Heidegger’s thinking should not be labelled rationalist or irrationalist. Because the definitions of rationality and irrationality, which can be seen as derived from Descartes’ or Cartesian philosophy, are deconstructed by Heidegger. The movement of this deconstruction is twofold: at the same time it is a thinking retrieval of the ontologico-historical origin of (Western) thought. The retrieval results in Heidegger’s notion of temporalising Being. This ‘notion’ can also be seen as informed by Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’ and, in turn, to inform its understanding or interpretation itself.

Keywords: Aristotle, Being, Heidegger, Nietzsche, power, thinking

INTRODUCTION

This article deals with some aspects of characterising thinking as manifested in Heidegger. In negative terms, thinking will be delimited from rationality which is opposed to irrationality or, from the very duality of rationality and irrationality. Viewed from the point of view of rationality which is opposed to irrationality, thinking could be described as a unity of rationality and irrationality. In positive terms, though, the description of thinking unfolds according to thinking’s own characteristics while bracketing the notions of rationality and irrationality altogether.

On the one hand, the article will point out some traits of ‘modern rationality’ such as nihilism, decadence of culture or life and negation of animality by showing their origin in the philosophy of Descartes. On the other hand, it will go back to the Greek origin of ‘Western rationality’ in Aristotle and demonstrate its relation to – or even identify it with – the living source as well as the difference of Aristotelian ‘intellect’ from the Cartesian ‘intellect’. This small investigation of the oneness of human theory and practice will be also informed by Nietzsche’s contribution who hammered down the Cartesian gaps. Heidegger’s thought could actually be seen as a continuation of Nietzschean critique of the European nihilism and his ‘philosophy of life’. What is ‘time’ for Heidegger – is it what Nietzsche called ‘life’ and ‘Dionysus’?

Reversely, the Heideggerian analysis of Aristotelian and, ultimately, Greek, and, even further, ‘Western’ notions and, in conclusion, basic traits of Heidegger’s own thinking can be used to inform the understanding of basic Nietzschean words such as ‘life’, ‘instinct’, ‘Dionysus’ and ‘overman’.
Scholarly literature discusses the philosophies of Nietzsche and Heidegger, both with respect to their thoughts on European nihilism and to the tasks and nature of thinking, as well as the relation between Heidegger’s thought and Nietzsche.

Nietzsche’s notion of ‘power instincts’ is, for example, interpreted by Sautkin and Philipova (2019), and topics of nihilism are broached by Vėželis (2019; 2023). The outcomes of his philosophy of life are considered by Andrijauskas (2019) and Vabalaitė (2020). The living or pathetic aspects of Heidegger’s notion of understanding are looked at by Grigas (2022) and Luks (2020). The relation of Heidegger and Nietzsche is analysed by Carman (2019), Dombowsky (2018), Colony (2014), Stolorow (2022), Scolari (2021), Lozar (2008) and Rayman (2017). Aspects of what it means to think or rationality, for Heidegger, are discussed in Kirkland (2007), Purino (2020), Siqueira (2020), Ospina (2020) and Grollo (2021). The input of Aristotelian notion in Heidegger’s philosophy has recently been noticed by Czerkawski (2021), Kuhlken (2014), Gonzalez (2018; 2019), Gross (2017), et al. Some aspects of the important term or notion of ‘production’ are also discussed by Mickevičius (2019).

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THINKING AND RATIONALITY

Thinking, reason and rationality seem to be synonymous. But this implies an opposition between ‘rationality’ and ‘irrationality’ with which thinking has nothing to do. On the contrary, thinking and science originate from the living and direct experience of the sensuous. Reasonable is sensible in the full semantics of the word. Nietzsche was adamant that ‘denaturalization’ of reality and selves had to do with ‘faith’ (or the distinction between this world and the other world) or ‘weakness of will’ rather than with science which presupposes ‘strength of will’, i.e. accepting and viewing reality as it is in its contradictions, painfulness and, as it were, (over)flow of life (cf. Nietzsche 2006: §54) without needing to resort to ‘the other world’ or to adopt ‘slave morality’. In this work What is Called Thinking?, Heidegger devotes a great deal of attention to Nietzsche. Heidegger’s own work is about Dasein, whose ecstatic (standing-out and Being-in-the-world) is always already sensuous and bodily where body and senses are phenomena of Being (Stasiulis 2021, 2023).

Nietzsche in his critique of decadence and slave morality wrote about the growing desert. Heidegger, following this critique, notes that dominance of ratio in the development of ‘European nihilism’ is to be analysed alongside the attempts to ‘flee into the irrational’ because the two belong together. Thinking, on the other hand, has to do with the possibility of hearing a behest from beyond the either-or of the rational/irrational (Heidegger 1979a: 388).

What we mean by rationality is largely determined by Descartes’ philosophy. Hence, also what we mean by irrationality as opposed to this rationality. For Descartes, res cogitans and res extensa are distinguished from each other. This distinguishing supervenes on the historic (philosophical as well as ‘Christian’) distinction between the spirit and the body; as well as the distinction between the rational immortal soul and the (mortal) body. Only humans, among all living beings, possess rationality. For Descartes, then, the reasonable is equated with self-consciousness whereas the animal – also, the animality in us – is relegated to the field of ‘irrational’ or ‘instinctual’ or -extended’ (‘material’).

Viewed from the point of view of this Cartesian philosophy, Heidegger’s philosophy should be described as one characterised by the unity of rationality and irrationality, the human and the animal, the reasonable and the instinctual. The point, however, is to do away with both members of this dual pair so that we do not speak about their unity but rather employ a language free of this duality. Such thinking presupposes a Being-historical investigation of
the origin of the Cartesian dualisms in the background of ancient Greek thinking. The following paragraphs present this Heideggerian critique of the Cartesian dualities and the demonstration of non-duality of these terms in the ancient Greek thought.

As usual, the terms of the philosophy of Aristotle are Heidegger’s key to opening the Greek thought and our thought in general. In his phenomenologico-hermeneutical and subsequent analysis, the ‘prototypic’ ‘rationalist’ philosophy of Aristotle appears without the distinction of rationality and irrationality.

THE PATHIC BEING-IN-THE-WORLD

Nietzsche criticised the metaphysics of substantiality and thinghood while indicating the underlying (over)flow (of life). He criticised the understanding of, as it were, stability of things (cf. Nietzsche 2016: 21). Heidegger’s analysis of temporality of the world, or worlding, also shows that stable spatial Being of things should be derived from temporality. Heidegger notes that Descartes’ understanding of the world, that is, of res extensa, is oriented toward spatial stability, that is, towards everyday understanding of things, without the analysis of the world, or worlding, which they presuppose.

This deeper ‘flowing,’ ‘living,’ ‘temporal’ layer of things is also found in Aristotle’s philosophy, on the reading of which Heidegger’s ‘own thinking is based.

In describing both the ecstaticness of time (Heidegger 2006: 326) and the temporality of Daseins spatiality (ibid: 367), Heidegger indicates that temporality is the meaning of Sorge, care. Dasein’s mode of Being is care, or temporality. In Aristotle’s thinking, the mode of Being of the soul – soul here is to be understood ontologically and not merely ‘psychologically’ – is, according to Heidegger, also care – oreksis (Heidegger 1990: 151; Arist. De An., 432b7).

In Being and Time (Heidegger 2006: 171), Aristotle’s oregomai is translated as Sorge: when referring to the care for seeing (das Sehen, to eidenai), i.e. knowing or thinking, in the first line of the Metaphysics. Seeing is here equated with thinking as such and related to Western metaphysical philosophy from its inception to conclusion: since Parmenides’ saying ‘to gar auto esti noein te kai einai’ to which all posterior Western tradition belongs up until Hegel’s dialectics (ibid: 171) and Nietzsche’s Wille zur Macht (Heidegger 1997).

Also, the oreksis is related to erōs as presented in Plato because they are variants of the same understanding (Heidegger 2006: 154; Arist. Met.: 1072b3).¹

Dasein’s temporality, or movedness, or care, is essentially characterised by Being-before-oneself, or Being-ahead-of-oneself (before/ahead = vorweg), grounded in the ecstasy of future (Heidegger 2006: 327). Temporality/care is willing, that is, standing out into the future as Entwurf (project), desire and seeking. The oreksis is directed toward the telos but it is not a ‘rational’ or conscious pre-givenness of a ready-made plan. As such, this directness toward the telos does not presuppose or imply a stable (pre-)givenness.

Heidegger indicates that the movedness of an entity is, for Aristotle, always eneka tinos – for the sake of something; hence, it is inseparable from telos, that is from prakton – what-is-to-be-done; and from orekton – what-is-sought (Heidegger 1990: 150–151) (Arist. De An., 433a28). But it is not the case that we at first have a presentation (Vorstellen) of the thing sought and only then seek it – the seeking is not determined by this presentation. On the contrary, seeking after something (Nach-stellen) equiprimordially presupposes a presentation (Vor-stellen) of what is sought but the former is ontologically even prior to the latter (Heidegger 1990: 151). Like, in

¹ Incidentally, Plato’s Symposium may have been young Nietzsche’s favourite classical work.
Being and Time, the two components of thrown project (geworfene Entwurf) are equiprimordial but being-thrown – which corresponds to Aristotle’s pathos – is more fundamental.

One of the possibilities of revealing Being is that this seeking-after (Nach-stellen), which in itself is the more fundamental one, is put out/aside (abstellen) and one remains with merely the spatial pre-sentation, or with a pre-given plan, a pro-gram and its fore-seen effect, with what is set-before (vor-gestelltes) (Heidegger 1990: 151). With this putting aside of seeking-after/temporality, the metaphysics of stable spatial things arises, which is also in accordance with the ‘naïve’ everyday going about things in the world without ‘reflecting’ on its worlding.

Being-in-the-world is always already concerned with innerworldly beings but it is only so because it has also revealed the world in advance. This revelation is performed by mood/state-of-mind (Befindlichkeit), or pathos (see Heidegger 2006: 137). Like readiness-to-hand in Heidegger, Being-in-the-world in Aristotle is described in terms of work, or ergon and poiēsis.

The work (ergon) of the nous is openness of the world. On the one hand, it is characterised by pathos: Dasein is concerned with the world. On the other hand, it is its ‘transcendental’ activity/work which allow this openness and being-concerned: ‘[Nous pathētikos] is only possible because of [nous poiētikos], only because of [noein], which opens the world’ (Heidegger 1993: 326). This is the field of Dasein – energēia. It is characterised by unity of poiēsis and pathēsis, which is essential to the Greek understanding of the world and life (ibid).

The analysis of Stimmung and Befindlichkeit in Being and Time stems from this insight. Primary openness of the world belongs to Stimmung. ‘Every understanding has its mood. Every state-of-mind is one in which one understands’ (Heidegger 2006: 335).

For the Greeks, kinēsis is defined via poiēsis and pathēsis, and such is also the structure of temporality of Dasein. There is no ‘theory’, i.e. revelation of Being, without temporality: it is pathic understanding.

**NON-SEPARATION OF TEMPORALITY AND SPACE AS WELL AS LOGIC**

Heidegger criticises Descartes’ understanding of the world because the Cartesian world is basically a collection of spatially defined things. The spatial contour (shape, size and position) of the thing is the essential or determining feature of matter (here world = space = matter = extendedness). But the ‘world of (spatial) things’ presupposes the ‘worldliness of the world’ (Weltlichkeit der Welt). The world is worlding. Hence, Heidegger speaks about time-space. Spatiality of the world, or Dasein, presupposes temporality. Even though ‘both Dasein’s interpretation of itself and the whole stock of significations which belong to language in general are dominated through and through by “spatial representations”’ (Heidegger 2006: 369), it is so not because of some specific power of space but because of Dasein’s temporal mode of Being: ‘Temporality is essentially falling [befallend], and it loses itself in making present; not only does it understand itself circumspectively in terms of objects of concern which are ready-at-hand, but from those spatial relationships [italics added] which making-present [Gegenwärtigen] is constantly meeting in the ready-to-hand as having presence [anwesend], it takes its clues for Articulating that which has been understood and can be interpreted in the understanding in general’ (ibid). Because of this, independency of space from time is understandable but ‘[o]nly on the basis of its ecstatico-horizontal temporality is it possible for Dasein to break into space’ (ibid).

---

2 For the English version of Being and Time (for quoting) the article uses the translation of Macquarrie and Robinson (Heidegger 2001 (1962)).
To note, the Heideggerian critique of the Cartesian prioritising of space does not amount to the Bergonian position of time as \textit{élan vital}. That is, space is not opposed to time. The temporality, or, rather, the temporo-spatiality (time-space), according to late Heidegger, can even be deduced from the notion of \textit{place} (Ort) itself (Heidegger 2007: 29). In \textit{Building, Dwelling, Thinking} Heidegger equates being a place or spatial to being \textit{limited} in the ancient Greek sense of the word (Heidegger 2000: 156). Limit, \textit{peras}, is, for the Greeks, not an ‘end’ but the beginning of the thing and its while (temporality).

Similarly to Nietzsche, Heidegger notes the primacy of the underlying ‘flow’ of life beneath ‘substantialities’; but, importantly, the ‘flow’ does not in any way drown the existence of things as such, even though it is in a way their ‘true’ Being. Being is supposed to manifest via entities or by way on entities.

It is important for Heidegger to show the dependence of Descartes’s understanding of space on and its derivation from everyday ontic understanding of (spatial) things. Critique of Cartesian ontology is crucial because it, this ontology, is at bottom of what Nietzsche called the ‘growing desert’ and of what Heidegger called ‘Gestell’, etc.

Hence, \textit{Being and Time} starts with the discussion of space and spatiality and only in the second part of the book spatiality and worlding are derived from temporality. To reiterate, it does not amount to prioritising temporality against spatiality. Heidegger does not side with the Bergsonian assertion that true time as ‘qualitative time’ suffers an ontological privation by being externalised into space. Spatial present-at-hand things are true as well as the time in which they ‘arise and pass away’ (Heidegger 2006: 333). There is no ontological gap between the ‘internal’ time in the soul and the ‘external’ or ‘cosmic’ time. Dasein is in-the-world. The distinction between what time is and the calculation of time does not amount to the afore-mentioned gap.

This distinction should not be read into Aristotle, either. Aristotle’s definition of time as the number of changes in terms of prior and posterior resonated perhaps in all subsequent philosophical treatment of time. This definition is determined by the orientation to the now-time, the movement of a clock arrow, a sequence of nows. But, in discussing time thus defined, Aristotle holds that time is in the soul. It is an indication that in Aristotle, also, the distinction between the ‘internal’ life of the soul and the ‘external’ world is non-existent or meaningless. ‘True time’ (in the sense explicated by Heidegger) is, in Aristotle, \textit{ergon} or \textit{energeia}; while time as the ‘number of change’ is a derivative of true time and has to do with calculation (of time).

Heidegger, whose thinking is largely related to retrieving ancient Greek thinking, also is ‘unaware’ of this distinction (between ‘external’ and ‘internal’ time). In his late work, he explains that \textit{time} in the name \textit{Being and Time} does not refer either to the mechanistic calculated ‘clock’ time or experiential time ‘in the sense of Bergson and others’ (Heidegger 1992: 113). Rather, time is the origin of any \textit{ratio} or \textit{logos} – Word. Late Heidegger suggests that \textit{Being and Time} may have more precisely been named \textit{Being and Word} (ibid). Temporality, or living movedness, and ‘rationality’ are equiprimordial and in no way opposed. True thinking stems from this living source. It does not need to escape or ‘transcend’ (in the sense of negating) the world of limited spatial things and spatial movements and the thereupon based calculation of time. Rather, it thinks this world.

This world and thinking are not devoid of temporality, body and sense – unlike for the Cartesian.

Cartesian understanding of the world stems from forgetfulness of Being and its movedness; but Being-historically it is also related to the Greek/Platonic \textit{eidos}. We can see a tendency
in Plato as well as Democritus to understand the Being of beings in purely spatial terms. For this reason, Heidegger emphasises that understanding, or *Entwurf* (project) – the notion arrived at by retrieving the meaning of Aristotle’s *poiēsis* (book Γ of Aristotle’s *On the Soul*) – is determined not solely by *eidos*; *orekton* (its Heideggerian retrieval is *Geworfenheit*, Being-thrown) is ontologically even prior to it. ‘Desire’, willing, needing is the *archē metabolēs* of the movement of producing (*poiēsis*) (Heidegger 1990: 152), or revealing/understanding. This ‘producing’ is implied in the notions of *eidos* and telos and energeia and enetelecheia. Thus, Heidegger uncovers the ontological primacy of ‘non-dual’ notion over the ‘rationalistic’ understanding of Dasein.

*Being and Time* explains that articulation merely says what was in advance revealed to Dasein as Being-in-the-world. In his retrieval of Aristotle, Heidegger likewise explains that *logos* does not mean mere articulation, word or speech but, first of all, *that which* allows speaking and language (Heidegger 1979: 278). Aristotle’s (and, one could add, ancient Greek) musings on *logos* were not a ‘theory’ on *logos* but only a saving of what for the Greeks was in advance known as the essence of *logos*. This essence is a gathering of the many into the unconcealment of the one (Being) (cf. ibid: 278–279).

This meaning of *logos* is retrieved from Heraclitus who opposes *legein*, revealing, precisely to *kruptein*, concealing. In terms of style, late Heidegger may have come closer to pre-Socratic thinkers, because now the world thought is not reduced to a merely spatial contour or ‘denaturalised’, life/temporality-deprived formal logic, in the 19–20th sense of the word.

**ECSTASY OF UNDERSTANDING**

Heidegger’s analysis of Dasein is formulated by his retrieval of Aristotle’s notion of *nous* (whose work is revealing the world). The thrown project which characterises Dasein is a retrieval of unity of *pathēsis* and *poiēsis* which characterises Aristotle’s *nous*. The description of Dasein in *Being and Time* is preceded by and modelled upon the analysis of ‘mind’ in Aristotle (cf. Heidegger 1993).

Heidegger analyses the question of the ‘components’ of *pathēsis* and *poiēsis* in power (*dynamis*, Being): when we speak about *dunamis tou poiein* and *dunamis tou paschein*, do we mean two powers or one? If one, then how are we to understand it? If two, then what is their unity? (Heidegger 1990: 104). Importantly, Being is one but not single; it is one and manifold. Power to produce and power to suffer are one but the oneness of this power is ecstatic: power to produce always implies the from-what it will produce, that is, power to suffer (ibid: 105). Power is the relation between production and suffering (power to produce and power to suffer), and, reversely, this relation is power itself (ibid: 89). The two are as one (*ōs mia*) (ibid). One power as two has these two components implying each other and belonging to each other, thus, it is always externalised and beyond itself. In *Being and Time* this beyond-itself means the before (ahead of)-itself of *Sorge* (*oreksis*) (Heidegger 2006: 191–192). The futural ahead-of-itself exists only in relation to being-thrown-into-the-past (Heidegger 2006: 327–329). Future and past stand out into each other and present (and they all stand out into Being, as Being stands out into them). Temporality is ecstatic.

Just like Aristotelian power is ecstatic: it stands out into two opposing powers while these two opposing powers stand out into each other. Using the vocabulary of *Being and Time*, Heidegger notes that power to produce (*Entwurf*, project) and power to suffer (*Geworfenheit*, thrownness) are not two as present-at-hand (*vorhanden*) but are ecstatic – each power indicates the opposing power. Power of a separate entity is ontic and it is related to ontological power which appears only while staying latent/concealed. Heidegger calls the power
of the ontic entity subjectum (a reference to Descartes’ philosophy) – while the ontological power is prior to subjectum as a separate entity (Heidegger 1990: 106). Likewise, the analysis of ready-to-hand points beyond subject.

Fusis and kinesis, like Being and time, belong together inseparably. Just like Dasein, fusis has a temporal structure. Fusis is being-on-the-way from itself to itself, presence of its absence. As this absence, it is a returning to itself which is but a going forward (Heidegger 1979: 299). Likewise, Dasein also futurally returns to itself (Heidegger 2006: 326). This unity of past and future gives rise to present, the Augenblick, which for Heidegger is a retrieval of Aristotelian kairos (Heidegger 1990: 44). In the notion of ecstatico-temporal Lichtung, the bifurcation of nous into theoretical and practical collapses or implodes back into its source. This gathered-ness of time can also be related to the Greek mysteries. But Heidegger, in describing this ancient mystical experience, also notes that the ecstasy/madness (weg-Sein) of seeing the gathered-ness of time can be accompanied by rather expressionless, simple tranquility of bodily composure rather than by bodily frenzy (Heidegger 1977: 348); apparently, it is also a description of his own stance and thinking and lecturing.

He indicates that the move toward theory – the knowledge of eidos – is also this ecstatic move. This move from separate entities to their Being is, in Aristotle (e.g. Arist. Phys. 185a, 12–14), epagogē – induction, a leading into Being. It is described by Heidegger precisely in ecstatic terms: one must look through the entity away, afar (weg) into Being (Heidegger 1979: 244).

This Heideggerian analysis of power and ecstasy might also be applied to interpreting Nietzschean will to power.

ANIMALITY AND THINKING

Human being is defined as an animal, or living being, who thinks, or has logos. Do other animals have logos? Heidegger notes (Heidegger 1990: 151) that Aristotle finds this question important. It shows that, in his thought, there is no ontological gap between animality and rationality.

It is not so in Descartes. Here man is defined by his ‘intelligence’. This kind of Being is opposed to that of other living beings (animal and likewise also plants). Animal being is not defined by intelligence but by ‘instinct’. Human reasoning is equated to the consciousness of objects which is reflected into itself (self-consciousness), hence, animal behaviour (because they do not have ‘self-consciousness’ or the Cartesian ‘I’) is understood as unconscious impulses of ‘instinct’ and stimuli directed towards a striving undefined by any object determination (Heidegger 1992: 235). ‘Instincts’ are said to be ‘blind’. Thus, Descartes-like understanding creates a rift between self-conscious human reason and ‘animality’. Likewise, between ‘culture’ and ‘nature’.

Aristotle’s understanding of reason is different. It is not deprived of animality like it is not deprived of temporality. Aristotelian nous is read by Heidegger as Lichtung, which is tempor-spatial and kairotic.

Aristotle defines man as zoon logon echon. The echein, the having (Haben), or heksis, is a practical active state in Aristotle (cf. Heidegger 1990: 151). We see that there is no gap or even distinction between ‘theory’ and (authentic) practice as logos and heksis belong together.

This does not mean that there is no distinction between Dasein and animal (other animals than humans). But the Daseinian subject is not submitted to the separation between intelligence and instinct, rationality and animality.
The Being of animal is understood, as it were, privatively from the Being of Dasein. It is not that Dasein or reasoning does not have animality. It is rather that the animal does not have ‘world’ in the sense of Dasein – in the sense of unconcealment (Heidegger 1992: 237). And thus the animal, unlike the human, is withdrawn from the essential area of the quarrel, or strife, between concealment and unconcealment (ibid). In this sense, other animals can be said to be ‘happier’ than us. But this sort of happiness is not simply meant for human beings. If someone is deprived of the world and environment, is withdrawn from the quarrel between concealment and unconcealment, forgets Being, then his being is inauthentic. Authentic Dasein and ‘remembrance’ of Being are synonymous. Thus, Dasein’s coming to terms with its animality is not a way of inauthenticity. Rather, return from the Being-deprived subject to Dasein coincides with reconciling with one’s animality. It comes not ‘before’ self-consciousness, or subject, but ‘after’ it.

Similarly, when Nietzsche calls for going back to ‘instinct’ and the criterion of life, it is also not a falling back into or an advocating of an ‘unreflective’ aristocratic morality of, for instance, the ancient past, but instinct is here sensible and, secondly, it is precisely the ‘modern’ man who reconciles with the ‘instinct’, with the ‘animal’, to become ‘overman’.

CONCLUSIONS

Heidegger’s Being-historical thinking considers the deeper layer of (Western) rationality in order to bring thinking and science back in accordance with life, or to reveal their unity (non-duality). In the course of Heidegger’s analysis of Aristotle’s notions, the notion of power, which is synonymous with Being, comes to the fore. The movement of this power unfolds in the structure of temporality, which equiprimordially gives rise to both existing and thinking, without the duality of these two. This notion of Being-power is the telos of the deconstruction of the Cartesian dual notions of rationality and instinct, among others. Heidegger’s work can be seen as a continuation of Nietzschean insights and in turn a key for interpreting Nietzsche’s own thought. Both can be seen as returning thought to things themselves and rooting it back to its animality, or livinghood.

References


NERIJUS STASIULIS

M. Heideggerio mąstymo kontūrai: dionisiškas mokslas

Santrauka

Raktažodžiai: Aristotelis, būtis, galia, Martinas Heideggeris, mąstymas, Friedrichas Nietzsche