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## Nietzsche through Aristotle? Ontology, Hermeneutics, and the end of Metaphysics

CAN THOUGHT have access to the phenomenon of life? Is there a relation between the movement of life and that of thought? Is it possible for us to seize upon this complex movement? How can philosophy capture life in its phenomenality? To which extent does life constitute both the source and the limit of philosophy? To what extent, and in what new ways, can contemporary philosophy, especially phenomenology, interrogate and respond to these questions that first bothered the ancient Greek philosophers, whom we credit with the invention of philosophy and *philosophein*? How can the question of life set the stage for a confrontation between Aristotle, the Greek who perhaps most thoroughly reflected upon Being and beings, and Heidegger, the thinker of the twentieth-century whose phenomenological hermeneutics posed anew the question of Being shedding a new light upon the Western philosophical tradition as a whole? We will then attempt to relate Heidegger's Aristotle to Nietzsche, another great thinker of modern times who devoted himself to the question of the complex and enigmatic nature of life, but also to that of Being. Consequently, we will turn to Heidegger's manifold interpretation of Nietzsche, as well as to his appropriation of Aristotle's ontological questioning and the way in which those two contribute to the unfolding of the harsh critique he addressed to metaphysics. Many analyses of both those appropriating movements have been undertaken by Werner Marx, Theodor Kisiel, Jacques Taminiaux, David Farrell Krell, John Sallis – some of those we will come back to later on. We will assume then that Heidegger's account of Western metaphysics, and, more specifically of Nietzsche as its ultimate figure, is directly linked to a consideration of Aristotle's account of life conjointly with that of movement [κίνησις] and change [μεταβολή], most notably treated in the *Physics*, books Beta and Gamma. The latter serves

as the primary reference in Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of factual life.<sup>1</sup> The phenomenological description of factual life in its essence, that is, its motility (*Bewegtheit*), developed by Heidegger during his stay in Marburg,<sup>2</sup> remains an important theme throughout his work and sets the stage for his later confrontation with metaphysics.<sup>3</sup> Many years after, in his 1951/52 *What is Called Thinking?*, Heidegger will write that one cannot read Nietzsche in a haphazard way and that it is advisable, therefore, that we postpone reading Nietzsche for the time being, and first study Aristotle for ten to fifteen years.

Our paper will turn around three main axes. The first axe on "Aristotle and the Facticity of Life" sketches the development of Heidegger's thought from 1923 till the mid-thirties, with special emphasis on his Marburg years (1923-28) and also on the lecture courses of the early thirties. Heidegger devoted many courses, or large parts within courses with a more general topic, to Aristotle; the 1924 course on *The Fundamental Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* which gives us the most synthetic account of the Aristotelian texts taking as its basis the *Physics*, the *Metaphysics*, the *Politics*, the *Rhetorics*, and the *Nicomachean Ethics*; the 1924-25 *Sophist* course which contains a lengthy analysis of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, books VI and X, and of the first book of the *Metaphysics*; also the 1924 course on *Aristotle's Rhetorics*, the 1926 course on *The Fundamental Concepts of Ancient Philosophy* as well as the 1925-26 course on *Logic - The Question Concerning Truth*. Those courses are preceded by the early Freiburg courses, where Aristotle was also on central stage, e.g. the 1921/22 course *Phenomenological Interpretations to Aristotle: Introduction to the Phenomenological Research*, the 1923 course on *Ontology (Hermeneutics of Facticity)* as well as the notorious *Natorp-Bericht*.<sup>4</sup> It is during those times that Heidegger elaborates the question of factual life (*faktisches Leben*) which is worked upon in connection with Aristotle's concept of movement (κίνησις). We will claim then that this concept will end up being the one on which fundamental ontology is both built and dismantled. In the second part on "Aristotle in the Nietzsche-courses (1936-46)", our concern will be a double one. On the one hand, we will attempt to evaluate to what extent Heidegger's confrontation with metaphysics and with Nietzsche in particular is

1 See mainly: Farrell Krell 1994b; Greisch 1996, among many others.

2 Sheehan 1981b, 1975; Brogan 1994; Ilting 1962; Volpi 1984, 2003.

3 This is the thesis of John van Buren who sets the stage for Heidegger's *Auseinandersetzung* with metaphysics as early as his first lecture courses in Freiburg (1919-23), where he develops a personalist-"kinetic" vocabulary focused on the notion of the "*Ereignis*", the appropriating event (van Buren 1994: 270-318). A similar thesis is held by David Farrell Krell (1992), who establishes a continuity between early "destruction" of life and his later confrontation with metaphysics and Nietzsche, and Thomas Sheehan (1983).

4 See in this respect: Brogan (2005: 21-56, 138-86); Kisiel (1994: 227-308), 1988; Makkreel 1990.

already determined by his early reading of Aristotle, which is, for most of us, a paradox, as the link we most usually establish is one between Nietzsche and Plato himself or, instead, with Platonism. On the other hand, we will question how Heidegger's understanding of Aristotle is transformed by his confrontation with the history of Western metaphysics. Finally, the third part on "Aristotle across Nietzsche?" aims at examining this transformation more closely and also at discerning the plurality of figures of Aristotle in the work of Heidegger: Aristotle as the philosopher of Being, the thinker of *phronesis* and *kairos*, of *kinesis* and *psyche*, that is, life itself seized in its facticity, the thinker of the *logos apophantikos* and last but not least, the founder of Western onto-theology. In all those various contexts, the presence of Nietzsche, considered as an end, *the end* of Western metaphysics, is of considerable importance. In fact, what will be of interest to us is to seize upon Heidegger's "Aristotelianism", that is, his unique appropriation of Aristotle, not only through his proper reading of Aristotle, but also through his unique interpretation of Nietzsche's ferocious anti-platonism, especially in the 1936-46 Nietzsche-courses. From this viewpoint, the two thinkers seem to share the same need to turn away from platonism, idealism, and nihilism. But unlike Nietzsche, who, in Heidegger's words, merely inverts platonism, what he himself undertakes is a return to the initial power of Greek ontology. To judge the value of this gesture, its limits and constraints is what we propose to focus upon at the end. Has Heidegger finally gotten rid of Platonism and nihilism –as was indeed his initial purpose–, even in their inverted forms in Nietzsche, or is his "Aristotelianism" a "platonic" or "platonizing" one? The question we are going to pose is certainly not a new one. On the contrary, it proves itself necessary to recuperate the questioning of scholars such as Jacques Taminiaux,<sup>5</sup> among others, who have asked those critical questions. The triad Plato-Aristotle-Nietzsche reveals for many scholars Heidegger's hidden, yet pervading, "platonism". His reading of Nietzsche shows how his attempt to recuperate Aristotle always goes through an encounter with Plato, most of times as a compromise of a genuine access to Aristotle.

## I. Aristotle and Factual Life

Heidegger discovers Aristotle very early in his philosophical itinerary, due in large part to his 1907 reading of Franz Brentano's (1862) *On the Manifold Meaning of Being since Aristotle*. In his well-known intellectual autobiography entitled "My Way to Phenomenology" (1963), Heidegger writes that his first contact with

<sup>5</sup> See most notably Taminiaux 1986, 1987, 1985, 1995a. And in an opposite sense: Brogan 1995.

Aristotle, coupled with and enriched by the new science of phenomenological interrogations, was fateful in his decision to become a philosopher:

“Even since 1907, Brentano’s dissertation *On the manifold meaning of Being since Aristotle* (1862) had been the chief help and guide of my first awkward attempts to penetrate into philosophy. The following question concerned me in a quite vague manner: If Being is predicated in manifold meanings, then what is its leading fundamental meaning? What does Being mean?”<sup>6</sup>

For the young Heidegger, Aristotle is the thinker who investigates the multiple meaning of Being (“τὸ ὄν λέγεται πολλαχῶς”), an investigation that philosophy has all but forgotten. For Aristotle, and for Heidegger, after him, Being has a verbal, transitive sense, and as such it is not merely substantive or nominal.<sup>7</sup> This means, then, that associated with Being is a certain concept of movement, found not in the treatise explicitly devoted to Being, that is, Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, but rather in his *Physics*.<sup>8</sup>

We hold that this interpretative shift serves as the very basis for Heidegger’s analysis of the facticity of life, where life is understood against the background of motility or “being- moved” (*Bewegtheit/Bewegtsein*). Aristotle’s concept of movement will prove to be the basis not only for treating life’s facticity, but also, later on, *Dasein*’s historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*) itself, and as such will be decisive in the genesis of fundamental ontology. In fact, Heidegger’s evolving reception of Aristotle runs parallel to a project of auto-explicitation and auto-critique, and, thus, is important in evaluating the so-called “turn” (*Kehre*) in Heidegger’s thought. This means, as we hope to prove, that this concept leads us to the very core of Heidegger’s early questioning, i.e. the question of Being and its relation to time, prior to the phenomenological reception of Kant. In *Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle: Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation* – the 1922 report to Paul Natorp, written just before commencing his duties in Marburg, Heidegger points out:

“Aristotle thus secures the sense of philosophy through the interpretation of a tactical movement of care (*Sorge*) with respect to its ultimate tendency. These purely observational dealings, however, prove to be such a kind that, in their That-with-respect-to-which, they no longer see that

6 *On Time and Being* (Heidegger 1972), p. 74. Cf. “A Dialogue on Language”, in: Heidegger 1971: 7. See in this respect: Sheehan 1981a; Richardson 1964.

7 On the Heidegger-Brentano-Aristotle correlation: Farrell Krell 1975a; Volpi 1968; Seidl 1976.

8 See in this respect: Gadamer 1994: 172-74; Michalski 2005.

very life within which they are. But insofar as these dealings, as pure understanding, are life-temporalizing, they are that through their very movement.”<sup>9</sup>

Thus, what preoccupies Heidegger’s thinking during the Marburg years is already announced: the movement of factual life, which is also the movement of life across history: “It is shown how Aristotle ontologically explicates the historical movement of tactical life...and how he does so under the titles of τύχη, αὐτόματον”.<sup>10</sup>

Later on, in the second division of the 1927 *Being and Time*, the “connectedness of life” (*Zusammenhang des Lebens*) is to be found in the “specific movement in which *Dasein* is stretched along and stretches itself along”.<sup>11</sup> Whereas the question of movement is already present in the first section of *Being and Time* –when it is about the fallenness (*Verfall*) of the *Dasein*– in the second division, the question of life’s motility is raised within the context of *Dasein*’s historicity and that in opposition to the “motion of something present-at-hand”. I quote § 72 of *Being and Time*:

“the constitutional totality of care has the possible ground of its unity in temporality. The ontological clarification of the “connectedness of life”, that is, of *the specific way of stretching along, movement, and persistence of Da-sein*, must accordingly be approached in the horizon of the temporal constitution of this being. The movement of existence (*Bewegtheit der Existenz*) is not the motion of something objectively present (*Bewegung eines Vorhandenen*). It is determined from the stretching itself along we call the occurrence of *Dasein*...To expose the structure of occurrence and the existential and temporal conditions of its possibility means to gain an ontological understanding of historicity”.<sup>12</sup>

The “stretching along” is the spatial way of *Dasein*’s historicity which is claimed to be totally different from the space attributed to physical motion: it is what lies between life and death. If the “connectedness of life” is a term borrowed by Dilthey, Jaspers and, most certainly, the “phenomenological” Aristotle are also in perspective here. Consequently, if the affinity between Heidegger’s early elaboration of factual life and Aristotle’s concept of κίνησις is only announced in 1922, it will be rendered explicit in the second division of *Being and Time*. I quote § 75 of *Being and Time* on *Dasein*’s historicity:

9 Heidegger 1992: 386.

10 Ibid, p. 390.

11 *Being and Time* (Heidegger 1962): 425, 427 (emphasis mine).

12 Ibid, p. 344.

“The historical world is factual only as a world of entities within-the-world. That which “happens” with equipment and work as such has its own character of mobility and this character has been completely obscure up till now...Quite apart from the fact that if we were to follow up the problem of the ontological structure of world historical historizing, we would be transgressing the limits of our theme, we can refrain from this all the more because the very aim of this exposition is to lead us face to face with the ontological enigma of the movement of historizing in general (*das ontologische Rätsel der Bewegtheit des Geschehens überhaupt*)”.<sup>13</sup>

It is interesting to note that in this same Heidegger incorporates a reflexion upon Nietzsche's second of the *Untimely Meditations* entitled “On the Uses and Abuses of History for Life”. Already, then, Heidegger links the two thinkers in terms of the movement of history, but also that of life, although it seems as though Aristotle's concept has priority, indeed even frames the way in which Nietzsche is appropriated by Heidegger. All of this, we believe, becomes even more explicit later on, in his lecture courses on Nietzsche. In a certain sense, Heidegger's ontological account of movement and factual life sets the stage for his confrontation with metaphysics and Nietzsche in particular. Even at the most superficial level, the analysis of factual life prior to the publication of *Being and Time* is dependant on the Aristotelian concepts of movement and privation (στέρησις). Those two will be later on made to correspond to the structural moments of the Will to Power in Nietzsche, those of *Uebergang* (passage, overcoming) and *Untergang* (decline, downgoing). It is then noteworthy that the themes of overcoming and decline that configure in the analysis of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, notably in the 1937 course on *The Eternal Return of the Same* retrieve movement and privation, concepts situated at the origin of the phenomenological analysis of factual life in the Marburg lecture courses. Privation and movement were there intertwined in the same way as decline and overcoming in the 1937 course on Nietzsche. Heidegger writes, while commenting the final section of Nietzsche's *Gay Science* entitled “Incipit Tragödia”, in order to designate the transition to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: “When Zarathustra's tragedy begins, so does his downgoing. The downgoing itself has a history. It is the history proper; it is not merely the end”.<sup>14</sup>

That is, in his very early appropriation of Aristotle, Heidegger already has a lens through which to read Nietzsche. But, and even more fundamentally, in the 1936 course on *The Will to Power as Art* he argues that:

“...the interior relation of Nietzsche's Will to Power to Aristotle's δύναμις, ἐνέργεια, ἐντελέχεια, we should not however understand it in such a way

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 441.

<sup>14</sup> Nietzsche, “The Eternal Return of the Same”, Heidegger 1984a, vol. II: 31.

that it could seem permissible to interpret the Nietzschean doctrine of Being with the aid of that of Aristotle. It is a matter of grasping the two doctrines in relation to more original questions.”<sup>15</sup>

It is worthwhile to note here that Heidegger has already treated the Aristotelian triad δύναμις, ἐνέργεια, ἐντελέχεια in his 1931 course on *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Θ 13, *On the Essence and Reality of the Force* and, in 1936, he explicitly relates it to the will to power by way of “more original questions”. The manifold significance of Aristotle's concept of movement for the formation of Heidegger's thought cannot, therefore, be underscored. It serves as the basis for his analysis of temporality and historicity, but also as a methodological tool for his later confrontation with metaphysics. We have already hinted at this, so let us render it clear. As we saw, in the 1922 report on Aristotle, an intimate link is established between motility (*Bewegtheit*) and factual life. Later on, around the mid-twenties, it is through the encounter with Kant that the early hermeneutics of facticity undertakes a transcendental turn, thus, connecting movement or motility to time and temporality. The course on Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* as well as the rest of the courses of the mid-twenties make a further, much differentiated, step towards the project of fundamental ontology.<sup>16</sup> Both divisions of *Being and Time* reflect upon this inner relation: section 75 of *Being and Time* touches on the delicate matter of Dasein's temporality viewed especially in its historical dimension. It is clear then that the elaboration of ecstatic temporality in *Being and Time* falls back upon Heidegger's phenomenological appropriation of κίνησις in Aristotle. What is of interest here is the twofold change effected in his analysis of temporality in the years following the publication of *Being and Time*. The first one pertains directly to Heidegger's encounter with Aristotle's fundamental ontological concepts. In the 1927 lecture course on *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger undertakes a thorough analysis of book Delta of Aristotle's *Physics*. Here he translates κίνησις not as *Bewegtheit* but as *Umschlag*, that is, overturning, and even *Uebergang* (passage), reminding us once more of Nietzsche, and, in doing so, marks a new shift in his understanding of Aristotle. He writes: “The simplest form of motion, and the one most frequently used by Aristotle in his analysis of motion, of transition, is φορά, transition from one place (τόπος) to another, shift (*Umschlag*), change of place”.<sup>17</sup> Many Heidegger scholars have noticed the importance of this new translation of κίνησις. David Farrell Krell notes its critical importance for the transition from fundamental to “frontal-ontology”, as he calls it, that is, the significant writings which follow immediately the publication of

15 Nietzsche, “The Will to Power as Art”, Heidegger 1984a, vol. I: 65.

16 See in this respect: Kisiel 1985; Sheehan 1992; Harman 2007: 38-44.

17 Heidegger 1982b: 242.

*Being and Time*, marking already the failure of the 1927 project.<sup>18</sup> In the later *Contributions to Philosophy* Heidegger will qualify his own confrontation with metaphysics as “overcoming” (Uebergang), leap (*Sprung*) and “preparation for the overcoming” (*Uebergangsvorbereitung*):

“If we inquire into beings as beings and thus inquire into the being of beings in this starting point and direction, then whoever inquires stands in the realm of *the* question that guides the beginning of Western philosophy and its history up to its end in Nietzsche. Therefore we call *this* question concerning being (or beings) the guiding-question. Its most general form was formulated by Aristotle, as ἦ τὸ ὄν; What is a being, i.e. for Aristotle, what is ὄν ἦ ὄν as the beingness of a being? ... On the other hand, if one inquires into be-ing, the approach here is not from beings, i.e., from this and that being respectively –and also not from beings as such in the whole– but rather the *leap* (*Einsprung*) is enacted into the truth (clearing and sheltering) of be-ing itself. Here what is experienced and questioned is that which is hidden in the guiding question and *sways* in advance: the openness for essential *swaying* as such, i.e., for truth ... Going from the guiding-question to the grounding question, there is never an immediate, equi-directional and continual process that once again applies the guiding question (to be-ing); rather, there is only a *leap* (*Sprung*) i.e. the necessity of an other beginning.”<sup>19</sup>

The “kinetic” vocabulary of Heidegger’s encounter with metaphysics is omnipresent in this context. Actually, the spatialization of existential temporality as well as the renewed interest in the intrinsic historicity of metaphysics are some of the themes which inaugurate the “turn” –the *Kehre*– in his thought in the late twenties. Once more the “kinetic” vocabulary witnesses this significant shift. In the 1928 lecture course on *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, Heidegger writes:

“We need a special problematic which has for its proper theme beings as a whole. This new investigation resides in the essence of ontology itself and is the result of its overturning (*Umschlag*), its μεταβολή. I designate this set of questions metontology ... the radicalization of fundamental ontology brings about the abovementioned overturning of ontology out of its very self.”<sup>20</sup>

18 See Farrell Krell (1980: 218), 1986, as well as his 1994a: 140.

19 Heidegger 1999: 52-53.

20 Heidegger 1984b: 157. See also in this respect: Sallis 1983.



Moreover, considered from a methodological viewpoint, movement as κίνησις had already determined the hermeneutical operation of *Destruction*. In the early twenties, Heidegger's main concern in the "destruction" of ontology is to show how the tradition forgets the question of Being, that is, how Being comes to be hypostatized and neutralized. If "destruction" can "remove the obstacles" –in his own words– that lead to the forgetting of Being, then, the question of Being can be posed again. The movement of "destruction" as such repeats that of factual life such that original κίνησις becomes the task of the phenomenologist. Put differently, "destruction" aims at liberating the movement of Being, and, thus, at rendering the method consistent with the object.<sup>21</sup>

## II. Aristotle in the Nietzsche-courses (1936-46)

From the above mentioned, it is clear that Aristotle's account of movement proves to be of critical importance for Heidegger's early phenomenological project, from a thematic as well as a methodological viewpoint, setting his agenda during the Marburg years, setting also the stage for his confrontation with metaphysics and Nietzsche, and, ultimately, rendering his 1927 unfinished project of fundamental ontology impossible. This last effects a turn in his thought, and it is for this reason that Heidegger's continued dialogue with Aristotle is to be taken as a project of explicitation with his own thought path till then.

We have already seen how Heidegger insists that thinking Nietzsche and Aristotle together should be done not by viewing the one in terms of the other, but rather in terms of the "more original questions" that they both raise, as he writes. We have also seen that it is immediately after the publication of *Being and Time* that a renewed understanding of Aristotle occurs in Heidegger's thinking. In our second part, we argue that his confrontation with metaphysics, and with Nietzsche in particular, effects a radical shift which is not irrelevant to his reappropriation of Aristotle.<sup>22</sup> Nowhere is this more prevalent than in the lecture courses devoted to Nietzsche, even if we have ventured above some indications that the presence of Nietzsche in Heidegger's thought is already intertwined with that of Aristotle as early as *Being and Time* and even before that.<sup>23</sup>

In fact, it is already right after *Being and Time* that the "kinetic" vocabulary which qualifies temporality is amplified and diversified. We have seen that Heidegger offers a new translation of *kinesis* and *metabole* as *Umschlag* and

21 The methodological aspect we here ascribe to movement is discussed by Sheehan 1981b, and by Caputo 1991: 198.

22 Lilly 1985; Farrell Krell 1975b.

23 Taminioux 1995b. For the presence of Nietzsche in Heidegger's thought path before 1927: van Buren 1994: 29, 32, 124-25, 362, 366, 393 etc.

*Uebergang* – both constituting a way to criticize his earlier analyses of ecstatic temporality. What is also of interest is that even before the courses on Nietzsche, ἔκστασις itself is replaced by “rapture” or by ecstatic “transport” (*Raptus*, *Entrückung*, *Schwung*, *Schwingung*), a modification that aims at making the unity of temporal ecstases explicit. He thus writes in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*: “Temporality as unity of future, past, and occasionally present; instead, as temporality it is itself the original outside-itself, the ἐκστατικόν”.<sup>24</sup> This affinity is present in various contexts. It is perhaps nowhere more clearly expressed than in the 1931 course on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, Θ 1-3. The exergue of the course is a citation from Nietzsche’s *The Will to Power*, § 419, which Heidegger introduces by writing that “the inner will of this course” can be characterized by a word from Nietzsche”:

“A few centuries hence, perhaps, one will judge that all German philosophy derives its real dignity from being a gradual reclamation of the soil of antiquity, and that all claims to “originality” must sound petty and ludicrous in relation to that higher claim of the Germans that have joined anew the bond that seemed to be broken, the bond with the Greeks, the hitherto highest type of man” (*Metaphysics*, Θ 1-3, exergue).<sup>25</sup>

Nietzsche’s thought of the Will to Power, but also of the “highest type of man”, the Overman, according to Heidegger, was precisely this reclamation, but what Nietzsche did not recognize was his profound link to Aristotle, and, instead, chose to invert platonism, a choice that is not without consequences. The same becomes apparent in his treatment of the Will to Power in the 1936 lecture course on Nietzsche:

“We should not understand the reference to the inner relation of Nietzsche’s will to power to δύναμις, ἐνέργεια, ἐντελέχεια in Aristotle as asserting that Nietzsche’s doctrine of Being can be interpreted immediately with the help of the Aristotelian teaching. *Both must be conjoined in a more original context of questions.* That is especially true of Aristotle’s doctrine. It is no exaggeration to say that today we simply no longer understand or appreciate anything about Aristotle’s teaching.”<sup>26</sup>

In this same 1936 lecture course, the “rapture” in relation to the ecstasis of authentic temporality will be analyzed not by way of a return to Aristotle, as we might suspect, but as a way of considering the Beautiful (το ἐκφανεστάτον,

24 Heidegger 1982b: 267; cf. Heidegger 1984b: 205-6. See also: Sallis 1990.

25 Heidegger 1995: 1.

26 Heidegger 1991: 65 (emphasis mine).

τὸ ἐρασιμώτατον) in Plato's *Phaedrus*. Heidegger translates the Beautiful as the "most ravishing" (*das Entrückendste*), that which lets Being itself shine forth, that towards which its ravishing carries him. It is a question for us to put this revised conception of ecstatic temporality in the frame of Plato's concept of the "sudden" (ἐξαιφνης). Needless to say that this falls back to Heidegger's earlier interest in "kairological time", Aristotelian καιρός in particular. Indeed, as David Krell notes: "what intrigues Heidegger in Aristotle's detailed treatment of time is the way in which the "now" itself is metabolic, ecstatic; a qualitative alteration that isn't simply transience or corruption".<sup>27</sup> If, in the 1936 lecture course on *The Will to Power as Art*, Aristotle's presence takes the form of a telling absence, in the 1937 course on *The Eternal Return of the Same*, Heidegger goes back to his well-known theme of the instant (*Augenblick*), another Aristotelian heritage. What we would like to ask here is how the "sudden" or the instant "moves" or "occurs", or to what extent it changes and even radicalizes Heidegger's reading of κίνησις in Aristotle. In the 1936 course, Heidegger writes explicitly:

"Although Nietzsche does not appreciate the concealed and vital connection between his concept of power, as a concept of Being, and Aristotle's doctrine, and although that connection remains quite loose and undetermined, we may say that the Aristotelian doctrine has more to do with Nietzsche's doctrine of will to power than with any doctrine of categories and modalities in academic philosophy".<sup>28</sup>

At the same time as the first lecture courses on Nietzsche Heidegger also prepares the *Contributions to Philosophy. On Enowing* (1936-38). It is here that we witness once more the profound changes in his reading of Aristotle, precisely, we claim, because of his then current confrontation with Nietzsche. The "kinetic" vocabulary that marks this work shows in a unique way the attempt to re-elaborate existential analytics. The return from Nietzsche to Aristotle occurs in many places, but more significantly, as an initiation to the whole problematic of the work, in its first part, entitled the "Echo". What Heidegger dissolves here is the idea of an overcoming viewed as a countermovement:

"Not a counter-movement, because all counter-movements and counter-forces are to a large degree co-determined by what they are "against", even though in the form of reversing what they are against. And therefore a counter-movement never suffices for an *essential* transformation of history ... Something entirely other must begin, beyond counter-forces and counter-drives and counter-establishments ... The other beginning

<sup>27</sup> Farrell Krell 1986: 62-63.

<sup>28</sup> *Nietzsche, vol. I* (Heidegger 1984a): 65.

is not counter-directed to the first. Rather, *as the other* it stands outside the counter [*gegen*] and outside immediate comparability. Thus setting [the beginnings] into perspective does not mean opposition, neither in the sense of crude rejection not in the manner of sublating [*Aufhebung*] the first into the other. From a new originariness the other beginning assists the first beginning unto the truth of its history – and thus unto its inalienable and ownmost otherness, which becomes fruitful solely in the historical dialogue of thinkers”.<sup>29</sup>

On the one hand, Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche qualifies the latter’s project as an inversion of Platonism and, as such, still locked within it. Heidegger argues that it is the lack of attention to Aristotle, and his obsession with “turning Platonism on its head” that led to Nietzsche being qualified as the last metaphysician, and, thus, to his “Platonization”. This interpretative turn is consolidated by the reinterpretation of the second book of the *Physics*, which allows Heidegger to reexamine movement (τὸ κινούμενον) in relation to art (ποίησις). This reexamination takes place in the Nietzsche-courses after 1939, the *Contributions to Philosophy* as well as in 1939 essay on *Vom Wesen und Begriff der φύσις. Aristoteles Physik B, 1*. The change of tone in the *Contributions to Philosophy* is also accompanied by a renewed understanding of the question of truth as adequation in Nietzsche, now viewed as the one who led metaphysics to its completion. That is, what was once an attempt at a phenomenological appropriation of Nietzsche’s Will to Power dissolves. The latter is now determined as a fundamentally metaphysical position. Platonism and nihilism become henceforth the exclusive axes that govern Heidegger’s confrontation with Nietzsche viewed in the light of his metaphysical position. This allows Heidegger to neutralize Nietzsche’s harsh critique of metaphysics by locating him within its history. Thus, an explicit “platonization” of Nietzsche’s Will to Power dissolves the profound link with Aristotle. As is the case with the concepts of δύναμις and τέχνη in the first book of the *Republic*, power (*Macht*) and “machination” (*Machenschaft*) –identified in the *Contributions to Philosophy* to “steadfast presence”, ποίησις, τέχνη<sup>30</sup> are from now on to belong together. In the 1941 course on “Die Erinnerung in die Metaphysik” Heidegger writes: “Reality displaces its essence in the multiple structures of the will ... in the essence of power is revealed the extreme letting-go of the Being of Beings, in virtue of which power becomes “machination”.<sup>31</sup> That is power is linked to *actualitas*, and thus to the conceptual network of action and acting: “once Being is converted to *actualitas* (reality), being is real, determined by effective *action* ... *energeia* is

29 Heidegger 1999: 130-31.

30 Ibid, p. 107.

31 *Nietzsche, vol. II* (Heidegger 1984a): 485.

conceived inversely starting from *actualitas* ... the initially hellenic imprint of the essence of Being is definitely misunderstood and rendered inaccessible.”<sup>32</sup>

What all of this suggest is that not only is the Will to Power “platonized”, but it is understood and determined not in relation to Aristotle, but rather in relation to Aristotelianism, particularly in its Scholastic and modern versions, the best representative of which is Leibniz. Heidegger explicitly compares Nietzsche’s concept of power with Leibniz’s concept of *vis primitiva activa et passiva*. In his turn, Leibniz seems to establish a continuity with Aristotle’s physics, especially with his concept of δύναμις, while marking an essential rupture with it: Leibniz understands the Aristotelian term of ἐντελέχεια not in its Greek sense, but according to his own monadology. What eclipses in power henceforth is precisely its own potentiality, its “being-able-to-be”. What we, thus, witness here is the clear inversion of the phenomenological priority of possibility over reality, which was, nevertheless, present in the 1936 treatment of the Will to Power. And so in the leibnizian primacy of existence over other modes of the beingness of beings (essence, necessity), one sees the beginning of the completion of modern metaphysics. This is how Leibniz understands Aristotle’s triad δύναμις - ἐνέργεια - ἐντελέχεια. In other words, Heidegger passes from a perceived affinity between Aristotle and Nietzsche to seeing the origins of Nietzsche’s metaphysics in nihilism and, further more, platonism: “just as Plato never allowed an isolated being as a being, so does Aristotle understand in an even more Greek sense (*griechischer denkt als Plato*), that is, more conforming to the initially decisive essence of being that Plato did not”.<sup>33</sup> If we accept the allegation Heidegger’s understanding of Aristotle has always been marked by a subtle, yet pervasive, platonism,<sup>34</sup> then, his reading of Nietzsche reflects this mediation. In the 1939 course on “The Will to Power as Knowledge”, life as πράξις in Nietzsche, that is, the Will to Power, collapses into the metaphysics of subjectivity, fully realizing itself in the modern figure of ποιησις, that is, technology. Heidegger’s formulation is in this context more aporetic than ever before.

Let us now turn our attention to the concept of movement and how it is viewed by Heidegger during this period. It is in the same critical vein that in the *Contributions to Philosophy* Heidegger deploys Ernst Jünger’s insights, in particular, his idea of “total mobilization”, which proves to be the final stage of Aristotle’s concept of κίνησις:

“[Total mobilization] is purely setting-into-motion and emptying all traditional concepts of the still operative education [*Bildung*]. The priority of method [*Verfahren*] and of institution in overall readying the

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 414.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 409.

<sup>34</sup> Jean-François Courtine, “Le platonisme de Heidegger”, in: Courtine 1991: 129-58.

masses and putting them into service – for what? What does this priority of mobilization mean? That thereby a new breed of man is necessarily forged is only the consequence that is counter to the event, but never the “goal”. But are there “goals” anymore? How does goal-setting arise? From within the beginning. And what is the beginning? ...”<sup>35</sup>

Moreover, Heidegger associates Aristotle’s κίνησις with power in Nietzsche thusly: “The will to power, as it overcomes itself, returns to the innermost of itself and so it gives to Being in its totality, that is, to becoming, the singular character of movement.”<sup>36</sup> In the same context, the Eternal Return of the Same is no longer viewed in terms of the “instant” (*Augenblick*), but as an ultimate figure of the scholastic *quomodo*.<sup>37</sup> Once again we see that movement is the foundation back to which everything is sent. In the *Contributions to Philosophy, Ereignis*, the new term by which Heidegger Dasein’s historicity is defined in opposition to the metaphysical concept of movement, gives us an indication. One more ontological difference is what sets the stage for determining the *Ereignis*: “passing and enowing and history can never be thought as kinds of “movements”, because “movement” (even when thought as μεταβολή) always relates to the ὄν as οὐσία – to which relationship δύναμις and ἐνέργεια and their later progeny also belong.”<sup>38</sup> That is, Heidegger now sees Aristotle’s movement and change as belonging to metaphysics as its beginning. This means, then, that Aristotle himself is implied in the “History of Being” (*Seinsgeschichte*), the horizon of which is once again determined by Platonic essentialism (μεταβολή-οὐσία). Aristotle is thus “platonized”, but indirectly and by way of his implication with Nietzsche: because movement is hermeneutically intertwined with Will to Power, and because Will to Power as the completion of metaphysics belongs to the History of Being, then so too is Aristotle’s κίνησις drawn into metaphysics. As such, the privilege that Aristotle seemed to enjoy was only apparent. The dissolution of this privilege is here more firmly pronounced. In the 1936 course Heidegger argued that Aristotle’s metaphysics “is a first denouement of the initial beginnings of Western philosophy in Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Parmenides.”<sup>39</sup> If then Aristotle belonged to the continuation of Presocratic thought, now, however, he is the philosopher who inaugurates the metaphysical epoch of Being. As a result, even the tone of Heidegger’s reading of Aristotle changes, as is indicated in the virulent critique addressed to his conception of life. In the 1943-44 summer course on Heraclitus, while interpreting Heraclitus’

35 Heidegger 1999: 100.

36 Nietzsche, vol. II (Heidegger 1984a): 284-85.

37 “Die ewige Wiederkehr des Gleichen und der Wille zur Macht” (1939), Nietzsche, vol. II (Heidegger 1984a): 11-12.

38 Heidegger 1999: 197.

39 Nietzsche, vol. I (Heidegger 1984a): 65.

fragment 45, Heidegger goes back to the *De anima* in order to affirm that Aristotle's  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  belongs to the beginning of Western metaphysics. He writes that the *De anima* deals with a "metaphysics of the living". As a result, Aristotle's  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  and *Leben* in Nietzsche are situated on the same historical plan, since they represent the beginning and the end of Western metaphysics respectively.

This analysis of the mid-forties counterweighs that given in the 1936 course in which Nietzsche's concept of will is already viewed in relation to book III, chapter X of the *De Anima*, where Aristotle enjoyed a privileged status. By putting the accent on Aristotle's concept of life as "one moving itself by itself" in 1936, Heidegger concludes that the idealist character of Nietzsche's Will to Power originates in Aristotle's concept of  $\delta\rho\epsilon\acute{\xi}\iota\varsigma$ . Yet the heritage of fundamental ontology which persists in the 1936 course, but which will soon be eclipsed, is apparent in the designation of the moving essence of will as  $\pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ : "Man is the highest form of living creature. The basic type of self-movement for him is action,  $\pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ ."<sup>40</sup>

### III. Aristotle across Nietzsche?

As a result, there are more than one "Aristotles", as there are more than one "Nietzsches". There is first the Aristotle who, starting from 1922, is the thinker of movement and the  $\pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$  of life; there is also the Aristotle who inaugurates the epoch of metaphysics; then, there is the "onto-theologist" Aristotle, received via the tradition of Aristotelianism, over against which one might mark even a fourth "Aristotle", the one who seems to escape the "History of Being" by an original relation to Presocratic thought. This variety of "Aristotles" results from Heidegger's rich and complicated confrontation with metaphysics, especially with Nietzsche as its ultimate figure. It is clear then that, from 1922 onwards, and especially across the sinuous and difficult confrontation with Nietzsche, Aristotle remains the standard of philosophical rigor against whom others are measured. Nietzsche is understood as an equally serious philosopher and ontologist, not a poet, an apocalyptic theologian, or a madman, as he was habitually treated. Heidegger writes in 1943 in "The Word of Nietzsche "God is Dead":

"The time has come for us to learn to perceive that Nietzsche's thinking ... is no less possessed of matter and substance and is no less rigorous than is the thinking of Aristotle, who in the fourth book of his *Metaphysics* thinks the principle of contradiction as the primary truth regarding the Being of whatever is."<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Heidegger 1982a: 94.

The established affinities established between Aristotle and Nietzsche will pertain throughout the courses and writings of the fifties. Thus, in “What Is Called Thinking?” (1951-52), a new confrontation of Nietzsche with Aristotle will be staged, this time as it concerns the question of temporality. While interrogating the metaphysical conception of the beingness of beings as presence (*Anwesenheit*) Heidegger notes:

“Aristotle, in his *Physics*, Delta, 10-14, has given a classical development of this manner of inquiry. And the answer Aristotle gave to the question of the essential nature of time still governs Nietzsche’s idea of time.”<sup>42</sup>

Yet, temporality and movement belong together. Thus, movement that constituted an ontological enigma for Dasein’s historicity in *Being and Time* will attempt to escape all metaphysical determinations. This “enigma” will find its resolution in the concept of appropriative event (*Ereignis*). Later on, in “On Time and Being”, Heidegger will write:

“With the entry into Appropriation, its own way of concealment proper to it also arrives. Appropriation is in itself expropriation. Thus, the lack of destiny of Appropriation does not mean that it has no movement. Rather, it means that the manner of movement proper to Appropriation turning towards us in withdrawal first, shows itself as what ... is to be thought”<sup>43</sup>

In fact, across the steps of the “appropriation (*Verwindung*) of metaphysics undertaken by Heidegger in the 50s, what is of concern is to rediscover a common ground for Aristotle and Nietzsche, beyond, or perhaps, despite the sole designation of the beginning and end of metaphysics respectively:

“he [Nietzsche] says: Revenge is the “will’s revulsion against time and its “It was”. We must think through this statement of Nietzsche with as much care as if we were dealing with one of Aristotle ... Of course, Nietzsche did not have Aristotle in mind when he wrote down his statement. Nor do we mean to suggest that Nietzsche is beholden to Aristotle. A thinker is not beholden to a thinker – rather, when he is thinking, he holds on to what is to be thought, to Being”<sup>44</sup>

As a result, in the horizon of the proximity established between the two thinkers

42 Heidegger 1976: 100-01.

43 Heidegger 1972: 41.

44 Heidegger 1976: 95.



who fully rise up to the vertiginous point of metaphysics, there is what is left “unthought” (*das Ungedachte*):

“The question “Being and Time” points to what is unthought in all metaphysics. Metaphysics consists of this unthought matter; what is unthought in metaphysics is therefore not a defect of metaphysics”<sup>45</sup>

The important for Heidegger in order to penetrate into the “unthought” is the return to the Greek beginning of philosophy. As Gadamer remarks on the importance of Heidegger’s relation to the Greeks:

“Heidegger was then orienting himself to an intensive interpretation of Nietzsche that would find expression in a two-volume work, the real counterpart of *Being and Time*. But this was not Nietzsche. This was a strenuous struggle for a philosophical language, which sought to go beyond Hegel and Nietzsche for the sake of retrieving and then “repeating” the beginnings of Greek thinking.”<sup>46</sup>



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<sup>45</sup> Ibid, p. 103.

<sup>46</sup> Gadamer 1987: 5.

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## ΓΚΟΛΦΩ ΜΑΓΓΙΝΗ

Ο Νίτσε μέσω του Αριστοτέλη; Οντολογία,  
Ερμηνευτική και το τέλος της Μεταφυσικής

## Περίληψη

**Η** ΜΕΛΕΤΗ αναδεικνύει την εκλεκτική σχέση της «αναμέτρησης» (*Auseinandersetzung*) του Μ. Χάιντεγκερ με τον Φ. Νίτσε ως τον τελευταίο μεταφυσικό, στις δεκαετίες '30 και '40, με μια άλλη σημαντική «αναμέτρησή» του, αυτή με τον Αριστοτέλη, η οποία ξεκινά νωρίς στη φιλοσοφική του διαδρομή. Δεν είναι τυχαίο ότι ο ίδιος ο Χάιντεγκερ ομολογεί, τη δεκαετία του '50, ότι η προπαιδευτική στην αριστοτελική οντολογία είναι αναγκαίος όρος για την κατανόηση της νιτσεϊκής κριτικής της μεταφυσικής.

Η μελέτη μας αρθρώνεται σε τρεις θεματικές ενότητες.

Η πρώτη θεματική ενότητα αναδεικνύει την ιδιάζουσα θέση του Αριστοτέλη στην προβληματική του γεγονοτικού βίου (*faktisches Leben*) στον Χάιντεγκερ της δεκαετίας του '20.

Η δεύτερη ενότητα τοποθετεί τη νιτσεϊκή μεταφυσική του βίου στο ευρύτερο πλαίσιο της κριτικής αποδόμησης (*Destruktion*) της μεταφυσικής από τον Χάιντεγκερ, επιστώντας την προσοχή σε ό,τι διαφεύγει από την ευθεία γραμμή που οδηγεί από τον πλατωνικό ιδεαλισμό στην «αντιστροφή» του στον Νίτσε, όπως αυτή αποτυπώνεται στις πανεπιστημιακές παραδόσεις για τον Νίτσε και τα κείμενα της δεκαετίας 1936-46. Στόχος μας είναι να φέρουμε, από πλευράς ερμηνευτικής χειρονομίας, την κριτική ιδιοποίηση από τον Χάιντεγκερ του Νίτσε κοντά στην ιδιοποίηση από αυτόν της αριστοτελικής φυσικής και πρακτικής φιλοσοφίας τη δεκαετία του '20, με την οποία διατηρεί, κατά τη γνώμη μας, εμφανείς αντιστοιχίες.

Τέλος, στην τρίτη ενότητα, επιχειρούμε να διερευνήσουμε τις πιθανές συμπλοκές των δύο φιλοσόφων στο πλαίσιο του χαϊντεγκεριανού ερμηνευτικού εγχειρήματος να ερμηνεύσει την ιστορία της δυτικής μεταφυσικής από το τέλος προς την αρχή της, με άλλα λόγια, από τον Νίτσε στον Αριστοτέλη, με σημείο αναφοράς τα κείμενα της δεκαετίας του '50, όπως το *Τι αποκαλούμε σκέπτεσθαι*; και το *Ποιος είναι ο Ζαρατούστρα του Νίτσε*.