. A Christian engagement with an interpretation of Nietzsche *might be* an example of such a state of affairs.

And yet even with such tumultuous situations we must admit that there is also a “cursed” way of doing philosophy. Recall the two ways of death delineated by the covenant structure of all things (cf. chapter 4). Though I would finally have to say that such a “cursed way” is also a form of philosophy which is not wrong or illegitimate as “philosophy,” I would also want to say that it is a truncated and self-defeating form which is still unable to not testify to its fuller possibilities.¹⁹ Indeed, in such cases perhaps the “face of Christ” specifically as “crucified”—i.e. as distorted, marred, bruised, etc.—is most visible. And in such cases the “violence” required of us is the embracing of that image, making it one’s own (appropriating, assimilating), carrying and caring for it as “Joseph of Arimathea” and “the women” cared for the dead body of Jesus, laying it in a tomb, wrapping it with spices and clean linen. And yet we might also hope and wait for that “broken word” (I am not speaking of the author

¹⁹ Derrida’s characterization of his “dissemination”—as “that which doesn’t come back to the father” (GoD 96)—is certainly inclined in this direction, though Derrida’s more recent characterization of his “dissemination” in terms of Abraham’s renunciation (as understood by Kierkegaard!) problematizes any such judgment as a bit too quick. The problem is that Abraham (the father) was given back his son (Isaac), though (according to Kierkegaard and Derrida) without expecting such. The testimony of Hebrews 11:17ff, however, contradicts Kierkegaard at this point.

here) to rise again. The crucified and resurrected One is, therefore, the “form” to which a Christian *Destruktion* conforms.

I close this section, then, by summarizing my understanding of Christian philosophy as that discernment and articulation²⁰ which embraces and “carries The Friend,” thereby developing (in a quasi-photographic sense) the image or “face” of Christ in “uncharted realms” of created reality (including especially the flesh and blood “other”!) as well as in and through the texts of the tradition.²¹ This “developing” is only *quasi*-photographic since it is that sketching or retracing which brings, or at least begins to bring, to incarnate (written or spoken and/or action-based) articulation that manifestation of the word of God which unfolds and displays the grace and glory of God. This spiritual discernment or insight (or *theoria*) which “rules” the philosophical impulse is not unlike Hölderlin’s recognition that “the face of the sky” is “full of his [God’s] qualities” (cf. PLT 225).

Nonetheless, in the first place that “face of Christ” to which we are beholden will be the “face” of “the Crucified,” discerned both in texts and in other “worldly” reality, especially other human lives. And yet a redeeming Spirit is also “hovering” over and around and within those “broken words” and marred images to in-breathe new life, new power-meaning, new (risen) humanity, and new hope (for those who “see” believably). To attend and mediate that process, participating in both the brokenness (the “mighty pain”) and the restoration-consummation (the future perfect “primal earliness”) is the current task of Christian philosophy.

8.3 Further Illustrations

Though I would not want to admit that my way toward a Christian philosophy has not already engaged in some (at least embryonic) Christian philosophizing, I want to conclude by giving further hints with regard to the philosophical, as well as theological, “payoff” of this proposal. To do so I further develop three topics which have already been broached in the preceding chapters: the form of unity, justification, and, finally, the relation between philosophy and theology.

²⁰ This “discernment and articulation” reflects the *dvoika* of Spirit and Word.

²¹ This “definition” is my retrieval of “the love of wisdom.”

8.3.1 The Form of Unity

The philosophical importance of “the form of unity” has been most ineluctably and creatively highlighted by the work of Jacques Derrida. I do not think anyone philosophizing since that work can responsibly ignore or avoid his demonstrations. Nonetheless, in keeping with the main focus of this book I simply need to recall the significance of what I am calling “the form of unity” in the work of Martin Heidegger in order to underline the importance of this issue.²² In chapter 5 I sketched five principal figures which Heidegger used to convey his sense of this unity: marriage, the mirror, play, the dance, and mutual indwelling. And, as I said in chapter 4, it turns out that the “penetration” of this mutual indwelling is the crucial point, both with regard to Heidegger’s own thinking and with regard to my own purposes. In chapter 7 we saw something of the importance of this “form of unity” with regard to “(the) Spirit.” Finally, or at least in other terms, this mutual indwelling comes down to the philosophical issue of our understanding of identity and difference, where the “and” bears all the philosophical weight Heidegger gave to it (cf. chapters 6 & 7). In fact, the matter of the “and” is the philosophical issue of identity and difference; it is also the crux of our understanding of mediation and synthesis, as well as of the traditional understanding of philosophy as system; on it depends our understanding of the “in” (e.g. being-*in*-the-world); and, finally, for Heidegger, “the close relation between *identity and difference* ... [is] that which gives us thought” (ID 21), i.e. it is that which is most worthy of thought. Indeed, Heidegger considered his text devoted to the topic of identity and difference (ID; pub. 1957) to be “the most important thing he [had] published since *Being and Time*” (7). There is no doubt, therefore, that “the form of unity” is of critical philosophical importance.

My point here is that we have already noted in a variety of ways that Ricoeur was no doubt correct to affirm that in other eras it was the Doctrine of the Trinity which sought to give articulation to this relation *between identity and difference* (NG 225). I am not arguing that point here, but only noting the philosophical “payoff” of clearly recognizing that overlap of philosophical and theological concerns. In particular, with regard to “the form of unity” there are several points of further interest.

²² I have dealt with Derrida’s work on this score in detail in SIG, especially chapter 7.

First, the most ultimate “form of unity” is, as Derrida (and others) have discovered, an always already divided unity; the only unity there is is not a homogeneous, “pure” unity, if “pure” means uncontaminated by “the other.” Second, this “divided unity” is not dyadic, but trinitarian. Third, this trinitarian unity is not strictly symmetrical; there are different relations and operations which characterize the internal form or structure of this unity. Fourth, to my mind these “different relations and operations” account for or “ground” or affirm what Derrida (and others) have been explicating as a variety of “infrastructures,” the most famous of which is *différance*.

Yet, fifth, Derrida has also been quite right to insist on a variety of related but different such “infrastructures.” The variety and diversity of such relations and operations results from another characteristic of “the form of unity”: its multidimensionality. That is, for instance, not only does the Father dwell in the Son, but the Spirit dwells in the Father dwelling in the Son, the Son dwells in the Spirit dwelling in the Father dwelling in the Son, etc., no doubt endlessly. It is, in fact, this infinitely proliferating multidimensionality which is “the form of unity.” It is something of this endlessly proliferating multidimensionality which Derrida (and others) have been tracing and remarking upon as reflected by and manifest in texts (and other “realities”).

Sixth, we are, then, delineating a new understanding of the systematicity of system, the basis of philosophy per se, at least since Kant. (Not so incidentally, this new understanding of system also affects the structure of so-called “systematic theology,” and thus our understanding of that discipline.)

Seventh, this new “system” structures and is reflected in and as “the Between”; it is the realm of the transcendentals (or quasi-transcendentals, as Derrida would rightly have it). According to the “consummation” of this realm, it is quite simply, as sketched above, Christ in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily and in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, remembering that “Christ” is dvoikic (the Son anointed and indwelt by the Spirit) and “the Godhead” is trinitarian. On the one hand, it is a bit uncanny, and on the other, to be perfectly expected, that the traditional transcendentals of Goodness, Truth, and Beauty, with the “system” of their interrelations being Unity, coincides so well with this proposal. What is offered by this current perspective is that these transcendentals are not themselves “simple,” but mutually and multidimensionally interpenetrating. To my mind that not only

complicates matters, but also begins to make sense out of the equally defensible, yet (somewhat) contradictory understandings of these “Terms” as developed throughout the history of the Western tradition, e.g. “Beauty” as harmony, design, allusivity, and inherently related to “the Sublime.” That, however, is a story for another day.

Eighth, and finally, the importance of the personal, or better, the interpersonal is highlighted. Ultimately this “structure” is not just a structure, but an interpersonal unity; in short, a community. There are implications with regard to our understanding of “structure,” the sense-reference relation (and dynamism), the person (the “subject,” the “individual”), intersubjectivity, the intra-/inter-subjective relation, the “structure” of time (especially its linearity), etc., all of which are of philosophical interest, but none of which I can pursue here.

My purpose here is not to mine all the implications of this trinitarian model of “the form of unity”—such would be impossible anyway, as just pointed out—but rather to indicate something of the philosophical “payoff” of these Christian philosophical meditations. In keeping with what was said earlier with regard to the “symphonic” overlap of theology and philosophy, it is also worth noting that theology is also affected by such a (Christian) philosophy of (tri-)unity. Only two illustrations will be given.

First, we have already noted that the Doctrine of the Trinity is itself reopened for further consideration, evaluation, and possible further elaboration. In particular, we noticed that perhaps the Holy Spirit should be considered operative in a “maternal” way with regard to the generation of the Son-Word. We even located otherwise overlooked Scriptural texts relevant to that reconsideration. Second, the philosophical point I have been developing has theological implications with regard to the relation between the Creator—specifically the “internal structure” of God Himself, that is, the so-called “ontological Trinity”—and the created “forms of unity.” This is not an unknown theological point (cf. e.g. the work of the philosopher and apologist Cornelius Van Til), but as far as I know no one has made much of the “internal operations and

functions” of the ontological Trinity with regard to created reality.²³ On this score, these philosophical considerations have opened new vistas for theological thought.

8.3.2 Justification

I return now to a topic considered previously in chapter 4. There we noted that according to Heidegger modern metaphysics has been the attempt to establish “the certainty of salvation” in a manner other than that attained previously in relation to God. In particular, Heidegger highlighted *both* Kant’s critical enterprise as the justification-“deduction” achieved by the “self-justifiedness of its ‘I think’” (QCT 90) *and* especially Nietzsche’s will to power as self-justifying justice, in the sense of the will to eternalize the momentary (= the Eternal Return of the Same). We found that justification depends upon one’s understanding of both justice and the law, and even more precisely on the “origins” of such. In chapter 7 we also noted that Heidegger’s *Stimme* recast and replaced Kant’s “I think”; thus Heidegger’s “voice (*Stimme*) of ‘(the) Spirit’” became the “origin” of his “retrieved” understanding of law and justice, and therefore determinative of justification as well. In short, for Heidegger “(the) Spirit” engenders that “law of a new lawfulness” (N3 240) which is “not a human artifact,” but which is in keeping with “a divine way of thinking” and thereby is determinative of the essence of humanity (249), what Nietzsche called “the overman” and what Heidegger had called *Dasein*.

In summary, then, Heidegger recognized justification as a topic of both theological and philosophical significance, indeed, as one of those “*fundamental philosophical doctrines*” in whose name “the struggle for dominion over the earth will be carried on” (N3 250, quoting Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, XII, 207).²⁴ Given the manner in which Heidegger developed the significance of Nietzsche in the history of Western metaphysics as well as the importance of “justice” in Nietzsche’s thought (cf. N3), perhaps justification is even *the* fundamental doctrine relevant to this “struggle.” And certainly, for Christianity as well, testimony is not hard to find that justification is “the

²³ Though see the work of Amos Yong for the beginnings of such, e.g. *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*, 2006. (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers).

²⁴ This phrase “the struggle for dominion over the earth” recurs in OWL as “In the battle for dominion over the earth, now, space and time reach their supreme dominion as parameters” (105).

article of a standing or falling Church" (CW2 203). Lest one think we are comparing apples and oranges here, note well that, at least according to Heidegger, the modern *philosophical* program has been motivated by the attempt to replace the certainty of salvation attained previously in relation to God by means of faith in the Christ of Scriptural revelation and/or the authority of the Church.

It is, then, due to the gravity of this matter, both philosophically and theologically, as well the already existent historical and conceptual entanglement, that I return (not without trepidation) to the topic of justification. A consideration of this topic will also allow us to return afresh in the final section to our concluding reflections on the relation between philosophy and theology.²⁵

Though in different ways, for both Heidegger and Christian theology much depends on justification; or better, justification and various other crucial formulations are mutually dependent and implicative. Amongst this network of dependencies we find, in both cases, the following: grace, faith, the law, the call, spirit, and a new humanity. In Heidegger's case we are more familiar with these formulations in the following terms: *Es gibt* (though also as "Kindness, the Pure"), *Andenken* (faithful thinking), *Ereignis* (as the law), the beckoning "voice (*Stimme*) of '(the) Spirit,'" and *Da-sein* (as the new humanity reborn beyond "the mighty pain" and "mortality"). Clearly, as with Heidegger's Nietzsche, this "new humanity," this change in the essence of human nature which Heidegger said is the ultimate "stake" in his thinking, depends upon the authentic relation of the mortal-human to that beckoning "voice of '(the) Spirit'" and to that "it" which "gives" (*Es gibt*). In short, the "new humanity" is *justified* humanity, the humanity which participates authentically in the four-fold *Ereignis* as "the new lawfulness." That authentic relation is what Heidegger called "thinking," understood as the thankful and sacrificial heart-devotion discussed earlier (cf. chapter 6).

²⁵ Though my particular approach to justification, as with "the Law" in chapter 4, was written before reading Caputo 1993a, 1993b, and therefore did not have his particular concern for justice in mind, I want to affirm his concerns as well as offer a different "take," one which maintains that justice is not simply a myth, and that indeed "saving justice" is as real as the crucified (and risen!) flesh/body of Yeshua.

For the Christian committed to the Biblical revelation, justification is also at the heart of one's concerns. As Murray put it,

The basic religious question is that of our relation to God. How can man be just with God? How can he be right with the Holy One? In our situation, however, the question is much more aggravated. It is not simply, how can man be just with God, but how can sinful man be just with God? (RAA 117).

For the Christian as well, justification cannot be understood without understanding the other notions mentioned: grace, faith, the law, the call, and a new humanity.

My purpose here is not to thoroughly develop this philosophical-theological dialogue on justification. I will, though, advance that engagement, or at least its plausibility, on several central issues. First, at the heart of our consideration in chapter 4 was "the law." Not only is a "new lawfulness" (= *Ereignis*) Heidegger's concern, but the biblical-theological understanding of justification in relation to "the law" (of God) seems to block any further interlacing of Heidegger's concerns with those of the New Testament. We can note, for instance, the Apostle Paul's vigorous rejection of "doing the works of the law" as effectual with regard to justification (Galatians 2:16; 3:11; 5:4). And yet, at the same time, we must insist that there is indeed "a new lawfulness" associated with the Christian life: It is called "the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2), "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:2), "the law of liberty" (James 1:25; 2:12), and "the royal law" (2:8).²⁶ Nonetheless, the theologians can still rightly maintain that the "observance"²⁷ of this "law" is *not* the issue with

²⁶ It will be of further interest to note the parallel between "the law" in James 1:25 and "the glory of the Lord" in 2 Corinthians 3:18. This sense of "the law" would play an important role in any dialogue with the sense of "justice" being developed by those sympathetic to deconstruction; cf. e.g. Caputo (1993a: 192ff). With reference to Caputo's objections to Heidegger's "*phainesthetics*" it is of interest to note that the biblical (Caputo's "Jewish") notion of "the law" is not necessarily in conflict with what I could call a "retrieved *phainesthetics*" (cf. Caputo 1993a: 152, 164, 211). With reference to chapter 6 above, it is of further interest to note that that which is "contrary" to "the law" (or obedience to the law) is not in the first place "justice," but "faith" (in the One who is "the righteousness of God").

²⁷ By "observance" here I mean more precisely "the doing," with the accent on the doing. There is an ambiguity in the English term "observance"; while it clearly means "doing" or "keeping" or "heeding" (e.g. of the law or a holiday), the root "to observe"—in the sense of "look at," "regard," take into account—still resonates close to the surface. Later I will reopen this question regarding the "observance" of this particular law, asking in particular if there is a difference between this "observance," especially if the second sense is given fuller play, and the "faith which justifies."

regard to the justification of the human-sinner, but is a consequence of a prior justification which is not by the “observance” of any law whatsoever, but by a purely receptive (though living and active) faith, specifically faith in the Christ whose perfect righteousness/“lawfulness” (and more) is imputed to them, thereby also constituting them as righteous, i.e. justified in relation to the legal (= covenantal) claims against them.

The crucial difference between Heidegger and the biblical account at this point is that for Heidegger the sacrifice involved is the sacrifice of “the thinker” yielding to the “sacrificial” giving of the (withdrawing) “It.” At most, Heidegger can claim that the sacrifice to which “the thinker” (i.e. our essential humanity) is called is an “imitation” of that unconcealing-concealing “law of ‘Being’” he called Truth. For the Christian, on the other hand, the essential sacrifice is the “vicarious sacrifice” of the Redeemer, a sacrifice which is “not only not the law of being, it is not a *law* at all. It is one solitary, matchless, Divine *transaction*—never to be repeated, never to be equaled, never to be approached. It was the splendid and unexpected device of Divine wisdom ... ” (RAA 57).²⁸ It is with this mention of “the splendid and unexpected device of Divine wisdom” (versus the “foolishness” of human wisdom; cf. 1 Corinthians 1) that this discussion of justification is intrinsically tied with our primary question, What is (Christian) philosophy? (cf. chapter 2).

Is it the case, though, that Heidegger’s concern with “sacrificial thinking” (= thanking) is inimical to “the Gospel”? It depends on the character and constitution of his “Between,” especially in relation to *Ereignis* (as “the law”) and most specifically, in relation to the Crucified. Note, for instance, that not only is his “Between” both not God and “nothing human,” but the justifying righteousness of the Gospel (which is through faith) also shares something of this “between-character”: It is both “not ... the divine attribute of justice or righteousness” and it is “a righteousness which is contrasted not only with human unrighteousness but with human righteousness” (RAA 127). That is, the righteousness which justifies, while not the righteousness of God Himself, is “the righteousness of God, characterized by divine quality or

²⁸ Murray is here quoting Hugh Martin. 1887. *The Atonement: in its Relations to the Covenant, the Priesthood, the Intercession of our Lord*. Edinburgh, 241f.

property" (CW2 213); it is "a God-righteousness," not a human righteousness (RAA 127).

For the Christian too, then, there is a realm of "the Between" which is essential to justification. For the Christian, however, this "between" is neither God nor anything human because it is "determined by his [the Christ's] hypostatic identity as the God-man" (CW2 213). We might say that the Christian "between" is neither God nor anything human because it is uniquely both God and human. It is thus neither (*just*) God nor (*just*) anything human. It may well be that this is *the* decisive difference between Heidegger's thinking and that presented in the Christian Scriptures.²⁹ And, of course, such nuances make all the difference.³⁰

The "new lawfulness" for the Christian, then, would be the righteousness of Christ, that is, Christ Jesus Himself "who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness ... " (1 Corinthians 1:30). He is that righteousness of God which, *apart from law*, has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets (Romans 3:21), and, now we might add, also by the "elemental spirits of the universe." But if Christ Himself is that righteousness which constitutes the "between" is there then a "new law" which He Himself has revealed, or more precisely, which He Himself *is* as the fulfillment and end (*telos*) of the law (Matthew 5:17; Romans 10:4)?

The New Testament does say that "when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well" (Hebrews 7:12), and with Christ there has been this "change in the priesthood." Is this new law "the law of Christ," "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," etc., mentioned earlier? Would such a "change in the law" also affect "Being"? That is, would there be a new "law of Being" patterned after, if not actually manifesting, that "new lawfulness"? And if so, is the "observance" of

²⁹ This difference would account for another which surfaces with regard to justification: Just as Heidegger's way was an always being-on-the-way, his justification is also not definitive; it too is always "on the way," never quite yet at home. Christian justification is otherwise, though "the coming" of righteousness is also "progressive," thus also "on the way."

³⁰ As Derrida has said, "everything, what is most decisive, is played out, here, in what Husserl called 'subtle nuances,' or Marx 'micrology'" (P 44). Those who are inclined to judge my efforts as confusing Heidegger and Christianity in important ways need to consider this paragraph carefully.

this "law of Christ" really distinct from that faith in Christ which justifies, carefully noting that such an "observance" is first of all radically receptive?

To move toward answering these questions there is a final concern to be taken up, and with it we once again highlight the similarities and the differences between the "religious" philosophy of Heidegger and Christian theology. We thereby also raise again the question of what a Christian philosophy might be. This concern is a return to the relation between faith and thinking, now in terms of what the theologians have called that "faith which justifies."

First of all, Murray was quite correct to point out that though justification is by or through faith, "it is not faith that saves but faith in Jesus Christ; [and] strictly speaking, it is not even faith in Christ that saves but Christ that saves through faith" (RAA 112). The point, of course, is that the "specific character of faith is that it looks away from itself and finds its whole interest and object in Christ" (112). As he put it elsewhere: "it is faith alone that justifies because its specific quality is to find our all in Christ and his righteousness" (CW2 217). Nonetheless, there is an "indispensable instrumentality" of faith with regard to justification (RAA 129); and yet, that "instrumentality" is characterized by the specific quality mentioned: "the receiving and resting of self-abandonment and totality of self-commitment" (CW2 217).

I have developed this point a bit because these theological formulations again emphasize that in the Christian vocabulary it is faith that uniquely and specifically characterizes that human "act" which Heidegger spoke of in terms of *Gelassenheit*, the primacy of "ontological intuition" or receptivity, etc., the very qualities which determined his understanding of thinking, and thus his "critique" of metaphysics or philosophy. And further, this specific quality of faith is clarified most precisely in relation to the question of justification, that is, "How can sinful human beings be just with God?".

That, of course, was not Heidegger's question; for Heidegger it was necessary "to hear and understand all these words carefully [the truth of Being, the holy, the essence of divinity] if we are permitted as men, that is, as eksistent creatures, to experience a relation of God to man" (LH 230; cf. 218). And yet, Heidegger commented later that his concern at that point was "the God of the poet, not the revealed God," and

that his interest was “merely what philosophical thinking is capable of on its own” (PT 65). We have already visited (and challenged Heidegger on) this point earlier in this chapter. There I noted that this commitment to “on its own” is a sign of bad faith with reference to Heidegger’s own understanding of our radical dependency as human beings on *Es gibt* and the consequent call to a radical *Gelassenheit*. Here the same point can be made from a theological perspective, though with philosophical implications.

The theological point is that it is precisely this clinging to what one might be capable of “on its own” that contaminates one’s understanding of justification which is rather purely by grace. That is, it is an act of God: “It is God who justifies” (Romans 8:33; cf. 3:24; Titus 3:7). And with that contamination comes distortions of our understanding of grace, lawfulness, faith, the call, spirit, the new humanity, etc. Regardless of our conclusions regarding Heidegger’s own thinking, the implication here is that *Christian* philosophy must yield to and be in accordance with this “purer” understanding of justification. However, before turning to how such a Christian philosophy would be related to Christian theology I take up the philosophical point related to this understanding of justification as an “act of God’s free grace” (RAA 124).

The key to this point is that though justification is wholly an act of God, the faith through or by which we are justified is “an activity on the part of the person and of him alone”: it is “not God who believes in Christ for salvation, it is the sinner” (RAA 106). And in particular, this “justifying faith” is not the faith that we have been justified, but that faith through which we are justified in the first place, thereby granting reason to believe, by a “reflex or secondary act of faith,” that we have indeed been justified (128f). “Justifying faith,” therefore, is that “initial and primary act of faith in Jesus Christ” whereby the creative “call of God” (likened to the first creation by His Word) both constitutes a new, justified relationship to Himself and declares us to be righteous *according to truth*³¹ and by virtue of the union with Christ effected by that “call” (RAA 124f, 129; CW2 209f). Here again, it is the Christian affirmation that this “way of salvation ... expresses his [God’s] supreme *wisdom* and *grace*” (106; emphases

³¹ That is, according to the reality of that newly constituted relation.

added). Surely, then, Christian philosophy in particular must submit itself to this “*wisdom and grace*” with no less devotion than Heidegger enjoined and practiced with regard to his own understanding of the call issued by the voice of “(the) Spirit.”

My “philosophical point,” then, is that this “nexus” of pure “act of God”/pure “‘act’ of man” is the forum or “primal scene” within which we have the best hope of clarifying such long-standing philosophical issues as the relation between “possibility” and actuality, existence and essence, identity and difference, form and matter, activity/passivity, etc. Heidegger himself developed these associations in some detail in his essay “Kant’s thesis about Being” (KTB). There he resolved these traditional concerns into his formulations of “Being and Time” and “Being and Thought” (cf. KTB 33). As already noted, though, those expressions themselves come down to understanding the *dvoika* of Word and Spirit, and specifically, the “and.” Here I am simply adding that a Christian philosophy must think out (and retrieve) these philosophical concerns in accordance with and while abiding in this “faith which justifies.” Further, it is only at that point that we might sufficiently clarify “the meaning of Being,” thereby being in a position to ask about the relation between the sacrifice of the Redeemer and any “law of Being.”

It is important, though, to recognize that I am not emphasizing the significance of this “faith which justifies” for a Christian philosophy simply because such a faith is what makes one a Christian, for instance prior to and as a prerequisite for being a specifically *Christian* philosopher. Rather, this “faith which justifies” is itself the best exemplification of that “interpenetration” of activity and passivity, the understanding of which grants us access to and thereby is determinative of “the solution” to, or better, the further explication of, the philosophical problems mentioned.

Heidegger’s own movement in this direction encourages our own and can be further indicated by his understanding of one of the paired terms noted above, in particular, “possibility.” It may be helpful, I think, to give some philosophical development at this point. Heidegger said, for instance, that “‘Possibility’ so understood, *as what enables*, means something else and something more than mere opportunity” (OWL 93; emphasis added). That is, Heidegger has already associated if not identified this “possibility” with his *Es gibt* (That which gives, thereby enabling), which is itself associated or identified with his understanding of grace, lawfulness, justification, etc.,

as well as “language,” or at least the essence or nature of language. And with this linkage to “language” comes the further invitation to advance this dialogue between Heidegger’s thought and Christian philosophy by means of a careful comparison between Heidegger’s understanding of “the word” (and its “call”) and that “effectual call” by which God Himself constitutes and declares the sinner as righteous in union with Christ, and that through faith.³² Regardless, with this we can agree: “That which enables” is the key that unlocks our further understanding of all these philosophical concerns. I am simply adding that the biblical understanding of justification by grace through faith in Christ Jesus offers the best hope of clarifying the issues surrounding our further understanding of “That which enables.” That, anyway, is my conviction, and I would see that clarification as part of the task of Christian philosophy.

Of course, to simply state, or even to make something of a case, that Christian philosophy of the sort I am proposing has an essential and unique contribution to make to the tradition of Western philosophy is not to demonstrate or provide that contribution. In a sense I have only presented what may appear as a pious hope or promise or pledge. I readily admit that as true, at least with regard to the philosophical concerns just mentioned. My concern, however, has been primarily with another philosophical issue, perhaps an even more fundamental matter, the question “What is philosophy?”. With regard to that question, I am claiming a contribution. I have also been claiming in this section that a consideration of justification also offers us the best access to that “foolishness of the divine wisdom” which is the heart of that by which we might indeed retrieve or overcome Western metaphysics, thereby achieving the kind of philosophical thinking sought, for instance, by Heidegger. In short, this “divine wisdom” would be the Christian philosophical response to that “law of a new lawfulness” (N3 240) which is “not a human artifact,” but which is in keeping with “a divine way of thinking.” Moreover, the faith that justifies would be the *way* of access to it. That is, that which God’s grace gives in the first place and always preeminently—i.e. justification by and in Christ (received by faith)—is the Way into the

32 More specifically, God’s “effectual call” constitutes the sinner as righteousness in union with Christ, calls forth life, and declares that righteousness-life (of Christ) to be reckoned to the (legal-covenantal) account of the one who believes, thereby declaring the redeemed-sinner to be not only “not guilty,” but also (legally) deserving of eternal life.

light of that Truth which is Life. In short, Christ who is our righteousness is also “the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6).

No doubt, it may appear to some that I have mixed up philosophy and theology in a quite confused and confusing manner. It is, therefore, to a few concluding comments about philosophy, especially in relation to theology, that I now turn my attention.

8.4 Philosophy and Theology

In the preceding sections we recognized the (possible) benefit of theology for (Christian) philosophy. My claim throughout has been that the Christian Scriptures have much relevance for philosophy; and not simply in a Kantian regulative-type manner, but rather in terms of a direct and conceptual contribution. While some might be willing to grant the Christian Scriptures, and particularly the exegesis of these Writings, an influential role in shaping one’s thinking, they may well hesitate over, if not reject, the notion that Christian theology offers the same kind of promise. This distinction between the Scriptures as primary with theology being the secondary product of the (institutional) church has a long and honored history. Nonetheless, without entering into the argumentation supporting such a position, I myself favor the alternative view that (at least portions of) the Christian Scriptures are themselves already specifically theological in character, and that in a manner which acknowledges the continuity between, for instance, the Apostle Paul and his later “theological” interpreters (like you and me). This position has been pioneered within my own tradition by Geerhardus Vos and most recently expounded by Richard Gaffin. Gaffin summarized this position as follows: “In short, it is not going too far to say that Vos approaches the apostle as one with whom he is involved in a common theological enterprise. And he does this without any sense of incompatibility with a conviction of the unity and divine origin and authority of Scripture” (CR 20). Thus, for me, though the Christian Scriptures maintain their traditional place as “canon,” i.e. as authoritative and normative rule for life (including thinking), the distinction between exegesis and theology per se is not pertinent with regard to my present concerns.³³

³³ Of course the theology contained in the Bible maintains an authoritative and normative status with regard to any other kind of subsequent theology. That is the point of Gaffin’s emphasis on the “conviction of the unity and divine origin and authority of Scripture” noted above (CR 20).

It is in this regard that Christian philosophy (even philosophy in general) and Christian theology can speak the same language, contrary to Heidegger's opinion (PT 65), though that language may be what Jordan called "the discourse of the blessed" (1985:308). It is the same conclusion I have reached through a consideration of Heidegger's own undeniable and insuppressible "religiosity" (or "spirit-uality"), as well as through our meditations on and with both Ricoeur and Derrida. It is also in this regard, as I noted earlier, that philosophy is a **unique** kind of "crypto-theology." I can, however, now say that theology is also a kind of "crypto-philosophy."

Let me illustrate this point with reference to the preceding discussion of justification. Let's ask, for instance, How is it that God can justify the sinner through faith in Christ Jesus, and do so in accordance with truth? That is, How can God constitute the unrighteous as righteous due to the righteousness of Christ Jesus, and thereby declare the ungodly to be righteous with a divine-human righteousness? However, before pursuing an answer to such questions, let me ask a further question: Are these questions theological questions or philosophical questions? I must admit that I myself am at a loss to answer; I can see it either way. First of all, such questions seem to be theological due to their subject matter; they are asking about our understanding of "the data" of the Christian faith. They would therefore be part of the long accepted theological practice of faith seeking understanding. And yet, they are also "transcendental" questions, inquiring with regard to the conditions for the possibility of particular data taken as given, much as Kant inquired with regard to the conditions for the possibility of (Newtonian and Euclidean) science. The point of difference I am concerned with here is not so much the manner of questioning as the particular "data" which is taken as given, and about which the questioning inquires. (I am aware, though, that the choice of such "data," as well as what "data" as such, are also taken to be affects of the "manner of questioning," the "way" or method of doing, in this case, transcendental philosophy. Kant, for instance, did not take as given what I take as given, and vice versa, nor in the same way.)

Nonetheless, again contrary to Heidegger who "denied that philosophy has any significance for theology" (PT 65), I find rich resources in Heidegger's own thinking—or perhaps better, within my retrieval of Heidegger's thought—for responding to these questions. In particular I am thinking of the reinterpretation of Heidegger's

complex of designations—*Dasein*, *Da-sein*, *Da-Sein*, *Da sein*, the *Da* as the place of human being *in which* we are, etc.—in terms of the multidimensionality of the Image/image of God. That is, if the Image (= Christ) in whom the human being ek-sists as image undergoes a radical change (= death and resurrection) ... ; again, if the prototypical Image of God (= Christ) in accordance with which the human being is ontologically and “essentially” constituted as image of God undergoes an essential transformation ... ; and again, if the essential nature of human being within which and because of which and in correspondence with which human being *is* specifically human being is recreated ... ; then it is not surprising that at least the possibility of a radical redefinition of human being has been opened up as a new thing by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Something like this is required regardless if the vicarious sacrifice of Christ is to be more than a “legal fiction” as enjoined by the Scriptural record (CW2 214). Further, if indeed those who are called and justified were also foreknown and predestined (i.e. chosen) *in Christ* before the foundations of the world (Romans 8:29f; Ephesians 1:4), then the death and resurrection of *that Christ* would be determinative of their identity as well (without here commenting on the means of appropriation of that determination).

My point, then, was simply to illustrate the fruitful interaction of theology and philosophy, an interaction which I am claiming is fruitful in both directions. What is of special interest to me is the “naturalness” of this interaction; the interpenetration of these two “disciplines” is such that the exchanges between them have the quality of the mutual unfolding of the implicit into the explicit. And yet, there is still a distinctiveness of each with regard to the other. (It is here that we need something like the model of “the form of unity” sketched earlier: There is both distinction and mutual indwelling, a kind of “tunneling” by which each is always already “in” the other.)

I conclude now with a suggestion as to why and how it can be both that philosophy is (a *unique* kind of) crypto-theology and that theology is (a *unique* kind of) crypto-philosophy. Again, however, I am unsure as to whether such thinking is itself philosophy or theology. My suggestion is actually very simple; it is also hardly innovative. It is just this: Instead of starting with man as being-in-the-world (as did Heidegger), we must begin with human being as being-in-the-world-in-God, or with

regard to a specifically Christian philosophy, being-(in-Christ)-in-the-world-in-God. The “in-Christ” is in parentheses because of the ambiguity mentioned earlier: “We do not yet see everything in subjection to him” (Hebrews 2:8). Perhaps the actual state of affairs with which Christian philosophers begin is therefore something like being-in-Christ-in-the-world-in-God-(in-Christ). That is, as Christians our being is first and foremost being-in-Christ. This point has been well expounded by Christian theologians (e.g. Herman Ridderbos). What has not been so clearly recognized is that we are nonetheless still “-in-the-world.” That is, even though Christians “do not belong to the world” (John 17:16), we are still “in the world” (17:11, 15). In that regard we must avail ourselves of the Heideggerean-like insights. I put it that way, i.e. “Heideggerean-like insights,” because even there, perhaps especially there, we must again insist upon a specifically Christian retrieval, for the primary Christian “identity” is “in Christ” who Himself is “no longer in the world” (17:11; etc.). It is for that reason that I have “inserted” “in-Christ” within the Heideggerean phrase being-in-the-world, thus “being-*in-Christ*-in-the-world.”

That too is not the full story, for whatever being constitutes human beings, that being is “in-God.” That was the Apostle Paul’s point when speaking with the Greek philosophers (quoting Greek poets) on Mars Hill: “‘For in him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring’” (Act. 17:28). And then, again, this “in-God” must also be supplemented by “God-(in-Christ),” though with the parentheses for the reason noted above.

To summarize, then, our starting point must be something like being-in-Christ-in-the-world-in-God-(in-Christ). No doubt there is much yet to discuss in this formulation, and we may well decide to modify it.³⁴ Such a proposal is, though, not without testimony from others. De Lubac, for instance, noted that the contribution of supernatural revelation (including the Bible) has opened up an undeniable fecundity in the history of human thought, even specifically, “philosophical investigation” (1992:501). He even went on to liken this fecundity to “the incessant activity of the Creator in the development of this world” (501), much as I have acknowledged

³⁴ One obvious point is the linearity of the “formula.” Given the kind of unity already sketched, this linearity is a mere artifact of linearity of ordinary linguistic expression, whether written or spoken.

the role of philosophy as “participating in the call to display God’s glory through the unfolding and cultivation of the wonders of His creation” (§8.2.1). Balthasar, too, noted that the “entire greatness of the Christian situation will be grasped only when both sides [i.e. ‘in this world,’ ‘not of this world,’ 149] are taken seriously” (CP 149). My formulation of the starting point, in fact, makes just this point with the “-in-Christ- ... -in-God-(in-Christ)” highlighting the “not of this world,” while the elided portion acknowledges the “in this world.” Similarly, Marion acknowledges and affirms Balthasar’s “method,” specifically in its application to the relation between philosophy and theology: “This method ... presupposes, therefore, that one and the same reflection is capable of joining together, without either confusion or separation, theology, which deals specifically with *revelata* and philosophy (understood in its broad sense), which interprets the *creata*” (1992:465).³⁵ This too is my own specific point: the proposed starting point (or something similar) provides the context within which both to differentiate and to relate Christian philosophy and Christian theology.³⁶

My proposal, then, is that (Christian) philosophy is most explicitly concerned with being-in-the-world, while Christian theology is most explicitly concerned with being-in-Christ- ... -in-God-(in-Christ), as well as with Christ and God in and of themselves, insofar as that is possible (and I think it is).³⁷ My general claim is that none of these foregrounded topics can detach themselves from the entire complex, not even the theological concern with Christ and God in and of themselves. And yet, regardless, there is always the necessity of some sort of foregrounding, and therefore

³⁵ Again, I insist that the *creata* are themselves inherently revelatory, thus denying the kind of distinction Marion insists upon.

³⁶ For helpful articles giving something of the history of the debates regarding the relation of philosophy to Christian theology, cf. Balthazar 1993, de Lubac 1992, Henrici 1988, Jordan 1985, Marion 1992, Schönborn 1988. Also <http://www.iep.utm.edu/chri1930/> (accessed 27-8-2010).

³⁷ There are complexities inherent in this formulation that need to be noted and eventually explicated further. They have to do with the “form of unity”, which is everywhere operative, together with the various (and endless) “resonances”. For example, the Trinitarian perichoretic reality is internal to “God” and “Christ”; (B)eing is resonant with human being, which is resonant with Christ as Image, as is the world; the “in” is the perichoretic par excellence, and is especially indicative of “the Spirit”; etc. This is not a linear structure; far from it.

also backgrounding: Not everything can be considered at once, and further, there is warrant for recognizing at least a relative autonomy with regard to the terms comprising this complex. (And, in the case of God Himself, aseity can also be affirmed.) It is, therefore, because of this inescapable and complex starting point that philosophy is (a kind of) crypto-theology and that theology is (a kind of) crypto-philosophy: The concerns of each can always be found in the other, whether explicitly or implicitly (i.e., "in the margins").

* * *

In conclusion, then, I affirm once again, for the sake of discussion leaving the matter in de Lubac's bold and provocative form, that "Try as man may to reject Christ, he always ends up confronting himself—his intelligence as well as his heart—such as he has been transformed in his very nature by Christ" (1992:504). And therefore, as he went on to say with regard to philosophy, "Every philosopher of today, ... is, whether he wishes it or not, and perhaps in just proportion to his perspicacity, a Christian philosopher" (505). This, however, is not to deny the attempted and pretended autonomy of so much of Western philosophy; it is, however, to deny that such an attempt ever has been or can be successful. My claim is that "the margins" will always betray this pretension, which finally is, as the Apostle Paul put it, the wicked (and therefore culpable) suppression of the (known) truth (Romans 1:18-23). As arrogant and offensive as such a point may seem to some, if it is in fact true, to go ahead and say so plainly would be an act of kindness. Would it not be the Doctor who hides the true diagnosis from the patient who is rather not only incompetent, but unkind, if not "arrogant and offensive"? Though some medical ethical conundra might be posed at this point, it would be pointless in the case of a known cure which, in fact, depended upon the patient's informed consent for its administration. It is the latter case—is it not?—which is affirmed by the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and testified to by the preceding philosophical/theological considerations.

9 Bibliography

- Bachelard, Gaston. 1964. *The poetics of space*, trans. by M. Jolas. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Balthasar, Hans Urs von. 1991. Philosophy, Christianity, Monasticism. *Explorations in theology, II: Spouse of the word*, 333-372. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.
- Balthasar, Hans Urs von. 1993 (Spring). On the task of Catholic philosophy in our time. *Communio* xx.1. 147-187.
- Bavinck, Herman. 1956. *Our reasonable faith*, trans. by Henry Zylstra. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.
- Bernasconi, Robert. 1995. On Heidegger's other sins of omission: Asian thought and Christian philosophy. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 333-350.
- Bourgeois, Patrick L. 1971. Hermeneutics of symbols and philosophical reflection. *Philosophy Today* 15. 231-241.
- Bourgeois, Patrick L. 1972. Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutical phenomenology. *Philosophy Today* 16. 20-27.
- Bourgeois, Patrick L. 1975. *Extension of Ricoeur's hermentics*. The Hague: Nijhoff.
- Bourgeois, Patrick L. 1979. *From hermeneutics of symbols to the interpretation of texts*. *Studies in the philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*, ed. by C.E. Reagan, 83-95. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- Calvin, John. *Institutes*. Grand Rapids: Associated Publishers and Authors Inc.
- Caputo, John D. 1988. *Radical Hermeneutics: Repetition, Deconstruction, and the Hermeneutic Project*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Caputo, John D. 1993. Heidegger and theology. *The Companion to Heidegger*, ed. by Charles Guignon, 270-288. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Caputo, John D. 1993a. *Demythologizing Heidegger*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Caputo, John D. 1993b. *Against Ethics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Caputo, John D. 1995. Presenting Heidegger. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 129-136.
- Childs, Brevard. 1962. *Memory and tradition in Israel*. London: SCM Press.
- Daigler, Matthew A. 1995. Heidegger and Von Balthazar: a lovers' quarrel over beauty and divinity. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 375-394.
- de Lubac, Henri. 1992 (Fall). On Christian philosophy. *Communio* xix.3. 478-506.

- Derrida, Jacques. 1981. *Dissemination*, trans. by Barbara Johnson. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1973b. *Différance. Speech and phenomena, and other essays on Husserl's theory of signs*, trans. by David B. Allison, 129-160. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1974. *Of Grammatology*. Trans. by G.C. Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978 (Fall). The retrait of metaphor, trans. by F. Gasdner et al. *Enclitic* 2.2. 5-33.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1981a. *Dissemination*, trans. by Barbara Johnson. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1981c. *Positions*. Translated and annotated by Alan Bass. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1984. *Margins of Philosophy*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1985. *The ear of the other*, ed. by Christie McDonald, trans. by Peggy Kamuf. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Limited Inc*. 1988. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1989. *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the question.*, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby. Chicago. The University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1990. Sending: on representation. *Transforming the hermeneutic context: from Nietzsche to Nancy*, ed. by Gayle L. Ormiston and Alan D. Schrift, 107-138. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1993. Heidegger's ear: Philopolemology (*Geschlecht* IV). *Reading Heidegger: commemorations*, ed. by John Sallis, 163-218. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1995. *The Gift of Death*. Chicago: University of CHicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 2004. The Last Interview. <http://www.studiovisit.net/SV/Derrida.pdf> (accessed 9 April 2010)
- Diane P. Michelfelder and Richard E. Palmer, ed. 1989. *Dialogue and deconstruction: The Gadamer-Derrida encounter*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Edwards, Jonathan. 1834. *The words of Jonathan Edwards*. Vol. I. Carlisle: The Banner of Truth Trust.

- Fehér, Istaván M. 1995. Heidegger's understanding of the atheism of philosophy. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 189-228.
- Gaffin, Richard B. Jr. 1978. *The centrality of the Resurrection*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Book House.
- Gasché, Rodolphe. 1993. Floundering in determination. *Reading Heidegger: commemorations*, ed. by John Sallis, 7-19. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Gilkey, Langdon. 1994. Nature as the image of God: reflections on the signs of the sacred. *Zygon* 29.4. 489-505.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1958b. *What is philosophy?* trans. by William Kluback and Jean T. Wilde. n.p.: Twayne Publishers Inc.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1959. *An introduction to metaphysics*, trans. by Ralph Manheim. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1962a. *Being and time*, trans. by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1962b. *Kant and the problem of metaphysics*, trans. by James S. Churchill. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1962c [1956]. The way back into the ground of metaphysics, trans. by Walter Kaufmann. *Philosophy in the twentieth century*, ed. by William Barrett and Henry D. Aiken, 206-218. New York: Random House.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1966. *Discourse on thinking*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1967. *What is a thing?* Translated by W.B. Barton, Jr. and Vera Deutsch. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1968. *What is called thinking?* trans. by J. Glenn Gray. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1969a [1929]. *The essence of reasons*, trans. by Terrence Malick. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1969b. *Identity and difference*, trans. by Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1971. *Poetry, language, thought*, trans. by Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1971b. *On the way to language*, trans. by Peter D. Hertz. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.

- Heidegger, Martin. 1972. *On time and being*, trans. by Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper Torchbooks.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1973. *Kant's thesis about Being*, trans. by Ted E. Klein, Jr. and William E. Pohl. *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy* 4.3.8-33.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1975. *Early Greek thinking*, trans. by David Farrell Drell and Frank A. Capuzzi. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1976 [1940]. On the being and conception of *phusis* in Aristotle's Physics B, I, trans. by Thomas J. Sheehan. *Man and World* 9.3. 219-270.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1976. *The piety of thinking*, trans. by James G. Hart and John C. Maraldo. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1977. *The question concerning technology and other essays*. Translated and with an introduction by William Lovitt. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1977f. What is metaphysics?. *Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell, 91-112. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1977h. Letter on humanism. *Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell, 193-242. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1984. *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, trans. by Michael Heim. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1985. Schelling's treatise on the essence of human freedom, trans. by Joan Stambaugh. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1959. *Introduction to metaphysics*, trans. by R. Manheim. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1988. *The basic problems of phenomenology*, trans. by Albert Hofstadter (revised ed.). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1990. *Kant and the problem of metaphysics*, trans. by Richard Taft. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1991. *Nietzsche*, Volumes 1 & 2, trans. by David Ferrell Krell. San Francisco: Harper.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1991. *Nietzsche*, Volumes 3 & 4, trans. by David Ferrell Krell. San Francisco: Harper.
- Heidegger, Martin. n.d. *The principle of reason*, trans. by Reginald Lilly. unpublished mss.

- Henrici, Peter. 1988 (Fall). Sophistry and philo-sophy. *Communio* xv.3. 384-394.
- Hodge, Charles. 1975. *Systematic Theology*. Vol. 1. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishers.
- Holy Bible, The New International Version (=NIV)*, The International Bible Society, 1973, 1978, 1984. NIVSB refers to the NIV Study Bible. 1985. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Bible Publishers.
- Ihde, Don. 1971. *Hermeneutic phenomenology*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Jonas, Hans. 1966. Heidegger and theology. *The phenomenon of life: toward a philosophical biology*, 235-261. New York: A Delta Book, Dell Publishing Co., Inc.
- Jordan, Mark D. 1985 (Fall). The terms of the debate over "Christian philosophy." *Communio* xii.3. 293-311.
- Kane, Michael T. 1995. Heidegger and Aristotle's treatise on time. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 295-310.
- Kant, Immanuel. 1929. *The critique of pure reason*, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith [=NKS]. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Kearney, Richard. 2004. *On Paul Ricoeur: The Owl of Minerva*. Burlington, Vt: Ashgate Publishing Company.
- Kisiel, Theodore. 1993. *The genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kisiel, Theodore. 1995. The genetic difference in reading *Being and time*. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 171-188.
- Kline, Meredith G. 1968. *By oath consigned*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Kline, Meredith G. 1980. *Images of the Spirit*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.
- Kovacs, George. 1990. *The question of God in Heidegger's phenomenology*. Evanston, Il.: Northwestern University Press.
- Langan, Thomas. 1959. *The meaning of Heidegger: a critical study of an existentialist phenomenology*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Langan, Thomas. 1966. *Merleau-Ponty's Critique of Reason*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

- Madison, Gary B. 1977. Reflections on Paul Ricoeur's philosophy of metaphor. *Philosophy Today* 21. 412-427.
- Marion, Jean-Luc. 1982. *God without Being: Hors-Texte*, trans. by Thomas A. Carlson. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Marion, Jean-Luc. 1992 (Fall). Christian philosophy and charity. *Communio* xix.3. 465-473.
- McCormick, Thomas W. 1988. *Theories of Reading in dialogue*. Lanham, Mass: University Press of America.
- McCormick, Thomas W. *Science, the imagination, and God*. Unpublished Manuscript.
- Murray, John. 1955. *Redemption: Accomplished and applied*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Murray, John. 1977. *Collected writings of John Murray*, Vol. 2. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust.
- O'Meara, Thomas F. 1995. The history of being and the history of doctrine: an influence of Heidegger on theology. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 351-374.
- Olson, Alan M. 1992. *Hegel and the Spirit: philosophy as pneumatology*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Ott, Hugo. 1995. Martin Heidegger's Catholic origins. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 137-156.
- Richardson, William J. 1965. Heidegger and God—and Professor Jonas. *Thought: a review of culture and ideas*. 40.156. 13-40.
- Richardson, William J. 1995. Heidegger's fall. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 229-254.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1965a. *Fallible man*, trans. by C. Kelbley. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1965b. *The image of God and the epic of man*, trans. by C. Kelbley. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1967a. *Husserl: an analysis of his phenomenology*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1967b. *The symbolism of evil*. Boston: Beacon Press.

- Ricoeur, Paul. 1970. *Freud and philosophy*, trans. by D. Savage. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1974. *The conflict of interpretations*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1975b. Biblical hermeneutics. *Semeia* 4. 29-148.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1976. *Interpretation theory*. Fort Worth: The Texas Christian University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1977. *The rule of metaphor*, trans. by R. Czerny. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1978c. Imagination in discourse and action. *The human being in action*, ed. by A.T. Tymieniecka. Boston: Reidel.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1979a. Preface: response to my friends and critics. *Studies in the philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*, ed. Charles E. Reagan, xi-xxi. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1979b. Naming God. *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* xxxiv. 4. 215-227.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1981a. *Hermeneutics and the human sciences*, trans. and ed. by John B. Thompson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1981b. Mimesis and representation. *Annals of scholarship*, 15-32.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1984a. *Time and narrative*. Vol. I. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1991. *A Ricoeur reader: reflection and imagination*, ed. by Mario J. Valdés. Toronto: University of Toronto Press
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1992. *Oneself as another*, trans. by Kathleen Blamey. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1995. *Figuring the Sacred*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1998. *Critique and Conviction*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 2009. *Living Up to Death*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- Ridderbos, Herman. 1962. *The coming of the kingdom*. Trans. by H. de Jongste. Ed. by Raymond O. Zorn. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and reformed publishing company.
- Ridderbos, Herman. 1975. *Paul, an outline of his theology*. Trans. by J.R. DeWitt. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

- Rorty, Richard. 1989. *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sallis, John. 1988. Dionysus In excess of metaphysics. *Exceedingly Nietzsche*, ed. by David Krell and David Wood. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sallis, John. 1990. *Echoes: After Heidegger*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Sallis, John. 1993. Deformatives: essentially other than truth. *Reading Heidegger: commemorations*, ed. by John Sallis, 29-46. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Schalow, Frank. 1995. The topography of Heidegger's concept of conscience. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 255-274.
- Schönborn, Christoph. 1988 (Fall). Does the Church need philosophy? *Communio* xv.3. 334-349.
- Sheehan, Thomas. 1995. How (not) to read Heidegger. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 275-294.
- Stonehouse, N.B. and Paul Wooley, ed. 1946. *The Infallible Word: A symposium by the members of the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary* Philadelphia, Pa.: The Presbyterian Guardian Publishing Corporation.
- The New Jerusalem Bible. 1985. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc.
- The New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible. 1989. Iowa Falls, Iowa: World Bible Publishers, Inc.
- Van Buren, John. 1994. *The young Heidegger. Rumour of the Hidden King*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Van Buren, John. 1995. The ethics of *Formale anzeige* in Heidegger. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 157-170.
- Van den Hengel, John W. 1982. *The home of meaning: the hermeneutics of the subject of Paul Ricoeur*. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America.
- Warfield, B.B. 1968. *Biblical and theological studies*. Ed. by S.G. Craig. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and reformed publishing company.
- Westminster Confession of Faith. 1646. http://www.reformed.org/documents/wcf_with_proofs/. (accessed 11 March 2011).
- Wright, Christopher J.H. 2006. *The Mission of God*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Wood, Robert E. 1995. Six Heideggerean figures. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, LXIX.2. 311-332.

Yong, Amos. 2006. *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers.