

On the unity of theory and practice in Heidegger's thought

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The article presents the unity of theory and practice as the clue to Heidegger's thought. Hence, Heideggerian notions are explicated with respect to the living situation of their occurrence. The *Seynsgeschichtlich* aspect is considered crucial for comprehending the gist of the notion of the ontological difference. In the light of the historicity of Heidegger's thought, its relations to the philosophy of ancient Greeks, especially to that of Aristotle and Plato, are explained. The Heideggerian reading of Greek concepts as well as the Aristotelian-Platonic character of Heideggerian musings is taken into account. Precise links between Heideggerian and Greek conceptions are indicated. A tentative outline of the ontological difference is suggested.

Keywords: Greek philosophy, Heidegger, history of philosophy, ontological difference, Platonic *erōs*, Western thought

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

What is the principle according to which we are to appreciate both this article and even the whole of Heidegger's thought in all its multiplicity? A clue to this is present in the Aristotelian notion of *ἐπαγωγή* (translated into Latin as *inductio*). One sees many trees and only recognizes that each one of them is a tree because of his *νοῦς* having *in advance* of a (single, common) shape, or *εἶδος*, of the tree. But what is anterior in actuality is for our recognition posterior. Therefore in the first instance separate trees are given to the sight and by seeing one tree after another all of which have different or even contradictory semblance (e. g. the foliaceous contradicts/negates the coniferous) one can eventually learn to view the *shape* of the tree, even though it is not visible to the eye and does not have a concrete semblance.

One is to view separate paragraphs in this article as well as parts of Heidegger's thought in the above-mentioned manner. What do they all have in common? Where is the *ἀλήθεια* that we seek? If one interprets each fragment separately, they may appear to have no commerce with one another; nevertheless, we must receive the single principle which gives rise to every one of them. Even though this principle cannot be reduced to any one of all of its written or spoken texts, it ever manifests itself from their beyond.

A similar principle (of clarification) is indicated in Wittgenstein's philosophy (which is defined as practical as opposed to theoretical in the sense of positivist, logicist and Cartesian-New-

tonian modes of theory-production). In order to introduce the famous concept of *family resemblances*, Wittgenstein explains it as follows. Let us suppose that there is a family with many members each of whom resembles the other in a way but it is impossible to draw a single primary face which they all resemble. What is common to them is the resemblance itself. Let us imagine that we have negatives of photographs of all these faces. If we put all the negatives onto one another, the resemblance will shine through. Physically, really, the primary face is not but the resemblance which shines through is the very true face which is not but which is to be sought by all of us (cf. Wittgenstein 1993: 142–143).

The preceding remarks have to do with (philosophical) practice. Their truth, presented in the notions of Aristotle and Wittgenstein, is also exemplified in the following passage by Heidegger:

Is this one Being something before all unfolding, that is, something that exists for itself, whose independence is the true essence of Being? Or is Being in its essence never not unfolded so that the manifold and its foldings constitute precisely the peculiar oneness of that which is intrinsically gathered up? Is Being imparted to the individual modes in such a way that by this imparting it in fact parts itself out, although in this parting out it is not partitioned in such a way that, as divided, it falls apart and loses its authentic essence, its unity? Might the unity of Being lie precisely in this imparting parting out? And if so, how would and could something like that happen [geschehen]? What holds sway in this event [Geschehen]? (These are questions concerning Being and Time!) (Heidegger 1995: 25; Heidegger 1990: 31).

Essentially, this passage comments on the Aristotle's theoretical philosophy but it is equally crucial for the practical revelation of Being. Proper practice arises not apart from a proper (theoretical) *form* the structure of which was here indicated. Nowadays, one is inclined to separate or even to scoop an abyss between theory and practice. The distinction between theory and practice has long become chrestomatic. Supervenient on it is the famous distinction between analytics and hermeneutics – the former to be dedicated to the theoretical, the stable, the graspable-by-the-mind, the logical, while the latter – to the graspable by practical sense, situational acumen, to the non-rational etc. We refuse to take this distinction for granted referring to the unity of theoretical and practical wisdom in the philosophy of Aristotle as well as in that of Heidegger whose thinking is nothing but an *eigentlich* (based on the proper form) retrieval of Aristotle's philosophizing.

As the proper form, the *θεωρία*, can only be manifest via the multiplicity of practice, it does take time. A thinking way of life takes time and hence the meaning of Heidegger's texts requires involvement. The oddness of Heidegger's writing is the notable constant repetition, or retrieval, of ever the same message. In the early as well as late 20's and after finishing *Being and Time* as well as up to his latest period, the thinker continues to repeat the same, although in different wording. One must sublimate the impression of a superficiality of such a retrieval, skip the possibility of superficial irony thereupon and recognize that it is only via constant repetition and unfolding, via constant attempt to return via different roads to ever the same that *ἀλήθεια* is able to occur¹.

THE ONTOLOGICAL DIFFERENCE AND THE FOUR AITIA

Heidegger's foundational work *Being and Time*, although unfinished, is not a sum of two parts, but a whole. The unity of the work consists in developing the message of the oneness

¹ These et al. have touched on the issues addressed in this article: E. Rimkus (2012), T. Kačerauskas (2009), S. Park (2015), T. Saulius (2016).

of theory and practice. This message is a retrieval (Wiederholung) of Greek wisdom and, first and foremost, of the structure of Aristotle's thinking.

Aristotle's philosophy distinguishes between theoretical, practical and technical, or po(a)etic², approach (Arist. EN.: 1139a26–28; Met.: 1025b25, 1064a16–19; Top.: 145a15–16)³. The first one is characterized by σοφία, ἐπιστήμη, νοῦς, the second one by φρόνησις, and the third one by τέχνη. This distinction is itself analytic but it does not abandon the oneness of Being which it muses over. Heidegger defines this oneness-in-separation with the utterance quoted in our introductory remarks (Heidegger 1995: 25; Heidegger 1990: 31).

Distinct fronetic ἀρεταί (or excellences of character) merely refer to the *one* (unity) of all excellences, which is uncovered by practical insight, i. e. φρόνησις, or νοῦς in its practical aspect: this aspect is acquired by νοῦς as it is directed to the τέλος of his own self, i. e. the one having this νοῦς. It is precisely because theory and practice are modes of directing the single νοῦς that basically they are not separate: in the case of nonfronetic approach, the νοῦς is directed to the telos of φύσει or technical ὄν. The first chapter of *Being and Time* is dedicated exactly to the explication of theoretical approach, while the second one to the practical one. Both of these explications are substantiated by a) the insight into the oneness of the theoretical and practical aspects and b) this single νοῦς' being thought namely on the basis of the third – the technical – approach. This technical approach is the essential one for the Greeks because they think Being in terms of *product*, *producing* (her-stellen) (cf. Heidegger 1990: 137; Stasiulis 2014: 135). Thus both φύσις and man's ψυχή, or νοῦς, are considered *producing* and the aspects uncovered by both practical and theoretical νοῦς are one and the same producing, i. e. *producing* as a *form* of Being: it is precisely the structure of this form, or producing, which is the structure of Being (the ontological difference). It is for this reason that the first part of *Being and Time*, in explicating the basis for theoretical νοῦς, provides the analysis of *Zuhandenheit*, while the second part, which discusses the structure of conscience (which is linked to φρόνησις), explicates the practical aspect of νοῦς without losing sight of the joint structural oneness of νοῦς, or Dasein. The project of *Being and Time* had to be replaced by another language because the former language, i. d. the former split of the philosophical method into theoretical/conceptual – be it analytic or phenomenological – and practical – be it existentialist or hermeneutic – failed to reveal the oneness of νοῦς as well as the structure of *producing* common to both theory and practice.

A thorough discussion of this structure would require an exhaustive and all-around discussion of the whole of Heidegger's philosophy, whereas here we shall only mark the simplest and most significant moments of this structure.

This structure is first and foremost explicated as that of *Zuhandenheit*. It is notably usual to reckon it an explication of practical being in the environment (surrounding) as well as various senses thereof and to draw inspiration hence for considering the everyday, "existence" et al. Although such an endeavour is not utterly baseless, it nevertheless wantonly ignores that *Being and Time* is not merely about time as well as the interrelated temporality and practicality but also about Being; furthermore, Heidegger's philosophy is first and foremost defined

² We may use the "ae" spelling to refer to the eta in "ποίησις"/"ποιητικός" in order to distinguish it from "poetic" merely in its current usual meaning. We choose this rendering – "po(a)etic" – alongside the more usual one of "production"/"productive" because it is both closer to the original and at times more suitable for the purpose of this article (as well as in terms of the Heideggerian reading).

³ To note, they are all supervenient upon λόγος which later stabilised into the *Organon* but the structure of which is indeed that of the ontological difference.

as the thinking of Being and not as that of time and it is precisely the forgetfulness of Being and not that of time which is the major problem in this philosophy. *Being and Time*, like all Western philosophy, is dedicated to the thinking of Being – Being as *οὐσία*. Also, the analysis of *Zuhandenheit*, even though it is related to the practical orienting in the environment, unfolds precisely the structure of *Being*, i. e. *οὐσία*. Thus, it indicates primarily the theoretical aspect and not the practical one (inasmuch as it is at all meaningful to make the division between them).

As is well-known, the *θεωρία* of the Greeks (in the case we are considering now – of Plato and especially of Aristotle) reveals Being as a stable *οὐσία*, as *εἶδος*, or *μορφή*. And it is revealed as *producing*, the structure of which is explicated by the analysis of *Zuhandenheit*. It shows that *Dasein*⁴ is a world (Welt) that worlds (weltet) (and not a Cartesian one), which is always already presupposed by an environment (Umwelt) which in turn is presupposed by *Zeug*⁵ (beings as utensils) to which the characteristic of being-reference is essential; it is characterized as being subordinate to the multiplicity of “in order to” references, which are *in advance* essentially interrelated. To describe it at greater length, this interrelatedness of references of producing has three components – the “whereof” (das Woraus), the “in-order-to” (das Um-zu), and the “towards-which”, or “what-for” (das Wozu) – and the (exclusive) fourth – the “for-the-sake-of-which” (das Worum-willen) (Heidegger 1962: 98–100, 116–117; Heidegger 1996: 65–66, 78–79; Heidegger 2006: 69–70, 84)⁶. They (in the same sequence) correspond to the three ecstasies of time of the other chapter – past, present, future – and their gatheredness (the “fourth”) as their contiguity with Being. Because only where there is the *One* there is ec-stasy – and vice versa. In the first chapter this *fourth* indicates *Dasein*, i. e. *νοῦς* in its theoretical mode of revealing. In the second chapter it indicates conscience as the hearkening to Being and *Augenblick* as *φρόνησις*. At the same time the three components (in the very same sequence) correspond to the three Aristotelian *αἰτία* – *ἔλη*, *μορφή* (*εἶδος*) and *τέλος* – and the fourth, which gathers them into the *One*, *δημιουργός*. Let us call to mind the way Heidegger himself describes it:

“Silver is that out of which the silver chalice is made. As this matter (hyle), it is co-responsible for the chalice. The chalice is indebted to, i. e., owes thanks to, the silver for that out of which it consists. <...> Thus the sacrificial vessel is at the same time indebted to the aspect (eidos) of chaliceness. <...>

But there remains yet a third that is above all responsible for the sacrificial vessel. It is that which in advance confines the chalice within the realm of consecration and bestowal. <...> That which gives bounds, that which completes, in this sense is called in Greek telos <...>. <...> The telos is responsible for what as matter and for what as aspect are together co-responsible for the sacrificial vessel. <...>

Finally there is a fourth participant in the responsibility for the finished sacrificial vessel’s lying before us ready for use, i. e., the silversmith – but, adds Heidegger, not at all because he,

⁴ Nowhere in Heidegger’s thought does *Dasein* mean merely Man, but *τῆς ψυχῆς νοῦς* (cf. also Arist. Phys.: 223a 16–29), thus *pari passu* thought, *pari passu* the world and *pari passu* both theory and practice.

⁵ It should not be translated in plural (as would, for instance, be the case with a possible Lithuanian translation *reikmenys* (utensils)); Heidegger uses it in singular, or, to be more precise, as an uncountable noun.

⁶ Macquarrie and Robinson, and Stambaugh suggest here the same English translations except for, respectively, *towards-which* and *what-for* for *wozu*. The Stambaugh translation may be more literal, or “scholarly”, while the Macquarrie and Robinson translation may be seen to provide a useful connotation of the Aristotelian “entelethic” movement.

in working, brings about the finished sacrificial chalice as if it were the effect of a making; the silversmith is not a causa efficiens.

The Aristotelian doctrine neither knows the cause that is named by this term nor uses a Greek word that would correspond to it.“ (Heidegger 1977: 3–4).

Thus, on the one hand, *μορφή*, revealed by theoretical *νοῦς*, is given as a gatheredness of the three components of the relatedness of references, thus a stable *οὐσία* is given as a gatheredness of the three ecstasies of time (or the ec-stasis between Being and time), while, on the other hand, a temporal (*zeitlich*) – practical – *Augenblick* (*φρόνησις*) is possible inasmuch as it is ec-static. *Νοῦς* in its two aspects is manifested as single ec-stasis: one's proper time is Being that gathers it into unity (even though without coinciding with it), while Being is ec-static time (although without them coinciding). Therefore the work is titled *Being and Time*.

We must also underline that *οὐσία* is only insofar as there is *νοῦς* and *νοῦς* – only insofar as there is *οὐσία*: in the self-concealing of Being, the *thinking* of it (the what-is-thought) is unconcealed in the same way as it *is thought*. In this sense we must understand the utterance *τὸ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστὶν τε καὶ εἶναι* (thinking and Being is the same). And we must heed that the conceptions (or shapes) of the (First) principle, the world and the soul (Man, mind, reason) ever coincide, are one and the same (Stasiulis 2014: 135 and above). This sameness is indicated by the term *Dasein*: the structure of *Dasein* is the structure of Being, the world, the soul (reason, language) (i. e. that of the ontological difference).

We have noted the oneness of the theoretical and practical aspects of *νοῦς*. Now we shall demonstrate 1) the meaning of this solid *νοῦς* having precisely the structure of *producing* as that of *ontological difference* and 2) the significance thereof according to the *Seynsgeschichtlich* attitude, i. e. with respect to the present thought and world as the situation of Heideggerian thinking. Unsurprisingly, here we must recall the Platonic musing on *ἔρω*s (Heidegger 1990: 154; cf. Arist. Met.: 1072b3).

THE STRUCTURE OF PLATONIC EROS AND THE ONTOLOGICAL DIFFERENCE

In his *Symposium* Plato (Steadman 2014: 210a and below) by Diotima's word declares that a person who is to understand *Dasein* (to put it in Heideggerian terms) has to begin in his youth by loving a beautiful *σῶμα*; and it would be unaccountable if subsequently he did not comprehend that beauty is the same in this body as well as another. Thus he shall begin to love the steady, the selfsame and shall be enamoured of the more stable beauty of the soul; so a fellow whose looks are less bloomy will suffice for being cherished by the *ἐραστής*. Hence he shall set eyes on the beauty in beautiful deeds as well as beautiful *νόμοι* and subsequently he shall perceive the beauty of theoretical sciences. Eventually, when all previous stages have been suffered through and his potency has matured, the philosopher is able to engage in the science – *θεωρία* – of Beauty itself, which in Heideggerian is *presence*. Although for the Greeks *θεωρία* of (ever selfsame) Presence is a *ἡδονή* (a pleasure), a *hardship* or *toil* which is essential to the growth of potency as well as to revelation of Being is also emphasized. The toil consists not in the “intelligent” understanding of Platonic *θεωρία* but in such vision which transfigures the essence of him who sees. Again, the unity of *θεωρία* and *πᾶξις* (life) is implied. This is the reason why we need to pose the question of simply the *form* of any revelation of Being. In the hard simplicity of this form there lies a vast wisdom like there used to lie a mysterious fascination beneath Socrates' “vulgarity”, ugliness and oddness.

As Socrates used to do, a philosopher should keep retrieving the proper form of Being by constant repetition of ever the same. This sort of *producing* is different from the modern one

characterized by its progressive inclination based on the notion of the linear arrow of time. Hence, the name of *Being and Time* as well as one of its major theses can be construed as follows: our time is the same as our revealing of Being, i. d. our practice is such as our revelation of Being is. Reversely, is proper revealing of Being feasible as long as our time (our while) is not being revealed in the proper manner? The proper form of Being is the proper form of time and vice versa: it is the form of the ontological difference. It is the joint source of theory and practice, and it is both *preconceptual* and *prepragmatic*. This source is essentially the primordial revelation of Being which is currently coincident with the essence of technology, or, to put it in different wording, with the essence of modern science (or, simply, modernity as such).

Apparently, Galilean-Newtonian discourse will not admit any notion of essence. Its primary revelation of Being is defined by the notion of *inertia*: an inertial entity in a “vacuum” changing its position rectilinearly in the direction passively received from an external impulse in infinite (recti)linear time. Such inertial entities are taken to be the basis of everything we do and do not possibly see. Hegel, whose *Aufhebung* was the Aristotelian *entelechy*, was able to recognize in the notion of inertia a reduction of actuality to its most primitive movement – that of death (cf. Stasiulis 2016). What sort of revealing of time and life will he have whose revelation of Being is based on the form of death? The joint preconceptual and prepragmatic source, or essence, of the “inertial” revelation of Being (which is the essence of technology, the *Gestell*) directs at the notion of *subjectum*, i. d. the Being-forgetful manifestation of *ὄνσια*.

To remind, the *Geschehen* of both Western history (cf. Heidegger 1997) and thought is ontologically united under the Greek revelation of *ὄνσια* which coincidentally has both the positive aspect (simply, that of manifesting Being as *εἶδος*) and the negative aspect of being the ontological-difference-forgetful version of that revelation (due to Being’s own tendency to self-concealing). All subsequent thought is the unfolding of this revelation, while the radicalization of this *ὄνσια* occurs in the Cartesian notion of *subjectum*. This *subjectivity*, as Heidegger has it, defines the current situation as well. The notion of *subjectivity* (and *Ge-stell*) as well as that of *ὄνσια* is the basis of every Heideggerian disquisition. Although in our time the subject may have turned into a vanishing point and the distinction between subject and object may have lost its significance in both (quantum) physics and hermetic orientations, Heidegger points out that (post)modern science, despite all of its transformations, is not able to give up revealing nature as a reckoning/calculating project (or identity) and setting it as a system of information (of cause-and-effect). Likewise, the existentialist manner cannot help projecting strategies of happiness as a kind of secular cosmody. These are the two manifestations of the *subject*, or *Gestell*, as of the ontological-difference-forgetful manifestation of *ὄνσια* which is the essence and the preconceptual/prepragmatic source of (post-modern) technological understanding of Being.

But what is the essence of technology? Is it essentially new and novel? Is the putting of technology, or producing, at the primary source of actuality a thing of the 21st or the 20th or the 27 c.? The question is to be answered in the negative. This is first and foremost a Greek thing.

Aristotle discerns the ways of unconcealing Being – theoretical, practical and technical, or poaetic. The primal unconcealing of the world, the primal *voūς* can be “applied” both theoretically and practically but it is *one* and *the same voūς*, one and the same unconcealing, and we see that Aristotle as well as the Greeks in general define it in technical terms: Aristotle names it the four “causes”. What is the essential difference between the Aristotelian causality

and the current causality which is conceived as causing of an effect, as stocking in the sense of a *subjectist* activity, as negating negativity in the pursuit of the gleam of creative happiness? This difference between the Aristotelian *αἰτία* and the modern informational-creative cause is discovered not only in the texts of Aristotle but also in those of Plato and specifically in the afore-mentioned "Symposium".

Beauty – the shining, forth-bringing, patent, phenomenizing, pro-ducing Being – is uttered to be the essence of actuality. But the essence – the Beauty – is not always achieved; not all trees are equally beautiful and, due to the vision of the essence of the tree, we recognize which of the actual trees are more or less like the essence (a verdant tree and a wilted one). It is no facile and perfectly or equally-by-all achievable thing to hold onto one's essence. Hence, the essence of actuality is not Beauty but rather *bearing, giving birth, bringing forth* in the presence of Beauty.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Bearing is the primal ontological determination, the technological, or poaetic, source of both subsequent theory and practice. We must underline that *bearing* and *producing* is the same (as is also, for instance, indicated in the Lithuanian language with the words *gimdyti* and *gaminti* stemming from the same root)⁷. If postmodern production of happiness is an effect of subject's activity, then the Platonic-Aristotelian producing, which is recalled by Heidegger, is used to primordial passivity characteristic of bearing as bringing forth out of concealment towards un concealment, from the proper and propertied (and affluent) nothingness of Being towards entity. It is used to this primordial relation which is the manifesting of divinity. It has to do with the hearkening to Being. To learn to experience Being in this way is, perhaps, to have what Wittgenstein meant by the change of aspect (by seeing the "face", mentioned in our introductory remarks).

The simple "solution" provided in the above passage is not a technological one in the "current" sense. A proper reading of *ἀλήθεια*, which unfolds in its various manifestations, can only come about through the struggle of constant retrieval, or repetition, of the very *attempt* to think, to answer to the call of Being, and this is the true meaning of *φρόνησις* and *νοῦς*. This producing is a *ἐξίς* as an ever learning in the givenness of Presence. Such activity is original in the proper sense of the word in that it needs not roam over a desert of the death of God but must remain rooted in the preexistent tradition, which presents the notion of *οὐσία* as *the ontological difference*. In the indisjoinable pair of *ποίησις* and *πάθησις*, the latter is the higher and the prevalence of divinity.

Jetzt komme, Feuer!

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⁷ To note, *φύσις* both is *gam-ta* and has a common root with *būt-is*. *Būtis* = *gimdymas/gaminimas*: Being = bearing/producing.

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Apie teorijos ir praktikos vienumą Martino Heideggerio mąstyme

Santrauka

Straipsnyje teorijos ir praktikos vienumas pristatomas kaip Martino Heideggerio mąstymo raktas. Todėl heidegeriškosios sampratos eksplikuojamos atsižvelgiant į gyvą situaciją, kurioje jos kilo. *Seynsgeschichtlich* aspektas laikomas esmingu siekiant suprasti ontologinio skirtumo sampratos branduolį. Atsižvelgiant į M. Heideggerio mąstymo istoriškumą, paaiškinami jo santykiai su senųjų graikų, ypač Aristotelio ir Platono, filosofija. Turima omenyje heidegeriškasis graikiškųjų sąvokų supratimas ir aristoteliškasis-platoniškasis heidegeriškojo mąstymo pobūdis. Nurodomos tikslios sąsajos tarp heidegeriškųjų ir graikiškųjų sampratų. Nubrėžiamas preliminarus ontologinio skirtumo kontūras.

Raktažodžiai: filosofijos istorija, graikiškoji filosofija, Heideggeris, ontologinis skirtumas, platoniškasis *erōs*, Vakarų mąstymas