

Université de Montréal

PHRONĒSIS AND ENERGEIA

A Reading of Heidegger's Early Appropriation
of Aristotelian *Phronēsis* (1922-24)
in the Light of *Energeia*

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par

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Cette thèse intitulée :

***Phronēsis and Energeia. A Reading of Heidegger's Early
Appropriation of Aristotelian Phronēsis (1922-24)
in the Light of Energeia***

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Résumé

Mots clés: HEIDEGGER, ARISTOTE, ÉTHIQUE À NICOMAUQUE, PHRONESIS, PRAXIS, ENERGEIA, ENTELECHEIA, KINESIS, PHYSIS, MÉTAPHYSIQUE DE LA PRÉSENCE.

L'objectif de cette thèse est d'élucider l'intention, la pertinence et la cohérence de l'appropriation par Heidegger des concepts principaux de la philosophie pratique aristotélicienne dans ses premiers cours. Notre analyse portera principalement sur les notions clés d'*energeia* et de *phronēsis*. La première section de la thèse est préparatoire : elle est consacrée à une analyse étroite des textes pertinents de l'*Éthique à Nicomaque*, mais aussi de la *Métaphysique*, en discussion avec d'autres commentateurs modernes. Cette analyse jette les fondations philologiques nécessaires en vue d'aborder les audacieuses interprétations de Heidegger sur une base plus ferme. La deuxième et principale section consiste en une discussion de l'appropriation ontologique de l'*Éthique à Nicomaque* que Heidegger entreprend de 1922 à 1924, à partir des textes publiés jusqu'à ce jour et en portant une attention spéciale à *Métaphysique IX*.

Le résultat principal de la première section est un aperçu du caractère central de l'*energeia* pour le projet d'Aristote dans l'*Éthique à Nicomaque* et, plus spécifiquement, pour sa compréhension de la *praxis*, qui dans son sens original s'avère être un *mode d'être* des êtres humains. Notre analyse reconnaît trois traits essentiels de l'*energeia* et de la *praxis*, deux desquels provenant de l'élucidation aristotélicienne de l'*energeia* dans *Métaphysique IX 6*, à savoir son *immédiateté* et sa *continuité* : *energeia* exprime l'être comme un « accomplissement immédiat mais inachevé ». L'*irréductibilité*, troisième trait de l'*energeia* et de la *praxis*, résulte pour sa part de l'application de la structure de l'*energeia* à la caractérisation de la *praxis* dans l'*Éthique à Nicomaque*, et du contraste de la *praxis* avec la *poiēsis* et la *theōria*. Ces trois caractéristiques impliquent que la vérité pratique — la vérité de la *praxis*, ce qui est l'« objet » de la *phronēsis* — ne peut être à proprement parler possédée et ainsi

transmise : plus qu'un *savoir*, elle se révèle surtout comme quelque chose *que nous sommes*. C'est ce caractère unique de la vérité pratique qui a attiré Heidegger vers Aristote au début des années 1920.

La deuxième section, consacrée aux textes de Heidegger, commence par la reconstruction de quelques-uns des pas qui l'ont conduit jusqu'à Aristote pour le développement de son propre projet philosophique, pour sa part caractérisé par une profonde, bien qu'énigmatique combinaison d'ontologie et de phénoménologie. La légitimité et la faisabilité de l'appropriation clairement *ontologique* de l'*Éthique à Nicomaque* par Heidegger est aussi traitée, sur la base des résultats de la première section.

L'analyse de ces textes met en lumière la pénétrante opposition établie par Heidegger entre la *phronēsis* et l'*energeia* dans son programmatique *Natorp Bericht* en 1922, une perspective qui diverge fortement des résultats de notre lecture philologique d'Aristote dans la première section. Cette opposition est maintenue dans nos deux sources principales — le cours du semestre d'hiver 1924-25 *Platon: Sophistes*, et le cours du semestre d'été 1924 *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*. Le commentaire que Heidegger fait du texte d'Aristote est suivi de près dans cette section: des concepts tels que *energeia*, *entelecheia*, *telos*, *physis* ou *hexis* — qui trouvent leur caractérisation ontologique dans la *Métaphysique* ou la *Physique* — doivent être examinés afin de suivre l'argument de Heidegger et d'en évaluer la solidité. L'hypothèse de Heidegger depuis 1922 — à savoir que l'ontologie aristotélicienne n'est pas à la hauteur des aperçus de ses plus pénétrantes descriptions phénoménologiques — résulte en un conflit opposant *phronēsis* et *sophia* qui divise l'être en deux sphères irréconciliables qui auraient pour effet selon Heidegger de plonger les efforts ontologiques aristotéliens dans une impasse. Or, cette conclusion de Heidegger est construite à partir d'une interprétation particulière de l'*energeia* qui laisse de côté d'une manière décisive son aspect *performatif*, pourtant l'un des traits essentiels de l'*energeia* telle qu'Aristote l'a conçue. Le fait que dans les années 1930 Heidegger ait lui-même retrouvé cet aspect de l'*energeia* nous fournit

des raisons plus fortes de mettre en doute le supposé conflit entre ontologie et phénoménologie chez Aristote, ce qui peut aboutir à une nouvelle formulation du projet heideggérien.

Abstract

Key words: HEIDEGGER, ARISTOTLE, NICOMACHEAN ETHICS, PHRONESIS, PRAXIS, ENERGEIA, ENTELECHEIA, KINESIS, PHYSIS, METAPHYSICS OF PRESENCE.

The purpose of this thesis is to sort out the intent, the philosophical relevance and the consistency of Heidegger's appropriation of the basic tenets of Aristotle's practical philosophy in his early lecture courses. Our analysis will focus mainly on the key notions of *energeia* and *phronēsis*. The first preparatory section of the thesis is devoted to a close analysis of Aristotle's relevant texts of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, but also of the *Metaphysics*, in discussion with other modern commentators. This lays the philological groundwork which will enable us to engage Heidegger's challenging interpretations on a more secure footing. The second and main section discusses Heidegger's ontological appropriation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* from 1922 to 1924 on the basis of the texts so far published, and with a special attention to *Metaphysics IX*.

The main result of section I is an insight into the central character of *energeia* for Aristotle's project in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and, more specifically, for his understanding of *praxis*, which in its genuinely original sense turns out to be *a way of being* of human beings. Our analysis recognizes three essential traits to *energeia* and *praxis*, two of which stemming from the analysis of Aristotle's own elucidation of *energeia* in *Metaphysics IX 6*, namely *immediacy* and *continuity*: *energeia* expresses being as an 'immediate unfinished fulfillment'. *Irreducibility*, the third trait of *energeia* and *praxis*, results from applying the structure of *energeia* to the characterization of *praxis* in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and from contrasting it with *poiēsis* and *theōria*. These three features entail that practical truth—the truth of *praxis*, the 'object' of *phronēsis*—cannot be properly possessed and thus transferred: more than something we *know*, it is something we *are*. It is this special character of practical truth that primarily attracted Heidegger to Aristotle in the early 1920s.

Section II, devoted to Heidegger's texts, starts by reconstructing some of the intellectual steps that led him to resort to Aristotle for the development of his own philosophical project, characterized by a profound, yet intriguing intermingling of ontology and phenomenology. The legitimacy and feasibility of Heidegger's pointedly *ontological* appropriation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is also discussed, on the basis of the results of section I.

The analysis of these texts is characterized by the sharp opposition set by Heidegger between *phronēsis* and *energeia* in his 1922 programmatic *Natorp Bericht*, a perspective that strongly diverges from the results of our philological reading of Aristotle in section I. The assessment of this opposition is maintained throughout the discussion of the two main sources—the 1924-25 winter course *Platon: Sophistes*, and the 1924 summer course *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*. Heidegger's direct commentary of Aristotle's text is followed closely in this section: concepts such as *energeia*, *entelecheia*, *telos*, *physis* and *hexis*—which find their ontological characterization in the *Metaphysics* or *Physics*—need to be scrutinized in order to follow Heidegger's argument and to assess its soundness. Heidegger's hypothesis from 1922—namely, that Aristotle's ontology does not fit the insights of his more penetrating phenomenological descriptions—eventually culminates in a clash between *phronēsis* and *sophia* which divides being into two irreconcilable spheres and brings Aristotle's ontological efforts to a dead end. Yet, this conclusion of Heidegger is built upon a specific interpretation of *energeia* that critically leaves in the shade its *performative* side, one of its essential traits as Aristotle conceived it. The fact that in the 30s Heidegger himself comes to see this side of *energeia* provides us with stronger grounds to question the supposed conflict between ontology and phenomenology in Aristotle, which can result in a new formulation of the Heideggerian project.

Contents

RÉSUMÉ.....	III
ABSTRACT	VI
ABBREVIATIONS	X
EDITORIAL REMARKS	XII
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	XIV
INTRODUCTION.....	1

SECTION I ~ AN APPROACH TO *PHRONĒSIS* IN CONNECTION WITH THE OVERALL ARGUMENT AND THE ONTOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE *NICOMACHEAN ETHICS*..... 7

1. ARISTOTLE'S ORECTICAL REFRAMING OF <i>PHRONĒSIS</i>	8
1.1. From Ancient Tradition to Aristotle.....	8
1.2. For the Sake of Precision	12
1.3. The Irreducibility of <i>Orexis</i>	18
1.4. Ends and Means: Toward the Organic Paradigm	22
1.5. Intelligent Desire.....	31
1.6. Community or the Missing Link	38
2. <i>ENERGEIA</i> AND THE IRREDUCIBILITY OF <i>PRAXIS</i>	42
2.1. Realizing Truth.....	42
2.2. <i>Energeia</i> : the Immediacy of Life.....	47
2.3. <i>Poiesis</i> and <i>Praxis</i> : Ceasing or Not to Be.....	60
2.4. <i>Phronēsis</i> and <i>Techne</i> : Two Spheres of Ends.....	63
2.5. The Structure of Practical Truth	71
2.6. <i>Phronēsis</i> and <i>Sophia</i> : Irreducibility Does Not Mean Supremacy.....	77
CONCLUSION TO SECTION I	87

SECTION II ~ A DIALOGUE WITH HEIDEGGER'S APPROPRIATION OF *PHRONĒSIS* ON THE WAY TO *SEIN UND ZEIT* IN THE LIGHT OF HIS UNDERSTANDING OF *ENERGEIA* 91

3. FROM PHENOMENOLOGY TO ARISTOTLE: GRASPING IMMEDIACY.....	92
3.1. Phenomenology and the Stream of Life.....	92
3.2. Phenomenological Method and Christian Kairology, Two Key Vectors Pointing towards Aristotle.....	97
3.3. Ethics or Ontology: a Dilemma for Aristotle and Heidegger?.....	110

4. <i>ENERGELA</i> AND <i>PHRONĒSIS</i> IN HEIDEGGER'S FIRST PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO ARISTOTLE	120
4.1. Heidegger's Early Approach to <i>Energieia</i>	120
4.2. The Doubling of the Point of View in <i>Phronēsis</i>	126
4.3. A Widening of the Paradox.....	137
5. <i>PHRONĒSIS</i> AND THE MODES OF <i>ALĒTHEUEIN</i>	143
5.1. Introducing the 1924 <i>Auseinandersetzung</i> with the <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>	143
5.2. Two Key Patterns of <i>Praxis</i> : <i>Logos</i> and <i>Echein</i>	148
5.3. <i>Phronēsis</i> and the Continuum of Life.....	157
5.4. The Twofoldness of <i>Technē</i>	170
6. <i>TELOS</i> : WHERE EVERYTHING IS DECIDED	179
6.1. <i>Telos</i> and <i>Peras</i> in 1924.....	179
6.2. Bringing <i>Physis</i> and <i>Praxis</i> Closer.....	186
6.3. Heidegger's Other Approach to <i>Telos</i> in 1939	193
6.4. <i>Aretē</i> cannot be <i>teleion</i> ?.....	200
7. <i>KAIROS</i> AND <i>AEI</i> , POLES OF THE GIGANTOMACHIA.....	221
7.1. <i>Phronēsis</i> is at Each Time New	222
7.2. No Bridge in the Abyss.....	233
7.3. Sharpening the Spear of <i>Phronēsis</i>	238
7.4. Heidegger's Place in the <i>Gigantomachia</i>	244
7.5. <i>Phronēsis</i> and <i>Sophia</i> : Medicine and Health?.....	249
8. REVISITING METAPHYSICS IX: <i>HEXIS</i> , <i>ENERGELA</i> AND TIME.....	260
8.1. <i>Energieia</i> and <i>Hexis</i> in 1931	261
8.2. <i>Energieia</i> and Time.....	274
CONCLUSION TO SECTION II	288
BIBLIOGRAPHY	296

Abbreviations

Sources

- DWA Heidegger, M. “Dasein und Wahrsein nach Aristoteles (Interpretationen von Buch VI [der] Nikomachischen Ethik)” (1924) An unpublished transcript of this lecture is quoted (cf. bibliography for more details and English translation).
- EE *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* Edited by R.R Walzer and J.M. Mingay. Oxford, 1991 [*Eudemian Ethics* Translated by J. Solomon, in *The Revised Oxford Translation* (Jonathan Barnes, ed.) vol. 2. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995].
- EPR *Einleitung in die Phänomenologie der Religion* (1920-21) in GA 60 *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens* Ed. by Matthias Jung, Thomas Regehly and Claudius Strube, 1995 [*The Phenomenology of Religious Life* Trans. by Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei. IU Press, 2004].
- GA Heidegger’s Collected Works (*Gesamtausgabe*) Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann.
- KNS Heidegger, M. *Die Idee der Philosophie und das Weltanschauungsproblem* (KNS 1919) in GA 56/57 *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie* Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann 1999 pp. 3-117.
- Met.* *Aristotelis Metaphysica* Edited by W. Jaeger (1957) Oxford, 1969 [*Metaphysics* Translated by W. D. Ross, in *The Revised Oxford Translation* (Jonathan Barnes, ed.) vol. 2. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995].
- NB Heidegger, M. *Natorp Bericht* = “Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation). Ausarbeitung für die Marburger und die Göttinger Philosophische Fakultät” (1922), in GA 62 *Phänomenologische Interpretationen ausgewählter Abhandlungen des Aristoteles zu Ontologie und Logik*. pp. 343-399. Ed. by Günther Neumann, 2005. [“Phenomenological Interpretations in Connection with Aristotle. An Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation” (trans. by John Van Buren) in Heidegger, M. *Supplements. From the Earliest Essays to Being and Time and Beyond* SUNY, 2002 pp. 111-145] (cf. bibliography for more details).
- NE *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea* Edited by I. Bywater (1894) Oxford, 1962. [*Nicomachean Ethics* Translated by W. D. Ross and revised by J. O. Urmson, in *The Revised Oxford Translation* (Jonathan Barnes, ed.) vol. 2. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995].
- SZ Heidegger, M. *Sein und Zeit* (1927) Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1967 (11th edition).
- WBP Heidegger, M. “Vom Wesen und Begriff der *Physis*. Aristoteles Physik B 1” (1939) in GA 9 *Wegmarken* Ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Hermann, 1996 (2nd edition) pp. 239-301.

Secondary Bibliography

- PRA Aubenque, P. *La prudence chez Aristote* Paris: PUF, 1963.
- AQM Brague, R. *Aristote et la question du monde. Essai sur le contexte cosmologique et anthropologique de l'ontologie*. Paris: PUF, 1988.
- GJ II Gauthier, R.A. and Jolif, J.Y. *L'Éthique à Nicomaque, Introduction, Traduction et Commentaire* (volumes II-1 and II-2: *Commentaire*) Louvain/Paris: Publications Universitaires de Louvain/Béatrice Nauwelaerts, 1970.
- LSJ Liddell, H. and Scott, R. *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Revised and augmented throughout by Sir Henry Stuart Jones with the assistance of Roderick McKenzie). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940.

Other abbreviations

- add. e. added emphasis in our quotation or translation of a text with emphases by the author (in quotations of Heidegger's works, the original text in footnotes includes only its emphases).
- esp. see especially
- for ref. cf. for the reference or quotation
- mod. tr. Partial modification of the English translation indicated in the bibliography.
- n. number
- our e. our emphasis (only in translation when the original is provided)
- our tr. our translation (indicated only if an English translation is included in the bibliography. This abbreviation is used only in first occurrences in footnotes).

Editors

- SUNY Albany: State University of New York Press
- PUF Paris: Presses Universitaires de France
- IU Press Bloomington: Indiana University Press

Editorial remarks

— In references and quotations, the pagination of Heidegger’s original text is always provided in the first place, followed by the pagination in [square brackets] of the English translation, if available. In the case of NB, the pagination of the original manuscript is provided next to that in the GA, separated by a slash.

— Square brackets also perform (i) the role of parentheses when placed inside other parentheses, and indicate (ii) annotations inside quotations, with the mark C.A. whenever any doubt might arise on the authorship of the annotation. Exception to this latter criterion is the indication of a term or expression in the original language made inside a translation, which is marked with parentheses.

— Some key terms are often rendered in Greek instead of in English translation either because the context requires doing so or because once the reader has got used to them it is preferable to keep the original form.

— Ancient Greek is rendered in Latin transliteration. Nouns or noun phrases in quotations, either next to the English translation of the term or replacing it, are rendered in nominative case wherever this makes the reading smoother. For the same reason, verbs or verb phrases are usually rendered in the infinitive.

— Single quotation marks are used to mark out specific terms or chains of words in English when not doing so would make the reading difficult, or also to identify paraphrases of recent quotations.

— The term *Dasein*, when referred to human beings, is kept in its original form in all the English translations of Heidegger’s work, independently from the criteria of each translator.

— The term ‘being’ translates two concepts that are rendered distinctively in German: *Sein*, being *per se*; *Seiendes*, an individual being (e.g. human beings and natural beings). In their translation of GA 19, Rojcewicz and Schuwer capitalize the term when it translates *Sein*. While this may make the reading smoother, we appreciate Stambaugh’s reasons (cf. the preface to her translation of *Sein und Zeit*) to avoid this strategy, which suggests a substantivation of ‘being’ that is alien to Heidegger’s approach to it, and therefore avoid the capitalization. For consistency reasons, we have applied this criterion to all our quotations in English, either from translations of Heidegger’s works, or from other bibliography. Otherwise, a common solution of English translators has been most times respected, namely rendering *Seiendes* in plural (beings).

— An homogeneous criterion has been taken for the references of Aristotle’s work as far as the numeration of books is concerned, which is applied also to references inside other author’s texts we quote: Roman numerals, instead of Greek alphabet letters are used. Thus, e.g. *Metaphysics* Θ is rendered as *Metaphysics* IX. Only titles of books or articles are exception to this criterion.

— As a rule, the references of the NE are indicated immediately in the main text (without the abbreviation NE) in order to lighten the volume of footnotes. Exception to this are (i) allusions to the NE without quotation, (ii) quotations of the NE with additional comments, (iii) passages in which the reference in the main text may hinder the reading. For the translations used, cf. the bibliography.

— While the quotations and references to the NE in Heidegger's works (in most cases added by the editors) follow the division of chapters of Becker's edition, the one Heidegger handled, because the English translations we handle follow the division of chapters according to Didot's edition, we have kept to this division of chapters in all references. In consulting Heidegger's works, the reader may perceive this contrast, but still the indication of Becker line and column avoids any misunderstanding.

— In section II, references of Aristotle *outside* of Heidegger quotations follow the original text and translations indicated in the bibliography, not Heidegger's translation or paraphrase.

— Unless otherwise indicated in quotations or references, translations used in the text correspond to *The Revised Oxford Translation*. (Jonathan Barnes, ed.) Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

— Emphases in Aristotelian quotations are always ours, unless otherwise indicated in footnotes.

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“Man versteht den Aristoteles nicht, wenn man bei ihm stehen bleibt. Man muß auch wissen, was er nicht sagt, und selbst muß man die Wege gewandelt haben, die er wandelt, die Schwierigkeiten, mit denen er kämpft, den ganzen Prozeß, den er durchlaufen, durchempfunden haben, um zu verstehen, was er sagt. Ein bloß historisches Wissen ist in Bezug auf keinen Philosophen weniger als auf Aristoteles möglich”

FRIEDRICH SCHELLING

“Heidegger has taught us that it is necessary to immerse oneself in the Aristotelian bath”

FRANCO VOLPI

Introduction

The sixth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE VI) is perhaps one of the densest texts in the works of Aristotle. Heidegger understood very soon the fundamental reach of the questions it tackles, and devoted a great deal of effort to it in his early courses. Nowadays it is certain that *Sein und Zeit*, the most influential philosophical work in the twentieth century, owes a lot to Aristotle's insights in that book.

Ever since the second half of the 19th century, this text has been the object of intensive though not always productive debate—inducing sometimes an “irritating quarrel”¹ between interpreters. Ricœur attributes the amount of literature on NE VI to the “complex, even tortuous character of this text, [which may] partly explain the overinterpretation of which it has been the object”². However much this text may have been ‘overinterpreted’, though, it still remains that the Aristotelian notion of practical truth is definitely “one of the most productive basic conceptual patterns in the history of Western metaphysics”³. The vast philosophical influence of Heidegger seems to suggest that this is far from being an exaggeration.

This thesis starts with an *interpretation* of the Aristotelian concept of *phronēsis* in section I. This first step is methodologically crucial, not because we intend to evaluate whether Heidegger does justice to Aristotle's thought but rather because we intend to reach an understanding of Heidegger's thought through an

¹ BODÉÛS, R. *The Political Dimensions of Aristotle's Ethics*. Albany: SUNY, 1993 p. 27.

² RICOEUR, P. “À la gloire de la *phronēsis*” in Chateau, J.-Y. (ed.) 1997 pp. 13-22 (p. 13 for ref.). Gauthier in his turn speaks of “the unfinished and disordered state in which [the text] has arrived to us” (GAUTHIER, R. A. and JOLIF, J. Y. *L'Éthique à Nicomaque. Introduction, Traduction et Commentaire* Louvain/Paris: Publications Universitaires de Louvain/Béatrice Nauwelaerts, 1970, vol. II.2 p. 446 (hereafter GJ II). For quotations of the commentary on book VI, we will refer only to Gauthier, as author of this part of the work). We subscribe to these opinions: the concentration of obscure passages of NE VI is remarkable in relation to the rest of this treatise.

³ VIGO, A. “Verdad práctica y virtudes intelectuales” in Vigo, A. *Estudios Aristotélicos*, Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2006d p. 403.

analysis of his *appropriation* of this concept. The distinction between ‘interpretation’ and ‘appropriation’, which has also been expressed as that between ‘reproductive’ and ‘productive’ interpretations, is in fact one of the philosophical returns of the work of Heidegger⁴. We believe that his relation to Aristotle is to be primarily conceived of in terms of ‘appropriation’ or ‘productive interpretation’, insofar as *he does not intend so much to elucidate what Aristotle said as rather build his own thought upon some of Aristotle’s insights*. Such an approach is based on the crucial point that emphasizing certain aspects of texts and downplaying others, far from being defective, is *constitutive* of an interpretation—also of a reproductive one. However, insofar as we do not remain only within texts but there is a *Sache* concerned by them, an appropriation may still be judged in terms of doing justice, not to the texts, but to the *Sache*, or to put it in Husserlian terms, *die Sache selbst*, things themselves. It is precisely this phenomenological strain to go beyond the text that guides the appropriations of Heidegger, and that leads us to develop in the first place an interpretation of Aristotle’s understanding of *phronēsis* in NE VI. ‘Interpretation’, insofar as we do not intend to unfold a train of thought, but rather to extract from the texts what Aristotle seems to say, without discarding the possibility of extracting from the text what the concise style of the author does not make explicit. This interpretation shall provide us a necessary guiding line to appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of Heidegger’s productive interpretation, always in reference to the things themselves.

Our research intends to mediate between the two most frequent approaches to Heidegger’s relation to Aristotle: on the one hand, those who in the name of the non-historiographical nature of Heidegger’s project assume that all of his moves in interpreting Aristotle are best suited to the service of that project,

⁴ Vigo holds that understanding (and interpretation) is in the core of contemporary hermeneutical philosophy because of “the shift of interest from the merely *reproductive* forms towards the original *productive* forms of understanding, in the philosophical consideration of the phenomena of openness and appropriation of sense” (VIGO, A. “Caridad sospecha y verdad. La idea de racionalidad en la hermenéutica filosófica contemporánea” *Teología y Vida* 46/1-2 (2005) cf. esp. pp. 259 ff.

with a repeated emphasis on the unthought by Aristotle, sometimes to the detriment of *what he might have thought, and even written*⁵; on the other, those who in learning the violence to which Heidegger submits the texts, concentrate their efforts on showing how Aristotle eludes Heidegger's *Destruktion*⁶. While the former do not adopt a necessary critical distance, so that they remain blind to possible inaccuracies of Heidegger's thought, the latter hardly appreciate the potentialities of this project.

To our mind, a correct approach to Heidegger's relation to Aristotle should balance between both extremes. Lingering too much on the first one would not enhance a necessary critical distance, which is necessary to evaluate whether certain aspects of the Heideggerian project could be improved or rethought, e.g. whether the *Holzwege* have to remain to be such, or there are other new ways which could be opened. And giving too much importance to the second approach would not enter well into the Heideggerian search for new ways: critical distance should not prevent us from understanding Heidegger's breakthroughs.

Finally, we would like to add a word on the title before briefly sketching out the structure of the thesis: as our argument unfolds the reader may wonder, in view of the relevance of the concept of *praxis*, why the thesis is not entitled "*praxis*

⁵ Sommer's *Heidegger, Aristote, Luther* is to our mind an example of this kind of approach. In spite of its thorough documentation, it ultimately seems to us to take too much for granted Heidegger's interpretation of Aristotle, in the name of overcoming sterile "dogmatic faithfulness" to Aristotle's text: "Heidegger is not a philosophy historian in the strict sense of the word. The phenomenological resource to history is a critical destructive return to the beginning of this history (...). The corpus of a philosopher is not just a stock of historiographically fixed opinions which we should restrict ourselves to index according to the sterile ideal of a dogmatic faithfulness to the text. The productive access to heritage operates by an over-interpretative translation of the text to make it say what it has not been able to say (...). The necessary historiographical critique must not overlook the main aspect of the heideggerian approach, namely the performative operativity of his philosophical practice, which aims at the transformation of a historical corpus to produce, by repetitive destruction, an unprecedented issue (*une problématique inédite*)" Cf. SOMMER, Christian *Heidegger, Aristote, Luther. Les sources aristotéliennes et néo-testamentaires d'Être et Temps* PUF, 2005 pp. 307-308.

⁶ Cf. e.g. BERTI, Enrico *Aristotele nel Novecento* Bari: Laterza 1993 pp. 60 ff. Although many of Berti's precisions are valuable not only for an understanding of Aristotle's philosophy but also for an approach to Heidegger like the one we develop in this thesis, he actually does not succeed in appreciating the 'unprecedented issues' that Heidegger may raise with his interpretation.

and *energeia*” rather than “*phronēsis* and *energeia*”, since *phronēsis* is a *dynamis* in relation to *praxis*, and *praxis* is itself a form of *energeia*. To be sure, it is *praxis* that supports the ontological weight of *phronēsis*, and Heidegger himself focuses almost exclusively on the term *praxis* in his 1924 course *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*. Yet, both in the *Natorp Bericht* where the ontological breakthrough into *phronēsis* is made, and in the 1924-25 course on Plato’s *Sophist*, this latter term is predominant to characterize a mode of *aletheuein*. Furthermore, it is under the term *phronēsis* that the topic of discussion developed in this thesis is generally identified among scholars, while *praxis*, in part perhaps because of its adoption by most modern languages, has come to invoke a wider range of themes. *Praxis* would therefore indicate less specifically what the reader will find in the present thesis, although its exclusion from the title is not intended in the least to diminish its relevance.

Section I is based on a combination of a close reading of Aristotle’s text and a dialogue with the interpretations provided by different commentators. Yet, we take sides in the debate and come to a defined view of *phronēsis*, because we believe that it is only thus that we can subsequently enter into a dialogue with Heidegger’s appropriation. Our overall view is not set therefore on Aristotle but, on the contrary, it takes its departure from Aristotle to approach Heidegger’s project. References to Heidegger are scarce in section I, also because we expect our initial distance from his appropriation of Aristotle to enrich our dialogue with his philosophy. Still, it is unavoidable that the thought of Heidegger somehow affects our reading in that first section—it definitely does, often through the perspectives of authors who are clearly indebted to Heidegger in their approaches to Aristotle, such as Hans-Georg Gadamer, Pierre Aubenque, Rémi Brague, Paul Ricœur, Leonardo Polo and Alejandro Vigo.

Chapter 1 analyzes the intellectual soil in which the Aristotelian understanding of *phronēsis* arises and the breakthrough implied by his original integration of *aretē* and *orexis*. The reflection in that chapter leads us to the concept of organic

unity (*symphysis*), which acquires increasing importance thereafter. From that basis, chapter 2 suggests an interpretation of how the distinction between *phronēsis* and *technē*—or their respective enactments, *praxis* and *poiēsis*—is built on the basis of *energeia* and the closely related concept of *entelecheia*. The ontological force of the distinction between *praxis* and *poiēsis* is to our mind the, as it were, secret weapon of the NE, and also the main reason for Heidegger’s interest in it. To our mind, crucial concepts such as readiness (*Fertigkeit*), or present-at-handness (*Vorhandenheit*) can be traced back to this basic distinction, from which the Aristotelian determination of *praxis* is obtained. It is also from the characterization of *praxis* that the much debated binomial *phronēsis-sophia* is approached at the end of this chapter.

After this search for our own voice as regards Aristotle’s concept of *phronēsis* and its place in his philosophy, the ground is ready to engage Heidegger’s texts in Section II. Chapter 3 starts considering the question of the immediacy of life as a *leitmotiv* for Heidegger’s renewal of phenomenology, and discusses the influence of his methodological efforts and his religious studies from 1919 to 1921 on his new approach to Aristotle. An essential point is still discussed, on the basis of the results of section I, namely the legitimacy and feasibility of Heidegger’s ontological appropriation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Chapters 4 to 7 constitute the core of our dialogue with Heidegger. We depart in chapter 4 from an analysis of Heidegger’s programmatic *Natorp Bericht* and the first course that he develops in the form of a close reading and comment of Aristotle’s texts. Chapter 5 enters the main source for our work, the long interpretation of the NE developed in the 1924-25 course *Platon: Sophistes*, and specifically the relation between *phronēsis* and *technē* as read by Heidegger. As is the case in section I, this distinction calls sooner or later for the concepts of *energeia* and *entelecheia*, which ultimately turn around that of *telos*. Chapter 6 stands therefore as a kind of interlude, since it turns to the previous course that year, where some of Heidegger’s most important points about these concepts are made,

and where his view of their relation with ethics is most explicit. Only from this basis can we go back to the interpretation of the NE in the *Sophistes* course, and specifically to what we have called the *gigantomachia* between *phronēsis* and *sophia* that is held in it. For all of Heidegger's emphasis on *phronēsis*, we hold there that his ultimate goal is not a dethronement of *sophia*, but a rethinking of its disclosing capabilities—one that, according to Heidegger, is not possible from within Aristotelian conceptuality.

Last but not least, chapter 8 actually works as a synthesis of the traversed way, and a further explicitation of the basic idea that guides its advance, namely that not only is there *no* conflict between Aristotle's concepts of *phronēsis* and *sophia* or *hexis* and *telos*, as Heidegger believes there to be, but also that the important passage of *Metaphysics* IX 6 where Aristotle elucidates at once the ontological structure of *praxis* and that of *energeia* provides new elements for a rethinking of being in the same terms in which Heidegger pointed to the ontological relevance of NE VI. Thus the paradox of an Aristotle providing ways out of his own labyrinth is probably enlarged, and we are provided with new insights to go on exploring, hand in hand with Aristotle and Heidegger, what things themselves have to say.

SECTION I

~

An Approach to *Phronēsis*
in Connection with
the Overall Argument
and the Ontological Implications
of the *Nicomachean Ethics*

1. Aristotle's Orectical Reframing of *Phronēsis*

1.1. From Ancient Tradition to Aristotle

The term *phronēsis*⁷ has a long trail in ancient Greek prior to Aristotle's original development of it. Gauthier provides a detailed history of its wanderings in his analysis of NE VI⁸. Its sense was originally very wide: "as well as *phren* means the soul as a whole, heart and spirit, and *phronein* means feeling as much as thinking, *phronēsis* can refer to all the nuances of feeling or thought"⁹. Democritus and Socrates, however, use it more specifically as meaning a kind of practical wisdom: a discernment of good and evil that would eventually adopt a contemplative character in Plato. Although this necessarily simplifies the multifariousness of views expressed in Plato's dialogues, Gauthier assumes this approach, yet with the qualification that the term 'contemplative' does not entail Platonic *phronēsis* renouncing to lead action, but rather rising above action to direct it, as a transcendent knowledge rooted in the acquaintance with the idea of the Good¹⁰. However, he proceeds, "the contemplative parenthesis opened by Plato in the history of *phronēsis*" is closed soon after him: Aristotle recovers its sense as developed by Democritus, Socrates and Isocrates, namely that of a practical

⁷ We preferably use the Greek term. If the context requires referring to it in English, though, we follow Ross' translation: 'practical wisdom'. We refer to *sophia* also preferably using the Greek term, or else as 'theoretical wisdom', to distinguish it from 'practical wisdom', also following Ross. For a different handling and translation of *phronēsis* and *sophia*, cf. Gauthier's in GJ II pp. 463 ff. in order to underscore the intellectual role of *phronēsis*, he rejects Aubenque's translation (*prudence*), and translates it into French simply as *sagesse* (wisdom). *Sagesse*, he holds, is not to be confused with *sophia*, which he declines translating.

⁸ Cf. GJ II pp. 463-469.

⁹ GJ II, p. 464. Cfr. also BRAGUE, R. *Aristote et la question du monde. Essai sur le contexte cosmologique et anthropologique de l'ontologie*. PUF, 1988, p. 41 (hereafter AQM).

¹⁰ GJ II, pp. 465-466. Gauthier concedes, though, that Plato's *Seventh Letter* and Aristotle's *Protrepticus*, supposedly faithful to an alleged Platonic doctrine, speak of two wisdoms, one of which is practical.

wisdom that immediately directs actions and therefore is a knowledge of singulars and means¹¹.

Although he tends to see Plato's understanding of *phronēsis* as a parenthesis too, Aubenque points out that such an opposition of Plato and Aristotle should be qualified, since some dialogues of Plato show an awareness of the limitations of a contemplative grasp of the Good as a guiding principle for action¹². This point, which is made by other commentators¹³, faces a deeply rooted approach that has been reinforced in the twentieth century by the influential though contested work of Jaeger¹⁴.

According to Aubenque, though, Plato's hesitations would not be but an effect of tradition: if we were to highlight all the passages where Plato gives *phronēsis* a sense which is not the 'Platonic' one, he contends, we would realize that "Platonic *phronēsis* only announces Aristotelian *prudence* insofar as it evokes the *phronēsis* of tradition"¹⁵. As for this traditional sense, Aubenque points beyond

¹¹ Cf. GJ II, pp. 467-469.

¹² AUBENQUE, P. *La prudence chez Aristote* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963, p. 24. (hereafter PRA).

¹³ Cf. BERTI, E. *La filosofia del primo Aristotele* Padova: Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia Università di Padova/CEDAM 1962 esp. pp. 550-553; DÜRING, I. *Aristoteles. Darstellung und Interpretation seines Denkens*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1966 esp. pp. 456-468; GADAMER, Hans-Georg *Die Idee des Guten zwischen Plato und Aristoteles* (1978) in *Gesammelte Werke 7. Griechische Philosophie III* Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 1991 pp. 128-227; GRANT, A. *The Ethics of Aristotle. Illustrated with Essays and Notes*. London: John W. Parker and Son, 1865 Vol. 1 esp. pp. 135-169, essay "On the Relation of Aristotle's Ethics to Plato and the Platonists", partly modified in a later edition (New York: Arno Press, 1973, vol. 2 pp. 179-217); POIRIER, J.-L. "Socrate avait raison..." in Chateau, J.-Y. (ed.) *La vérité pratique: Aristote, « Ethique à Nicomaque », livre VI* Paris: Vrin, 1997 pp. 137-150; ROWE, C. J. "The Meaning of *Phronēsis* in the Eudemian Ethics" in Mueller-Goldingen (ed.) *Schriften zur Aristotelischen Ethik* Hildesheim: Olms, 1988 p. 260, who acknowledges that speaking of a "Platonic use of *phronēsis*" might be misleading in certain cases.

¹⁴ JAEGER, W. *Aristoteles: Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*. Berlin: Weidmann, 1923.

¹⁵ PRA pp. 24-25.

Socrates and his contemporaries (Socrates is said to be an “unconscious heir”¹⁶ of it), namely to what he calls “the tragic source”¹⁷:

Greek tragedy was full of problems of this kind: what is man allowed to know? What is he supposed to do in a world where chance reigns? What can he expect from a future that is concealed to him? How to remain, men as we are, within the limits of man? The answer, tirelessly repeated by the choirs of tragedies, is summarized in a word: *phronēin* (...). It is because Aristotle has been always approached within the shadow of Plato that we have ended up forgetting that he was a Greek, perhaps even more of a Greek than his teacher (...)¹⁸.

Phronēsis for Aristotle would then be ultimately that rationality which is proper to the finitude of man. Knowledge that is conscious of its limits: “one of the most constant traits of the Greek spirit”¹⁹, which leads Socrates to hold that “real wisdom is the property of God” and that the wisest man is who has realized that “in respect of wisdom he is really worthless”²⁰; a conviction that lies also in Aristotle’s concession that a life of pure contemplation is “too high for man” (X 6, 1177b 26f), although “we must, so far as we can, make ourselves immortal, and strain every nerve to live in accordance with the best thing in us” (33f). The old Greek wisdom reminding human beings of their limits, which the Stoics will turn upside down by conceiving them as gods²¹, is conserved in the popular use of the term *phronēsis* at least until the time when Aristotle recovers it to develop the structure of the wisdom of those who “know what is good for themselves and what is good for men in general” (VI 5, 1140b 9f).

This knowledge, Aubenque points out, “is moral not because of its reach, but rather because of its limits, [which] are present in the term *phronēsis* itself, this

¹⁶ PRA p. 164.

¹⁷ Cf. PRA pp. 25, 30 and 155-177. Gauthier also refers to this tradition (cf. GJ II p. 464), but he does not make it a major subject.

¹⁸ PRA p. 30. Martha C. Nussbaum explores extensively this trend in *The Fragility of Goodness. Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

¹⁹ PRA p. 165.

²⁰ *Apology of Socrates* 23 a-b.

²¹ PRA p. 162.

old word that Plato had conserved by detaching it from its sense”²². That morality is a mark of finitude would explain why Aristotle considers it senseless to attribute virtues to gods: “What would their temperate acts be? Is not such praise tasteless, since they have no bad appetites?” (X 8, 1178b 15f). *Pave* Aubenque, though, and however large or imprecise the concept of *phronēsis* is for Plato, it is significant that a very similar point is made in the critique of poets of the *Republic*²³. Besides, Aubenque himself admits that Aristotle’s play on words relating *sōphrosynē* and *phronēsis*—namely that *sōphrosynē*, i.e. temperance, owes its name to the fact that it preserves *phronēsis*—is taken from Plato²⁴.

In this respect, it is most surprising—in view of the eventual direction of his interpretation—to read in Jaeger’s *Aristoteles* the concession that “there is nothing to which Plato has more passionately objected to the last moment of his life as the idea that the soul can *know what is good without being good itself*”²⁵. Jaeger himself acknowledges that Plato showed an awareness of the limits of the theory of the Ideas, and he even rejects the hypothesis that the criticisms on this theory in the *Parmenides* would have been written by Aristotle. However, while he admits that it would be misleading, for an adequate understanding of the relation between the thought of Aristotle and that of Plato, to intend to reduce the latter’s to a fully consistent whole²⁶, he declines to do so only to reduce Plato to *a smaller whole*: that of his latest dialogues which, like the *Philebus*, are supposed by Jaeger to search for an ideal of scientific exactness in ethics²⁷. This reduction, of course, is

²² PRA p. 152.

²³ Cf. *Republic* II, 381 b-c.

²⁴ PRA pp. 159-160 (Cf. *Cratylus* 411e; *Republic* IV, 442 c-d; NE VI 5, 1140b 11f).

²⁵ JAEGER, W. p. 22 (our e).

²⁶ *Ibidem* p. 10. Cf. GRANT, A. 1973 p. 181: “If we ask, at what point of his fifty years of authorship was Plato most himself? In which of the dialogues can we put our finger on the most essential features of his philosophy?—the answer must be, nowhere and everywhere. Plato is to be regarded as a dynamic force, rather than as the setter forth of a system”.

²⁷ Cf. *Ibidem* pp. 13-15. Düring and Berti object to this point (cf. note 13). Cf. also GADAMER, Hans-Georg “Der aristotelische ›Protreptikos‹ und die Entwicklungsgeschichtliche Betrachtung der

crucial to his theory on the evolution of Aristotle's thought from an unshakeable adherence to a Platonic theoretical *phronēsis* in the *Protrepticus* to a mature Aristotelian theory-free *phronēsis* in the NE²⁸. We do not intend to join here the long debate provoked by this theory. What is most significant about it, as Aubenque accurately diagnoses, is that it has ultimately said very little about the philosophical sense of the Aristotelian concept of *phronēsis*²⁹, to which we now turn.

1.2. For the Sake of Precision

In addition to the need to pay close attention to the text itself, as Aubenque and others recommend³⁰, we suggest that primarily conceiving of the philosophical relation between Aristotle and Plato as one of radical opposition may be misleading to understand their own philosophies³¹. Such a conception is often taken

aristotelischen Ethik" (1927) in GW 5 *Griechische Philosophie I* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985 pp. 164-186, esp. pp. 176-177.

²⁸ Natali, who refutes Jaeger's interpretation on the basis of textual evidence in the *Topics* and the *EE*, claims rather that Aristotle holds a sustained struggle throughout his work with the concept of *phronēsis*, which shows itself as both an excellence of character and of intelligence. (Cf. NATALI, C. "Virtù o Scienza? Aspetti della *phronēsis* nei *Topici* e nelle *Etiche* di Aristotele" *Phronēsis* 29 (1984) pp. 50-72, republished later in Natali, C. *The Wisdom of Aristotle* SUNY, 2001).

²⁹ "Ever since the publication of the works of philologists as E. Kapp and W. Jaeger, the problem of the interpretation of Aristotelian Ethics within the whole of Aristotelian speculation has been replaced by that of the place of the *Nicomachean Ethics* within the history of Aristotelian Ethics and, more generally, of Aristotelian Ethics within the history of Ethics (...). The result is that, by regarding Aristotelianism as a simple stage between the Pre-Aristotelianism of the young Aristotle and the Post-Aristotelianism of epigones, we have ended up forgetting what was specific of Aristotelianism itself. It is such a misfortune that has happened to *phronēsis*, torn between the contemplation from which it detaches and the practice towards which it heads (...). Thus, genetic method, always more concerned with processes than with structures, readier to highlight the contradictions of a doctrine than its consistency (...) [does not see] anything else but transition and passage between extremes, where the point of view of the author could have seen a peak". PRA pp. 26-27. Cf. also BODÉÜS, R. 1994 pp. 1-2 and YEPES, R. "El origen de la *energeia* en Aristóteles" *Anuario Filosófico* 22/1 (1989) pp. 94-95.

³⁰ The works of Natali and Chateau are nice examples of this close reading. Some of their strengths are to our mind the following: i) avoiding to base an interpretation on short difficult passages; ii) taking seriously Aristotle's difficult points, if he insists on them in different passages; iii) for Aristotle's understanding of a concept, giving priority to passages where he develops it over passages where he could be just using the term in a colloquial sense (Cf. NATALI, C. 1984 and 2001; CHATEAU, Jean-Yves "La *phronēsis* et la vérité" in Chateau, J.-Y. [ed.] 1997 pp. 185-261).

³¹ Grant believes that the NE "is manifestly indebted to the dialogues of Plato, [which] go far towards furnishing its entire skeleton" (GRANT, A. 1973 p. 198). Marías, a translator of Aristotle into Spanish,

for granted and summarized by the commonplace term ‘Anti-Platonism’—a term no doubt fed partly by Aristotle, whose harshest criticisms seem however directed to the Platonists³². As a matter of fact, Aristotle refers explicitly to Plato only three times in the NE, not quite to criticize him but to insert his teachings as relevant to the argument³³.

The often unconscious prejudice of many commentators consists perhaps in regarding Aristotle as Anti-Platonic until otherwise proven. We suggest an alternative point of departure by observing Aristotle’s relation to Plato as one of a gain in accuracy or precision³⁴. This does not exclude originality in his thought nor detachment from Plato on certain issues, but it downplays an approach of mutual exclusion that is usually based on the reduction of the ‘real Plato’ to some of his

observes: “The philosophy of Aristotle cannot be understood but from Platonism. But let us not misunderstand that: *from* does not mean *within*. It is an eminent case (...) of what I call «intellectual filiation», which can be formulated as follows: «incomprehensible without him, irreducible to him». The Aristotelian concepts, except for perhaps a pair of them—*energeia*, *entelecheia*, and few more—come from Plato. There can be hardly found a page of Aristotle that does not *come* from Plato (but we should add: nor one that *remains* in Plato)” (MARIAS, J. “Introducción” to Aristotle, *Ética a Nicómaco* Madrid: Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales [1959] 2002, p. xi).

³² Cf. NE I 6 and *Met.* I 9. As for the passage that has come to be known under the motto *Amicus Plato magis amica veritas* (cf. NE I 6, 1096a 11ff), it is remarkable that Aristotle speaks of a collective: “the Forms have been introduced by friends of our own (*dia to philous andras eisagein ta eide*)”. Surely, we do not intend to question Plato’s authorship of the notion of Forms or Ideas, otherwise clearly indicated by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* I 6, but to avoid the oversimplification of reducing Plato’s thought to a theory developed in some of his dialogues, which too easily reads Plato and Aristotle as poles apart.

³³ Cf. NE II 3, 1104b 11ff, where Plato’s view is far from being regarded as ‘intellectualist’ (cf. also note 25) “[M]oral excellence is concerned with pleasures and pains; it is on account of pleasure that we do bad things, and on account of pain that we abstain from the noble ones. Hence *we ought to have been brought up in a particular way from our very youth, as Plato says, so as to delight in and to be pained by the things that we ought*; for this is the right education” (Cf. *Republic* III 402a and *Laws* II 653 a-c). Cf. also, for the other references, NE I 4, 1095a 32; X 2, 1172b 28.

³⁴ Rodrigo, while acknowledging relevant threads of continuity between Plato and Aristotle, characterizes the latter’s analyses as “more qualified than those of his predecessor”. RODRIGO, P. *Aristote. Une philosophie pratique. Praxis, politique et bonheur*. Paris: Vrin, 2006 p. 120. Vigo, for his part, characterizes Aristotle’s methodological concern as “a kind of phenomenological reserve before the tendency to obtain systematic all-embracing unities” (VIGO, A. *Zeit und Praxis bei Aristoteles*. München: Karl Alber, 1996 p. 41). This attitude can be traced for instance in the passage that has inspired the title of this subsection: “Most of these qualities also are unnamed, but in these as in the other cases we must attempt to coin names for them ourselves, for the sake of clarity and so that our meaning may be easily followed” (NE II 7, 1108a 15ff, Rackham). Cf. also EE 1 6, 1216b 26; and NE I 3, 1094b 11f: “Our discussion will be adequate if it has as much clearness as the subject-matter admits of?”.

dialogues or some of his assertions. The passage on the contemplation of the Good in the *Republic* is in this respect one of the favorite targets³⁵. Less commented upon, however, is e.g. his skepticism about the efficacy of laws “enacted only in words and on paper (*logō te kai grammasin*)”³⁶ which cannot make the city “good *in the full sense of the word*, [i.e.] wise, brave, sober and just”³⁷. In this same trend, one may well cling to the statement at the end of the *Meno* that whoever has virtue gets it “by divine dispensation (*theia moira*)”³⁸ as evidence that Plato would understand ethics in a contemplative manner. However, a few lines above in the same dialogue it is clearly stated that virtue is not knowledge (*phronēsis*) and that it cannot be taught (*didakton*)³⁹. If the dialogue finishes referring to the gods, it is precisely because it comes to an *aporia*: neither Socrates nor Meno are clear on the nature of virtue, but still they agree on what it is not, i.e. mere theoretical knowledge; hence Socrates’ constant criticism, here and elsewhere, of the Sophists, who believe that virtue can be taught⁴⁰.

When the Socrates of the Platonic dialogues considers virtue and knowledge as equivalent he is pointing to a wider conception of knowledge than the Sophists have. “Assuming knowledge in such a sense that this equivalence appears as unintelligible or arbitrary, Gadamer argues, entails that the reproach of intellectualism turns against itself”⁴¹. Yet, the reduction of Plato and Socrates to the intellectualist *cliché* is undoubtedly a comfortable resort in the case of so complex authors, and that is perhaps one reason why the commentators of Aristotle who

³⁵ Cf. *Republic* VII, 517 c-d.

³⁶ *Ibidem* IV, 425b.

³⁷ *Ibidem* IV, 427e.

³⁸ Cf. *Meno* 99e–100b.

³⁹ Cf. *ibidem* 98e. Plato is here obviously using the wide Greek sense of *phronēsis*, which cannot be simply leveled to the more clear-cut understanding of the concept in Aristotle.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Meno* 90c ff. and GUTHRIE, William K. C. *A History of Greek Philosophy. Volume III: The Fifth-century Enlightenment*. Cambridge University Press, 1979 pp. 250-260.

⁴¹ GADAMER, Hans-Georg “Praktisches Wissen” (1930) in *GW 5 Griechische Philosophie I* Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 1985, pp. 230-248 (p. 231 for ref).

assume it are legion. An immediate result of this assumption is for instance the transformation of the allegedly Platonising book X of the NE into a source of puzzlement and controversy that does not benefit the overall interpretation of the treatise⁴².

On the other hand, holding as we do that the Platonic dialogues set relevant precedents for Aristotle's ethical reflection does not entail leveling the differences between these authors. For Grant, the thesis that virtue is a science, "far from being an abstract theory, [is] intimately connected with life and reality"⁴³. And yet,

[it] exhibits one of the characteristics of early Ethics, namely, that they contain extremely little psychology. At first men are content with the rudest and most elementary mental distinctions; afterwards greater refinements are introduced. Plato's threefold division of the mind into Desire, Anger and Reason, was the first scientific attempt of the kind. But even in Plato, the distinction between the moral and the intellectual sides of our nature was hardly established⁴⁴.

It is precisely Aristotle's merit to have provided analytical accuracy where required, e.g. in the articulation of "the moral and the intellectual sides of our nature". What is new in his philosophy, Aubenque argues, "is not an unprecedented interest in action—neither Socrates nor Plato had been pure speculators—but the discovery of a *split within reason*, and the acknowledgement of it as the condition of a *new practical intellectualism*"⁴⁵. Socrates, Aristotle argues in the *Eudemian Ethics*, "in-

⁴² Thus, for instance, in spite of her lucid analyses of many aspects of the NE, Nussbaum considers NE X 6-8 as a remnant of Platonism in Aristotle and therefore as incompatible with the rest of Aristotle's ethical thought (Cf. NUSSBAUM, M. 1986 pp. 373 ff). The effects of considering this difficult passage as not genuinely Aristotelian, though, go beyond the seemingly innocent excision of a text. This shall be dealt with in section 2.6 below.

⁴³ GRANT, A. 1865 p. 122. Poirier holds that Socrates' emphasis on virtue being a science is due to the aim to take sides against the biologism of the Protagorean position (Cf. POIRIER, J.-L. p. 141).

⁴⁴ GRANT, A. 1865 p. 124.

⁴⁵ PRA p. 144 (our e). Here Aubenque is less restrictive than in the first pages of his study and seems to concede that Plato (now related to Socrates) did something else for *phronēsis* than just assume the insights of the "tragic source" (cf. note 15). In tune with this view, Poirier defines Aristotle's effort of chapters 12 and 13 of NE VI as a reworking of the Socratic theory on the unity of virtues where Aristotle takes care not to break away from Socratism (cf. POIRIER, J.-L. p. 139).

quired what excellence is, not how or from what it arises”⁴⁶. Aristotle’s contribution could then be summarized as coming to grips with the complex structure of rationality by showing *how* knowledge is intertwined with practice. Yet, the articulation of this ‘how’ does not entail a general overturning of Plato or Socrates that would justify the term ‘Anti-Platonism’ as a basic trait of Aristotle’s thought. The point is, again, not to level differences, but to avoid transforming a question of method or precision—which evidently provides new philosophical insights—into one of radical opposition.

One of the trends of Aristotle’s precision in regard to Plato is the sorting-out of the problem of the ambiguity of the good, which is “either means or end”⁴⁷. While Plato and Socrates tend to consider the end as the defining term of a moral action, Aristotle puts special emphasis on the means⁴⁸. By doing so, however, he does not at all relinquish an appreciation of ends, but inserts the question about them into the context of action: he somehow puts them *in motion*, or better, he grasps them in their original motion. Thus he manages to explain the relation between the right apprehension of ends and ethical virtue (*ethikē aretē*)⁴⁹, which Jaeger recognizes Plato to have detected⁵⁰. However, such an account requires a distinction and *articulation* of action (*praxis*) on the one hand and disposition or habitual state (*hexis*) on the other, in which *praxis* is as much the cause of *hexis* as its result. Here Aristotle goes too beyond Plato, who had already stressed the essential role of *hexis*, but had not accounted for the way in which

⁴⁶ EE I 6, 1216b 16.

⁴⁷ GRANT, A. (1865) p. 125.

⁴⁸ Cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 p. 201: “Against this Socratic or Platonic perspective which traces everything back to the end, Aristotle endeavors here, at first, to trace everything back to the action itself (i.e. to the means undertaken in sight of the end)”. Cf. NE III 5, 1113b 5f. For Plato, cf. *Gorgias* 426 c-d: “If a man acts with some purpose, he does not will the act, but the purpose of the act”; *Laches* 185d: “When [one] considers anything for the sake of another thing, [one] thinks of the end and not of the means?”.

⁴⁹ Unless otherwise indicated, the use of the term *aretē* hereafter refers to *ethikē aretē*.

⁵⁰ Cf. note 25 above.

such dispositions are produced⁵¹. In NE I he introduces—in a correction that, again, seems to concern Platonists more than Plato himself⁵²—his chief thesis that, rather than a state, *eudaimonia* or human good is an activity (*energeia*) of the soul according to virtue⁵³:

it makes, perhaps, no small difference whether we place the chief good in possession (*ktēsis*) or use (*chrēsis*), in state (*hexis*) or in activity (*energeia*). For the state may exist without producing any good result, as is a man who is asleep or in some other way quite inactive, but the activity cannot; for one who has the activity (*energeia*) will of necessity be acting (*prattein*), and acting well (*eu prattein*). (I 8, 1098b 31ff).

Thus, the Aristotelian emphasis on means—only apparently to the detriment of ends—seems to be closely related to the primacy of action over disposition or use over possession. This new accent, though, does not simply downplay dispositions and ends⁵⁴: it rather reinforces them through a new understanding; as we said, *it puts them in motion, it roots them in human life, which is essentially active*. A conscientious exploration of two fundamental concepts allows in our opinion for this ‘activation’ of ethics: *orexis* and *energeia*. Both are crucial for Aristotle’s new understanding of *phronēsis* and its relation to *aretē*, *technē* and *sophia*.

⁵¹ Cf. GAUTHIER, R.A. *La morale d’Aristote* PUF, 1973 pp. 76-78; ROWE, C. J. p. 258.

⁵² According to Rodrigo, “concerning *hexis*, Aristotle plays Plato off against the Platonics (Speusippus and Xenocrates); he carries out a «return to Plato», so to speak, against those Platonics who weaken the notion of *hexis*”. (RODRIGO, P. 2006 p. 122). The term ‘return’, of course, does not intend to flatten the differences between Plato and Aristotle. For a general perspective of the argument, cf. pp. 118-126. Plato distinguishes between a passive and an active sense of *hexis*, and in the *Philebus* he places *eudaimonia* among the latter (Cf. *ibidem* p. 119, providing other references, and YEPES, R. 1989 pp. 97 ff.). Cf. also NATALI 2001 pp. 118 ff.

⁵³ Cf. also e.g. NE I 7 1098a 16f; 13, 1102a 5f.

⁵⁴ Cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 pp. 217-218: “*Phronēsis* is of course not excluded from dealing with the end of action, conceived as it is by Aristotle as the excellence of intelligence in the practical domain; it is just that its way of dealing with them is none other than that of deliberation concerning the means”.

1.3. The Irreducibility of *Orexis*

The Aristotelian notion of *phronēsis* can be regarded either as a widening of the concept of ethical virtue (*aretē*) or as a widening of that of knowledge⁵⁵. That is in fact what is at stake in a reference to Socrates near the end of NE VI:

Socrates in one respect was on the right track while in another he went astray; in thinking that all the excellences (*aretai*) are forms of practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) he was wrong, but in saying they implied practical wisdom he was right (...). But we must go a little further. For it is not merely the state (*hexis*) in accordance with right reason (*kata logon*), but the state that *involves* right reason (*meta logon*), that is excellence (...). Socrates, then, thought the excellences were forms of reason (for he thought they were, all of them, forms of knowledge), while we think they *involve* reason⁵⁶.

Aristotle makes here a double point that provides an important key to understand NE VI. On the one hand, ethical virtue requires *phronēsis* to exist, but such a requirement cannot be understood as an identification: *phronēsis* and ethical virtue are to be kept as different principles if we are to understand them. Broadie rightly underlines in this respect that Aristotle says that prudent actions require an *agreement* of right desire and true reason, “which implies harmony, hence not identity”⁵⁷. On the other, we do not understand this requirement if it is conceived of as an *external* agreement: virtue is not a state of desire according to (*kata*) the reasons furnished by a sensible person or to those of an accurate treatise advising one on how to act. When Aristotle calls for the involvement of right reason, he means that virtue is a state necessarily *structured by one’s own reason*. Rackham’s translation is in this respect perhaps more enlightening: “Virtue is not merely a disposition *conforming to* right principle (*kata logon*), but one *cooperating* with right

⁵⁵ Cf. NATALI, C. 1984 p. 59: “Now virtue is understood as a wider kind (...), which embraces two species: the *aretē* of intellect or dianoetic species, and the *aretē* of character or ethical species (...) In its turn, *phronēsis* is not anymore a science, but another kind of knowledge”.

⁵⁶ NE VI 13, 1144b 18-30, mod. tr.

⁵⁷ BROADIE, S. *Ethics with Aristotle* New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991 p. 217. Cf. NE VI 2, 1139a 29ff.

principle (*meta logou*)”—cooperating, i.e. operating together, in such a way that one makes possible the operation of the other.

The *topos* of this encounter between one’s own virtue and one’s own reason is *phronēsis*, “a true, rational, practical disposition (*hexis alethē meta logou praktikē*) with regard to the things that are good or bad for man” (VI 5, 1140b 4ff)⁵⁸, the elucidation of which constitutes one of the main goals of the NE⁵⁹. This true rational disposition provides the standard that makes ethical virtue possible, as stated in NE II: “*aretē*, then, is a state concerned with choice, lying in a mean (*mesotēs*) relative to us, this being determined by reason and in the way in which the man of practical wisdom (*phronimos*) would determine it” (II 6, 1106b 35ff). However, in order to provide this standard that is constituent of virtue, *phronēsis* requires in turn the rectitude of *orexis*, i.e. ethical virtue: “it is evident that it is impossible to be practically wise (*phronimos*) without being good” (VI 12, 1144a 36f). This circularity, the crux of many interpreters, is the center of gravity of Aristotle’s conception of practical truth that attracted the interest of the young Heidegger.

This relation between *aretē* and *phronēsis*, which may be literally called a ‘virtuous circularity’⁶⁰, turns on the concept of *orexis*. According to the detailed analysis by Nussbaum⁶¹, this term is reported to have been used before Aristotle only in “the dubious ethical fragments of Democritus”. The verb *oregesthai* does

⁵⁸ Mod. tr. Ross translates *hexis alethē meta logou praktikē* as follows: “a true and reasoned state of capacity to act”. We follow here Mariás’ translation, which seems to us clearer.

⁵⁹ “It should be determined what right reason is and what is the standard that fixes it” (NE VI 1, 1138b 33f).

⁶⁰ By ‘literally’ we mean that the term ‘virtuous’ can be applied both formally and materially to this circularity; what is more: the formal sense finds its origin in the material one—this consistent circularity is not a conceptual construction but a feature of the dynamics of virtue. We may also speak of a ‘vicious circularity’, in the case of vice, but not in the formal sense (that remains ‘virtuous’, or consistent) but only in the material one: inasmuch as virtue is generated as a result of this interaction between *orexis* and *phronēsis* (or excellence of *praxis*), vice is also generated as a result of an interaction between *orexis* and defective *praxis*.

⁶¹ Cf. NUSSBAUM, M. pp. 273 ss.

appear, though rarely, in Plato⁶², and also in Homer as meaning ‘reach out for’ or ‘grasp at’⁶³. Aristotle appears to have selected it as a generic term to cover “all cases of goal-directed animal movement”. *Epithymia* and *boulēsis*, respectively those desires proper of bodily appetites and of reason, are then species of the genus *orexis*⁶⁴. For Nussbaum, the English translation ‘desire’ does not faithfully render this generic meaning⁶⁵, which she defines with two essential traits: (i) it implies directedness towards an object and (ii) it is active more than passive, in the sense that it does not entail just ‘being in need of something’. Her analysis, based also on the *De Motu Animalium* and the *De Anima*, concludes that for Aristotle *orexis* is involved in every action and “accounts for what is common to all animal movement (...). Both human and other animals, in their rational and non-rational actions, have in common that they stretch forward, so to speak, towards pieces of the world which they then attain or appropriate”⁶⁶.

This view is developed in *De Anima* III where Aristotle clearly states that “in any case it is the object of appetite that originates movement”⁶⁷. The point is

⁶² Plato had indeed dealt with desire, although he lacks the interwoven conception of *hexis* and *orexis* developed by Aristotle, which reveals the more intricate structure of both. On Plato’s consideration of *orexis* in the *Republic*, cf. III 402a, where although the specific term is not used, enjoying and being pained at the right moments is considered an essential result of good education. Later in that dialogue *oregesthai* is used in the context of a discussion on the articulation between reason and irrational impulses: “The soul of the thirsty, then, in so far as it thirsts, wishes nothing else than to drink, and yearns for this (*oregetai*) and its impulse is toward this” (IV 439a-b). The term *epithymia* is used nearby in the same sense, in a statement that parallels clearly the beginning of the NE: “All men desire good (*pantes tōn agathōn epithymousin*), and so, if thirst is desire (*epithymia*), it would be of good drink (...) and similarly of other desires” (438a). Cf. also VI 485d on striving after (*oregesthai*) “truth in every form”.

⁶³ Cf. LSJ, entry *oregesthai*.

⁶⁴ Vigo shares this view, and attributes to *boulēsis* the concern with plans for one’s life (Cf. VIGO, A. “Razón práctica y tiempo en Aristóteles” in Vigo, A. 2006a p. 285).

⁶⁵ In this thesis we shall use preferably the Greek term. If it is necessary to translate it, though, we shall render it as ‘desire’.

⁶⁶ NUSSBAUM, M. pp. 275-276. Cf. also ANSCOMBE, G.E.M. *Intention* (1963) Cambridge/ London: Harvard University Press, 2000 pp. 63 ff. “[A] point insisted by Aristotle himself [is that] the *archē* (starting point) is *to orekton* (the thing wanted)”.

⁶⁷ *De Anima* III 10, 433a 27f (cf. the whole of chapter 10, 433a 9 – 433b 30). For Vigo, *De Anima* III 9-13 “points out significantly to [the] priority of the desiderative factor” (cf. VIGO, A. 1996 p. 261).

confirmed in a crucial passage of NE VI to which we will return later in this chapter:

Intellect itself (...) moves nothing, but only the intellect which aims at an end and is practical (...). [F]or good action (*eupraxia*) is an end (*telos*), and desire (*orexis*) aims at this. Hence choice is either desiderative thought or intellectual desire, and such a principle (*arche*) is man (VI 2, 1139a 35 - b5)⁶⁸.

It is otherwise significant that Aristotle places desire at the outset of both the *Metaphysics* and the NE: “All men by nature desire (*oregontai*) to know”⁶⁹; “[T]he good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim (*ephietai*)” (I 1, 1094a 2f)⁷⁰. Both assertions place this ‘reaching out for an end’ in the first place, as a prior driving force, even for thought. The *Eudemian Ethics* is also quite clear in this respect: “The end aimed at is (...) the starting-point of our thought, [and] the end of our thought the starting-point of action”⁷¹.

This irreducibility of desire, though, does not conflict with the priority of action over disposition, or with the new emphasis of means that is characteristic of Aristotle. It just accounts for the ties between man and the rest of reality: *orexis* connects *praxis* with the *physis* to which human beings belong⁷²—which also implies, crucially, the distension in time in which we are. In fact, an important point of the doctrine of the psychic powers, developed in the *De Anima*⁷³ and summarily expressed in the NE⁷⁴, is that each one includes the lower ones, so that

⁶⁸ The English translation by Ross runs as follows: “and such an origin of action is man”. We assume rather Grant’s and Mariás’ translation “and such a principle as this is man”, which makes more explicit Aristotle’s reference to man himself (*kai e toiaute arche anthropos*). Rackham’s, in this respect, is Solomonic: “man, as an originator of action, is a union of desire and intellect”.

⁶⁹ *Met.* I 1, 980a 21.

⁷⁰ Cf. *ephiemi* in LSJ, meaning here ‘aiming at’.

⁷¹ *EE* II 11, 1227b 32-33.

⁷² As Nussbaum puts it, *orexis* “demystifies rational action by asking us to see it as similar [though not irreducible, C.A.] to other animal motions (NUSSBAUM, M. p. 276).

⁷³ Cf. esp. *De Anima* II 3.

⁷⁴ Cf. *NE* I 7, 1097b 33f; 13, 1102a 26ff.

the relevance of *orexis* for reason might better explain this “desiderative thought or intellectual desire”⁷⁵ that constitutes man.

Aristotle’s insistence on the irreducibility of *orexis* is also far from implying a devaluation of reason. It does not imply that desire governs reason, just as the fact that the senses provide the information for abstract thinking does not mean that they govern it⁷⁶. What is at stake here—Vigo puts it in a way that makes clear Heidegger’s interest in Aristotle—is to show how rational agents “move always already within an ambit of understanding in which cognitive momentums (*vis*: perception, belief, thought) are indissolubly intertwined with projective anticipations (*vis*: desires, intentions, plans, expectations)”⁷⁷. The key question is *how* this intertwining has to be understood in order not to denaturalize neither desire nor knowledge.

1.4. Ends and Means: Toward the Organic Paradigm

In his definition of *physis* in *Metaphysics* V, Aristotle distinguishes organic unity (*symphysis*) from mere contact (*baphēs*), “for in the latter case there need not be anything besides the contact, but in organic unities there is something identical in both parts, which makes them grow together instead of merely touching”⁷⁸. The structure of this peculiar kind of unity can be very helpful to our mind for an accurate understanding of the interplay between desire and reason—or ends and means—in Aristotle’s definition of *phronēsis* in NE VI: “a true (i), rational (ii), practical (iii) disposition (*bexis alethē meta logou praktikē*) with regard to the things that are good or bad for man (iv)” (VI 5, 1140b 4f)⁷⁹. Four features are detailed in

⁷⁵ Cf. NE VI 2, 1139b 4f.

⁷⁶ Cf. *Politics* VII 14, 1333a 21ff: “[I]n the world both of nature and of art the inferior always exists for the sake of the superior, and the superior is that which has a rational principle”.

⁷⁷ VIGO, A. 2006a p. 290.

⁷⁸ *Met.* V 4, 1014b 22ff. Cf. also the definition of *holon* in V 26, esp. 1023b 32ff.

⁷⁹ Mod. tr, cf. note 58.

this definition—besides the categorization of *phronēsis* as a disposition (*hexis*)—and *they are meant to form a whole*: they occur simultaneously, and they reciprocally transform themselves, as in an organic whole⁸⁰. Thus, for instance, the inclusion of the terms ‘true’ (i) and ‘practical’ (iii) in this definition implies that the *phronimos* ‘holds’ a peculiar kind of *alētheia*, i.e. practical truth, which cannot be just equated with the restricted sense in which Aristotle uses *alētheia* when he warns us in NE I about the limited precision of his statements: “[W]e must be content (...) to indicate the truth roughly and in outline” (I 3, 1094b 19ff). The truth of statements—the *written letter* of the NE—is not practical truth, however much this work may deal with practical issues.

Therefore, we cannot grasp the *alētheia* of *phronēsis* unless we conceive it at once with the rest of elements in the definition: it must be *meta logou*, i.e. not only agree with a rational principle, but take its lead from the exercise of one’s own reason; it must be *praktikē*, i.e. *stemming from* and *pointing towards* action, rather than being just learnt from a teaching that can be subsequently transmitted⁸¹; and concerned with what is good or bad for man (*peri ta anthrōpō agatha kai kaka*), taking for ‘man’ the whole of one’s being, and not just a part of it, like e.g. one’s profession.

⁸⁰ Many of the misunderstandings concerning Aristotle’s ethics might be due to a reading guided by a mechanical paradigm. Trendelenburg actually considered ethics a privileged source for the idea of organicity: “Ethics provides for the first time, as an outcome of Metaphysics, the basic access to the idea of the whole, and surely the organic view of the world (*organische Weltanschauung*), against a mechanical one” (TRENDELENBURG, Adolf *Naturrecht auf dem Grunde der Ethik* Leipzig: Hirzel, 1860 § 3, cf. also § 19). Rodrigo suggests the mereologic theory of Stanislaw Lesniewski as a clue to explain the relation between virtues and happiness in Aristotle. We think that it can shed light here too: in this theory, “the relation between parts [is conceived] as relation between ingredients rather than as elements, in the sense that an ingredient is defined by the relation itself, and does not exist at all before it (...). In brief, the being of the ingredient is totally relative” (RODRIGO 2006, p. 48). The logical scheme of priority *proteron-hysteron* developed by Aristotle can also provide insight in this respect (for a detailed analysis of this issue, cfr. VIGO, A. “Prioridad y prioridad ontológica según Aristóteles” in Vigo, A. 2006e pp. 23-54).

⁸¹ Cf. NE X 9, 1179b 4ff.

This organicity of the binomial ‘true’ and ‘practical’ is expressed also before in NE VI: “of the part [of reason] which is practical and intellectual the good (*to en*) is truth *in agreement with* right desire (*alētheia homologōs ekhousa tē orexei tē orthē*)” (VI 2, 1139a 29ff)⁸². The term *alētheia* included *inside* this definition, if observed as an isolated component, would be restricted to truth on the fact that certain means lead to a certain end, while the truth that is object of the definition—i.e., practical truth, the good (*to en*) of the part of reason which is at the same time practical and intellectual—*results from* an agreement between true reason and right desire.

Within the peculiar truth that is the result of this agreement, Aristotle links rightness of ends to desire and correctness of means to reason: “wish (*boulēsis*)⁸³ relates rather to the end (*telos*), choice (*proairesis*) to what contributes to the end (*ta pros to telos*)” (III 2, 1111b 26f). This meets his repeated statement that deliberation (*bouleusis*), which is the necessary step prior to choice, is concerned with means, not with ends: “We deliberate not about ends but about what contributes to ends. For a doctor does not considerate whether he shall heal (...) nor does any one else deliberate about his end. *Having set the end, they consider how and by what things it is to be achieved*” (III 3, 1112b 11-16). The doctor, *qua* doctor, does not deliberate about curing: this is an end that is set prior to his professional exercise here and now⁸⁴. Only with the view set on this *telos* can he come to deliberate about the ways through which he could attain it. In the same way, insofar as one is ready to act, one has already set an end. The point is taken up in NE VI:

⁸² Mod. tr: Ross renders *to en* and *to kakōs* as ‘the good state’ and ‘the bad state’, thus perhaps restricting too much their meaning.

⁸³ *Boulēsis* is rational desire (cf. note 64); choice is defined some lines above by Aristotle as a typically rational activity (cf. b 7 ff). That Aristotle uses *boulēsis* instead of *orexis* reinforces our point above on the reciprocal transformation of the ‘ingredients’ of practical truth.

⁸⁴ The same point is made by Plato in *Republic* I 342, with a similar purpose, i.e. pointing towards a sphere of excellence that is wider than professional skills.

Phronēsis (...) is concerned with things human and things about which it is possible to deliberate; for we say this is above all the work of the man of practical wisdom (*phronimos*), to deliberate well, but no one deliberates about what cannot be otherwise, nor about things which have not an end (VI 7, 1141b 8-12)⁸⁵.

Here a further step is taken: good deliberation, i.e. good choice of the means, is attached to *phronēsis*—which seems to be confirmed towards the end of NE VI, where *phronēsis* is plainly affirmed to deal with the means, seemingly to the exclusion of ends: “excellence (*aretē*) makes the aim (*skopos*) right, and practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) the things leading to it (*ta pros touton*)” (VI 12, 1144a 8f)⁸⁶. These passages have been the object of controversy because they seem to contradict other statements in the NE where *phronēsis* is said to determine the end of action⁸⁷. What seems to follow from them is that *phronēsis* is indeed a rational faculty, though limited to a calculation of means to attain an end in the determination of which it would not take part. However, Gauthier argues, understanding that the end is set without the intervention of *phronēsis* would entail “abandoning [the constitution of values] to desire”⁸⁸—which calls for the question as to whether *phronēsis* has a role in the determination of the end and, if so, as to why Aristotle would insist so much that this is the task of desire.

The *phronimos* is indeed characterized as the one who is excellent in deliberation, although this excellent deliberation (*euboulia*) is distinguished from that deliberation which correctly leads to attaining what one should not do, or also

⁸⁵ Cf. also NE VI 9, 1142b 32f; VI 5, 1140a 25f: “it is thought to be the mark of a man of practical wisdom to be able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for him”; 1140a 30f: “the man who is capable of deliberating has practical wisdom”.

⁸⁶ Cf. also NE III, 1111b 26f. “wish (*boulēsis*) relates rather to the end [and] choice (*proairesis*) to what contributes to the end (*tōn pros to telos*)”.

⁸⁷ The clearest one is the following: “The choice will not be right without *phronēsis* any more than without *aretē*; for the one determines the end and the other makes us do the things that lead to the end” (NE VI 13, 1145a 4ff); Another one may be taken to adopt the same stance, depending on how it is interpreted: “excellence in deliberation will be correctness with regard to what conduces to the end of which practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) is the true apprehension” (VI 11, 1142b 32f). This second text is at the core of the controversy between Gauthier and Aubenque, discussed below.

⁸⁸ Cf. *ibidem* p. 565.

from that which leads to attaining what one should do, but not by the right means. This, Aristotle holds, does not yet entail “excellence in deliberation (*euboulia*)” (VI 9, 1142b 24f)⁸⁹. The first case (deliberation that leads to attaining what one should not do) is especially relevant to elucidate, by contrast, the specificity of *phronēsis*. This is developed later when Aristotle distinguishes *phronēsis* from cleverness (*deinotēs*), the unqualified cleverness or skill to choose the right means to achieve an end⁹⁰. For Aristotle, *euboulia*—the deliberation of a *phronimos*—leads to take (a) the effective means for achieving (b) a *good* end, in such a way that (a) without consideration of (b) does not describe the deliberation of *phronēsis*, but of *deinotēs*, which is a skill present in a villain as well as in a *phronimos*:

There is a faculty which is called cleverness (*deinotēs*); and this is such as to be able to do the things that tend towards the mark (*skopos*) that we have set before us and hit it. Now if the mark be noble (*kalos*), the cleverness is laudable, but if the mark be bad (*phaulos*), the cleverness is mere villainy; hence we call clever both *phronimoi* and villains. *Phronēsis* is not the faculty [of cleverness], but it does not exist without this faculty” (VI 12, 1144a 23ff).

The good deliberation of *phronēsis*, therefore, has something that the good deliberation of *deinotēs* does not have: *it points to an excellence that transcends the relation between ends and means here and now*⁹¹, *although it is only ‘realized’ in this relation here and now*⁹². In order to grasp its structure, we should first dwell on the relation between ends *here and now*, following Aristotle’s maxim that we should start from things that are easier to know for us⁹³.

⁸⁹ Aristotle furnishes a third case excluded from excellence in deliberation: attaining what one ought to do but only after long deliberation (b26)

⁹⁰ Cf. NE VI 12, 1144a 23ff.

⁹¹ Cf. NE VI 5, 1140a 25ff, where Aristotle characterizes the *phronimos* as the one who is able “to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, *not in some particular respect* (...) but about what sorts of thing conduce *to the good life in general* (*pros to eu zēn holos*)”.

⁹² Broadie’s firm prevention against the idea of a ‘grand end’ directing actions in Aristotle’s Ethics is very enlightening in this respect. Cf. BROADIE, S. esp. pp. 196 ff. and 238 ff.

⁹³ Cf. NE I 6, 1095b 2ff; EE I 6, 1216b 26ff.

Many commentators agree that, if we are to understand *phronēsis*, ends and means have to be understood as a kind of dynamic unity⁹⁴. In other words, we have to be forewarned about the risk of applying modern separations to Aristotle's distinctions. Aristotle's frequent way of alluding to means as referred to ends, i.e. 'what leads to the end' (*ta pros to telos*) is very significant of this connection⁹⁵. Deliberating is dealing with ends in terms of means, and acting is setting means as ends in view of a subsequent end, so that *there is not such a thing as an end conceived of independently from the means that leads to it, as much as there is not such a thing as a means that is not oriented towards an end*. Even happiness has to be conceived of as happiness here and now in order to point to happiness as a life-project⁹⁶. Broadie expresses accurately this dependence of means on ends that Plato had already noted⁹⁷:

The person did X-for-the-sake-of-Y rather than merely X, the doing of which would be explained by reference to something outside that doing, e.g. a desire for Y (...). We ask «Why are you doing X?» because “doing X” does not describe the whole item (...). Mentioning Y reveals what choice the agent makes in choosing X. It reveals the real nature of the project⁹⁸.

Indeed, as Aristotle puts it, “if the mark be noble (*kalos*), the cleverness is laudable, but if the mark be bad (*phaulos*), the cleverness is mere villainy” (VI 12, 1144a 26f). But his perspective is wider, because he also stresses the converse dependence of *ends on means*: “excellence makes the choice right, but the things

⁹⁴ “The unique and identical object that thought states and that desire pursues is neither the means isolated from the end, nor the end separated from the means: it is the means-through-the-end or the end-through the means” (GJ II pp. 447-448). Vigo speaks of the “intentional complex object compounded by end and means” (VIGO, A. “La concepción aristotélica de la verdad práctica” in Vigo, A. 2006b p. 308). Cf. also DUNNE, J. *Back to the Rough Ground. 'Phronesis' and 'Techne' in Modern Philosophy and in Aristotle* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993 p. 272; NATALI, C. 1984, and 2001 pp. 39-61; BROADIE, S. pp. 179 ff.

⁹⁵ Cf. also e.g. NE III 3, 1112b 12, 33f; III 5, 1113b 4; VI 9, 1142b 30-34; VI 12, 1144a 24f.

⁹⁶ Cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 pp. 228 ff. “The deliberation of *phronēsis* (...) is not a determination of what the end is (happiness), nor of what happiness is from a theoretical point of view, but a determination of what happiness is *here and now*”.

⁹⁷ Cf. *Gorgias* 426 c-d.

⁹⁸ BROADIE, S. pp. 180-183.

which should naturally be done to carry out our choice belongs not to excellence but to another faculty” (1144a 20ff). Paraphrasing Broadie, the person searched Y-through-X rather than merely Y, the search of which could be explained by reference to something outside that searching, e.g. doing X. We ask ‘*How* will you get Y?’ because ‘getting Y’ does not describe the whole item. Mentioning X reveals what kind of end the agent searches by searching Y. It reveals the real nature of the project.

Therefore, while Aristotle assumes Plato’s point that means are not morally neutral insofar as they are always defined by their end, he *also* emphasizes the opposite dependence. And this he does not only because an end shall not be reached unless the necessary means to attain it are found but, *much more fundamentally, because the end cannot be given a moral character independently from the means through which it is attained.* The end, settled as it is before starting deliberation, is in fact ‘realized’ by the choice of the means⁹⁹. Furthermore, that this intertwinement between ends and means is not just a conceptual requirement is shown by the fact that within a course of actions what now is an end may subsequently become a means:

in each deliberation process a certain end is assumed, and there is no deliberation anymore about it *in that deliberation process* (...). This does not avoid that, in a new context of deliberation, one may deliberate on that end [as a mean C.A.], relating it to a superior end¹⁰⁰.

What this observation helps us understand is that Aristotle ultimately does *not* hold that we cannot deliberate about ends, but rather that *each deliberation is already settled within an orientation, so that the ends we deliberate about are means ordered to an*

⁹⁹ Thus, means are anything but neutral, which is precisely an anticipated challenge to machiavellism (*pace* Aubenque, who considers Aristotle not to have dealt with such an idea: cf. PRA p. 136). Höffe is also of the opinion that a “machiavellian prudence” is considered by Aristotle in NE VI 12, 1144a 23ff. (cf. note 90 and HÖFFE, O. *Aristotle* Albany: SUNY, 2003 p. 140).

¹⁰⁰ VIGO, A. 2006b p. 306. That is what Aristotle means when he says that “if we are to be always deliberating, we shall have to go on to infinity” (NE III 3, 1113a 1f). A similar point is made by Natali: “At every stage it is possible to redefine the means found, considering it as the end of a still more specific means. Thus the end/means distinction is relative” (NATALI, C. 2001 p. 81).

end: “no one deliberates about what cannot be otherwise, *nor about things which have not an end (...)*” (VI 7, 1141b 10f). This does not entail that we are necessarily tied to our orientation, but surely that we do not depart from an aimless state: “intellect itself (...) moves nothing, but only the intellect which aims at an end and is practical” (VI 2, 1139a 35f).

As was the case with the call into question of Socrates’ identification of *phronēsis* and ethical virtue¹⁰¹, *it does make a difference to keep the distinction between ends and means, in order to understand deliberation properly, i.e. accounting for its being always settled within an orientation, and framed within the temporal distension of human life*. However, Aristotle’s emphasis on this distinction has originated a probably unnecessary controversy, of which Gauthier and Aubenque are perhaps the outstanding representatives. Their diverging opinions provide conflicting translations of a passage of NE VI 9: “Excellence in deliberation will be correctness with regard to what conduces to the end of which practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) is the true apprehension” (1142b 32f). Ross’ translation is open to both theses: either Gauthier’s, who holds that *phronēsis* is the true apprehension *of the end*, or Aubenque’s, who holds that *phronēsis* is the true apprehension *of what leads to the end*¹⁰². We agree with Gauthier that emphasizing the role of virtue in the determination of ends to the point of reducing *phronēsis* to an instrumental deliberation would leave *phronēsis* in the hands of virtues, against Aristotle’s point that *phronēsis* is essential to the *genesis* of virtues¹⁰³. However, Gauthier’s effort to give back to *phronēsis* a voice in the determination of the ends almost reduces the role of virtue to a mechanical activation of what *phronēsis* orders: “if virtue is necessary, it is not at all to know the

¹⁰¹ Cf. p. 18 above.

¹⁰² Cf. “Compte-rendu de l’ouvrage de P. Aubenque sur La Prudence chez Aristote” *Revue des Études Grecques* 76 (1963) pp. 265-268 ; AUBENQUE, P. “La prudence aristotélicienne porte-t-elle sur la fin ou sur les moyens?” *Revue des Études Grecques* 78 (1965) pp. 40-51.

¹⁰³ NE II, 1106b 35ff: “Excellence, then, is a state concerned with choice, lying in a mean relative to us, *this being determined by reason and in the way in which the phronimos would determine it*”.

end, but to do it”(!)¹⁰⁴. Neither of these accounts does justice, to our mind, to Aristotle’s view; and it is mainly due to a misunderstanding of the articulation between ends and means, intimately tied to that between *orexis* and *dianoia* within *phronēsis*¹⁰⁵.

This dialectic or ‘transaction’ between ends and means turns on Aristotle’s statement that “the end of an action is relative to the occasion (*kata ton kairon*)” (III 1, 1110a 13): it is in the *now* of the action that ends and means converge. That Aristotle does not conceive this in an utilitarian way is made clear by the fact that he regards the deliberation proper to *phronēsis* as irreducible to that of the *deinotēs*. What makes a difference, we have stated, is a principle regulating those transactions of ends and means, making sure that they are *also* right from the point of view of an excellence that transcends the relation between ends and means here and now, albeit it is only realized in this relation here and now¹⁰⁶. However, how is this to take place? *How can a principle that is beyond the occasion become a principle relative to the occasion?* Aristotle provides an answer for this, as Chateau has shown by underlining the relevance of NE III to an understanding of book VI¹⁰⁷. The principle is not, properly speaking, *beyond* the occasion, but rather already operating *beneath* it.

¹⁰⁴ GJ II p. 577. Aubenque, for his part, adopts a difficult intermediate position. He rightly objects to Gauthier’s intellectualistic picture, but he is not comfortable either with a merely instrumentalist conception of *phronēsis*. We believe that the controversy is due to a separation of ends and means that does not reflect Aristotle’s articulation of these concepts. This is also Chateau’s view, who envisions the controversy as a quarrel between isolated passages seen in the light of one or the other interpretive thesis, highlighting or moving passages into the shade to convenience of it (cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 p. 198).

¹⁰⁵ “Such is then the status of the question with the peculiar object of prudence. It is an *inescapable* question, and indeed an *insoluble* one, insofar as it is posed as an alternative between ends and means” (RODRIGO, Pierre *Aristote, l’eidétique et la phénoménologie* Grenoble: Millon, 1995 p. 130).

¹⁰⁶ Cf. NE VI 5, 1140a 25ff. and note 91.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 pp. 198 ff.

1.5. Intelligent Desire

NE III starts with an analysis of voluntary and involuntary acts, after which Aristotle turns to choice, and it is here that we find the statement, quoted above, that deliberation does not devote itself to ends but to means. The same is stated of choice (*proairesis*): while “wish relates rather to the end, choice [relates] *to what contributes to the end*” (III 2, 1111b 26f). Choice, of course, is also a fundamentally rational operation: “Those who say that it is appetite or anger or wish or a kind of opinion do not seem to be right. For choice is not common to irrational creatures as well, but appetite and anger are” (1111b 10ff). However, does Aristotle actually succeed in holding together the orrectical reference to the end with the rationality of choice? We believe that Chateau is right in pointing to this text as the key for an answer¹⁰⁸:

The end, then, being what we wish for, [and] the things contributing to the end what we deliberate about and choose, actions concerning the latter must be according to choice and voluntary. Now the exercise of the excellences is concerned with these. Therefore excellence also is in our power, and so too vice (...). *Now if it is in our power to do noble or base acts, and likewise in our power not to do them, and this was what being good and bad meant, then it is in our power to be virtuous or vicious* (III 5, 1113b 2-13).

What can be inferred from this is that, inasmuch as choice is caused by *orexis*, the way in which *orexis* itself desires later on is caused in its turn by the present choice: it is with our actions that we carve out our character (*ēthos*). Against those who say that “all men aim at the apparent good, but have no control over how things appear (*phainesthai*) to [them]”, Aristotle replies that “if each man is somehow responsible for the state he is in, he will also be himself somehow *responsible for how things appear*” (III 5, 1114b 2f). Therefore, it remains that we are always already oriented, but not because of a fate that is not ours to decide upon, but most fundamentally because of our previous decisions. And this orientation does not only imply an irrational desire, but also, inseparably, a desire

¹⁰⁸ Cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 pp. 208 ff.

emerging from an understanding of reality. That is why, following a Platonic intuition¹⁰⁹, Aristotle says that “vice is destructive of the principle” (VI 5, 1140b 19f)¹¹⁰. Or, in other words, we are responsible *even* for the end of our actions¹¹¹.

Therefore, lying under the determination of ends that is proper to a chain of deliberations¹¹², be it that of *deinotēs* or that of *phronēsis*, there is not only contingency in the sense of what one cannot control (what the Greeks called *tyche*) but also *a deeper momentum of human action: another level of determination which precedes our deliberations as well as it is derived from them*, that of *orexis*. However, whereas it is in our power to be vicious or virtuous, “it does not follow that if [one] wishes he will cease to be unjust and will be just. For neither does the man who is ill become well on those terms” (III 5, 1114a 12ff). The statement that we cannot deliberate about what cannot be otherwise¹¹³ is thus applied also to the changing domain of human actions: to a certain extent we cannot immediately reverse the way in which we wish right now, because that is the result of the kind of person we have come to be with our previous decisions¹¹⁴. If we manage, as it were, to wish against our base wishes in a given moment, it is only because there were already in our being some forces which we have been able to retrieve now. If, in spite of our effort, we cannot, it is only because *ēthos* is a state, a *dynamis* that requires time to be developed and time to be changed¹¹⁵.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. note 24.

¹¹⁰ Cf. also VII 8, 1151a 14ff.

¹¹¹ Cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 p. 208.

¹¹² Cf. note 100.

¹¹³ Cf. NE VI 7, 1141b 10f.

¹¹⁴ Cf. NE VI 2, 1139b 5ff: “Nothing that is past is an object of choice, e.g. no one chooses to have sacked Troy; for no one deliberates about the past, but about what is future and contingent, while what is past is not capable of not having taken place”. Analogously, the *ēthos* with which we face a choice here and now is a given—to put it in a Heideggerian term, it is facticity.

¹¹⁵ Aubenque’s connection of morality and finitude is opportune here too (cf. note 22).

Right after this analysis in NE III, Aristotle undertakes the task of exploring ethical virtues, which occupies him until book VI. His first approach to choice in the latter shows clear signs of the continuity outlined by Chateau between both books, and introduces subsequent concepts:

The origin of action—its efficient, not its final cause—is choice, and that of choice is desire and reasoning with a view to an end (...). Intellect itself, however, moves nothing, but only the intellect which aims at an end and is practical (...). [F]or good action (*eupraxia*) is an end (*telos*), and desire (*orexis*) aims at this. Hence choice is either desiderative thought or intellectual desire, and such a principle (*archē*) is man (*orektikos nous hē proairesis ē orexis dianoetikē, kai hē toiautē archē anthrōpos*) (VI 2, 1139a 31 - b5)¹¹⁶.

Aristotle’s well-known way of formulating that choice is “either desiderative thought or intellectual desire”, with this exchange of substantives and adjectives, can well be regarded as a rhetorical way of emphasizing the circularity between desire and intelligence, *orexis* and *dianoia*. However, we suggest reading this formula as a *structural explanation* of this circularity. Leandri hints at this in his comment of this passage:

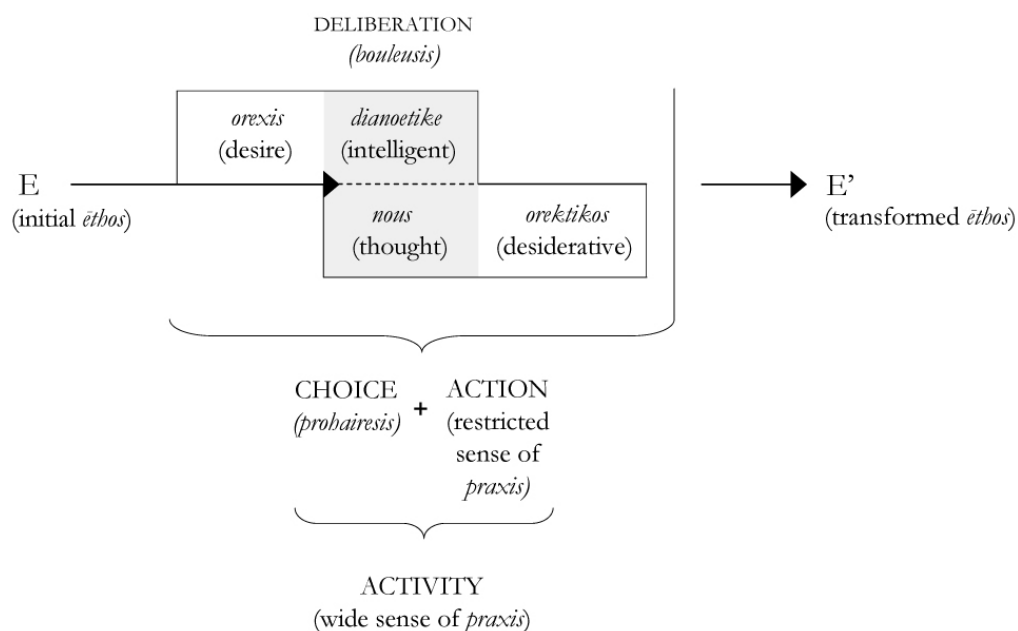
The symmetry of the conclusive formula (...) [shows that] both connections must be maintained jointly: on the one hand, a desire that is not penetrated by thought is not a source of an action (...); on the other, thought without desire does not produce any action on its own (...) which enables us to conclude «so the preferential choice can be said indifferently to be either desiderative thought or intellectual desire»¹¹⁷.

Our nuance to Leandri is that “if both connections must be maintained jointly”, then the point is not that they can be applied ‘indifferently’ to choice, but that *it is the conjunction of them that defines choice*. “Intelligent desire” (*orexis dianoetikē*) and “desiderative thought” (*orektikos nous*) are rather *two elements of choice that find each other* (cf. the figure below), in such a way that thought and desire are both present throughout all the process. A passage of the EE quoted elsewhere suggests this reading: “The end aimed at is (...) the starting-point of our thought,

¹¹⁶ Mod. tr: cf. note 68.

¹¹⁷ LEANDRI, A. “L’action et la vérité” in Chateau, J.-Y. (ed.) 1997 p. 51. This is also suggested by Chateau’s overall interpretation (cf. below).

[and] the end of our thought the starting-point of action”¹¹⁸. An *orexis* determined by the present situation and by the *ēthos* (or set of *hexeis*) of the agent ‘precedes’ choice because “intellect itself moves nothing”¹¹⁹ (not even choice). This desire activates intelligence of means (deliberation) and comes to terms with it, and subsequently ‘follows’ the conclusion of deliberation, i.e., it provides intelligence with the power to move, as desiderative thought. As an additional and necessary result, the initial *ēthos* is transformed¹²⁰.



¹¹⁸ EE II 11, 1227b 32-33. Cf. note 71.

¹¹⁹ NE VI 2, 1139a 35f.

¹²⁰ What is developed here is analogous to what has been characterized on as ‘practical syllogism’ by many commentators. However, the parallelism of the practical syllogism with the theoretical one has provoked misunderstandings and unnecessary controversy, of which we do not intend to tackle the details here. On this issue, and on the relation between choice and action, cf. paragraph 2.5. below on the structure of practical truth.

Two points should be secured here: (i) that *orexis* is placed both before and after thought is far from meaning that the intellectual faculty is suspended before and after choice; and (ii) the fact that deliberation is placed in the center does not mean that the desiderative faculty is suspended while one is deliberating (the dotted line in the figure suggests the inner connection of both moments). As for (i), insofar as the moving *orexis* comes to an agreement with reason, it is not an irrational *orexis*, but that of a rational agent¹²¹: an *ēthos* determined to a greater or lesser extent by reason¹²², which is transformed throughout the process. The new *ēthos* that comes out is the reconfiguration of desire that will operate in subsequent deliberations. Moreover, (ii) if deliberation is a transformation of the desire from which it departs, it is because it comes to terms with it: desire is present throughout the deliberation process, in such a way that “it makes itself heard by intelligence”, as much as intelligence makes itself heard by it¹²³.

What is suggested, all in all, is a picture that shows desire and intelligence in a constant feedback, i.e. what Aristotle implies by his insistence that there is no *phronēsis* without *aretē* and *vice versa*: they are *cooriginary*, which implies that they are distinct, although they require each other to exist, like the organs of a living body; the organic paradigm prevails again¹²⁴. The scheme, therefore, intends to explicate how an understanding of the mutual belongingness of desire and reason within

¹²¹ While in NE VI Aristotle uses the generic term *orexis* for this agreement, in book III he chooses the term *boulēsis*, rational desire (cf. note 64) as distinct from *epithumia*, bodily appetite: “wish (*boulēsis*) relates rather to the end, choice (*proairesis*) to what contributes to the end” (III 2, 1111b 26f). Choice is defined some lines above by Aristotle as a typically rational activity (cf. b 7ff).

¹²² Cf. NE II 6, 1106b 35ff. According to Aristotle’s definition of ethical virtue, the closer it is to the mean term, the more determined by reason it is. Insofar as it admits different degrees, the scheme accounts for defective cases of the use of reason; the fact remains, in any case, that the agent is rational, and precisely because of that his defective use of reason results in a further weakening of his reason.

¹²³ Cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 pp. 221-222.

¹²⁴ Cf. p. 22 ff. *Aretē* without the know-how of *phronēsis* is not such, because it lacks the standard to reach the mean term that characterizes it; thus, NE II explains how for instance courage might result in temerity without an adequate calculation of circumstances (Cf. NE II 2). On the other hand, *phronēsis* cannot exist without virtue, because the right end is not evident except to the good man (Cf. NE VI 12, 1144a 29-36; 13, 1144b 30ff; VII 8, 1151a 14ff).

human *praxis* requires an identification of the function of each one that does not tear the conjunction apart. If, in order to safeguard the rationality of the process, desire were reduced to the task of ‘activating’ action, as Gauthier suggests¹²⁵, *aretē* would cease to be a constitutive part of *phronēsis*, because one could reach prudent conclusions without being virtuous, i.e. without having a right desire, which would clearly contradict Aristotle’s definition of *phronēsis*. Indeed, “in organic unities (*symphysis*) there is something identical in both parts, which makes them grow together instead of merely touching, and *be one in respect of continuity and quantity, though not of quality*”¹²⁶. *Aretē* and *phronēsis* are parts of a continuous (*syneches*) and thus constitute one whole, they never exist or operate (which shall also prove to be one and the same thing) in isolation, but still they perform distinct functions.

That is why, when Gauthier clings to Aristotle’s statement that *phronēsis* “determines the end” and *aretē* “makes us do the things that lead to the end” (VI 13, 1145a 5f)¹²⁷, he only reveals his intellectualistic understanding of *phronēsis*¹²⁸, which is not Aristotle’s. This author wrongly interprets Aristotle’s distribution of functions in the characterization of the precise moment when action is to take place as a separation of *phronēsis* and *aretē* that openly contradicts Aristotle’s recurrent point that they require each other to exist: “it is impossible to be *phronimos* without *ethikai aretai*”¹²⁹. Which implies that *at the time* when *phronēsis* is uttered in this passage, Aristotle is actually considering it as an *aretē*. Thus, when *phronēsis* is said to determine the end, what is meant is that, through the agreement¹³⁰ between *logos* and *orexis*, *phronēsis*, the good state of the practical part

¹²⁵ “[I]f virtue is necessary, it is not at all to know the end, but to do it” GJ II p. 577.

¹²⁶ *Met.* V 4, 1014b 23ff.

¹²⁷ Cf. note 87 above.

¹²⁸ Furthermore, his interpretation cannot account for the fact that a few lines above Aristotle says that “*aretē* makes the aim right, and *phronēsis* the things leading to it” (cf. NE VI 12, 1144a 8f).

¹²⁹ NE VI 12, 1144a 36f. Cf. also references in note 124 above.

¹³⁰ Cf. NE VI 2, 1139a 30f.

of rationality, *reaches at the same time the truth of the means and the rectitude of the end*. Or more precisely, it reaches the rightness or rectitude of the end *through* the truth of the means, i.e. those things ordered to the attainment of the end (*ta pros to telos*). This, as has been stated, is achieved through a transformation of the right end provided by *orexis*, which consists in realizing the end with means. It is in this respect that *phronēsis* can be said to determine the end: not independently from virtue, i.e. according to “*the highest practical good for man*” (VI 7, 1141b 12f)¹³¹.

This (i) organic relation between *phronēsis* and *aretē* on which we have been insisting is importantly intertwined with the thesis (ii) on the unity of virtues at the end of NE VI. One has to note how the argument proceeds from (i) to (ii) and subsequently integrates both theses:

“It is clear, then, from what we have said, (i) that it is not possible to be good (*agathon*) in the strict sense without *phronēsis*, nor *phronimos* without *ēthikai aretai*. But (ii) in this way we may also refute the dialectical argument whereby it might be contended that the excellences exist in separation from each other (*chōrizontai allelōn*)¹³²; the same man, it might be said, is not best equipped by nature for all the excellences (...). This is possible in respect of the natural excellences (*physikai aretai*), but not in respect of those in respect of which a man is called without qualification good; for (i+ii) with the being (*hyparchein*) of the one quality, *phronēsis*, will be given at once (*hama*) all the excellences”¹³³

Only once it has been established that *aretai* are given simultaneously (*hama*) with *phronēsis* can we understand why Aristotle states that *aretē* “makes us do the things that lead to the end”. It is *aretē* as a constitutive part of *phronēsis* that leads the *phronimos* to act, which explains why action is intrinsic to *phronēsis*. Gauthier is then right in holding that virtue leads us to act, but he is wrong in depicting it, with the view to ensuring the role of *phronēsis* in the settlement of ends, as extrinsic to it. Only by observing *aretē* as intrinsic to *phronēsis*—and we

¹³¹ Mod. tr: Ross’ translation is accurate, but too intricate: “...aiming in accordance with calculation at the best for man of things attainable by action”.

¹³² The occurrence of this expression in this context importantly weakens the validity of separations either of means and ends or *phronēsis* and *aretē* described above, to the benefit of this organic paradigm.

¹³³ NE VI 13, 1144b 30 – 1145a 2, mod. tr.

expect to have shown that Aristotle holds this to be so—is the circle of human *praxis* accounted for, gathering together actions, *orexis* and *dianoia* in a practical agent.

1.6. Community or the Missing Link

Our preceding argument has shown that Aristotle's account of the circularity of human *praxis* necessarily includes choice. Out of this the question arises, concerning the beginning of intelligent desire in human life: if it does not come from previous choices, because there is no use of reason for that, where and how is it originated? Aristotle's clear framing of the NE within a wider project that includes the book known as the *Politics*¹³⁴, provides the answer. Man is born in a community, and this community is his departing point¹³⁵. It is social transmission that provides the intelligence for the desire of those who still do not have intelligence—which does nothing but reinforce Aristotle's stress on the irreducibility of *orexis*.

The missing link is, therefore, education. Here an important trend of continuity between Aristotle and Plato is shown again¹³⁶, which has been referred to

¹³⁴ Cf. I 2 and X 9. "It is surprising—Marías argues—to see the extent to which the interpretations of the ethical works of Aristotle tend to neglect its connection with the *Politics*, in spite of the extraordinary explicitness with which it is underscored in the texts (...). This connection is generally enunciated, but later cast aside, so that it is of no help to the understanding of the NE. I believe to the contrary that only an approach of both can be fruitful (...)" (MARÍAS, J. "Introducción" to Aristotle, *Ética a Nicómaco* p. xvii). Bodéüs, considers it a capital error to "regard Aristotle's *Ethics* as an attempt to contribute to «the moral formation of the individual» considered in isolation from society" (Cf. BODÉÛS, R. 1994 p. 42).

¹³⁵ Cf. *Politics* I 1, 1253 a 3-5. Cf. VIGO, A. 1996 p. 306: "In the world of *praxis* there is no such a thing as a zero point from which the agent could start without the load of the past (...). The *praxis* subject lives right from the beginning as a member of a society".

¹³⁶ Cf. refs. in note 33. "Plato expressly states his conviction that at the earliest age the totality of character is basically determined by habit (...). Hence the importance reserved in [Laws] for education defined as the primary acquisition of virtue in children. Plato started from the idea that those still incapable of reason must be trained to rule their appetites and their aversions by rational norms whose rationality they will later acknowledge (...). Aristotle decisively adopts the same perspective regarding both the nature of primary education and the importance of laws". (BODÉÛS, R. 1994. pp. 48-49).

above: Aristotle alludes to his teacher, who understands good education as an ordering of our desire that leads us “to delight in and to be pained by the things that we ought, for this is the right education” (II 3, 1104b 12f). This goal is given high political priority in the *Politics*: “No one will doubt that the legislator should direct his attention above all to the education of youth”¹³⁷. And education is primarily understood in the same terms as in the NE:

And as the body is prior in order of generation to the soul, the irrational is prior to the rational. Anger and wishing and desire are implanted in children from their very birth, but reason and understanding are developed as they grow older. For this reason, the care of the body ought to precede that of the soul, and the training of the appetitive part should follow: nonetheless our care of it must be for the sake of reason, and our care of the body for the care of the soul¹³⁸.

This statement has a continuity in Aristotle’s repeated warning that only those who are already directed to the good will benefit from the study of the NE¹³⁹. Which implies that the first principles of good *praxis* are not ultimately to be provided by the theoretical discourse of this treatise, but by a previous state of affairs: the character (*ēthos*) “must somehow be there already with a kinship to excellence (*oikeion tēs aretēs*), loving what is noble and hating what is base” (X 9, 1179b 29ff). Bodéüs has rightly stressed this point:

“[I]f Aristotelian prudence were the excellence activated by the philosopher who argues (...), then that would mean that this virtue is acquired just when one becomes a philosopher and also that the philosopher’s teaching produces this intellectual virtue”¹⁴⁰.

The primacy of moral education *as the good direction of desire*, i.e. as a transmission of dispositions (*hexeis*) and not just of theoretical knowledge about the good, is crucial to Aristotle’s characterization of the practical nature of

¹³⁷ *Politics* VIII 1, 1337a 10f.

¹³⁸ *Politics* VII 1, 1334b 20ff. Cf. note 33.

¹³⁹ Cf. NE I 3, 1095a 10f. Cf. also X 9, 1179b 23ff.

¹⁴⁰ BODÉÜS, R. 1994 p. 30.

phronēsis. If the first practical principles could be grasped without mediation of desire, the intimate link between *phronēsis* and ethical virtues would be missed.

The references to politics in NE I 2 and X 9 are significant of this continuity. At the start, Aristotle subsumes ‘ethics’ in the wider discipline of ‘politics’, which “legislates as to what we are to do and what we are to abstain from, [so that] the end of this science must include those of the others, [and] this end must be the good for man (*anthrōpinon agathon*)” (I 2, 1094b 5ff). Eventually, at the very end of the NE, Aristotle announces his plan to analyze legislation and constitutions “in order to complete to the best of our ability the philosophy of human things (*ta anthropeia philosophia teleiōthē*)”¹⁴¹. The articulation of these passages has generated a wide debate in which we do not intend to enter here¹⁴². To retain the crucial point, extensively shown by Bodéüs, there is not such a thing in Aristotle as “an ethical inquiry which is not political” nor a political science which could do without Ethics¹⁴³. The political dimension is as essential to *praxis* as the ‘oretical’ one. Such is the reach of Aristotle’s categorization of man as a political animal (*politikon zōon*) by nature¹⁴⁴:

The social dimension is always already given in a *praxis* subject (...). The fiction of an individual in pre-social conditions, however relevant it may have become for certain modern conceptions of the state, does not play any role in Aristotle. But that is no wonder. Quite on the contrary, it can be presumed that such a theoretical assumption would be misleading insofar as it tends to ignore and cover *a priori* the moment of facticity that is constitutive of the world of *praxis*¹⁴⁵.

¹⁴¹ NE X 9, 1181b 15, mod. tr: Ross renders *ta anthropeia* as ‘human nature’. We follow here Mariás’ translation.

¹⁴² A quite complete account of this debate is provided by RODRIGO, P. 2006 p. 8 ff.

¹⁴³ BODÉÜS, R. 1994 p. 39 (cf. also esp. 39ff. and 59-63). Rodrigo holds that only the refusal to identify the “philosophy of human things” with either ethics or politics as mutually exclusive enables to understand their articulation, which is based primarily on the concept of education rather than on that of architecture. (RODRIGO, P. 2006 pp. 19-20, 26). Cf. also BERTI, E. “*Phronēsis* et science politique” in Aubenque, P. et al (eds.) 1993 pp. 435-459.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. *Politics* I 1, 1253a 2f.

¹⁴⁵ VIGO, A. 1996 p. 307. Cf. also RIEDEL, M. “Über einige Aporien in der Praktischen Philosophie des Aristoteles” in Riedel, M (ed.) 1972 (vol. 1) p. 84: “[T]he term *praxis* refers as much to the

Analogously to what has been observed with other issues above, the misunderstandings concerning the relation between ethics and politics in Aristotle might be primarily due to the application of a modern concept of politics alien to *the organic continuity between man and society that leads Aristotle to envision ethics and politics as belonging to one and the same project*, namely “the philosophy of human things”¹⁴⁶:

A city can be excellent only when the citizens who have a share in the government are excellent, and in our state all the citizens share in the government; let us then inquire how a man becomes excellent. For even if we could suppose the citizen body to be excellent, without each of them being so, yet the latter would be better, for in the excellence of each the excellence of all is involved¹⁴⁷.

Summing up, this conception of politics appears to confirm the pertinence of the organic paradigm which we have suggested to explain the relation between *aretē* and *phronēsis*¹⁴⁸. Inasmuch as man needs society to become who he is, society needs man to become what it is. Man, who is not only the result of a given political-cultural background *but much more fundamentally a result of the community of reason and desire that he himself is*. And it is this inner community that, for better or worse, shapes the *polis* no less than it is shaped by it.

individual as to the *polis*; to the *polis* insofar as it requires the activity of its citizens to realize its *telos*, to the individual so far as he himself is as a human being the principle of his actions and has a share in this *telos*”.

¹⁴⁶ “Politics is more comprehensive than ethics and superior to it, because the political space is extensively wider and includes the ethical one. But in both cases it is about a practical space shaped by the behavior of man, as an individual and as a citizen” (BASTONS, M. 2003 p. 52).

¹⁴⁷ *Politics* VII 13, 1332a 33ff. Cf. also VII 3, 1325b 30ff: “[I]t is evident that the same life is best for each individual, and for states and for mankind collectively”.

¹⁴⁸ Trendelenburg also makes extensive to politics the organic paradigm that he suggests for ethics (Cf. TRENDELENBURG, A. § 19)

2. *Energeia* and the Irreducibility of *Praxis*

At the beginning of NE VI Aristotle reminds the reader of a previous distinction between excellences of character (*aretai tou ēthous*) and excellences of intellect (*aretai tēs dianoias*)¹⁴⁹: the former having engaged him since book III, he now turns to the latter. Following the logic of Aristotle’s argument, we have been analyzing the relation between *aretai tou ēthous* and *phronēsis*, the excellence of the rational part of the soul that is intimately connected with *ēthos*. We must now proceed in the determination of the structure of *phronēsis* by analyzing its articulation with the other excellences of intellect. Specially important is in this respect Aristotle’s effort to distinguish *phronēsis* from craft (*technē*), since the distinction is not only at the heart of Aristotle’s ethics and ontology but also of Heidegger’s appropriation of his philosophy.

2.1. Realizing Truth

Aristotle’s analysis of the excellences of intellect is preceded by some remarks on the soul. After distinguishing a rational and an irrational part in it, he makes a decisive distinction within the rational part of the soul, concerning the objects it deals with, i.e. “the things whose principles cannot be otherwise” on the one hand, and “those variable” on the other¹⁵⁰. Richardson Lear grasps well what Aristotle means by the latter: “[those] things I could bring about”¹⁵¹. This includes “both things made and things done” (VI 4, 1140a 1f), i.e. the objects of *poiēsis* and

¹⁴⁹ Cf. NE VI 1, 1138b 35f; NE I 13, 1103a 4f.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. NE VI 1, 1139a 6ff.

¹⁵¹ RICHARDSON LEAR, G. *Happy Lives and the Highest Good. An Essay on Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004 p. 100.

those of *praxis*, which are the activities (*energeiai*) or uses (*chrēseis*)¹⁵² of *technē* and *phronēsis*, both to be found in an initial list of five states (*hexeis*):

Let it be assumed that the states by virtue of which the soul *alētheuei* by way of affirmation or denial are five in number, i.e., art (*technē*), knowledge (*epistēmē*), practical wisdom (*phronēsis*), philosophical wisdom (*sophia*), comprehension (*nous*); for belief and opinion may be mistaken (VI 4, 1139b 15ff).

It is not easy to translate the verb *alētheuein*—obviously concerned with truth (*alētheia*)—without leveling its richness, all the more since it is here predicated of so many different dispositions. That is after all a central tenet of the philosophy of Heidegger, who in one of his early courses is reluctant to translate *alētheuein*¹⁵³ on the grounds that *alētheia* “conforms rather to beings themselves, and not to a determinate concept of scientificity”¹⁵⁴. The appreciation is worth mentioning here as a sensible methodological precaution: according to this passage of the NE, it seems appropriate to understand that the concept of ‘truth’ is wider for Aristotle than that of theoretical truth, if it is said to be realized through five different dispositions, among which *phronēsis* or *technē* are to be counted¹⁵⁵. Sparshott suggests translating *alētheuein* as “getting things true”¹⁵⁶, which improves the rather objectivist translation provided by Ross: “to possess truth”. Greenwood suggests “to reach truth”¹⁵⁷, but this seems not to reflect well enough Aristotle’s point that truth adopts different shapes *because of* its intertwinedness with the soul (*psychē*).

¹⁵² There is a conceptual vicinity in Aristotle between *chrēsis* and *energeia*. Yet, Hagen goes too far in considering them as synonyms (Cf. HAGEN, C. T. “The *Energeia-Kinesis* Distinction and Aristotle’s Conception of *Praxis*” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 23/3 (1984) p. 272).

¹⁵³ Cf. GA 19 *Platon: Sophistes* (WS 1924-25) Ed. by Ingeborg Schübler, 1992 [*Plato’s Sophist* Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer, IU Press, 1997] § 3a, p. 17 [12].

¹⁵⁴ *Ibidem* § 4a, p. 24 [17] *Alētheia* “richtet sich vielmehr nach dem Seienden selbst und nicht nach einem bestimmten Begriff von Wissenschaftlichkeit”.

¹⁵⁵ Rodrigo agrees with Heidegger that the inclusion of these dispositions is a solid reason to suspect easy translations such as “énoncer ce qui est vrai” (Tricot) or “dire vrai” (Gauthier-Jolif). (Cf. RODRIGO, P. 2006 p. 144).

¹⁵⁶ Cf. SPARSHOTT, F. E. *Taking Life Seriously. A Study of the Argument of the Nicomachean Ethics*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994, p. 206.

¹⁵⁷ *Nicomachean Ethics Book Six with Essays, Notes and Translation* by L. H. G. Greenwood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909.

Mariás, finally, suggests “realizing truth”, carrying it out—which must not be understood as ‘producing’ truth, since *alētheuein* would then be assimilated to one of its senses and would acquire a subjectivist connotation that is alien to Aristotle. ‘To realize truth’ takes into account on the one hand the idea of a finding (Aristotle speaks elsewhere of touching or hitting truth¹⁵⁸) and on the other the fact that this finding takes place in the relation of the *psychē* with beings. The idea of ‘realizing’, which has been used already before concerning ends and means¹⁵⁹, sets itself in the vicinity of one of Heidegger’s proposals of translation for *alētheuein*, namely ‘being true’ or ‘being in the truth’¹⁶⁰.

(ii) The five states by virtue of which the soul realizes truth are not necessarily equally fundamental, i.e. there could be a hierarchy between them. Given the placement of this text in NE VI, the eventual development of the argument and the verb used (*estō*, ‘let it be assumed’), Gauthier considers that this list of five *hexeis* does not render Aristotle’s final view but that of a prevailing opinion of the time¹⁶¹. Only two of these states, namely *sophia* and *phronēsis*, will eventually be granted the title of intellectual virtues of the two sides in the rational part of the soul¹⁶². Sparsott synthesizes this as follows:

[Aristotle] gets rid of three of the five candidates, one by subordination and two by subsumption. The elimination has a certain untidiness. On the one hand, art is *excluded from* good sense, whereas intuition and knowledge are *included in* wisdom¹⁶³.

¹⁵⁸ Touching, contacting (*thigein*) truth: Cf. *Met.* IX 10, 1051b 24f; Hitting, attaining what is good: *tyghanein* NE VI 9, 1142b 25. Gadamer’s translation of *alētheuein* in VI 4, 1139b 15ff. follows this thread: ‘to hit truth’ (“Die Wege, auf denen die Seele (...) die Wahrheit trifft”) GADAMER, Hans-Georg *Nikomachische Ethik VI*. Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt 1998.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. p. 26 above.

¹⁶⁰ GA 19 § 4a (p. 23 [16]) “Wahrsein, In-der-Wahrheit-sein”.

¹⁶¹ Cf. GJ II pp. 450-452.

¹⁶² For Gauthier’s argument, cf. GJ II pp. 453 ff. Cf. also CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 pp. 190-191; AQM p. 151; JOACHIM, H. H. *Aristotle. The Nicomachean Ethics* (edited by D.A. Rees) Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955 pp. 192 ff.

¹⁶³ SPARSHOTT, F.E. p. 206.

The ‘subsumption’ of *nous* and *epistēmē* under *sophia* does not create many difficulties for Aristotle, and he does not either linger too much on it, because it is not central to his argument here. As for *phronēsis* and *technē*, their relation is far more complex, insofar as the determination of what it means for *technē* to be ‘subordinated’ to *phronēsis* concerns in turn the characterization of *praxis*, the relevance of which is most visible in the equation of *eupraxia* with the center of gravity of Aristotle’s enterprise, *eudaimonia*: “happiness [is] a sort of living and faring well (*eu zēn kai eu prattein*)” (I 8, 1098b 20f)¹⁶⁴. The equation actually includes a third term coming from the *Metaphysics*, *energeia*: “we identify the end (*telos*) [of human life] with certain actions and activities (*praxeis tines kai energeiai*), for thus it falls among goods of the soul (*peri psychēn agathōn*) and not among external goods” (I 8, 1098b 18ff)¹⁶⁵.

When Aristotle suggests that “it makes, perhaps, no small difference whether we place the chief good in possession (*ktēsis*) or use (*chrēsis*), in state (*hexis*) or in activity (*energeia*)” (1098b 31ff), he is in fact retrieving a distinction that, as different authors convincingly show, he learnt from Plato¹⁶⁶. As a matter of fact, in the *Euthydemus* Socrates distinguishes, in the context of a discussion on happiness, possessing goods (*kektēsthai*—to have acquired) from holding or using them (*chrēsthai*)¹⁶⁷. Further, in the *Theaetetus* he speaks of a passive and an active sense of *hexis*: in the same way that one can either have a coat as a possessor (*kektēmenos*) or have it (*echein*) in the sense of wearing it, knowledge can be either just possessed, or also had in the active sense, i.e. used¹⁶⁸.

¹⁶⁴ On the connection between *eudaimonia* and *eupraxia* cf. also NE I 8, 1099a 2f; *Politics* VII 3, 1325a 31f, 1325b 14f.

¹⁶⁵ On the connection of *eudaimonia-eupraxia* with *energeia* cf. also NE I 9, 1099b 26; I 10, 1100a 14; I 13, 1102a 17; IX 9, 1169b 29-31; X 6, 1176b 1; X 7 1177a 10, *Politics* VII 8, 1328a 37f; VII 13, 1332a 9.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. SCHANKULA, H. S. A. “Plato and Aristotle: *eudaimonia*, *hexis* or *energeia*? *Classical Philology* 66 (1971) pp. 244-246; YEPES, R. 1989 esp. pp. 97 ff. and RODRIGO, P. 2006 pp. 118 ff.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. *Euthydemus* 280d-e.

¹⁶⁸ *Theaetetus* 197a - 198a 5.

Dynamis and *energeia* constitute a further elaboration of this distinction in Aristotle, and are essential to the architecture of the main theses of the NE, where *energeia* and *energein* appear over a hundred times¹⁶⁹, to refer not only to *praxis* and *eupraxia*, but also to the enactment of production (*poiēsis*)¹⁷⁰, life (*zōē*)¹⁷¹ and pleasure (*hēdonē*)¹⁷². It is then no wonder that already at the very outset of the NE a first veiled distinction between *phronēsis* and *technē*—and their respective enactments, *praxis* and *poiēsis*—turns on this concept¹⁷³:

[T]he good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim. But a certain difference is found among ends (*telē*); some are activities (*energeiai*), others are products (*erga*) apart from the activities (*energeiai*) that produce them. Where there are ends apart from the actions (*telē para tas praxeis*), it is the nature of the products to be better than the activities (I 1, 1094a 2ff)¹⁷⁴.

The point will be retrieved later in NE VI: “while making (*poiēsis*) has an end other than itself, action (*praxis*) cannot; for good action itself is its end (*estī gar autē he eupraxia telos*)” (VI 5, 1140b 6f). The thought-provoking idea of *praxis* ‘being

¹⁶⁹ Yepes speaks of 142 times for *energeia* (Cf. YEPES, R. “Los sentidos del acto en Aristóteles” *Anuario Filosófico* 25/3 [1992] p. 509). As for the connection of *energeia* in the ethical treatises with that in the rest of Aristotle’s works, cf. AQM esp. pp. 453-509; JOACHIM, H. H. (relevant references to *energeia* throughout the commentary of the treatise); GRANT, A. 1865 pp. 181-201.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. NE I 1, 1094a 4; IX 7, 1168a 6f.

¹⁷¹ Cf. e.g. NE I 7, 1098a 13; IX 7, 1168a 6; X 4, 1175a 12.

¹⁷² Although in NE X 4 *hēdonē* is not explicitly called *energeia* by Aristotle—probably because he wants to emphasize that it accompanies other *energeiai*—he denies that it be a *kinēsis* (1174b 13) with arguments that parallel those in the contrast between *energeia* and *kinēsis* in 1048b.

¹⁷³ In subsequent references to this passage we assume that Aristotle refers here to *poiēsis* and *praxis* in spite of the fact that he does not use these specific terms.

¹⁷⁴ Joachim rightly explains *why* this passage is not incompatible with the sentence shortly below (a16-18), which at first sight would seem to contradict it bluntly: “it makes no difference whether the activities themselves are the ends of the actions, or something else apart from the activities, as in the case of the sciences just mentioned”. What follows immediately afterwards (a18-22) seems to increase the perplexity, but provides the solution: “If, then, there is some end of the things we do, which we desire for its own sake (...) clearly this must be the good and the chief good”. We agree with Joachim that a16-18 refers to the examples that Aristotle provides of techniques subordinated to each other (a6-16), for which such a distinction is not important (Cf. JOACHIM, H. H. p. 20). Within *technē*, the distinction between ends and means moves within a derivative dimension, as we have suggested above (cf. 2.2). Aristotle’s NE has a more fundamental scope, as is shown from a18 on, and the statement in a16-18 is intended to show that the hierarchy or teleology he is looking for points beyond the dimension of the relations described in a16-18.

its end’, ‘having the end in itself’ or, as the late Heidegger puts it, “having-itself-in-its-end (*Sich-im-Ende-Haben*)”¹⁷⁵, has an ontologic import that should not be overlooked—it points precisely to *entelecheia*, a term of Aristotle’s own coinage which is closely related to *energeia* in *Metaphysics* IX¹⁷⁶. An in-depth elucidation of the structure of *praxis* and of the peculiar *alētheuein* of *phronēsis* requires then us to linger now on the conceptuality of that book of the *Metaphysics*, which we believe to have deep connections with the line of reasoning of the NE.

2.2. *Energeia*: the Immediacy of Life

Energeia is widely considered as a genuinely Aristotelian concept, and as one, if not the most, fundamental of his thought¹⁷⁷. Yepes sets its birth in the *Protrepticus* where, he argues, it already appears “as a complete speculative discovery”¹⁷⁸. Although the concept permeates Aristotle’s entire work, “it is in the bio-psychological field that *energeia* shows its greatest fecundity to explain phenomena related to life, knowledge and operation”¹⁷⁹.

In this respect, it is remarkable that *Metaphysics* IX 6, the only place of Aristotle’s works where a straightforward definition of *energeia* is provided, comprises a passage centered on phenomena related to human life (cf. 1048b 18-35). Aristotle opens this text by referring to actions (*praxeis*), which makes it even more significant, given the exceptionality of this theme in the context of the

¹⁷⁵ “Vom Wesen und Begriff der *Physis*. Aristoteles Physik B 1” (1939) in GA 9 *Wegmarken* Ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Hermann, 1996 (2nd edition) pp. 309-371, p. 354 [217] for ref. (pagination of the Klostermann *Einzelausgabe*, indicated in the margins. Hereafter WBP).

¹⁷⁶ Cf. *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 30f. and IX 8, 1050a 22f. Cf. also the comments in YEPES, R. 1989 p. 105; AQM pp. 453-454.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. e.g. DÜRING, I. p. 617; GRANT, A. 1865 p. 183; GAUTHIER, R.-A. p. 77; YEPES, R. 1992. We preferably use the term *energeia* instead of its different translations, such as ‘use’ or ‘activity’. We have also often replaced the translations for the Greek term in quotations.

¹⁷⁸ YEPES, R. 1992 p. 497 ff.; 1989 p. 95 ff.

¹⁷⁹ YEPES, R. 1992 p. 506. “One of the first applications of *energeia* in this field is the statement that «life is an *energeia* (*ζῆν ἐνέργεια τίς ἐστι*)»” Cf. NE X 4, 1175a 12 (the cross-reference provided by Yepes is wrong).

*Metaphysics*¹⁸⁰. The whole text has generated a wide debate and it is not by chance that our approach to Heidegger's early interpretation of Aristotle hinges on it¹⁸¹. We quote it extensively to facilitate further references in this chapter and below:

Since of the actions (*praxeis*) which have a limit (*peras*) none is an end (*telos*) but all are relative to the end, e.g. the process of making thin is of the sort, and the things themselves when one is making them thin are in movement (*en kinēsei*) in this way (i.e. without being already that at which the *kinēsis* aims), this is not an action (*praxis*) or at least not a fulfilled (*teleia*) one (for it is not an end); *praxis* is that *in* which the end *is* (*enyparchein*). E.g. at the same time (*hama*) we are seeing and have seen, are understanding and have understood, are thinking and have thought: but it is not true that at the same time we are learning and have learnt, or are cured and have been cured. At the same time we are living well and have lived well, and are happy and have been happy. If not, this event¹⁸² would have had some time to cease, as the process of making thin ceases (*pausthai*): but, as it is, it does not cease; we are living and have lived. Of these events, then, we must call the one set *kinēseis*, and the other *energeiai*. For every *kinēsis* is imperfect (*ateleis*)—making thin, learning, walking, building; these are *kinēseis*, and imperfect ones. For it is not true that at the same time we are walking and have walked, or are building and have built, or are coming to be and have come to be—it is a different thing that is being moved and has been moved, and that is moving and that has moved; but it is the same thing that at the same time has seen and is seeing, or is thinking and has thought. The latter event, then, I call an *energeia*, and the former a *kinēsis*¹⁸³.

The concept of *telos*—generally translated as ‘end’—is central to the architecture of this passage, because it is according to their relation to it that two different kinds of actions (*praxeis*) or events are delimited. In fact, Aristotle briefly suggests that, strictly speaking, we should reserve the term *praxis*, or at least that of *praxis teleia*, for one of them. The examples used by Aristotle for those *praxeis*

¹⁸⁰ Brague calls *Met. IX 1048b 18-35* an “aérolithe aristotélien”. He provides a detailed history of the transmission of it, and considers it authentic: cf. AQM p. 454 ff. Yepes also authenticates the text and refers to other authors (Cf. YEPES, R. *La doctrina del acto en Aristóteles* Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra [Eunsa], 1993 pp. 258-260).

¹⁸¹ For an overlook of the debate about *Met. IX* cf. YEPES, R. 1993 esp. pp. 83-112.

¹⁸² Ross uses here the term ‘process’, as he does before in the text with the *kinēsis* of making thin (b19). However, the idea of a process tends to subsume *energeia* under the sense of *kinēsis*, something that is on the way; we prefer thus ‘event’ here for the *energeia* of living and/or being happy (b26), and below, in b28 and b34-35, where Aristotle refers both to *energeia* and *kinēsis*. In fact, Aristotle only uses the term *praxeis* to refer to both at the beginning of the passage (b18), and he subsequently restricts the sense of *praxis*, or at least *praxis teleia*, to *energeia* (b21-22). Elsewhere, either he directly speaks of the phenomenon, e.g. ‘the making thin’ (*to ischnainein*, b 19), or uses pronouns.

¹⁸³ *Met. IX 6*, 1048b 18-35, mod. tr.

which are not *teleia*, like making thin, curing or building, are actually occurrences of *poiēsis*, so we can well envision this passage in the light of the above-mentioned statement of NE VI: “while making (*poiēsis*) has an end other than itself, action (*praxis*) cannot; for good action itself is its end (*esti gar autē he enpraxia telos*)” (VI 5, 1140b 6f). Although the relevance of this passage of *Metaphysics* IX will prove to point much beyond this practical context¹⁸⁴, the approach through these concepts definitely helps read it without distorting its argument. That *praxis* is its own *telos* is indeed assumed at least three times in 1048b: twice by denying this from *poiēsis* (b18, b22), and subsequently by way of affirmation (b22 f): *praxis* is that *in* which the *telos* is (*enyparchein*). However, what does this inner belongingness of *telos* to *praxis* entail, in contrast with a *poiēsis* such as building?

The question requires first of all a clarification of the sense of *telos* and its distinction from *peras* (limit, or *ending*), which is assumed in the first line of our passage (b18). While *praxis* is its own *telos*, none of the other kind of actions is a *telos*: instead, there is a limit (*esti peras*) for them, i.e. the time comes when they vanish, because the *telos* towards which they were heading has been attained. This distinction is grounded on the definitions of *teleion* and *peras* in *Metaphysics* V 16, 17. We cannot now linger on those texts, which will be the object of further development below in our discussion of Heidegger’s texts in chapter 6; yet, our interpretation of 1048b here provides reasons to maintain as a reasonable hypothesis the point that while *peras* implies completion, the *ending* of a process, *telos* rather implies *perfection, fulfillment*. In quoting this passage we have definitely avoided Ross’ translation of *teleia* as complete and *ateleōs* as incomplete, since this tends to suggest that a *praxis*, because it is *teleia*, i.e. ‘complete’, would cease. This, however, is precisely what Aristotle holds that does *not* happen to *praxeis*, here identified with *energeiai*: they do not cease. Ross is to our mind much more accu-

¹⁸⁴ Cf. RICOEUR, Paul *Soi-même comme un autre* Paris: Seuil, 1990 p. 357.

rate when he translates *entelecheia* as fulfillment¹⁸⁵, but unfortunately in his translation he does not search to harmonize *entelecheia* with *telos* or *teleion*¹⁸⁶. Rendering *teleiōn* as ‘complete’ tends to primarily portray *energeia* as the result of a *process* that has come to an *ending* (*peras*), in such a way that the result is, in relation to the process that has led to it, immobile. But this is not the fundamental sense of *energeia*¹⁸⁷, which is only acquired in the light of *telos*: *energeia* designates those events, rather than processes¹⁸⁸, which have their end in themselves, i.e. which are their end themselves¹⁸⁹. Their end is nothing to be attained: instead, it is always already attained insofar as they are, i.e. *their being is attainment or fulfillment itself*, but not in the sense of something that is there like a piece of property (*ktēma*) but of something that takes place, as a happening, an event (*gignesthai*)¹⁹⁰.

Under this perspective, *energeia* and *entelecheia* are to be considered synonyms, as Aristotle claims both before and after the passage that occupies us¹⁹¹: “the word *energeia* is derived from *ergon* and points to [i.e. it tends to mean] *entelecheia*”¹⁹². While for *kinēsis* the attainment of a *telos* is its *peras*, i.e. the point

¹⁸⁵ Cf. his translation of *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 30, b2; IX 8, 1050a 23. Cf. also *Physics* III 3, 202a 16 (Gaye and Hardie).

¹⁸⁶ Cf. also Ross’ translation of *teleion* as ‘complete’ e.g. in *Met.* V 16, 1021b 12ff. and NE X 4, 1174a 15.

¹⁸⁷ It is indeed one of them, and in this respect a finished product, as well as a product throughout the whole of the process of its production, is there as an *energeia*. However, this fact itself implies that the idea of ‘something finished’ cannot be the ground sense of *energeia*.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. note 182 above.

¹⁸⁹ “The immanence of *telos* in an action does not immobilize it at all: the action continues to exist under its perfect modality” (AQM p. 419).

¹⁹⁰ Cf. NE IX 9, 1169b 29f: “an *energeia* clearly is something that happens (*gignesthai*), not a thing that we possess all the time, like a piece of property (*ktēma*)”. Mod. tr: according to LSJ, the verb *gignomai* means, when referred to things, to produce (this is how Marías translates the term, although it seems to us problematic, insofar as the *energeia* involved is *eudaimonia*) or to become; when referred to events, to happen, to take place. We adopt this latter translation, which seems us to fit better what Aristotle seems to mean, in accordance with his analysis of *energeia* in the *Metaphysics*. Cf. also the comment of this passage by Brague, to whom we owe the indication of its relevance, in AQM p. 503.

¹⁹¹ Consistently with that, Aristotle uses the terms interchangeably in his definition of *kinēsis* in the *Physics*. Cf. III 201a 10f; 2, 201b 31f; 3, 202a 14ff.

¹⁹² *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 22f. Cf. also IX 3, 1047a 30f: “The word *energeia*, which we connect with *entelecheia* (...)”. Brague agrees that Aristotle tends to see both terms as equivalent (cf. AQM p. 500).

where the *kinēsis* ceases to be, and leaves an *ergon* as something different from it, to be an *energeia* means instead to be its own *telos* and its own *ergon*. At the same time (*hama*) “we are living *and* have lived”¹⁹³: *there is not such a thing as a process activated by ‘living’ of which ‘living’ would be the end*, in the sense of a *telos* different from this event. ‘Living’ does not mark, as a *peras*, its own conclusion, its ending; *‘living’ is the end of ‘living’ in the sense of fulfillment. Its activation immediately implies its fulfillment, and its fulfillment implies its continuation*¹⁹⁴.

That in *energeia* the end is immediately reached means that *being* and *telos* are cooriginary for it: *energeia* is insofar as it has (*echein*) the end in itself (*en-telos-echein*). To retrieve Plato’s example¹⁹⁵—it is no chance that Aristotle uses it in his definitions of *echein* and *hexis*¹⁹⁶—*energeia* ‘has’ the end in the active sense of *hexis*, i.e. ‘using’ it (*chrēsthai*), ‘wearing’ it, instead of having it as a possession (*ketomai*), as clothes are in the wardrobe. Still, of course, the metaphor has its limits, because ‘using’ implies to a certain extent a difference between who uses and what is used. Probably for that reason Aristotle avoids the term *chrēsthai* in his discussion and instead he directly speaks of “being a *telos*” (1048b 18, 22) as what fits the structure of *energeia*. And still, he explicitly holds that being necessarily means being in fulfillment: “some non-*being* things *are* potentially (*dynamēi estin*), yet they *are not* (*ouk esti de*), because they *are not* (in) fulfillment (*ouk entelecheia estin*)”¹⁹⁷.

This immediacy with which the *telos* is attained, to our mind a key pattern of *energeia* which Aristotle is stressing, implies the subsequent statement that such

¹⁹³ *Met.* IX 6, 1048b 27. Cf. HAGEN, C. T. p. 264 ff. on the debate around the “tense test”, i.e. the series of examples among which this one appears.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. AQM p. 486, concerning another example of Aristotle in this series: “perception does not head towards itself: it is itself right away (*d’emblée*)”. Cf. also GONZALEZ, F. J. “Time in a moment. The Temporality of Activity and Essence in Aristotle (with and against Heidegger)” *Dianoia*, 13 (2008) pp. 7-46 (p. 43 for ref): “Though life is *complete*, it is never *completed*; in its very completeness, in its very having lived, it is always a present tense verb: *living*”.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. *Theaetetus* 197a - 198a 5.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. *Met.* V 20, 1022b 7; V 23 1023a 11.

¹⁹⁷ *Met.* IX 3, 1047b 1f. Tredennick (mod. tr).

an event as ‘ceasing’ is out of the question for it (b26 f). Because for *energeia* ‘to be’ immediately means ‘to have its *telos*’, there is nothing in this ‘being’ that can make it finish. *Energeia* is not, like *kinēsis*, directed towards an ending: what is essential to it is to continue¹⁹⁸. Therefore, *energeia* is fulfilled and unlimited at the same time: it has ‘the end’ (*telos*) but it does not have ‘an ending’ (*peras*). And both traits call for one another: on the one hand, denying the continuity or unlimitedness¹⁹⁹ of an *energeia* would entail denying its being (its fulfillment), since for an *energeia* ‘to be’ means immediately ‘to go on being’: the immediacy of past and present in the now entails, as it were, the infinitesimal perception of the continuity of an event in time that is expressed by the *hama*. On the other hand, denying that an *energeia* is fulfilled right from the start would cancel its being (i.e., its continuity as fulfilled), since it would remain always in a state of ‘coming to be’ (*genesis*): on the way to fulfillment. And “as it is, being itself (*to on auto*) does not come to be nor cease to be (*ou gignetai oude phtheiretai*); for if it did it would have to come out of something (*ek tinos gar an egigneto*)”²⁰⁰. Being is *energeia* and *entelecheia*: paraphrasing what we said above on life, there is no such thing as a process activated by ‘being’ of which ‘being’ would be the end: insofar as something is, it fulfills in itself what is meant by ‘being’; or, in other words, there is no such thing as a remainder of ‘being’ that would not still be part of this being. The point is made precisely in these terms in a passage of NE X—one that importantly exhibits the relation between *Metaphysics* IX 6 and Aristotle’s practical philosophy—where Aristotle takes up his first example of *energeia* in 1048b, that of sight: “seeing seems to be at any moment

¹⁹⁸ Cf. AQM pp. 469-470: “When Aristotle speaks of *energeiai*, the end is present in a way that French cannot express as «having finished» (*avoir fini*). It means the attainment of a perfection, a fulfillment (*finition*). (...) The end being interior to [*energeiai*], it is for them a permanent possession. *Energeia* does not finish its finishing, it stops without stopping (*l’acte n’en finit pas de finir, il cesse sans cesse*)”.

¹⁹⁹ Hagen speaks of “continuability” in his accurate analysis of this passage. We would rather say ‘continuity’, though, since the former term suggests contingency (it could continue or not), while it belongs to the essence of *energeia* to necessarily continue. Cf. HAGEN, C. T. esp. pp. 267 and 275. Cf. also AQM p. 471.

²⁰⁰ *Met.* IX 10, 1051b 29f.

fulfilled (*kath hontinoun kbronon teleia*), for it does not lack anything which will fulfill (*teleoyn*) its form (*eidōs*) by coming into being later” (X 4, 1174a 14ff)²⁰¹.

One could of course wonder what the difference is between this conception of being and the Parmenidean negation of movement. The crucial difference is best expressed by Polo when he states that a good handling of the discovery of *energeia* implies inferring that the word for being is *not subsistence but persistence*²⁰². This sense can be traced back, again, to Aristotle’s statement in the NE that “*energeia* clearly is something that happens (*gignesthai*), not a thing that we possess all the time, like a piece of property (*ktēma*)” (IX 9, 1169b 29f). What it means for *energeia* to ‘happen’ hinges on the immediacy expressed by the particle *hama* in the series of examples in 1048b: *energeia* is and *at the same time* it has been. This conception of being, insofar as it implies *at once* identity (fulfillment) and temporal deployment (continuity or persistence)²⁰³ making each other possible as an organic whole, is capable of embracing *kinēsis* within it. As Brague sees it, “*dynamis* situates itself within the domain opened by *energeia*. It is not moved but because *energeia* opens the way for it”²⁰⁴.

Kinēsis is in fact a phenomenon situated in the midst of the domain opened up by Aristotle’s distinction (*diaphoras*) between *energeia* and *dynamis*²⁰⁵: as argued in

²⁰¹ Mod. tr. Cf. also 1174a 16f and b7, 13f on pleasure. We thank prof. Francisco J. Gonzalez for calling our attention on this chapter of the NE and its link to 1048b. Cf. his comment in GONZALEZ, F. J. 2008 esp. pp. 39 ff.

²⁰² POLO, L. *El ser (I). La existencia extramental*. (1965) Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra (Eunsa), 1997 p. 177.

²⁰³ “*Energeia* is persistence because, instead of being settled and stabilized, it has a unity that consists simply of non-contradiction” *Ibidem*, p. 166. And below, p. 168: “*In the formulation* of the principle of non-contradiction, the opposition between being and nothingness is given in an instant; *in reality* the principle of non-contradiction is the unity of persistence” (our e).

²⁰⁴ AQM p. 497.

²⁰⁵ “*Energeia* means the being of the thing, not in the way which we express by ‘potentially’ (*dynamis*) (...). Our meaning can be seen in the particular cases by induction, and we must not seek a definition of everything, but be content to grasp the analogy—that as that which is building is to that which is capable of building, so is the waking to the sleeping, and that which is seeing to that which has its eyes shut but has sight (...). Let *energeia* be defined by one member of this antithesis, and the potential

the *Physics*, *kinēsis* “cannot be classified as a *dynamis* or an *energeia* (...). It is a sort of *energeia*, or *energeia* of the kind described, hard to grasp, but not incapable of existing”²⁰⁶. *Kinēsis* is “hard to grasp” precisely because it is and at the same time it is *not* an *energeia*: the risk of leveling it with *energeia* or vice versa is for that reason very high²⁰⁷. Why *kinēsis* cannot be simply classed as an *energeia* we have already seen in 1048b: it is *ateleēs*, i.e. it *is* insofar as it does not have the end toward which it is pointing, its being consists of ‘being on the way’. That is why in the *Physics* Aristotle defines it as “the fulfillment (*entelecheia*) of what is potentially, *as such* [i.e. as being potentially, C.A.]”²⁰⁸. Insofar as something is still potentially—not yet come to the *telos* towards which it tends—it is *kinēsis*: its being is from that point of view on the way, coming to be, and for that reason it is “hard to grasp”. However, if we were to cut *kinēsis* at any time, i.e. if we could grasp, in the literal sense of the word, one of those infinitesimal divisions, what we would find is *energeia* and *entelecheia*, not *dynamis*²⁰⁹: “when what is buildable (*to oikodomēton*), in so far as we call it such, is in fulfillment (*entelecheia*), it is being built, and that is building (*oikodomēsis*)”²¹⁰. The process itself *is*, in the full sense of the word—it has its *telos*, i.e. its being—but it is still a process, i.e. it is on the way to a *telos*. Yet, how can this work with the point that “being itself (to on *auto*) does not come to be”²¹¹?

(*dynaton*) by the other” (*Met.* IX 6, 1048 a30 – b6, mod. tr: “the existence of the thing” is replaced for “the being of the thing”).

²⁰⁶ *Physics* III 2, 201b 28 - 202a 3 (our e).

²⁰⁷ Gonzalez and Brague emphasize the distinction: Cf. GONZALEZ, F. J. “Whose Metaphysics of Presence? Heidegger’s Interpretation of *Energeia* and *Dynamis* in Aristotle” (2006b) *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 44/4 (2006) pp. 533-568 (cf. esp. p. 539 ff.); AQM pp. 497-509. For a different account, cf. Aubry’s extensive analysis, which ultimately tends to identify *energeia* and *kinēsis* (AUBRY, G. *Dieu sans la puissance. Dynamis et energeia chez Aristote et chez Plotin* Paris: Vrin, 2006, esp. p. 138).

²⁰⁸ *Physics* III 1, 201a 10f.

²⁰⁹ Cf. POLO, L. 1997 p. 117: “If one cuts *kinēsis*, one will find *energeia*, not *dynamis* (...). The reality of *dynamis* is also *energeia*, namely *kinēsis*”.

²¹⁰ *Physics* III 2, 201a 16ff.

²¹¹ *Met.* IX 10, 1051b 29.

A distinction is made in the same passage of the *Physics* which can help sort this out: “*kinēsis*, though a kind of *energeia*, is imperfect (*ateleis*)”—but this imperfection, Aristotle explains, is not the result of its being an *energeia*: “the cause of its being imperfect is the potential (*to dynaton*) of which it is the *energeia*”²¹². The point is made, more concisely, in the *De Anima*: “movement is an activity of what is imperfect”²¹³. Insofar as *kinēsis* is an *energeia*, it is *teleia*. However, it is *energeia* of something imperfect, something on the way: *that* is what makes it *ateleis*, not being *energeia* imperfectly²¹⁴. Still, because “there is no such thing as a *kinēsis* over and above things (*para ta pragmata*)”²¹⁵, but *kinēsis* belongs always to a *tode ti*, to a ‘this something’, we do not grasp this phenomenon if we think of it as comprising an *energeia* on the one hand and a *dynamis* on the other. *Kinēsis* is, like we have held of the binomial *aretē* and *phronēsis* above, an organic whole formed by *energeia* and *dynamis*²¹⁶; and as such an organic whole, it is only properly grasped, as it were, in a live picture:

Aristotelian *kinēsis* is not an integration made departing from a primary infinitesimal division, because *it is only real if it is carried out, if it is happening* (...). The reality that corresponds to *dynamis* is not that of a ‘there being a *dynamis*’, but that of ‘there happening a *kinēsis*’²¹⁷.

We have brought *kinēsis* to the fore not only because its determination is crucial to the understanding of *energeia* but also because the reader might reasonably object that there is something in the immediacy and continuity of the ‘happening’ of *energeia*, as conceived in 1048b, which does not seem to fit our

²¹² *Physics* III 2, 201b 31ff. (We take Gonzalez’s translation, although like Ross he uses the terms ‘complete’ and ‘incomplete’, which have been replaced here by ‘perfect’ and ‘imperfect’). Cf. GONZALEZ, F. J. 2006b p. 539; Cf. also AQM p. 502.

²¹³ *De Anima* III 7, 431a 6f.

²¹⁴ Cf. AQM p. 502.

²¹⁵ *Physics* III 1, 200b 32 f.

²¹⁶ Cf. *Met.* V 4, 1014b 23 ff: “in organic unities there is something identical in both parts, which makes them grow together instead of merely touching, and *be one in respect of continuity and quantity, though not of quality*”.

²¹⁷ POLO, L. 1997 p. 118.

experience of human life. While life is fulfilled right from the start, i.e. everything that belongs to its *eidos* is there at any moment in which one says ‘I live’²¹⁸, we *also* speak of the fulfillment of life *as a process*, i.e. as a *kinēsis*, “for one swallow does not make a summer, nor does one day; and so too one day, or a short time, does not make a man blessed and happy” (I 7, 1098a 18ff). Moreover, life belongs to the movement of growth and decay²¹⁹, and thus eventually comes to an end. The same can be applied to seeing: one is surely seeing already when one realizes this, but one may see more, e.g. if helped with some more light, and one will not be able to see anymore when all the light is out. In this respect, Joachim rightly points out that even ‘*energeia* proper’ (i.e., *energeia teleia*) has, for man, the imperfection

of what involves potentiality (*dynamis*), as directed towards an end beyond and other than itself. And it is limited in time, begins and ends (...). Divine activity, on the other hand, is *anēu dynamēos* (without residue of potentiality). There is no transition to a complete condition, since that which is active (*energei*) is complete: and there is no beginning, no ending (...). The divine activity, therefore, is timeless or eternal, and without change or process—an activity of changelessness (*energeia akinēsia*)²²⁰.

Yet precisely in this passage of the NE to which Joachim refers, Aristotle speaks in the first place of an *energeia kinēseōs*—an *energeia* of movement²²¹. To be sure, every human *energeia* is constitutively pierced by this sort of ‘delay’ or ‘not being yet the end’ that is *kinēsis*²²². That is why Aristotle says that “a short time does not make a man blessed and happy”²²³, or also why later, in placing the fulfillment of happiness in *theōria*, he acknowledges that, insofar as exercised by man, it cannot escape this limitation:

“[If] the activity of intellect, which is contemplative (*theoretikē*), *seems* both to be superior in worth and to aim to no end beyond itself, it follows that this will be the com-

²¹⁸ Cf. NE X 4, 1174a 15ff.

²¹⁹ Cf. *De Anima* II 2, 413a 24f; III 9, 432b 9.

²²⁰ JOACHIM, H. H. p. 206.

²²¹ Cf. NE VII 14, 1154b 27.

²²² Cf. RICOEUR, P. 1990 p. 357; POLO, L. 1997 esp. pp. 141 and 168 ff.

²²³ NE I 7, 1098a 20.

plete happiness of man (...). *But such a life would be too high for man; for it is not in so far as he is man that he will live so, but in so far as something divine is present in him*” (X 7, 1177b 19-28).

It could be argued, though inconsistently, that when Aristotle says that man “*will live so* insofar as something divine is in him” he means that in certain moments man can live like a god. Indeed, he holds that we “must, [though] *so far as we can*, make ourselves immortal” (1177b 33). But “such a life would be *too high for a man*”, i.e. Aristotle is not meaning ‘temporal lapses where man could live as a god’ but ‘a way of living human life that is closer to divine life’. If that, as we think, is what the text says, Aristotle would not be losing sight here of the characterization of human life developed in the rest of the NE, as Nussbaum fears²²⁴.

However, if human life is—like the rest of reality, with the exception of the *energeia akinēsis* that Aristotle identifies with the divine—*kinēsis*, i.e. an *energeia* of something imperfect, or rather of something *perfectible*, why then does Aristotle speak in 1048b of such a thing as a *praxis teleia*, or in NE X of *hedonē* as something *holon* and *teleion*?²²⁵. The aporia can also be formulated thus: on the one hand, human life is said to be an *energeia* as much in the *Metaphysics* as in the NE²²⁶; on the other, it seems clear from the NE itself and the *De Anima* that it is also a *kinēsis*.²²⁷

What dissolves the aporia is precisely the seemingly contradictory fact that *kinēsis* is a kind of *energeia*, i.e. it is an *energeia from a certain point of view*. We have stated above that what is essential to an *energeia* is to continue, and this applies for any *kinēsis*, if considered regardless of the *telos* towards which it is directed, a *telos* that it does not have, because it is different from its being. Still, insofar as a *kinēsis*

²²⁴ Cf. NUSSBAUM, M. p. 377.

²²⁵ Cf. *Met.* IX 6, 1048b 22, NE X 4 1174b 5f, 13f.

²²⁶ Cf. respectively notes 193 and 171 above.

²²⁷ Cf. NE I 7, 1098a 19f. and note 219 above.

is, it does have a *telos* of its own, namely its own being what it is. That is why, if we ‘cut’ *kinēsis*, what we find is *energeia*, not *dynamis*²²⁸.

Thus, the fact that *energeiai* such as seeing or living may finish, as we experience that perceptions and lives come to an ending (*peras*), does not stem from their inner characterization, but *from their relation to what is not their own being*. Human life is indeed a *kinēsis* (i) in relation to the world, insofar as it has a beginning and a term, and (ii) in relation to itself *at its different stages* (so that it is somehow other to itself), insofar as it implies a development: one does not become good immediately²²⁹, one grows up and grows old, and so on. However, the inner characterization of life is not thus reached yet, because it is only understood from the outside, namely from (i) its relation to other beings, or from (ii) its relation to its own being as other. Life is only properly grasped if experienced also from the inside, i.e. as it is lived here and now. And it is in the now of life that *kinēsis* and *energeia* find each other: “*kinēsis* is only real if it is carried out, if it is happening (...). The reality that corresponds to *dynamis* is not that of a ‘there being a *dynamis*’, but that of ‘there happening a *kinēsis*’²³⁰. When Aristotle says that “we are living and have lived”²³¹ he is implying *at the same time* the distension in time that is typical of *kinēsis* and the immediacy that is typical of *energeia* and *entelecheia*.

Human beings are capable of *experiencing* their own life—they find themselves living—and life is for them a domain from which they cannot evade²³². This *experience* is not just a psychological phenomenon—it is, more than anything

²²⁸ Cf. POLO, L. 1997 p. 117.

²²⁹ Cf. NE I 7, 1098a 19f.

²³⁰ POLO, L. 1997 p. 118.

²³¹ *Met.* IX 6, 1048b 27.

²³² Cf. AQM p. 491, within Brague’s powerful analysis of the “interiorité de la vie”. pp. 487-492. We agree with Brague that Heidegger’s concept of facticity points to this interiority: we find ourselves always already (*immer schon*) living. Yet Ricoeur is right that Heidegger’s equation between *energeia* and facticity tends to blur the “difficult dialectic” between *energeia* and *dynamis* (cf. RICOEUR, P. 1990 p. 365).

else, as Brague points out, an ontological fact²³³: it opens up a new field *in* reality. While a part of reality to which it belongs, man is genuinely distinct from the rest of it in that it can experience or live its own life:

He who sees perceives (*aisthanesthai*) that he sees, and he who hears, that he hears, and he who walks, that he walks, and in the case of all other activities similarly there is something which perceives that we are active (*energein*), so that if we perceive, we perceive that we perceive, and if we think, that we think; and (...) to perceive that we perceive or think is to perceive that we are (*eimai*). (IX 9, 1170a 29ff).

To experience one's life and being, because one is interior to it, entails to experience the immediacy and continuity that have been established as the main features of *energeia*. That is why human life is the "fundamental experience"²³⁴, or the "place of readability par excellence"²³⁵ of the meaning of being as *energeia* and *dynamis*. The acknowledgement that at the same time "we are living *and* have lived" does not express a virtuality of language, but rather finds in language a way to express what the phenomena dictate to this being who, because he is aware that he is living, is capable of naming²³⁶. Human life is a *kinēsis*, but not like any other: it is a *kinēsis* that discovers itself in its *energein*, and this experience does not misrepresent its being, which is indeed at a time *kinēsis* and *energeia*.

This 'ontological field' opened by the experience of one's own life, while rooted in the wider one of being as tension between *energeia* and *dynamis*, has an inner logic that entitles Aristotle to designate, *from within life*, some processes as *energeiai* (experienced in the terms of immediateness and continuity in which one experiences one's life) and some processes as *kinesēis* (experienced in terms of mediateness and discontinuity in relation to one's life). This dialectic, which can

²³³ Cf. AQM p. 494.

²³⁴ AQM p. 475.

²³⁵ RICOEUR, P. 1990 p. 357.

²³⁶ Cf. EE I 6, 1216b 26f: "About all these matters we must try to get conviction by arguments (*dia tōn logōn*), using the phenomena (*khrōmenon tois phainomenois*) as evidence and illustration". Cf. also VIGO, A. 1996 p. 42, AQM pp. 463-465.

also be expressed with the binomial interiority-exteriority²³⁷, is to our mind the perspective that is required to understand the articulation of *phronēsis* and *technē* as well as their irreducibility to each other.

2.3. *Poiēsis* and *Praxis*: Ceasing or Not to Be

It seems plausible from what precedes that the distinction *phronēsis/technē* or *poiēsis/praxis* is based on the distinction *energeia/kinēsis*²³⁸, i.e. on their different relation to *telos*. “while making (*poiēsis*) has an end other than itself, action (*praxis*) cannot; for good action itself is its end” (VI 5, 1140b 6f). However, we have argued (i) that *energeia* in man is to be understood as not fully fulfilled—since it is not in absence of motion (*akinēsia*) as divine *energeia*²³⁹—and (ii) that *kinēsis* is a kind of *energeia*. The statement that “neither acting [is] making nor is making acting” (VI 4, 1140a 5f) is thus faced with the fact that both acting and making belong to the genus *energeia*, as Aristotle himself acknowledges at the outset of the NE²⁴⁰. So that, while the concept of *energeia* seems to be helpful to distinguish *phronēsis* and *technē*, in a way it does not seem to.

This difficulty cannot be sorted out by an interpretation of 1048b which does not distinguish the interior and the exterior perspectives, i.e. the fact that man is at the same time a being who can on the one hand experience its own being as his or her own and, on the other, experience the being of other beings, and its own being as other.

From the exterior perspective, *poiēsis* and *praxis* are both *kinēseis* insofar as they imply an alteration of states of affairs and they deploy within time. One sees a

²³⁷ The term ‘interiority’ (developed in AQM pp. 487-492) corresponds to our ‘immediateness’; ‘exteriority’, for its part, corresponds to ‘mediateness’. Both aspects shall come up below, along with the analysis of *technē* and *phronēsis*.

²³⁸ Cf. JOACHIM, H. H. p. 188.

²³⁹ Cf. NE VII 14, 1154b 27.

²⁴⁰ Cf. NE I 1, 1094a 4f.

potter working on clay in his workshop and one perceives an evolution in the jar he is making; or one listens to a dialogue and one perceives how the views of those who take part in it evolve. But from this external perspective they can *also* be regarded as *energeiai*, insofar as both immediately acquire a *telos*: their own process. This may seem bizarre of *poiēsis*, but the fact is that if we consider the process developed by the craftsman independently from the fact that the jar is on the way to be a finished jar, the *poiēin* is an *energeia* together with ‘the jar on the way’²⁴¹.

Only the interior perspective, that ‘from within life’, allows for the distinction, and it is from this perspective that we believe that the argument of 1048b is built: here the immediacy with which I experience that ‘I am living and I have lived’ contrasts with *kinēsis*, the process through which the work (*ergon*), the *telos* of *poiēsis*, ‘takes time’ to be what it is not yet (and it only comes to be insofar as *poiēsis* ceases to be). In contrast, the *telos* of *praxis*, while it takes place within time, does not ‘take time’ to be, but *is* immediately, since it coincides with *praxis* itself. That is also why, if we compare it with *poiēsis*, we cannot say that *praxis* ceases to be in the same sense as *poiēsis* does. Yet, we said that in another sense *praxis* *does* cease to be, because it undergoes a change that brings it closer or moves it further away from *eupraxia* or *eudaimonia*. In this respect, *praxis* is subject to some kind of otherness: it does not seem to be *exactly* its own *telos*, so that the distinction with *technē* seems to lose sharpness again.

While Aristotle’s examples of *poiēsis* always focus our attention on objects being made, Broadie interestingly contends that activities such as dancing and singing are also *technai*, and there is not for them such a thing as a finished product

²⁴¹ “The handiwork is in a sense the producer in activity” (NE IX 7, 1168a 6f). “Set apart from movement, the moving object [and the mover, C.A.] is not in an effective relation with the term of this movement” (POLO, L. 1997 p. 117, our e). The approach to *kinēsis* as a “concrete organic unity” is developed, on the basis of *Physics* III, 3 in WATERLOW, Sarah (= Broadie, Sarah) *Nature, Change, and Agency in Aristotle’s Physics: A Philosophical Study* (1982) New York: Oxford University Press, 1998 (cf. esp pp. 200-203).

that remains after them; instead, the *telos* is immediately reached with the activity itself: for dancing the principle seems to apply that ‘we are dancing and we have danced’. As a result, the idea of a finished product remaining afterwards appears as too narrow to understand *technē*²⁴². Moreover, as much in the process of production as in that of dancing a change is being *operated* in the craftsman himself, who becomes better skilled: also this *telos* is immediately reached in the exercise of *poiēsis* itself²⁴³. Does it then still make sense to keep distinguishing *poiēsis* and *praxis* on the basis of *telos*?

It does. These points shed light on additional sides of the relation between *poiēsis* and *praxis*, which shall be dealt with below, and show where we should *not* look for the fundamental element of irreducibility between them. The crucial point is that while *poiēsis* ceases in the attainment of the *telos* that has activated it—to leave this *telos* as ‘inheritance’ in the form of the object or the effect produced (*ergon*) and *also* the skill of the craftsman (*technē*)—*praxis* does not cease. *Praxis* is not restricted to an end which could be determined independently from life, but immersed in the goal of human life as a whole (*to eu zēn holōs*)²⁴⁴. Concerning *praxis* we can, no doubt, identify an individual action guided by a given end, or even point to the external effects of this action, but this does not reach yet its fundamental sense. Two meanings of *praxis* must then be

²⁴² Cf. *loc. cit.* Still, it is for that reason that Aristotle considers “what is buildable (*to oikodomēton*), in so far as we call it such”, i.e. being built, to be in fulfillment (*entelecheia*) (Cf. *Physics* III 2, 201a 16f).

²⁴³ Although one could wish Aristotle had developed this topic more extensively, he shows awareness of it in holding that who has learnt, even if he can go on learning, actively exercises his knowledge; “otherwise he would be in the contradictory state of not knowing” (*Physics* VIII 4, 255b 1-5). Cf. also the suggestive and rigorous analyses in DUNNE, J. 1993 pp. 315-356, esp. pp. 343 ff, which develop Aristotle’s succinct remarks on *technē*. We feel very close to his widening of the concept of *technē*, insofar as he pushes Aristotle’s rather mechanical image of it towards a more live picture, so that it gets rooted in the moving phenomenon of life. This, however, is done starting precisely from Aristotle’s characterization of *phronēsis*, which suggests that the brief remarks on *technē* in *Metaphysics* I and NE VI do not necessarily exclude this widening. The conciseness of Aristotle in these passages seems mainly due to the fact that he is mainly concerned with emphasizing, respectively, the contrast between *phronēsis* and *technē* and between *empeiria* and *technē*.

²⁴⁴ Cf. NE VI 5, 1140a 25ff.

distinguished: on the one hand, *praxis* as an isolated action²⁴⁵, with a beginning and an end, like e.g. giving a speech or having a conversation; on the other, a more fundamental sense in which the former is inscribed, namely *praxis* as a way of being, i.e. the ‘conversation’ with oneself that constitutes one’s life as a whole.

Thus, beneath one’s mediate or external relation to something, be it that of *poiēsis* or of a single action—*praxis* in the derivative sense—there lies always already an *immediate or interior relation to oneself* that does not cease as long as one’s life takes place. Aristotle’s enigmatic assertion that *phronēsis* cannot be forgotten²⁴⁶ may be interpreted in this sense: insofar as *phronēsis* is *not concerned with processes within human life but with human life as a whole*, its different shapes throughout our life remain with us in the form of a shape that at every single moment is the result of them—and this reshaping does not cease²⁴⁷. Thus, from this ‘interior’ point of view, the one from which Aristotle operates in 1048b, *energeia* and *kinēsis* do provide a key to distinguish between *poiēsis* and *praxis*—or *technē* and *phronēsis*—and, moreover, between *praxis* in a derivative sense and *praxis* as a way of being.

2.4. *Phronēsis* and *Technē*: Two Spheres of Ends

Still, one must be careful not to transform these distinctions into separations: our specific actions, whether they result in a transformation of what surrounds us or not, are always inscribed in the *praxis* that we are. Practical *dianoia* is “the *archē* of productive activity, since he who makes some thing always has some further end in view: the act of making is not an end in itself (*telos haplōs*), it is only a means, and belongs to something else, whereas a thing done is an end in itself”²⁴⁸. The act of making belongs to the wider project of living. This lays down two spheres of ends

²⁴⁵ X, 7 1177b 3f: “from practical activities (*de tōn praktikōn*) we gain more or less apart from the action (*para tēn praxin*)”.

²⁴⁶ Cf. NE VI 5, 1140b 29f.

²⁴⁷ Chateau basically holds this view too (cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 p. 234).

²⁴⁸ NE VI 2, 1139b 1f, Rackham.

in human life, which are related within the frame of a hierarchy but which are irreducible to each other. This hierarchy is clearly suggested as soon as NE I—“a thing pursued as an end in itself is more fulfilled (*teleiōteron*) than one pursued as a means to something else”²⁴⁹—but only in NE VI is a more thorough account provided:

Regarding *phronēsis* we shall get at the truth by considering who are the persons we credit with it. Now it is thought to be a mark of a man of practical wisdom to be able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, *not in some particular respect (ou kata meros)*, e.g. about what sorts of thing conduce to health or strength, but about what sorts of thing conduce *to the good life in general (pros to eu zēn holōs)*. This is shown by the fact that we credit men with practical wisdom in some particular respect when they have calculated well with a view *to some good end which is one of those that are not the object of any technē* (VI 5, 1140a 24ff).

The contrast that we have examined above between the ceasing of *poiēsis* (or isolated *praxeis*) and the non-ceasing of *praxis as being* is here expressed in regard to *technē* and *phronēsis*, the *hexeis* of *poiēsis* and *praxis*, on the basis of their respective focuses. In her comment of this passage, Broadie accurately points out that the practical agent differs from the technical one “not by being focused on another good that is special because unrestricted”²⁵⁰: Aristotle speaks of the *phronimos*—i.e. the practical agent that is able and willing to unfold a good life—as someone who deliberates about specific ends, but this in such a way that he has always in view the more genuine *telos* of his life as a whole. The *phronimos* does not restrict his deliberation to looking after (*kata*) the way of succeeding in specific states of affairs, which are only a part (*meros*) of his life, but *also* looks after the wider affair of succeeding in life in general (*pros to eu zēn holōs*).

This is the case because there is on the one hand a deliberation focused on a particular end—which is that of *poiēsis*—and on the other a deliberation that,

²⁴⁹ Cf. NE I 7, 1097a 30f. (Rackham, mod. tr).

²⁵⁰ BROADIE, S. p. 211. Yet, one must be careful with the distinction between practical and technical agent, since the technical agent is always necessarily a practical one, even if he does not mind. Thus, the distinction is only useful in terms of *concern about* the practical relevance of one’s acts.

although focused on a particular end (e.g. that of *poiēsis*), takes into account whether that particular end leads one or not to the more general end of a good life as a whole—which goes beyond what *technē* can envision. In the chain of ends and means of *poiēsis* we can indeed speak of an ‘intentional object’ compounded by means and end²⁵¹, which is ordered in turn as a means to a subsequent end. However, this subsequent end, insofar as considered by *technē*, does not transcend the instrumental sphere insofar as it does not take care of *being* (living well in general) but of *doing*. Even the consideration of the craftsman who works with the sole aim of practicing, in order to become a better professional, remains in the sphere of *doing*, or of efficacy, which is a partial horizon of his *being*. That is why at the outset of the NE Aristotle downplays as irrelevant the hierarchy between technical sciences²⁵², *in order to set the view on a deeper level of hierarchy*.

To be sure, the reader might find odd the translation of *poiein* and *prattein* as ‘doing’ and ‘being’, since these activities are generally rendered as ‘making’ and ‘acting’²⁵³. What we are suggesting with these terms, on the basis of insights of Chateau and Dunne²⁵⁴, is not an alternative translation but a reflection on the outlooks of *poiēsis* and *praxis*: *while the technical agent is concerned only with a partial sphere of what she is, the practical agent takes into consideration the fact that the whole of her being is at stake in her decision*²⁵⁵. In *praxis* already the sole consideration of the ‘intentional object compounded by means and end’, without regard to its being ordered in its turn to a subsequent end in a chain, transcends the instrumental sphere, while for *poiēsis* alone not even this inclusion in a chain transcends it. While the fact that

²⁵¹ Cf. note 94 above.

²⁵² Cf. NE I 1, 1094a 16ff. Cf. note 174 above.

²⁵³ Sometimes, the binomial is rendered as ‘making’ and ‘doing’, which does not lack interest, but which we exclude to avoid confusion.

²⁵⁴ Cf. CHATEAU, J.-Y. 1997 p. 233: “true action is a way of being”. For Dunne’s point, see shortly below.

²⁵⁵ As Gauthier puts it, work is the end of the worker, but not that of the man he is (cf. GAUTHIER, p. 40). Working embraces only a sphere of him, while acting (*prattein*) copes with his whole being, even when he is working.

bridle-making is ordered to the art of riding—and this in turn to strategy²⁵⁶—does not entail *per se* that these arts are considering good life as a whole, the decision to help someone else for the sake of helping and regardless of what this action can foster in the future is immediately situated beyond the material act of lending money²⁵⁷.

Yet, it would be misguided to search this transcendence beyond the ‘here and now’ of ‘this end through these means’: *in the practical agent the choice of a means for an end is always already installed within the orientation towards one’s living in general*: the ability of *phronēsis* to deliberate and decide is always rooted in a more fundamental sphere, i.e. the orientation settled by previous decisions and actions²⁵⁸. The practical agent indeed adopts a certain point of view in relation to ends, i.e. that of the good life in general, but she does so because *those ends and the reality that she herself is* are constitutively demanding that point of view. In this respect, the fact that a technical agent may just pay attention to the attainment of ‘this end through these means’ does not prevent her from being at the same time a practical agent, insofar as she cannot set this technical engagement apart from the *praxis* that she herself is. Thus, what Broadie calls the ‘technical agent’ is in fact a practical agent who in his deliberation is not *concerned* with succeeding in life in general, but whose success in that sphere is nevertheless at stake²⁵⁹. All instances of *poiēsis* necessarily

²⁵⁶ Cf. NE I 1094a 10 ff.

²⁵⁷ Cf. NE IX 7, 1167b 31f.

²⁵⁸ Cf. NE III 5, 1114b 2ff.

²⁵⁹ Broadie holds that what distinguishes the ‘practical agent’, i.e. the one who is at a time concerned with his life as a whole, is the fact that while he is equally focused on a restricted good, his focus “sets no limit on the considerations that could affect which way he goes” (p. 211). However, this seems incomplete, since the same could be said too of a craftsman, who depending on the circumstances or on the evolution of what he is working on will change his procedure (in fact, that is also an important part of good craftsmanship, as Dunne has rightly shown (Cf. DUNNE, J. 1993 p. 352): “it is certainly not always the case that we know the end in advance (...). Often we are not just trying to calculate the means to our end but are, rather, trying to work out what a worthwhile and feasible end in our situation is”. This actually applies both for *poiēsis* and *praxis*). Broadie is then right to emphasize that unrestrictedness does not refer to the end but to the way in which this end is considered, but the idea of an ‘unrestricted openness’ remains ambiguous. It becomes a powerful approach, though, if we

imply the presence of *praxis*: “every making involves doing (...). The activity of making the statue is something the sculptor does, and that activity has to be considered as an activity within the whole context of the sculptor’s life”²⁶⁰. Which, in other words, implies that there is an unavoidable connection between what we do and what we are, no matter whether we make a point of it or not, no matter whether we are conscious of it or not. *Praxis* is omnipresent in human life, as long as the use of reason is operative²⁶¹. Yet the rootedness of *poiēsis* within the texture of *praxis* outlines the fundamental difference between them. As Dunne puts it, *while in poiēsis there is a possible split between doing and being, in praxis such a split is not possible*²⁶². One is a shoemaker, but one may not be making shoes right now. However, one has an *ēthos* that is the result of one’s previous actions²⁶³, one *constantly* acts according to this *ēthos*, no matter what one does (making shoes, eating one’s dinner or speaking to a neighbor), and one’s *ēthos* is necessarily and constantly becoming something new, for the better or the worse.

This irreducibility of *praxis* is also expressed in a dense and crucial passage of NE VI by including *phronēsis* under the genus *aretē*, in contrast with *technē*.

While there is such a thing as excellence (*aretē*) in art (*technē*), there is no such a thing as excellence in practical wisdom (*phronēsis*); and in art he who errs willingly is preferable, but in practical wisdom, as in the excellences (*aretai*), he is the reverse. Plainly, then, practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) is an excellence (*aretē*) and not a *technē*. There being two parts of the soul that possess reason, it must be the excellence of one of the two, i.e. of the part which forms opinions; for opinion is about what can be otherwise, and so is practical wisdom. But yet it is not only a reasoned state; this is shown by the

specify more and speak, with Aristotle, of openness to the consideration of the upper level of ends, i.e. living well in general (*eu zēn holos*).

²⁶⁰ SPARSHOTT, F. E. p. 209

²⁶¹ Childhood (Cf. NE III 2, 1111b 8), sleep (cf. I 13, 1102b 7) and drunkenness (Cf. VII 3, 1147b 7) are some of the circumstances that Aristotle mentions in which a human being is not, or not fully, an agent of *praxis*. As for childhood, although the seemingly sudden beginning of the use of reason may be compared to the regrouping of an army described in *Post. Analytics* II, 100a 12f, it is preceded by a progressive process in which children may be considered to a certain degree agents of *praxis*; at any rate, their lack of autonomy as agents of *praxis* is made up for by the community that surrounds them.

²⁶² Cf. DUNNE, J. 1993 p. 267.

²⁶³ Cf. NE III 5, 1114b 1ff.

fact that a state of that sort may be forgotten but practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) cannot (VI 5, 1140b 22ff).

The fact that there is an excellence in *technē* and not in *phronēsis* can be read in the light of the assertion that *phronēsis* is itself an excellence, so that there is no excellence *of* it, no virtue making *phronēsis* better *from outside* it. In other words, the perfection of *phronēsis* springs from the agreement of reason and desire that constitutes it²⁶⁴: “of the part which is practical and intellectual the good (*to eu*) is truth in agreement with right desire” (VI 2, 1139a 29f). This does not entail by any means that *phronēsis* is not subject to perfection, but rather that there is nothing we can do apart from *phronein* to be more *phronimos*—which assumes the mutual belonging between virtues and *phronēsis* stressed by Aristotle at the end of NE VI: any progress in ethical virtues, as distinct from progress in natural virtues, implies the operation and progress of *phronēsis*²⁶⁵.

On the other hand, it is not by chance that, when it comes to *technē*, Aristotle puts so scarce emphasis on the rectitude of desire²⁶⁶—when any reference is made to this rectitude, it is only insofar as *poiēsis* is inscribed within the practical domain²⁶⁷. *Phronēsis* stands out, then, as the virtue or excellence of that part of reason that deals with things which can be otherwise or which we can bring about, as Aristotle himself concludes in these passages²⁶⁸. Yet, *technē* does reach some kind of truth on its own²⁶⁹, but a restricted one *in relation to human life*: not the *full truth* of the part of reason that deals with things that can be otherwise, but a derivative form of it, a truth confined to the connection between means and ends, regardless of the agreement of ends with right desire, *viz.* disconnected of the

²⁶⁴ Cf. NE VI 13, 1144b 32ff.

²⁶⁵ Mod. tr: Ross renders *to eu* as ‘good state’, but this unnecessarily puts the weight of the interpretation on the *hexis* (*phronēsis*) while the assertion is valid too for its *energeia* (*praxis*).

²⁶⁶ Cf. VIGO, A. 2006d p. 391.

²⁶⁷ Cf. NE VI 12, 1144a 26ff.

²⁶⁸ Cf. also NE VI 2, 1139b 1f.

²⁶⁹ Cf. NE VI 3, 1140a 15ff.

mean term (*mesotēs*) that enables the attainment of *eupraxia*²⁷⁰. Gauthier is right to stress here, therefore, that *technē* is not a virtue because it is a capacity for opposites²⁷¹: it is truth of a ‘doing’ regardless of what ‘being’ a man is. It attains truth concerning one’s ‘doing’, but not necessarily concerning one’s ‘being’. That is why, *from a point of view restricted to technē*, “he who errs willingly is preferable” (because this shows his mastery). But if the restriction is removed, i.e. if we consider the truth of ‘doing’ in relation to what ‘being’ a man is, then *technē* cannot provide itself the criterion to know whether it reaches truth: it is *phronēsis* that can provide it, precisely because it is not a capacity for opposites: *insofar as it is, it is good* (yet perfectible). That is also why in *phronēsis* he who errs willingly is bad, because the mistake implies a step backward in virtue, i.e. in *phronēsis*. Or more strictly said, *phronēsis*, like ethical virtue, cannot be used against its nature²⁷² (so that when one errs in regard to *phronēsis* one is not acting as a *phronimos*, while one can err in regard to *technē* and yet be acting as a *technitēs*).

Aristotle’s doctrine of the capacity for opposites, developed in *Metaphysics* IX 9, seems then to confirm the connection of the binomials *poiēsis/praxis* and *technē/phronēsis* on the one hand and *dynamis/energeia* on the other:

That the good *energeia* is better and more valuable than the good *dynamis* is evident from the following argument (...). The *dynamis* for contraries is present at the same time, and the *energeiai* also cannot be present at the same time, e.g. health and illness. Therefore one of them must be the good, but the *dynamis* is both the contraries alike, or neither; the *energeia*, then, is better²⁷³.

If *phronēsis* is not capable of contraries, it is already, to a certain extent, more than a mere *dynamis*. This meets also Aristotle’s chief thesis that *eudaimonia* or

²⁷⁰ Cf. NE II, 1109a 20. In this respect, *technē* responds to Aristotle’s characterization of *deinotēs*. Cf. NE VI 12, 1144a 23ff. and p. 26 above. Cf. also NE VI 9, 1142b 19f.

²⁷¹ Cf. GJ II p. 477. For Aristotle’s exposition on the capacities for opposites, cf. *Met.* IX 9, 1051a 4 ff. The issue was known also to Plato; cf. e.g. *Republic* 342a ff.

²⁷² Cf. NATALI, C. 2001 p. 61.

²⁷³ *Met.* IX 9, 1051a 4-15.

eupraxia is not a state but an activity (*energeia*) of the soul according to virtue²⁷⁴. If *praxis* never ceases, the boundaries between *eupraxia* and its *dynamis* (i.e. *phronēsis*, including all the ethical virtues)²⁷⁵ are softened, in two senses: (i) *phronēsis*, while remaining a *hexis* or *dynamis*, is active throughout human life, and is at stake in every single action; *technē*, on the other hand, is limited to periods and layers of one's life²⁷⁶; (ii) insofar as *phronēsis* is not capable of contraries in regard to what we have called the 'full truth' of things that can be otherwise, it can be said to be, *regarding this full truth*, an *energeia*: an effective realization of it, while *technē* remains as *dynamis*.

Dunne's and Chateau's remarks that in *phronēsis* there is no split between "what one is and what one does" and that "true action is a way of being"²⁷⁷ entail this constant feedback between *phronēsis* and *praxis*: one does what one is, and one is what one does. This is the irreducible condition of man: "desiderative thought or intellectual desire" (VI 2, 1139b 4f). And it is towards this fundamental dimension that Aristotle is pointing at in his effort to distinguish *technē* from *phronēsis*. He does not intend to establish an artificial separation between them, but rather to avoid the leveling of life with our relation to things: he is describing the *immediate* relation of human life to itself.

²⁷⁴ Cf. NE I 7, 1098a 16f; I 13, 1102a 5f.

²⁷⁵ Cf. p. 37 above.

²⁷⁶ Vico's development of the concepts of horizontality and verticality in *ethos* complements this point very well (Cf. VIGO, A. 1996 pp. 386 ff.). While *phronēsis* embraces the whole of one's life both vertically (insofar as everything one does *in a certain moment* is related to it) and horizontally (insofar as everything one does *throughout one's life* is related to it), *technē* only covers a restricted layer of one's action in a certain moment (vertical dimension) and a restricted period of one's life (horizontal dimension). Even in the case of someone who devoted all his life to a determinate work, this horizontality does not reach the fundamental horizontality of *phronēsis*, which acquires its special character from its indissociability with its vertical coverage: "the vertical unity [that is typical of happiness] must be realized in the horizontal unity" (*ibidem*, p. 387).

²⁷⁷ Cf. respectively notes 262 and 254 above.

2.5. The Structure of Practical Truth

We have held that for any practical agent the choice of a means for an end is always already framed within the orientation towards one's good life in general (*pros to eu zēn holōs*). The 'always already' structure (*immer schon*) is a typically Heideggerian formulation, but what is meant by it is no less typically Aristotelian. 'Being always already installed within an orientation' implies that what is constitutive of the knowledge of *phronēsis* is *not* the ability to articulate why one regards something as leading one to 'living well in general', i.e. as a good end, or to mentally conceive of something as such a kind of end. What is constitutive of *phronēsis* is that its deliberation is embedded in this orientation or, in other words, that 'living well in general', the end towards which the *phronimos* directs his or her actions, is an intelligent desire or desiderative thought that leads to act well (*eu prattein*). Why this end has been chosen may be eventually formulated theoretically and become the object of a publication (the NE is an example of that), or just accounted for on demand, but this formulation is not the ultimate *reason* why the agent chooses this end: *a formulation in words does not reveal the ontological structure of practical truth*²⁷⁸.

Natali rightly notes how, while Aristotle's approach to practical truth focuses on deliberation to the point of defining *phronēsis* as its excellence²⁷⁹, moral contemporary philosophy is rather interested in the more theoretical concept of justification. Approaching Aristotle through this latter concept, though, risks missing the specificity of his conception of practical truth. Departing from

²⁷⁸ Berti devotes a relevant chapter of his book *Le ragioni di Aristotele* to analyze the discourse of the NE, which he calls "practical philosophy", as distinguished from *phronēsis*, "equally practical, but not philosophical, or scientific" (p. 139). Berti's distinction between *phronēsis* and practical philosophy is relevant, insofar as it shows that the discourse of the NE is fundamentally dialectical, i.e. scientific, as the rest of Aristotle's works. This is crucial if one wants to preserve the practical character of *phronēsis* and also to ensure the possibility of a theoretical discourse on ethics as that of the NE (cf. BERTI, E. *Le ragioni di Aristotele* Bari: Laterza, 1988, pp. 113-152).

²⁷⁹ Cf. NE VI 9, 1142b 31ff.

Aristotle's crucial categorization of the objects of the rational part of the soul as either "things whose principles cannot be otherwise" or "those [that are] variable"²⁸⁰, Natali argues that "the logical structure of an investigation aiming at the justification of an action that has been carried out is, at least in part, different from the deliberation of *an action that is still to be performed*"²⁸¹. This special character of practical reason or *phronēsis* and its relation to time, as contrasted to *sophia* or theoretical reason, is noted also by Broadie: deliberation, she argues, "is not an explanation or justification of something which the agent was already going to do, in the way in which the scientific argument explains an already recognized fact"²⁸². In other words, while (theoretical) explanation departs from the fact, (practical) deliberation *leads to produce it*²⁸³. Vigo provides further insight in this respect when he holds, in comparing the so-called practical syllogism²⁸⁴ with the theoretical one, that while in the latter truth is somehow conserved, in the former truth is *produced*, it *comes about*.

For the conclusion [of a theoretical syllogism] to be true, its corresponding premises have to be true, since syllogistic inference limits itself to *conserve* the truth of premises in the transition from the latter to the conclusion (...). [However,] in the case of practical syllogism it would not be right to say that the truth of premises is merely *conserved* in the resulting conclusion (i.e. action). It would not be right, because

²⁸⁰ Cf. NE VI 1, 1139a 6ff.

²⁸¹ NATALI, C. 2001 p. 46 (our e).

²⁸² BROADIE, S. p. 226. Cf. also VON WRIGHT, Georg Henrik *Explanation and Understanding* London: Routledge, 1971 pp. 96 ff.

²⁸³ The justification of an action will just *explain* the reasons that led to choose certain means in order to achieve an end: its object may be difficult to find (e.g. evidence on the means in a criminal proceeding), but it is already set. Linguistic usage itself shows the contrast: while we say 'justification *of* an action', deliberation is *for* an action: there is no question of explaining here, but of leading to an action.

²⁸⁴ Aristotle himself never uses this term. Scholarship introduced it because Aristotle suggests a similarity between the formal scheme for animal movement and human action and that of theoretical syllogisms (cf. e.g. *De Motu Animalium* 7, 701a 23-25). In practical syllogism, the major premise is concerned with desire (i.e. ends) while the minor is concerned with means to the end. As Vigo holds, the parallelism is very helpful to understand the nature of practical truth, if handled adequately (cf. VIGO, A. 2007b esp. pp. 309-323); however, it has also been a source of misunderstandings, insofar as it seems to suggest a reduction of practical to theoretical reason—something unacceptable, in view of the Aristotelian texts we are working on. Cf. also the developments in NATALI, C. 2001 pp. 63-109; NUSSBAUM, M. 1978 pp. 184-210; ANSCOMBE, G.E.M. § 32 ff.

practical truth occurs only in the conclusion itself (i.e. action) and is not yet really present, *as practical truth*, in none of the premises as taken separately. Practical truth is not, therefore, merely *conserved* but, strictly speaking, *constituted* or *produced* in the conjunction of wish and belief that is the fruit of the intervention of choice (*proairesis*)²⁸⁵.

Practical truth is not only the truth of the means (the fact that they effectively lead to the end pursued) nor the rectitude of desire, but it is the conjunction of both, that corresponds to Aristotle's definition of this kind of truth, of which *phronēsis* is the 'producer': "truth in agreement with right desire" (VI 2, 1139a 29ff). Moreover, the truth one comes up with in the conclusion is *new* in a sense that cannot be said of the conclusion of a theoretical syllogism: its truth is *structurally different* from the truth of the premises. While new knowledge is indeed provided in the conclusion of a theoretical syllogism as the fruit of the conjunction of the premises, these contain already parts of this theoretical truth, and that is why here the conclusion is arrived at through conservation (or, we might say, accumulation). The structural difference of the truth arrived at in the conclusion of practical syllogism comes into focus in light of Aristotle's insistence that its conclusion is *not a statement, but an action*:

[H]ow is it that thought is sometimes followed by an action, sometimes not (...)? What happens seems parallel to the case of thinking and inferring about the immovable objects. There the end is the truth seen (for, when one thinks the two propositions, one thinks and puts together the conclusion), but here the propositions result in *a conclusion which is an action*—for example, whenever one thinks that every man ought to walk, and that one is a man oneself, *straightaway one walks*²⁸⁶.

Aristotle's account is here genuinely phenomenological: what we *see* in practical inferences is simply that the combination of the universal and the particular premises *immediately* results in action. "The test of the facts of life"²⁸⁷ shows that there is no intermediate step between the premises and the action. That is

²⁸⁵ VIGO, A. 2007b p. 317.

²⁸⁶ *Movement of Animals* 7, 701a 6-14. Cf. also 20 ff.

²⁸⁷ Cf. NE IX 8, 1179a 20ff. (mod. tr): "We must therefore survey what we have already said, bringing it to the test of the facts of life, and if it harmonizes with the facts we must accept it, but if it clashes with them we must suppose it to be mere theories".

why VIGO holds that choice (*proairesis*) is not to be taken for the conclusion of the practical syllogism: instead, he suggests, *proairesis* is the passage from the premises of deliberation to the conclusion, i.e. the action²⁸⁸. This does not downplay the role of *proairesis*, but rather prevents it from being considered as an intellectual inference; such an account would drive *orexis* out of practical reasoning, and it would require an additional connection between the conclusion of the practical syllogism and the action (a connection that Aristotle does not hint at)²⁸⁹. In other words: *proairesis* cannot be understood separately from *praxis*. Aristotle himself relates it to *praxis* as its origin (*archē praxeōs*) in NE VI:

[S]ince moral excellence is a state concerned with choice, and choice is a deliberate desire, therefore both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good, and the latter must pursue just what the former asserts. Now this kind of intellect and of truth is practical (...). The origin of action (*archē praxeōs*)—its efficient, not its final cause—is choice (*proairesis*), and that of choice is desire and reasoning with a view to an end” (VI 2, 1139a 22-33).

When desire and deliberation, *orexis* and *dianoia*, come to a conclusion of their dialogue, a specific course of action among those possible is followed, and *proairesis* is already part of this course of action²⁹⁰. If the conclusion of a reasoning on practical affairs were not an action, then we would not be speaking any longer of a practical syllogism, but of a theoretical reasoning that either explains the course of an action or constitutes the theoretical part of a practical syllogism, e.g. it considers the factual possibilities of successfully undertaking an action²⁹¹. In

²⁸⁸ Cf. VIGO, A. 2006b p. 314.

²⁸⁹ Natali tackles both problems and interestingly argues that without “transmission of desire” there is no question of practical reasoning (Cf. NATALI, C. 2001 pp. 93-95, p. 95 for ref).

²⁹⁰ VIGO, A. 2006b p. 317. Of course, there are defective cases, such as that of the agent who chooses but later declines to act; this Aristotle calls “incontinence”. However, if practical reasoning were approached on the basis of such a deficient case where in fact the syllogism is not ended (since the conclusion—the action—is not inferred), then it would not be understood at all. It is rather incontinence that must be understood from the action of the continent (Book VII of the NE is devoted to this topic, on which we cannot linger here. It must be noted, at any rate, that it is only developed once practical wisdom has been analyzed in book VI).

²⁹¹ “Practical truth presupposes, as one of its essential constitutive moments, a component of theoretical truth, represented by the descriptive premise of the practical syllogism”. (VIGO, A. 2006b p. 318). Anscombe exemplifies this thus: “John will drive from Chartres to Paris at an average of sixty m.p.h.,

both cases, the reasoning *examines* an action instead of *doing* it. The NE is a chief example of this; however, what it can furnish us with is not practical truth, but rather theoretical truth on practical affairs. As Bodéüs rightly claims, if the NE provided practical truth, reading and understanding it would suffice to be good²⁹².

The fact that choice is defined by Aristotle as the origin of action underlines its inner connection to it—which implies that even if the choice does not actually lead to an action, be it due to incontinence or to external factors, there is also a practical moment at play²⁹³: *praxis is inescapable also when there is no external action, because choice itself is already praxis*²⁹⁴. Moreover, even those cases in which there is no choice do not escape the practical domain. The alternative to ‘choosing something’ is not, strictly speaking, ‘not choosing anything’, as though such neutrality could be reached: we do choose, namely we choose ‘not to choose’. Because our being is *praxis*, we are always necessarily choosing who we are going to be: *what is essential to praxis is not whether a change is produced or not in a reality external to the agent, but the fact that a change is always necessarily operated in the agent herself*. Even if the action is not actually carried out, there is *praxis*. Even if there is no choice, there is *praxis*. This prevents *a view of praxis that might consider its effects from the point of*

he starts around five, Paris is sixty miles from Chartres, therefore he will arrive at six—this will not be what Aristotle calls a ‘demonstration’ because, if we ask the question what John will do, that is certainly capable of turning out one way or another. But for all that the reasoning is an argument that something is true. It is not practical reasoning: it has not the form of a calculation what to do, though *like any other piece of ‘theoretical’ argument it could play a part in such a calculation?* (ANSCOMBE, G. E. M. § 33, our e).

²⁹² Cf. BODÉÛS, R. p. 30. Cf. also NE X, 1179b 4ff.

²⁹³ In the case of incontinence, the action is not undertaken due to weakness in the right desire that had led the agent to judge well or even to choose well. This has an effect on the *ethos*, namely weakness of desire is increased. As for the case where an external impediment prevents the agent from undertaking the chosen action, the ‘making’ moment of the action is not realized, but the ‘doing’ moment is, insofar as the intention or interior determination to do something reinforces the agent’s *ethos*, his disposition to act hereafter in a manner consistent with his choice (concerning the coexistence of ‘making’ and ‘doing’ in *praxis*, developed here as ‘producing’ and ‘operating’, cf. note 260 ff.). As Anscombe holds, “the intention itself can be complete, although it remains a purely interior thing” (Cf. ANSCOMBE, G. E. M. § 4).

²⁹⁴ It is to our mind the failure to understand choice as *praxis* that leads Broadie to claim that practical truth occurs in what she calls the ‘prescriptive conclusion’ of the practical syllogism (Cf. BROADIE, S. pp. 219-225). For a criticism of Broadie’s argument, cf. VIGO, A. 2006b p. 315 n. 14.

view of its external output, which would miss the core of it. It is in this respect that we have distinguished above between a derivative sense of *praxis* (action) and the fundamental or original one: *praxis* as a way of being human.

The point that there is always an effect in the practical agent, regardless of whether something is changed in the world, is traced back to the fact that *the orectic dimension is present throughout the life of man*, that being who is capable of choice, i.e. capable of “desiderative thought or intellectual desire”²⁹⁵. This ‘always already’ structure of *orexis* implies at the same time the ‘not yet’ situation that distinguishes deliberation from justification: the fact that one is always already installed within an *ēthos* entails that practical reason is irreducible to the reasonings that approach action from the outside, i.e. as an object different from what one is actually doing. In practical reason there is an identification between knowing and doing: it operates within action, so that it is *constantly in motion*, i.e. not yet definitely ‘there’ as the object of a theoretical study is said to be ‘there’. What is more, once an action has been undertaken, the ‘always already’ of *ēthos* remains altogether with the ‘not yet’ of *eupraxia* as *the vast never fully accomplished and yet definitely real ‘action’ that is a life: activity, praxis in the wide sense*²⁹⁶.

We are thus faced once again with Aristotle’s chief thesis that *eudaimonia*, i.e., practical truth (*eupraxia*), is not a state but an activity (*energeia*) of the soul according to virtue²⁹⁷. Practical truth is neither truth *about* a state nor *about* an action, but *truth realized in an action, truth being operated right now. Truth of a life, which demands for a ‘live picture’*²⁹⁸. This is the conceptual core that attracts Heidegger towards Aristotelian practical philosophy: the tension between ‘always already’ and ‘not yet’

²⁹⁵ NE VI 2, 1139b 4f.

²⁹⁶ Cf. RICOEUR, P. 1990 p. 357 “[E]nergeia-dynamis points towards a ground of being (*fond d’être*), at once potentiality and actuality (*puissant et effectif*) against which human action stands out” (our e).

²⁹⁷ Cf. e.g. NE I 7, 1098a 16f; 13, 1102a 5f.

²⁹⁸ Cf. pp. 35 and 55 above.

in human life, a peculiar motion that constitutes the locus of an original *experience* of truth:

As a being becoming unveiled and available through the *alētheuein* of *phronēsis*, the *prakton* is in the mode of *not yet* being such an such. As ‘not yet such and such’ and, indeed, as the toward-which of concern, it is *at the same time already* such and such, i.e. insofar as it is the toward-which that belongs to a concrete readiness for dealings, the constitutive illumination of which is provided by *phronēsis*. This ‘not-yet’ and this ‘already’ need to be understood in their ‘unity’, i.e. on the basis of an original givenness, with reference to which they are particular explicata²⁹⁹.

However, the question necessarily arises as to why, despite his live picture of life, Aristotle should ultimately consider theory as the highest form of access to truth for human beings, or also determine human happiness in relation to theory. Rivers of ink have been expended on this question, which is also at the core of Heidegger’s *Auseinandersetzung* with Aristotle in the 1920s.

2.6. *Phronēsis* and *Sophia*: Irreducibility Does Not Mean Supremacy

We have just held that a reasoning which examines an action instead of leading to do it is not a practical reasoning but a theoretical one. We may call it ‘practical philosophy’ with Aristotle³⁰⁰, but noting as he does that this is not practical wisdom or *phronēsis*³⁰¹, but theoretical reasoning on practical affairs. This kind of reasoning, we have argued, *considers* desire in a determined course of action instead of being affected by it. Yet, one’s being continues to be “desiderative thought or

²⁹⁹ NB 383/35-36 [155, mod. tr, add. e.] “Das *prakton* als das Seiende, das im *alētheuein* der *phronēsis* unverhüllt verfügbar wird, ist etwas, was *ist* als *noch nicht* das und das Sein. Als ›noch nicht das und das‹, und zwar als Worauf eines Besorgens, *ist* es zugleich *schon* das und das, als das Worauf einer konkreten Umgangsbereitschaft, deren konstitutive Erhellung die *phronēsis* ausmacht. Das ›Noch-Nicht‹ und das ›Schon‹ sind in ihrer ›Einheit‹ zu verstehen, d. h. von einer ursprünglichen Gegebenheit her, für die das ›Nochnicht‹ und das ›Schon‹ bestimmte Explikate sind”.

³⁰⁰ Cf. *Met.* II 1, 993b 19ff.

³⁰¹ Cf. NE VII, 1152a 9f: “A man has practical wisdom not by knowing only but by acting”. Cf. BERTI, E. 1988 pp. 113 ff. Cf. also BODÉÛS, Richard *Le véritable politique et ses vertus selon Aristote*. Louvain: Peeters, 2004 p. 63: “All the teaching of Aristotle is summarized in two distinct propositions: (a) it is reason that teaches the philosopher that virtuous action is the ultimate end of action. (b) But it does not teach anyone to take this sort of action as ultimate end of his action”.

intellectual desire (*orektikos nous hē proairesis ē orexis dianoetikē*)” (VI 2, 1139b 5) when one is considering a course of action. In other words, practical reason is irreducible to theoretical reasonings *not because it would have nothing to do with them, but rather because it encompasses them*. practical reason, in its characteristic ‘not yet being finished’, is always already operating in a theoretical exercise, because it is still ourselves, with our own always-in-motion *ēthos*, that are exercising that ability. Theory does not simply set a parenthesis within the continuum of our *praxis*.

While *theōria* cannot alter *praxis* but through *praxis* itself, one may ask whether *praxis* does not *per se* alter *theōria*. A thorough study of the NE does not *per se* alter one’s practical reasoning: “we are none the more able to act for knowing (*eidēnai*) [things which are good for man] if the *aretai* are *hexeis*” (VI 12, 1143b 24f). The study may reveal the need of a change, but this change will only come true through actions that will modify one’s *ēthos*. However, does not one’s *ēthos*—the result of one’s practical behavior—condition the way one theoretically approaches practical affairs, or any affairs whatsoever?

What we are asking—which will be answered as our argument unfolds—is in fact at the core of one of the widest trends of controversy on the NE, namely what the nature of the relation between *theōria* and *praxis* is. Aristotle’s remarks about this issue are somewhat obscure for us, unless we assume—and this is the leading thread of our interpretation—that there is less of an exclusive relation between them than has been generally thought³⁰². We believe that, despite the important differences between them, Aristotle ultimately *envisions them as a continuity, when both are given in human life*³⁰³, as shown in a very much quoted passage of the *Politics*, at the center of Aristotle’s reflection on the best life (*aristos bios*):

If we are right in our view, and happiness is assumed to be acting well (*euprattein*), the active life will be the best (*aristos bios ho praktikos*), both for every city collectively, and

³⁰² Against this stands the mainstream view of Aristotle as opposed to Plato: cf. pp. 13 ff.

³⁰³ Cf. NATALI, C. 2001 pp. 157 ff.

for individuals. Not that a life of action (*ton praktikon*) must necessarily have relation to others, as some persons think, nor are those ideas to be regarded as practical which are pursued for the sake of the objects that result from action (*charin gignomenas ek tou pratein*), but *much more the thoughts and contemplations* (*theoriai kai dianoēseis*) which are independent and fulfilled in themselves (*autotelei*); since acting well (*eupraxia*), and therefore a certain kind of action (*praxis tis*), is an end (*telos*), and even in the case of external actions the directing mind (*dianoia*) is most truly said to act (*pratein*)³⁰⁴.

This text is especially relevant because Aristotle makes here explicit the above-mentioned double sense of *praxis*: (i) *praxis* as a specific action—either internal or externally visible— and (ii) *praxis* as a way of being—i.e. being happy, equated with *euprattein*. Aristotle’s reasoning departs from the meaning of *praxis* as a way of being, which he explicitly relates below to the NE³⁰⁵: *eudaimonia* is *eupraxia* or *energeia*—not a frozen state, but a ‘becoming’, a continuum within which we can in turn identify specific actions, *praxis* in sense (i). Concerning these ‘individualisable’ actions, Aristotle holds that the term *praxis* is not limited to actions which relate somehow to others, or actions looking for things resulting from the action (*gignomena ek tou pratein*), i.e. what in NE I is called “*erga* apart from the *energeiai* that produce them” or “ends apart from the actions (*telē para tas praxeis*)”³⁰⁶. That is only *praxis in the sense of non-theoretical dealings*, the sense of the term in which Aristotle thinks when he says in NE X that “from practical activities (*de tōn praktikōn*) we gain more or less apart from the action (*para tēn praxin*)”³⁰⁷. Actually, in this statement, the ambiguity between *praktika* and *praxis* seems precisely intended to point to the specific meaning of *praxis* (of which *praktika* are only one occurrence), namely *praxis as an activity that does not have an end*

³⁰⁴ *Politics* VII 3, 1325b 14ff. (our e, mod. tr).

³⁰⁵ “The view that we maintain (*and this is the definition that we laid down in the Ethics*, if those discourses are of any value) is that happiness is the complete activity (*energeia*) and employment (*chrēsis*) of virtue (*aretē*)” (*Politics* VII 13, 1332a 7ff, Rackham). Cf. also VII 8, 1328a 37f. Cf. note 164 above for passages in the NE linking *eudaimonia* and *eupraxia*, and note 165 for passages linking *eudaimonia-eupraxia* and *energeia*. Cf. also *Politics* VII 3, 1325a 31f: “it is a mistake to put inactivity (*apraktein*) over action (*pratein*), for happiness is activity (*praxis*)”.

³⁰⁶ NE I 1, 1094a 4f.

³⁰⁷ NE X 7, 1177b 3f.

other than itself, because it is itself its end³⁰⁸. It is from this idea of *praxis*, the one that Aristotle holds throughout the NE and in *Metaphysics* IX 6, that he remarks in the *Politics* that “thoughts and contemplations”, which have their end in themselves (*autotelei*), are “much more” strictly *praxeis*. And the point is still reaffirmed, to ensure that *praxis* is not limited to external actions: *even* when the action is poured into the outside *the mind is said to act*. In other words, reflecting, *theōria*, which is not *per se* poured into the outside, is *praxis* too; what we think, even if it is not directed or translated into external actions, is *praxis*: it changes the way we are. What is more, it is because of the autotelic character of this *praxis* that the superiority of *bios theōretikos* is affirmed in a passage of NE X—that parallels the one of *Politics*—where the term *energeia* is significantly used to signify *praxis*:

So if among excellent actions political and military actions are distinguished by nobility and greatness, and these are unpleasurable and aim at an end and are not desirable for their own sake, but the activity of intellect (*de tou nou energeia*), which is contemplative, seems both to be superior in worth and to aim at no end beyond itself, and to have its pleasure proper to itself (...) and all the other attributes ascribes to the blessed man (...) it follows that this will be the full happiness (*teleia eudaimonia*) of man (NE X 7, 1177b 16-25).

Because *theōria* belongs to the genus *praxis*, Aristotle can freely praise the exercise of *theōria* as the highest for human beings and hold at the same time that “life is *praxis* and not *poiēsis*”³⁰⁹. Actually, the fundamental sense of *praxis* as a way of being can only be preserved if we realize that what is essential of *praxis* is the fact that with any action a change is always necessarily operated in the agent herself, regardless of whether an external effect results from this action. This is what Aristotle is meaning—still in our passage of *Politics* VII 3—when he traces action back to the mind (*dianoia*) and stresses that we must speak of a *praxis even more (malista)* when there are no external effects resulting from the operation of the mind. Only by including *theōria* among *praxeis* can it make any sense to think of

³⁰⁸ Cf. NE VI 5, 1140b 6f.

³⁰⁹ *Politics* I 4, 1254a 7.

praxis as the way of being of human beings. If we were to deny that *theōria* is *praxis*, not only would we create artificial parentheses in the continuum of life (the times during which man exercises *theōria*) but we would also necessarily reduce *praxis* to the external effects that may stem from it, and thus notions as *hexis*, *aretē* and *ēthos* would become useless. However, if *theōria* is a form of *praxis*, why is it that knowing (*eidenai*) what is good does not make us better³¹⁰?

Sophia, Aristotle argues, is “a part of full virtue (*meros tēs holēs aretēs*), [and] by being possessed and by actualizing itself makes a man happy. Still, the function (*ergon*) of man is achieved in accordance with *phronēsis* as well as with *ēthikē aretē*” (VI 12, 1144a 5ff). This surely forbids reading Aristotle’s discussion in NE X 6-8 as though he would be holding there that contemplative life, i.e. happiness at its best (*eudaimonia teleia*)³¹¹ excludes the exercise of *aretai*. Actually, in book X itself, upon acknowledging the limits of *theōria* for man, Aristotle remarks: “the life of the man who is active in accordance with excellence (*kata tēn aretēn energountos*) will be happy” (X 8, 1179a 8f). And in the *Politics* he puts it straightforwardly: “each one has just so much of happiness as he has of *aretē* and *phronēsis*”³¹².

These statements just assume the above-mentioned continuity between *praxis* and *theōria*, which does not entail a leveling of their differences: they are “one in respect of continuity and quantity, though not of quality”³¹³. If *theōrein* can ever be *eudaimonia teleia* it is surely not without *aretē* and *phronēsis*. Because *theōria* is *praxis*, it is subject to *aretē* and *phronēsis*: as is the case with any other *praxis*, the exercise of *theōrein* necessarily improves or worsens one’s *ēthos*. Not only from the point of view of the relation between *theōrein* and the *praxis* of one’s life as a whole

³¹⁰ Cf. NE VI 12, 1143b 24f.

³¹¹ Cf. NE X 7, 1177b 24.

³¹² *Politics* VII 1, 1323b 21f.

³¹³ *Met.* V 4, 1014b 25f. The unity between *praxis* and *theōria*, though, is not exactly comparable to that between *phronēsis* and *aretē*, which require one another to exist. While the exercise of *theōria* is always the exercise of *praxis*, *praxis* does not *per se* require the existence of *theōria*.

(e.g. one can get down to thoroughly studying the NE and consciously neglect other urgent duties), but specially from that of *how theōrein* itself is exercised: one may study the NE with a disposition to change one's mind about certain issues if the arguments provided are compelling enough, or instead adopt the dogmatic attitude of rejecting certain points that contradict one's own views. One's scientific *ēthos* is necessarily transformed as a result of this exercise, and it is from this transformed *ēthos* that subsequent theoretical dealings are to depart. Still, it is not because one has been studying the arguments in the NE that one becomes good, but because one (i) welcomes them as reasonable, to the extent that they are, and (ii) subsequently conducts one's actions according to these arguments. It is not the *logoi autarkei* that change one's *praxis*, but *praxis* itself, in the form of (i) one's attitude towards them and (ii) one's further actions. *Logoi* “seem to have power to encourage and stimulate the generous-minded among the young, and to make a character which is gently born, and a true lover of what is noble, ready to be possessed by excellence (*katokōchimon ek tēs aretēs*)” (X 9, 1179b 9). They have an effect on some youngsters, but only insofar as they have been previously prepared for through the *ēthos* that has been transmitted to them³¹⁴. As Plato puts it in a remarkably close manner in the *Republic*, those who have been well educated “praise beautiful things and take delight in them and receive them into their soul to foster its growth and become themselves beautiful and good”³¹⁵. Yet, they must, “when they are grown up”, i.e. when they have to act themselves, “practice and be ‘habituated’ (*epitēdeuein kai ethizesthai*)” to *aretai* (X 9, 1180a 2f).

Summing up, the *exercise* of *theōria* can modify one's *ēthos*, but it does only insofar as *theōria* is a kind of *praxis*, and not insofar as it is a body of concepts: we do not change because we know what is better, but because we do it. Readiness to change one's points of view is surely a move in that direction, but the range of

³¹⁴ Cf. paragraph 1.6 above (pp. 38 ff).

³¹⁵ *Republic* III, 402a (mod. tr).

praxeis that constitutes the *praxis* of a life is necessarily wider than the exercise of *theōria*³¹⁶.

Moreover, the fact that *theōria* is a *praxis* implies also that one's *praxis* may have an effect on the disclosing possibilities of *theōria*. How could this happen? Aristotle defines *sophia*, the *hexis* of *theōria*, as *epistēmē* combined with *nous*³¹⁷, i.e. with intuition of the first principles (*archai*) that make possible the operation of any *epistēmē*. *Sophia* is more than *epistēmē*, because it does not just use the first principles, but it also accounts for them, in a sort of circular movement where the same principles that are provisionally taken for granted as basis for the reasoning are questioned as to their validity. To question them one must first of all get to know them, which occurs in different manners: “of the first principles we see (*theōrein*) some by induction (*epagōgē*), some by perception (*aisthēsis*), some by a certain habituation (*ethismos*), and others too in other ways” (I 8, 1098b 3f). The second way mentioned is especially relevant for our purpose, and meets a point that is repeatedly made by Aristotle: “excellence (*aretē*) and vice (*mochthēria*) respectively preserve and destroy the first principle” (VII 8, 1151a 15)³¹⁸. Yet, “it is not any and every belief that pleasant and painful objects destroy and pervert, e.g. the belief that the triangle has or has not its angles equal to two right angles, but only beliefs about what is to be done” (VI 5, 1140b 13ff)³¹⁹. One can become a perfect villain and still remain an outstanding geometrician. However, insofar as *theōria* must also deal with human things, the lack of a “certain habituation” necessarily limits one's possibilities as far as practical philosophy is concerned. One can indeed overlook the role of *ēthos* for a lack of philosophical insight, but

³¹⁶ Cf. NE X 8, 1178b 33f: “Our nature is not self-sufficient for the exercise of *theōrein*”.

³¹⁷ On *sophia* as the conjunction of *epistēmē* and *nous*, cf. NE VI 7, 1141a 17-20, 1141b 2f.

³¹⁸ Cf. also NE VI 5, 1140b 17ff.

³¹⁹ “[I]n actions that for the sake of which is the first principle, as the hypotheses are in mathematics; neither in that case is it reason that teaches the first principles, nor is it so here—excellence either natural or produced by habituation is what teaches right opinion about the first principle” (NE VII 8, 1151a 15ff). Cf. BODÉÛS, R. 2004 p. 59.

one will necessarily overlook it for a lack of acquaintance with it, i.e. for a lack of exercise of it. Because the object of practical philosophy is oneself, one's relation to oneself is decisive for its development. Because *phronēsis* includes all *aretai*, it is required to ensure an in-depth access to the principle or principles that any reflection concerning human things, such as the NE, requires³²⁰.

Yet, the fact that *praxis* encompasses *theōria* and that, insofar as it is *eupraxia*, makes *theōria* possible to a certain extent, does not entail a superiority of *phronēsis* over *sophia*:

[*Phronēsis*] is not supreme over *sophia*, i.e. over the superior part of us, any more than the art of medicine is over health; for it does not use it *but provides for its coming to being* (*hora hopōs genētai*); it issues orders, then, for its sake (*heneka epitattei*), but not to it. Further, to maintain its supremacy would be like saying that the art of politics rules the gods because it issues orders about all affairs of the state (VI 13, 1145a 6ff).

The point made here is confirmed by parallel passages in NE VI and EE VII³²¹. *Phronēsis* does *not* command *sophia*, it does not *give orders to* it; but it does command *for the sake of sophia*, i.e. it is one of the factors that make *sophia* possible. How this nuance is to be understood is explained by the example on politics: if one were to hold that *phronēsis* commands *sophia*, the science that deals with what cannot be otherwise—what is not subject to the decisions of man, the order of reality—, one would be implying that human decisions could ground the order of a reality within which human beings always already find themselves. This is the sense in which Aristotle states in NE VI that “it would be strange to think that the art of politics, or *phronēsis*, is the best knowledge, *since man is not the best thing of the*

³²⁰ That is why “we ought to attend to the undemonstrated sayings and opinions of experienced and older people or of *phronimoi* not less than to demonstrations; for because experience has given them an eye they see aright” (NE VI 11, 1143b 11ff).

³²¹ NE VI 12, 1143b 33ff: “[I]t would be thought strange if *phronēsis*, being inferior to *sophia*, is to be put in authority over it, as seems to be implied by the fact that the art which produces anything rules and issues commands about that thing”. EE VII 15, 1249b 12 ff. “[M]edical science governs in one sense, health in another, the former existing for the latter. And so it is with the theoretic faculty; for god is not an imperative ruler, but is the end with a view to which *phronēsis* issues its commands (...), for god needs nothing”.

world’ (VI 7, 1141a 20f). The statement, it must be said, is not a theological assumption, but the acknowledgment that there are states of affairs at many different levels of reality which are not ours to change:

[A]bout eternal things no one deliberates, e.g. about the material universe or the incommensurability of the diagonal and the side of a square. But no more do we deliberate about the things that involve movement but always happen in the same way, whether of necessity or by nature or from any other cause, e.g. the solstices and the risings of the stars; nor about things that happen now in one way, now in another, e.g. droughts and rains; nor about chance events, like the finding of treasure. *But we do not deliberate even about all human affairs*; for instance, no Spartan deliberates about the best constitution for the Scythians. For *none of these things can be brought about by our own efforts* (III 3, 1112a 21 ff).

Aristotle’s point is evidently not that we cannot change some spheres of reality—and of the reality that we ourselves are—with our choices, but rather that such changes cannot alter *the order of that reality*³²². We cannot change, for instance, the fact that everything we do and think shapes ourselves, i.e. that all this is *praxis*. And neither can we change what right desire or what the human good is³²³, nor the fact that we necessarily tend towards *eudaimonia*—the whole of the NE is based on assumptions like these. In a word, man cannot decide what *phronēsis* is made of, which is tantamount to saying that our *phronēsis* is not only a result of our own free decisions, but also of the fact that they are “in accordance with, or not without, rational principle (...) [i.e.] in conformity with *aretē*?” (I 7, 1098a 7, 16f). We cannot change this reality for another reality—we can just transform the reality within which we find ourselves, our *ergon*, the ‘always in movement’ result of our actions. In fact, *we cannot help transforming it one way or the other*.

³²² “The only part of reality in which according to Aristotle it is possible to change the state of things is the one that is constituted by human actions” (BERTI, E. 1988 p. 115).

³²³ Someone might object to this statement, holding that the rectitude of desire is a result of a determined cultural background. That Aristotle does not ignore the effect of culture in our view of reality is clear from his constant allusions to the opinions of his contemporaries. But equally clear is the fact that the NE is not a sociological description. In this respect, the idea that there is such a thing as a rectitude of desire that does not just depend on human decisions is assumed statement after statement in the NE. “Concerning the (ultimate) good, Aristotle never seeks in reason a norm for virtue; he rather seeks in virtue a norm for reason” (BODÉÛS, R. 2004 p. 59).

What is beyond our creative possibilities is not the object of deliberation—and therefore of *phronēsis*—but that of *sophia*. Hence the pretension of validity of the discourse of the NE, its scientificity, requires that its structure be *sophia*³²⁴, not *phronēsis*³²⁵. That is the precise sense in which *sophia* is higher than *phronēsis*: it has to do with what is given prior to our decisions, and what our decisions cannot alter; it is therefore a sensible attitude to discern well what is ours to deliberate about, and what is not³²⁶. For its superiority, though, *sophia* is not enough to make men good³²⁷, so while *theōria* is a *praxis* itself, its *ergon*, its *alētheia* is not practical: the *logoi* that we can find in the NE, or that Aristotle’s students could listen to, do not *have* an *ēthos* in the active sense of *being* it: they just *contain* ideas about how *ēthos* works, and how a good *ēthos* can be attained through *praxis*. And vice versa, the specific sense in which a life realizes truth does not have the form of *logoi antarkeis*, but that of an enactment, *praxis*. The *being* and the *alētheuein* of *praxis* are one and the same, and for that reason while we can dispose of *theōria*—our life could unfold without exercising it—we cannot dispose of *praxis*, because we *are* it. Yet, while it encompasses everything in our life, including *theōria*, it cannot alter its own ontological structure, as known by *theōria*: that *praxis* is irreducible does not mean that man is “*the best thing of the world*” (VI 7, 1141a 20f).

³²⁴ Berti, for his part, reserves the character of *sophia* to the *Metaphysics*, and considers ‘practical philosophy’ (i.e. the discourse of the NE) to be *epistēmē*, like mathematics, physics or political science, which do not account for the principles with which they operate. (Cf. BERTI, E. 1988 pp. 141-142). However, while the *Metaphysics* is surely mostly concerned with accounting for the *archai*, we believe that this account is also an important part of philosophical works such as the NE, the *Physics* and the *De Anima*, which stand apart from other more ‘empirical’ works such as the *Meteorology* or *On Memory* for which the term *epistēmē* seems to be suitable. In this respect, Gadamer argues that Aristotle considers both metaphysics and ethics to belong to *philosophia*: “When [Aristotle] develops his own teaching, he speaks of theoretical philosophy instead of theoretical *sophia*; of practical philosophy instead of practical *sophia*. Why? I believe that in Aristotle the idea is still present of knowledge as a search, of knowledge as something that is never absolute but is always on the way towards perfection” (GADAMER, H.-G. 1990, p. 63).

³²⁵ Cf. NE VI 8 1142a 23f: “That *phronēsis* is not *epistēmē* is clear”.

³²⁶ Cf. NE III 3, 1112a 18ff.

³²⁷ Cf. NE X, 1179b 4ff.

Conclusion to Section I

If one wishes to truly enter in a dialogue, it is required that one set one's views about the matter at stake, not only in order to bring to bear one's own voice in the interchange, but also in order to be able to qualify or change one's views. This requirement, which seems all the more relevant when one is confronted with a philosophy like Aristotle's, is however not the standard practice in the literature on Heidegger's Aristotle, although there are a number of exceptions—the reader's to judge hereafter. In devoting this first section to an 'independent' research on Aristotle we have intended to set the necessary conditions for a better appreciation and discussion of what Heidegger found in Aristotle.

For those readers blessed with a longer acquaintance with Aristotle, whom the preceding analyses may not have opened substantial horizons, an important element was nevertheless provided in the section we are now concluding: it is from our views on *phronēsis*, *energeia* and related concepts, as set down in these pages, that our dialogue with Heidegger's appropriation of Aristotle will unfold. Why we are concerned about certain issues when we will follow Heidegger throughout his work in the early 1920s finds an answer in this first section, to which the reader will be redirected often hereafter. Its main points may now be summarized.

Our discussion has revolved around two main concepts, which structure the two preceding chapters: *orexis* and *energeia*. Both come down to an idea that parallels Aristotle's central concern with movement, namely, how to understand its structure without betraying what it tells us about itself, i.e. that it is constantly in motion and thus cannot be reduced to one of its stages. The introduction of *orexis* in the conceptual matrix of the *ethics* allows Aristotle to account for the way in which our *ēthos*, which we perceive as evolving throughout time, both *comes to be* and *is now*. With *orexis*, Aristotle manages to explain not only what it means that we are now better or worse from the point of view of human *aretē*, but also *how* we have come to be the way we are, and *how* our present acts will model the way we

will be—in short, why what best describes our *ēthos* is *kinēsis*: we are a ‘coming to be’. *Orexis* places the notion of *telos* at the center of ethical life: it is because we tend towards what we believe to be our good that we act, and it is because we act that we come to tend more strongly towards that good. How one is and how one is going to be from an ethical point of view can be ultimately understood in terms of the *tele* towards which one directs oneself.

From this centrality of *telos*, the controversies about the relation between ends and means in the NE can be dissolved through what we have called an ‘organic paradigm’, following Aristotle’s understanding of organic unity (*symplysis*): speaking about ends and means in human life is a requirement of our temporal distention, but we would betray this temporality if we were to conceive ends and means separately. Just as organic life is the result of the interpenetration of its components, so is ethical life the result of the intermingling of ends and means: if the end towards which one longs cannot be equated with the means it is *only* because one cannot reach that end immediately, because “one swallow does not make a summer” (I 7, 1098a 18f). The end is always present in our choice of the means, as indicated by Aristotle’s denomination of the means as *ta pros to telos*. It is present in the ‘now’ of *praxis*, not only in the form of an explicit calculation of means, but also in the form of the *ēthos* that, as a result of our previous choices, has led us to calculate and desire in a specific manner. In other words, the end is not only what we now choose, but what we have chosen before—not only what we now *do*, but what we have come to *be* with what we have *done*. It is not only something we choose, it is always also something we *are* already.

This determination of *ēthos* as embedded in time, one that transcends the here and now of our experience and puts *ēthos* into motion, is intimately tied with one of Aristotle’s central theses in the NE, namely that *eudaimonia*, the fulfillment of our being, is not a state but an activity, *energeia*: “something that happens, not a thing that we possess all the time, like a piece of property (*ktēma*)” (IX 9, 1169b 29f). Still, if on the one hand *ēthos* structurally fits the mold of *kinēsis* and on the

other *eudaimonia* is supposed to fit that of *energeia*, the question arises whether we should just equate *kinēsis* and *energeia*. But Aristotle's most important determination of *energeia*, in 1048b, precisely forbids that. Before the 'being on the way' that is characteristic of almost everything in human life, and which demands the distinction between ends and means, *energeia* stands as a disturbing exception: as it is, Aristotle reports how in performing certain activities, such as seeing, or living itself—the 'activity' that lies beneath any other activity—we experience the *immediate* attainment of ends which, as a constitutive element of the experience itself, *continue* to be. Living is experienced as immediately fulfilled and, insofar as it is experienced, it is *being*, it continues to be. 'Being' thus appears as a synonym of attainment or fulfillment (*entelecheia*), but in the active sense of being always attained, of a fulfillment that is, as it were, continuously renewed, continuously enacted (*energeia*). This places *energeia* at a different ontological level; still, however, Aristotle understands *kinēsis* as a special kind of *energeia* and *entelecheia*, which demands further study on our part—the question shall be retaken in section II.

As we have inferred from 1048b, and from different passages of the NE, the determination of *energeia* (and *entelecheia*) is also crucial to Aristotle's distinction between *praxis* and *poiēsis*, in which the whole of his ethical conception is at stake: while *poiēsis* designates processes that have limits within one's life, i.e. processes that we start and eventually stop, *praxis* is a constitutive element of life, something that is always at stake in our own living: it is not ours to stop it, because it does not cease, insofar as life continues to be. While *poiēsis* is a process that we can observe *from* our own self, *praxis* is not primarily something we can observe, because *praxis is our own self*: something that we are and that we become, something *immediate* to our own being and *continuous* as our own being is. This has some consequences, among which we can now highlight the following: technical truth, which is truth about the way to attain certain ends in a restricted domain of human action, is subordinated to a deeper level of ends, those which encompass the 'action' that is our life, a whole that is continuously on the way; *praxis* is thus primarily conceived as a way of being. No part of the truth about this deeper level of ends,

i.e. practical truth, is transferable, as is the case of technical or theoretical truth. Statements about practical affairs remain as external to life, because they can stand without the ‘happening’ of this ‘whole continuously on the way’, as books stand on shelves while the lives of their owners unfold. Practical truth only exists in the form of *praxis*, as realized in a life—it only exists as *energeia*. As a result, ethics in its genuine original sense is not a body of rules we follow under certain conditions, but a dimension that pervades every single action in our life.

The immediacy and continuity that are characteristic of *praxis* imply a third essential trait that has appeared in comparing it to *poiēsis*, and which is reinforced with the analysis of the relation between *praxis* and *theōria*: its *irreducibility*. The superiority of *theōria*, so insisted upon by Aristotle at the end of NE VI, and later in NE X, does not bring into question the continuum of our *praxis*; what is more, Aristotle’s preference for *theōria* as the highest *praxis* ensures a correct understanding of *praxis*, which must not be reduced to the external effects *produced* by it, but essentially consists of the internal effect always necessarily *enacted* in the agent herself, even when no choice is made or no decision is taken.

The increasing relevance that the concept of *energeia* has acquired with the unfolding of our analysis of *phronēsis* and *praxis* lays a very convenient frame to approach one of Heidegger’s main concerns from his very first early course in Freiburg: the characterization of the peculiar structure of human life, of its mov- edness (*Bewegtheit*), which is to remain his main topic throughout the 1920s, the “laboratory of fundamental ontology”³²⁸, until *Sein und Zeit* and beyond. The frame is all the more appropriate if we consider that it springs from the body of con- cepts found in Aristotelian thought, which, although initially absent, will very soon turn out to be a crucial travel mate of Heidegger, at least explicitly until 1939, well into the so-called *Kehre*.

³²⁸ SOMMER, C. 2005 p. 121.

SECTION II

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A Dialogue with Heidegger's
Appropriation of *Phronēsis*
on the Way to *Sein und Zeit*
in the Light of his
Understanding
of *Energeia*

3. From Phenomenology to Aristotle: Grasping Immediacy

3.1. Phenomenology and the Stream of Life

Heidegger's concern with the *Bewegtheit* of human life pervades his research from the first early course in Freiburg, the 1919 *Kriegsnotsemester*³²⁹, under a concept that sustains the whole of his questioning in this short term: the immediacy (*Unmittelbarkeit*) with which we experience our own life, which is prior to any reflective development of such an experience. Heidegger's insights in this course are acute and thought-provoking, and it is remarkable that many of the motives that will occupy him during the 20s are already present here, although if compared with the courses of the years to come, these motives are still put in a rather generic way; it is obviously a thought that is still steering its way, searching for a new language³³⁰.

Although Heidegger, by then under the auspices of Husserl, is prudent enough as to avoid making explicit the fact that his development is partly a critique of Husserlian phenomenology, his efforts are focused on this immediacy, insofar as to his mind it has not been properly approached by Husserl. This is clear from the ironical beginning of the course, where Heidegger announces that this problem that concerns him “will reveal, in an increasingly radical and decisive manner”, that remarks as the following are “incongruent and foreign”:

³²⁹ *Die Idee der Philosophie und das Weltanschauungsproblem* (KNS 1919) in GA 56/57 *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie* pp. 3-117 (hereafter KNS).

³³⁰ The question of immediacy launched here will lead to *Sein und Zeit*, where Heidegger describes it carefully in a prominent passage (cf. SZ § 5 p. 15): “True, *Dasein* is ontically not only what is near or even nearest—we ourselves *are* it, each of us. Nevertheless, or precisely for this reason, is ontologically what is farthest removed”. (“Das Dasein ist zwar ontisch nicht nur nahe oder gar das nächste – wir sind es sogar je selbst. Trotzdem oder gerade deshalb ist es ontologisch das Fernste”).

The scientific idea to be pursued is such that with the achievement of a genuine methodological orientation we step out beyond and away from ourselves, and must methodologically remain behind in the sphere which is forever foreign to the most proper problematic of the science to be founded³³¹.

This somehow pompously depicted idea of philosophical science is the blueprint of what Heidegger intends to develop, i.e. one in which we do not *step out from ourselves*, because we ultimately cannot do so. That is one of the consequences of the fact that our life is immediate to us: even when we are reflecting, we are still living, so that theoretical efforts must try to grasp this immediacy without stopping its moving continuity. The terms ‘theory’ and ‘reflection’, in fact, are *in this course*³³² the object of critique, as compartments that ignore the fundamental phenomenon of life:

[I]n reflection (*Reflexion*) we are theoretically (*theoretisch*) oriented. All theoretical comportment, we said, is de-vivifying (*entlebendes*). This now shows itself in the case of life-experiences, for in reflection *they are no longer lived but looked at*. We set the experiences *out* before us *out of* immediate experience; we intrude so to speak into the flowing stream of experiences and pull one or more of them out, we ‘still the stream’ as Natorp says³³³.

The difference between ‘looking at’ a lived experience and ‘living it’ is the difference between a naïve approach that considers it as something that “pass[es]

³³¹ KNS § 1 in GA 56/57 p. 3 [3]: “Das Problem (...) wird zusehends entschiedener und radikaler die vorbereitenden Anfangssätze als ihm selbst inkongruent und sogar wesensfremd erscheinen lassen. Es liegt im sinnmäßigen Zuge der zu verfolgenden wissenschaftlichen Idee, daß wir mit der Gewinnung der echtmethodischen Erkenntnisstellung über uns selbst hinaus- und wegschreiten und uns selbst methodisch zurücklassen müssen in der Sphäre, die der ureigensten Problematik der zu fundierenden Wissenschaft ewig fremd bleibt”.

³³² The critique of theory here should not lead to the hurried conclusion that Heidegger’s thought is against theory altogether, as Bowler and Gonzalez correctly warn. Cf. BOWLER, Michael *Heidegger and Aristotle. Philosophy as Praxis* London/New York: Continuum, 2008, p. 97; GONZALEZ, F. J. “On the Way to *Sophia*: Heidegger on Plato’s Dialectic, Ethics, and Sophist” *Research in Phenomenology* 27 (1997) pp. 16-60 (cf. esp. pp. 26-28).

³³³ KNS § 19 in GA 56/57 pp. 100-101 [85, our e.] “[I]n der Reflexion wir sind wir theoretisch eingestellt. Aller theoretische Verhalten, sagten wir, ist ein entlebendes. Das zeigt sich nun in einem ganz eminentem Sinne bei den Erlebnissen. Sie werden ja in der Reflexion nicht mehr erlebt, sondern, das ist ihr Sinn, erblickt. Wir stellen die Erlebnisse hin und aus dem unmittelbaren Erleben *heraus*. Wir machen einen Griff gleichsam in den abfließenden Strom der Erlebnisse und greifen eines oder mehrere heraus, d.h. wir stellen den Strom still, wie Natorp sagt”. The latter reference to Natorp (who is also the object of critique, cf. *ibidem* pp. 107 ff. [90 ff.]) is highlighted by Heidegger as the only “scientifically noteworthy objection” to phenomenology at that moment.

in front of me like a thing”³³⁴ and the approach that Heidegger is looking for: understanding lived experience “*not as a process (Vor-gang), as thing, as object, but in a quite new way, as an event (Ereignis)*”³³⁵. This event is not a kind of detour from life in order to conceptualize it from the outside, but an understanding of life *from within*. Insofar as in our questioning we do not lose sight of the fact that we are always already installed in life, we cannot speak of limits, as one does when designating a process, i.e. when one objectifies a certain period of time from the outside, and verifies the action (*Gang*) before (*vor*) oneself (Heidegger hyphenates *Vor-gang* in this sense). One’s lived experiences are not placed one after the other, or concurrent in time (which would after all remain in the perspective of *Vor-gänge*)—they are merged in the *continuous* stream of life, being at one with life.

Against the “knowing ‘I’ (*erkennendes Ich*)” of “the objective occurrence, the happening as objectified and known, [which] we describe as process”³³⁶, Heidegger stresses the “historical ‘I’ (*historisches Ich*)” that relates to the world as the environment in which she finds herself immersed. Thus, because life implies the experience of its environment, the immediacy not only refers to the historical ‘I’ that lives but also, at the same time, to ‘what’ is lived in experience, not as a result of a joining “in the manner of existing objects”³³⁷ but as an original unity:

³³⁴ “Das Erleben geht nicht vor mir vorbei, wie eine Sache, die ich hinstelle” *Ibidem* § 15 p. 75 [63, mod. tr.]. The parallelism with a passage of the NE is remarkable: “*energeia* clearly is something that happens, not a thing that we possess all the time, like a piece of property (*ktēma*)” (Cf. NE IX 9, 1169b 29f, Rackham, mod. tr.).

³³⁵ “[N]icht als Vor-gang, als Sache, Objekt, sondern als ein ganz Neuartiges, ein Ereignis” (KNS § 15 in GA 56/57 p. 75 [63]). Sadler translates *Ereignis* as “an event of appropriation”, but there is no textual basis for this sense, that rather belongs to a later stage of Heidegger’s thought (cf. ADRIÁN, J. *El lenguaje de Heidegger. Diccionario Filosófico 1912-1927* Barcelona: Herder, 2009 pp. 78-80).

³³⁶ KNS § 15 in GA 56/57 p. 74 [62] “Das objectivierte Geschehen, das Geschehen als gegenständliches, erkanntes, bezeichnen wir als Vor-gang”

³³⁷ *Ibidem* § 13 p. 70 [59] “Das Erleben und das Erlebte sind nicht wie seiende Gegenstände zusammengestückt”.

“in immediate observation I do not find anything like an ‘I’, but only an ‘experience of something’, a ‘living towards something’”³³⁸.

This questioning of the modern concepts of ‘subject’ and ‘object’, on the basis of a more original unity between them, relegates the question of ‘what’ that is typical of an objectifying regard to prioritize the question of the ‘how’. Immediacy means *sense*, i.e. *how* something concerns me:

What is immediately given! Every word here is significant. What does ‘immediate’ mean? The lectern is given to me immediately in the lived experience of it. I see it as such, I do not see sensations and sense data³³⁹.

Heidegger is here referring back to his masterful analysis of the experience of the lectern in § 14, which for many reasons has remained as one of the best-known passages of his early courses. Among these reasons stands out his coining of the verb *welten* (*es weltet*, “it worlds”), a term that expresses this immediacy between experience and the lived of experience, from which the hermeneutic relation to the world and to oneself springs, because everything—also oneself—“has the character of world (*welthaft*)”³⁴⁰. *Das Erleben*, the lived of experience, is not primarily a ‘this’ to be approached through the question ‘what’, as something I could view from the outside of the world to which I and *das Erleben* belong, but rather a ‘this’ in reference to which I ask myself always in the first place ‘how’.

³³⁸ *Ibidem* § 13 p. 68 [57] “Unmittelbar schauend finde ich so etwas wie ein »ich« nicht vor, sondern nur ein »Er-leben von Etwas«, ein »Leben auf etwas zu«”.

³³⁹ *Ibidem* § 17 p. 85 [71] “Was unmittelbar gegeben ist! Jedes Wort ist hier von Bedeutung. Was besagt unmittelbar? Unmittelbar ist mir im Kathedererlebnis das Katheder gegeben. Ich sehe dieses als solches und sehe nicht etwa Empfindungen und Empfindungsdaten”.

³⁴⁰ *Ibidem* § 14 pp. 72-73 [61] “In the experience of seeing the lectern something is given *to me* from out of an immediate environment. This environmental milieu (...) does not consist just of things, objects which are then conceived as meaning this and this; rather, the meaningful is primary and immediately given to me without any mental detours across thing-oriented apprehension. Living in an environment, it signifies to me everywhere and always, everything has the character of world. It is everywhere the case that ‘it worlds’”. (“In dem Erlebnis des Kathedersehens gibt sich *mir* etwas aus einer unmittelbaren Umwelt. Dieses Umweltliche (...) sind nicht Sachen mit einem bestimmten Bedeutungscharakter, Gegenstände, und dazu noch aufgefaßt als das und das bedeutend, sondern das Bedeutsame ist das Primäre, gibt sich mir unmittelbar, ohne jeden gedanklichen Umweg über ein Sacherfassen. In einer Umwelt lebend, bedeutet es mir überall und immer, es ist alles welthaft, »es weltet«”).

This ‘how’ encompasses the determination of ‘this’ as a ‘what’, and of ‘me’ as an ‘I’, because I originally find myself in the ‘how’ of my relatedness to things and to myself, a relatedness that is as previous to the ‘what’ as to the ‘I’.

The methodological challenge is therefore how we are to approach this ‘how’ of lived experience without falling prey to “[e]xplanation through dismemberment, i.e. destruction (*Zerstörung*): one wants to explain something which one no longer has as such”³⁴¹. A brief outline of a phenomenological structure that could provide this approach is indicated at the end of the course: the “hermeneutical intuition” (*hermeneutische Intuition*), in which lived experience, in taking hold of itself, understands itself³⁴². This requirement to reconcile philosophy and life, to find a non-objectifying language to describe life—something crucial to the correct self-understanding of phenomenology—will dominate Heidegger’s efforts in the subsequent courses, in which philosophy, but also religion, appear intertwined in “a peculiar back-and-forth movement (...), such that each [is] to make the other possible”³⁴³. This marriage, justified by Heidegger in a famous letter to Löwith where he calls himself a “Christian theologian”³⁴⁴, is already hinted at in the closing chapter that he wrote in 1916 for the publication of his *Habilitationschrift*: “Phi-

³⁴¹ *Ibidem* § 17 p. 86 [73] “Erklärung durch Zerstückelung, d.h. hier Zerstörung: Man will etwas erklären, das man gar nicht mehr als solches hat”. Heidegger uses here the term *Zerstörung*, with a clearly negative sense that is not to be confused with what he means by *Destruktion*, in relation to his task of appropriation of tradition.

³⁴² Cf. *Ibidem* § 20c pp. 116-117 [98-99].

³⁴³ VAN BUREN, J. “The Earliest Heidegger: A New Field of Research” in Dreyfus, H. L. et al (eds.) *A Companion to Heidegger* Malden/Oxford/Victoria: Blackwell, 2005 p. 24.

³⁴⁴ “I work concretely and factually out of my «I am»—out of my spiritual and thoroughly factic heritage, my milieu, my life contexts, and whatever is available to me from these (...) I am a «Christian theologian»” —“Drei Briefe Martin Heideggers an Karl Löwith” in Papenfuss, D. And Pöggeler (eds.) *Zur philosophischen Aktualität Heideggers. Im Gespräch der Zeit*. Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1990 (Cf. pp. 27-32 for the letter to Löwith on the 19th August 1921, p. 29 for ref. [“Letter to Karl Löwith on his Philosophical Identity” in Sheehan, T. and Kisiel, T. *Becoming Heidegger* pp. 97-102, pp. 99-100 for ref.]).

osophy as rationalistic construction, removed from life, is helpless; mysticism as irrationalistic experience is aimless”³⁴⁵.

3.2. Phenomenological Method and Christian Kaiology, Two Key Vectors Pointing towards Aristotle

An excerpt of Heidegger’s notes for the closing part of the 1919-20 course *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* is specially significant of the vivid methodological concern of these years, without which mysticism would indeed be “aimless”:

The ‘strictness’ of method has nothing to do with the rationalistic exactitude of natural science (...); ‘stern’, ‘thorough’—*pure devoting oneself to the genuine vital situations*; but also as seen from the other side: no mystic and mysticism, no arbitrary illusions³⁴⁶.

Heidegger’s insistence on the term *Strenge* suggests a veiled reference to Husserl’s idea of “Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft”³⁴⁷, from which Heidegger is intending to depart, in the name of truly remaining *rein hingegen den echten Lebenssituationen*. Heidegger tries to find his way between the Neokantian de-vitalizing (*Entlebung*) of theory which to his mind Husserl’s phenomenology does not escape³⁴⁸, and the methodologically weak claim for the retrieval of life typical

³⁴⁵ *Die Kategorien- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus* (1915) in GA 1 *Frühe Schriften* Ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, 1978 p. 410. “Philosophie als vom Leben abgelöstes, rationalistisches Gebilde ist machtlos, Mystik als irrationalistisches Erleben ist ziellos”.

³⁴⁶ GA 58 *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (WS 1919-20) p. 137 (our e.). “Die »Strenge« der Methode hat nichts zu tun mit rationalistischer Exaktheit der Naturwissenschaft (...); »strenge«: »angestrengt« — *rein hingegen den echten Lebenssituationen*; aber auch nach der anderen Seite gesehen: nicht Mystik und Mystizismus, keine willkürlichen Verstiegenheiten (...)”. The passage in which this remarks are included has the significant title of “Philosophy—a struggle for method” (“*Philosophie — ein Ringen um die Methode*”).

³⁴⁷ HUSSERL, Edmund *Logos 1* (1910-11), Tübingen, pp. 289-341, also in *Husserliana 25 Aufsätze und Vorträge (1911-1921)* The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987.

³⁴⁸ A thorough exposition of Heidegger’s critical views on the philosophy of Rickert, Husserl and Natorp can be found in BOWLER, M. pp. 7-75. Of course, Heidegger’s assessment of Husserlian phenomenology should be carefully nuanced, a task which exceeds our possibilities in this thesis. Balanced outlooks of the idea of phenomenology in Husserl and Heidegger can be found in CROWELL, Stephen G. *Husserl, Heidegger and the Space of Meaning. Paths toward Transcendental Phenomenology* Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001; CRISTIN, Renato *Fenomeno storia. Fenomenologia e storicità in Husserl e Dilthey* Napoli: Guida 1999 esp. 105 ff.; GRONDIN, Jean “La contribution silencieuse de Husserl a

of *Lebensphilosophie*. A strong methodology is surely required, but one that grasps our original relatedness to life, our finding ourselves in life, that precedes any theoretical formulation:

An «undistinguished» noise in a room («there is something out of place», «something uneasy about it»). The sense-content and the sense-function of this «something» of factual experience does not have the least to do with the formal-logic something of objectivity (*Gegenständlichkeit*), which is the correlate of the free process of formalization (...). While in the sense of the formal-logic something there is in general an absolute and most radical inhibition of factual personal life-concern (*Lebensbezug*) (...), the pretheoretical something (*vortheoretische Etwas*) brings along the highest potential and full uncanniness of life³⁴⁹.

The methodological key for this mediation between theory and life experience lies in the notion of formal indication (*formale Anzeige*) which, for further evidence of the feedback between philosophy and religion in these years, finds its longest development in the context of a course on religion. This concept, “perhaps the very heart and soul of the early Heidegger”³⁵⁰, is a more mature version of the *hermeneutische Intuition* summarily announced in KNS, a term which is not used again by Heidegger in his courses³⁵¹. *Formale Anzeige*, as developed in the 1920-21 course *Einleitung in die Phänomenologie der Religion*³⁵², is opposed to the

l'herméneutique” dans *Le tournant herméneutique de la phénoménologie* PUF, 2003 pp. 19-37; MORAN, Dermot “Heidegger’s Transcendental Phenomenology in the Light of Husserl’s Project of First Philosophy” in Crowell, S. et al. (eds) *Transcendental Heidegger* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.

³⁴⁹ GA 58 § 24 pp. 106-107 “[E]in »unerklärliches« Geräusch im Zimmer (»es ist etwas nicht in Ordnung«, »es ist etwas nicht geheuer«). Dieses »Etwas« des faktischen Erfahrens hat seinem Sinngehalt und seiner Sinnfunktion nach nicht das mindeste zu tun mit dem formallogischen Etwas der Gegenständlichkeit, das Korrelat ist des freien Prozesses der Formalisierung (...). Während im Sinne des formallogischen Etwas überhaupt liegt absolute und radikalste Unterbindung faktisch lebendigen personalen Lebensbezugs (...), trägt das Vortheoretische Etwas die höchste potentielle und volle Unheimlichkeit des Lebens”.

³⁵⁰ KISIEL, Theodore *The Genesis of Heidegger’s Being and Time* London: University of California Press, 1993 p. 172.

³⁵¹ Heidegger, as far as I know, only mentions it again in a letter to Heinrich Rickert on the 27th January 1920. Cf. HEIDEGGER, Martin and RICKERT, Heinrich *Briefe 1912 bis 1933 und andere Dokumente* Ed. by Alfred Denker. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2002, p. 48.

³⁵² Cf. *Einleitung in die Phänomenologie der Religion* (1920-21) §§ 12-13 in GA 60 *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens* Ed. by Matthias Jung, Thomas Regehly and Claudius Strube, 1995 [*The Phenomenology of Religious Life* Trans. by Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei. IU Press, 2004] (hereafter EPR). For accurate approaches to this key concept of Heidegger, cf. IMDAHL, Georg *Das Leben Verstehen*.

Formalisierung depicted in the text above, on the grounds that the *how* of our relation (*Bezug*) to reality has always to be taken into account. *Formale Anzeige* is a prevention against the implicit uncritical establishment of a determined way of referring to reality. Specifically, Heidegger is concerned with the “formal-logic ‘something’ of objectivity (*Gegenständlichkeit*)”, that takes this outlook for granted. This naïve adoption is to be prevented through the inclusion of the *Vollzugsinn*, the sense of the execution, in any account of the meaningfulness (*Bedeutsamkeit*) with which the world comes up. This is the chief difference between *formale Anzeige* and *Formalisierung*: with the former, the *actus exercitus*³⁵³ is inquired as to the adequation of its approach to reality. Only through a “phenomenology of the formal (original consideration of the formal itself and explication of the relational meaning within its enactment)”³⁵⁴ can philosophy ensure that it has an adequate orientation to the phenomena.

The “three directions of sense” that are present in all our experiences, namely the “what” (*Was*) that is experienced (“content, *Gehalt*”), the “how” (*Wie*) in which it is experienced (“relation, *Bezug*”) and the “how” (*Wie*) of the enactment (*Vollzug*) of the relational meaning “do not simply coexist. «Phenomenon» is the explication of this totality of sense”³⁵⁵. As a result, real phenomenology, i.e. taking “everything that presents itself (...) originally in

Heideggers formal anzeigende Hermeneutik in den frühen Freiburger Vorlesungen. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1997 esp. pp. 142-174; KISIEL, T. 1993 pp. 164-173; VAN BUREN, John *The Young Heidegger. Rumor of the Hidden King* IU Press, 1994 pp. 324-341; VIGO, Alejandro *Arqueología y aletheología y otros estudios heideggerianos*. Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2008 pp. 231-257 (esp. 251-255).

³⁵³ Gadamer has highlighted the importance that Heidegger attached in these years to the medieval distinction between *actus exercitus* and *actus signatus*. Cf. GADAMER, Hans-Georg “Vom Anfang des Denkens” (1986) in *Gesammelte Werke 3, Neue Philosophie I. Hegel/Husserl/Heidegger*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987c pp. 375-393 (p. 389 for ref.).

³⁵⁴ EPR § 13 in GA 60 p. 62 [43] “Phänomenologie des Formalen (ursprüngliche Betrachtung des Formalen selbst und Explication des Bezugsinns innerhalb seines Vollzugs)”.

³⁵⁵ *Ibidem* p. 63 [43] “Diese drei Sinnesrichtungen (Gehalts-, Bezugs-, Vollzugssinn) stehen aber nicht einfach nebeneinander. »Phänomen« ist Sinnanzheit nach diesen drei Richtungen”.

«intuition» (...) simply as it gives itself³⁵⁶, only occurs by keeping open once and again the relational meaning, i.e. by always letting phenomena answer the question of *how they are to be approached*. This is precisely what formal determination does not take into account, since it orders (*ordnen*)³⁵⁷, it prescribes to reality how it is to be approached, instead of letting reality determine that ‘how’ in each case. The “precautionary measure (*Vorsichtsmaßregel*)”³⁵⁸ of *formale Anzeige* is required against the narrowing of the sense of being implied by formalization, which

hides the *enactment*-character (...) and turns one-sidedly to the *content*. A glance at the history of philosophy shows that the formal determination of the objective entirely dominates philosophy. How can this prejudice, this pre-judgment, be prevented? This is just what the formal indication achieves³⁵⁹.

Formal indication always faces anew the philosopher with the original experience of phenomena. What is essential is not to have the opportunity of enacting *materially* the experience (because everyone does so all the time, and we are not thereby doing phenomenology), but to enact it *formally*, i.e. to ‘keep in view’ the full spectrum of sense that constitutes a phenomenon when we attempt to analyze it, which implies to ask whether the way in which we enact our relation to this phenomenon corresponds to its structure³⁶⁰. In this respect, the fact that for Aristotle “truth in Ethics can only be judged in terms of performances in

³⁵⁶ “Alles, was sich uns in der »Intuition« originär (...) darbietet, [ist] einfach hinzunehmen (...) als was es sich gibt”. HUSSERL, E. *Husserliana 3. Ideen zu einer Reinen Phänomenologie und Phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch* (1913) The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950 § 24 p. 43 (according to the original pagination in margins). Heidegger quotes this passage in KNS § 20 in GA 56/57 p. 109 [92]).

³⁵⁷ Cf. EPR § 13 in GA 60 p. 64 [44] The terms *Ordnung* and *geordnet* are used.

³⁵⁸ *Ibidem* p. 64 [44].

³⁵⁹ *Ibidem* p. 63 [43] “[Die formale Bestimmung] verdeckt das *Vollzugs*mäßige (...) und richtet sich einseitig auf den *Gehalt*. Ein Blick auf die Geschichte der Philosophie ergibt, daß die formale Bestimmtheit des Gegenständlichen die Philosophie völlig beherrscht. Wie kann diesem Präjudiz, diesem Vorurteil vorgebeugt werden? Das leistet gerade die *formale Anzeige*”.

³⁶⁰ “The notion of formal indication (...) means that the terms used to describe existence require a specific and non-prescribable process of appropriation on the part of the reader or listener. This process is not contained in the concept itself, it can only be awakened, encouraged, urged by the concept” (GRONDIN, Jean “The Ethical and Young Hegelian Motives in Heidegger’s Hermeneutics of Facticity” in Kisiel, T. et al. (eds.) *Reading Heidegger from the start. Essays on his early thought* SUNY, 1994 pp. 345-357 [p. 353 for ref.]).

living, [because] otherwise it is mere words (...) [is] perfectly in line with Heidegger's notion of formal indication"³⁶¹.

Closely related to formal indication, as what makes it possible, there is another relevant methodological insight that is crucial to Heidegger's early rethinking of phenomenology, and this one comes directly from the Husserl of the *Logische Untersuchungen*: categorial intuition (*Kategoriale Anschauung*)³⁶². The relevance of this concept, to which the late Heidegger referred in his very last seminar course in Zähringen as "the focal point of Husserl's phenomenology"³⁶³, is not explicitly stressed by the early Heidegger until the 1925 summer semester course *History on the Concept of Time*³⁶⁴. However, in one of his renowned short intellectual autobiographies, he relates categorial intuition to his reading of Aristotle in the early 1920s³⁶⁵. Indeed, *formale Anzeige* presupposes the "new objectivity" that is

³⁶¹ HATAB, Lawrence J. *Ethics and Finitude. Heideggerian Contributions to Moral Philosophy*. Maryland: Rowman & Little Field, 2000 p. 107. Cf. NE X 8, 1179a 18f (Hatab's reference).

³⁶² Cf. HUSSERL, E. *Husserliana 19/2 Logische Untersuchungen. Zweiter Band. Zweiter Teil. Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis* (1901) Martinus Nijhoff, Haag 1984 §§ 40 ff, on the 6th research ("Elemente einer phänomenologischen Aufklärung der Erkenntnis"). A good synthesis of this Husserlian discovery and its relevance for Heidegger can be found in TAMINIAUX, Jacques "Le regard et l'excédent. Remarques sur Heidegger et les *Recherches Logiques* de Husserl" *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 75 (1977) pp. 74-100.

³⁶³ *Seminar in Zähringen* (1973) in GA 15 *Seminare (1951-1973)* Ed. by Curd Ochwad, 1986 pp. 372-400 (p. 373 for ref.) [*Seminar in Zähringen* in Heidegger, M. *Four Seminars* Translated by Andrew Mitchell and François Raffoul, IU Press, 2003 pp. 64-81, p. 65 for ref.]. This is not just a remark made in passing: Heidegger extensively dwells on an explanation of categorial intuition.

³⁶⁴ Cf. GA 20 *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (SS 1925) Ed. by Petra Jaeger, 1979 §§ 6-7 [*History of the Concept of Time. Prolegomena*, trans. by Theodore Kisiel. IU Press, 1985].

³⁶⁵ "Mein Weg in die Phänomenologie" (1963) in GA 14 *Zur Sache des Denkens* Ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, 2007 pp. 91-104 (previously published in *Zur Sache des Denkens* Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1969) ["My way to Phenomenology", trans. by John Stambaugh in *On time and being* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002 pp. 74-82]. Cf. p. 98 [78]: "As I myself practiced phenomenological seeing, teaching and learning in Husserl's proximity after 1919 and at the same time tried out a transformed understanding of Aristotle in a seminar, my interest leaned anew toward the Logical Investigations, above all the sixth investigation in the first edition". ("Als ich seit 1919 selbst lehrend-lernend in der Nähe Husserls das phänomenologische Sehen einübte und zugleich im Seminar ein gewandeltes Aristoteles-Verständnis erprobte, neigte sich mein Interesse aufs neue den »Logischen Untersuchungen« zu, vor allem der sechsten in der ersten Auflage").

On this connection, cf. ADRIÁN, Jesús *El joven Heidegger. Un estudio interpretativo de su obra temprana a la luz de la pregunta por el ser*. Doctoral Dissertation. Bellaterra: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 2000 p. 464; BRAGUE, Rémi "La phénoménologie comme voie d'accès au monde grec. Note critique sur la

constituted with categorial acts, which is not the “result of the activity of intellectual understanding upon the external world”³⁶⁶: sensitive intuition brings altogether with it the categories with which we are to understand reality, in such a way that it is in each case the given phenomenon and not the attitude of the subject that prescribes how it is to be approached. Thus, for instance, “I can in a single act of perception simply see a flock of birds or a row of trees. Such given wholes are self-contained. The unity of a row, a swarm, a flock of wild ducks is not based upon a prior act of counting. It is an intuitive unity which gives the whole simply”³⁶⁷. We are able to say ‘one’, or ‘this’ not because we have *a priori* categories to approach reality but because reality itself is constituted in this way, and provides itself the categories with which we can understand it, as correlates of the acts of perception³⁶⁸. This is indeed the perspective that is at stake when Aristotle speaks, for instance, of a substance as a *tode ti*, a ‘this something’³⁶⁹, or when he holds that movement is not something “over and above things (*para ta pragmata*)”³⁷⁰. “Without being explicitly conscious of it, phenomenology returns to the broad concept of truth whereby the Greeks (Aristotle) could call true even perception as such and the simple perception of something”³⁷¹. The fact that intuition recovers its

Vorhandenheit comme modèle ontologique dans la lecture heideggerienne d’Aristote” in Marion, J.-L., Planty-Bonjour, G. (eds.) *Phénoménologie et Métaphysique* Paris: PUF, 1984 pp. 247-273 (cf. esp. p. 252); KISIEL, T. 1993 pp. 370-371; VOLPI, Franco *Heidegger e Aristotele* Padova: Daphne, 1984 pp. 72 ff.

³⁶⁶ GA 20 § 6d p. 96-97 [71] “Die kategorialen Akte konstituieren eine neue Gegenständlichkeit (...). Diese Gegenständlichkeit (...) ist nicht Resultat der Betätigung des Verstandes an der Außenwelt”.

³⁶⁷ GA 20 § 6c 90 [66] “Ich kann in einem Akte der Wahrnehmung einen Schwarm von Vögeln, eine Allee von Bäumen schlicht sehen. Diese vorgegebene Ganzheit ist in sich geschlossen. Die Einheit einer Allee, eines Schwarmes, eines Zuges von Wildenten beruht nicht auf vorheriger Durchzählung, sondern ist anschauliche Einheit, die schlicht das Ganze gibt”. Heidegger acknowledges immediately below his debt to Husserl on this.

³⁶⁸ Cf. GA 20 § 6b p. 79 [59]. Cf. HUSSERL, E. 1984 § 44 pp. 669-670 (Heidegger quotes p. 141 of the 2nd edition [1921])

³⁶⁹ Cf. e.g. *Met.* VII 3, 1029a 28.

³⁷⁰ *Physics* III 1, 200b 32f.

³⁷¹ GA 20 § 6a p. 73 [55] “Sie kehrt ohne ausdrückliches Bewußtsein davon zu der Weite des Wahrheitbegriffes zurück, in der die Griechen — Aristoteles — auch die Wahrnehmung als solche und schlichtes Wahrnehmen von etwas wahr nennen konnten”. But because phenomenology is not

broadness with Husserl's logical investigations, after having been limited in modernity to the perception of disjointed sense data, paves the way for the understanding of ontology that guides the whole of Heidegger's approach to Aristotle, which is marked by the assumption that Aristotle himself proceeded under that broad idea of intuition, in which phenomenology and ontology are one and the same:

The exhibition of categorial structure serves to broaden the idea of objectivity so that this objectivity can itself be exhibited in its content in the investigation of the corresponding intuition. In other words, the phenomenological research which breaks through to objectivity arrives at the form of research sought by ancient ontology. There is no ontology *alongside* a phenomenology. Rather, *scientific ontology is nothing but phenomenology*³⁷².

We said above that hand in hand with methodological questions—the preventive role of *formale Anzeige* and the breakthrough discovery of categorial intuition—there is another important source for Heidegger's rethinking of phenomenology and his new return to Aristotle in the early 20s: his acquaintance with the experience of life in primal christianity, which brings about a *kairological* understanding of temporality that is very much in line with the attentiveness to the particularity of phenomena prescribed by *formale Anzeige*. In fact, in his course on the Phenomenology of Religion, Heidegger turns abruptly from his longest ever explication of this methodological strategy to an exegesis of the Pauline letters, apparently because of the growing dissatisfaction of some of the students in the course due to the absence of religious content in the lessons. Whether this befits or not Heidegger's original intentions for this course, we do not know, remarks

conscious of this return (*Rückgang*), Heidegger adds, it cannot ultimately find this original sense of truth, which he refers to Aristotle's development in *Met.* IX 10.

³⁷² GA 20 § 6d p. 98 [72] “Mit dem Aufweis der kategorialen Struktur ist die Idee der Objektivität erweitert, so zwar, daß diese Objektivität selbst nun in der Durchforschung der entsprechenden Anschauung in ihrem Gehalte aufweisbar wird. Mit anderen Worten: In der damit durchbrechenden phänomenologischen Forschung ist die Forschungsart gewonnen, die die alte Ontologie suchte. Es gibt keine Ontologie *neben* einer Phänomenologie, sondern *wissenschaftliche Ontologie ist nichts anderes als Phänomenologie*”. Cf. also SZ § 7c p. 35.

Kisiel³⁷³. What seems clear, though, is that Heidegger could only make this shift because he had come to appreciate the high phenomenological potential of the primitive Christian view of life that characterizes the Pauline letters. The content of the course becomes more explicitly ‘religious’, but the aim remains fundamentally methodological: “In the following, we do not intend to give a dogmatic or theological-exegetical interpretation, nor a historical study or a religious meditation, but *only guidance for phenomenological understanding*”³⁷⁴.

Phenomenologically relevant for Heidegger is the fact that “Christian experience lives time itself («to live», understood as *verbum transitivum*)”³⁷⁵. By this transitive sense, Heidegger means a disposition of one’s entire being towards its temporality, by which time appears not primarily as something *in* which we are, but as part of us, as a whole that is given prior to our analytical understanding. From this perspective, the correct access to time is not to see it as something *in* which we live, but to *live* it in the first place. This will be argued in clear-cut terms in the 1924 lecture on the concept of time³⁷⁶: “*Dasein*, conceived in its most extreme possibility of being, *is time itself*, not *in* time”³⁷⁷; and, as a result, “[t]he primary relation to *Dasein* is not that of seeing but of “*being it*”³⁷⁸.

³⁷³ KISIEL, T. 1993 p. 171. Kisiel suggests from examination of the text that Heidegger had probably thought of a softer transition from philosophy to religion (cf. p. 173).

³⁷⁴ EPR § 14 in GA 60 p. 67 [47, our e.] “Wir beabsichtigen im Folgenden nicht, eine dogmatische oder theologisch-exegetische Interpretation, auch nicht eine historische Betrachtung oder eine religiöse Meditation, sondern lediglich eine Anleitung zum phänomenologischen Verstehen zu geben”.

³⁷⁵ *Ibidem* § 21 p. 82 [57] “Die christliche Erfahrung lebt die Zeit selbst («leben» als *verbum transitivum* verstanden)”.

³⁷⁶ “Der Begriff der Zeit. Vortrag vor der Marburger Theologenschaft Juli 1924” in GA 64 *Der Begriff der Zeit* Ed. by F.-W. von Herrmann, 2004 pp. 107-125 [“The Concept of Time”, trans. by Th. Kisiel in Sheehan, T. and Kisiel, T. *Becoming Heidegger. On the Trail of his Occasional Early Writings, 1910-1927* Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007 pp. 200-213].

³⁷⁷ *Ibidem* p. 118 [208] “Das *Dasein*, begriffen in seiner äußersten Seinsmöglichkeit, *ist die Zeit selbst*, nicht *in* der Zeit”.

³⁷⁸ *Ibidem* p. 114 [205] “Der primäre Bezug zum *Dasein* ist nicht die Betrachtung, sondern das «*es sein*»”.

One of the key aspects of this early Christian attitude towards time is found by Heidegger in Paul's answer to the request of the Thessalonians about the day of the *Parousia*, the "appearing again of the already appeared Messiah"³⁷⁹. Paul, Heidegger argues, avoids the term 'when' in his answer, and speaks instead of time and moment, "*peri de tōn chronōn kai tōn kairōn*"³⁸⁰, because "[t]he entire question for Paul is not a cognitive question (cf. 5,2; *autoi gar akribōs oidate* [for yourselves know perfectly]). He does not say, «at this or at that time the Lord will come again» (...) —rather he says: «You know exactly...»"³⁸¹. Paul does answer to the aim for security that the Thessalonians reveal in the inquiry for a "when", but he does so with a formal indication, i.e. he returns back the question to them: the proper answer to the question does not lie anywhere to be grasped as a knowledge that one could possess, but rather is realized in one's readiness, in *how* one expects the coming of the Lord.

How the *parousia* stands in my life, that refers back to *the enactment (Vollzug) of life itself*. The meaning of the «when», of the time in which the Christian lives, has an entirely special character (...). One cannot encounter this temporality in some sort of objective concept of time. The when is in no way objectively graspable³⁸².

The 'when' of *parousia* cannot be grasped from the outside as a *Vor-gang*, as something that one is to expect, as an established "peace and safety"³⁸³; instead, this 'when' has to be enacted here and now, this 'when' requires an answer which is at each time new, because the answer is nothing different from one's life. This is the core of the kairological temporality as primal christianity conceives it, but also

³⁷⁹ EPR § 26 in GA 60 p. 102 [71] "die Ankunft des Messias als Stellvertreter Gottes".

³⁸⁰ I *Thessalonians* 5, 1.

³⁸¹ EPR § 26 in GA 60 p. 102-103 [72] "Die ganze Frage ist für Paulus nicht eine Erkenntnisfrage. (vgl. 5,2; *autoi gar akribōs oidate*). Er sagt nicht »dann und dann kommt der Herr wieder« (...) — sondern er sagt: »Ihr wißt ganz genau...«?".

³⁸² *Ibidem* § 26 p. 104 [73, our e.] "Wie die *Parousia* in meinem Leben steht, das weist zurück auf den Vollzug des Lebens selbst. Der Sinn des »Wann«, der Zeit, in der der Christ lebt, hat einen ganz besonderen Charakter (...). Von irgendeinem objektiven Begriff der Zeit kann man unmöglich diese Zeitlichkeit treffen. Das Wann ist auf keine Weise objektiv faßbar".

³⁸³ I *Thessalonians* 5, 3.

as Aristotle grasps it in his account of *praxis* in the NE: “the end of an action is relative to the occasion (*kata ton kairon*)” (III 1, 1110a 13)³⁸⁴; and this not in the manner of a merely technical knowledge of what is to be done in each case, but as a result of one’s attitude: “a man has *phronēsis* not by knowing only but by acting” (VII 10, 1152a 10). Far from the *theologia gloriae* of Scholasticism that was so much vituperated by Luther, Aristotle here seems to be grasping in philosophical terms something very close to the experience of factual life that is peculiar to the *theologia crucis* of the Pauline letters. In fact, this was not hidden to Luther himself; although “in moments of excess [he] condemned Aristotle’s entire corpus, he often expressed a great respect for Aristotle’s practical writings”³⁸⁵. In his lectures on Paul’s letters to the Romans, e.g., he observes:

it is most correct to say that man is always in privation, always in becoming or in potentiality, in matter, and always in action. Aristotle philosophizes about such matters, and he does it well, but people do not understand him well. Man is always in nonbeing, in becoming, in being, always in privation, in potentiality, in action, always in sin, in justification, in righteousness, that is, he is always a sinner, always a penitent, always righteous³⁸⁶.

Aristotle philosophizes well about such matters—he gives an account of man as a being that is always in motion, so that his being can only be grasped from within this motion—but he is not well understood. This remark very well summarizes the task that Heidegger will set for himself as of 1921, following the intuitions of Luther and Kierkegaard on the opportunities of the philosophy of

³⁸⁴ Cf. also NE I 6, 1096a 24-27 “Things are called good (...) in time [insofar as they meet] the right opportunity (*en chronō kairos*)”.

³⁸⁵ VAN BUREN, J. 1994 p. 199.

³⁸⁶ LUTHER, Martin *Luther’s Works* 25. *Lectures on Romans* Ed. by Hilton C. Oswald. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999 chapter 12, p. 434. Cf. also *ad loc. cit.*: “For just as there are five stages in the case of the things of nature: nonbeing, becoming, being, action, being acted upon, that is, privation, matter, form, operation, passion, according to Aristotle, so also with the Spirit: nonbeing is a thing without a name and a man in his sins; becoming is justification; being is righteousness; action is doing and living righteously; being acted upon is to be made perfect and complete. And these five stages in some way are always in motion in man”. In view of these statements, it seems narrow to hold, despite Luther’s ferocious criticisms elsewhere, that “*against Aristotle*, Luther holds that movement is constant until the death of christians” (Cf. SOMMER, C. 2005 p. 60, our e.).

Aristotle but also on its limitations³⁸⁷. This implies to understand Aristotle's philosophy better than tradition understood it—better than Heidegger himself understood it until 1915³⁸⁸. But more importantly, the task also consists of understanding Aristotle better than he understood himself. Throughout the background of Heidegger's *Ausinandersetzung* with Aristotle there lies the conviction that an inner tension in the philosophy of this author outweighs his best intuitions: hand in hand with the accuracy of his sharp vision of human life in its movedness, there is in Aristotle an unquestioned understanding of being which this very same understanding of life could call into question (indeed it should, and that is precisely the sense of Heidegger's *Abbau*), i.e. being conceived as constant presence (*Anwesenheit*) and completedness (*Fertigkeit*). This thesis, one of the most constant and deep-rooted in Heidegger's intellectual path³⁸⁹, and which is crucial to his reading of Aristotle, is forged precisely in these years. Pöggeler reports Heidegger to have located the origin of this fundamental approach around 1922-23 in a conversation with him: by those years, Heidegger would have arrived at the conclusion that Western tradition had levelled the idea of time to the present, due to its option for being as presence³⁹⁰.

Van Buren, echoing the view of other relevant commentators, argues that “the violent, explosive force of Heidegger's destruction of the concept of being as

³⁸⁷ A thorough account of the influence of Luther, Kierkegaard and different Christian authors in Heidegger during these years is provided in SOMMER, C. 2005; VAN BUREN, J. 1994 pp. 157-202. Briefer accounts, with different emphases, in COURTINE, Jean-François “Une difficile transaction: Heidegger entre Aristote et Luther” in Cassin, B (ed.) *Nos Grecs et leurs modernes. Les stratégies contemporaines d'appropriation de l'antiquité* Paris: Seuil, 1992 pp. 337-366; GADAMER, Hans-Georg “Die religiöse Dimension” (1981) in *Gesammelte Werke 3* 1987d pp. 308-319; LARIVÉE, Annie et LEDUC, Alexandra “Saint Paul, Augustin et Aristote comme sources gréco-chrétiennes du souci chez Heidegger” *Philosophie* 69 (2001) pp. 30-50; VAN BUREN, J. 2005 pp. 19-31.

³⁸⁸ Cf. “Vorwort zur ersten Ausgabe der »Frühen Schriften«” (1972) in GA 1 *Frühe Schriften* Ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, 1978 pp. 55-57 (p. 55 for ref.).

³⁸⁹ “From paragraph 6 in *Sein und Zeit* until his last writings, [this is] one of the most constant theses of Heidegger's work”. (GRONDIN, Jean “La persistance et les ressources éthiques de la finitude chez Heidegger” *Revue de Métaphysique et Morale* 1988/3 pp. 381-400 [p. 389 for ref.]).

³⁹⁰ Cf. PÖGGELER, Otto *Neue Wege mit Heidegger* Freiburg: Alber, 1992 p. 185.

presence” in the history of metaphysics and in Aristotle could only find its roots in his “passionately anti-Greek Christian heritage”³⁹¹. Indeed, in Luther’s lectures on the *Romans*, not far from the place where we have seen him praising the conceptuality of Aristotle as suitable to “philosophize” about man, he recommends the doctrine of Paul over the vanity of the “glories of philosophy” of those people who, set before the “Creation of God, (...) look only at its mechanics but never see its final goal”³⁹². Luther, although without mentioning Aristotle, clearly denounces the entanglement of such a philosophy in a frozen gaze at the present, and ‘explosively’ calls for an urgent destruction of its categories:

The apostle [Paul] philosophizes and thinks about things in a different way than the philosophers and metaphysicians do. For the philosophers so direct their gaze at *the present state of things* that they speculate only about what things are and what quality they have, but the apostle calls our attention *away from a consideration of the present* and from the essence and accidents of things and directs us to their future state. For he does not use the term «essence» or «activity» of the creature, or its «action», «inaction», and «motion», but in an entirely new and marvelous theological word he speaks of the «expectation of the creation» (...). But alas, how deeply and painfully we are ensnared in categories and questions of what a thing is; in how many foolish metaphysical questions we involve ourselves! (...) Therefore I warn you all as earnestly as I can that you finish these studies quickly and let it be your only concern not to establish and defend them but treat them as we do when we learn worthless skills to *destroy them* and study errors to refute them (...). Therefore you will be the best philosophers and the best explorers of the nature of things if you will learn from the apostle to consider the creation as it waits, groans, and travails, that is, as it *turns away in disgust from what now is and desires that which is still in the future*. For then the study of the nature of things, their accidents and their differences, will quickly grow worthless³⁹³.

Nevertheless, Heidegger’s very same distrust against the presentialism that allegedly stems from the Greeks goes hand in hand—as in Luther³⁹⁴—with a deep

³⁹¹ Cf. VAN BUREN, J. 1994 p. 202. Cf. also GADAMER, H.-G. 1987c p. 389, 1987d p. 313, “Die Geschichte der Philosophie” (1981) in *Gesammelte Werke 3* 1987e pp. 297-307 (p. 299 for ref.).

³⁹² LUTHER, Martin *Luther’s Works* 25. *Lectures on Romans* chapter 8, p. 362.

³⁹³ *Ibidem* pp. 360-361 (our e.). Cf. *Romans* 8, 19.

³⁹⁴ For instance, a few paragraphs below the passage just quoted, Luther quotes Aristotle’s *De Anima* III as relevant to his argument (cf. *ibidem* p. 364).

appreciation of the high potential of Aristotle, which will lead Heidegger to plunge into “a voracious appropriation”³⁹⁵ of Aristotelian practical philosophy, as the initial impulse for a rethinking of ontology which takes as its first task that of securing the approach to *Dasein*, which is the departing point for any ontology³⁹⁶. The first sketches of this ontology, the ‘hermeneutics of facticity’ that unfold in the *Natorp Bericht*³⁹⁷ and in the 1923 summer semester course³⁹⁸, are the result of this “complex interweaving of Christianity, phenomenology and Aristotle”³⁹⁹ that Heidegger himself summarily and accurately draws at the beginning of that course: “*Companion* in my searching was the young Luther and the *pattern* Aristotle, whom the former hated. Impulses were given by Kierkegaard, and Husserl *opened my eyes*”⁴⁰⁰. Luther and Kierkegaard awake in Heidegger the need of a destruction of tradition, in which Aristotle appears both as the ally and as the enemy. The ally,

³⁹⁵ VOLPI, Franco “In Whose Name? Heidegger and ‘Practical Philosophy’” *European Journal of Political Theory* 6/1 (2007b) pp. 31-51 (p. 33 for ref.).

³⁹⁶ Cf. GADAMER, H.-G. 1987c p. 389: “Heidegger’s interpretations—although his early listeners, among which I was numbered, did not understand this aspect until later—pointed to show that, while Aristotle had indeed carried out the fateful turning that led to the metaphysics of presence, he was however the only thinker to whom Heidegger was willing to recognize the merit of having developed an appropriate conceptuality for his intentions”.

³⁹⁷ “Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation). Ausarbeitung für die Marburger und die Göttinger Philosophische Fakultät” (1922), in GA 62 (SS 1922) *Phänomenologische Interpretationen ausgewählter Abhandlungen des Aristoteles zur Ontologie und Logik* Ed. by Günther Neumann, 2005 pp. 237-269, hereafter *Natorp Bericht* in the main text, and NB in footnotes. We indicate the pagination of the GA volume and, separated with a slash, that of the original document, as indicated in the margins of its first publication in *Dilthey Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Geschichte der Geisteswissenschaften* 6 (1989) pp. 237-269. [“Phenomenological Interpretations in Connection with Aristotle. An Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation” (trans. by John Van Buren) in Heidegger, M. Supplements. From the Earliest Essays to Being and Time and Beyond SUNY, 2002 pp. 111-145].

³⁹⁸ GA 63 *Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität)*. (SS 1923) Ed. by Käte Bröcker-Oltmanns, 1995 (2nd edition) [*Ontology—The Hermeneutics of Facticity* Translated by John Van Buren, IU Press, 1999].

³⁹⁹ VAN BUREN, J. 1994 p. 220.

⁴⁰⁰ GA 63 p. 5 [4, mod. tr, our e.] “Begleiter im Suchen war der junge Luther und Vorbild Aristoteles, den jener haßte. Stöße gab Kierkegaard, und die Augen hat mir Husserl eingesetzt”. Another relevant reference in this respect is Heidegger’s choice of quotations from Kierkegaard, Paul and Luther to “characterize the intention of the interpretation” in his winter semester 1921-22 course (Cf. GA 61 *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung*. Ed. by Walter Bröcker and Käte Bröcker-Oltmanns, 1994 (2nd edition) [*Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle. Initiation into Phenomenological Research*. Translated by Ricard Rojewicz, IU Press 2001], p. 182 [137].

because of the potential of Aristotle’s method for a reframing of phenomenology; and the enemy, because it is the understanding of ontology stemming from Aristotle’s synthesis of Greek thought that Heidegger intends to overturn; the aim of his interpretation, he argues at the beginning of a lecture on NE VI in 1924,

is to enable Aristotle to speak again, not in order to bring about a renewal of Aristotelianism, but rather in order to prepare the battleground for a radical engagement with Greek philosophy—the very philosophy in which we still stand⁴⁰¹.

3.3. Ethics or Ontology: a Dilemma for Aristotle and Heidegger?

The two first occasions in which Heidegger taught on Aristotle by closely following the original texts, a seminar on the *De Anima* and the *Metaphysics* during the summer of 1921⁴⁰² and a course one year afterwards on the first chapters of the *Metaphysics* and the *Physics*⁴⁰³, reveal the primarily ontological interest that activates Heidegger’s return to Aristotle. That this continues to be his concern when he suddenly retrieves NE VI in the *Natorp Bericht* is made clear by a preliminary admonishment which has been the focus of extensive commentary:

⁴⁰¹ “Diese Interpretation hat nun die Absicht, Aristoteles wieder zum Wort zu verhelfen, nicht um einen Aristotelismus zu erneuern, sondern um den Kampfplatz für eine radikale Auseinandersetzung mit der griechischen Philosophie, in der wir selbst noch stehen”. “Dasein und Wahrsein nach Aristoteles (Interpretationen von Buch VI [der] Nikomachischen Ethik)” (1924) pp. 1-2 [219]. An unpublished typewritten transcript of this lecture is quoted, which will be presumably a source for the forthcoming publication in GA 80 *Vorträge* (hereafter DWA). [“Being-There and Being-True According to Aristotle” translated by Brian H. Bowles in Sheehan, T. and Kisiel, T. *Becoming Heidegger. On the Trail of his Occasional Early Writings, 1910-1927* Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007 pp. 218-237]. We thank prof. Sheehan for kindly providing us with a copy of this transcript.

⁴⁰² *Übungen über Aristoteles, De Anima* (SS 1921) in *Heidegger-Jahrbuch* 3 (2007) (*Heidegger und Aristoteles*) pp. 9-22 (Oskar Becker’s transcript of the seminar, presumably a source for the forthcoming publication in GA 83 *Seminare: Platon — Aristoteles — Augustinus*).

⁴⁰³ Cf. GA 62 (SS 1922) *Phänomenologische Interpretationen ausgewählter Abhandlungen des Aristoteles zur Ontologie und Logik*

Temporarily leaving aside the specific problem of ethics in these discussions, our interpretation of them explains the ‘dianoetic virtues’ as different modes of having available the possibility of actualizing a genuine *true safekeeping of being*⁴⁰⁴.

Heidegger *seems* to be implying here that he intends to develop an ontology that, while taking its lead from the conceptuality of Aristotle in the NE, brackets the peculiar ethical characteristics of the phenomena that give rise to these concepts in Aristotle. However, nothing could be further removed from the phenomenological attitude he prescribes with his *formale Anzeige*, and that is why one should not jump too quickly to the conclusion that Heidegger is happily transferring concepts from ethics to ontology without regard to the soil in which they emerged⁴⁰⁵, or that he is ‘perverting’ their ethical meaning⁴⁰⁶. To start with, the passage should be read in the light of another one, placed almost at the end of the essay, when Heidegger briefly summarizes “the second part” of his investigations, devoted to *Metaphysics* VII, VIII and IX. Heidegger is interested in how Aristotle develops in those books the question of being in relation to movement, and how he arrives “at an ontological characterization of the ‘categories’ of *dynamis* and *energeia*”. Yet he significantly remarks:

Aristotle’s ‘ethics’ is then to be placed into this ontological horizon, so that this ‘ethics’ is seen as the explication of the being as human being (*des Seienden als Menschsein*), i.e., human life, the movedness of life (*Lebensbewegtheit*)⁴⁰⁷.

This passage, the only other place where Heidegger lingers on the term ‘ethics’ in the *Natorp Bericht*⁴⁰⁸, has been much less commented on, but it is not in

⁴⁰⁴ NB p. 376/29 [129, our e.] “Die Interpretation dieser Abhandlung macht unter vorläufigem Absehen von der spezifisch ethischen Problematik die »dianoetischen Tugenden« verständlich als die Weisen des Verfügens über die Vollzugsmöglichkeit echter Seinsverwahrung”.

⁴⁰⁵ Cf. ROSEN, Stanley “Phronesis or Ontology. Aristotle and Heidegger” in Pozzo, R. (ed.) *The Impact of Aristotelianism on Modern Philosophy* Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004 pp. 248-265 (p. 249 for ref.).

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. GONZALEZ, Francisco J. “Beyond or Beneath Good and Evil? Heidegger’s Purification of Aristotle’s Ethics” in Hyland, D. et al. *Heidegger and the Greeks. Interpretive Essays*. IU Press, 2006a pp. 127-156 (p. 129 for ref.).

⁴⁰⁷ NB 397/48-49 [143, mod. tr.] “In diesen ontologischen Horizont wird dann die »Ethik« gestellt, als die Explikation des Seienden als Menschsein, menschliches Leben, Lebensbewegtheit”.

the least dispensable if Heidegger's approach is to be properly understood. It probably spells out his mind more precisely: he does not intend so much to appropriate ethical concepts for an ontological project that would set ethics aside as *to elucidate the ontological weight of these concepts*, and thus retrieve them for a more original approach to the being of human beings. If one gives too much weight to the perhaps infelicitous statement on 'temporary leaving aside' ethics, and reads it as the setting of a fundamental direction that will soon crystalize into an ethically void thinking, one may just find a somewhat nostalgic retrospective declaration of intent in Heidegger's reflections about ethics and ontology more than twenty years later⁴⁰⁹. We are referring to Heidegger's perhaps most famous remark on ethics, one of the keystones of those studies trying to retrieve the ethical character of Heidegger's work⁴¹⁰, in his *Letter on Humanism*⁴¹¹. Heidegger refers there to Beaufret's question on the relation of ontology to ethics by reflecting, on the basis of a text by Heraclitus, on the fundamental sense of *ēthos* as "abode, place of dwelling (...), the open sphere in which man dwells"⁴¹².

If now, in accord with the basic meaning of the word *ēthos*, ethics dwells in the abode of man, then that thought which thinks the truth of being as the original element of man as ex-sisting is already in itself at the source of ethics. But then this kind of thinking is not ethics, either, because it is ontology. For ontology always thinks only the being (*on*) in its being. As long as the truth of being, however, is not thought, all

⁴⁰⁸ The term 'ethics' appears twice more in NB, but is only mentioned in passing (cf. pp. 368-369/20-22 [124-125]).

⁴⁰⁹ "The occasional suggestions of a later return from ontology to ethics", Gonzalez argues, "represent a *permanent* postponement" (Cf. GONZALEZ, F. J. 2006a p. 139).

⁴¹⁰ Cf. for instance GRONDIN, J. 1994; HATAB, L. 2000; HODGE, Joanna *Heidegger and Ethics* London; New York: Routledge, 1995; MACANN, Christopher E. "Who is *Dasein*? Towards an ethics of authenticity" in Macann, C. E. (ed.) *Martin Heidegger. Critical Assessments. Vol II: History of Philosophy* London/New York: Routledge, 1992 pp. 215-246; NANCY, Jean-Luc "Heidegger's originary Ethics" in Raffoul, F. et al (eds.) *Heidegger and Practical Philosophy* SUNY, 2002.

⁴¹¹ "Brief über den »Humanismus«" (1946) in GA 9 *Wegmarken* pp. 313-364 ["Letter on »Humanism«" translated by Edgar Lohner in Barrett, W. and Aiken, Henry D. *Philosophy in the Twentieth Century: an anthology* (vol. 3) New York: Random House, 1962.

⁴¹² *Ibidem* p. 354 [296] "*ēthos* bedeutet Aufenthalt, Ort des Wohnens. Das Wort nennt den offenen Bezirk, worin der Mensch wohnt".

ontology remains without its base. Hence the thought, which with *Sein und Zeit* tried to think forward into the truth of being, called itself fundamental ontology⁴¹³.

Is Heidegger projecting here onto his previous work an increasing concern about *ēthos* that would have been alien to his efforts during the previous quarter of a century? Is he perhaps sorting out an uncomfortable question by surreptitiously introducing ethics in the project of ontology? Or does the answer mirror the specific approach that Heidegger had already adopted towards ethics in the 1920s?

Surely, his analysis of the NE is limited to the period of 1922-24⁴¹⁴, and he does not linger on the specific analyses of ethical virtues in books III-V, nor on those of incontinence, friendship and pleasure in books VII-X. Instead, he primarily focuses on certain concepts of books I, II, VI and X such as *mesotēs*, *hexis*, *praxis*, *phronēsis*, *eudaimonia* and *aretē*, with a view to “the explication of the being as human being i.e., human life, the movedness of life (*Lebensbewegtheit*)”⁴¹⁵. Thus, for instance, in his long interpretation of NE VI in 1924, he will contend: “[t]he being disclosed by *phronēsis* is *praxis*. In this resides human *Dasein* (...)—the *zōē* of man is determined as *zōē praktikē meta logou*”⁴¹⁶.

⁴¹³ *Ibidem* pp. 356-357 [297] “Soll nun gemäß der Grundbedeutung des Wortes *ēthos* der Name Ethik dies sagen, daß sie den Aufenthalt des Menschen bedenkt, dann ist dasjenige Denken, das die Wahrheit des Seins als das anfängliche Element des Menschen als eines existierenden denkt, in sich schon die ursprüngliche Ethik. Dieses Denken ist aber dann auch nicht erst Ethik, weil es Ontologie ist. Denn die Ontologie denkt immer nur das Seiende (*on*) in seinem Sein. Solange jedoch die Wahrheit des Seins nicht gedacht ist, bleibt alle Ontologie ohne ihr Fundament. Deshalb bezeichnete sich das Denken, das mit »S. u. Z.« in die Wahrheit des Seins vorzudenken versuchte, als Fundamentalontologie”.

⁴¹⁴ The sole exception to this is, to my knowledge, the 1926 summer semester course, where Heidegger summarizes some basic lines of his understanding of Aristotelian *phronēsis*, although he does so in the concise style of this course, that of an overview of his interpretations of the Greeks and Aristotle to that date. Cf. GA 22 *Die Grundbegriffe der Antiken Philosophie* (SS 1926) Ed. by Franz-Karl Blust, 1993 [*Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy* Translated by Richard Rojewicz. IU Press, 2008], p. 311-312 [230] (Mörchen’s transcript).

⁴¹⁵ NB 397/48-49 [143, mod. tr.] “die Explikation des Seienden als Menschsein, menschliches Leben, Lebensbewegtheit”.

⁴¹⁶ GA 19 § 22a p. 146 [100] “Das Seiende, das die *phronēsis* aufdeckt, ist die *praxis*. Darin liegt das menschliche *Dasein* (...) —die *zōē* des Menschen ist bestimmt als *zōē praktikē meta logou*”. Cf. NE I 7, 1098a 3 ff; Cf. also § 21 p. 143 [98]: “[T]he object of *phronēsis* is *praxis*, the *zōē* of man, human *Dasein* itself” (“[D]er Gegenstand der *phronēsis* ist die *praxis*, die *zōē* des Menschen, das menschliche *Dasein* selbst”).

With his *formal anzeigende* phenomenology Heidegger intends to retrieve (*wiederholen*) the phenomenological analyses of Aristotle. He is surely trying to see *beyond* what Aristotle sees and if necessary *against* what he sees, but in any case he is doing so *with* him: by closely following his analyses. In this respect, the question is relevant whether such a thing as an ontological approach is foreign to Aristotle's objectives in the NE, i.e. whether in this work Aristotle does not intend to provide as well an ontology of human life, or at least whether he cannot avoid providing such an ontology. For Brogan "Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is rooted in an essential insight into the inseparability of ontology and ethics", and the same holds for *Sein und Zeit*⁴¹⁷. Indeed, the ontological elucidation of *praxis* in *Metaphysics* IX 6, its clear parallelism with NE X 4 and the repeated reference to *energeia* in that work for the characterization of life and happiness among other concepts—to recall only some important examples—are to our mind evidence that makes Heidegger's idea of reading the NE from an ontological outlook less violent than some commentators tend to think⁴¹⁸. His somewhat imprecise remark about "temporarily leaving aside the specific problem of ethics"⁴¹⁹, then, might not be read as a dismissal of ethics altogether from an allegedly 'purely ontological project' but as a selective reading of the NE which does not linger on the analysis of specific actions, because it does not intend to extract guidance for action, but light for phenomenological-ontological reflection.

⁴¹⁷ BROGAN, Walter *Heidegger and Aristotle. The Twofoldness of Being* SUNY, 2005 p. 148.

⁴¹⁸ Thus, e.g. Rosen, who regards *phronēsis* and ontology as an exclusive disjunctive and speaks of Heidegger's move as an "ontological temptation" (Cf. ROSEN, S. 2004 p. 249); Gonzalez speaks of an "ethics without ethics", as the strange product of the "ontologizing" to which Heidegger would submit NE (Cf. GONZALEZ, F. J. 2006a pp. 149-150). In his paper, Gonzalez does not limit his critical comments to the subsumption of ethics in ontology; he also refers, importantly, to the understanding of being that Heidegger presupposes in Aristotle, a problem that he has also tackled accurately in other papers, among which specifically 2006b. As we intend to show in subsequent chapters, it is rather this latter issue—on which our views are very close to Gonzalez's—that might make some aspects of Heidegger's appropriation of Aristotle problematical for his own project. Moreover, it might also explain some of the specific problems with the ethics that Gonzalez points out.

⁴¹⁹ NB p. 376/29 [129] "unter vorläufigem Absehen von der spezifisch ethischen Problematik".

In this interpretative line, Brogan contends that the NE “is primarily an ontology of human being”⁴²⁰. While we agree with him that the ontological weight of this work cannot be overemphasized, it seems obvious that Aristotle is concerned *also* with providing a merely ‘ontical’ account of actions, and that is why we hold that Heidegger’s reading is indeed selective. This selection, however, does not *per se* entail a perversion of the ethical sense of the concepts in the NE or a disposal of the ‘ontical’; it only implies that Heidegger does not intend, like Aristotle, to write an ethics *and* the ontology of human being that grounds this ethics, but only the latter. In this respect, Volpi seems to us more accurate in arguing that “what interests Heidegger is manifestly not the individual *praxeis* (actions), *poiēseis* (producing), and *theōriai* (theorizing) but rather only the ontological potential of these determinations”⁴²¹.

Volpi does not discard there being a certain ontological intention on the part of Aristotle’s understanding of these determinations, and in this respect he refers precisely to *Metaphysics* IX, 6⁴²². Still, he holds that “for Aristotle, practical science represents a particular consideration of human life, which thematizes life in as much as it is an action that aims at the realization of a ‘to do’ (*praktōn*). But this is just one possible way, amongst others, of considering it”⁴²³. It is perhaps due to “its inferior precision (*akribeia*)”⁴²⁴, Volpi argues, that tradition has considered practical philosophy as “a minor philosophy”, and for that reason it is the merit of Heidegger to have addressed these practical determinations as ones which

⁴²⁰ BROGAN, W. 2005 p. 138.

⁴²¹ VOLPI, Franco “Being and Time: A «Translation» of the Nichomachean Ethics?” in Kisiel, T. and Van Buren, J. (eds.) *Reading Heidegger from the Start. Essays on his Early Thought* SUNY, 1994 p. 202.

⁴²² *Ibidem* pp. 201-202. Cf. also, by the same author, “Dasein as *praxis*: the Heideggerian Assimilation and the Radicalization of the Practical Philosophy of Aristotle” in Macann, C. E. (ed.) *Martin Heidegger. Critical Assessments. Vol II: History of Philosophy* London/New York: Routledge, 1992 pp. 90-129, esp. p. 104: “The most perceptive transformation seems to me to be the accentuation, better the absolutization, of the ontological character which, to a certain extent, they also possess with Aristotle, but which, with him, is not the only character, not even always the determinative character”.

⁴²³ VOLPI, F. 2007b p. 43.

⁴²⁴ Aristotle himself warns the reader about that. Cf. NE I 3, 1094b 10 ff.

do not exist alongside other possible determinations, but entirely occupy understanding and the constitution of existence. This implies that their content, being constitutive of *Dasein*, is not ultimately something which can be freely chosen, to have or not to have, but implicates a determination to which it is indissolubly bound and which it cannot escape⁴²⁵.

While to maintain, as Brogan does, that the NE is primarily an ontology of human being seems to us an overstatement, we indeed believe that there is more to this work than just an ethical intention: key conceptions of this work such as *aretē*, *hexis* and *praxis* are framed within the powerful ontological elucidation that was passed down to us as the *Metaphysics*. And it is precisely this inner connectedness, we would like to argue, that enabled Heidegger to explicitate as he did the “ontological potential of these determinations” much more than Aristotle himself did. Precisely for that reason, in his interpretations of the NE Heidegger makes constant cross-references to other works of Aristotle, among which especially the *Metaphysics* and the *Physics*⁴²⁶.

From this point of view, Volpi’s influential designation of the Heideggerian appropriation of Aristotle’s practical philosophy as an “ontologization”⁴²⁷ should to our mind be taken *cum grano salis*. Volpi argues that Heidegger—in contrast to some of his students, such as Gadamer, Arendt and Jonas—transforms the categories of Aristotle’s practical philosophy “into constitutive determinations for the being of man, which is to say that he ‘ontologizes’ them and nullifies their practical-moral force”⁴²⁸. It is beyond doubt that some of Heidegger’s students considered the specifically ethical aspects of the NE much more than their teacher did. Nevertheless, their new appropriation of Aristotle actually stems from Heidegger’s insight into the ontological force of these determinations, which once set the basis for Aristotle’s original ethical reflection. Does not the duality of

⁴²⁵ VOLPI, F. 2007b p. 43. Cf. also 1984 pp. 113 ff.

⁴²⁶ These are actually the three works that Heidegger comments in the outline of his projected research in NB.

⁴²⁷ Cf. VOLPI, F. 1994 p. 200 ff.; 2007b esp. pp. 38 ff.

⁴²⁸ VOLPI, F. 2007b.

Heidegger and his students somehow reflect the two non-mutually excluding main tasks that concerned Aristotle in the research that has been handed down to us as the NE, i.e. approaching human beings ontologically and, on the basis of this ontology obtained from phenomenological observation, analyzing how happiness can be achieved from the interplay between dianoetical and ethical *aretai*? Volpi himself, from the outset of his pioneer approach to the young Heidegger through the lens of Aristotelian practical philosophy, assumes that

[i]n what concerns the central concept of *praxis*, Heidegger thinks he detects in Aristotle (...) a dual employment of the concept: an ontic employment in which the term indicated particular *praxeis* (...); and a philosophical and ontological use in which *praxis* does not indicate particular actions but a modality of being (...). It is this use of the term one finds, for example, in *Nicomachean Ethics* VI 5, or in *Metaphysics* IX 6⁴²⁹.

However, does one actually give an appropriate account of Heidegger's ontological reading when one considers it as an exclusion of "all ontic meaning"⁴³⁰? Is the appearance of practical elements in Heidegger's interpretation an unavoidable fissure in a systematical 'witch-hunt' against the ontical⁴³¹, or is it a conscious integration of what is given, as it is given, to his questioning? In other words, are the ontical and the ontological really opposed in Heidegger's appropriation of Aristotelian concepts?

In his 1924 summer course *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*, Heidegger refers to Aristotle's *Physics* as "an investigation of *being*, not of *beings*; not an investigation of the *ontic*, such that it would be pursued with respect to individual beings, but rather an investigation into the *ontological*, insofar as beings are addressed in their being"⁴³². This is not said in such a clear-cut manner of his

⁴²⁹ VOLPI, F. 1992 pp. 111-112. On the two senses of *praxis* cf. also 1984 p. 96.

⁴³⁰ VOLPI, F. 1994 p. 201.

⁴³¹ "[P]ractical elements nevertheless slip through Heidegger's ontological filter" *Ibidem* p. 207.

⁴³² GA 18 *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie* (SS 1924) Ed. by Mark Michalski, 2002 [*Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* Translated by Robert D. Metcalf and Mark B. Tanzer. IU Press, 2009] § 26c p. 291 [197] "Untersuchung des *Seins*, nicht des *Seienden*; nicht in ontischer Untersuchung, so daß dem

approach to the NE, but it seems clear that the principle applies to his entire interpretation of Aristotle⁴³³. Is then Heidegger implying here a ‘purification’ of the ontical, which regarding ethics would entail a ‘purification’ of the ethical⁴³⁴? Light is shed on the question in §§ 4-5 of *Sein und Zeit*, in a more extensive articulation of the distinction between the ontic and the ontological. While the term ‘ontology’ is reserved “for the explicit, theoretical question of the sense of beings”⁴³⁵, Heidegger warns that

no arbitrary idea of being and reality, no matter how «self-evident» it is, may be brought to bear on [*Dasein*] in a dogmatically constructed way (...). The manner of access and interpretation must instead be chosen in such a way that this being can show itself to itself on its own terms. And furthermore, this manner should show that being as it is *initially and for the most part—in its average everydayness*⁴³⁶.

Heidegger does not intend to remain in the ontical, i.e. in the particular description of beings, like “philosophical psychology, anthropology, ethics, «politics», poetry”⁴³⁷ do, but still he cannot just leap into the ontological, i.e. to an “idea of being and reality” without regard to how *Dasein* “show[s] itself to itself on its own terms”. Ontology goes beyond the ontical, because it asks about the sense of be-

Seienden im einzelnen nachgegangen wird, sondern in *ontologischer*, sofern das Seiende *in seinem Sein* angesprochen wird”.

⁴³³ Further analyses of the 1922-24 period in this thesis will provide more evidence for that. A later reference, from the 1926 summer semester course, may suffice for now: “the positive outcome of Aristotle’s analyses is shown by the fact that his theory of the *psychē* is aiming at an ontology of life” (“Daß Aristoteles mit der Lehre von *psychē* auf eine Ontologie des Lebens zielt, zeigt der positive Ausgang seiner Analysen”) (GA 22 § 65 p. 184 [155, mod. tr.]).

⁴³⁴ Cf. GONZALEZ, F. J. 2006a.

⁴³⁵ SZ § 4 p. 12 (mod. tr.) “Wenn wir daher den Titel Ontologie für das explizite theoretische Fragen nach dem Sinn des Seienden vorbehalten (...)”.

⁴³⁶ SZ § 5 p. 16 “es darf keine beliebige Idee von Sein und Wirklichkeit, und sei sie noch so »selbstverständlich«, an dieses Seiende konstruktiv-dogmatisch herangebracht [werden] (...). Die Zugangs- und Auslegungsart muß vielmehr dergestalt gewählt sein, daß dieses Seiende sich an ihm selbst von ihm selbst her zeigen kann. Und zwar soll sie das Seiende in dem zeigen, wie es *zunächst* und *zumeist* ist, in seiner durchschnittlichen *Alltäglichkeit*”. Cf. also GA 24 *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (SS 1927) Ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, 1997 § 22c esp. pp. 466 ff. [327 ff]. [*The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. by Albert Hofstadter. IU Press, 1982]. This course is often misspelled in existing literature as “Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie”, which corresponds more exactly to GA 58.

⁴³⁷ SZ § 5 p. 16 “Philosophische Psychologie, Anthropologie, Ethik, »Politik«, Dichtung”.

ings: it goes beyond what is given, because it inquires into the structure of this givenness and the structure of the being that is given. But still, because phenomenology is none other than ontology, it must depart from the given. This is nothing other than a reaffirmation of the prescription of *formale Anzeige* and the phenomenological breakthrough of categorial intuition. Heidegger needs the ontical anyway if his ontology is to depart from phenomena and fit in with them.

Thus, we would not say that an attempt to ‘nullify’ the ethical, however unproblematic it may seem to Volpi, adequately accounts for Heidegger’s overall approach to Aristotle⁴³⁸. Heidegger does not nullify the ethical, but *thinks the ontological beneath the ethical*, he extracts the ontological structures that underlie the ethical. Hence, to our mind, the question worth asking is to what extent Heidegger’s phenomenological analyses of the NE are wide enough for the goal that he sets for himself, i.e. developing an ontology of human existence; or, in other words, whether he makes the best of the potential of Aristotle’s phenomenological insights and of his ontological analyses. However, asking this question requires to set aside the objection that Heidegger’s ontological approach to Aristotle’s ethics is a dead end. And we do so on the basis that the subsumption of the ethical in the ontological is already operating in Aristotle, but also with the conviction that accepting Heidegger’s approach does not necessarily entail an acceptance of *all* his moves in appropriating Aristotelian concepts. A discernment of these moves indeed constitutes one of our basic tasks in the subsequent chapters, where we would like to analyze to what extent they are conducive to his own philosophical goal.

⁴³⁸ To be sure, Volpi’s overall interpretation does not ignore Heidegger’s departure from the ontical, but his emphasis on “ontologization”, or his contrast between the ontic and the ontological, meant to highlight the specificity of Heidegger’s project before Aristotle’s, seems to us a source of confusion. We are not, of course, meaning that Aristotle would have already said all that Heidegger intends to say, but rather that there might be more of a unity between ethics and ontology in Aristotle than Volpi and Heidegger himself suggest.

4. *Energieia* and *Phronēsis* in Heidegger's First Phenomenological Approach to Aristotle

Heidegger's philosophical wanderings in the late 10s and the early 20s, as we have observed them above, reflect the search for a phenomenology that takes what is given as it is given at each time, without imposing predetermined and unquestioned categories on it, as well as a sense for the performative way in which *Dasein* relates to its own being and a vivid conscience of the immediacy of this relation. These fundamental aspects of his thought provide an account of the reasons that led him to return to Aristotle, and moreover they structure the way in which this return is made. The 'why' and the 'how' of the retrieval are in fact one and the same, and make up the "Aristotle redivivus"⁴³⁹ that Heidegger became in the early 20s, to the extent that his students could not tell whether he spoke for himself or it was Aristotle that spoke⁴⁴⁰. Heidegger comes back to Aristotle in the unique way he does not only because a *Destruktion* of tradition has to be traced back to this thinker, but also because he finds in Aristotle a strong affinity with his own methodological ideas and, specifically, an interweaving of ethics and ontology that can open a way to rethinking the sense of being, out of the things themselves.

4.1. Heidegger's Early Approach to *Energieia*

Because the passage of *Metaphysics* IX 6 where Aristotle distinguishes *energeia* and *kinēsis*, in the context of an ontological determination of *praxis* (1048b 18-35), has turned out to be crucial to our interpretation of *phronēsis* and *praxis*, a dialogue with Heidegger's appropriation of these concepts demands inquiring about his

⁴³⁹ GADAMER, H.-G. "Martin Heidegger — 85 Jahre" (1974) in *Gesammelte Werke* 3 1987f pp. 262-270 (cf. p. 267 for ref.).

⁴⁴⁰ Cf. *Ibidem* p. 266.

approach to *energeia*. Given that 1048b is the only place in Aristotle's work where a direct characterization of *energeia* is provided, it is noteworthy that despite Heidegger's extended concern with this concept⁴⁴¹, we only find detailed analyses of *this passage* of *Metaphysics* IX twice in 1922 and once in 1939. The subsequent pages are devoted to the former, which notwithstanding their seemingly transient character within the whole of Heidegger's courses in the 1920s, play a very relevant role in the formation of his approach to Aristotle⁴⁴².

The first occurrence of this relevant text is to be found in an excursus to the interpretation of *Metaphysics* I 2 on § 11 of the 1922 summer semester course⁴⁴³. Heidegger undertakes here a translation of the whole passage and then provides an interpretation of it in relation to other theses of Aristotle⁴⁴⁴. Peculiar to the interpretation is the fact that Heidegger's interest is restricted to *theōrein* and its *hexis—sophia*—while Aristotle seems to be concerned with *praxis* in general. Still, though, Heidegger admits that *theōria* is indeed for Aristotle the highest form of *praxis*⁴⁴⁵.

Heidegger acknowledges the controversy about the authenticity of this passage and agrees with Bonitz in accepting it: “what factually comes up—he admits—is genuinely Aristotelian”⁴⁴⁶. Halfway through his translation of 1048b 21-24, Heidegger emphasizes the uniqueness of what Aristotle calls *energeia*, the

⁴⁴¹ In contrast, his interest for *phronēsis* is much more restricted in time (namely, the period we are studying).

⁴⁴² Actually, in his letter to Richardson (published as preface in Richardson, William J. *Heidegger: through Phenomenology to Thought* New York: Fordham University Press, 2003 pp. viii-xxiii, cf. pp. x-xi for ref), Heidegger speaks of “a renewed study of the Aristotelian treatises (especially Book IX of the *Metaphysics* and Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics*)” in those years. (“Ein erneutes Studium der Aristotelischen Abhandlungen (im besonderen des neunten Buches der »Metaphysik« und des sechsten Buches der »Nikomachischen Ethik«)”).

⁴⁴³ Cf. GA 62 (SS 1922).

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. *ibidem* § 11f pp. 105-108 for the translation and pp. 108-111 for the analysis.

⁴⁴⁵ Cf. *Politics* VII 3, 1325b 16.

⁴⁴⁶ GA 62 § 11f p. 105 “was sachlich zur Sprache kommt, is genuin aristotelisch”.

ontological structure that corresponds to *praxis* (although he does not mention *praxis*): “a movement standing itself in its end, [which] *is* precisely in the end! —which *is* movement yet or precisely when it is in its end! To be in the ‘end’ and to be movement precisely then”⁴⁴⁷. In addition to the translation of these lines, he summarizes Aristotle’s examples: “Having seen, the ‘being at the end’ of the *movedness* that is seeing, is seeing itself; the how of having thought is thinking”⁴⁴⁸, and he adds in a marginal note: “= *energeia*”. Movedness (*Bewegtheit*) is indeed the term with which Heidegger translates below, in 1048b 27f, Aristotle’s *energeia*, as contrasted with the movement (*Bewegung*) of *kinēsis*, formally indicated as “being on the way to (*Unterwegssein zu*)”. Relevant in Heidegger’s paraphrase of 1048b 21-24 is also another formal indication, namely that of “the *how* (*das Wie*) of having-thought”, which is adopted in the translation henceforth. Thus, for instance, in b26, “the how of having lived well is precisely good life”⁴⁴⁹; or, in b29-33, concerning the *hama*, a key word in Aristotle’s characterization of *energeia*: “this ‘at once’ (*dieses Zugleich*) we cannot find in the movement of going and having gone (...); instead, it is *another how of being* in which ‘he moves’ and ‘he has moved’”⁴⁵⁰. The confluence in a same moment (*hama, zugleich*) of ‘having lived’ and ‘living’ opens up, in the reflection upon the phenomenon, a way of characterizing the being of life which seems to transcend the realm of the ‘being on the way to’ proper to movements.

The interest in the *Wie*, in the “how of being” corresponds to Heidegger’s *formal anzeigende* approach, which is present in his translation of Aristotle’s texts in

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibidem* p. 106 (our e.) “[Eine Bewegung] die selbst in ihrem Ende steht, am Ende gerade ist! —die noch oder gerade dann Bewegung ist, wenn sie an ihrem Ende ist! Am »Ende« sein und gerade dann Bewegung sein”.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibidem* p. 107 (our e.) “Das Gesehenhaben, das »am Ende sein« der Bewegtheit sehen, ist selbst Sehen, das Wie des Gedachthabens ist gerade »denken“.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ad loc. cit.* “das Wie des Gut-gelebt-habens ist gerade das gut Leben”.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibidem* p. 108 “[d]ieses Zugleich ist nicht bei der Bewegung des Gehens und dem Gegangensein (...) sondern es ist *ein anderes Wie des Seins* in dem »er bewegt« und »er hat bewegt“.

this course from the very beginning, when the first passage of the *Metaphysics* is tackled: the renowned *pantes anthrōpoi tou eidenai oregontai physei*, traditionally rendered as “all men naturally desire knowledge”⁴⁵¹. As Kisiel notes, “clearly seeking to counter the substantifying ‘what-being’ which a long tradition has invested in phrases like ‘by nature’ and ‘human nature’”⁴⁵², Heidegger translates *physei* here as “constitutive of the how-being of man”⁴⁵³. *Physis*, therefore, is used to refer to *the sense of being* of life, about which Heidegger is enquiring.

The approach to b33-35, finally, sets *kinēsis* aside and focuses on *energeia* in a translation that makes much more explicit than elsewhere Heidegger’s own voice: “Such a movedness I call how-being in the true-safekeeping temporalization as temporalizing true-safekeeping (*Wiessein in der verwahrenden Zeitigung als zeitigender Verwahrung*)”⁴⁵⁴. The whole formula is an interpretation of Aristotle’s succinct sentence “such a process I call *energeia*” (b34f). Heidegger refers explicitly his pointed redundancy to Aristotle’s *hama to auto*: the same thing at the same time. *Energeia*, therefore, is understood by Heidegger as a peculiar *how* of being that is defined in a circular manner: it is a safeguarding which unfolds at once with one’s own time; a safeguarding which does not take place in the form of a specific activity or process (in the sense of something that I could be doing or not), but simply in *being* what it is: as a true safekeeping unfolded in the time of life.

But what is safeguarded (*Verwahren*) in this unfolding in time (*Zeitigung*), and why does Heidegger introduce this terminology all of a sudden in his translation? We said that his reading of *energeia* in this context is directed towards the

⁴⁵¹ *Met.* I 1, 980a 21. Thus in Ross’ translation.

⁴⁵² KISIEL, T. 1993 p. 240.

⁴⁵³ GA 62 § 7a p. 17 “Das Verlangen nach dem Leben in Sehen (...) ist etwas, was das *Wiessein* des Menschen mitausmacht”.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibidem* § 11f p. 108 (our e.). “Eine solche Bewegtheit spreche ich an als *Wiessein in der verwahrenden Zeitigung als zeitigender Verwahrung*”. We use ‘safekeeping’ as substantive for *Verwahrung* after Van Buren’s translation of the *Natorp Bericht* (cf. e.g. note 457 below) and ‘safeguarding’ as verb for *Verwahren*.

theōrein of *sophia*. In the *Natorp Bericht*, written soon afterward, in late September⁴⁵⁵, Heidegger refers to Aristotle’s list of *hexeis* by which the soul is true (*alētheuein*)⁴⁵⁶, among which *sophia* and *phronēsis*, as “the modes in which the soul brings and *takes beings into true safekeeping* as unveiled”⁴⁵⁷. What is at stake in this safekeeping (*verwahren*), as a translation for *alētheuein*, is actually the disclosure of being. This does not only become clear in light of the *Natorp Bericht*, but also from the occurrence of the term throughout this whole course and, specifically, from the line of questioning that Heidegger announces in § 12 for the subsequent sessions on *Physics* I, 1-4, centered not on the sense of being in general, but specifically on the sense of being of human life:

From which fundamental experiences and intentions and from which preconceptual categorial articulations arises for Aristotle—and the Greeks—the object and *the sense of being of man and human life*?⁴⁵⁸.

The interpretation of 1048b in § 11 leads Heidegger to conclude that “the *sense of being* of the first mover, the divine, is pure *energeia*”⁴⁵⁹. To the sense of being of such a movedness, though, “only the movedness of seeing, *theōria*, is adequate”. Moreover, “to preserve its full sense of *energeia*, *theōrein* cannot be directed towards arbitrary changeable objects (...). Nothing that for his part refers *to something else*

⁴⁵⁵ For chronological details on the *Natorp Bericht*, Cf. KISIEL, T. 1993 pp. 248-249, and the “Nachwort des Herausgebers” in GA 62, pp. 438 ff.

⁴⁵⁶ Cf. NE VI 4, 1139b 15ff.

⁴⁵⁷ NB 376/29 [130] “[die] Weisen, in denen die Seele Seiendes als unverhülltes in Verwahrung bringt und nimmt”. In that very same page [129 in translation], he refers to the dianoetic virtues “the possibility of actualizing a genuine *true safekeeping of being*” (“die Vollzugsmöglichkeit echter *Seinsverwahrung*”. Our e.). Later (p. 382/34 [134]) he sets *phronēsis* and *sophia* as “the concrete modes of the actualizing of this authentic true safekeeping of being” (“die konkreten Vollzugsweisen solcher eigentlichen *Seinsverwahrung* sind *sophia* und *phronēsis*”).

⁴⁵⁸ GA 62 § 12 p. 111 (our e.) “Aus welchen Grunderfahrungen und Vorhaben und aus welchen vorgrifflichen kategorialen Artikulationen erwächst für Aristoteles —und die Griechen— der Gegenstands- und Seinssinn des Menschen und menschlichen Lebens?”. At § 21 pp. 173 ff., in an excursus entitled “Ontologie und Geschichte”, Heidegger sets factual-historical human life as the sphere for research on being (*Seinsforschung*).

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibidem* § 11f p. 108 “Der Seinsinn des ersten Bewegers ist reine *energeia*”.

can be the *toward-which* of the movedness of *theōria*⁴⁶⁰. This, Heidegger notes, perfectly fits the sense of being of the divine, characterized by Aristotle as *noēseos noēsis*⁴⁶¹. Man, insofar as he has in his way of being the possibility of tarrying (*verweilen*), has in him something divine, even if he is granted such activity only for a short time⁴⁶². What it means, though, for man to participate in divinity is left hanging in the air by Aristotle, and Heidegger does not pursue the question further here.

From this consideration, Heidegger returns to 1048b, where “the elucidation of the sense of *energeia* encounters: *noein*, *theōrein* and *eudaimonein* and *zēn*. Which implies: *theōrein* as the most authentic sense of pure movedness is thereby the mode of life, the being of life in which life is in its accomplished state”⁴⁶³. This result is backed with Aristotle’s statement in NE X that “happiness extends so far as contemplation does”⁴⁶⁴ (which follows a consideration of contemplation—*theōrein*—as the activity of the gods). In addition, Heidegger points to that relevant passage of the *Politics* where Aristotle implies that *theōria* is “the highest *praxis* (sense of movedness! Crucial!)”⁴⁶⁵.

All in all, Heidegger’s understanding of *energeia* and *theōria* in this passage clearly intends to hold an inner tension. On the one hand, he seems to appreciate the fact that *theōria*, “the pure beholding of authentic understanding, is the way-to-

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibidem* pp. 108-109 “Dem Seinssinn solcher Bewegtheit genügt nur die Bewegtheit des Sehens, *theōria*”. “Um also den vollen Sinn der *energeia* im *theōrein* zu wahren, kann dieses sich nicht auf beliebige veränderliche Gegenstände richten (...). Nichts kann das *Worauf* der Bewegtheit der *theōria* sein, was seinerseits auf ein anderes verweist”.

⁴⁶¹ *Met.* XII 9, 1074b 34f.

⁴⁶² Cf. GA 62 § 11f p. 109. Cf. NE X 8, 1178b 26ff. (a passage to which Heidegger refers below) Cf. also X 7, 1177b 26 ff.

⁴⁶³ GA 62 § 11f p. 110 “In *Met.* IX 6 ist bei der Explication des Sinnes der *energeia* begegnet: *noein*, *theōrein* und *eudaimonein* und *zēn*. Das besagt: das *theōrein* als der eigenstlichste Sinn reiner Bewegtheit ist damit die Weise des Lebens, das Sein des Lebens, in dem es in seiner vollendeten Lage ist”.

⁴⁶⁴ NE X 8, 1178b 28ff.

⁴⁶⁵ GA 62 § 11 p. 111 “Die höchste *praxis* (Bewegtheitsinn! Entscheidend!)”. Cf. *Politics* VII 3, 1325b 16.

be in which life has first and last autonomy and, being master of itself, determines its movement from out of itself in terms of itself⁴⁶⁶. On the other, he notes that the exemplary being out of which its structure as *energeia* is derived in Aristotle is none other than divine being, i.e. that being in whose pure movedness (*reiner Bewegtheit*) there is no possibility at all of an emotional behavior (*keine Möglichkeit eines emotionalen Verhaltens überhaupt*)⁴⁶⁷, i.e. of change.

The ambiguity is not sorted out in this course, but the passage is discussed again, although in a much briefer fashion, in the *Natorp Bericht*, written some months after this course. Here 1048b comes at a very significant point, precisely when Heidegger indicates the ontological power of Aristotle's conception of *phronēsis* and the fact that, despite its relevance, Aristotle does not seem to be up to the discovery. The close reading of the text and the articulated reasoning developed in this summer course will help us understand the 'hermeneutical situation' on which Heidegger's more succinct but also more defined interpretation of *energeia* in the *Natorp Bericht* is grounded, as well as the ontological weight that *phronēsis* is going to acquire.

4.2. The Doubling of the Point of View in *Phronēsis*

The treatment of *phronēsis* in the *Natorp Bericht* is the first detailed analysis of this concept in Heidegger's work, and very probably the very first occurrence of it, as far as we know from what has been published to date. The concept is not even mentioned in the summer course—perhaps it stems from an intuition that Heidegger had been maturing during the previous months, and which acquired a sharper outline in the intense composition of the *Natorp Bericht*⁴⁶⁸? Was Heidegger

⁴⁶⁶ KISIEL, T. 1993 p. 243.

⁴⁶⁷ Cf. GA 62 § 11 p. 110

⁴⁶⁸ Cf. letter of Martin Heidegger to Karl Jaspers (19. Nov. 1922) in *Briefwechsel 1920-1963* Edited by Walter Biemel und Hans Saner. München: Piper, 1992 pp. 33-34 "Natorp desired a specific orientation on my work plans. I have got down to work on it for three weeks, and I have summarized my ideas by

perhaps building up an interpretation of Aristotelian *sophia* in the summer course which could be eventually contrasted with *phronēsis*? The fact is that although in the interpretation of NE VI provided in the *Natorp Bericht* both *phronēsis* and *sophia* are considered as “the concrete modes of the actualizing of this authentic true safekeeping of being”⁴⁶⁹, the latter is only briefly sketched, and set aside in the analysis, which is instead decisively centered on *phronēsis*. The reason for this shift seems to be that while *sophia* is “a kind of understanding consisting in a pure and simple looking at... [which] brings into true safekeeping those beings whose ‘from-out-of-which’ *is*, as it *is* itself, in such a way that it necessarily always is what it is”, *phronēsis*, in contrast, “brings into true safekeeping those beings which, along with their ‘from-out-of-which’, *can* in themselves *be otherwise*”⁴⁷⁰.

All of a sudden, the summer course tension between the true-safekeeping temporalization of *energeia* and the ‘heavenly’ *theōrein*, the activity of *sophia*, seems to be overcome by the ‘revolutionary’ concept of *phronēsis*, which not only accounts for phenomena which can be otherwise but also, Heidegger argues,

provides an initial understanding of the basic characteristics of being that *phronēsis* itself has. *Phronēsis* is a *hexis* (...) which temporalizes and unfolds itself in life itself as its own possibility, brings life into a particular state—and this in a determinate way—and in a certain sense actually brings it about⁴⁷¹.

writing an «Introduction»”. (“Natorp wünschte eine konkrete Orientierung über meine geplanten Arbeiten. Darauf setzte ich mich drei Wochen hin und exzerpierte mich selbst und schrieb dabei eine »Einleitung«”).

⁴⁶⁹ NB p. 382/34 [134] “die konkreten Vollzugsweisen solcher eigentlichen Seinsverwahrung sind *sophia* und *phronēsis*”.

⁴⁷⁰ NB p. 382/34-35 [134, mod. tr.] “Das reine hinsehende Verstehen bringt das Seiende, dessen ›Von-Wo-Aus‹ und das selbst *ist* in der Weise, daß es notwendig und immer ist, was es ist, in Verwahrung; das fürsorgend-besprechende Sichumsehen dagegen ein solches Seiendes, das an ihm selbst und dessen ›Von-Wo-Aus‹ anders sein kann”.

⁴⁷¹ NB p. 385/37 [135-136, mod. tr.] “[S]ie gewinnt zugleich ein erstes Verständnis des Seinscharakters, den die *phronēsis an ihr selbst* hat. Sie ist *hexis* (...), was sich im Leben selbst als dessen eigene Möglichkeit zeitigt —und dieses in einen bestimmten Stand— in gewisser Weise zu-Stande-bringt”.

Phronēsis actualizes or unfolds life because, as the *hexis* of *praxis*, it is concerned with the dealings of life with itself⁴⁷². *Alētheia praktikē*, the peculiar truth that is disclosed by *phronēsis*, is “nothing other than the whole unveiled moment (at the particular time) of factual life in the how of its decisive readiness for dealings with itself”⁴⁷³. The ontological traits of *phronēsis* enhance a formal indication of both life and its dealings, insofar as they are understood within a *kairological* frame: life is seized in its *Bewegtheit* because it is seized from within it, and not from a paradigm alien to it, as is the case of the pure movedness (*reine Bewegtheit*) of the divine. Hence the phenomenon of *phronēsis*, as described here,

is a doubling of the point of view into which Aristotle placed the human being and the being of life and which became decisive within intellectual history for the fate of the categorial explication of the sense of the being of facticity. In circumspection, life is there for itself in the concrete how of the with-which of going about its dealings. However, and this is decisive, in Aristotle it is *not on the basis of this phenomenon and not in a positive manner (nicht positiv hieraus)* that the being of the with-which of dealings is ontologically defined. Rather, it is defined simply in a formal manner as ‘capable of being otherwise’ than it is and thus ‘not necessarily and always’ what it is. This ontological definition gets actualized through a negative comparison with another kind of being that is considered to be being in the *authentic* sense”⁴⁷⁴.

The text becomes at this stage extremely dense and somehow obscure in its reasoning. This detection of a “doubling of the point of view” (*Doppelung der Hinsicht*) in Aristotle marks a crucial turning point in the essay and, we might say, in Heidegger’s intellectual path. The term *Doppelung* grants Aristotle both an insight and a fateful error—a phenomenological breakthrough and, at the same time, the inability to be up to its relevance. Two interrelated objections are made

⁴⁷² Cf. NB p. 383/35 [134].

⁴⁷³ NB p. 384/36 [135] “Die *alētheia praktikē* ist nichts anderes als der jeweils unverhüllte volle Augenblick des faktischen Lebens im Wie der entscheidenden Umgangsbereitschaft mit ihm selbst”.

⁴⁷⁴ NB p. 385/37 [136] “So zeigt sich an der *phronēsis* gerade eine *Doppelung* der Hinsicht an, in die der Mensch und das Sein des Lebens gestellt sind, die für das geistesgeschichtliche Schicksal der kategorialen Explikation des Seinssinnes der Faktizität entscheidend wird. In der Umsicht ist das Leben da im konkreten Wie eines Womit des Umgangs. Das Sein dieses Womit ist aber —und das ist schon entscheidend— *nicht positiv hieraus* ontologisch charakterisiert, sondern nur formal als solches, »das auch anders sein kann, »nicht notwendig und immer ist, wie es ist. Diese ontologische Charakteristik ist vollzogen im negierenden Gehalt gegen anderes und *eigentliches* Sein”.

to the way in which Aristotle understands the being of what *phronēsis* deals with—namely actions (*praktā*)—which will necessarily impact upon his understanding of the being of *phronēsis* itself, and thus of the *Bewegtheitsinn* of human life: (i) *phronēsis* is defined just formally, i.e. as capable of being otherwise and, more importantly, (ii) it is understood negatively, insofar as it is only grasped in relation to another sense of being which would be the authentic sense, *viz.* that of what is always in the same manner, of what cannot be otherwise⁴⁷⁵. The phenomenon of life is pointed to, but when it comes to grasping it ontologically the discovery is squandered, because of its subordination to an ontological frame that does not fit its sense of being⁴⁷⁶.

This Aristotelian authentic sense of being in relation to which human *praxis* is negatively understood, Heidegger argues, is not derived from the human way of being as encountered in *phronēsis*, but instead “springs from an ontological radicalization of the idea of beings that are moved”⁴⁷⁷. Here we meet for the first time a clear formulation of Heidegger’s thesis on Western and, specifically, Greek ontology, that settles during these breakthrough years in his mind⁴⁷⁸. The exemplary pattern from which Aristotle conceives movement, Heidegger argues, is that of production (*die Bewegung des Herstellens*). For that reason, being for Aristotle means “*being-finished-and-ready* i.e., a kind of being in which motion has arrived *at its*

⁴⁷⁵ “The central question is: where does Aristotle obtain the distinction «to be always» - «to be capable to be otherwise?» (“Die Kernfrage ist: Woher gewinnt Aristoteles die Unterscheidung: »immer sein« - »auch anders sein können«?”). (*Übungen über Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Nikomachische Ethik VI; De Anima; Metaphysik VII)* (WS 1922-23) in *Heidegger-Jahrbuch* 3 (2007) pp. 23-48, cf. p. 34 for ref).

⁴⁷⁶ Cf. the formulation of this thesis, some years later, in SZ § 44 p. 225: “[F]or the Greeks (...) [the] primordial sense of truth was also alive, even if pre-ontologically, and it even held its own against the concealment implicit in their ontology—at least in Aristotle”. (“[B]ei den Griechen (...) das ursprüngliche, wengleich vorontologische Verständnis der Wahrheit lebendig war und sich sogar gegen die in ihrer Ontologie liegende Verdeckung — mindestens bei Aristoteles — behauptete”).

⁴⁷⁷ NB p. 385/38 [136] “[eine ontologische] Radikalisierung der Idee des Bewegteiden”.

⁴⁷⁸ Cf. notes 389 and 390 above.

*end*⁴⁷⁹. The term *her-stellen* implies to bring something forth, to *place* (*stellen*) something as stemming *from* (*ber-*) a movement that is different from the being of what is thus placed: when something has been *hergestellt*, it is no longer in movement; its way of being is readiness, completedness⁴⁸⁰. Heidegger is obviously leading the reader to ask herself: is however this idea of being as production suitable to grasp the ontological character of human life, “a being that is precisely insofar as it can in each case be otherwise”⁴⁸¹, i.e. a being never finished, ever in motion while it is alive?

Heidegger approaches the issue by trying to make sense of how Aristotle could actually find a way of understanding human life starting from an outlook that is alien to it. Indeed, Heidegger argues, Aristotle did find a way, and this in consistency with his ontology. For Aristotle, “the being of life must be looked at simply in terms of the *pure temporalizing and unfolding of sophia as such*, and this is due to the *authentic* kind of movement available in it”⁴⁸². This authentic kind of movement is *energeia*, the *Bewegtheit* described in 1048b, which was the object of a thorough translation in the summer course that year, and which Heidegger retrieves here in a more concise, but substantially similar, version of his interpretation⁴⁸³.

⁴⁷⁹ NB p. 385/38 [136] “Sein ist Fertigsein, das Sein, in dem die Bewegung zu ihrem Ende gekommen ist”.

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. the development of this topic, some years later, in GA 24 § 11b p. 152 [108]: “To *pro-duce*, to place-*here*, *Her-stellen*, means at the same time to bring into the narrower or wider circuit of the accessible, here, to this place, to the *Da*, so that the produced being *stands for itself* on its own account and remains able to be found there and to *lie-before there as something established stably for itself*. (“Herstellen besagt aber zugleich: in den engeren oder weiteren Umkreis des Zugänglichen bringen, her, hierher, in das Da, so daß das Hergestellte an ihm selbst *für sich steht* und als *für sich Ständiges* vorfindlich bleibt und *vorliegt*.”). It is worth noting that the latin etymology of pro-duct (brought forth) literally renders the sense of the german *herstellen*. Cf. also WBP in GA 9 p. 354 [217].

⁴⁸¹ NB p. 386/38 [136] “ein Seiendes, das ist gerade dadurch, daß es je anders sein kann”.

⁴⁸² *Ibidem* “Lediglich *in der reinen Zeitigung* der *sophia als solcher* muß, ob der ihr verfügbaren *eigentlichen* Bewegtheit, das Sein des Lebens gesehen werden”

⁴⁸³ Cf. NB p. 386/38-39 [136-137].

Seeing is identical with having seen, i.e. seeing itself has brought itself to its end from the very first moment of its being. It is therefore *immediately* there, immediately *ready, finished*, i.e. it is ultimately dependent on the sense of being of the *kinēsis* that is production. What is special about seeing, however, is that it is its ‘being ready’ that activates its motion: I can only see when ‘seeing’ is fully there. The same applies for *noein*: “[i]n having arrived at its end insofar as what it is able to perceive in a pure and simple manner *now stands before its gaze*, [the *nous* of *sophia*] not only does not cease, but rather now—precisely as having arrived at its end—really is motion for the first time”⁴⁸⁴. For *noein* ‘to be’ implies to linger on this ‘motion’ that consists of perceiving something before its gaze. The immediacy with which it comes to be inaugurates a new movedness that is different from that of *kinēsis*: its motion is not like that of production, one that ceases when the product is ready; quite the reverse, its immediate readiness gives rise to a motion that does not cease. Because of its immediacy, *energeia* can detach from the moving stream of *kinēsis* and is thus able to see life and reality as something standing before its gaze. However, it is *also* for this reason, because in *noēsis* life is present to itself as something standing before its gaze, *as different from* the pure movement on which it lingers and of which it alone is capable⁴⁸⁵, that “*noēsis* as pure *theōrein*” shares the leading ontological paradigm of *Fertigsein* with the specific type of *kinēsis* that is production.

Heidegger’s dense diagnostic could be summarized as follows: on the one hand, because Aristotle—as a Greek—understands being from the perspective of production (*herstellen*), he definitely cannot find in *kinēsis*—i.e. being unfinished or on the way—an adequate characterization of human life. On the other, the

⁴⁸⁴ NB p. 386/38 [136, our e.] “[*nous* ist] die Bewegtheit, die als zu ihrem Ende gekommene, sofern sie das rein Vernehmbare im Blick hat, nicht nur nicht aufhört, sondern gerade erst — als zu Ende gekommene — Bewegung ist”. The observation must be made that here Heidegger problematically tends to reduce *sophia* to *nous*, which in Aristotle’s text is only one of the components of *sophia*, together with *epistēmē*. As Aristotle depicts it, *sophia* adopts a more discursive form that is less convenient to Heidegger’s interpretation.

⁴⁸⁵ NB p. 386/39 [137] “Der höchsten Idee reiner Bewegtheit genügt nur die *noēsis* als reines *theōrein*”.

phenomena seem to indicate that life is indeed a motion, and thus Aristotle arrives, starting from the idea of being as *Fertigsein*, to the concept of *energeia*. What is distinctive about *energeia* is that it is immediately there as *fertig*, so that it actually ‘is’ in a full Greek sense, but at the same time it performs an activity, it has ‘motion’⁴⁸⁶. Thus, while there is indeed something like a motion at stake, the being of man is ultimately understood from a radicalization of the ontological thickness that we find in things which have been produced (*herstellt*), things which are the result of a movement that is different from them:

The basic character of the being of *hexis* and thus also of *aretē*, i.e. the ontological structure of human being, is understood on the basis of an ontology of beings in the how of a particular kind of movement and on the basis of an ontological radicalization of *this* kind of movement⁴⁸⁷.

Approaching life through *energeia*, the radicalization of the idea of production, entails to understand its movedness from the point of view of things as ready to hand (*Vorhanden*), and it is ultimately because of this understanding, Heidegger argues, that Aristotle will privilege *sophia* for ontology. However, *sophia* “does not in any sense have human life as its intentional toward-which”⁴⁸⁸, it is not concerned with *prakta* as *phronēsis* is, in which “life is there for itself in the concrete how of the with-which of going about its dealings”⁴⁸⁹. As a result, the ontology

⁴⁸⁶ This ambivalent character of *energeia*, as Heidegger understands it, is explained more extensively in GA 22 (SS 1926) p. 175 [146]: “Life has a *telos*, an *entelecheia*. Life as *the most proper presence-at-hand: presence out of itself and constantly complete*, and yet not at rest, not simply lying there immobile. Movedness and presence, *entelecheia* (...): a kind of being of a higher mode. But, as presence, maintaining itself constant, autonomous and constant in full, finished presence (...), finished and yet not stopping in its insistent presence (...)”. (“Leben hat *telos*, *entelecheia*. Leben als die *eigentlichste Vorhandenheit: Anwesenheit von sich selbst her und ständig vollendet* und doch nicht *ruhend*, unbewegt vorliegend. Bewegtheit und Anwesenheit, *entelecheia* (...): eine Seinsart von höherem Modus. Aber als Anwesenheit sich selbst ständig, eigenständig-ständig in der vollen fertigen Anwesenheit halten (...), fertig und doch *nicht Aufhören der vordränglichen Anwesenheit* (...)”).

⁴⁸⁷ NB 386/39 [137] “Der Seinscharakter der *hexis* und damit der *aretē*, das heißt: die ontologische Struktur des Menschseins, wird aus der Ontologie des Seienden im Wie einer bestimmten Bewegtheit und der ontologischen Radikalisierung der Idee *dieser* Bewegtheit verständlich”.

⁴⁸⁸ NB 385-386/38 [136] “die *sophia* hat [das menschliche Leben] überhaupt nicht zu ihrem intentionalen Worauf?”.

⁴⁸⁹ NB 385/37 [136] “In der Umsicht ist das Leben da im konkreten Wie eines Womit des Umgangs”.

that we are getting is one which cannot account for the being of the ontologist herself. As a result, she remains methodologically blind, unaware of her own conditions of access to phenomena, and thus delivered to a determinate unquestioned approach to being.

Is then Heidegger simply dismissing *sophia* altogether here, in order to replace it with *phronēsis*? This would again be too hasty an interpretation, as we warned in the case of the critique of the *Entlebung* of theory in KNS. In that course, Heidegger was not trying to get rid of theory but to acquire a theoretical access to life that could grasp its movedness without stopping it (since this would imply not having it any longer). In a similar fashion, here Heidegger is concerned with the way in which Aristotle understands *sophia*. *The problem, in fact, is not sophia itself, but rather the idea of being that allegedly inspires Aristotle in his characterization of it.* According to Aristotle, Heidegger argues,

the authentic being of human beings temporalizes and unfolds itself in the pure actualization of *sophia* as a tarrying alongside and pure perceiving of the *archai* of those beings that always are (...) ⁴⁹⁰.

If, *without exclusion* of those beings that always are, philosophy (*philo-sophia*) cannot be conceived in such a way that it also truly safeguards the being of human life, then it cannot be legitimated, because the how of the access to phenomena—the *Vollzugsinn*—is brushed off⁴⁹¹. The task, therefore, is not to substitute *phronēsis* for *sophia*, but to rethink *sophia* through *phronēsis*. This implies rethinking

⁴⁹⁰ NB 386/39 [137] “Eigentliches Sein des Menschen zeitigt sich im reinen Vollzug der *sophia* als dem unbekümmerten, zeithabenden (*scholē*), rein vernehmenden Verweilen bei den *archai* des immer Seienden”.

⁴⁹¹ Some commentators simplify Heidegger’s interpretation, perhaps because they are lead astray by his statement in this essay that “philosophy has to be atheistic” (cf. NB 363/15 [121]), when they read Heidegger as though he was reproaching Aristotle for allowing finite human beings into the divine sphere (cf. e.g. LONG, C. 2002). However, neither Aristotle is that naïve, nor is Heidegger’s interpretation that simple. Brague is straight to the point in this respect when he says that “Heidegger does not deny that those realities naively qualified as eternal (mathematical objects, ‘values’, God, etc.) are accessible to human spirit. He only holds (...) that the way of being of such realities does not allow to think what being means in wide enough a manner to embrace—without deformations—what being means when I say ‘I am’” (BRAGUE, R. 1984 p. 261).

theōria as *praxis*, surely as the highest form of *praxis*, but making sure that *praxis*, human life, is not understood from the foreign ontological frame of *energeia*, this radicalization of that *determined* sense of *kinēsis* that is production.

It is important to stress that Heidegger is concerned with *this kind* of movement, namely production: he does not just consider *energeia* ‘the radicalization of the idea of movement’ in general, but specifically of the idea of *poiēsis*, that has its guiding thread in the readiness of the product toward which it tends. He is therefore implying that there is more to *kinēsis* than just production, and that is why later in the essay he turns to the question of *kinēsis* in the *Physics*⁴⁹², and summarizes his intention of retrieving a question that he attributes to Aristotle’s research in this book: “to what extent is motion itself being seen and genuinely explicated on the basis of itself?”⁴⁹³; or—reading between the lines—is *kinēsis* thought, even by Aristotle himself, in wide enough a manner as to liberate being from the narrowing to which it was initially subdued?⁴⁹⁴

This relation of exclusion between the paradigms of *energeia* on the one hand and *kinēsis* in a wide sense on the other, so intensively though briefly held in 1922, could explain why *Metaphysics* IX 6, 1048b 18-35 is not again the object of a close analysis in Heidegger’s published works until the 1939 essay *Vom Wesen und Begriff der Physis*⁴⁹⁵. The fact that what is at stake in this passage is a *positive* analysis of *energeia*—in the sense that it is the sole place in Aristotle’s works where it is thematised *per se*—perhaps makes it, *once energeia is discarded as belonging to the*

⁴⁹² Cf. NB pp. 391 ff./43 ff. [139 ff.]

⁴⁹³ NB p. 394/47 [142] “wie weit ist jeweils Bewegung an ihr selbst gesehen und genuin expliziert?”

⁴⁹⁴ It is in this respect that Gadamer would say, in his introduction to the publication of NB, the *wiedergefundenes Programm*, that “the 6th book of the Nicomachean Ethics appears in this programmatic text actually rather as an introduction to Aristotelian *Physics*” (GADAMER, Hans-Georg “Heideggers »theologische« Jugendschrift” *Dilthey Jahrbuch* 6 (1989) pp. 228-234, p. 231 for ref.).

⁴⁹⁵ “Vom Wesen und Begriff der *Physis*. Aristoteles Physik B 1” (WBP) in GA 9 pp. 354-357 [216-219]. Two brief references to this passage within this span of time can be found in DWA (1924) p. 15 [230] and GA 22 (SS 1926) § 62 p. 175 [146]. A more veiled reference, with the example of “going for a walk”, is provided in GA 18 (SS 1924) § 10b p. 71 [50].

metaphysics of presence, rather useless for Heidegger's efforts, that are hereafter centered on the understanding of life as *kinēsis*, the very *Sache* of his thought, according to Sheehan⁴⁹⁶.

While an unquestioned acceptance of everything Aristotle says is diametrically opposed to Heidegger's enterprise, and to any sensible approach to Aristotle, it is crucial to take heed of the context of those passages which are the object of the interpretation, particularly when they are fundamental for it. It is remarkable in this respect that nowhere in his analysis of 1048b in the 1922 summer course or, later that year, in the *Natorp Bericht*, does Heidegger refer to the fact that in Aristotle this passage is presented as an analysis of *praxis* (b18) and that *phronein* itself is listed among the *energeiai* (b24). We might deduce that Heidegger does not think *phronein* should be included there, but he does not even say so. McNeill has importantly noted this:

Aristotle's text *also* attributes the simultaneity of seeing and having seen, as the strictest sense of *praxis*, to *phronēsis*: *horai hama [kai keōrake], kai phronēi [kai pephroneke]* (1048b 24), something that Heidegger conspicuously omits to mention. Thus, even if we read with Heidegger the reference to *noein* as alluding to the theoretical *nous* of *sophia*, *phronein* comprises no less of an end in itself than does *theorein*. Moreover, this mention of *phronein* seems to suggest that we find the authentic Aristotelian meaning of being not only in moving away from *phronēsis* and remaining at a theoretical remove from it, but that this sense of being might equally be found in the seeing intrinsic to *phronēsis* itself. Might one speculate that Heidegger's neglecting to mention the entire practical context of this point in *Metaphysics* Book IX could be due to the significance of this insight for his own germinating project of reinscribing the stasis of vision (...) back within the *Augenblick* of a *praxis* conceived more originarily?⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹⁶ Cf. SHEEHAN, Thomas "On Movement and the Destruction of Ontology" *The Monist* 64/4 (1981) pp. 534-542 (cf. esp. P. 536) and "On the Way to *Ereignis*: Heidegger's Interpretation of *Physis*" in Silverman, Hugh. J et al. (eds.) *Continental Philosophy in America* Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1983 pp. 131-164 (cf. esp. p. 133) The latter provides an analysis of the influence of Heidegger's early orientation towards movement as *energeia atelēs* in the 1939 essay, as well as on his later concept of *Ereignis*.

⁴⁹⁷ McNEILL, William *The Glance of the Eye. Heidegger, Aristotle and the Ends of Theory* SUNY, 1999, p. 129 (our e.). Taminioux and Volpi also consider 1048b as a reference passage for the understanding of *praxis* in Aristotle (Cf. VOLPI, F. 1994 pp. 201-202 and TAMINIAUX, Jacques *Lectures de l'ontologie fondamentale* Grenoble: Jerome Millon, 1989 pp. 163 ff.).

The neglect is not unimportant, especially if we take into account the fact that the implicit divorce between *energeia* and a wide idea of *kinēsis* in Heidegger's interpretation of this passage parallels the one he establishes between *phronēsis* and *sophia*. However, Heidegger does not intend to oppose these determinations *per se* (since he intends to appropriate them in a new synthesis), but rather to show how Aristotle's ontological characterization of *sophia* upon the basis of *energeia* is rejected by his phenomenological insight of *phronēsis*. For that reason, we do not think that at the time there was for Heidegger something like a 'significant insight' in 1048b. The breakthrough, instead, was for him in NE VI, as we have seen in the *Natorp Bericht*. The proof of that, as we suggested, is the scarce attention that Heidegger pays to 1048b after 1922. That is why, although he is right in pointing out Heidegger's neglect of the relation between *praxis* and *energeia* in 1048b, McNeill's suggestion that Heidegger might be deliberately denying Aristotle a valuable insight for his own efforts does not seem plausible to us. Since Heidegger is not here whimsically dismissing Aristotle to turn to other thinkers, but starting his own long dialogue with this philosopher, it is hardly believable that he could just turn down a speculative possibility in Aristotle. We presume that if Heidegger does not retrieve this text later in the 1920s, it is because at that moment he does not find such a possibility in it. For Heidegger *sophia* has to be understood as *praxis*, as Aristotle himself states, and *praxis* has to be understood as *kinēsis*, because *energeia*, as he understands it, does not fit its way of being. From this point of view, if Aristotle intends to understand *praxis* in terms of *energeia* it is only because he is thinking the how of human being from a paradigm that is extraneous to it. Still, we may insist, McNeill is right that Heidegger does not face the challenge to his interpretation that is implicit as much in the inclusion of *phronēi* [*kai pephronēke*], right next to *noei kai neonēken*, as in the clear practical framing of the passage⁴⁹⁸. One would say that the text seems to be swept away by the force of the thesis of *Anwesenheit* before it is allowed to state its case.

⁴⁹⁸ It could be argued that Aristotle could be using *phronēsis* here in the general sense of knowledge, as

4.3. A Widening of the Paradox

In his introduction to the first publication of the *Natorp Bericht* in 1989, Gadamer acknowledges that the understanding of being as ‘being produced’ (*Hergestelltsein*) that Heidegger assigns to Aristotle for the first time in this text goes hand in hand with the idea that “*telos* does not mean aim (*Ziel*), but being ready (*Fertigsein*)”⁴⁹⁹. If, according to this conception of *telos*, *energeia* is just a radicalization of the idea of production—an immediate *herstellen*, an immediate reach of *Fertigkeit*—it obviously narrows the sense of being that appears in the phenomenon of *Dasein* finding itself in itself, in being itself⁵⁰⁰. As a result, a wider determination of being is required than *energeia* can provide. To be sure, though, by this widening Heidegger does not intend to dismiss the sense of being as *Vorhandenheit* altogether, as Taminiaux accurately remarks:

Fundamental ontology does not intend to refuse, but rather to reappropriate this understanding or view of being as *Vorhandenheit*, inherent to *poiēsis*. In other words, the aim is to put it back in its proper place by preventing it from expanding to all the field of understanding of beings (...). [The Greeks] were naïve to believe—or at least to imply—that all views on being are a simple modification of the view that is inherent to *poiēsis*⁵⁰¹.

Yet the paradox—as Taminiaux points out—is that Heidegger intends to overcome this Greek naivety on the basis of Greek texts: “in order to remove the limitation and obscuring entailed by *poiēsis*, Heidegger leans on the Greek analysis of another activity, namely *praxis* as Aristotle ponders it”⁵⁰². But if *praxis* can overcome the limitations of an ontology tailored on *poiēsis*, the fact that the only

in *Met.* I 2, 982b 24 or IV 5, 1009b 13. However, apart from the fact that *phronēsis*, as much as the other examples provided, are considered *praxeis*, while Heidegger reads *eudaimonein* in this passage as restricted to pure *theōrein* (Cf. GA 62 § 11f p. 110, NE X 8, 1178b 28f), Aristotle conceives *theōrein* as *praxis* and happiness as including the exercise of ethical *aretai*, i.e. of *praxis* (cf. section 2.6 above).

⁴⁹⁹ GADAMER, H.-G. 1989 p. 233.

⁵⁰⁰ “[*Dasein*] finds itself in itself (...). The primary relation to *Dasein* is not that of seeing but of «being in»” (Es befindet sich bei sich selbst (...). Der primäre Bezug zum *Dasein* ist nicht die Betrachtung, sondern das »es sein«) (“Der Begriff der Zeit” (1924) in GA 64 p. 114 [205, mod. tr.]).

⁵⁰¹ TAMINIAUX, J. 1989 pp. 161-162

⁵⁰² *Ibidem* p. 162.

positive determination of *energeia* in Aristotle's works is obtained precisely from an analysis of *praxis* requires a more detailed discernment of whether the approach to *energeia* in 1048b is effectively led by a narrow idea of being as presence (*Anwesenheit*). Specifically, we have to inquire whether the analysis of *energeia* in that passage is ultimately an application of a previously assembled idea of being—i.e. a radicalization of the idea of production (*herstellen*)—or whether it actually takes its lead from the phenomena with which it is faced. While the structure of *energeia* in 1048b is elucidated through a contrast with *kinēseis*, among which *poiēseis* like building are counted, is not Aristotle seeing and genuinely explicating *energeia* on the basis of itself, of its *phainesthai*⁵⁰³? In other words, are we not here, like with *phronēsis* in NE VI, in the presence of a *formale Anzeige*?

This line of questioning necessarily places us in a sort of *mit und gegen Heidegger* position⁵⁰⁴, given that 1048b is so much at the heart of the genesis of his thesis on the Greek and Western submission to the narrowing sense of being as *Anwesenheit*. This thesis, accepted without much discussion in most of the literature on Heidegger, is questioned to different degrees by a certain number of commentators⁵⁰⁵. Inquiring to what extent it fits Aristotle's ontological conception

⁵⁰³ Ontologically defining a determination on the basis of itself: cf. NB p. 394/47 [142] in reference to *kinēsis* and p. 385/37 [136] in reference to *phronēsis*.

⁵⁰⁴ The expression is a transformation of the *mit und gegen Aristoteles* that has become popular in the secondary bibliography on Heidegger to express synthetically the peculiar character of his approach to Aristotle. For instance, it is the heading to a section in the volume comprising the lectures of the 2005 *Tagung* of the Heidegger Gesellschaft (Cf. STEINMANN, Michael (ed.) *Heidegger und die Griechen* Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 2007). The *mit und gegen Heidegger* may seem daring as an approach, given Heidegger's intellectual stature. But the opposite argument applies too: one has sometimes, in reading the literature on Heidegger, the impression that Aristotle's intellectual stature is undermined by an unquestioned faithfulness to Heidegger's approach. The expression has been used recently in GONZALEZ, F. J. 2008.

⁵⁰⁵ The most recent critical remarks are developed in: GONZALEZ, Francisco J. 2008, 2006b, and also his "Confronting Heidegger on Logos and Being in Plato's Sophist" (2003) in Damschen, G. et al. (eds.) *Platon und Aristoteles — sub ratione veritatis* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003 pp. 102-133; SEGURA, Carmen *Heidegger y la metafísica. Análisis críticos*. Madrid, 2006 and "Crítica a la interpretación heideggeriana de la ousia aristotélica" (due to be published in *Actas del I Congreso Internacional de Filosofía Griega, 2008*. Palma de Mallorca, 2010). Cf. also PÖGGELER, Otto "Temporal Interpretation and Hermeneutic Philosophy" in Bruzina, R. and Wilshire, B. (eds.) *Phenomenology, dialogues and bridges* (1982) pp. 79-106 (esp. pp. 90 ff.) and *Neue Wege mit Heidegger* Freiburg: Alber, 1992 pp. 134 ff., 197 ff.;

obviously exceeds the possibilities of the present research, because a more encompassing exegesis of Aristotle's and Heidegger's works would be required than we can provide here. Our task could be defined as *a widening of the paradox that Heidegger himself holds throughout his lifelong dialogue with Aristotle*, according to which there would be insights in Aristotle which point toward an overcoming of the tradition that he himself represents: discoveries on the one hand which catch a glimpse of the originary sense of being, and naïve ontological assumptions on the other which abandon and ultimately hide this sense of being. The indication of this paradox is evident in Heidegger with the notion of *praxis* in the early 1920s and with that of *physis* in the late 1930s. *Energieia*, in turn, appears with varying intensity throughout these years, and a certain evolution of Heidegger's understanding of it can be appreciated, although its interpretation ultimately remains subjugated to the suspicion that *Anwesenheit* constitutes its unthought ground⁵⁰⁶. That precisely *energeia* could widen the non-naïve side of the paradox, of course, could make collapse the paradox, as far as Aristotle is concerned. Would this however imply a collapse of Heidegger's project before the *Kehre*, as he himself suggests in 1930 concerning his thesis about the Greek concept of being?:

If this interpretation of [the Greek concept of] being as constant presence is not correct, there can be no basis for unfolding a connection between being and time, as demanded by the fundamental question⁵⁰⁷.

GADAMER, Hans-Georg *Metafisica e Filosofia Pratica in Aristotele* (1990) Napoli: Guerini, 2000 pp. 57, 99 ff.; RICOEUR, P. 1990 pp. 358 ff.; BERTI, E. 1993 pp. 60 ff.; D'ANGELO, Antonello *Heidegger e Aristotele: la potenza e l'atto* Napoli: Il Mulino, 2000 esp. pp. 418 ff.; DOSTAL, Robert J. "Beyond Being: Heidegger's Plato" in Macann, Ch. (ed.) *Martin Heidegger. Critical Assessments. Vol II: History of Philosophy* London/New York: Routledge, 1992 pp. 61-89 (esp. pp. 71 ff.), POLO, Leonardo *Hegel y el posthegelianismo* Piura: Ediciones Universidad de Piura, 1985 (esp. pp. 293 ff.), MARX, Werner *Heidegger and the Tradition* Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971 (esp. pp. 21-22).

⁵⁰⁶ A discussion of this evolution is undertaken in GONZALEZ, F. J, 2006b.

⁵⁰⁷ GA 31 *Vom Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit* (SS 1930) Ed. by Hartmut Tietjen, 1982 [*The Essence of Human Freedom* Translated by Ted Sadler, London: Continuum, 2002], § 9 p. 74 [51]. "[D]iese Interpretation von Sein, *ousia*, als beständige Anwesenheit wäre nicht stichhaltig, dann bestände kein Anhalt dafür, einen Problemzusammenhang von Sein und Zeit zu entfalten, wie es die Grundfrage fordert".

Although our contribution in this thesis can only be to show a side of the problematic, we suggest that Heidegger's project might be *transformed* rather than relinquished, if the elucidation of *energeia* in 1048b proved to show that "being and time are interwoven with one another" in such a way that "the 'and' signifies a primordial co-belongingness of being and time from the ground of their essence"⁵⁰⁸. What we suggest is that an *Urform* of what the 'und' is to *Sein und Zeit* might be found *mutatis mutandis* in Aristotle's "at the same time" (*hama*) in this text. As much as the question on the *und* between *Sein* and *Zeit*—i.e. that of the being of *Dasein*⁵⁰⁹—comprises the power and originality of the first Heidegger, the cooriginality of the 'I see' and the 'I have seen' described by the *hama*, which is constitutive of the characterization of *energeia*, encloses one of Aristotle's most fertile intuitions, with effects upon many of his works, among which stand, crucially, the NE. On commenting upon Aristotle's handling of the word *hama* in *Physics* IV, Derrida remarks:

The entire force of Aristotle's text depends on a single word which is scarcely visible because it is so evident; as obvious, it is also discreet and hidden, but it operates all the more effectively for escaping thematic attention. The tiny *hama* is that which sets the discourse in motion in terms of its articulation; from this point on, it will constitute the inner core (*cheville*, literally 'ankle-bone') of metaphysics; it will be the small key (*clavis*) which both locks and unlocks the history of metaphysics—the skeletal frame (*clavicula*, 'collar-bone') on which the entire conceptual apparatus of Aristotelian discourse is supported and in terms of which it is articulated⁵¹⁰.

We are surely not suggesting that a determined reading of Aristotle would make the project of *Sein und Zeit* unnecessary because Aristotle would have already

⁵⁰⁸ GA 31 § 11 p. 118 [84] "Sein und Zeit suchen einander und weben einander. Das ›Und‹ ist der Titel für eine ursprüngliche Zusammengehörigkeit von Sein und Zeit aus dem Grunde ihres Wesens".

⁵⁰⁹ Cf. GRONDIN, J. 1988 pp. 381-382: "Heidegger's research will be addressed to the *Dasein* with a view to open the question of the sense of being, which will have to become apparent within the horizon of time. Two of these notions, bound by an 'and' which the grammar of the depths could call an undefined conjunction, have found place in Heidegger's master work: being and time—but it is surely the *Dasein* that supports their connection. The *Dasein*, the 'und' in *Sein und Zeit* (...)".

⁵¹⁰ DERRIDA, Jacques "Ousia and Grammē: A Note to a Footnote in *Being and Time*" in Smith, F. J. (ed.) *Phenomenology in Perspective* The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970 pp. 54-93 (pp. 80-81 for ref.). Cf. *Physics* IV 10, 218a.

anticipated it. Instead, we believe that this project—in its unfolding in the early 1920s—might find in 1048b at least as valuable an insight as it does in the pages of NE VI, and that Heidegger seems to us not to unfold it⁵¹¹. If this passage of *Metaphysics* IX is read without the premise that *energeia* is a structure alien to the being of *Dasein*, the retrieval of Aristotle’s practical philosophy would be reinforced from the inside, perhaps not so much against Aristotle himself as against the modern philosophy of subjectivity⁵¹². In fact, if 1048b has come to be relevant for us in our approach to *phronēsis* in section I it is partly due to reasons which are internal to Heidegger’s project: (i) his prevention against reducing our understanding of being to presence, which goes hand in hand with his orientation towards time as the way out of this narrowing of the sense of being⁵¹³; (ii) his methodological requirement of basing the understanding of being on the relation of *Dasein* to its own being⁵¹⁴; (iii) his dissatisfaction with Husserl’s solution to the *aporia* of conceiving a subject founding a world to which it in its turn belongs⁵¹⁵, and (iv) his *ontological* reading of *phronēsis*⁵¹⁶.

⁵¹¹ Cf. VOLPI, Franco “La «riabilitazione» della *dynamis* e dell’*energeia* in Heidegger” *Aquinas* 33/1 (1990) pp. 3-27 (p. 27 for ref.): “Heidegger has been able to valorize *energeia* only to a certain extent, that is, only insofar as it served as referral and exhortation to think of a forgotten dimension of modern technique, namely the dimension of that movedness which rests upon itself and which as a matter of principle keeps out of human machinations, and of which an originally thought *physis* is the expression”. Volpi’s comment is centered on Heidegger’s understanding of the term from 1931 on, which acquired a positive sense that his reading of *energeia* in the 1920s is far from having.

⁵¹² Cf. POLO, L. 1985 pp. 294-295: “The preeminence of conscience in the modern sense implies that the foundation is conscience itself, and that it provides its own objective presentation for itself. This inversion of the classic approach is, undoubtedly, a forgetfulness of being, or an usurpation of its fundamental character on the part of the priority of conscience. Clearly, if presence is only conscient presence, what takes place is a decisive forgetfulness of being. But the confusion of conscience and foundation can be refuted from Aristotle; specifically, from his thesis on the plurality of the ways of referring to beings”. Cf. also, concerning Aristotle and the moderns in relation to *Anwesenheit*, GADAMER, H.-G. 2000 pp. 57, 99 ff.

⁵¹³ Cf. SZ § 5 pp. 17-19 and GA 24 § 19.

⁵¹⁴ Cf. SZ § 5 p. 16 and GA 24 § 20 pp. 417-418.

⁵¹⁵ Cf. GA 20 § 11 and VOLPI, F. 1992 pp. 102-103.

⁵¹⁶ An unwarned reader might object that (ii) and (iii) exclude each other, but such an objection would miss precisely the difficult balance that Heidegger is searching: if the relation of *Dasein* with its own being is not dealt with in the first place, then the *Dasein* is necessarily understood as a subject who

This determines the sense of our *mit und gegen* as a perspective to which our analysis of Aristotle and Heidegger brings us. What is being inquired here is not whether Heidegger is faithful to Aristotle's text but whether he makes the best of its possibilities—whether thought or unthought. Hence the emphasis is definitely placed on the *mit*, to which the *gegen* is ancillary. In other words, our 'with and against' Heidegger intends to remain 'within' the Heideggerian project, as much as Heidegger's *Destruktion* of Aristotle intends to define its "positive possibilities"⁵¹⁷.

founds the world, because its belongingness to being is overlooked and the understanding of the world as object present to the knowing subject is uncritically accepted.

⁵¹⁷ SZ § 6 p. 22: "The destructuring has just as little the *negative* sense of disburdening ourselves of the ontological tradition. On the contrary, it should stake out the positive possibilities of the tradition, and that always means to fix its *boundaries*". ("Die Destruktion hat ebensowenig den *negativen* Sinn einer Abschüttelung der ontologischen Tradition. Sie soll umgekehrt diese in ihren positiven Möglichkeiten, und das besagt immer, in ihren *Grenzen* abstecken").

5. *Phronēsis* and the Modes of *Alētheuein*

5.1. Introducing the 1924 *Auseinandersetzung* with the *Nicomachean Ethics*

With the exception of the reflections developed in the *Natorp Bericht*, and a seminar dealing with different texts of Aristotle that followed it⁵¹⁸, 1924 is the center of gravity of Heidegger's engagement with the NE. Its basic moments are the 1924 summer semester course *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*, the lecture "Dasein und Wahrsein nach Aristoteles" on NE VI⁵¹⁹, delivered in December of that year, and the first third of the 1924-25 winter semester course *Platon: Sophistes*, which spans from early november until the 1924 Christmas break⁵²⁰. After this intensive *Auseinandersetzung*, in which *phronēsis* plays a central though not exclusive role, this term virtually disappears of Heidegger's repertory⁵²¹. In this respect, the lecture *Der Begriff der Zeit*, delivered in July 1924, provides an interesting hint on how Heidegger's close and intense reading of Aristotle during this year is intimately tied to the elucidation of the philosophical discourse that progressively leads to *Sein und Zeit*, a work undoubtedly related to this close reading of Aristotle⁵²², which however operates upon a conceptuality of its own.

Our approach to the vast constellation of reflections developed in these texts shall follow the course *Platon: Sophistes* (hereafter GA 19) as guideline. This

⁵¹⁸ *Übungen über Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Nikomachische Ethik VI; De Anima; Metaphysik VII)* (WS 1922-23) in *Heidegger-Jahrbuch 3* (2007) pp. 23-48 (Oskar Becker's transcript of the seminar, a source for the forthcoming publication in GA 83 *Seminare: Platon — Aristoteles — Augustinus*).

⁵¹⁹ "Dasein und Wahrsein nach Aristoteles (Interpretationen von Buch VI [der] Nikomachischen Ethik)" (DWA) Cf. note 401 above for further references on the text.

⁵²⁰ For dates and other details on the development of the course, cf. the editor's afterword in GA 19 pp. 654 ff. [457 ff.].

⁵²¹ A brief analysis of *phronēsis* is provided, however, in GA 22 (1926). Cf. note 414 above.

⁵²² Cf. e.g. SZ § 7b p. 32 and § 44b p. 225.

winter course contains the most systematic interpretation of the NE in Heidegger's work. It has to be read, however, in close connection with the immediately previous one, *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie* (hereafter GA 18), where relevant keys are provided for some interpretative moves which are only very succinctly accounted for in the long Aristotle 'introduction' to his reading of Plato's *Sophist*. As it is, while at the beginning of his winter course Heidegger justifies before the audience his detour through Aristotle on the way to the analysis of *The Sophist* as a way of ensuring a correct access to the thought of Plato⁵²³, the connection of his interpretation of Aristotle with the previous summer course seems even more relevant: Heidegger is surely paving the way for his reading of the *Sophist*, but he is also pursuing an interpretation that he had not been able to fulfil in the previous summer⁵²⁴. Indeed, in GA 18, on the occasion of the distinction between *aretai ēthikai* and *aretai dianoētikai*, Heidegger announces that "later we will examine the [latter], since the basic possibility of considering, of scientific research, of the *bios theōretikos*, and therewith the basic possibility of human existence, is found in their domain"⁵²⁵. However, the *hexeis* of *alēthein* are finally only tackled very summarily in this course⁵²⁶, and it is only from early November on that Heidegger will get to analyze them thoroughly, in an interpretation that has been delivered to us in nearly two hundred pages of the GA 19 volume⁵²⁷. Obviously, there was more to it than just gaining a proper orientation to approach Plato.

⁵²³ Cf. GA 19 § 1b pp. 10 ff. [7 ff.]

⁵²⁴ At that time, Heidegger was still engaged in his book project on Aristotle, which however would eventually not get published. Cf. KISIEL, T. 1993, esp. pp. 269, 311-312 and 479.

⁵²⁵ GA 18 § 13 p. 106 [73] "Später werden wir die *aretai dianoētikai* ins Auge fassen, weil in ihrem Felde die Grundmöglichkeit des Betrachtens, der wissenschaftlichen Forschung liegt, der *bios theōretikos*, und damit zugleich die Grundmöglichkeit der menschlichen Existenz".

⁵²⁶ Cf. GA 18 § 22a pp. 263-265 [176-179].

⁵²⁷ Cf. GA 19 §§ 1-26 pp. 7-188 [5-129].

It is important to bear in mind the peculiarity of the texts with which we are dealing now. If we have been working on a programmatical text, the *Natorp Bericht* (which in spite of its concise style has the density of a treatise, quite like Aristotle's 'class notes'), we are now faced on the one hand with the transcription of two oral courses and with the summary style of a lecture to a multifarious audience⁵²⁸. On the one hand, what the lecture provides in terms of systematicity, it does not provide in terms of detailed analysis; on the other, while when reading some of Heidegger's courses one would say that they are closer in their style to treatises rather than to transcriptions of lecture courses, this is not so much the case with GA 18 and GA 19, retrospectively seen by Heidegger as the most important of his Marburg years⁵²⁹. This may be explained by the fact that Heidegger is here constantly quoting, translating and paraphrasing Aristotle's text, and the direction of his thought is interwoven with these references. He is at the same time trying to make out what Aristotle says—as much as what Aristotle does not say—and what he himself intends to say: the elucidation of his philosophical project is here indissociable from his interpretation of Aristotle. As Michalski puts it, Heidegger is securing, or at least proving the worth of his own thinking in the course of his investigation of Aristotle's concepts⁵³⁰. All in all, these texts are the portrait of a search, as it took place during a lecture course, without the subsequent reelaboration that is typical of written texts.

Most commentators approach GA 19 from the point of view of its relation to *Sein und Zeit*⁵³¹. This reference is more than legitimate, but it could also lead to a distortion of what is at stake in this text, if too smooth connections between concepts here and in *Sein und Zeit* are taken for granted. In this course Heidegger

⁵²⁸ I.e. GA 18 and GA 19 on the one hand, and DWA on the other.

⁵²⁹ Cf. "Beilage zu Wunsch und Wille (Über die Bewahrung des Versuchten)" in GA 66 *Besinnung* Ed. By Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, 1997 pp. 419-428 (pp. 421-422 for ref).

⁵³⁰ Cf. editor's afterword to GA 18 p. 417 [279].

⁵³¹ Cf. e.g. Franco Volpi, Jacques Taminiaux, Stanley Rosen.

is painstakingly making out his own way, and he is doing so in a very complex manner, as we said, not only because of the enterprise he is sketching but also because of the fact that it is elucidated through a dialogue with Aristotle. That is why, while the problematic of *Sein und Zeit* remains the horizon of our approach, we will rather focus on the breakthroughs and ambiguities of this text and the neighboring ones as a way of searching and discussing with a Heidegger who is still here *making his way* to his magnum opus.

Well into his interpretation of NE VI in GA 19, Heidegger states that if it reads “something «into» Aristotle, it does so merely to attain and to understand what is genuinely taking place in him”⁵³². Here we might recall that our goal is not to evaluate to what extent Heidegger sticks to Aristotle’s letter and spirit, but to analyse the phenomena to which he and his reading of Aristotle point, in order to see which possibilities are actually opened for Heidegger’s project in his disclosure of these phenomena, and to point also to *those possibilities which could have been opened*. In other words, ‘what is taking place’ in Heidegger is also an important part of the analysis.

Methodologically relevant for the approach to these texts is also an excursus halfway through the Aristotle ‘introduction’ in GA 19, on the concepts of the universal (*katholon*) and the particular (*kath hekaston*). These concepts mirror Heidegger’s distinction between the ontological and the ontical, respectively—a distinction which, as we said elsewhere, does not by any means establish a relation of exclusion. The relation between *katholon* and *kath hekaston*, Heidegger argues, is also that between speech (*logos*) and sense perception (*aisthēsis*). On the one hand, the *katholon* “shows itself first and only to *legein*”, it is an approach exclusive to those beings who have *logos*; on the other, the *kath hekaston* “is a being as it initially

⁵³² GA 19 § 9c p. 62 [43] “[W]enn die Interpretation in Aristoteles etwas »hineindeutet«, so geht es ihr darum, wieder zu erlangen und zu verstehen, was eigentlich bei ihm vor sich geht”.

presents itself”⁵³³. Paraphrasing a passage of the *Metaphysics* where Aristotle holds that “one must start from that which is barely intelligible but intelligible to oneself, and try to understand what is intelligible in itself, passing by way, as has been said, of those very things which one understands”⁵³⁴, Heidegger concludes:

[A]lthough in *aisthēsis* «something uncovered as straightforwardly familiar» is present, one must *depart from it* (...). *One must depart from what is thus uncovered*, even if it is straightforwardly uncovered. *One must appropriate this ground explicitly* and not leap beyond it to a reality which is simply fabricated by theory (...). One must fasten onto precisely the *kath hekaston* of *aisthēsis* and admit it as the first factual state of beings⁵³⁵.

The bare intelligibility of what is immediately experienced has to do with the fact that it does not have the precision and simplicity of the concept: our senses provide many data which have to be sorted out before something is understood in its intelligibility. That is why Aristotle says that this first and elementary knowledge “has little or nothing of reality (*mikron ē outhen echei tou ontos*)”⁵³⁶, because reality is intelligible in itself, which is hardly the case of these experiences. This statement, Heidegger notes, “shows that for Aristotle *a determinate sense of being guides* all his discussions about beings”⁵³⁷: while he acknowledges the need to start from the *kath hekaston* of *aisthēsis*, he tends to regard this departure point primarily as a necessary passageway to genuine reality, which would be beyond, in the clarity

⁵³³ GA 19 § 12b p. 82 [57] “Das *kath hekaston* ist das Seiende, wie es sich zunächst und d.h. in der *aisthēsis* darbietet. Das *katholon* ist etwas, was sich erst und allein im *legein* zeigt”.

⁵³⁴ *Met.* VII 3, 1029b 10ff. Cf. also V 1, 1013a 2ff: “we must sometimes begin to learn not from the first point and the origin of the thing, but from the point from which we should learn most easily”.

⁵³⁵ GA 19 § 12b p. 85 [58-59, add. e.] “[O]bwohl in der *aisthēsis* ein »schlecht vertrautes aufgedecktes gegenwärtig ist«, muß man *von ihm her* den Ausgang nehmen (...). Man muß von diesem obzwar schlecht Aufgedeckten doch seinen Ausgang nehmen; man muß sich diesen Boden ausdrücklich zueignen, — und nicht über die von einer Theorie aus als schlecht angesetzte Realität hinwegspringen (...). Gerade das *kath hekaston* der *aisthēsis* muß man in den Griff bekommen und an ihm den ersten Tatbestand des Seienden aufnehmen”. Cf. also § 14 p. 98 [68]: “*sophia* does not thereby exclude *aisthēsis* but merely takes it as a point of *departure*” (“Dabei wird jedoch die *aisthēsis* nicht ausgeschaltet, sondern zum *Ausgang* genommen”).

⁵³⁶ *Met.* VII 3 1029b 9f.

⁵³⁷ GA 19 § 12b pp. 84-85 [58] “In dieser eigentümlichen Ausdrucksweise zeigt sich, daß für Aristoteles ein *bestimmter Sinn von Sein leitend* ist in allen Diskussionen über das Seiende”. The remark parallels the analysis of the experience of a house in the *Natorp Bericht* above, where Heidegger criticizes Aristotle on the same grounds. Cf. NB p. 398-399/50 [144-145].

of the *katholon*. Heidegger instead holds that “one must appropriate this ground explicitly”, as the raw material from which the sense of being has to be gained. Failure to do so entails the risk of imposing this sense of being onto beings from the outside⁵³⁸, without ensuring “the transparency of the procedure”⁵³⁹. That is why, Heidegger contends, Aristotle “was successful here only within certain limits, and in spite of his tendency to radicality he did not press on into the ultimate originality of the being of the world”⁵⁴⁰. Nevertheless, Heidegger applauds the fact that Aristotle’s fundamental line of questioning remains ontological—“beings are addressed in their being”⁵⁴¹—and he discusses the texts in these terms. How far this is from intending a dismissal of the ontical, though, is clear enough from the importance that Heidegger attaches to the *kath hekaston* of *aisthēsis*, i.e. to the phenomena in their multifariousness. Ensuring that the phenomena are thus appreciated is as crucial to Heidegger’s reading of Aristotle as to *our* reading of his reading of Aristotle.

5.2. Two Key Patterns of *Praxis*: *Logos* and *Echein*

Alētheia, the Greek word for truth, comes explicitly to the fore both at the beginning and the end of the Aristotle ‘introduction’ in GA 19⁵⁴², and in fact it underlies the whole of this interpretation of Aristotle. In approaching NE VI in section I we have noted already how at the beginning of this course *alētheuein* is presented

⁵³⁸ Cf. NB p. 349/3 [113, our e.] “This basic direction of philosophical questioning is not *externally added* and attached to the interrogated object, factual life” (“Diese Grundrichtung des philosophischen Fragens ist dem befragten Gegenstand, dem faktischen Leben, nicht von außen angesetzt und aufgeschraubt”).

⁵³⁹ GA 19 § 12c p. 90 [62] “die Durchsichtigkeit des Ausgangs”.

⁵⁴⁰ GA 19 § 12b pp. 85-86 [59] “Das ist auch dem Aristoteles nur in gewissen Grenzen gelungen, so daß er trotz der radikalen Tendenz nicht zur letzten Ursprünglichkeit des Seins der Welt gedrungen ist”.

⁵⁴¹ GA 18 § 26c p. 291 [197] “das Seiende *in seinem Sein angesprochen* wird”. An explicit distinction is made *ad loc. cit.* between ontic and ontological, which is only implicit in GA 19.

⁵⁴² Cf. § 3a and § 26b, respectively entitled by the editor as “The meaning of the word *alētheia*. *Alētheia* and *Dasein*” and “*Logos* and *alētheia*”.

as rather untranslatable, and only a hint on its meaning is provided: “*to be disclosing (Aufdeckendsein)*, to remove the world from concealedness and coveredness. And that is a mode of being of human *Dasein*”⁵⁴³. The reticence has something of a pedagogical strategy, because Heidegger does provide different translations for it: truth, unconcealedness, uncoveredness, to be true, to be in the truth⁵⁴⁴. Still, *alētheia* is not granted here an univocal sense and Heidegger continues to use the Greek term afterwards in this course and in his work. Why he is reluctant to translate *alētheia* and its verb *alētheuein* has to do with the methodological (i.e. phenomenological) concern sketched above. One aspect of this we have mentioned already in section I: if *alētheia* is to be understood in all its amplitude (a task that is actually the core of Heidegger’s enterprise both on the way to *and* in *Sein und Zeit*), we have to let beings determine the *how* of our approach to them, instead of unilaterally imposing this *how* onto them. *Alētheia* “conforms rather to beings themselves, and not to a determinate concept of scientificity”⁵⁴⁵, it requires the “precautionary measure”⁵⁴⁶ of *formale Anzeige*: phenomena themselves have to show how they are ‘being true’ (*Wahrsein*). Truth is “a character of beings, insofar as they are encountered”⁵⁴⁷, which leads to a second more important point:

in an authentic sense [truth] is nevertheless *a determination of the being of human Dasein itself* (...). Hence it is human *Dasein* that is properly true; it is in the truth—if we do translate *alētheia* as ‘truth’. To be true (*Wahrsein*), to be in the truth (*In-der-Wahrheit-*

⁵⁴³ GA 19 § 3a p. 17 [12] “*alētheia: alētheuein*. Wir wollen dies nicht übersetzen. *Alētheuein* meint: *aufdeckendsein*, die Welt aus der Verslossenheit und Verdecktheit herausnehmen. Und das ist eine Seinsweise des menschlichen Daseins”.

⁵⁴⁴ “Wahrheit, Unverborgenheit, Aufgedecktsein” (GA 19 § 4a p. 24 [17]); “Wahrsein, In-der-Wahrheit-sein” (p. 23 [16]).

⁵⁴⁵ GA 19 § 4a p. 24 [17] “[*Alētheia*] richtet sich vielmehr nach dem Seienden selbst und nicht nach einem bestimmten Begriff von Wissenschaftlichkeit”.

⁵⁴⁶ EPR § 13 in GA 60 p. 64 [44].

⁵⁴⁷ GA 19 § 4a p. 23 [16, mod. tr.] “Die Wahrheit ist also zwar ein Charakter des Seienden, sofern es begegnet”.

sein), as a determination of *Dasein*, means: to have at its disposal, as unconcealed, the particular being with which *Dasein* cultivates its dealings⁵⁴⁸.

Dasein, human being, is as essential to “uncoveredness” as things are. It is in the juncture of things and *Dasein* that it can make any sense to speak of *alētheuein*: “this uncoveredness does not apply to things insofar as they are but insofar as they are encountered (...). Accordingly, uncoveredness is a specific accomplishment of *Dasein*, which has its being in the soul: *alētheuei hē psychē*”⁵⁴⁹. To read this statement as a subjectivistic move, one would have to take for granted the modern segregation between objects and subject, so that the “accomplishment of *Dasein*” would entail something like a ‘constitution of the world by *Dasein*’. However, this is alien to the way in which the Greeks saw the world, and in which Heidegger intends that the world is to be approached⁵⁵⁰. He surely takes critical distance from whatever he considers naïve in the Greek approach, but he definitely appreciates how “in keeping with one’s *primary being-together with the world*” the Greeks call things *pragmata* instead of dividing reality between subject and objects⁵⁵¹.

⁵⁴⁸ *Loc. cit.* (mod. tr.) “Die Wahrheit ist (...) im eigentlichen Sinne doch eine *Seinsbestimmung des menschlichen Daseins selbst* (...). Das menschliche Dasein also ist es, das eigentlich wahr ist; es ist in der Wahrheit — wenn wir *alētheia* mit Wahrheit übersetzen. Wahrsein, In-der-Wahrheit-Sein, als Bestimmung des Daseins besagt: das jeweilig Seiende, mit dem das Dasein Umgang pflegt, unverdeckt zur Verfügung haben”.

⁵⁴⁹ GA 19 §4b pp. 24-25 [17] “Diese Unverdecktheit kommt der Sache nicht zu, sofern sie ist, sondern sofern sie begegnet (...). Demnach ist das Unverdecktsein eine spezifische Leistung des Daseins, das sein Sein in der Seele hat: *alētheuei hē psychē*”.

⁵⁵⁰ In the SS course of 1923 Heidegger speaks of the “disastrous infiltration” of the object-subject schema into phenomenological research. Cf. GA 63 § 17a, pp. 81-82 [62-63]. On the inadequacy of this schema to understand Greek thought, cf. also GA 18 § 9b pp. 56-57 [40].

⁵⁵¹ DWA p. 11 [227] (our e.) “Die Griechen bezeichnen nicht Subjekt und Objekt, sondern das primäre Zusammensein mit der Welt, *Pragmata*”. Heidegger specifies that the Greeks used the term *pragmata* to refer to things produced. Things that are “always already there in advance”, on the other hand, they call *hypokeimenon* (the degree to which this partition is historically precise cannot be analysed here). Near the end of the lecture, he adds (p. 16 [231, mod. tr.]): “*Dasein* means being-in-the-world—that is our fundamental finding. There is not first of all a subject, which is enclosed in and for itself as in a box, with an object outside. Rather, the fundamental finding is: being-in-a-world” (“*Dasein* heisst in der Welt sein, das ist der fundamentale Befund. Es gibt nicht ein Subjekt zunächst, das für sich eingeschlossen ist in einem Kasten, und draussen ein Objekt, sondern der fundamentale Befund ist: in einer Welt sein”).

The world, then, is not constituted by *Dasein*, but rather *Dasein* finds itself ‘being in’ the world. *Dasein* is *had* by the world and at the same time, differently from the rest of beings, it *has* a world, because it has *logos*. This primary being-together with the world of *Dasein* was well grasped by the Greeks in the determination of man as a $\zeta\acute{o}\nu\ \logon\ echon$, a being that has and is ‘had’ by *logos*, by speaking: “The being-in-the world of the human being is determined in its ground through speaking”⁵⁵². This fundamental character of speaking has its roots already in the 1923 course *Ontologie — Hermeneutik der Faktizität*. Heidegger had by then achieved a *formal anzeigende* approach to the classical Aristotelian definition of man, which in 1924 is well settled into his interpretation⁵⁵³. His efforts are directed to understanding human beings primarily as a ‘how’⁵⁵⁴—the how of the being of human beings as imbedded in language—rather than as a ‘what’, the approach that to his mind was crystallized in the traditional translation *animal rationale*⁵⁵⁵.

Bowler has recently highlighted the importance for Heidegger’s analytic of *Dasein* of the fact that the verb *echein*, from which comes *hexis*, is defined in *Metaphysics* V both in an active and passive sense, i.e. having and being had⁵⁵⁶:

To have (*echein*) means many things. (1) To treat a thing according to one’s nature or according to one’s impulse, so that fever is said to have a man, and tyrants to have their cities, and people to have the clothes they wear. (2) That in which a thing is present as in something receptive of it is said to have the thing, e.g., the bronze has the form of the statue, and the body has the disease⁵⁵⁷.

⁵⁵² GA 18 § 5b p. 18 [14] “Das In-der-Welt-sein des Menschen ist im Grunde bestimmt durch das Sprechen”.

⁵⁵³ Cf. GA 63 § 5.

⁵⁵⁴ “The human being is determined as $\zeta\acute{o}\nu\ \logon\ echon$, a «living being», though not in accordance with the modern biological concept. Life is a *how*, a *category of being*” (“Der Mensch wird bestimmt als $\zeta\acute{o}\nu\ \logon\ echon$, ein »Lebewesen« — kein biologischer Begriff in moderner Ausformung. Leben ist ein *Wie*, eine *Kategorie des Seins*”) (GA 18 § 6 pp. 20-21 [16]).

⁵⁵⁵ Cf. GA 63 p. 26 [21]: “The question «What is man?» blocks its own view of what it is really after with an object foreign to it (Cf. Jaspers)” (“Die Frage: was der Mensch sei, verstellt sich den Blick für das, was sie eigentlich will, mit einem ihr fremden Gegenstand (vgl. Jaspers)”).

⁵⁵⁶ Cf. BOWLER, M. pp. 119 ff.

⁵⁵⁷ *Met.* V 23, 1023a 8ff.

In the first sessions of GA 18, Heidegger refers to *logos* in a way that implicitly encompasses both senses, although it is clear that he is mainly concerned with the passive one: language belongs in the first place to “the genuine drive of being of the human being. Living, for the human being, means speaking”⁵⁵⁸. Much more fundamentally than a possession or an usage, *logos echein* is a feature of our being: we are ‘possessed’ by this determination. Later, in § 17a, Heidegger returns to *echein* and *hexis*, and he undertakes a detailed analysis of the passage of *Metaphysics* V, where he makes explicit the articulation between the active and the passive sense, precisely by regarding it as grounded in the *how* of the being of human beings, on the basis of what Aristotle himself states:

kai to en tini de einai homotropōs legetai kai hepomenōs tō echein. «Having is said in the same way as being-in-something». *Hepomenōs*: this meaning of being-in-something is already co-given with having; the character of having and being had as that of being-in-something⁵⁵⁹.

The *logos* in the formula *zōon logon echon*, therefore, indicates not only a possession at one’s disposal but, much more originally, a *non-disposable* dimension of our being, in the sense that we always already find ourselves within this dimension, and it is not ours to change this *how* of our being. *Logon echein* means, more fundamentally than having language, ‘being in’ language, as the specific way of having a world:

The human being is seen by the Greeks as *zōon logon echon*, not only philosophically but in concrete living: «a living thing that (as living) has language». This determination should not be thought in biological, psychological, social-scientific, or any such terms. *This determination lies before such distinctions.* *Zōē* is a concept of being: “life” refers to *a mode of being*, indeed a mode of being-in-a-world. A living thing is not simply at hand (*vorhanden*) but is in a world in that it has its world⁵⁶⁰.

⁵⁵⁸ GA 18 § 6 p. 21 [16] “das Sprechen zum eigentlichen Seinsantrieb des Menschen gehört. Leben des Menschen heißt Sprechen”.

⁵⁵⁹ GA 19 § 17a p. 174 [118] “»Das Haben wird in derselben Weise gesagt wie das in-Etwas-Sein«. *Hepomenōs*: Es ist diese Bedeutung des In-etwas-Seins beim Haben schon mitgegeben: der Charakter des Habens und Gehabtwerdens wie der des In-etwas-Seins”. Cf. *Met.* V 23, 1023a 23ff.

⁵⁶⁰ GA 18 § 5b p. 18 [14] (our e.). “Der Mensch wird von den Griechen gesehen als *zōon logon echon*, nicht nur philosophisch, sondern im konkreten Leben: »ein Lebendes, das [als Lebendes] die Sprache

That this structural *how* of our being is *non-disposable* is as much a result of the *immediacy* of life as of the *continuity* between world and *Dasein*. Care (*Sorge*) is the fundamental concept that concentrates both aspects and, specifically, articulates this continuity as a rethinking of intentionality⁵⁶¹. What acquires new emphasis in this understanding of intentionality, against any subjectivist deviations, is its bidirectional or cooriginary character: it is constituted *at the same time* (*hama*) from *Dasein* to the world and from the world to *Dasein*: the active and passive senses are intertwined, making one another possible. Concern (*Besorgen*) is the way “in which human beings as human beings live in their being-human (*Menchsein*)”⁵⁶², and is the result of the unity between *logos* and *praxis*. This step is taken by Aristotle in the elucidation of the *ergon* of human beings in NE I 7 in contrast to other living beings. As Heidegger paraphrases it,

Yet «there remains», for human being, still another mode of being-in-the-world, which is to be in it in such a way as to be able to be concerned about something, and «the concern of a being that speaks». The *idion ergon*, the genuine mode of human beings, is *praxis*, determined as a mode of being-in-the-world precisely through speaking, *meta logou, kata logon* ⁵⁶³.

hat«. Bei dieser Definition darf man nicht an Biologie denken oder an geisteswissenschaftliche Psychologie und dergleichen. *Diese Bestimmung liegt vor solchen Unterscheidungen. Zōē* ist ein Seinsbegriff, »Leben« besagt *eine Weise des Seins*, und zwar Sein-in-einer-Welt. Ein Lebendes ist nicht einfach vorhanden, sondern ist in einer Welt, in der Weise, daß es seine Welt hat”. Worth mentioning is a comment on the definition *zōon logon echein* which combines phenomenological acuteness with a touch of humor, later in the course. Heidegger remarks: “We do not have a corresponding definition [for *zōon logon echein*]. At best, an approximately corresponding definition would be: the human being is a living thing that reads the newspaper” (“Wir haben eine dem entsprechende Definition nicht. Eine ungefähr entsprechende wäre höchstens: Der Mensch ist ein Lebendes, das Zeitung liest”) (GA 18 § 13 p. 108 [74]).

⁵⁶¹ In 1925, *Sorge* will be explicitly presented as a reformulation of intentionality (Cf. GA 20 § 31 esp. pp. 419-420). Cf. also GA 63 (SS 1923) § 26, GA 61 (WS 1921-22) pp. 135-137 [101-102], SZ §§ 12 ff.

⁵⁶² GA 18 p. 43 [31] “»Besorgen«, in dem der Mensch als Mensch in seinem Menschsein lebt”. *Besorgenis* is already considered in 1923 as a specific mode of the more encompassing concept *Sorge* (cf. GA 63 § 26 p. 102-103 [79]), but we can take Heidegger to be using here *Besorgen* to refer to the sense of *Sorge*.

⁵⁶³ GA 18 § 12 p. 99 [68] “»Es bleibt« am Menschen nur noch eine Weise des Seins-in-der-Welt, die so ist, daß sie in ihr etwas besorgen kann, und ein »Besorgen eines solchen Seienden, das spricht«. Das *idion ergon*, die eigentliche Weise des Menschen, ist die *praxis*, bestimmt als Weise des Seins-in-der-Welt, und zwar sprechend, *meta logou, kata logon*”. Cf. NE I 7, 1098a 3ff, 7f, 13f. This connection between *praxis* and *logos* is made also in GA 63 § 5 p. 27 [23] and GA 19 § 22a p. 146 [100]. In this passage, Aristotle clearly uses this double sense of *echein* in his understanding of man as *zōon logon echein*. We

Praxis and *logos* are then the two basic cooriginary determinations of the being of human beings for Aristotle—cooriginary because *praxis* presupposes *logos*, and *logos* implies *praxis*—, and Heidegger welcomes this bynomial as suitable for his own questioning. The twofold sense of *echein* operates in both determinations, i.e. they are as much non-disposable features of our being as the ways through which we act upon being. We *are logos* and we *have logos*, we *are praxis* and we *have praxis*. It is from this double point of view too that the approach to *alētheuein* in this course is to be understood. Heidegger is not asking only after ‘how we disclose’ (*Aufdecken*) nor only after ‘how we are true’ (*Wahrsein*)⁵⁶⁴: he is asking at the same time after both things, because they are actually the object of the same question. The original determination of the *alētheuein* of *Dasein* is that in which *alētheuein* and ‘being’ are grasped as one and the same thing.

This is the background from which Heidegger states in GA 19 that Aristotle achieves, in connection with the determination of man as *ζῷον λογόν εχόν*, “the first articulation of the five modes of *alētheuein*”⁵⁶⁵, and thus he plunges into the analysis of NE VI that was promised in the previous course⁵⁶⁶. Heidegger’s

emphasize this in our translation (Rakham and Ross do not), because the context seems to leave no room for doubt on Aristotle’s meaning: “There remains therefore what may be called the practical life of the being who has and who *is* in a rational principle (*praktikē tis tou logon echontos*). Of this, one part is rational as obedient to principle (*epipeithes logos*), the other possessing principle and exercising intelligence (*echon kai dianoumenon*)” (NE I 7, 1098a 3-5, our tr). Bowler does not mention this passage, and perhaps for that reason he reads Aristotle’s indication of the polysemy of *echein* in *Met.* V 23 as a mere “ambiguity”. For Bowler, Aristotle fails to understand the *echein* in *ζῷον λογόν εχόν* as the junction of both active and passive sense, best expressed—as he rightly points out—in the concept of *hexis*. This makes odd the irreducibility that Bowler observes between *echein* and *hexis*, which would make Aristotle’s definition of man a “substantial definition”: “At one point, Aristotle says that a human being is a living being characterized by its *praxis*, but when it comes to defining human being, he gives a substantial definition” (Cf. BOWLER, M. pp. 119-121, 120 for ref.). While Bowler does not back this with any textual evidence, this passage of NE I (as well as Heidegger’s interpretation of it) casts doubt on the accurateness of Bowler’s inference, because it importantly brings together the practical character of human life and the active-passive sense of *echein*. To what extent Aristotle unfolded the ontological possibilities of this conception is, of course, another question.

⁵⁶⁴ Cf. GA 19 § 4a pp. 23-24 [16-17].

⁵⁶⁵ GA 19 § 4b p. 27 [19] “Und so gewinnt Aristoteles auch im Anschluß an diese Bestimmung des Menschen, im Felde des *logon echon* und im Hinblick auf dieses, die erste Gliederung der fünf Weisen des *alētheuein*”.

⁵⁶⁶ Cf. GA 18 § 13 p. 106 [73] and § 22a pp. 263-265 [176-179].

interpretation from this point on § 5 to the end of the Aristotle ‘introduction’ in § 26 traces a complex itinerary which actually opens more threads than our work can tackle. Although the table of contents provided by the editor offers a valuable insight into the structure of this part of the course, still a brief overview of its three chapters will be useful to shed light on our further analyses.

Chapter 1 is a “Preparatory survey of the modes of *alēthenein*”⁵⁶⁷. Heidegger presents these modes (§ 4) and defines the task of his investigation, which follows Aristotle’s in NE VI, i.e. to sort out the relations between them: how they are connected and which hierarchy there is between them (§ 5). Already here Heidegger advances that Aristotle considers *phronēsis* and *sophia* the highest modes of *alēthenein* (*belistai hexeis*). According to the unfolding of NE VI, *epistēmē* is the first *hexis* to be analyzed (§ 6), then *technē* (§ 7), *phronēsis* (§ 8) and *sophia* (§ 9). *Nous*, in turn, is always tackled in relation to these *hexeis*, in this chapter and beyond, because it is present in different ways in each of them⁵⁶⁸.

In chapter 2 (§§ 10-17), entitled “The Genesis of *sophia* within Natural Greek *Dasein*”, Heidegger leaves NE VI aside and pursues the analysis of *sophia* with *Metaphysics* I 1-2. Heidegger is interested in these chapters insofar as they are a description of the genesis of *sophia* starting from natural experience. In § 11 he deals with sense perception (*aisthēsis*), experience (*empeiria*) and *technē*, the first three levels of *eidēnai*, a term that he translates as seeing (*sehen*)⁵⁶⁹. § 12 is an important excursus on the universal (*katholon*) and the particular (*kath hekaston*), to which we have referred already above, and which provides insights to pursue the analysis of *Metaphysics* I 1-2. Thus, § 13 analyzes the inner tendency of *technē* to become *epistēmē*, i.e. to start from the *kath hekaston* towards the *katholon*, and § 14 reviews

⁵⁶⁷ Titles of chapters and paragraphs, as is usually the case in the *Gesamtausgabe*, are introduced by the editor (Ingeborg Schuβler for GA 19), on the basis of the text of the course.

⁵⁶⁸ Cf. GA 19 § 5a p. 28 [20].

⁵⁶⁹ Heidegger translates *eidēnai* from the very first line of the *Metaphysics* as *sehen* (Cf. § 11 p. 70 [48]). Later he uses the term *hinsehen*, dominant in his comment of *Met.* I 1-2 in NB 387ff./39ff. [137 ff.].

the different aspects that Aristotle detects in the popular understanding of *sophia*, in 982a 8-19. A long excursus on the essence of mathematics follows in § 15, in which Heidegger seems to be mainly interested in the concept of continuum (*syneches*)⁵⁷⁰. After the excursus, Heidegger returns to the *Metaphysics* in § 16 to concentrate on the fourth moment of *sophia* as disclosed by popular understanding: the autonomy of its *alētheuein* in regard to other forms of knowledge. This trait becomes increasingly important hereafter, insofar as Heidegger detects in it a fundamental principle for the predominance of *sophia* over *phronēsis*. This direction of the interpretation is hinted at in § 17, which sums up the path taken up to here.

Chapter 3 retakes the analysis of NE VI. What Heidegger is after here is “The Question of the Priority of *phronēsis* or *sophia* as the highest mode of *alētheuein*”. The structure of this part is clearer, with no more excursus: after a transition from the *Metaphysics* to the NE in § 18, §§ 19-23 provide an extensive analysis of *phronēsis*, which was virtually absent in chapter 2. The analysis is directed towards a contrast of *phronēsis* and *sophia* built upon two criteria which are specified in § 24a: firstly, the above mentioned autonomy of the *alētheuein* of *sophia*, and secondly the kind of beings which *phronēsis* and *sophia* make thematic: respectively, *Dasein*—a being who is able to be otherwise (*endeichomenon allōs echein*)—and beings which are always (*aet*) in the same way. On the basis of the Greek understanding of being, the higher rank is granted to the *alētheuein* of *sophia* (§ 24b), which is also prior in regard to *eudaimonia* (§ 25), as Heidegger infers from NE X. Finally, § 26 retakes more explicitly the issue of *alētheia* and *logos* to prepare the transition to the interpretation of Plato’s *Sophist*. The remarks in this last paragraph also point clearly to the problematic developed one year later in the course *Logik: Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*⁵⁷¹.

⁵⁷⁰ Cf. GA 19 § 15b pp. 116 ff. [79 ff.]

⁵⁷¹ GA 21 *Logik: Die Frage nach der Wahrheit* (WS 1925-26) Ed. by Walter Biemel, 1995 (2nd edition).

For all his interest in *phronēsis* and his criticism of Greek *sophia*, though, we shall argue that, again here, as in KNS, the idea of a dismissal of *theōrein* altogether on the part of Heidegger would be a too much simplistic reading of his aim: his interpretation of *phronēsis* as analyzed by Aristotle shows as much an appreciation for its ability to grasp the being of human beings as a clear awareness of its non-scientific character. Consistent with his methodological efforts of the previous years, Heidegger is searching for a third way between *phronēsis* and *sophia*, which may well explain why after the strong interpretation of NE VI developed in this course, Heidegger will not dwell on the text anymore⁵⁷².

5.3. *Phronēsis* and the Continuum of Life

An inner tendency seems clear in Heidegger's analysis of the modes of *alētheuein* from § 6 on: it is to portray *phronēsis* as a disposition which, because of its unique structure, remains isolated from the rest of modes of *alētheuein*. *Phronēsis* deals with what can be otherwise, as *technē* does, but its *telos* is intrinsic to it, which makes it irreducible to *technē*. And it is this intrinsic *telos*, namely *praxis* itself, that makes *phronēsis* also irreducible to *epistēmē*⁵⁷³. Moreover, the interpretation of *Metaphysics* I 1-2 shows how *technē* is characterized by Aristotle as a disposition which, taking its lead from *aisthēsis*, is directed towards *epistēmē*, i.e. towards the knowledge of the universals, so that *technē* and *epistēmē* are brought closer to each other. Last but not

⁵⁷² In this respect, Sadler is right to downplay the consideration of Heidegger's approach to Aristotle as an 'appropriation', if by this is implied a retrieval of Aristotle which would conserve intact the main pillars of his thought (although this is definitely not our understanding of 'appropriation' as applied to Heidegger; that is why we speak of a productive interpretation in our introduction). To our mind, Sadler's approach—with which we share only some points of agreement—underscores Heidegger's distance from Aristotle to an extent that disfigures the relation between these philosophers (e.g. by suggesting that "it is Aristotle's 'hermeneutical phenomenological' methodology, and not his substantive ontological categories (including those connected with *praxis* and *phronēsis*) which Heidegger sees as neutral and thus as of possible service for a 'retrieval' of primal Christianity"), but his work still remains as a warning for too enthusiastic connections. Cf. SADLER, Ted *Heidegger and Aristotle: The Question of Being* London / Atlantic Highlands: Continuum, 1996 pp. 14 ff. and 153 for ref).

⁵⁷³ Cf. GA 19 § 20 esp. pp. 139-140 [96].

least, to this vicinity belongs *sophia*, a special *epistēmē* that makes thematic the principles provided by *nous*, and thus brings together *nous* and *epistēmē*. *Nous* seems to remain at the end of the analysis as the sole link of *phronēsis* to the other *hexeis* of *alētheuein*. This, however, seems too little of a connection, if we take into account the fact Heidegger regards *phronēsis*, the *hexis* of *praxis*⁵⁷⁴, as the mode of disclosure of *Dasein*⁵⁷⁵ and, consistently, welcomes in both 1924 courses the Aristotelian understanding of human life—where all the other determinations are included—as *praxis*:

The *idion ergon*, the genuine mode of human beings, is *praxis*, determined as a mode of being-in-the-world precisely through speaking, *meta logou, kata logou*⁵⁷⁶.

The being disclosed by *phronēsis* is *praxis*. In this resides human *Dasein*. For human *Dasein* is determined as *praktikē* or—to make the determination more complete—the *zōē* of man is determined as *zōē praktikē meta logou*⁵⁷⁷.

Because the sense of Heidegger's appropriation of Aristotle is not that of a simple transfer of an intact course of thought into his own questioning, but instead a phenomenological test of Aristotle's concepts, the fundamental concern here must be this phenomenological task⁵⁷⁸. At the same time, however, Heidegger means to render a consistent interpretation of Aristotle, which includes also pointing out what Aristotle does not say. In other words: Heidegger intends to explain *what is going on* with these concepts in Aristotle, and to ask to what

⁵⁷⁴ Cf. GA 19 §§ 20-21, esp. pp. 138-140 and 144-149 [95-96 and 98-102].

⁵⁷⁵ Cf. GA 19 § 8a pp. 48-51 [34-36] and § 24a pp. 165-168 [114-115].

⁵⁷⁶ GA 18 § 12 p. 99 [68] “Das *idion ergon*, die eigentliche Weise des Menschen, ist die *praxis*, bestimmt als Weise des Seins-in-der-Welt, und zwar sprechend, *meta logou, kata logou*” Cf. also NE I 7, 1098a 3ff., 7f, 14; GA 18 § 17 pp. 188-189 [127]; GA 63 § 5 p. 27 [23].

⁵⁷⁷ GA 19 § 22a p. 146 [100]. “Das Seiende, das die *phronēsis* aufdeckt, ist die *praxis*. Darin liegt das menschliche *Dasein*. Denn das menschliche *Dasein* ist bestimmt als *praktikē*, bzw. — um die Bestimmung vollständig zu machen — die *zōē* des Menschen ist bestimmt als *zōē praktikē meta logou*”; Cf. also § 21 p. 143 [98]: “[T]he object of *phronēsis* is *praxis*, the *zōē* of man, human *Dasein* itself” (“[D]er Gegenstand der *phronēsis* ist die *praxis*, die *zōē* des Menschen, das menschliche *Dasein* selbst”).

⁵⁷⁸ On this methodological approach, cf. GA 18 § 4 pp. 13-15 [12-13]. Michalski, the editor of this volume, describes the nature of Heidegger's task in very acute terms: “Heidegger secured, or at least proved the worth of, his own existential-ontological thinking in the course of his investigation of Aristotelian conceptuality” (Cf. Editor's Afterword in GA 18 p. 417 [279]).

extent they point to things themselves. As a result, the question arises as *to what extent this virtual isolation of *phronēsis* in Heidegger's reading of NE VI fits the whole phenomenological spectrum opened by Aristotle*. Further analysis will show that Heidegger emphasizes the distinction between *phronēsis* and the other forms of *alēthein* through meticulous phenomenological analyses, but he hardly explores the possible connections. Why? It is obviously *not* because he refuses to search for an account of the being of *Dasein* which could articulate the different determinations through which *Dasein* 'is in truth', and 'is itself true' (*alēthein*). More specifically, he refuses to search for that account *in Aristotle*, because he understands that the ontological frame which is supposed to gather these different determinations in Aristotle's conception cannot face a thorough phenomenological analysis. However, we understand that Heidegger leaves in the shade certain areas of the phenomena that Aristotle embraces with these determinations, and that shedding light on them might qualify Heidegger's interpretation.

At the core of his interpretation of *phronēsis* in § 8, Heidegger makes clear the point that *phronēsis* is an *aretē* itself⁵⁷⁹. This is an inference from Aristotle's laconic and somewhat enigmatic statement that, differently from *technē*, *phronēsis* has no *aretē*⁵⁸⁰: there is no other determination fulfilling it, making it *teleion*, from the outside⁵⁸¹. The fact that it has no *aretē* because it is *aretē* itself, though, does not necessarily enclose *phronēsis* within itself. Surely, it is irreducible to any other of the *hexeis*, but that is the case of the other *hexeis* too, as Heidegger's first approach in §§ 6-9 shows. However, from § 10 on, he emphasizes with Aristotle how *sophia* embraces *epistēmē* and *nous* and how *technē* in a certain way overlaps with *epistēmē*. In other words, the irreducibility of these *hexeis* to one another does not necessarily mean a reciprocal relation of exclusion. Aristotle's concept of organic unity

⁵⁷⁹ Cf. GA 19 § 8c p. 54 [38].

⁵⁸⁰ Cf. NE VI 5, 1140b 21f. "While there is such a thing as *aretē* in *technē*, there is not such a thing as *aretē* in *phronēsis*".

⁵⁸¹ Cf. GA 19 § 8c pp. 53 ff. [37 ff].

(*symplysis*)⁵⁸² must be retrieved here again. The specific organs and limbs of a body are distinct and still are one as a living body: the continuity between them does not question their specificity. Analogously, if all these *hexeis* belong to *Dasein*—because it is *Dasein* itself who is, e.g. *technitēs*—and *Dasein* is determined as *praktikē*, why should *phronēsis* stand so radically apart from the other *hexeis* as Heidegger suggests? If we hold that life is *praxis*, the question about the connection between *phronēsis* and the other *hexeis* should not be dismissed without further ado on the grounds of structural differences, as Heidegger does, for instance, in the case of *technē*. “*Phronēsis* cannot be the *aretē* of *technē*—because of its very mode of carrying *alētheuein*, quite appart that the object of *technē* is a *poiēton*, while the object of *phronēsis* is a *prakton*”⁵⁸³.

We pursue the question because in elucidating the distinction between *phronēsis* and *technē* in section I we have come to the conclusion that, while irreducible to one another, these *hexeis* are intertwined. To our mind, this holds—to put it in Heideggerian terms—not only for our ordinary experience (*ontical level*) but also for the philosophical questioning about their being (*ontological level*). Volpi, who in passing refers to the dialectic between *phronēsis* and *technē* in NE VI to *Metaphysics* IX 6 (Heidegger, for all the references to the *Metaphysics* in this course, does not), speaks of an intertwining on the ontical level, and contrasts it with the distinction that operates on the ontological level:

If one were to read the differentiation between *poiesis* and *praxis* in book Z of the *Nicomachean Ethics* in conjunction with *Metaphysics*, Theta 6, one would clearly recognize that an ontic differentiation is not at issue, that is, a differentiation with reference to individual actualizations of action, where there are *poiesis* on the one hand and *praxis* on the other. Rather, this differentiation has an ontological character; it distinguishes two different ways of being that do not ontically stand out from one another. For example, giving a speech can have the way of being of a *poiesis* (...), but it can also have the way of being of a *praxis* (...); on the ontic level this

⁵⁸² Cf. *Met.* V 4, 1014b 22 ff.

⁵⁸³ GA 19 § 8c pp. 54-55 [38] “Die *phronēsis* kann nicht die *aretē* der *technē* sein, und dies auf Grund der Vollzugsart des *alētheuein* selbst, ganz abgesehen davon, daß das Seiende der *technē* ein *poiēton*, das der *phronēsis* ein *prakton* ist”.

difference does not appear. It is thus exclusively this ontological content of the Aristotelian concepts that Heidegger extrapolates⁵⁸⁴.

Heidegger is indeed concerned with the ontological level but, as we said, he always starts from the ontical: “one must appropriate this ground explicitly and not leap beyond it to a reality which is simply fabricated by theory”⁵⁸⁵. The specificity with which *praxeis* appear to us with regard to *poiēseis* surely requires a specific ontological determination of *praxis* vis-à-vis *poiēsis*. But the continuum (*syneches*) of life that holds together *poiēseis* and *praxeis* is also a phenomenon—it is “something pregiven, prior to the question of an analytic penetration”⁵⁸⁶—that requires an ontological determination too. The question that Heidegger does not raise, because he is content with the acknowledgement of the irreducibility of *praxis* to *poiēsis*, is whether an ontological solution can be found in Aristotle which reconciles the irreducibility between *poiēsis* and *praxis* with their intertwinedness in the continuum of life. He does not, we suggested, because he believes that these determinations, as conceived by Aristotle, cannot meet this requirement. We contend, however, that *telos*, the fundamental concept which ontologically distinguishes *poiēsis* and *praxis* (or their *hexeis*, *phronēsis* and *technē*) might turn out to be as well the concept which binds them together.

The *telos* of *technē*, that for the sake of which *technē* gets down to produce something, is its *ergon*. But this *ergon*, Heidegger argues, “as soon as it is finished, is *para*, «beside» *technē*”⁵⁸⁷: “the *poioumenon*, the finished house, is no longer an object

⁵⁸⁴ VOLPI, F. 1994 pp. 201-202.

⁵⁸⁵ GA 19 § 12b p. 85 [59] “man muß sich diesen Boden ausdrücklich zueignen, — und nicht über die von einer Theorie aus als schlecht angesetzte Realität hinwegspringen”.

⁵⁸⁶ GA 19 § 15b p. 117 [80] “[Das continuum ist] etwas *Vorgegebenes* (...), vor der Frage nach einer analytischen Durchdringung”.

⁵⁸⁷ GA 19 § 7b p. 42 [29] “Das *ergon*, sobald es fertig ist, ist *para*, »neben« der *technē*”. Cf. NE I 1, 1094a 4 ff.

of *technē*. As a finished house, it escapes *technē*⁵⁸⁸. Heidegger does not say here in whose hands the finished house remains, but some lines above he remarks that

the *ergon* contains in itself a reference to something else; as *telos it leads forth from itself*: it is a *pros ti kai tinos*, it is «for something and for someone». The shoe is made *for* wearing and is *for* someone. This *double character* entails that the *ergon* of *poiēsis* is something produced for further use, for man⁵⁸⁹.

Although Heidegger does not take this step, the *double character* of the *ergon* of *technē* entails that *poiēsis* is not self-sustained: it is inscribed within the *praxis* of human life, within a context of meaning, that of a *zōon logon echon*. The *telos* of *poiēsis*—the finished shoe—is, from a point of view *internal* to *poiēsis*, only its *peras*: the point that marks its ending. That is why, as Heidegger notes in his lecture in December, “Aristotle says that the shoe no longer belongs to the shoemaker *as shoemaker*”⁵⁹⁰. Although Aristotle does speak of the figure of the shoemaker elsewhere, to our knowledge he does not actually make such a statement; this is rather an example of Heidegger that he very probably extracts from an important statement of NE VI 2 to which we have referred elsewhere⁵⁹¹: “the act of making is not an end in itself (*telos haplōs*), it is only a means, and belongs to something else, whereas a thing done is an end in itself”⁵⁹².

To unfold the insight, both the shoe and its making belong to, i.e. they are for the sake of (*heneka*) the shoemaker *as human being* (as a *zōon logon echon* who manufactures shoes to earn his living, to wear them himself, etc.), and may also be

⁵⁸⁸ GA 19 § 7b p. 44 [30] “Dagegen ist das *poioumenon*, das fertige Haus, nicht mehr Gegenstand der *technē*. Es fällt als fertiges aus der *technē* heraus”.

⁵⁸⁹ GA 19 § 7b p. 41 [29, add. e, mod. tr.] “Das *ergon* hat in sich die Verweisung auf etwas anderes; als *telos* ist es *von sich wegweisend*. Es ist ein *pros ti kai tinos* (b2 sq), »zu etwas für jemanden«. Der Schuh ist hergestellt *zum* Tragen, für einen Anderen. In dieser doppelten Charakteristik liegt, daß das *ergon* der *poiēsis* ein Hergestelltes zur weiteren Verwendung ist für den Menschen”. Cf. NE VI 4, 1139b 2f. Cf. also DWA p. 13 [228-229].

⁵⁹⁰ DWA p. 13 [229] “Der Schuh aber, sagt Aristoteles, gehört nicht mehr dem Schuster als Schuster, sondern der Sinn des Schuhs ist gerade Gebrauchsgegenstand”.

⁵⁹¹ Cf. p. 63 above.

⁵⁹² NE VI 2, 1139b 1ff. (Rackham).

for the sake of any other human being who, as human being too, acquires the shoes. The shoe (the *ergon*, or *poiēton*) is *peras* for *poiēsis*, because it belongs to a realm that *poiēsis* cannot reach, not even when the shoe is still on the way and we recognize it—we *call* it—as shoe. *Poiēsis* ‘knows’ the shoe as an assembly process, but it does not *know* the shoe as something *for* life: this knowledge rather belongs to *praxis*, which embeds the shoe in its teleological structure: a specific action is done *in order to* get the shoe (e.g. walk to the shoemaker’s), and the shoe is in turn *ordered to* subsequent ends (e.g. go to a party). The shoe is *telos* for *praxis*, which applies as much to the shoe that is finished as to the shoe that is on the way: e.g. the half-made shoe is *peras* of the work session of a shoemaker, the finished shoe is *peras* of that specific productive project, but either on the way or finished it is *telos* within the life-project that he is, and eventually *telos* within the life-project that the client is.

Despite his reference to the ‘belongingness’ of the shoe to a sphere beyond the enclosed process of *technē*, and at least for the time being, Heidegger focuses on the relation between *ergon* and *telos* only from the point of view of the ‘having been finished’ of the *ergon*. Thus, he contends: “the *telos*, taken in its ontological character, is *peras*”⁵⁹³. The fact that the context of the statement is a paragraph centered on *technē* should stand as a sufficient indication that it is meant to be restricted to *technē*, although it would be desirable to make that more explicit. However, the close analysis of *telos* and *peras* in GA 18—assumed at different stages in GA 19—makes clear that Heidegger’s statement is *not* restricted to *technē*⁵⁹⁴.

Still, if we hold to the point that the *ergon* is both *peras* and *telos*, as *distinct* but coexistent moments of its reality either on the way or as finished, then the

⁵⁹³ GA 19 § 7b p. 44 [30] “Nun aber ist das *telos*, in seinem ontologischen Charakter genommen, *peras*”. Heidegger refers to *Met.* V, 17, 1022a 4 ff, where *peras* is defined and brought in the vicinity of *telos*.

⁵⁹⁴ This approach is confirmed in the December lecture (cf. DWA pp. 12-13 [228]). Cf. chapter 6 below for further development on it.

specific structure of *praxis* turns out to be disclosed, and this in the precise terms in which Heidegger and Aristotle express its superiority over *technē*: while *technē* can only seize the *archē* (the *eidos* of the shoe that will be realized in the real shoe), *phronēsis* embraces both the *archē* and the *telos*⁵⁹⁵. While *technē* can never ‘witness’ the fulfillment of the project, i.e. the moment when the *eidos* becomes the *telos*, for *praxis* the *eidos* or *archē* is always already a *telos*.

In acting—or more accurately, in deciding—I anticipate the *archē* (...). The conclusion of the resolved deliberation is the action itself. But this action is not something different from the mode of being of *phronēsis*; rather, it is the very being of the deliberator himself. That is why *phronēsis* has both the *archē* and the *telos* within the reach of its power of discovery⁵⁹⁶.

Heidegger is pointing here to a wide sense of action which embraces deliberation (*bouleusis*), decision (*proairesis*), and external action. It is in this wide sense that the fundamental structure of *praxis*, and thus of *phronēsis*, is disclosed. *Praxis* is present throughout the entire process: the deliberation and the decision are *praxis* as much as the external operation⁵⁹⁷. From the point of view of the *praxis* that one *is*—from the ontological approach to *Dasein*, that which asks for its being—deliberation, decision and external operation, which appear as ontically distinct, constitute a continuum. *Praxis*, as a determination of one’s being, is not ‘on the way’

⁵⁹⁵ This contrast between *phronēsis* and *technē* from the point of view of *archē* and *telos*, is articulated in a clearer fashion in DWA pp. 13-14 [228-229] than in GA 19 (§ 8c p. 55 [38, mod. tr.]), where it is only summarily stated: “[B]ecause *phronēsis* is directed at once to the *archē* and the *telos* and preserves both, it is the *belton hexis* of the *alētheuein* that corresponds to those beings that also can be otherwise”. (“Und weil die *phronēsis* sich auf die *archē* und das *telos* zugleich richtet und beide verwahrt, ist sie die *belton hexis* des *alētheuein* innerhalb desjenigen Seienden, das auch anders sein kann”). Cf. also GA 19 § 20a p. 139 [96] and *Übungen über Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles* (WS 1922-23) p. 47. For the treatment of this issue by Aristotle, cf. NE VI 4, 1140a 13 ff, b 6f.

⁵⁹⁶ DWA pp. 13-14 [229, mod. tr.] “In der Handlung — genauer im Entschluss, nehme ich vorweg die *arche* (...). Der Schluss des entschlossenen Überlegens ist das Handeln selbst. Dieses Handeln selbst aber ist nicht etwas, das von der Seinsart der *phronēsis* verschieden wäre, sondern das Sein des Überlegenden selbst. Deshalb hat die *phronēsis archē* und *telos* im Machtbereich des Aufdeckens?”.

⁵⁹⁷ In GA 18 § 17c p. 189 [127] Heidegger makes explicit this double sense of *praxis*. “In the case of an action—in the narrow sense (*im engeren Sinne*) in which it is opposed to *poiēsis*—it does not, according to its sense, depend on the action simply ending, or a result coming about” (“Bei einer *Handlung* — im engeren Sinne gegenüber der *poiēsis* — kommt es ihrem Sinne nach nicht darauf an, daß sie einfach abläuft, daß sich ein Resultat ergibt”).

during deliberation, but is ‘fully’ there (*da*): because “the object of the deliberation is *zōē* itself; the *telos* has the same ontological character as *phronēsis*”⁵⁹⁸. *Archē* and *telos*, therefore, overlap in *phronēsis*, the *archē* is the *telos*. Only because the *telos* is immediately grasped in *praxis* can the *praktikos* ‘make his way’ towards it. This statement would surely be a contradiction if *praxis* had the same structure as *technē*. As it is, however, the *praktikos* grasps his *telos* differently from how the *technitēs* grasps the *telos* of his *technē*. The *technitēs*, as such, has the *telos* only *dynamēi*, as the *eidos* of the pot is in reference to the *ergon*, the finished pot. In *praxis*, however, there is not such a difference. The *eidos* is already *praxis*, like the external action is. Of course, something new in relation to the *praxis* of deliberation happens when one decides, and in turn something new in relation to the *praxis* of decision happens when one externally acts: something gets ‘done’ at each of these stages, but this ‘getting done’ is precisely indicated from the outside of the *kinēsis* of *praxis*, observing it as a *Vor-gang*. This perspective surely must not be ignored, because it does make a difference to do something one has decided to do. However, beneath these ontically distinct moments, observing the phenomenon of *praxis* from the inside as only a *zōon logon echon* can do, we are always faced with the given continuity (*synecheia*) of our own life: a laborious one, indeed, which does not remain unchanged, but a continuity still⁵⁹⁹.

⁵⁹⁸ GA 19 § 8a p. 49 [34] “Bei der *phronēsis* ist vielmehr der Gegenstand des Überlegens die *zōē selbst*; das *telos* ist vom selben Seinscharakter wie die *phronēsis*”. Heidegger quotes NE VI 5, 1140b 6f. and translates: “in the case of *poiēsis*, the *telos* is something other; but this does not hold for *praxis*: the *eupraxia* itself is the *telos*” (“Bei der *poiēsis* ist das *telos* ein anderes, bei der *praxis* aber nicht; es ist nämlich die *eupraxia* selbst das *telos*”).

⁵⁹⁹ The substantive *synecheia*, scarcely used in the *Metaphysics*, appears in IX 8, 1050b 26 in the context of a reflection on the “eternal movement” of the elements of heaven, as distinct from the *kinēsis* of finite beings. *Synecheia* is assumed for both, under different conditions: “Nor do they tire in this activity; for movement does not imply for them, as it does for the perishable things, the potentiality for opposites, so that the continuity of the movement should be laborious” (b 24ff). The concept is most often expressed thorough the adjective *synēches*, e.g. in the definition of one (*hen*) in V 6, where *synēches* is also used as a noun (cf. V 6 1016 a9, and also the definition of *physis* in V 4, 1014b 25). In this passage, Aristotle remarks: “A thing is called continuous which has by its own nature one movement and cannot have any other; and the movement (*kinēsis*) is one when it is indivisible, and indivisible in time” (1016a 5-6). This obviously applies to life, because the attempt to divide it, i.e. to separate two parts of it in time, can only result in destroying it.

This convergence of *archē* and *telos* is as much a solid ground for the irreducibility of *praxis* to *poiēsis* as a key to explain why the former is the ground on which the latter can ever come to be. The first point is clearly made both by Heidegger and Aristotle; the second, though, is not explicit in Aristotle, and is ultimately denied by Heidegger, insofar as he concludes that “*phronēsis* cannot be the *aretē* of *technē*”⁶⁰⁰. This point he justifies also, we have seen, by the fact that their objects (*prakton* and *poiēton*) are different, and by Aristotle’s statement that “*phronēsis* is an *aretē* but not a *technē*” (VI 5, 1140b 24f). The divorce between *phronēsis* and *technē*, moreover, seems to be reinforced by the “striking” fact that

Aristotle designates *sophia* as the *aretē* of *technē* (VI 7, 1141a 12) (...). This must seem all the more remarkable in view of the fact that *technē* has as its theme beings which can also be otherwise, whereas the theme of *sophia* is in a preeminent sense what always is⁶⁰¹.

Heidegger emphasizes the paradox because it furnishes a strong basis for his interpretation: the analysis of the genesis of *sophia* in §§ 10-17 aligns *technē* with *sophia* too, and thus the question of which is highest of the two best *hexeis* of *alētheuein*, namely *phronēsis* and *sophia*, is asked in clear-cut terms, as advanced already in § 9c. We are faced with two paradigms which, as Heidegger sees it, exclude one another⁶⁰²: an insurmountable tension between on the one hand Aristotle’s insight of *phronēsis*—which is capable of envisioning human life in its *Bewegtheit*—and on the other his typically Greek appreciation for *sophia*—which is aligned with *technē* and *epistēmē* in its concern for what stands there before one’s

⁶⁰⁰ GA 19 § 8c pp. 54-55 [38] “Die *phronēsis* kann nicht die *aretē* der *technē* sein”.

⁶⁰¹ GA 19 § 8c pp. 56-57 [39-40] “Das Frappante ist nun, daß Aristoteles die *sophia* als *aretē* der *technē* bezeichnet. Das muß umso merkwürdiger berühren, als die *technē* das Seiende, das auch anders sein kann, die *sophia* aber im ausgezeichneten Sinn das Immerseiende zum Thema hat”.

⁶⁰² “*Sophia* is to be worked out in its own structure *versus phronēsis* and presented as the genuine mode of *alētheuein*, as the highest possibility of the being of *Dasein*—whereby *phronēsis* will appear more concretely” (“[*Sophia* ist] gegenüber der *phronēsis* in ihrer eigenen Struktur herauszuarbeiten und als die eigentliche Weise des *alētheuein*, als höchste Seinsmöglichkeit des *Daseins*, durchzusetzen, — wobei die *phronēsis* konkreter heraustreten wird”). (GA 19 § 9c p. 61 [43, our e.]).

gaze⁶⁰³. The tension, Heidegger believes, is fatefully decided in favour of *sophia*, to the detriment of Aristotle's insights into the peculiarity of the being of *Dasein*⁶⁰⁴. Still, Heidegger argues,

Aristotle does not force this result dogmatically on the *Dasein* of the Greeks of that time. Aristotle is not seeking something unprecedented and novel. On the contrary, he understands *sophia* as the highest possibility of being of *Dasein* on the basis of the Greek *Dasein* itself⁶⁰⁵.

However, as regards these statements of NE VI—“*phronēsis* is an *aretē* but not a *technē*” (1140b 24f), “[in the arts] we mean by *sophia* nothing but *aretē* in *technē*” (1141a 12)—does not Heidegger show here perhaps too much of a concern for the letter of Aristotle's text at the expense of phenomenological and contextual analysis? The ‘unsaid’ of Aristotle is not here far too restricted by Heidegger, to put it in Gadamerian terms, to the *Wirkungsgeschichte*⁶⁰⁶ operating in the fact that he is after all a Greek? To be sure, this has to be taken into account, but insofar as we are trying “to enable Aristotle to speak again”⁶⁰⁷, we should balance the ‘*wirkungsgeschichtlich*’ elements with the phenomenological analysis and the hermeneutic principle of reading the part in the light of the whole and vice versa. This hermeneutical balance is a constant throughout the most part of Heidegger's analysis, but it is not so clearly held at this crucial point where he is formulating his overall interpretation. As a matter of fact, the *context* of the second statement

⁶⁰³ Cf. NB p. 386/38 [136].

⁶⁰⁴ “This result is all the more astonishing if we consider that the theme of *sophia* is beings which *always* are, whereas *phronēsis* aims at and makes transparent precisely the *endeichomenon allōs echein*, the being of human *Dasein*” (“Dieses Resultat ist umso verwunderlicher, wenn man bedenkt, daß die *sophia* das Seiende, das *immer* ist, zum Thema hat, während doch gerade die *phronēsis* auf das *endeichomenon allōs echein*, das *Sein des Menschlichen Daseins*, zielt und es durchsichtig macht). (GA 19 § 9c p. 61 [43]).

⁶⁰⁵ GA 19 § 9c p. 61 [43] “Dieses Resultat ist nicht dogmatisch von Aristoteles dem damaligen *Dasein* der Griechen aufgezwungen; Aristoteles will nichts Unerhörtes und Neues; sondern *er macht die sophia als die höchste Seinsmöglichkeit aus dem Sein des griechischen Daseins selbst verständlich*”.

⁶⁰⁶ Cf. GADAMER, Hans-Georg *Wahrheit und Methode* (1960) in *Gesammelte Werke 1. Hermeneutik I. Wahrheit und Methode*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1990 pp. 305 ff.

⁶⁰⁷ Cf. DWA pp. 1-2 [219]. “Diese Interpretation hat nun die Absicht, Aristoteles wieder zum Wort zu verhelfen”.

does not seem to provide a strong basis to infer that Aristotle considers *sophia* the *aretē* of *technē*:

Sophia in the arts (en te tais technais) we ascribe to their most finished exponents, e.g. to Phidias as sculptor and to Polyclitus as a maker of statues, and *here* we mean nothing by *sophia* but excellence in art (*aretē technēs*); but we think that some people are wise (*sophos*) in general (*holōs*), not in some particular field or in any other limited respect (VI 7, 1141a 9ff).

Aristotle, following his usual practice, is here expressing a common opinion: he is not providing a definition of *sophia*. Moreover, the sentence to which Heidegger clings is explicitly restricted by Aristotle to the sphere of the arts (*en te tais technais*): *here* we mean nothing by *sophia* but *aretē technēs*. Last but not least, Aristotle ascribes to common opinion also the conception of *sophia* as not restricted to *technai*. This justifies Heidegger's overall approach to *Metaphysics* I 1-2 as a description of the genesis of the concept of *sophia*, but precisely for that reason Aristotle does not necessarily establish in philosophical terms that *sophia* is the *aretē*, or the only *aretē*, of *technē*.

On the other hand, Aristotle does say in NE VI 5, 1140b 24f. that “*phronēsis* is an *aretē* but not a *technē*”. Heidegger reads this as a proof that they are conceived as reciprocally exclusive. However, a few lines below, Aristotle adds that *phronēsis* “is *not only* a reasoned *hexis* (*oud hexis meta logou monon*); [which] is shown by the fact that a *hexis* of that sort may be forgotten, but *phronēsis* cannot” (b28ff). If we read the former statement in the light of this, another thread is opened, namely that *phronēsis* is more than a *technē*, *more than* a reasoned *hexis*, because it is *also* an *aretē*, which *technē* is not. Let us recall the definition of *phronēsis*, placed in this same chapter: “a true, rational, practical disposition (*hexis alethē meta logou praktikē*) with regard to the things that are good or bad for man” (b4f)⁶⁰⁸. One surely does not ‘synthesize’ *phronēsis* by joining a technically good decision

⁶⁰⁸ Cf. also b20 f.

with a virtuous orientation stemming from the advice of a *phronimos* friend⁶⁰⁹: *phronēsis* exists only when the moments of its definition come to be at once (which of course is not impediment to the *phronimos* asking for advice—this indeed might also be a sign of *phronēsis*). What remains, in any case, is that the *phronimos*, as Aristotle understands him, is technically well prepared: “*phronēsis* is not the faculty [of cleverness (*deinotēs*)], but it does not exist without this faculty” (1144a 28f). Hence “we call clever (*deinous*) both *phronimoi* and villains” (a27 f).

We have suggested before⁶¹⁰, and come back to the point now, that what Aristotle calls *deinotēs* is comparable to *technē*: it is a faculty that enables us “to do the things towards the mark that we have set before ourselves, and to hit it” (a24 ff), regardless of the orientation of this mark to the fulfillment of life as a whole (*to eu zēn holōs*)⁶¹¹. The definition, while applicable to other *ontical* domains than that of a workshop, perfectly matches the *ontological* structure of the *technē* of the craftsman, who conceives a determinate *ergon* and knows how to proceed in order to produce it, regardless of whether the knife that he produces is meant to slice bread or to kill someone. As a result, if *technē* is a specific mode of *deinotēs*, *phronēsis* can well be considered by Aristotle, at least from a certain point of view, the *aretē* of *technē*.

We have lingered on this not because of an exegetic zeal that would ignore Heidegger’s problematic, but because Heidegger himself lets his interpretation rest so much *on what Aristotle says*. The letter of the text made clear, let us focus again on the phenomenological analysis, which is what can ultimately legitimate or accredit (*ausweisen*)⁶¹² the truth of what is contended. We were arguing that the

⁶⁰⁹ Cf. p. 18 above and NE VI 13, 1144b 26f.

⁶¹⁰ Cf. note 270 above.

⁶¹¹ Cf. NE VI 5, 1140a 25-28.

⁶¹² This term is used by Heidegger in the crucial § 44 of SZ on *truth*, the only paragraph of SZ in which he explicitly refers to NE VI (cf. p. 225) apart from § 7b (p. 32), where he very significantly highlights Aristotle’s understanding of *logos* as *apophainesthai*. Thus, in § 44a (p. 217) Heidegger asks: “When does truth become phenomenally explicit in knowing itself? When knowing is validated (*sich ausweist*) as being

irreducibility between *technē* and *phronēsis* needs not imply a relation of exclusion between them. In fact, setting such a relation between these *hexeis* would leave unthought *the phenomenon that is our experience of the continuity of life*. We are actually not pointing anywhere else than Aristotle and Heidegger by hinting at *praxis* as the structure that could ground this continuity. But if this is so, the processes that we know as *poiēsis* are not a sort of parenthesis in this continuum, but they are imbedded in it. Given that “*Dasein* is disclosed as the *hou eneka*, a «for the sake of which»”⁶¹³, if the shoemaker were not, at the start and throughout the process of production of the shoe, *at the same time* a *technitēs* (as shoemaker) and a *praktikos* (as man, as *ζῶον λογόν εχόν*), how could he start or pursue the production? How could the *technitēs* provide himself with a *telos*, with a *hou eneka*, if *technē* cannot grasp the *telos*, that remains out of its domain? It can indeed grasp the *archē*—the shoemaker has the *eidos* of the shoe⁶¹⁴—but why would he get down to produce shoes? He does so because he is a *ζῶον λογόν εχόν*, but in his *logon echein* we cannot absolutely separate, not even ontologically, his *poiēsis* from his *praxis*.

5.4. The Twofoldness of *Technē*

Our emphasis on the embeddedness of *poiēsis* in *praxis* is nonetheless far from suggesting that *sophia* cannot be an *aretē* of *technē*. What is questioned is that it be *the only aretē* of *technē*. In § 11 Heidegger convincingly shows, analyzing *Metaphysics* I 1, how in regard to experience (*empeiria*) *technē* has a certain claim to universality:

true. The self-validation (*Selbstausweisung*) secures its truth”. (“Wann wird im Erkennen selbst die Wahrheit phänomenal ausdrücklich? Dann, wenn sich das Erkennen *als wahres* ausweist. Die Selbstausweisung sichert ihm seine Wahrheit”) Mod. tr: we use the terms ‘validate’ and ‘validation’ rather than Stambaugh’s ‘prove to be’ and ‘demonstrate itself’, otherwise correct, in order to highlight the only occurrence of the term *Selbstausweisung* in SZ. In KNS § 17 (GA 56/57 p. 91) *Ausweisen* is used already with this sense: “Das Umweltliche hat seine genuine Sichselbstausweisung in sich selbst”. We thank Prof. Alejandro Vigo for drawing our attention to the relevance of this term for Heidegger’s understanding of the embeddedness of phenomenology and ontology.

⁶¹³ GA 19 § 8a p. 50 [35] “*Dasein* als das *hou heneka*, das Worumwillen, aufgedeckt ist”.

⁶¹⁴ Cf. DWA p. 13 [228].

the «as soon as-then» [of *empeiria*] becomes [in *technē*] «if such and such, then so and so» (...). The understanding is then no longer founded in a pre-presentification of the connection effective in practice, in a retention of the order of succession, but in an actual *presentation of the outward look of the thing itself* which is to be treated in some way or other (...). *The new phenomenon, which makes it possible to speak of technē as sophōtera* over and against *empeiria*, lies on the path of *seeing*, not of the carrying out in practice⁶¹⁵.

The relation that Heidegger makes here between phenomena and speaking confirms the balance between phenomenological and textual analysis that characterizes most of his approach, and according to which we develop ours—only thus is it possible to read Heidegger, and to read Aristotle with Heidegger. In *technē*, Heidegger argues, there is more than the knowledge of who has verified ‘that’ when I do A, then B happens. The *technitēs* knows ‘why’ when I do A, B happens—in his knowledge there is a “because” (*Weil*)⁶¹⁶, which goes deeper into the *archē*, into what makes this happen: he acquires a certain distance from the particular (*kath hekaston*) to grasp the universal (*katholon*)⁶¹⁷. And it is due to this knowledge of the ‘why’, the cause (*aition*), that the *technitēs* is regarded as wiser (*sophōteron*) than the experienced (*empeirikos*): “in the tendency toward simple disclosive looking at beings with regard to their *archē* resides the *sophōteron*. Hence in *technē sophia* is predelineated”⁶¹⁸.

This phenomenological analysis is accurate, but it is remarkable that, as was the case with *technē* and *phronēsis*, again here Heidegger seems to shed light *only* on the differences between *technē* and *empeiria*. The fact would not be very relevant if this emphasis on the differences were not crucial to Heidegger’s interpretation;

⁶¹⁵ GA 19 § 11c pp. 75 [51-52, add. e.] “Das *Sobald – dann* wird zum *Wenn* das – *dann* das (...). Das Verstehen gründet jetzt nicht mehr im Gegenwärtigen des Ausführungs- und Verrichtungszusammenhangs, im Behalten der Aufeinanderfolge, sondern in der *Präsentation des Aussehens der Sache*, auf deren Behandlung das Besorgen gerichtet ist (...). Das neue Phänomen, das die Möglichkeit bietet, die *technē* gegenüber der *empeiria* als *sophōtera* anzusprechen, liegt in der Richtung des *Sehens*, nicht der Ausführung”.

⁶¹⁶ GA 19 § 11c p. 75 [51].

⁶¹⁷ Cf. GA 19 § 11c pp. 75-76 [52].

⁶¹⁸ GA 19 § 11c p. 77 [53] “In der Tendenz auf das lediglich aufdeckende Betrachten des Seindens in Hinsicht auf die *archē* liegt das *sophōteron*. So ist in der *technē* die *Vorzeichnung für die Sophia* gegeben”.

however, it is, to the extent that the new way in which he presents *technē* seems to exclude *empeiria*. Aristotle surely distinguishes these determinations: “with a view to action (*prattein*) *empeiria* seems in no respect inferior to *technē*, and we even see men of *empeiria* succeeding more than those who have *logos* without *empeiria*”⁶¹⁹; and a few lines below: “If a man has *logos* without *empeiria*, and knows the *katholou* but does not know the *kath hekaston* included in this, he will often fail to cure, because it is the *kath hekaston* that is to be cured”⁶²⁰. However, Aristotle is not stating that insofar as one has *logos* one does not have *empeiria*, but that *if one were to have logos without empeiria* one would not be well prepared as action is concerned. Why should the *technitēs* necessarily have no *empeiria*? For sure, he has a certain universal grasp, and in this respect *technē* heralds *sophia*—what is more, *sophia* can be said to be, *from this point of view*, its *aretē*, its excellence. However, *technē* also remains a *hexis* of what can be otherwise, as Heidegger himself holds throughout his analysis in § 7. But this dimension is now left in the shade; there is no mention of a contradiction in Aristotle between the depiction of *technē* in the NE and in the *Metaphysics* (which in fact does not exist if, as seems to be the case, *technē* is not said in the *Metaphysics* to exclude *empeiria*).

At any rate, regardless of what Heidegger and Aristotle might say, the decisive point is that phenomena show that, while *empeiria* is irreducible to *technē*, they often coexist: ignoring or distancing oneself from the *kath hekaston* does not necessarily follow from the knowledge of the *katholou*, of ‘why’ if I do A, then B results. What is more, this knowledge of the universal usually fosters wider involvement in the particular, for instance, in the form of experimentation: examining the *kath hekaston* from even more points of view to discover how it works under different *particular* circumstances. Knowing the ‘because’ between A and B usually leads one to try whether, for instance, doing A in the presence of C

⁶¹⁹ *Met.* I 1, 981a 12ff.

⁶²⁰ *Met.* I 1, 981a 20ff.

will still produce B, or will produce something else, and so on. *Experimentation* appears then as a phenomenon that traces the theoretical tendency of *technē* back into *empeiria*. Aristotle actually refers experimentation to *technē* in distinguishing it from *phronēsis*; as usual, the remark is powerful but concise: “in *technē* he who errs willingly is preferable, but in *phronēsis*, as in the *aretai*, it is the reverse” (VI 5, 1140b 22ff). Heidegger, who deals with this passage earlier in the course, interprets thus the first half of the statement:

Technē can presume things and concede things. Trial and error are proper to it. Through *technē*, one discovers whether something works one way or another. The more *technē* risks failure, the more secure it will be in his procedure. It is precisely through failure that certitude is formed. It is precisely the one who is not ingrained in a definite «technique», a set routine (...) who acquires the correct possibility of know-how, [who] has at his disposal the proper kind of the *alētheuein* that corresponds to *technē*⁶²¹.

The possibility of failure is, as Heidegger puts it, “constitutive to the development of *technē*”⁶²², precisely because *technē* is referred to what can be otherwise. In fact, this possibility of being otherwise acquires in *technē* a specific concreteness, which becomes its inner motivation for experimentation: *technē* is concerned with ‘what can be *better*’, in the restricted sense of ‘better’ that was at the core of the concern of the later Heidegger with modern technique: the idea of a limit or regulation does not belong to the inner logic of technique⁶²³. While Greek *technē* had not this present-day dramatic face of technique, the principle is well grasped in Aristotle’s statement, and Heidegger unmistakably assumes the inner tendency

⁶²¹ GA 19 § 8c pp. 53-54 [37-38, mod. tr.] “Die *technē* kann vor- und zugeben. Zu ihr gehört das Probieren. Man versteht in ihr, ob es geht oder ob es auf andere Weise geht. Die *technē* wird um so sicherer gehen, wenn sie einen Fehlversuch riskiert. Gerade auf dem Wege des Verfehlens bildet sich die Sicherheit aus. Gerade wer sich nicht auf eine bestimmte »Technik«, eine bestimmte eingefahrene Behandlungsart, versteift (...), der bringt sich in die rechte Möglichkeit des Sichauskennens, der verfügt über die rechte Art des *alētheuein*, das der *technē* entspricht”.

⁶²² GA 19 § 8c p. 54 [38] “Diese Möglichkeit des Fehlgehenkönnens ist konstitutiv für die Ausbildung der *technē*”.

⁶²³ Cf. “Die Frage nach der Technik” (1953) in GA 7 *Vorträge und Aufsätze* Ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, 2000 pp. 9-40, p. 31 for ref. (pagination of the Neske *Einzelausgabe*).

of *technē* towards experimentation⁶²⁴. That is why it is surprising that in § 11 we are left only with the remark that “the new phenomenon” of knowing the ‘why’ “makes it possible to speak of *technē* as *sophōtera over and against empeiria* [and] lies on the path of seeing, not of the carrying out in practice”⁶²⁵. The knowledge of the ‘why’ is indeed a new phenomenon, but the inner tendency of *technē* towards *empeiria* is another one—thoroughly appreciated by Heidegger in § 8c, though without mention of the term *empeiria*—and we very often find this tendency stemming from the impulse of *technē* to enlarge knowledge. This proximity between universality and particularity within *technē*, however, is displaced from § 11 on:

«(...) *technē*, by its very sense, is concerned with the *katholou*», the outward look which recurs in all the single cases, whereas the meaning of *praxis* is, e.g., healing, i.e. making the determinate sick person healthy. *Praxis* is concerned with the *kath hekaston*. (Here we touch upon concepts, the *katholou* and the *kath hekaston*, which are very important for grasping the distinction between *sophia* and *phronēsis*)⁶²⁶.

In the text that Heidegger paraphrases, Aristotle does say that *technē* is knowledge of the universals, while actions (*praxeis*) and productions (*geneseis*) are concerned with the individual. However, Aristotle is using here a restricted concept of *praxis*, as externally perceptible action, and therefore not the wide sense of *praxis* as the way of being of human beings. Heidegger himself makes that clear in his interpretation, because he also uses this restricted sense: *praxis*, in contrast with the theoretical knowledge of the *technitēs*, means curing this man here and now. However, because in curing this man, the doctor does not produce

⁶²⁴ The specific term ‘experimentieren’, however, is only used by Heidegger to exclude it from the domain of *phronēsis* (although by doing so he implicitly attaches it to *technē*): Cf. GA 19 § 8c p. 54 [38], quoted in note 628 below.

⁶²⁵ GA 19 § 11c p. 75 [52, our e.] “Das neue Phänomen, das die Möglichkeit bietet, die *technē* gegenüber der *empeiria* als *sophōtera* anzusprechen, liegt in der Richtung des *Sebens*, nicht der Ausführung”.

⁶²⁶ GA 19 § 11c p. 76 [52] “»Der Grund liegt darin, daß die *technē* ihrem Sinn nach auf das *katholou* geht«, auf das Aussehen, das jeweils in den einzelnen Fällen wiederkehrt, während der Sinn der *praxis* z.B. das Heilen ist, d.h. den betreffenden bestimmten Kranken gesund zu machen; die *praxis* geht auf das *kath hekaston*. — Damit sind wir auf Begriffe gestoßen, die für das weitere Verständnis und für die Unterscheidung der *sophia* und der *phronēsis* wichtig sind: *katholou* und *kath hekaston*”. Cf. *Met.* I 1, 981a 15ff.

health as health does—i.e. not according to the way in which *physis* brings about *physis* and in which *praxis* brings about *praxis*—but from the outside, the *praxis* that he is undertaking is a *poiēsis*, the activity whose *hexis* is *technē*.

As a result, we are actually faced with the phenomenon of a doctor who applies his *technē* to a particular case (*kath hekaston*). *Technē*, therefore, not only points to *epistēmē* but also to *praxis*. However, this second dimension is not convenient for Heidegger’s interpretative line, as the parenthesis in the quotation above suggests: “*Praxis* is concerned with the *kath hekaston*. (Here we touch upon concepts, the *katholou* and the *kath hekaston*, which are very important for grasping the distinction between *sophia* and *phronēsis*)”⁶²⁷. If *phronēsis* turns out to be the only form of *alētheuein* that is truly concerned with the *kath hekaston*, as Heidegger suggests, then it definitely remains isolated from the rest of them, which allegedly fall under the paradigm of readiness (*Fertigkeit*). However, if *phronēsis* does not prove to be the only *hexis* dealing with what can be otherwise, i.e. if *technē* also has a share in this, and as a result it is linked not only to *sophia* but also to *phronēsis* and *empeiria*, then the relation between *sophia* and *phronēsis* may acquire a different shape, and this is precisely the wider perspective we are aiming at.

Our reflection on experimentation now illuminates the second half of Aristotle’s statement: while in *technē* he who errs willingly is preferable, “in *phronēsis*, as in the *aretai*, it is the reverse” (VI 5, 1140b 22ff). Heidegger comments:

[I]n the case of *phronēsis*, on the contrary, where it is a matter of a deliberation whose theme is the proper being of *Dasein*, every failure entails failing oneself (*jedes Fehlgehen [ist] ein Sich-Verfehlen*) (...). *Phronēsis* is not oriented toward trial and error; in moral action I cannot experiment with myself⁶²⁸.

⁶²⁷ GA 19 § 11c p. 76 [52].

⁶²⁸ Cf. GA 19 § 8c p. 54 [38, mod. tr.] “Bei der *phronēsis* dagegen, wo es sich um das Überlegen handelt, dessen Thema das eigene Sein des *Dasein* ist, da ist jedes Fehlgehen ein Sich-Verfehlen (...). Die *phronēsis* ist nicht darauf orientiert, zu probieren; ich kann im sittlichen Handeln nicht mit mir experimentieren”.

While a mistake in *technē* may not necessarily entail a lack of skill or knowledge, but an experiment or a pedagogical strategy, which shows precisely a certain development in one's technical knowledge, a mistake in *phronēsis* necessarily brings *phronēsis* itself into discredit. While the failure to bring about a desired *ergon* on the part of technical experience remains in the restricted domain of a production, of an *ergon* that is different from oneself, the *ergon* that *phronēsis* deliberates and decides about is the deliberator and decision maker himself. That is why Heidegger contends that “a result is not constitutive for the being of an action; *only the eu*, the how, is. The *telos* in *phronēsis* is the *anthropos* himself. In the case of *poiēsis*, the *telos* is something other, a worldly being over and against *Dasein*; not so in the case of *praxis*”⁶²⁹.

But however *other* the *telos* of *poiēsis* be, it is still conceived and desired by *Dasein*—otherwise, *poiēsis* would be left floating in the void. It is in this respect that we can speak of a certain technical achievement (i.e. doing the things that tend towards a bad mark that we have set ourselves)⁶³⁰ as a personal or social shortcoming: because the *erga* of *poiēsis* are not the work of chance but of a *zōon logon echon*, their consideration always necessarily requires a wider perspective, encompassing the ground on which they come to be: human life as a whole (*to eu zēn holōs*)⁶³¹. The *how* is always already at stake in any activity of *Dasein*, so that *poiēsis* cannot be an independent domain, but belongs to the determination of the being of *Dasein* as *praxis*. Aristotle clearly assumes this to be so⁶³²; the key question, again, is whether his conceptuality allows for conceiving these determinations in such a unity—and we believe that Heidegger too quickly dismisses that possibility.

⁶²⁹ GA 19 § 8a p. 51 [35-36] “Ein Resultat ist nicht konstitutiv für das Sein des Handelns, sondern *lediglich das eu*, das Wie. Das *telos* in der *phronēsis* ist der *anthropos* selbst. Bei der *poiēsis* ist das *telos* ein anderes, ein weltlich Seiendes gegenüber dem Dasein, bei der *praxis* aber nicht”. Cf. NE VI 5, 1140b 6-7.

⁶³⁰ Cf. NE VI 12, 1144a 24-27.

⁶³¹ Cf. NE VI 5, 1140a 25-28.

⁶³² Cf. NE VI 2, 1139b 1-3.

At first sight, one could say that Heidegger is for once implicitly assuming that *technē* is embedded in *praxis* when he says that “*phronēsis* is different from *technē*; for in the case of *technē* the *prakton* is a *telos* which is *para*”⁶³³. Heidegger indeed speaks here of *technē* as concerned with a *prakton*. However, because his statement itself assumes once again that *praxis* is never *para*, for the sake of precision it should replace ‘the *prakton*’ with both ‘the *poiēton*’ and ‘the *poiēsis*’: insofar as the craftsman (*poiētēs*, or *technitēs*) is a man, his *prakton* is not a *telos* which is *para*, as much as the *telos* of the client who ‘makes her way’ to the shoemaker’s (i.e. buying a pair of shoes) is not *para* for her. What is *para* for the shoemaker is the production itself (*poiēsis*) or the finished shoe (*poiēton*), the pro-duct⁶³⁴, because once he has finished it he does not have it any longer *as shoemaker*, but he does have it as a man; and what is *para* for the client is ‘the way she makes’ *as a biped*, insofar as once she has ‘made it’ she does not have it any longer: the *telos* of her *kinēsis* is *para*, because as soon as she gets to the shoemaker’s it is completed and thus set aside; however, because she is at the same time a biped and a *zōon logon echon*, the *telos* that activates her ‘making her way towards the shoemaker’s’ is there (*Da*) as much on the way to the shoemaker’s as once she has arrived there. The *telos* that leads her to set off for the shoemaker’s is the same that, once she has arrived, leads her to finally buy her pair of shoes.

Because all *poiēseis* are activated and pursued by *praxis*, while “neither acting [is] making nor making acting” (VI 4, 1140a 5f), *poiēsis* can only come to be within the span opened by *praxis*, as much as *kinēsis* can only come to be within the span opened by *energeia* or *entelecheia*⁶³⁵. Our reading of Heidegger’s interpretation requires now making more explicit his understanding of these other concepts,

⁶³³ GA 19 § 8a p. 50 [35] “Und doch ist die *phronēsis* verschieden von der *technē*, denn bei der *technē* ist das *prakton* ein *telos*, das *para* ist”.

⁶³⁴ Cf. note 480 above.

⁶³⁵ Cf. AQM p. 497 “*Dynamis* situates itself within the domain opened by *energeia*. It is not moved but because *energeia* opens the way for it”.

which hinge on that of *telos*, and analyzing how he envisions their relation to basic ethical-ontological concepts such as *hexis* and *aretē*. This leads us back to the 1924 summer course, where the conceptual architecture on which GA 19 rests is laid.

6. *Telos*: Where Everything is Decided

6.1. *Telos* and *Peras* in 1924

We have argued above that Heidegger, in his interpretation of Aristotle during these years, tends to read *telos* and *peras* as almost interchangeable concepts. This is due to basically two intertwined reasons. Firstly, his thesis—stated quite at the beginning of GA 18—that *Dasein* (in the wide sense of any being) for the Greeks means “1. primarily *presence, present*, 2. *being-complete, completedness*—[these are] the two characters of the there (*Da*) for [them]. In these two characters, all beings with regard to their being are to be interpreted”⁶³⁶. Secondly, there is the fact that Aristotle, despite dealing with *telos* and *peras* as distinct entries of his ‘philosophical dictionary’ (chapters 16 and 17 of *Metaphysics* V), actually brings together to a certain extent their meanings when he includes *telos* among the meanings of *peras*⁶³⁷.

Heidegger devotes § 11 of the 1924 summer course to *teleion* (fulfilled)⁶³⁸, which is the concept under which *telos* is approached by Aristotle. According to the direction of his interpretation, Heidegger translates *teleion* as “something that is completed” (*Fertigseiendes*) or “what constitutes being-completed” as a way of being (*was das Fertigsein ausmacht*)⁶³⁹.

The three senses of *teleion*, as developed by Aristotle, are thoroughly paraphrased. “What is addressed as complete (*fertig*), first of all, is a being outside of

⁶³⁶ GA 18 § 7b p. 35 [26] “Dasein heißt also zusammenfassend: 1. primär *Gegenwärtigkeit, Gegenwart*, 2. das *Fertigsein*, die *Fertigkeit* — die beiden Charaktere des Da bei den Griechen. In diesen beiden ist alles Seiende hinsichtlich seines Seins auszulegen”.

⁶³⁷ Cf. *Met.* V 17, 1022a 6ff.

⁶³⁸ In paragraph 2.2. above (cf. pp. 49 ff.) we have preferred to render *telos* as ‘fulfillment’, from which ‘fulfilled’ for *teleion*. Our development here shall make clearer the reasons for our choice.

⁶³⁹ Cf. GA 18 § 11a p. 80 [56].

which no part remains to be encountered”⁶⁴⁰. Secondly, “what is addressed as complete is that which has nothing left in the context of having a genuine being-possibility at one’s disposal”⁶⁴¹. Characteristic to this second translation is the fact that Heidegger renders Aristotle’s *kat aretēn kai to eu* (“in respect of excellence and goodness”) as “being-possibility”, according to his formal approach to the good as a *how* of being⁶⁴². The fact that *aretē* is read as being-possibility obviously reinforces the point that Heidegger wants to make, namely that being *teleion* excludes new possibilities. Otherwise, the formal approach certainly grasps Aristotle’s conception of the good as a how of the being of something: its being fulfilled. This is especially visible in the third sense of this term, which Aristotle phrases as follows: “the things which have attained a good end (*telos spoudaion*) are called *teleia*; for things are called *teleia* in virtue of the having of their *telos* (*to echein to telos*)”⁶⁴³. For things to attain their *telos* means to attain their good: as a result, being good and being *teleion* are equivalent for him. That is why, Aristotle argues, it is only in a derived sense that we speak of bad things as *teleion*. Heidegger, on his part, confirms with this third sense his interpretation of the previous ones: “*teleion* is being in the how of being-completed (*im Wie des Fertigseins*), the being in which, as such, its completedness (*Fertigkeit*) is at hand in a serious way”⁶⁴⁴. The formal

⁶⁴⁰ GA 18 § 11a p. 80 [56, mod. tr.] “Als fertig wird einmal angesprochen ein Seiender, außerhalb dessen auch nicht ein einziger Teil sich antreffen läßt”. Cf. *Met.* V 16, 1021b 12ff.

⁶⁴¹ GA 18 § 11a pp. 80-81 [56] “Weiter wird als fertig angesprochen das, was im Umkreis des Verfügens über eine eigene Seinsmöglichkeit in ihrer echten Herkunftigkeit kein Darüberhinaus mehr hat”. Cf. 1021b 14ff.

⁶⁴² Cf. e.g. GA 19 § 8a p. 51 [35-36].

⁶⁴³ *Met.* V 16, 1021b 23ff.

⁶⁴⁴ GA 18 § 11a p. 81 [57] “Ferner ist *teleion* Sein im Wie des Fertigseins, das Seiende, in dem als solchem seine Fertigkeit ernsthaft vorhanden ist”. *Spoudaion* is rendered as “in a serious way”, in reference to the way in which the end is had (*echein*), i.e. to the attitude of that being who can have and end consciously (Cf. GA 18 § 11b p. 87 [60]). This translation seems as valid as Ross’—in which *spoudaion* is considered an adjective of the *telos*, in continuity with the second sense of *teleion*—because the accusative may well have the meaning of an adverb. However, it somehow obscures the relation of this passage to the NE that Heidegger will make apparent in § 12, i.e. that *teleion* and *agathon* are equivalent determinations of being.

approach is maintained, and also the point that “being-possibilities” are exhausted: what is *teleion* has come to its utmost possibility and it is therefore ready (*fertig*).

Up to here, especially from the perspective of Heidegger’s emphasis on *Fertigkeit*, the sense of *telos* seems to overlap with that of limit (*peras*), which is defined as “the last point of each thing, i.e. the first point beyond which it is not possible to find any part, and the first point within which every part is”⁶⁴⁵. But it is relevant to note that, still upon unfolding the third sense of *teleion*, Aristotle adds: “the ultimate thing for the sake of which (*to hou eneka eschaton*) is also an end (*telos*)”⁶⁴⁶. Heidegger paraphrases: “*telos*, constituting the end as being-completed, means also that for the sake of which something is”⁶⁴⁷. He then forewarns: “One must be cautious with the concept of «teleology». Aristotle had no «teleological» worldview. Even a superficial understanding shows that *teleion* and *telos* do not mean «aim» (*Ziel*) or «purpose» (*Zweck*)”⁶⁴⁸. This is odd, however: to name only two examples, in section I we have seen how practical dealings in the NE are governed by aims and purposes from the ground up, and how the *Metaphysics* starts stating our desire to know, as something set in our own way of being (*physis*). If a superficial understanding shows something, it is definitely that it is an aim, whether implicit or explicit, that moves us to act or to know. Yet, on closer inspection the point seems to be reinforced, since it applies also to *physis*: “the nature (*physis*) is *telos* and that for the sake of which (*hou heneka*). For if a thing undergoes a continuous change toward some *telos*, that last stage (*eschaton*) is actually that for the sake of which”⁶⁴⁹; and in the *Metaphysics*: “everything that

⁶⁴⁵ *Met.* V 17, 1022a 4f.

⁶⁴⁶ *Met.* V 16, 1021b 29f.

⁶⁴⁷ GA 18 § 11a p. 82 [57] “*Telos*, Ende als Fertigsein ausmachend heißt auch das, worum willen etwas ist”.

⁶⁴⁸ GA 18 § 11a p. 82 [57] “Vorsichtig muß man sein mit dem Begriff der ›Teleologie‹. Aristoteles hatte keine »teleologische« Weltanschauung. Schon ein flüchtiges Verstehen zeigt, daß mit *teleion* und *telos* nicht gemeint ist »Ziel« oder »Zweck“.

⁶⁴⁹ *Physics* II 2, 194a 28ff.

comes to be moves towards a principle (*archē*), i.e. its end (*telos*). For that for the sake of which a thing is (*to hou beneke*), is its principle (*archē*), and the becoming is for the sake of the end (*telos*)”⁶⁵⁰. *Telos* could hardly be brought closer to the ‘for the sake of which’ that is characteristic of *phronēsis*, and this is done precisely by pointing to the same overlapping of *telos* and *archē* that Heidegger finds in NE VI⁶⁵¹. Furthermore, Aristotle himself contrasts in that same book the dispersion of *telos* and *archē* that is characteristic of *technē* with their belonging together in things that are or become in accordance with nature (*kata physin*)⁶⁵², thus implicitly associating the *how* of being of *physis* with that of *praxis*.

That the dismissal of any idea of aim in *telos* was somehow an excess is shown by the fact that Heidegger right away grants that “the end can be encountered in the character of purpose or aim, but only because *telos* is end [in the sense of *peras*, C.A.]. It is aim or purpose with respect to a definite looking-toward (*Hinsehen-auf*)... keeping in sight (*Ins-Auge-Fassen*)”⁶⁵³. This, however, is only a half concession: we may indeed consider that *telos* has the sense of aim or purpose, but this has to be understood as subordinated to the primary sense of *telos*, i.e. *peras*, centered on the idea of *Fertigkeit*. Hence this aim is designated as referred to a seeing: only an aim that can be set out there can be kept in sight, as finished. However, Heidegger is not really interested in this ‘teleological’ meaning; the idea of *telos* as aim only appears once more in his commentary:

⁶⁵⁰ *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 7ff (mod. tr.). Cf. also III 2, 996a 23ff: “Everything that in itself and by its own nature is good is an end (*telos*), and a cause in the sense that for its sake the other things come to be and are, and (...) an end or purpose (*telos kai hou beneke*) is the end of some action”.

⁶⁵¹ Cf. DWA pp. 13-14 [229, mod. tr.]. Cf. NE VI 4, 1140a 13 ff, b 6f.

⁶⁵² “For *technē* is concerned neither with things that are, or come into being, by necessity, nor with things that do so *kata physin* (since these have their origin in themselves). *Poiesis* and *praxis* being different, *technē* must be a matter of *poiesis*, not of *praxis*” (NE VI 4, 1140a 14ff).

⁶⁵³ GA 18 § 11a p. 82 [57] “In den Charakter von Zweck und Ziel kann das Ende treten, aber nur weil *telos* Ende ist, kann es auch einmal Ziel oder Zweck sein. Es ist Ziel oder Zweck im Hinblick auf ein bestimmtes Hinschen-auf ..., Ins-Auge-Fassen”.

With the discussion of the *teleion* we acquire a foundation for the discussion of *the fundamental concept of the Aristotelian doctrine of being, entelecheia*. *Telos* is not «aim» but rather *eschaton*, having the character of limit, «what is outermost». Aim and purpose are definite modes in which the *telos* is an «end», but they are not primary determinations⁶⁵⁴.

Fertigkeit having been retained as the underlying sense of *telos* is the necessary result of the fact that *entelecheia* is the key to Aristotle's ontology, *provided that* this concept proves to remain within the Greek view of being as presence (*Gegenwärtigkeit*) and completedness (*Fertigkeit*)⁶⁵⁵. The idea of there being something which *is* in the full sense of being and yet is moving towards a still non-achieved possibility, i.e. something that *is* in this possibility, obviously does not fit into this scheme, and that is why Heidegger tends to displace it from the core of the meaning of *telos* as used by Aristotle. Thus, he infers, “for a being there is no further being-possibility beyond the *telos* (...), a being has *come to its end with respect to its being-possibility*”⁶⁵⁶: a being determined by *entelecheia* is “the type of being that maintains itself in its genuine being-possibility so that the possibility is consummated”⁶⁵⁷. Having the end in itself (*en-telos-echein*) implies the *ending* of possibility itself. We must then “hold primarily in view the fact that *telos* has the determination of *limit*”⁶⁵⁸.

Of course, the application of this scheme to our experience of *Dasein* does not make much sense, and this is precisely what Heidegger wants to stress: the Greek sense of being cannot grasp the genuine being of *Dasein*, “such a being that,

⁶⁵⁴ GA 18 p. 85 [59] “Mit der Diskussion des *teleion* bekommen wir ein Fundament für die Erörterung des *Fundamentalbegriffes der aristotelischen Lehre vom Sein*, der *entelecheia*. *Telos* ist nicht »Ziel«, sondern *eschaton*, Charakter der Grenze, »Äußerstes«. Ziel und Zweck sind bestimmte Weisen, in denen *telos* als »Ende« ist, aber sie sind nicht primäre Bestimmungen”.

⁶⁵⁵ Cf. GA 18 § 7b p. 35 [26].

⁶⁵⁶ GA 18 § 11b p. 85 [59] “Ein Worüber-hinaus-nichts (...) in dem Sinne, daß es über das *telos* hinaus keine weitere Seinsmöglichkeit für ein Seiendes gibt, daß ein Seiendes *hinsichtlich seiner Seinsmöglichkeiten zu seinem Ende gekommen ist*”.

⁶⁵⁷ GA 18 § 11c p. 90 [62] “Ein Seiendes, durch die *entelecheia* bestimmt, besagt fundamental *ein solches Seiendes, das sich selbst hält in seiner eigentlichen Seinsmöglichkeit, so daß die Möglichkeit vollendet ist*”.

⁶⁵⁸ GA 18 § 11c p. 89 [61] “[S]o ist primär festzuhalten: *telos* hat die Bestimmung von *Grenze*”.

in its being, depends upon its being, explicitly or inexplicitly”⁶⁵⁹. But Heidegger does not make this clear at the moment; he sets this objection aside for later, and proceeds with his interpretation, now centered on the human good (*anthrōpinon agathon*) as discussed in NE I. The connection with *Metaphysics* V 16 is clear, because the *anthrōpinon agathon* is here elucidated by Aristotle precisely in terms of *teleiōsis* (what we translate as fulfillment or plenitude, and Heidegger translates as *Fertigkeit*): to ask for the human good is to ask for the specific human *telos*. The question has to be made according to the Greek sense of being:

For the being-determination of the *Dasein* of human beings, the basic Greek determination of being is to be radically and consistently laid claim to, and it is to be shown in this way that *agathon* is *telos* in the sense that it is *haplōs teleion*, *teleion* in the strict sense⁶⁶⁰.

This *haplōs teleion* of human beings is set by Aristotle in *eudaimonia*, a popular concept which, as his elucidation progressively unfolds, acquires a philosophical sense, that of a specific how of one’s being—according to Heidegger, “the being-completed (*Fertigsein*) of *Dasein*, the *very being-possibility* (*Seinsmöglichkeit*) of *Dasein itself*”⁶⁶¹. It is conspicuous that Heidegger does not refer here to the specific procedure by which Aristotle determines happiness as the *haplōs teleion* of human beings, namely one that reads *telos primarily as aim*, not as completedness: “we call that which is in itself worthy of pursuit more *teleion* (*teleiōteron*) than that which is worthy of pursuit for the sake of something else” (I 7, 1097a 30ff). As a result “we call fulfilled without qualification (*haplōs teleion*) that which is always (*aei*) desirable in itself and never for the sake of something else” (a33 f), and this is happiness.

⁶⁵⁹ GA 18 § 12a p. 95 [65] “Ein solches Seindes, in dessen Sein es ausdrücklich oder unausdrücklich auf sein Sein ankommt”. Cf. also § 17c p. 180 [121-122] “*Dasein as concern is care about itself*, for the most part inexplicitly”. (“*Dasein als Besorgen ist Sorge um sich Selbst*, zumeist unausdrücklich”).

⁶⁶⁰ GA 18 § 12a p. 92 [63] “Es wird für die Seinsbestimmung des *Daseins* des Menschen die griechische Grundbestimmung des Seins radikal und konsequent in Anspruch genommen und so gezeigt, daß das *agathon* in dem Sinne *telos* ist, daß es *haplōs teleion*, schlechthin *teleion* ist”.

⁶⁶¹ GA 18 § 12a p. 95 [65] “Das *haplōs teleion* das ist, was schlechthin das *Fertigsein* des *Daseins* ausmacht, die *schlechthinige Seinsmöglichkeit des Daseins selbst*”.

Why does Heidegger leave in the shade this sense of *telos* as aim, which some months later he cannot avoid using in his analysis of the NE⁶⁶²? Surely because he is trying to show that Aristotle applies his ontological concepts to the ethics. This is indeed an enterprise that fits the nerve of Aristotle's search. However, while considering *Fertigsein* as the primary sense of *teleion* in NE I is definitely consistent with Heidegger's thesis on the Greek idea of being, it is uncertain that he is letting Aristotle's phenomenological analysis speak. Is Heidegger trying to see *with* Aristotle, even to see beyond Aristotle? In a much quoted passage of the *Natorp Bericht* the doubt is cast on whether Aristotle is doing real phenomenology or is instead applying to phenomena an unquestioned sense of being:

Was the sense of being Aristotle employed to define the being of human life drawn in a genuine manner from a simple, founding experience of this object only and its being, or was human life understood as only one being within a more comprehensive domain of being, i.e., did Aristotle apply to it a sense of being that he took to be archontic for investigating it?⁶⁶³

This question, though, could also be directed at Heidegger's approach, namely to his taking for granted Aristotle's submission to a Greek idea of being as *Fertigsein*: does the sense of being that Heidegger reads into Aristotle's definition of the being of human life reflect Aristotle's founding experience of this object only and its being, or is Heidegger applying to Aristotle's understanding of human life a sense of being that he takes to be archontic for investigating Aristotle's approach?

Heidegger presumes that there is a tension between the ontological molds of the *Metaphysics* and the phenomenological insights of the NE, and he develops his interpretation according to this conviction. We have seen how in GA 19 he

⁶⁶² Cf. GA 19 § 7b p. 41 [29].

⁶⁶³ NB 373/25-26 [127] "Ist der Seinssinn, der das Sein des menschlichen Lebens letztlich charakterisiert, aus einer reinen Grunderfahrung eben dieses Gegenstandes und seines Seins genuin geschöpft, oder ist menschliches Leben als ein Seiendes innerhalb eines umgreifenderen Seinsfeldes genommen, beziehungsweise einem für es als archontisch angesetzten Seinssinn unterworfen?"

assumes, in the context of NE VI, that an *ergon*, insofar as it is a *telos*, “leads forth from itself (...), it is «for something and for someone»”⁶⁶⁴: a shoe, insofar as it is inscribed in *praxis*, is not anymore seen as something *fertig*: as embedded in *praxis*, it points beyond itself. On the other hand, though, in his analysis of *aretē* in GA 18, he concludes that “it is a mistake to conceive of *aretē* as completedness (*Fertigkeit*), as this contradicts the sense of *aretē*”⁶⁶⁵. *Aretē* is an essential element of Aristotle’s understanding of *eudaimonia*, which is defined by him as “an *energeia* of the soul in accordance with fulfilled excellence (*psychēs energeia tis kat aretēn teleian*)”⁶⁶⁶. How to reconcile the fact that man is *praxis*, and therefore its *aretai* are always on the way, with the ontological characterization of *aretē* as something *teleion*? This is the tension that Heidegger believes to find in Aristotle: in the one hand a sharp phenomenological eye in the ethics, and on the other an ontological frame, an archontic sense of being that does not live up to the touch with reality (*thigein*)⁶⁶⁷ unfolded in his practical philosophy.

6.2. Bringing *Physis* and *Praxis* Closer

However, could there be less of a tension than Heidegger says there is in Aristotle? If having the *telos* does not mean only to have attained a limit (*peras*) beyond which there are no further “being possibilities” (which definitely applies for *telos* as the external endpoint of a *kinēsis*, where *telos* is the accomplishment of a ‘coming to be’), *but also to be and yet continue to be, as it seems required for the continuity of a kinēsis to be real at each stage*⁶⁶⁸, then Aristotle would not be defining the being of

⁶⁶⁴ GA 19 § 7b p. 41 [29, mod. tr.] “als *telos* ist [das *ergon*] *von sich wegweisend*: Es ist (...) »zu etwas für jemanden«”.

⁶⁶⁵ GA 18 § 17c p. 188 [127] “[Es ist verfehlt], wenn man die *aretē* als *Fertigkeit* fassen würde — das widerspricht dem Sinn der *aretē*”.

⁶⁶⁶ Cf. e.g. NE I 13, 1102a 5-6.

⁶⁶⁷ Cf. *Met.* IX 10, 1051b 24f. Heidegger highlights the distinctiveness of this characterization of truth in GA 21 § 13c esp. pp. 189-190.

⁶⁶⁸ Cf. *Physics* III 2, 201a 16f. and POLO, L. 1997 p. 118.

human beings in terms of *Fertigkeit* when he conceives *eudaimonia* as the *haplōs teleion* of human beings. The late Gadamer has clearly pointed to this balance between being and yet not being, the difficulty of which is acknowledged by Aristotle himself in his definition of movement as *energeia atelēs*, “hard to grasp, but not incapable of existing”⁶⁶⁹:

We are all always in a way which has an end (*un fine*) and which, at the same time, does not have an ending (*una fine*). Yes, this fits the Aristotelian thought: being always in a fulfilled though endless process (*un processo finalizzato ma senza fine*)⁶⁷⁰.

The Italian with which Gadamer makes this statement allows for a play on words that renders even better than English the dialectic between *end* and *ending*: *finalizzato ma senza fine*—fully realizing its *telos*, and yet *continuing* on the way towards it, insofar as *its realization* of the *telos* is constantly changing⁶⁷¹ (such is indeed the dynamism of life: we fully live insofar as we are living, but at the same time living implies a constant redefinition of itself). The statement is made in the context of a course on Aristotle given some weeks after having reread the *Natorp Bericht*, by then recently discovered; the Heideggerian text keeps the inspiring force that definitely awakened the young intellectual for philosophy in 1923, but now it does not do so in the form of generating enthusiastic adherence, but of fostering a deep rethinking of his own life-long reading of Aristotle which, while in many respects different from Heidegger’s, is nonetheless deeply influenced by his teacher⁶⁷². More specifically, the old Heidegger *Schüler* is giving a session on the relation between the *Physics* and the *Metaphysics* where he devotes special attention to

⁶⁶⁹ *Physics* III 2, 202a 2f.

⁶⁷⁰ GADAMER, H.-G. 2000 p. 86.

⁶⁷¹ English does have the verb ‘finalize’, with a slightly different sense from ‘ending’. Usually referred to arrangements, it means that the preparations for e.g. an event are ready, that everything is prepared. To have finalized the event, then, does not imply that the event has finished, but that it is ready to start. However, the moment of ‘readiness’, and the fact that an event is thought as a process bracketed in time, make the term only partly adequate as translation. Cf. also note 198 above.

⁶⁷² Cf. GADAMER, H.-G. 2000 p. 23.

Aristotle's determination of the sense of being of *physis* as distinct from the sense of being of *poiēsis*:

To say that the fruit is the end of the plant is perhaps accurate from the human point of view, and more precisely from that of agricultural *production*, but it is not true from the point of view of nature. For nature the fruit is also seed, the beginning of the species, and therefore not the end point of the process. That is why in the *Physics* (193b 13) Aristotle, who has always an admirable precision, states that nature *odos estin eis physin*, it is a way towards nature⁶⁷³.

This, Gadamer remarks later, makes the term *Vorhandenheit* adequate to describe how modern science views things as none other than the objects “measured, mathematically constructed and therefore the object of dominion”. “But in Aristotle the concept of nature is much more specific, because it is always thought within a tension between artificial and natural beings”⁶⁷⁴. Artificial beings, and even natural beings as placed in an artificial—i.e. cultural—context (e.g. the fruit in *agriculture*), can be seen from a certain point of view as independent from the being of nature and of man. As Heidegger puts it, “the shoe is the *telos* in the sense that when it has been completed it has its own existence in the world «alongside» (*para*) the being of the shoemaker”⁶⁷⁵. Nevertheless, we said, the being of the shoe, however other it is from the being of *Dasein*, is framed and encountered within the teleological span of *praxis* as much in its conception as in its production and in its finished existence alongside (*para*) the being of the shoemaker. This phenomenon is clearly viewed by Heidegger as soon as 1919, in his analyses of the surrounding

⁶⁷³ *Ibidem* p. 83 (our e). Cf. also p. 107: “The movement of nature (...) is a circular movement. This concept of circularity of movement is crucial to the aristotelian solution of the problem represented by the relation between being and movement. In fact, a circular movement has always arrived to a final point, in the sense that it always has an accomplishment of its own, but it is never at *the* final point”.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibidem* pp. 99-100.

⁶⁷⁵ GA 18 § 12 p. 91 [63] “Der Schuh ist das *telos* in dem Sinne, daß er, wenn es fertig ist, »neben« (*para*) dem Sein des Schuhmachers”.

world⁶⁷⁶, which are widely taken up in the *Natorp Bericht*, and later in *Sein und Zeit*, in explicit reference to what the Greeks called *praxis*⁶⁷⁷:

The dealings geared to useful things, which only here can show themselves genuinely in their being, e.g. hammering with the hammer, neither grasp these beings thematically as occurring things nor do they even know of using or the structure of useful things as such. Hammering does not just have a knowledge of the useful character of the hammer; rather, it has appropriated this useful thing in the most adequate way possible. When we take care of things, we are subordinate to the *in-order-to* (*Um-zu*) constitutive for the actual useful thing in our dealings with it⁶⁷⁸.

In other words: analogously to how the fruit seen from within *physis* is not something *vorhanden*, the being of a tool or any other artificial object, when we see reality from within *praxis*, does not primarily stand as something *para*, *vorhanden*. From the point of view of *praxis*, it is grasped as useful to the *telos* that I have, e.g. to hammer a nail into a piece of wood. From that of *physis*, in turn, the tool is part of an encompassing *kinēsis*⁶⁷⁹: only because of its being set apart in a workshop, this movement may be slowed down for the hammer. But certain conditions of extreme humidity, for example, may transform the iron and the wood into rust and organic waste. Aristotle expresses this latter point very clearly:

A bed and a coat and anything else of that sort, *qua* receiving these designations—i.e. in so far as they are products of art (*technē*)—have no innate impulse to change. But in so far as they happen to be composed of stone or of earth or of a mixture of the two, they do have such an impulse, and just to that extent—which seems to indicate that

⁶⁷⁶ Cf. KNS §§ 14 ff in GA 56/57.

⁶⁷⁷ Cf. SZ § 15 p. 68 (mod. tr.): “The Greeks had an appropriate term for «things»: *pragmata*, that is, that with which one has to do in taking care of things in dealings (*praxis*)” (“Die Griechen hatten einen angemessenen Terminus für die »Dinge«: *pragmata*, d. i. das, womit man es im besorgenden Umgang (*praxis*) zu tun hat”). Cf. also NB p. 352/6 [115]; GA 19 § 7b p. 41 [29].

⁶⁷⁸ SZ § 15 p. 69 (our e, mod. tr.) “Der je auf das Zeug zugeschnittene Umgang, darin es sich einzig genuin in seinem Sein zeigen kann, z. B. das Hämmern mit dem Hammer, erfaßt weder dieses Seiende thematisch als vorkommendes Ding, noch weiß etwa gar das Gebrauchen um die Zeugstruktur als solche. Das Hämmern hat nicht lediglich noch ein Wissen um den Zeugcharakter des Hammers, sondern es hat sich dieses Zeug so zugeeignet, wie es angemessener nicht möglich ist. In solchem gebrauchenden Umgang unterstellt sich das Besorgen dem für das jeweilige Zeug konstitutiven Um-zu”.

⁶⁷⁹ Cf. *Physics* II 1, 192b 19ff.

nature is a source or cause of being moved and of being at rest in that to which it belongs primarily, in virtue of itself and not accidentally⁶⁸⁰.

The bed and the coat, *qua* called and conceived from within *praxis*⁶⁸¹, the practical concern of a *zōon logon echon*, belong to this sphere: they are, as it were, a *longamamus* of *praxis*, an extension of the ‘hand’ (*manus*) of *praxis*, not something standing apart from it, not something at hand (*vorhanden*). However, as conceived from *praxis*, as well as from *technē*, they are independent from nature, i.e. they do not have an inner impulse to change. But if we plant a bed in the garden, then the natural being of the bed—which is always already there—comes to the fore: wood comes up from the bed, not another bed⁶⁸², because the *telos internal* to the nature of wood *leads* it, under the appropriate circumstances, to generate more wood, not to generate more beds. This, Aristotle argues, shows that “the arrangement in accordance with the rules of art is merely an accidental attribute, whereas the substance is the other, which, further, persists continuously through the process”⁶⁸³.

The embeddedness of the tool (*das Zeug*) and the production within *praxis* reflects this same structure, which can be found in the phenomenological approaches of Heidegger in 1919, 1922 and 1927. The *Um-zu*⁶⁸⁴ cannot help expressing an aim “that persists continuously through the process”: *praxis*. Why then should Heidegger be so concerned in 1924 about displacing the idea of aim from *telos*? Apparently due to the fact that, *if* Aristotle ultimately understands being as *Fertigkeit*, then *entelecheia*, his key term to understand being, cannot be pointing

⁶⁸⁰ *Physics* II 1, 192b 16ff.

⁶⁸¹ From within *praxis* in general (e.g. using the bed to sleep and the coat to keep oneself warm), or also from within the specific practical context of *poiēsis* (producing a bed or a coat).

⁶⁸² Cf. *Physics* II 1, 193a 12ff: “Antiphon points out that if you planted a bed and the rotting wood acquired the power of sending up a shoot, it would not be a bed that would come up, but wood”.

⁶⁸³ *Physics* II 1, 193a 14ff.

⁶⁸⁴ Cf. SZ § 15 p. 69.

to the same phenomena that are envisioned in *physis* or in *praxis*. However, could *entelecheia* actually be pointing to those same phenomena?

If this hypothesis is pursued, a phenomenological-ontological rapprochement between *praxis* and *physis* necessarily results. *Poiēsis*, in turn, appears as situated halfway between them, and this not by chance. It is because there is a being whose being consists of *praxis* that there can be such a process as *poiēsis*, which otherwise requires *physis* to be unfolded: no hammer without a *zōon logon echon praktikon*⁶⁸⁵, who may conceive a hammer, produce it, and then be concerned about hammering; but no hammer either without the iron and wood provided by the alterity or *Vorhandenheit* with which *hylē* presents itself to this *zōon*, who is about to ‘extract’ these elements from the movement of nature.

This double dependence of *poiēsis* enables the disclosure, by contrast, of the specific way of being of *physis* and of *praxis*: “[we] start from what is more intelligible to oneself and make what is intelligible by nature intelligible to oneself”⁶⁸⁶. The ‘visibility’ of *poiēsis*, due to the narrow conception of being that it can provide *per se* with its *her-stellen*, its bringing forth something that stands for itself and is there (*da*) as available⁶⁸⁷, enables us to grasp the wider conception of being at stake in *physis* and *praxis*, which may eventually prove to encompass and ground the *Vorhandenheit* revealed by *poiēsis*. *Physis* and *praxis* are not like *poiēsis*, because they do not generate reality from the outside and, as a result, what they generate has the same being as them. *Physis* does not generate *physis* like a craftsman makes a pot out of clay: wood is made by wood itself out of wood, and this because of an internal direction or aim to do so. *Praxis*, for its part, does not generate *praxis* as a product that remains ready to hand: if one acts well, one’s *praxis*, i.e. one’s

⁶⁸⁵ Cf. NE I 7, 1098a 3f.

⁶⁸⁶ *Met.* VII 3, 1029b 7ff.

⁶⁸⁷ Cf. GA 24 § 11b p. 152 [108] (note 480 above) and p. 153 [109], where “disposability (*Verfügbarkeit*) is considered a synonym of “at-handness (*Vorhandenheit*). Cf. also GA 18 p. 346.

being, is changed for the better (or conversely, if one acts wrongly), but this change itself has no other external output than one's own being.

Still, the domain of *praxis* is more complex than that of *physis*, so that this latter point requires two specifications. (i) Surely, the social dimension of man implies a certain otherness in *praxis*—it widens the output of *praxis* to other human beings, and it is in this respect that such a thing as education is possible and necessary. But the perspective of a sort of intersubjective *praxis* encompassing the *praxis* of each citizen does not in the least diminish its autotelic and ultimately untransferable structure—instead, it provides the missing link for this structure⁶⁸⁸. (ii) Moreover, most of our actions surely have an external output: acting well may mean, for instance, preparing a hot drink for someone. The drink stays there, *vorhanden*, but it is the result of the *poiēsis* generated by one's *praxis*, not of the *praxis* itself. If *praxis* 'produces' anything, it is nothing but *praxis* that it 'produces': "not as the art of medicine produces health, (...) but as health produces health" (VI 12, 1144a 3f).

Yet we might wonder whether it would make any sense to say that *poiēsis* makes *poiēsis*, analogically to how *praxis* makes *praxis* and *physis* makes *physis*. Actually, in a way it does, while in another way it does not. It is through *poiēsis* that the *empeirikos* and *technitēs* are generated, and in this sense *poiēsis* is autotelic: a part of what *poiēsis* generates with its exercise remains in the *poiētēs*. However, intrinsic to the structure of *poiēsis* is a way of causing that necessarily produces *also* something external to it, and in this sense there is a *telos* that it cannot grasp *per se*. This twofoldness of *poiēsis*—hinted at above from the point of view of its relation to *theōria* and *praxis*—reinforces its ontological-phenomenological situation between *praxis* and *physis*. *Phenomenological*, because it is through the visibility of the processes of *poiēsis* that we come to determine the specificity of the 'invisible'

⁶⁸⁸ Cf. paragraph 1.6 above.

processes of *praxis* and *physis*⁶⁸⁹. *Ontological*, because it is starting from the contrast between two different phenomenological experiences—“at the same time we are living and have lived” vs. “we are being cured and have been cured”—that Aristotle gets to the ontological categories of *kinēsis* and *energeia*. It is through the contrast with the *poiēsis* of curing (which does not produce health as health itself does) that the *praxis* of living is understood in its specificity as *energeia*. Moreover, the fact that *kinēsis* is said in the *Physics* to be an *energeia atelēs*, and a principle within all things constituted by nature⁶⁹⁰, brings *physis* into the vicinity of *praxis* and its ontological characterization in 1048b⁶⁹¹.

6.3. Heidegger’s Other Approach to *Telos* in 1939

Is however this ontological vicinity between *praxis* and *physis* foreign to Heidegger? We do not believe it is, for the following reasons: on the one hand, we are joining him in pointing to *praxis* as an ontological domain that escapes a *Fertigsein* paradigm (this is the inner core of the 1922-24 approach to the NE); on the other, Heidegger does find these possibilities in *physis* in his 1939 essay⁶⁹², where *phronēsis* and *praxis* however are not central anymore. Yet, in that essay, for all the disclo-

⁶⁸⁹ The point is actually made by Heidegger, in relation to *praxis* and *poiēsis*, in GA 18 § 10a p. 68 [48]: “*technē*, the «knowing-one’s-way-around the concern at the moment», is that mode of being-in-the-world in which *the agathon becomes explicitly visible*. *Technē* makes the *telos* explicitly visible” (“Die *technē* nun, das »Sichauskennen im jeweiligen Besorgen«, ist diejenige Weise des Seins-in-der-Welt, in der ausdrücklich sichtbar wird das *agathon*. Die *technē* macht ausdrücklich sichtbar das *telos*”). In his comment of Aristotle’s definition of *kinēsis* in book III, a definition which uses solely the example of building (Cf. *Physics* III 1, 201a 16, 201b 8f), Brague makes a similar point, this time in relation to *physis* and *poiēsis*: “What could be here at stake is nothing other than *a simple pedagogical priority of art over nature* (...). Production is chosen as privileged example because it is the movement that better serves the proposed definition: in it, the *telos* is clearly visible (...). Production even lets the *telos* stand out more sharply than natural generation, which Aristotle considers however as the model that is imitated by art” (AQM p. 507, our e).

⁶⁹⁰ Cf. *Physics* II 1, 192b 9ff: “By nature (*phusei*) the animals and their parts exist, and the plants and the simple bodies (earth, fire, air, water)—for we say that these and the like exist by nature. All the things mentioned plainly differ from things which are not constituted by nature. For each of them has within itself a principle of motion (*kinēsis*) and of stationariness”. Cf. also VIII 6, 259b 1ff.

⁶⁹¹ This vicinity is otherwise implied by Aristotle: cf. e.g. NE II 6, 1106b 14f; VI 4, 1140a 14-17 and VI 12, 1144a 3f; *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 16-19.

⁶⁹² Cfr. WBP in GA 9 esp. pp. 341-343 [207-209].

sive force that Heidegger finds in Aristotle's analysis of *physis*, he still contends—as he seems to have maintained to his last days⁶⁹³—that Aristotle “does not formally reject” the basic understanding of being as *Vorhandenheit*⁶⁹⁴. What is essential, though, is not so much whether this judgment is accurate, but whether what Heidegger finds in *physis* in 1939 is not extremely close to what he finds in *praxis* in the 1920s. In this respect, it is remarkable that the longest analysis of 1048b after 1922 is to be found precisely in this essay⁶⁹⁵. *Praxis* is not mentioned at all here, but the passage is definitely viewed as relevant to the task of widening the sense of being, in an approach that in some respects parallels Heidegger's interpretation of *energeia* in the 1922 summer course, although now it seems to welcome this concept as suitable to grasp the being of finite beings⁶⁹⁶.

Heidegger brings the passage up in order to distinguish between movedness (*Bewegtheit*) and movement (*Bewegung*). The practical import is not commented upon, but it is inevitably implicit for us. Heidegger quotes Aristotle:

hora hama kai beōrake «Someone sees, and in seeing he or she has also at the same time (precisely) already seen». Such seeing is the *telos*, the end where the movement of seeing first gathers itself up and essentially is movedness. (‘End’ is not the result of stopping the movement, but is the beginning of movedness as the ingathering and storing up of movement)⁶⁹⁷.

This approach is remarkably far from the assimilation of *telos* to *peras* implicit in the *Natorp Bericht*⁶⁹⁸ and so thoroughly emphasized in GA 18: *telos* is not

⁶⁹³ Cf. *Seminar in Zähringen* (1973) in GA 15 pp. 378-379 [68].

⁶⁹⁴ Cf. WBP in GA 9 pp. 342 ff [208 ff].

⁶⁹⁵ Cf. *Ibidem* pp. 354-357 [216-219]. *Met.* IX 6 and 8 are analyzed.

⁶⁹⁶ Cf. pp. 121 ff. above, and GA 62 § 11f, esp. p. 106.

⁶⁹⁷ WBP in GA 9 p. 354 [217] “*hora hama kai beōrake* »einer sieht und sehend hat er (eben) zumal auch schon gesehen« (...) Solches Sehen ist das *telos*, das Ende, worin sich die Bewegung des Ausblickens erst *auffängt* und wesentlich *Bewegtheit* ist. (»Ende« nicht Folge des Aufhörens der Bewegung, sondern Anfang der *Bewegtheit* als auffangendes Aufbehalten der Bewegung)”. Cf. *Met.* IX 6, 1048b 23.

⁶⁹⁸ Cf. e.g. NB p. 385/38 [136]; GADAMER, H.-G. 1989 p. 233.

anymore the end of being-possibilities (*Seinsmöglichkeiten*)⁶⁹⁹, but instead the source of being-possibilities itself. For a being there can be such a thing as movement only insofar as there is a *telos* in it. Aristotle himself implies this in considering *telos* as one of the concepts to which we apply the term *peras*: “[the] end (*telos*) is that to which motion (*kinēsis*) and action (*praxis*) proceed, and not the end from which. But sometimes (*hote de*) it is both the end from which and the end to which, i.e. that for the sake of which”⁷⁰⁰. With the *hote*, as often in the *Metaphysics*⁷⁰¹, Aristotle is meaning that *from a certain point of view*, i.e. that in which *telos* means something else than just *peras*, *telos* is also the *archē* of movement: not in the sense in which the finished shoe is *telos*—because the finished shoe does not exist neither at the beginning nor during the distension of the productive movement that will bring it forth—but in the sense in which the *eidos* of the shoe makes possible as much the beginning of the productive movement as its distension, and also in the sense in which the project of using it is that for the sake of which the shoemaker gets down to produce it. Thus we come across the two levels of *telē* that are at stake in every movement. (i) *Telos* as *peras* of the movement, i.e. that *telos* which the movement *as such* never attains, because when it is attained the movement is not there any longer—and hence it is defined as *energeia atelēs*⁷⁰². And (ii), *telos* as *archē* of the movement, not only at its beginning but throughout all its distension, i.e. that *telos* which is *had* at every stage by the movement, as what makes it possible—and hence movement is also defined as *entelecheia*⁷⁰³, which does not compromise its continuity but instead makes it possible. This second sense, as a result, encom-

⁶⁹⁹ Cf. GA 18 § 11b p. 85 [59]: “A beyond-which-nothing (...) in the sense that, for a being, there is no further being-possibility beyond the *telos* (...), a being has *come to its end with respect to its being-possibilities*” (“Ein Worüber-hinaus-nichts (...) in dem Sinne, daß es über das *telos* hinaus keine weitere Seinsmöglichkeit für ein Seiendes gibt, daß ein Seiendes *hinsichtlich seiner Seinsmöglichkeiten zu seinem Ende gekommen ist*”).

⁷⁰⁰ *Met.* V 17, 1022a 7f (Tredennick, mod. tr).

⁷⁰¹ Cf. e.g. *Met.* III 4, 1001b 22; V 6 1016a 28; V 12, 1019b 5.

⁷⁰² Cf. *Physics* III 2, 201b 31f; Cf. also *De Anima* III 7, 431a 6f: “*ton atelous energeia*”.

⁷⁰³ *Physics* III 1, 201a 10f.

passes both the process and the finished product, i.e. the more restricted sense of *telos*.

In his approach to 1048b in the 1939 essay Heidegger is referring to this second wider sense, which is ontologically more fundamental: that in which *telos* and *archē* are one and the same. The domain of worldly things is now read from an ontological structure that in 1924 was restricted to the domain of *Dasein* and, specifically, to *phronēsis*, the disposition that discloses its being⁷⁰⁴.

The movement of a moving being gathers itself into its end, *telos*, and as so gathered within its end, «has» itself: *en telei echei, entelecheia*, having-itself-in-its-end. Instead of the word *entelecheia*, which he himself coined, Aristotle also uses the word *energeia*. Here, in place of *telos*, there stands *ergon*, the «work» in the sense of what is to be produced and what has been produced (*im Sinne des Herzustellenden und Her-gestellten*). In Greek thought *energeia* means «standing in the work», where «work» means that which stands fully in its «end». But in turn the «fully ended or fulfilled» (*das Vollendete*) does not mean «the concluded», any more than *telos* means «conclusion»⁷⁰⁵.

Heidegger here considers *entelecheia* and *energeia* as equivalent terms, as Aristotle himself does, not only in his usage of both terms to define *kinēsis* in the *Physics* but also in the two passages of *Metaphysics* IX mentioned above in section I⁷⁰⁶, which we can now recall. Firstly, in IX 3: “the word *energeia*, which we connect with fulfillment (*entelecheia*), has, strictly speaking been extended from movements to other things”⁷⁰⁷. Equivalence, though, does not mean identity—otherwise Aristotle would not have found it necessary to coin *entelecheia*. The

⁷⁰⁴ “In *phronēsis*, the *praxis* ist *archē* and *telos*” (“Die *praxis* ist in der *phronēsis* *archē* und *telos*”) GA 19 § 20a p. 139 [96].

⁷⁰⁵ WBP in GA 9 p. 354 [217] “Die Bewegtheit einer Bewegung besteht somit zuhöchst darin, daß die Bewegung des Bewegten sich in ihrem Ende, *telos*, auffängt und als so aufgefangene im Ende sich »hat«: *en telei echei: entelecheia*, das Sich-im-Ende-Haben. Statt des von ihm selbst geprägten Wortes *entelecheia* gebraucht Aristoteles auch das Wort *energeia*. Hier steht für *telos* *ergon*, das Werk im Sinne des Herzustellenden und Her-gestellten. *Energeia* besagt griechisch gedacht: Im-Werk-stehen; das Werk als das, was voll im »Ende« steht; aber das »Vollendete« ist wieder nicht gemeint als das »Abgeschlossene«, sowenig wie *telos* den Schluß bedeutet”.

⁷⁰⁶ Cf. pp. 50 ff.

⁷⁰⁷ *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 30f.

term *energeia*, as Aristotle puts it in IX 8, *points to entelecheia*⁷⁰⁸: what is meant when we say *energeia* implies what is meant when we say *entelecheia*. *Energeia*, Aristotle states in his only direct definition of this concept, “is the being of the thing (*hyparchein to pragma*), not in the way which we express by ‘potentially’”⁷⁰⁹. But what is this way of existing which is not ‘potentially’? The answer was provided in IX 3: to be *in* fulfillment (*entelecheia einai*), as Ross translates⁷¹⁰, or also ‘to be fulfillment’:

It is agreed that actuality is properly motion. Hence people do not invest non-existent things with motion, although they do invest them with certain other predicates. E.g., they say that non-*being* things (*ta mē ontā*) are conceivable and desirable, but not that they are in motion. This is because, although these things *are* not actually (*ouk ontā energeia*), they will *be* actually (*esontai energeia*). For some non-*being* things *are* potentially (*dynamei estin*), yet they *are* not (*ouk esti de*), because they *are* not (in) fulfillment (*ouk entelecheia estin*)⁷¹¹.

Insofar as something actually is (*energeia estin*)—and *kinēsis* is the privileged phenomenon by which everyone gets to know that⁷¹²—it is also necessarily in fulfillment (*entelecheia estin*). This does not mean that its being possibilities are exhausted, but simply that it *is*—and, “as it is, being itself (*to on auto*) does not come to be nor cease to be (*ou gignetai oude phtheiretai*); for if it did it would have to come out of something (*ek tinos gar an egineto*)”⁷¹³. *Being itself*, the being of a movement as much as the being of a stone, is immediately, it does not take time to be: it has its *telos*, i.e. it has its being, and it has it *inside*: *en telos echein*. It is *teleion*, i.e. no part of

⁷⁰⁸ *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 22f: “the word (*tounoma*) *energeia* is derived from ‘activity’ (*ergon*), and points to the fulfillment (*entelecheia*)”.

⁷⁰⁹ *Met.* IX 6, 1048a 30ff (mod. tr).

⁷¹⁰ Tredennick: “to exist *in* complete reality”.

⁷¹¹ *Met.* IX 3, 1047 a32 ff. Tredennick, mod. tr: we have replaced the usage of the verb ‘to exist’ (cf. also in Ross) for ‘to be’, which seems to us more suitable, because the former risks suggesting a modern reading which does not fit Aristotle’s mind, as Heidegger himself has noted (“Die Metaphysik als Geschichte des Seins” [1941] in GA 6.2. *Nietzsche II* Ed. by Brigitte Schillbach 1997, pp. 363-416, cf. pp. 375 ff). Moreover, only thus is the complementary translation ‘to be fulfillment’ feasible, taking *entelecheia* for a nominative.

⁷¹² Cf. *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 31.

⁷¹³ *Met.* IX 10, 1051b 29f.

its being is to be found out of it—whatever its being here and now is, is there *in* its being:

Matter is potentially (*hylē esti dynamēi*), because it may attain to the form (*eidos*); but when it exists actually (*hotan de ge energeia ē*), it is then *in* the form (*en tō eidei*). The same applies in all other cases, including those where the end is motion (*kai hōn kinēsis to telos*)⁷¹⁴.

The latter remark is especially relevant, because Aristotle implies that he is not applying this consistency or thickness of being only to material objects but also to ‘moving’ beings, i.e. those that have *praxis* or *physis* as their way of being: “as teachers think they have achieved their *telos* when they have exhibited the pupil at work (*energounta*), so also does nature (*kai hē physis homoios*) (...). For the *ergon* is the end (*telos*), and the *energeia* is the *ergon*”⁷¹⁵.

Aristotle explicitly brings together here the respective ways of being of *physis* and *praxis* as we have seen him do elsewhere. Both display the way of being that is characterized by the terms *energeia* and *entelecheia*, in which the *archē* immediately reaches the *telos*: insofar as *praxis* and *physis* start to be, they are fully there as such. This applies also for *the exercise* of *poiēsis*⁷¹⁶, though not for its *ergon* on the way: what makes *physis* and *praxis* distinct from it is the ‘overlapping’ of *ergon* and enactment expressed in the concise statement that “the *ergon* is the end (*telos*), and the *energeia* is the *ergon*”. *Ergon* is difficult to translate here: Tredennick and Ross suggest rendering it as ‘action’, which is suitable for *praxis*, but not so much for *physis*. ‘Work’, in the sense of a finished product, should be discarded, because of the deeper ontological level at which *telos* is dealt with here. Indeed, in 1930 Heidegger does understand it as ‘finished work’, and thus reads the sentence as though Aristotle were narrowing the sense of *energeia* to that of a finished *ergon*, thus understanding

⁷¹⁴ *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 15ff. (Tredennick).

⁷¹⁵ *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 17ff.

⁷¹⁶ Cf. *NE* I 1, 1094a 4; IX 7, 1168a 6f.

it in terms of *Fertigkeit*⁷¹⁷. This specific passage is not translated by Heidegger in 1939, but he states that “*energeia* means «standing in the work», where «work» means that which stands fully in its «end». In turn, the «fully ended or fulfilled» (*das Vollendete*) does not mean «the concluded», any more than *telos* means «conclusion»”⁷¹⁸.

If the fundamental sense of *telos* is not that of conclusion—if it is primarily what fosters the conclusion, not the conclusion itself, and therefore we only call it the conclusion, *peras*, in a derivative fashion—then instead of *energeia* being read as a finished *ergon*, it is the sense of *ergon* that is encompassed by *energeia*, as is the case in NE I with respect to man: “the *ergon* of man is an *energeia* of soul in accordance with, or not without *logos*” (I 7, 1098a 7f)⁷¹⁹. *Ergon* is here understood not from the perspective of a finished product that is inserted from the outside in *praxis*, but as *praxis* itself⁷²⁰. *Kai hē physis homoiōs*⁷²¹: and the same applies to nature, as Heidegger reckons in 1939 by referring to *physis* (yet without mentioning *praxis*) as the fundamental concept to grasp being. That *ergon* is encompassed by *energeia*, that its being is possible because of *energeia*, implies that a stone *is* in the mode of *energeia* as is an athlete in the midst of a race⁷²². And because both belong to *physis*, they *are* specifically as *energeia atelēs*: *kinēsis* is their way of being, regardless of what they do (e.g. run or just stand, for the athlete), or of what happens to them (e.g. fall or just lie there, for the stone). That is, the fact that the athlete is running is only a *kinēsis*,

⁷¹⁷ Cf. GA 31 § 8 p. 69. One year later, Heidegger accepts a wider sense for *energeia*, although he keeps considering *ergon* in the narrow sense of a finished product (cf. GA 33 § 20b p. 204 [175]).

⁷¹⁸ Cf. WBP in GA 9 p. 354 [217].

⁷¹⁹ Cf. also NE VI 12, 1144a 6f.

⁷²⁰ Cf., for the usage of *ergon* as product, opposed to *praxis*, NE I 1, 1094a 5f.

⁷²¹ Cf. *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 19.

⁷²² *Hylē is* (as) *energeia* (Cf. *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 15f). Cf. also MARX, W. 1971 p. 142, POLO, L. 1997 p. 117.

a *Vor-gang* deployed *within* the *kinēsis* (*energeia atelēs*) that is the fundamental constitution of her being, as it is of the stone⁷²³.

6.4. *Aretē* cannot be *teleion*?

The approach to *telos* that we encounter in the 1939 essay, and which leads Heidegger to consider *energeia* and *entelecheia* as equivalent, is by no means the perspective that governed his reading of Aristotelian ontology fifteen years before, in GA 18. But the potentialities that the later Heidegger finds in these concepts are very close to the nerve of his early interpretation of Aristotelian practical philosophy: Heidegger is precisely intending to grasp life, *praxis* in its inner movedness, as it is immediately experienced, and this is what leads him to discard a part of Aristotle's ontological repertory as inadequate to understand this phenomenon. § 17 of this course, revolving on the concept *hexis*, shows at its best the inner conflict that Heidegger believes to find in Aristotle: "it is a mistake to conceive of *aretē* as completedness (*Fertigkeit*), as this contradicts the sense of *aretē*"⁷²⁴. Indeed, *from* the understanding of *teleion* as 'completed' which operates in GA 18, it does not seem to make any sense to apply the term *teleion* to *praxis*, as Aristotle does⁷²⁵.

However, we have argued that, in view of Heidegger's later reading of *Metaphysics* IX 6—which is closer to ours—it makes a lot of sense to apply terms such as *telos*, *teleion* and *entelecheia* to *praxis*, precisely because these concepts point beyond the idea of *Fertigkeit*. However, the fact that Heidegger in 1924 sees these concepts stemming from the *Metaphysics* as caught up in this narrow understanding

⁷²³ *Energeia* is "a concept of being which is wide enough to encompass the being of the moving object" AQM p. 503.

⁷²⁴ GA 18 § 17c p. 188 [127] "[Es ist verfehlt], wenn man die *aretē* als *Fertigkeit* fassen würde — das widerspricht dem Sinn der *aretē*". Cf. also NB 386/39 [137].

⁷²⁵ Cf. e.g. NE I 13, 1102a 5f: "Happiness is an activity of the soul in accordance with fulfilled excellence (*psychēs energeia tis kat aretēn teleian*)".

of being forces him to develop a strongly ontological analysis of *praxis* where he finds, to a large extent, what at that moment *telos* does not seem to offer. For the rest of this chapter we shall proceed by first briefly showing how Heidegger's reading of *teleion* in GA 18 § 11 leads to a specific interpretation of *energeia* and *entelecheia* at the end of the course (§§ 25-28)⁷²⁶, in order to contrast it with his analysis of *aretē* in § 17. With this interpretation of *aretē*, in turn, we shall be driven back, in chapter 7, to the core of the phenomenological analysis of *phronēsis* in GA 19 § 8, and analyze Heidegger's claim that *phronēsis* is always new (*immer neues*).

The approach to *energeia* and *entelecheia* at the end of GA 18 is framed by an investigation of *kinēsis* as what “constitutes *the genuine there-character of being (Da-Charakter des Seins)*”⁷²⁷, i.e. the way in which being shows itself to us. Ontically or phenomenologically, therefore, being is *kinēsis*, but Heidegger advances that this might be also the case at an ontological level: “presumably the being-character (*Seinscharakter*) of *kinēsis* will also have to be interpreted on the basis of this basic sense of being”⁷²⁸. A point that Heidegger holds firm with Aristotle is that “*kinēsis* is not something *para ta pragmata*, not something alongside beings that are there of the world, of nature. This ‘not *para*’ means, in a positive sense: *kinēsis* is a mode of the being of beings that are themselves there”⁷²⁹. This and other points being

⁷²⁶ Two diametrically opposed analyses of these paragraphs of GA 18 can be found in SOMMER, C. 2005 pp. 81-100 and GONZALEZ, F. J. 2006b.

⁷²⁷ GA 18 § 25 p. 287 [194] “die *kinēsis* den *eigentlichen Da-Charakter des Seins* ausmacht”.

⁷²⁸ GA 18 § 25 p. 287 [195] “vermutlich wird auch der Seinscharackter der Bewegung aus diesem Grundsinn von Sein selbst her interpretiert werden müssen”.

⁷²⁹ GA 18 § 26 p. 288 [195] “Die *kinēsis* [ist] nicht etwas *para ta pragmata*, nicht etwas »neben dem Daseienden« der Welt, der Natur. Dieses »nicht *para*« besagt positiv: Die *kinēsis* ist eine Weise des Seins des Daseienden selbst”. Cf. also § 26e p. 307 [208] and p. 379 [257]. Cf. *Physics* III 1, 200b 32f: “there is not such a thing as *kinēsis* over and above the things (*para ta pragmata*). It is always with respect to substance or to quantity or to quality or to place that what changes changes (...). [M]otion and change [do not] have reference to something over and above the things mentioned; for there is nothing over and above them”.

assured, he proceeds to analyze the concepts of *energeia*, *entelecheia* and *dynamis*, from which *kinēsis* is to be understood⁷³⁰.

While in 1939 Heidegger considers *energeia* and *entelecheia* as equivalent terms to express being⁷³¹, in GA 18 he sets these terms in an unusual relation, on the basis of the above mentioned passages of *Metaphysics* IX where Aristotle relates them to one another⁷³². In both of them, Aristotle is speaking about “the name (*tounoma*) *energeia*” as related to *entelecheia*, i.e. as a synonym of it. Surely, Aristotle himself would not hold the *logical* link if it were not grounded on an ontological one. What is odd, however, is the fact that Heidegger slips in a remarkably unphenomenological fashion from the logical to the ontological: the verbs that Aristotle uses to express the relation between the terms are considered to mean, instead, a relation between the ways of being supposedly described by each term. In 1050a 23, Aristotle uses the verb *synteinein*, i.e. to direct or tend towards something: *energeia* “*synteinei pros tēn entelecheian*, «stretches itself out to the end» (*spannt sich aus zum Ende*)”⁷³³. As for the verb used in 1047a 30, *syntithemenē* (to be put together)⁷³⁴, Heidegger suggests, probably after Diels⁷³⁵, to replace it by *synteinomenē*, i.e. the middle voice of *synteinein*, so that the idea of directedness of *energeia* towards *entelecheia* is reinforced⁷³⁶. Nonetheless, it remains that in both passages Aristotle is speaking of the word *energeia*, so that the directedness, the “stretching towards” is referred to the sense of the word, not to the way of being that is defined by *energeia*.

⁷³⁰ Cf. GA 18 § 26d ff. Cf. also NB p. 396/48 [143]

⁷³¹ Cf. WBP in GA 9 p. 354 [217].

⁷³² Cf. *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 30f. and IX 8, 1050a 22f.

⁷³³ GA 18 § 26d p. 296 [200] “*synteinei pros tēn entelecheian*, »spannt sich aus zum Ende«”.

⁷³⁴ Cf. LSJ, headwords *synteinō* and *syntithēmi*.

⁷³⁵ GA 18 § 26d p. 296 [200] Heidegger does not refer this explicitly to Diels, but he quotes this author shortly afterwards. Cf. DIELS, H. “Etymologica” *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung* 47 (1916) pp. 193-210 (p. 201, note 1 for ref.), on the etymology of *entelecheia*.

⁷³⁶ For a detailed discussion of this move, cf. GONZALEZ, F. J. 2006b pp. 541-542.

The fact that the verbs used by Aristotle are in the first place determining a *logical* relation, as Heidegger admits in 1931⁷³⁷, is not trivial, and neither is Heidegger's directly ontological reading of their articulation, since his entire interpretation of *energeia* and *entelecheia* in these paragraphs of GA 18 takes its lead from this peculiar application of *synteinein*. This, in turn, is consistent with the interpretation of *teleion* in § 11, rooted in the thesis that Aristotle's ontology, of which *entelecheia* is the key term, is led by the prevailing motive of presence and completedness. The interpretation is surely consistent with the rest of GA 18, but this is one of those points where Heidegger perhaps privileges too much the letter of the text (or, more specifically, the letter that he believes to see in the text) and subjugates his phenomenological analyses to the fundamental direction of his own interpretation. If, as Heidegger sees it, *energeia* 'stretches itself out' to *entelecheia*, then these terms do not define different aspects of the sense of being, but different ways of being: while *entelecheia* means "«presence, being-present of a being as end» in the sense of the final point that is completed, that has itself in its «end» (...); that which maintains itself in its being-completed, what is there in the genuine sense"⁷³⁸, *energeia* means

a character of being-there, but such that *it is not there in its completedness*; *energeia*: the being-character of *being-grasped in becoming-completed*. In producing, having-been-produced is a determinate mode of being-there—only when one sees that, is it possible to see what movement is: the being-there of a being that is in its *becoming-completed*, but is not completed yet. *Energeia* is *kinēsis*, but not *entelecheia*⁷³⁹.

⁷³⁷ At the end of his course on *Metaphysics* IX 1-3, Heidegger translates 1047a 30 ff. in a manner that renders more accurately the meaning of the text: "the name and meaning of *energeia*—being at work, [is] a meaning which in itself is directed toward *entelecheia* (...)" GA 33 § 22 p. 224 [192] (our e.). Otherwise, these passages will not be the object of a direct translation in 1939.

⁷³⁸ GA 18 § 26d p. 296 [200] "*Entelecheia*: »Gegenwart, Gegenwärtigsein eines Seienden als Ende« im Sinne des letzten Punktes, das fertig ist, das sich in sich selbst in seinem »Ende« hat (...); was sich in seinem Fertigsein hält, was im eigentlichen Sinne da ist". Cf. also pp. 367-370 [248-250].

⁷³⁹ GA 18 § 26d p. 296 [200-201] "ein Charakter des Daseins, aber so, daß *nicht in seinem Fertigsein da ist*; *energeia*: der Seinscharakter des *im Fertigwerden Begriffenseins*. Im Herstellen Hergestelltwordensein ist eine bestimmte Weise des Daseins — nur wenn man das sieht, ist es möglich zu sehen, was Bewegung ist: das Dasein eines Seienden, das ist in seinem *Fertigwerden*, aber noch nicht fertig ist. *Energeia* ist die *kinēsis*, aber nicht *entelecheia*". Cf. also GA 18 pp. 378-382 [255-258].

This alignment of *energeia* and *kinēsis*, a binomial which in turn is opposed to *entelecheia*, is problematical from the point of view of Aristotle's text, since it cannot take seriously Aristotle's indistinct use of *energeia* and *entelecheia* to define movement⁷⁴⁰. Thus, before Aristotle's repeated reference to *kinēsis* as fulfillment (*entelecheia*)⁷⁴¹, Heidegger can only remark that "insofar as being ultimately means being-in-its-end, maintaining-itself-in-its-end in a *conclusive* sense, *entelecheia*, Aristotle must, if he is to speak cautiously, designate the being-there of beings-in-movement as *energeia*"⁷⁴². Surely, one must feel free to question Aristotle's handling of his own concepts; however, the question is raised as to whether Heidegger's understanding of these terms here, deeply influenced as it is by an understanding of *telos*⁷⁴³ that he will qualify in the 30s, provides a better account of the phenomenon of being. Our preceding analyses give us reasons to find both Aristotle and the later Heidegger more compelling than Heidegger in GA 18. Still, it is actually the peculiar understanding of *energeia* and *entelecheia* developed in this course that leads Heidegger, already from the *Natorp Bericht*, to look in Aristotle's practical philosophy for alternative ontological categories.

Despite its contradistinction to *entelecheia*, *energeia* is still for Heidegger "a how of the there of *entelecheia*", namely "being-there as *being-uncompleted*"⁷⁴⁴, being on the way to *telos*. In other words, *energeia* is also encompassed by the archontic idea of being as *Fertigkeit*. This explains why if at the end of GA 18 it is still translated as "being-in-work (*In-Arbeit-Sein*)", it is only from the perspective of

⁷⁴⁰ On *kinēsis* as *energeia*, cf. *Physics* III 2, 201b 31f; cf. also 202a 2.

⁷⁴¹ *Physics* III 1, 201a 10f: "the fulfillment (*entelecheia*) of what is potentially, as such". Cf. also III 3, 202b 25ff: "alteration is the fulfillment (*entelecheia*) of the alterable as alterable (or, more scientifically, the fulfillment of what can act and can be acted on, as such)".

⁷⁴² GA 18 § 27d p. 321 [217, our e.] "Sofern Sein letztlich heißt In-seinem-Ende-Sein, Sich-in-seinem-Ende-Halten in einem endgültigen Sinne, *entelecheia*, muß Aristoteles, wenn er vorsichtig spricht, das Dasein des Seienden-in-Bewegung als *energeia* bezeichnen".

⁷⁴³ "Telos: »end«, not the final addition but how of the there of a being that is from production" ("Telos: »Ende«, nicht der letzte Zusatz, sondern Wie des Da eines Seienden, das ist aus Herstellung") (GA 18 p. 368 [249]).

⁷⁴⁴ GA 18 p. 381 [257] "*Energeia* gerade Dasein als *Unfertigsein*, ein Wie des Da von *entelecheia*".

what is “being-produced (*Hergestelltsein*)”⁷⁴⁵. Some months later, in GA 19, *energeia* is hardly distinguishable from the sense of *entelecheia* developed during the summer course: “*energeia* means nothing else than presence, pure immediate presence at hand”⁷⁴⁶.

Yet in the first lessons of GA 18 Heidegger does not seem to disapprove of Aristotle’s usage of *energeia* to describe the being of *Dasein*, “a being for whom, *in its being as such, this very being is a question, a being that is concerned with its being*”⁷⁴⁷. The term definitely seems to him more adequate than *entelecheia*, the determination of “[that] type of being that maintains itself in its genuine being-possibility so that the possibility is consummated”⁷⁴⁸. In those first lessons, which we have briefly discussed above, Heidegger is immersed in an analysis of NE I, a text that eventually leads him to the analysis of *teleion* in *Metaphysics* V 16 (§ 11), from which spring the interpretations of *hexis*, *energeia* and *entelecheia* later in the course.

Heidegger quotes the very first lines of the NE, where Aristotle holds that “a certain difference is found among ends (*telè*); some are activities (*energeiai*), others are products (*erga*) apart from the activities (*energeiai*) that produce them” (I 1, 1094a 3ff). The continuation of the text (a5) makes clear that by these *energeiai* Aristotle means *praxeis*, since the circumstance is considered in which there are “ends (*telè*) apart from the actions (*para tas praxeis*)”. Heidegger acknowledges the equivalence: *energeia* is “a how of being, such a way of being that has the being-

⁷⁴⁵ GA 18 p. 381 [257-258].

⁷⁴⁶ GA 19 § 25a p. 172 [119] “*Energeia* besagt nichts anderes als Anwesenheit, reines unmittelbares Vorhandensein”. *Entelecheia* hardly appears in GA 19. Cf. § 3b p. 18 [12] where it is mentioned in passing in a definition of the soul in the *De Anima*, “the proper being-present of a living being” (“was am Lebenden sein eigentliches Anwesendsein ausmacht”).

⁷⁴⁷ GA 18 p. 44 [31] “ein Seiendes, dem es *in seinem Sein als solchem auf dieses Sein als solches ankommt*, ein Seiendes, das *um sein Sein besorgt ist*”. Cf. also § 12a p. 95 [65].

⁷⁴⁸ GA 18 § 11c p. 90 [62] “ein solches Seiendes, das sich selbst hält in seiner eigentlichen Seinsmöglichkeit, so daß die Möglichkeit vollendet ist”.

character of *praxis*”⁷⁴⁹. He sharpens this specificity of *energeia* in contrast with products (*erga*) by recurring to the distinction that we encounter in 1048b and in NE X 4 (although without explicitly referring to these passages):

Along with the completing of the shoe, the shoe comes about. The *para* is meant to suggest that the *telos* of concern is something independent of it (...). By contrast, there is going for a walk (...), whose *telos* is reached in that I go for a walk; not that I go here or there, or traverse a definite distance, but that I am out in the air, that I have gone for a walk. The *telos* lies in the *praxis*. Just through my staying within the concern, this being concerned reaches its end⁷⁵⁰.

This second idea of *telos* is not that of something finished, in the sense in which an *ergon* is finished—it refers indeed to something that is wholly there, but not as completed, and thus ready (*fertig*) to be used. The *telos* of walking is *fully* reached “in that I go out for a walk” because no part of the *praxis* ‘walking’ is missing—which means that ‘walking’, thus seen, is an *energeia*: I walk and I have walked. We only find something missing in ‘walking’ when we do not consider it *per se* but as referred to something else: walking *to a destination* is an unaccomplished process, i.e. a *kinēsis*. As a result, Heidegger argues, when Aristotle holds that “the genuine *agathon* of human *Dasein* is, in the end, *eupraxia* or *euzyōia*” he does not mean the *eu* as “something available out in the world, but rather [as] a how of living itself”⁷⁵¹. The point is reiterated further on: “the *anthrōpinon agathon* is *zyōē* itself, «living» itself. The *ergon* is living itself (...). Thus the *anthrōpinon agathon* is *psychēs energeia kat aretēn*”⁷⁵². The *ergon* of life is *immediately* there

⁷⁴⁹ GA 18 § 10b p. 70 [50] “*Energeia* ein Wie des Seins, eines solchen Seins vom Seinscharakter der *praxis*”.

⁷⁵⁰ GA 18 § 10b p. 71 [50] “Neben dem Verfertigen des Schuhs fällt der Schuh ab. Das *para* will andeuten, daß das *telos* des Besorgens etwas für sich Eigenständiges ist (...). Dagegen ist ein Spaziergang (...), damit bei seinem *telos*, daß ich spazierengehe; nicht daß ich da und da hingehe, eine bestimmte Strecke laufe, sondern daß ich draußen bin an der Luft, daß ich spazierengegangen bin. Das *telos* liegt in der *praxis*. Dadurch, daß ich mich im Besorgen aufhalte, kommt diese Besorgung zu Ende, zu ihrem *telos*”.

⁷⁵¹ GA 18 § 10b p. 78 [55] “Deshalb ist am Ende das eigentliche *agathon* des menschlichen Daseins die *eupraxia* oder *euzyōia*. Das *eu* ist nicht etwas, das außerhalb in der Welt gelegen ist, sondern ein Wie des Lebens selbst”. Cf. NE I 8, 1098b 21 ff.

⁷⁵² GA 18 § 12b p. 100 [69] “Das *anthrōpinon agathon* [ist] die *zyōē* selbst, das »Leben« selbst. Das *ergon* ist das Leben selbst (...). Das *anthrōpinon agathon* ist also *psychēs energeia kat aretēn*”. Cf. NE I 6, 1098a 16f.

with life itself, because it is nothing different from it. In this sense, *energeia* indeed means “immediate presence”. But what *does not* seem to follow from these analyses is that *energeia* means “*nothing else* than presence”, and specifically “immediate presence *at hand*”⁷⁵³, as Heidegger will put it some months later by referring to *eudaimonia*, which, “insofar as it concerns the being of man as its finished state (*als ein Fertigsein*), (...) *as man’s proper being*, must be transferred to *energeia*”⁷⁵⁴.

This is all the more surprising in view of Heidegger’s interpretation of *aretē* in GA 18: in § 10 itself, he remarks that “*aretē* [is] *energeia*, a matter that shows itself *in deeds*, that has its being in *genuine, concrete being-there in every situation*”⁷⁵⁵; consistently, in § 17 he holds that “it is a mistake to conceive of *aretē* as completedness (*Fertigkeit*), as this contradicts the sense of *aretē*”⁷⁵⁶. What can be distilled from this is that Heidegger is very clear on the structure of *aretē* but that he is markedly ambiguous on the structure of *energeia*. The key question is whether this ambiguity is already in Aristotle or if it is projected on him by Heidegger’s restrictive interpretation of *telos* in § 11 (*telos* as limit, *peras*), which increasingly reveals itself as crucial for Heidegger’s approach to Aristotle in GA 18, in GA 19 and beyond: in *telos* almost everything is decided.

Heidegger grants Aristotle a powerful insight into the ‘how’ of the being of human life, but at the same time he seems convinced that a part of the ontology

Cf. also GA 18 § 17c p. 182 [123]: “[T]he basic conditions governing the *ergon* of human beings are entirely different than those in the case of a *technē*”. (“Deshalb sind für das *ergon* des Menschen ganz andere Grundbedingungen maßgebend als bei einer *technē*”).

⁷⁵³ GA 19 § 25a p. 172 [119] “*Energeia* besagt nichts anderes als Anwesenheit, reines unmittelbares *Vorhandensein*”. Cf. MARX, W. 1971 p. 142: “Other determinations of *ousia*, first of all as *energeia* and as *telos*, do not have the sense of ‘appearing’ for a ‘knowing’. It is not true that Aristotle’s *ousia* is limited to merely being the ‘visible’ in the foreground, since the occurrence of *energeia* and of *telos* are ‘inner’ movements”.

⁷⁵⁴ *Ibidem* [118-119, mod. tr.] “[S]ofern sie das Sein des Menschen als ein Fertigsein [betrifft] (...) muß die *eudaimonia* als das *eigentliche Sein in die energeia* versetzt werden”

⁷⁵⁵ GA 18 § 10b pp. 76-77 [53-54] “die *aretē* ist *energeia*, eine Sache, die sich *in der Tat* zeigt, die ihr Sein hat *im eigentlichen, konkreten in jeder Lage Dasein*”.

⁷⁵⁶ GA 18 § 17c p. 188 [127] “[Es ist verfehlt], wenn man die *aretē* als *Fertigkeit* fassen würde — das widerspricht dem Sinn der *aretē*”.

with which Aristotle intends to grasp this ‘how’ is inadequate for his purpose⁷⁵⁷. Nevertheless, we said, it is precisely this conviction about Aristotle’s failure to find the appropriate concepts to think human life in a way fitting the phenomena that constitutes the strong stimulus that leads him to search for this conceptuality within Aristotle’s practical philosophy. It is with this aim that Heidegger undertakes a thorough analysis of *hexis*, “one of Aristotle’s ontologically basic concepts”⁷⁵⁸. Aristotle’s connection of *aretē* and *teleion* having resulted in contradicting the sense of *aretē*, because of the *Fertigkeit* import in *teleion*, he now searches for an alternative way in the relation between *aretē* and its *genos*, *hexis*: “from the connection between *hexis* and *aretē*, we will see the orientation of *hexis* toward the *Dasein* of human beings in its concrete possibilities”⁷⁵⁹.

This connection is developed through the phenomenon of the mean term (*mesotēs*), developed in NE II, where Aristotle holds that “ethical *aretē* is a *mesotēs*”⁷⁶⁰. Heidegger makes clear from the beginning how the *mesotēs*, as conceived by Aristotle, is not a determination of human actions from the measuring stick of “mediocrity”: the NE is not a bourgeois morality⁷⁶¹. Quite on the contrary, Aristotle conceives the *mesotēs* as a life-long task, since the effort to maintain oneself in it is required of us at every single action: “the end of an action is relative to the occasion (*kata ton kairon*)” (III 1, 1110a 13f):

Aristotle emphasizes, again and again, that the *meson* is hard to find and easy to miss; errors are easy. To fly off the handle is easy, but to be angry at the right moment is

⁷⁵⁷ Cf. the synthetic formulation of this in SZ § 44 p. 225.

⁷⁵⁸ GA 18 § 17b p. 176 [119, mod. tr.] “Wir haben in der letzten Stunde einen der ontologischen Grundbegriffe des Aristoteles klar gemacht, die *hexis*”.

⁷⁵⁹ GA 18 § 17c p. 179 [121] “Aus dem Zusammenhang zwischen *hexis* und *aretē* werden wir die Orientierung der *hexis* auf das Dasein des Menschen in seinen konkreten Möglichkeiten sehen”. Cf. NE II 5, 1105b 19ff. (esp. 1106a 11ff.) on *hexis* as *genos* of *aretē*.

⁷⁶⁰ NE II 9, 1109a 20 (mod. tr).

⁷⁶¹ Cf. GA 18 § 17c pp. 179-180 [121].

difficult. This requires the possibility of being able to seize the moment as a whole (*den Augenblick als Ganzes ergreifen zu können*)⁷⁶².

It is then through Aristotle's analysis of the phenomenon of the *mesotēs* that he gets to disclose the *kairos* and in turn, through the *kairos*, the whole of the being of life in its inner movedness: *aretē* is conceived not as "a property, not [as] a possession brought to *Dasein* from without, but [rather as] a mode of *Dasein* itself"⁷⁶³, whose being is at stake in its own *being* at each single moment, i.e. in its own *behaving* at each moment. Aristotle uses quite the same terms as Heidegger to express this in a passage of NE IX with which we are by now well acquainted: "happiness is a form of activity (*energeia tīs*), and an *energeia* clearly is something that happens, not a thing that we possess all the time, like a piece of property (*ktēma*)" (IX 9, 1169b 29f). The term *energeia* is indeed very meaningful in this respect, because it articulates the feedback between 'being' and 'behaving' that is implicit in the recurring formula that, in different forms, keeps its basic sense from these years to *Sein und Zeit*:

the being of this being [i.e. *Dasein*] is involved in its own being. Thus it is constitutive of the being of *Dasein* to have, in its very being, a relation of being to this being⁷⁶⁴.

⁷⁶² GA 18 § 17c pp. 190-191 [128] "Aristoteles betont immer wieder, daß das *meson* schwer zu finden und sehr leicht zu verfehlen ist, die Ausschläge sind leicht. In Zorn geraten ist leicht, im rechten Augenblick zornig sein ist schwierig. Es bedarf der Möglichkeit, den Augenblick als Ganzes ergreifen zu können". Cf. NE II 9, 1109a 26ff: "[A]ny one can get angry—that is easy—or give or spend money; but to do this to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, with the right aim, and in the right way, *that* is not for every one, nor is it easy; that is why goodness is both rare and laudable and noble".

⁷⁶³ GA 18 § 17c p. 181 [122] "Die *aretē* als *hexis* ist keine Eigenschaft, kein von außen an das *Dasein* herangebrachter Besitz, sondern *eine Weise des Daseins selbst*".

⁷⁶⁴ SZ § 4 p. 12 (mod. tr.) "[D]iesem Seienden in seinem Sein *um* dieses Sein selbst geht. Zu dieser Seinsverfassung des *Daseins* gehört aber dann, daß es in seinem Sein zu diesem Sein ein Seinsverhältnis hat". Stambaugh's translation of the first sentence, "in its being this being [i.e. *Dasein*] is concerned *about* its very being" does not to our mind render radically enough the "relation of being" that is implied afterwards (on this relation of being cf. also "Der Begriff der Zeit" in GA 64 p. 114 [205]). The being of *Dasein* is not just something about which it is concerned: it is something that it *is* and, as a result, *Dasein* cannot help being at stake in its very being. The point is better rendered to our mind by Rivera's Spanish translation, which can use a reflective form of the Spanish verb 'ir' (*go, geben*) to express this immediate involvement: "a este ser *le va* en su ser su propio ser" (its being is at stake in its own being). Stambaugh's 'being concerned about' would fit the similar formula in GA 18 p. 44 [31], where Heidegger speaks of "ein Seiendes, das um sein Sein besorgt ist". In SZ § 22 p. 104 *geben um*

Dasein's being, *Dasein*'s 'energeia', is at stake in its own *energein*, in its own being (i.e. behaving). The fact that Aristotle uses *energeia* as much to refer to "the being of the thing (*hyparchein to pragma*)"⁷⁶⁵ as to the being of life—"life is an *energeia* (*ζῶε energeia tis esti*)"⁷⁶⁶—could be indeed used as an argument that the being of life is understood by him in terms of the *Fertigkeit* of *erga*, of available *pragmata*, as in GA 19⁷⁶⁷; but it works also as an argument that the being of *pragmata* is understood from a way of being, *energeia*, that befits the being of life and is in fact encountered only *from* this being and *in* this being, as seems to be the case in 1048b, where *praxis* and *energeia* are explicitly brought together. In this respect, rather than conceiving life from the perspective of *pragmata*, Aristotle seems indeed to be conceiving *pragmata* from life—or at least he would be setting the basis to conceive them in this way.

If this feedback between *erga* or *pragmata* and *energeia* is only 'unsaid' or 'unthought' in Aristotle, we might be standing before an 'ambiguity'. However, if it is deliberate, then we should think of an *analogy*, so that both *pragmata* and life would participate (*metechein*) in the structure of being that is defined by *energeia*, as species of this *genos*. To decide this, one should apply the old hermeneutical principle according to which the parts must be understood in view of the whole, and the modern hermeneutical principle of charity⁷⁶⁸ (presupposing consistency in Aristotle, unless otherwise proven). If *energeia* is somehow common to *ergon* as work at hand and *ergon* as life in enactment—a how of one's being—, the decision

appears as a *specific* determination of the *Besorgen* of *Dasein*, which to our mind shows the relevance of our nuance: "Das Besorgen des Daseins, dem es in seinem Sein um dieses Sein selbst geht".

⁷⁶⁵ *Met.* IX 6, 1048a 31.

⁷⁶⁶ NE X 4, 1175a 12.

⁷⁶⁷ Cf. GA 19 § 25a p. 172 [118-119]. Cf. also GA 31 §§ 7-8 pp. 40 ff, esp. pp. 68-69.

⁷⁶⁸ "Since charity is not an option, but a condition of having a workable theory, it is meaningless to suggest that we might fall into massive error by endorsing it. Until we have successfully established a systematic correlation of sentences held true with sentences held true, there are not mistakes to make. Charity is forced on us; whether we like it or not, if we want to understand others, we must count them right in most matters". DAVIDSON, Donald *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (1984). New York: Oxford University Press, 2001 p. 197.

on which of these senses is the originary one, as much for Aristotle as for things themselves, has to be taken according to what Aristotle says in different passages of his works and also according to the phenomena to which he is pointing, explicitly or inexplicitly—which goes beyond the classical hermeneutical prescriptions, but is required by the things themselves, i.e. by the interweaving of phenomenology and hermeneutics that Heidegger urges.

All this does not imply approaching Aristotle in an acritical or naïve manner, nor unfolding a dogmatic reading of his work, but simply taking him seriously, in order to avoid that the hypothesis of an Aristotle consciously or unconsciously faithful to a Greek archontic sense of being may function as a dogmatic tenet in the interpretation. This kind of serious work is surely performed in Heidegger's analysis of *hexis* in § 17 of GA 18, the phenomenological imprint and exhaustiveness of which seems to us much stronger than that of *energeia* and *entelecheia* in §§ 25-28, which show concern about a peculiar reading of *the letter* of Aristotle's text, to the detriment of phenomenological analysis (perhaps because of an excess of faithfulness on Heidegger's part to his hypothesis about Aristotle's leading concept of being). In the analysis of *hexis* and *kairos*, on the other hand, one sees Heidegger at his best, starting from Aristotle's text to analyze things themselves, with and beyond Aristotle, according to the guidelines that he himself lays down for the course:

We must see the ground out of which these basic concepts [i.e. Aristotle's] have arisen, as well as *how* they have so arisen. That is, the basic concepts will be considered in their specific conceptuality so that we may ask *how the matters themselves meant by these basic concepts are viewed, in what context they are addressed, in which particular mode they are determined*⁷⁶⁹.

⁷⁶⁹ GA 18 § 1 p. 4 [4] “Es muß gesehen werden der *Boden*, aus dem diese Grundbegriffe erwachsen, und *wie* sie erwachsen sind, d. h. die Grundbegriffe sollen betrachtet werden auf ihre *spezifische Begrifflichkeit*, so daß wir fragen, *wie die gemeinten Sachen selbst gesehen sind, woraufhin sie angesprochen werden, in welcher Weise sie bestimmt sind*”.

Striking the *mesotēs*, Heidegger contends, requires “the possibility of being able to seize the moment as a whole (*den Augenblick als Ganzes ergreifen zu können*)”⁷⁷⁰. It is worth noting that, although the specific analysis of *phronēsis* is eventually postponed to GA 19, it is actually introduced here, since this ability is none other than *phronēsis*, as Heidegger cursorily implies⁷⁷¹. The *simultaneity* with which the *Augenblick* or *kairos* and the wholeness of life appear in the phenomenon of the *mesotēs*, a phenomenon only accessible to the *phronimos*, is the precise sense in which Heidegger holds that the being of life is sighted. If, in the *kairos*, the *zōon logon echon* could not see beyond what is present to him at a certain moment, then only a state of affairs, and not life itself, would be disclosed. This is in fact confirmed by the defective case: the more one is far from being a *phronimos*, and thus of *aretē*, the more one is absorbed in the present⁷⁷². On the other hand, if life could *only* be grasped as a whole “in a pure and simple looking at” (*reine hinsehbende Verstehen*)⁷⁷³, independently from the situatedness in which this ‘looking at’ itself is placed, it would not be grasped as life, because it would be considered from the outside, as something *vorhanden*. The case, however, is that both *kairos* and the wholeness of life are given together in the phenomenon of *mesotēs*, so that life is grasped at once as a whole and in its situatedness in the now, i.e. from the inside.

But this temporality, this “stretching across time”⁷⁷⁴ implied in *aretē* is shown in the first place in the way in which *hexis* is generated: *hexis* is only arrived

⁷⁷⁰ GA 18 § 17c p. 191 [128]. “Es bedarf der Möglichkeit, den Augenblick als Ganzes ergreifen zu können”.

⁷⁷¹ Cf. GA 18 § 18a pp. 192-193 [130]. Cf. NE VI 5, 1140a 28 on *phronēsis* as directed to “living well in general (*eu zēn holos*)”. The specific determination of *phronēsis* is not tackled here, but instead we are provided with an analysis of its *genē*, namely *hexis* and *aretē* (*hexis* is *genos* of *aretē*, which in turn is a *genos* of *phronēsis*). This analysis constitutes a crucial reference for the interpretation of GA 19, where it remains for the most part implicit.

⁷⁷² The motive of *Verfallen*, so crucial in *Sein und Zeit* (cf. §§ 35-38), while possibly stemming also from other references, clearly finds here a strong phenomenological basis.

⁷⁷³ NB p. 382/34 [134].

⁷⁷⁴ GA 18 § 17c p. 181 [122] “Erstreckung in die Zeit”.

at through habituation (*di ethous*)⁷⁷⁵: “we have the possibility of learning courage, of leaving cowardice behind, *not in a fantasized reflection upon Dasein*, but rather in *venturing out into Dasein* according to the possibilities of existence as encountered”⁷⁷⁶. *Hexis* is not a possession of which we may subsequently make use, but a ‘possession’ that is the result of our ‘usage’, as Aristotle puts it by opposing *hexis* to senses⁷⁷⁷. However, how are we to use something that we still do not have? —We ‘use’ our self, we ‘venture out into our own *Dasein*’. This peculiar *genesis* also makes clear that the term ‘possession’ is in fact inadequate to grasp what *hexis* is. *Hexis* is not a ‘what’ but a ‘how’, “a mode of *Dasein* itself. We are encountering once again, as always, the peculiar category of the *hon*”⁷⁷⁸. *Hexis* is the result of how we ‘use’ our own existence with its possibilities, and this result is nothing other than a ‘how’ of our own existence: *more than a having, it is a being*. Actually, although ‘use’ is more adequate than ‘possession’, it ultimately falls short of the sense of *hexis*, because to use something entails to have a dominion over it, to *have* it, in the sense of embracing it from the outside, which does not accurately explain our relation to ourselves. Again with *Sein und Zeit*, “it is constitutive of the being of *Dasein* to have, in its very being, *a relation of being* to this being”⁷⁷⁹: more than ‘using’ our own self, we *are* our own self, in the performative sense of ‘venturing out into it’.

In this respect, the structure of Aristotle’s definition of *hexis* in *Metaphysics* V 20 is not only enlightening but essential. Heidegger alludes to it at § 17a, although later he does not relate it back to the interesting analysis of *mesotēs* in § 17c

⁷⁷⁵ Cf. NE II, 1103a 25ff.

⁷⁷⁶ GA 18 § 17c pp. 181-182 [122-123, add. e.] “[Wir haben] die Möglichkeit, den Mut zu lernen, die Feigheit zu verlieren, nicht in einer phantastischen Reflexion über das Dasein, sondern in dem *Sichhinauswagen in das Dasein* je nach den Möglichkeiten der betreffenden Existenz”.

⁷⁷⁷ Cf. NE II, 1103a 30f: “We use them because we have them” (*Chresamenoí eschomen*).

⁷⁷⁸ GA 18 § 17c p. 181 [122] “*eine Weise des Daseins selbst*. Wir begegnen immer wieder der eigentümlichen Kategorie des Wie”.

⁷⁷⁹ SZ § 4 p. 12 (mod. tr.) “Zu dieser Seinsverfassung des Daseins gehört aber dann, daß es in seinem Sein zu diesem Sein ein Seinsverhältnis hat”. Cf. also “Der Begriff der Zeit” in GA 64 p. 114 [205].

that we are following. Aristotle says: “we call *hexis* a kind of *energeia* (*energeia tis*) of the haver (*echontos*) and the had (*echomenon*), something like an action (*praxis*) or movement (*kinēsis*)”⁷⁸⁰. Which is translated by Heidegger as follows: “*hexis* is the *energeia*, «the genuine there, the being-present of the having and of what is had»”⁷⁸¹. The translation reflects a side of *energeia*, namely its appearance (genuine there, being-present), but it again leaves in the shade its performative side (“something like an action”), in spite of the fact that Heidegger includes *praxis* and *kinēsis* in his quotation of the Greek text. This approach is then projected on the interpretation of Aristotle’s explanation of the definition, which Heidegger quotes subsequently:

When one thing makes and one is made, *between* them (*metaxu*) *there is a making*, so too *between* him who has a garment and the garment which he has *there is a having*. This sort of having, then, evidently *we cannot have* (*ouk endechetai echein hexin*); for the process will go to infinity, if we can have the having of what we have⁷⁸².

Heidegger comments that “this having is something ultimate, as nothing more can be had on its part. The having of this having is not a new being-determination, but simply the there (*das Da*), the being-present (*das Gegenwärtigsein*)”⁷⁸³. Again, however, this account does not seem to reflect all the potential of the concept⁷⁸⁴. Aristotle denies the possibility that we can have ‘the having’ that exists between ‘what we have’ and ‘what is had by us’ because this would initiate a process to infinity (*apeiron*), and thus the determination of the being of *hexis* would

⁷⁸⁰ *Met.* V 20, 1022b 4f.

⁷⁸¹ GA 18 § 17a pp. 174-175 [118] “*Hexis* ist die *energeia*, »das eigentliche Da, das Gegenwärtigsein des Habenden und des Gehabten«”.

⁷⁸² *Met.* V 20, 1022b 5ff. (Ross’ translation, our e). Cf. GA 18 § 17a p. 175 [118]: Heidegger quotes the whole fragment in Greek.

⁷⁸³ GA 18 § 17a p. 175 [118] “Dieses Haben ist ein Letztes, es kann seinerseits nicht mehr gehabt werden. Das Haben dieses Habens ist keine neue Seinsbestimmung, sondern einfach das Da, das Gegenwärtigsein”.

⁷⁸⁴ Cf. in contrast, this remark in his seminar of the winter semester 1922-23, which significantly mentions *physis*: “The *hexis* of *physis* is distinguished from that of *technē* in that I *have* myself as I *grow*” (“Die *hexis* der *physis* ist darin von der *technē* unterschieden: ich *habe* mich, indem ich *wachse*”). (Cf. *Übungen über Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles* in *Heidegger-Jahrbuch* 3 [2007] p. 44, add. e).

collapse. *In this respect*, Heidegger's contention that *peras* is a crucial concept for the determination of being in Aristotle is straight to the point⁷⁸⁵. But by this Aristotle is appealing precisely to the phenomena themselves: if we are to grasp an *ousia* or a *kinēsis* starting from our experience of them, the ontological account must pass "the test of the facts of life"⁷⁸⁶, and an infinite regress surely does not, at least concerning finite beings. Thus, while the phenomena with which Aristotle deals are surely determined by *peras*, this does not imply that *telos* is absorbed without further ado in this determination, as Heidegger repeatedly infers.

Apart from the delimitation of the phenomenon in the there (*das Da*), the argument of the *regressio ad infinitum* entails that if *hexis* is to *be* at all, then it cannot *be had*: in *hexis* 'being' excludes 'being had'. Being appears here at its best in its immediacy, as something that is not available, not ready to *manipulation*, not *vorhanden*. Yet, does this characterization of *hexis* resist a phenomenological analysis? Does this *between* have phenomenological credentials? Let us examine Aristotle's first example, that of making (*poiēin*): "when one thing makes and one is made, between them there is a making"⁷⁸⁷. If we read it in the light of Aristotle's designation of *hexis* as "an action or movement", we realize that the same phenomenon is alluded to in the *Physics*: "the *energeia* of that which has the power of causing motion is not other than the *energeia* of the movable; for it must be the *entelecheia* of both"⁷⁸⁸. In a movement like that of *poiēsis* the movement of the mover (the *poiētos*) and the being-moved of the movable object (the *poiētes*) is the same, and is not *had* by them: the *poiētes* performs the movement ("it is mover because it actually can do it (*energein*)"⁷⁸⁹) and the *poiēton* is acted upon ("it is on the

⁷⁸⁵ Cf. GA 18 § 8 pp. 38-39 [28-29].

⁷⁸⁶ Cf. NE IX 8, 1179a 20ff. (mod. tr): "We must therefore survey what we have already said, bringing it to the test of the facts of life, and if it harmonizes with the facts we must accept it, but if it clashes with them we must suppose it to be mere theories".

⁷⁸⁷ *Met.* V 20, 1022b 5f.

⁷⁸⁸ *Physics* III 3, 202a 15f.

⁷⁸⁹ *Physics* III 3, 202a 17 (mod. tr.)

movable that [the mover] is capable of being active (*energētikos*)⁷⁹⁰, in such a way that the *poiēton* becomes something new through this movement (*energeia atelēs*).

The fact that, differently from what happens in *physis* and *praxis*, the *poiēton* and the *poiētes* are different beings, provides the movement of *poiēsis* with the phenomenological privilege to which we alluded before in this chapter. *Poiēsis* enables us to *speak* of a ‘between’ which, however, is not meant as something set apart from the beings of the *poiēton* and the *poiētes*. The ‘between’ is not, as it were, floating in the void. We can surely understand the *poiēton* and the *poiētes* separately as different *energeiai* at any pause in the process (e.g. the *poiētes* taking a rest while the unfinished *poiēton* rests in the workshop), or even during the process itself. But insofar as they are grasped as involved in *poiēsis*, “there is a single *energeia* of both alike”⁷⁹¹ which neither they have nor a third party can have: it is something they *are*. The ‘between’, as a result, is not to be understood as something *vorhanden*: it is *energeia*, the being of *kinēsis*. If Aristotle, always so cautious about the risk of bestowing being on things that do not exist, speaks of a ‘between’, it is precisely to mean that movement, which is nothing apart from things (*para ta pragmata*)⁷⁹², is *this between*.

The phenomenological analysis of *poiēsis* thus provides us with an insight on the ontological structure of *hexis* which is crucial to understand *praxis*, and which we could not grasp from *praxis* itself, because of *the identity between* the mover and the movable, i.e. oneself. *Hexeis* are not possessions, but part of our

⁷⁹⁰ *Loc. cit.* (mod. tr.)

⁷⁹¹ *Physics* III 3, 202a 18.

⁷⁹² Cf. *Physics* III 1, 200b 32f.

own being, which is not ours to *have*, but to *be*⁷⁹³; which is always in performance, always at stake: *energeia*, *praxis*. Our identity, our being, is a *between*⁷⁹⁴.

If Heidegger does not retrieve the definition of *hexis* as *energeia* in *Metaphysics* V for the analysis of the temporality of *hexis* in § 17c, it is probably because he does not find in it this performative side we have been emphasizing. To our mind, however, the retrieval is necessary to understand in all its extent the important point that *hexis* is a being more than a having. We have mentioned that a first hint of the temporality of *hexis* is found by Heidegger in the fact that *hexis* is obtained through habit⁷⁹⁵, and thus its structure is already sketched: use against possession, *chrēsis* against *ktēsis*, a crucial distinction already used by Plato, and one, if not *the* source of Aristotle's original conception of *energeia*⁷⁹⁶. Now, after concluding that “it is a mistake to conceive of *aretē* as completedness (*Fertigkeit*)”⁷⁹⁷, Heidegger proceeds to sharpen the determination of *hexis* and *aretē* as applied to *praxis*, in contradistinction with *poiēsis*. In *poiēsis*, the habituation process is directed to reduce deliberation “insofar as it is through training that the completedness of attaining a result comes about”⁷⁹⁸. In *praxis*, on the other hand, it is not the result that is constitutive of the action, but *proairesis*, “the manner and mode of «resolving oneself». It belongs to action that it arise in each case out of a

⁷⁹³ Cf. *Übungen über Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles* (WS 1922-23) in *Heidegger-Jahrbuch* 3 [2007] p. 44, quoted above in note 784.

⁷⁹⁴ Interesting in this respect is a statement in Gadamer's 1928 *Habilitationschrift*, which was supervised by Heidegger: “Plato's philosophy is a dialectic not only because in conceiving and comprehending it keeps itself on the way to concept but also because, as a philosophy that conceives and comprehends in that way, it knows man as a creature that is thus «on the way» and «between» (*Unternwegs und Zwischen*)” (GADAMER, H.-G. 1985 pp. 6-7). The point is unfolded later in Gadamer's work, as applied to philosophical Hermeneutics: “It is in this between (*in diesem Zwischen*) that hermeneutics finds its true place” (1990 p. 300).

⁷⁹⁵ Cf. GA 18 § 17c p. 181 [122].

⁷⁹⁶ Cf. p. 45 and notes 52 and 166 (these terms are not used by Heidegger here).

⁷⁹⁷ GA 18 § 17c p. 188 [127] “[Es ist verfehlt], wenn man die *aretē* als Fertigkeit fassen würde — das widerspricht den Sinn der *aretē*”.

⁷⁹⁸ GA 18 § 17c p. 189 [127] “Die Einübung hat gerade den Sinn, die Überlegung zum Ausfall zu bringen, sofern es gerade durch die Einübung der Fertigkeit darauf ankommt, ein Resultat zu erreichen”.

resolution. Action has its *telos* in the *kairos*⁷⁹⁹. While the excellence of *poiēsis*, from the restricted point of view of the particular process that it generates, is judged by the result that ‘comes out’, by the *ergon* as finished product, the excellence of *praxis* is internal to it, i.e. every action is judged on its own, and not primarily according to its external results, because those are not the action itself: “it belongs to action that it *proceed by way of deliberating and as such be fulfilled*”⁸⁰⁰. In deliberating and deciding one is already acting: ‘the how of action’ is properly at stake in them, to the extent that other considerations of the ‘how’, from the point of view of the external results, are ultimately technical considerations. This immediacy of *praxis*, its inseparability from the being of *Dasein* (because *praxis* is its own being in its inner movedness), entails that

the manner and mode of habituation, in the case of action, is not practice but retrieval (*Wiederholung*). Retrieval does not mean the bringing-into-play of a settled completedness, but rather *acting anew in every moment on the basis of the corresponding resolution*⁸⁰¹.

Heidegger’s point here is of the utmost importance for any interpretation of *phronēsis* in Aristotle: one does not make progress towards *aretē*, one does not put one’s practical *hexeis* into play by repeating some prescribed rules on how something is to be done (as is the case with technical *hexeis*, that we call skills rather than *aretai*), but by deciding at each time on how to act, “acting anew in every moment on the basis of the corresponding resolution”. The immediacy of

⁷⁹⁹ GA 18 § 17c p. 189 [127-128] “die Art und Weise des »Sichentschließens«. Zur Handlung gehört, daß sie jeweils aus einem *Entschluß* entspringt. Die Handlung selbst hat ihr *telos* im *kairos*”. On this issue, cf. our paragraph 2.5 above, esp. pp. 75 ff.

⁸⁰⁰ GA 18 § 17c p. 189 [128] “Zur Handlung gehört also, daß sie gerade *durch die Überlegung hindurchgeht und als solche vollzogen wird*”.

⁸⁰¹ GA 18 § 17c p. 189 [128] “Die Art und Weise der Gewöhnung bei der Handlung ist nicht Übung, sondern *Wiederholung*. Wiederholung besagt nicht: Ins-Spiel-Bringen einer feststehenden Fertigkeit, sondern *in jedem Augenblick neu aus dem entsprechenden Entschluß heraus handeln*”. Mod. tr: we follow Stambaugh’s translation of *Wiederholung* as ‘retrieval’ (cf. *Being and Time* SUNY, 1996 p. xv). The translators of GA 19 render the term as ‘repetition’. While this is indeed one of the meanings of the word, to our mind here it obscures the precise meaning that Heidegger searches and which leads him to choose this word: *niederholen* means to retake, to take anew, and that is the sense operating in ‘retrieve’. Below we use also ‘reappropriate’.

praxis makes the appropriation of the *kairos* a must: no action is independent from a specific situation—of our own self and of others—requiring an *ad hoc* resolution, no universal rules can ultimately exempt us from facing the ‘here and now’ of an action, precisely because this ‘here and now’ is part of the action itself. What is more, even if we do not explicitly face it, we are nonetheless faced with it: our being is at stake at each ‘here and now’.

Of course, also in the case of *poiēsis*, as considered *per se*, the ‘here and now’ does play a role, as Dunne has convincingly argued⁸⁰². But it is crucial to understand that this role is a much more restricted one: the sculptor, e.g. will have to adapt himself to the unique characteristics of the piece of marble with which he is working. Yet this ‘here and now’, this being ready for the *kairos* does not disclose life as a whole, an *ergon* which we *are* ourselves—and which, as a result, is unfinished so long as we are—but only the whole of the process of bringing out the statue, an *ergon* which can come to be finished and ready (*fertig*).

We understand that it is in this respect that Heidegger here translates *poiēin* as “completing” (*verfertigen*)⁸⁰³. Both *poiēin* and *prattein* “cultivate the how of dealing itself. The distinction, [though], lies in the fact that *praxis* depends on the *how*”⁸⁰⁴: because its result, its *ergon*, is internal to life, i.e. because its *ergon* is life itself, and life is never finished as long as it is—it does not cease—, *praxis* always brings us back to the *kairos*. Apart from sleeping and losing one’s use of reason, there is no pause granted to *Dasein* as *praktikos*: pauses are possible for *Dasein* as *poiētes*, because a *kinēsis* can cease, but the stream of life, and thereby *praxis*, “does not cease; we are living and have lived”⁸⁰⁵.

⁸⁰² Cf. DUNNE, J. 1993 pp. 315-356, esp. pp. 343 ff.

⁸⁰³ GA 18 § 17c p. 190 [128].

⁸⁰⁴ *Loc. cit.* “[N]icht bestimmtes Material aufzunehmen, sondern *das Wie des Umgebens selbst auszubilden*. Der Unterschied liegt darin, daß es bei der *praxis* auf das *Wie* umgeht”.

⁸⁰⁵ *Met.* IX 6, 1048b 27.

The performative sense of *energeia* that pervades Aristotle's conception of *physis* (defined as a way to *physis* itself) and *praxis* (for which *being* is *behaving*) makes senseless his resort to *telos* and *entelecheia* for the characterization of concepts such as *kinēsis* or *aretē*, unless *telos* and *entelecheia* point beyond the paradigm of *Vorhandenheit*. This is precisely the point we have intended to make in this chapter: *telos* does not imply the end of being-possibilities⁸⁰⁶, but instead the source of being-possibilities itself—as Heidegger sees it in 1939⁸⁰⁷. *Telos* not only does not distort the ontological force of *praxis* as Aristotle conceives it in the NE but makes it possible. It is certainly not an aim, as it were, attached to beings (*para ta pragmata*), which would stop on arrival at their goal. *Telos* a determination of being itself, yet not one by which beings are *completed*—as Heidegger sees it—but *fulfilled and at the same time open and directed towards their fulfillment*. “*Energeia* is the *telos*”⁸⁰⁸ that structures beings as *a way to the realization of what they always already are*⁸⁰⁹.

⁸⁰⁶ Cf. GA 18 § 11b p. 85 [59]: “A beyond-which-nothing (...) in the sense that, for a being, there is no further being-possibility beyond the *telos* (...), a being has *come to its end with respect to its being-possibilities*?” (“Ein Worüber-hinaus-nichts (...) in dem Sinne, daß es über das *telos* hinaus keine weitere Seinsmöglichkeit für ein Seiendes gibt, daß ein Seiendes *hinsichtlich seiner Seinsmöglichkeiten zu seinem Ende gekommen ist*”).

⁸⁰⁷ WBP in GA 9 p. 354 [217].

⁸⁰⁸ *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 9.

⁸⁰⁹ Cf. *Physics* II 1, 193b 13.

7. *Kairos* and *Aei*, Poles of the Gigantomachia

Our reconsideration in chapter 5 of Heidegger's portrayal of the relation between *praxis* and *technē* in GA 19 has brought again to the foreground the relevance of the concept of *telos*. The fourfold dialogue between Heidegger's very different approaches to it in 1924 and in 1939, Aristotle's own understanding of the term, and its phenomenological-ontological possibilities, provides now the basis to proceed in our reading of Heidegger's interpretation of the NE in GA 19, and face the decisive *gigantomachia*⁸¹⁰ of *phronēsis* and *sophia* with which the 'Aristotle introduction' to that course ends.

In reappropriating (*wiederholen*)⁸¹¹ his phenomenological analysis in chapter 5, we had recognized as problematic Heidegger's point that Aristotle would conceive *sophia* as the only *aretē* of *technē*, to the exclusion of *phronēsis*. This move surely does not in the least imply removing *phronēsis* from the scene, but rather intends to sharpen its uniqueness as far as the possibilities of disclosing the being of *Dasein* are concerned. The analysis of *hexis* and *kairos* developed in GA 18 is now extended around another cryptic statement of Aristotle: *phronēsis* cannot be forgotten—or, as Heidegger renders it, *phronēsis* is, like *Dasein*, always new. This makes the idea of there being an abyss between *phronēsis* and *sophia* all the more evident in Heidegger's eyes, and as a result Aristotle's privileging of *sophia* as the highest way of *alētheuein* for *Dasein* becomes deeply problematical for Heidegger. An approach to this *gigantomachia*, after which NE VI virtually disappears from Heidegger's work, is to occupy us now.

⁸¹⁰ *Sophist* 246a: "a battle of gods and giants (*gigantomachia*) going on between them over their quarrel about reality (*peri tēs ousias*)". Cf. GA 19 §§ 67 ff. and SZ § 1 p. 1.

⁸¹¹ Cf. note 801 above on this term.

7.1. *Phronēsis* is at Each Time New

Heidegger's analysis of *phronēsis* in § 8 of GA 19 had started from the crucial point that distinguishes it from *technē*, namely that *technē* is concerned with the production of something else, understanding by this 'something else than *Dasein* himself as a whole'. In this respect, "health or bodily strength, which promote *Dasein* in a particular regard"⁸¹² are objects of the concern of *technē*, because they result from a deliberation *kata meros*⁸¹³, according to a particular aspect of *Dasein*. *Phronēsis*, instead, "deliberates in the right way *poia pros to eu zēn holōs*, regarding «what is conducive to the right mode of being of *Dasein* as such and as a whole»"⁸¹⁴. For this reason, because *phronēsis* deliberates about *the being* of *zōē* itself, and not about something that *zōē* may *have* (health, strength, properties, etc.), because it is a deliberation about the *good* and not about *goods* that is at stake here, "the *telos* has the same ontological character as *phronēsis*"⁸¹⁵: *eupraxia* is the 'what-for' of the deliberation of *phronēsis*, which is itself *praxis*.

Worth noting is the fact that Heidegger's phenomenological approach cannot help finding here again a 'teleological' meaning, an idea of aim beyond the conception of *telos* as a limit (*peras*)⁸¹⁶. What is more, it is precisely because *telos* is something else than a limit that *phronēsis* can appear in its specificity: beyond the *telē* that are attained in human life, there is an 'always and at the same time never fully attained, never fully ready' *telos* that keeps life moving: *eupraxia*. On the one

⁸¹² GA 19 § 8a p. 49 [34] "Beiträglichkeiten, die in bestimmter Hinsicht, z.B. in Hinsicht auf Gesundheit oder Körperkraft, für das *Dasein* beiträglich sind".

⁸¹³ Cf. NE VI, 5 1140a 27.

⁸¹⁴ GA 19 § 8a p. 49 [34] "Wir nennen einen *phronimos* den, der in rechter Weise überlegt, *poia pros to eu zēn holōs*, »was zuträglich ist für die rechte Weise des Seins des *Daseins* als solchem im Ganzen«. Cf. NE VI, 5 1140a 28.

⁸¹⁵ GA 19 § 8a p. 49 [34] "Das *telos* ist vom selben Seinscharakter wie die *phronēsis*". Cf. NE VI, 5 1140b 6f.

⁸¹⁶ The meaning becomes explicit some lines below: "*Dasein* is disclosed as the *bou eneka*, a «for the sake of which». ("Dasein [ist] als das *bou beneka*, das Worumwillen, aufgedeckt") (GA 19 § 8a p. 50 [35]).

hand, one can only be happy if the form (*eidos*) of happiness is fully there⁸¹⁷: “At the same time (*hama*) we are happy and have been happy (*eudamonein kai eudaimonēken*)”⁸¹⁸. On the other, happiness is not attained all of a sudden: “one swallow does not make a summer, nor does one day; and so too one day, or a short time, does not make a man blessed and happy” (I 7 1098a 18ff). Happiness takes time to come to being; but it only comes to be as it is now because it has been somehow previously attained:

Of that which is coming to be, some part must have come to be, and, of that which is changing, some part must have changed (...). It is surely clear, then, in this way, that *energeia* is in this sense also, viz. in order of becoming and of time, prior to *dynamis* (*protera tēs dynamēōs kata genesin kai chronon*)⁸¹⁹.

Our happiness, the *eu* of our *praxis*, is always changing. But if we ‘cut’ this *kinēsis* as Aristotle does in 1048b by saying that in an infinitesimal now—the *hama*—“we are happy and have been happy”, then we find *energeia*, not *dynamis*⁸²⁰. That the *telos* is fulfilled (*teleion*), thus limiting (defining: *horismos*)⁸²¹ the being of life, making it real, does not entail the ending (*peras*) of the movement of life, but rather makes its movedness possible. Only if life is *entelecheia* can it be understood as *kinēsis*; only if *telos* is always already there in ‘my *praxis* here and now’ can *enpraxia* be a *telos* that, as it were, pushes forward ‘this *praxis* here and now’. That is why, as Heidegger puts it later in the course, in the now of *phronēsis*, the now that *phronēsis* can see, “*praxis* is *archē* and *telos*”⁸²².

⁸¹⁷ Cf. NE X 4, 1174a 14-16.

⁸¹⁸ *Met.* IX 6, 1048b 26.

⁸¹⁹ *Met.* IX 8, 1049b 35 - 1050 a3.

⁸²⁰ Cf. POLO, L. 1997 p. 117.

⁸²¹ As in the case of Aristotle’s ruling out of characterizations of being that lead to a *regressio ad infinitum*, in respect to which Heidegger points to *peras* as a fundamental concept of being for the Greeks (cf. GA 18 § 8 pp. 38 ff. [28 ff.]) we believe Heidegger is also right in including definition (*horismos*) among these fundamental concepts (cf. § 8 pp. 36 ff. [26 ff.]). However as in the case of *peras*, *horismos* is, at least for Aristotle, *only an aspect of being, not its whole characterization*.

⁸²² GA 19 § 20a p. 139 [96] “Die *praxis* ist in der *phronēsis archē* und *telos*”.

We have already analyzed the consequences that Heidegger draws from Aristotle's statement that "while there is such a thing as *aretē* in *technē*, there is not such a thing as *aretē* in *phronēsis*" (VI 5, 1140b 21f)⁸²³. Heidegger inferred—correctly to our mind—that *phronēsis* itself is an *aretē*. However, he concluded subsequently that *phronēsis* could not be the *aretē* of *technē*, on an objectively very tiny textual basis and with scarce phenomenological *Selbstaussweisung*⁸²⁴. Our reserve about this second move, however, is not a closed issue, but one we must now reopen and put to the test.

Heidegger expresses the specificity of *phronēsis* as *aretē* in another way that we can now discuss more deeply, from the background of his important approach to *hexis* and *kairos* in GA 18. The point stems from Aristotle's concise statement that "in *technē* he who errs willingly is preferable, but in *phronēsis*, as in the *aretai*, it is the reverse" (VI 5, 1140b 22ff). Heidegger comments, we have seen, that in the case of *phronēsis* "every failure entails failing oneself (...). *Phronēsis* is not oriented toward trial and error; in moral action I cannot experiment with myself"⁸²⁵. Then he adds:

With *phronēsis*, unlike *technē*, there is no more or less, no «this as well as that» (*kein Sowohl-Als*), but only the seriousness of the definite decision, success or failure, either-or. Insofar as *phronēsis* is *stochastikē*, it is impossible for it to be more accomplished⁸²⁶.

⁸²³ Cf. pp. 159 ff. above.

⁸²⁴ On the methodological relevance of this term, cf. note 612 above.

⁸²⁵ Cf. GA 19 § 8c p. 54 [38, mod. tr.] "Bei der *phronēsis* (...) da ist jedes Fehlgehen ein Sich-Verfehlen (...). Die *phronēsis* is nicht darauf orientiert, zu probieren; ich kann im sittlichen Handeln nicht mit mir experimentieren".

⁸²⁶ GA 19 § 8c p. 54 [38, mod. tr.] "Bei der *phronēsis* gibt es kein Mehr oder Minder, kein Sowohl-Als auch wie bei der *technē*, sondern nur den Ernst der bestimmten Entscheidung, das Treffen oder Verfehlen, das Entweder-Oder. Sofern die *phronēsis stochastikē* ist, hat sie gar keine Möglichkeit, vollendeter zu sein". Mod. tr: the English translators render *vollendeter* as 'more complete', which is confusing, because 'complete' is the term they use elsewhere to translate *fertig*, which precisely has connotations from which Heidegger tends to detach *phronēsis*.

Phronēsis is *stochastikē*. Heidegger is surely referring to the passage in NE VI where Aristotle states, concerning the *phronimos*, that “the man who is without qualification good at deliberating (*haplos eubolos*) is the man who is capable of aiming in accordance with calculation at the best for man of things attainable by action (*tou aristou anthropō tōn praktōn stochastikos kata ton logismon*)” (VI 7, 1141b 12ff). Aristotle also uses the term *stochastikē* three times in book II: “if *aretē* is more exact and better than any art, as *physis* also is, then it must have the quality of aiming at the intermediate (*tou mesou stochastikē*)” (II 6, 1106b 14f); and later: “*aretē* is a kind of mean (*mesotēs tis*), since it is skillful in aiming at what is intermediate (*stochastikē tou mesou*)” (1106b 26f)⁸²⁷. NE II is precisely the main thread of the analysis of *hexis* and *kairos* in GA 18, centered around the phenomenon of the *mesotēs*, which we have discussed above. Following the logic of Aristotle’s argument, Heidegger now recovers for his interpretation of book VI his analysis of GA 18, in which the specificity of *aretē* as referred to *kairos* was gained: because differently from *technē*, *phronēsis* is an *aretē* itself, everything is at stake for it in the how of its ‘use’, of its being put into play.

That is the precise meaning in which Heidegger’s statement that in *phronēsis* “there is no more and less” can make sense (he cannot be meaning that deliberation does not look for the *mesotēs*, which is indeed the peak between the more and the less). For *phronēsis* there is no back office, no private workshop where one can make mistakes that will not come to the light: whatever is ‘produced’ by *phronēsis* is immediately visible, so to speak, in the shop window. One may well experiment with oneself, but the experiment itself is the ‘finished’ *ergon* one gets, whether it is successful or not. In this respect, “there is no more or less” for it. This, according to our experience of *praxis as deployed in time*, entails that once one has acted, one can certainly consider that one’s anger was out of proportion, or that one was too mild—because it is not easy to strike the *mesotēs*—,

⁸²⁷ Mod. tr. For the third occurrence in book II, cf. NE II 9, 1109a 21.

but these considerations do not change the *ergon* just ‘produced’. They may affect the *ergon* that I am going to be from now on, insofar as they lead me to behave differently in the future, but not the *ergon* that I have ‘become’ with my action. This, however, is only a way of speaking, because the *ergon* that I have come to be and the *ergon* that I am going to be do not stand apart but constitute a continuum in time, so that what I actually do when I redirect my behavior is to *retrieve* in a new way the *ergon* that I have come to be.

Certainly, if we maintain this parallelism of *praxis* with the productive paradigm of *poiēsis*, it is only in order to disclose its specificity. Against the mode of being-there in which the *erga* of *poiēsis* stand before me (*Vorhandenheit*), in such a way that I may decide to destroy them because they are defective or sell them because they are acceptable, the *ergon* of *praxis* does not stand before me, but is identical with me, ontologically immediate: I am this *ergon*, I am my *praxis*, I am this *there* (*Dasein*) generated by myself, starting from my previous possibilities. (This, in passing, shows how the characterization of *Dasein* can stem from the consideration of *praxis* as opposed to *poiēsis*, without this implying a reduction of the categories of *Dasein* to those of being as *Vorhandenheit*. None other is in fact the procedure by which Heidegger is making his way in this interpretation).

Yet, there is something in Heidegger’s inference from the fact that *phronēsis* is *stochastikē*, i.e. skillful in aiming at the *mesotēs*, which might at first sight appear as surprising: “insofar as *phronēsis* is *stochastikē*, it is impossible for it to be more accomplished. Thus it has no *aretē* but is in itself *aretē*”⁸²⁸. Heidegger does not gloss the inference, but instead swiftly applies it as an argument for his sharp contrast between *phronēsis* and *technē* with which we have dealt above. Yet, it is important to delimit its field of validity, as always, on phenomenological grounds: that *phronēsis* cannot be more accomplished, according to its skill to strike the *mesotēs*, can be

⁸²⁸ GA 19 § 8c p. 54 [38, mod. tr.] “Sofern die *phronēsis stochastikē* ist, hat sie gar keine Möglichkeit, vollendeter zu sein. Sie hat also keine *aretē*, sondern ist in sich selbst *aretē*”.

understood as meaning that my *phronēsis* ‘here and now’ has no other resource to make it better than *phronēsis* itself. Because *phronēsis* is *aretē*, its ability is entirely dependent on what it ‘is’: that is all it ‘has’. *But* if we detach ourselves from the ‘here and now’ of *phronēsis* and think of it as “stretching across time”⁸²⁹, then it can of course be more accomplished, because it is a *hexis* and, as such, it is generated through habituation (*di ethous*)⁸³⁰, which in turn is the result of action. Because more than a having it is a being, *phronēsis* is as dynamic as our own being, as our own *praxis*—it is, indeed, *praxis* itself. This in fact draws us back to the inseparability between what we do and what we are, so that the inclusion of continuity in time in the characterization of the phenomenon secures its correct interpretation.

After summarily discarding the idea that *phronēsis* be the *aretē* of *technē*, Heidegger asks whether it could be regarded as the *aretē* of *epistēmē*. Aristotle, he argues, entertains the possibility: opinion (*doxa*), which for all its coarseness is still a theoretical knowledge, “is about what can be otherwise, and so is *phronēsis*” (VI 5, 1140b 27f). But the leveling is cut short: *phronēsis* “is not only a reasoned state (*oud hexis meta logou monon*)” (b28). Heidegger translates this as follows: “«but *phronēsis* is not a *hexis* of *alētheuein* which is autonomous in itself and is only for the sake of disclosing»; on the contrary, it is a *hexis* of *alētheuein* which is *praktikē*”⁸³¹. Relevant is the way in which Heidegger renders the narrow sense of *logos* in this passage—*meta logou*: “autonomous in itself and only for the sake of disclosing”. Because *phronēsis* is *praktikē*, because it belongs to my own being, it cannot be re-

⁸²⁹ GA 18 § 17c p. 181 [122] “Erstreckung in die Zeit”.

⁸³⁰ Cf. NE II, 1103a 25 ff. and GA 18 § 17c pp. 181-182 [122-123].

⁸³¹ GA 19 § 8c p. 55 [39] “»Aber die *phronēsis* ist keine *hexis* des *alētheuein*, die in sich eigenständig ist, die lediglich um des Aufdeckens willen ist«, sondern sie ist eine *hexis* des *alētheuein*, die *praktikē* ist”. Mod. tr: Rojcewicz and Schuwer’s English translation of this passage is misleading: “*phronēsis* is not a *hexis* of *alētheuein*, a *hexis* which is autonomous in itself (...)” leads to understand that what follows the comma is an explanatory clause of what *hexeis* of *alētheuein* are in general, which is not the case. The clause is indeed between commas in the original, but this *in German* need not imply an explanation: the context must say. And, as can be understood from the continuation of the text—well rendered in the translation, too—Heidegger is rather specifying the *kind* of *hexis* that *phronēsis* is.

duced to a knowledge process that I could bracket in time as having a beginning and an end, and which I could objectify as different from me, as *vorhanden*. For instance, a study about meteorology consists of a knowledge that falls within the phenomenon of *alētheuein* verified in *epistēmē*: it has determinate contours in one's life (it was started then and finished then) and it stands apart from it as a product of one's work. For that reason, its accomplishedness is to be judged on its objective results, which are appropriated without the being of the researcher. This befits to the letter the character of *poiēsis*, so that in this respect Heidegger is right to align *epistēmē* with it: both are “[*hexeis*] of *alētheuein* into which *Dasein* places itself explicitly (*sich eigens bringt*)”⁸³². English provides us with a very graphical—not to say ontological—term to express this: we *get down* (as it were, from our being in the genuine sense) to producing (*poiēin*) or to investigating (*epistasthai*) but we do not get down to acting (*prattein*), because we are always already acting, as much as we are always already being. The point must be made, however, that this contrast implies for *epistēmē* what has been held elsewhere about *poiēsis*, namely that, for all its differences from *praxis*, *epistēmē* is still embedded in it: if *epistēmē* ever starts to operate *and* persists in its being “*for the sake of disclosing*”, it does so because it stems from our *praxis*, the only determination of our being that is capable of *activating* the *kinēsis* of *epistēmē* towards the *telos* that keeps it moving.

What we could call the ‘contourability’ or ‘bracketing in time’ of an *alētheuein* like *poiēsis* and *epistēmē* is not only apparent in the phenomenon of getting down to it or placing oneself in it (*sich in es bringen*) but also in that of forgetfulness, as indicated in the second somewhat enigmatic and concise remark by which Aristotle characterizes the distinctiveness of *phronēsis*. The point has a phenomenological potential that Heidegger does not in the least overlook: *phronēsis* is more than a *hexis meta logou* because “a *hexis* of that sort may be forgotten, but *phronēsis* cannot” (VI, 5 1140b 28ff).

⁸³² GA 19 § 8c p. 56 [39] “[D]ie *hexis meta logou* ist eine *hexis* des *alētheuein*, in die sich das *Dasein* eigens bringt”.

Heidegger comes upon this phenomenon starting from the consideration of the ‘contourability’: while “I can experience, notice and learn from what has already been experienced, noted, and learned (...), *phronēsis* is in each case new”⁸³³. Heidegger’s impersonal way of referring to what has already been done is, be it intended or not, extremely accurate: he could have said ‘I can experience from what *I* have already experienced’, but he actually says ‘I can experience from what *has been* experienced’. This allows for a full-length portrait of the ‘availability’ (which well renders *Fertigkeit* here) of knowledge in *poiēsis* and *epistēmē*: at least a part of the knowledge in *poiēsis* and *epistēmē*, whether it is drawn from someone else who has it or from oneself, because it was previously acquired by oneself, is there (*Da*) as something available, as something I can acquire and possess. This availability, which is clearly viewed in the first case—getting the know-how from someone else—, is also importantly operating in the latter: when I get down to producing something, I get the know-how from myself *as other*, e.g. when I get down to producing a pair of shoes, I get the know-how from *my being a shoemaker*, which is not my being as a whole, which is not *me* without further ado. On the other hand, when I act—in the wide sense of *praxis* for which I cannot say that I get down to it, because I am always at it—, what takes place is a retrieval (*Wiederholung*): not a “bringing-into-play of a settled completedness, but rather [an] *acting anew in every moment on the basis of the corresponding resolution*”⁸³⁴. I am not bringing to the *kairos* a part of myself, as something that I ‘possess’ and thereby ‘use’, but rather *the kairos is bringing my whole being to the occasion where I find myself*. ‘Finding oneself’ (*sich befinden*)⁸³⁵ is what properly defines our original relation to

⁸³³ GA 19 § 8c p. [39] “ [I]ch [kann] erfahren, merken, lernen (...), was schon erfahren, gemerkt, gelernt ist, während die *phronēsis* jedesmal neu ist”.

⁸³⁴ GA 18 § 17c p. 189 [128] “Wiederholung besagt nicht: Ins-Spiel-Bringen einer festsitzenden Fertigkeit, sondern *in jedem Augenblick neu aus dem entsprechenden Entschluß heraus handeln*”.

⁸³⁵ Cf. “Der Begriff der Zeit” (1924) in GA 64 p. 114 [205]: “The averageness of everyday *Dasein* does not imply a reflection upon the ego of the self, and nevertheless *Dasein* has itself. It *finds* itself with itself” (“In der Durchschnittlichkeit des alltäglichen Daseins liegt keine Reflexion auf das Ich und das Selbst, und doch hat sich das Dasein selbst. Es *befindet* sich bei sich selbst”).

our *praxis*, a movement that is previous to our own deliberating on what to do: one always already finds oneself acting.

It is not by chance that it is precisely in these terms, i.e. as a ‘finding oneself’ that *praxis* is characterized in 1048b. This passage of *Metaphysics* IX 6 provides, in spite of the fact that it is not used by Heidegger in this course, another important hint to understand what he finds in this ‘always being new’ of *phronēsis*. *Phronēsis* is in each case new precisely because “it does not cease”⁸³⁶: every single moment of our life, of our *kinēsis*, is *praxis*, so that we are modelling it all the time, or rather, our *praxis* is being modelled all the time by itself, “explicitly or inexplicitly”⁸³⁷. With *praxis* it does not make any sense to speak of retaking our ‘practice’ where we left it the day before, as a harp player does: our *praxis* is not retaken as something that ceased yesterday when time was over or when we decided to leave it—instead, it is *praxis* that ‘retakes’ us at each time, that retrieves our whole being. *Praxis* is not ours to set aside, because it belongs to the structure of our being, which is not available, not ready to hand. ‘Playing’ life is not like playing the harp: the rehearsal is always already the performance. In *praxis* rehearsal and performance identify with each other in a single movement that does not cease—life is always *live*.

The contrast between the *praktikos* and the harpist (although one must not forget that ‘being a harpist’ is always encompassed by ‘being *praktikos*’) reveals the inner connection between these two basic tenets of Aristotle about *phronēsis* to which Heidegger reasonably attaches so much importance: firstly, the idea that mistakes in *phronēsis* do not make it stronger; secondly, the idea that *phronēsis* cannot be forgotten. What lies beneath both points is the fact that *praxis*, the *energeia atelēs* that we are, does not cease: it is always at stake. In *praxis*, we said, a

⁸³⁶ *Met.* IX 6, 1048b 27.

⁸³⁷ GA 18 § 12a p. 95 [65] “[Dasein ist] ein solches Seindes, in dessen Sein es ausdrücklich oder unausdrücklich auf sein Sein ankommt”. Cf. also § 17c p. 180 [121-122].

mistake is not set apart in the back room: it is not ours to hide or forget, because it is not there as available for our decision. *In fact it is not properly oneself who does not forget, but one's being, one's praxis.* We believe that it is in this respect that Heidegger makes his reputed connection between *phronēsis* and moral conscience (*Gewissen*), which until the publication of this lecture course was mainly known through Gadamer, on whom the move left a deep impression⁸³⁸:

As regards *phronēsis*, there is no possibility of falling into forgetting. Certainly the explication that Aristotle gives here is very meager. But it is nevertheless clear from the context that we would not be going too far in the interpretation by saying that Aristotle has here come across the *phenomenon of conscience*. *Phronēsis* is nothing other than conscience set into motion (*das in Bewegung gesetzte Gewissen*), making an action transparent. Conscience cannot be forgotten (...). Conscience always announces itself. Hence because *phronēsis* does not possess the possibility of *lethē*, it is not a mode of *alētheuein* which one could call theoretical knowledge⁸³⁹.

Heidegger's account of this connection is definitely more extensive than Aristotle's laconic statement that *phronēsis* cannot be forgotten, but still rather succinct for the audacity of what it suggests. Volpi asks, "how could Heidegger in his accurate and attentive reading of Aristotle bring two concepts so temporally and semantically remote as *phronēsis* and conscience into such an outrageous neighborhood?"⁸⁴⁰. The question is not less rhetorical than Heidegger's statement. With Gadamer and other commentators, Volpi relates this passage to the call of conscience (*Ruf des Gewissens*) which is argued in *Sein und Zeit* to be the phenomenon

⁸³⁸ Cf. GADAMER, Hans-Georg "Die Marburger Theologie" (1964) in *Gesammelte Werke 3* 1987a pp. 197-208 (esp. pp. 199-200) and "Auf dem Rückgang zum Aufgang" (1986) in *Gesammelte Werke 3* 1987b pp. 394-416 (esp. p. 400).

⁸³⁹ GA 19 § 8c p. 56 [39] "Bei der *phronēsis* gibt es nicht die Verfallensmöglichkeit des Vergessens. Zwar ist die Explication, die Aristoteles hier gibt, sehr knapp. Aber es ist doch aus dem Zusammenhang deutlich, daß man in der Interpretation nicht zu weit geht, wenn man sagt, daß Aristoteles hier auf das *Phänomen des Gewissens* gestoßen ist. Die *phronēsis* ist nicht anderes als das in Bewegung gesetzte Gewissen, das eine Handlung durchsichtig macht. Das Gewissen kann man nicht vergessen (...). Das Gewissen meldet sich immer wieder. Weil also die *phronēsis* nicht die Möglichkeit der *lethē* hat, ist sie keine Weise des *alētheuein*, die man als theoretisches Wissen ansprechen könnte".

⁸⁴⁰ VOLPI, F. "«Das ist das Gewissen!» Heidegger interpretiert die Phronesis (Ethica Nicomachea VI, 5)" (2007a) in Steinmann, M. (ed.) *Heidegger und die Griechen* Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 2007 pp. 166-180 (p. 167 for ref).

through which *Dasein* is originally disclosed to itself⁸⁴¹. Although a close examination of this correspondence exceeds our possibilities here, it is fully consistent with the fact that Heidegger repeatedly holds in this course, in different guises, that “the object of *phronēsis* is *praxis*, the *zōē* of man, human *Dasein* itself”⁸⁴². *Phronēsis* is “conscience set into motion”, not in the sense that conscience could be actually brought to a halt and then set again in movement and so on, but rather in the sense that, because *phronēsis* discloses *praxis*⁸⁴³ and is *praxis* itself, this “eye of the soul (*omma tēs psychēs*)”⁸⁴⁴ is always in motion, as one’s own being is.

For Volpi, “Heidegger must have arrived [here] at the conclusion that, if [*phronēsis*] is more than a *hexis* and if, therefore, it cannot be overlooked, it must be a characteristic of the soul itself. It therefore has to be ontologized”⁸⁴⁵. We have argued above why the term ‘ontologization’ does not seem accurate to describe Heidegger’s approach to the NE⁸⁴⁶, as though this work had no ontological weight *a priori*. To be sure, by comparing it with conscience, Heidegger is reading *phronēsis* ontologically, as an eye of the soul that cannot avoid *seeing* always because it is inseparable from our *being*, i.e. from our *behaving*. Yet, we believe that this ontological reading is actually possible because of the belongingness of *praxis* to the genus *energeia* that is implied by Aristotle as much in *Metaphysics* IX 6 as in the NE—even if Heidegger does not make that connection explicit. That *praxis* is *energeia*, both on its own and in relation to *poiēsis* or *epistēmē*, entails that, in the same way that being is *being*—that being is essentially performative—the

⁸⁴¹ Cf. SZ §§ 56-58, esp. pp. 272-273; VOLPI, F. 2007a pp. 175 ff, and 1992 pp. 118-119; GADAMER, H.-G. 1987 p. 200; TAMINIAUX, J. 1989 pp. 185-186; VIGO, A. 2008 pp. 223-225.

⁸⁴² GA 19 § 21 p. 143 [98] “der Gegenstand der *phronēsis* ist die *praxis*, die *zōē* des Menschen, das menschliche *Dasein* selbst”. Cf. also GA 19 § 8a pp. 48-51 [34-36]; § 22a p. 146 [100]; § 24a pp. 165-168 [114-115]; NB 384/36 [135].

⁸⁴³ GA 19 § 22a p. 146 [100]. “The being disclosed by *phronēsis* is *praxis*. In this resides human *Dasein*” (“Das Seiende, das die *phronēsis* aufdeckt, ist die *praxis*. Darin liegt das menschliche *Dasein*”).

⁸⁴⁴ NE VI 12, 1144a 30.

⁸⁴⁵ VOLPI, F. 1992 p. 119.

⁸⁴⁶ Cf. pp. 116 ff. above.

knowledge that is at stake in *phronēsis* is more a *knowing* than a ‘knowledge’. *Phronēsis* is a ‘knowledge’ being operated anew and *as a whole* in the *kairos*, not a deposit of knowledge of which one extracts a part to be applied here and now. This has an important parallel in the medieval distinction between *actus exercitus* and *actus signatus* which, although not mentioned in this course, is operating in the background of this approach to *phronēsis* not less than in other of Heidegger’s lessons on the way to *Sein und Zeit*, as Gadamer has recalled⁸⁴⁷.

7.2. No Bridge in the Abyss

At the beginning of this chapter we have compared the opposition between *phronēsis* and *sophia* maintained by Heidegger in these first lessons of GA 19 with the battle of giants (*gigantomachia peri tēs ousias*)⁸⁴⁸ of Plato’s *Sophist*. Later in the course, Heidegger interprets this passage and remarks that “the battle is first of all over what primarily and genuinely satisfies the meaning of being, i.e., presence”⁸⁴⁹. This battle between those who consider *aisthēsis* the genuine mode of access to being and those who consider that it is *noein* or *logos* that fulfills this role⁸⁵⁰ very well reflects Heidegger’s sharp opposition between *phronēsis* and *sophia*. The fact that he will eventually retrieve Plato’s *Sophist* to present the guiding thread of his questioning in *Sein und Zeit*⁸⁵¹ reveals the reach of this opposition for Heidegger on his way to his magnum opus.

⁸⁴⁷ Cf. GADAMER, H.-G. 1987c p. 389. Gadamer himself seems to point to this conceptual core when he says that our historically-effected consciousness (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*) is more being than consciousness (*mehr Sein als Bewußtsein*)” (“Zwischen Phänomenologie und Hermeneutik. Versuch einer Selbstkritik” (1985) in *Gesammelte Werke 2. Hermeneutik II. Wahrheit und Methode. Ergänzungen/ Register*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993 pp. 3-26 (p. 11 for ref.).

⁸⁴⁸ Cf. *Sophist* 246a.

⁸⁴⁹ GA 19 § 67 p. 467 [323]. “Der Kampf geht zunächst darum, was dem Sinn von Sein, Anwesenheit, primär und eigentlich genügt”.

⁸⁵⁰ Cf. *loc. cit.* [323-324].

⁸⁵¹ Cf. SZ p. 1 and *Sophist* 244a.

Heidegger's thorough emphasis on the uniqueness of the structure of *hexis* and *aretē* in GA 18 and of *phronēsis* and *praxis* in GA 19 culminates in this controversy between *phronēsis* and *sophia*, centered around the question of which is to be the highest possibility of *alētheuein* for *Dasein*. The tension is already drawn at the end of § 9, devoted to *sophia*: while “*phronēsis* aims at and makes transparent precisely the *endechomenon allōs echein*, the being of human *Dasein*”, *sophia* is oriented towards “beings which *always* are”⁸⁵², and nonetheless it is the highest possibility of *alētheuein*. The distinction between these objects, what always is, and what can be otherwise, is made by Aristotle quite at the beginning of NE VI, as one that constitutes two ways of *logon echein*: the *logistikōn* (which is concerned with what can be otherwise), under which *phronēsis* and *technē* fall, and the *epistēmōnikōn*, (which is concerned with what is always as it is) within which *sophia* and *epistēmē*. In his presentation of these ways of *logon echein* in § 5a, Heidegger brings them together:

Home and courtyard have their being under heaven, under the sun, which traverses its course daily, which regularly appears and disappears. This world of nature, which is always as it is, is in a certain sense the background from which what can be other and different stands out. This distinction is an entirely original one. Therefore it is wrong to say that there are two regions of being (...). Rather, this distinction articulates the *world*; it is its first general ontological articulation⁸⁵³.

Why should then the distinction between these two determinations of beings, which is here depicted by Heidegger as one that articulates an understanding of reality as a continuity, subsequently become a sharp separation of spheres of being in the analysis of *phronēsis* and *sophia*? Surely not because Heidegger would believe there to be such a separation, which he explicitly denies here, but rather

⁸⁵² GA 19 § 9c p. 61 [43] “[D]ie *sophia* [hat] das Seiende, das *immer* ist, zum Thema, während doch gerade die *phronēsis* auf das *endechomenon allōs echein*, das Sein des menschlichen *Daseins*, zielt und es durchsichtig macht”.

⁸⁵³ GA 19 § 5a p. 29 [20] “Haus und Hof haben ihr Sein unter dem Himmel, unter der Sonne, die jeden Tag ihren Gang geht, jeden Tag gleichmäßig immer wieder erscheint und verschwindet. Diese Welt der Natur, die immer so ist, wie sie ist, ist gewissermaßen der Hinergrund, von dem sich das Anders-Sein-Könnende abhebt. Deshalb ist es verfehlt, zu sagen, es seien zwei Seinsgebiete (...). Vielmehr ist diese Unterscheidung die *Welt* und deren erste ontologische Gliederung überhaupt”.

because of the Greek understanding of being as “what exists always, what is constantly already there”⁸⁵⁴, that leads Aristotle to understand the being of human beings only negatively⁸⁵⁵, as what can be otherwise. Surely, “the *Dasein* of man is not something ordained to be *aei*”⁸⁵⁶, to be always, and Aristotle is conscious of that. However, the point was already made in the *Natorp Bericht* that this way of being that is alternative to the *aei* is not determined positively by Aristotle, i.e. it is not conceived in starting from the phenomenon in which it becomes apparent, namely “life [being] there for itself in the concrete how of the with-which of going about its dealings”⁸⁵⁷. The ‘always being changing’ of *Dasein* is only understood in relation to a more authentic kind of being which never changes⁸⁵⁸, and as a result its ontological characterization has no phenomenological validation: we are only understanding man derivatively from an ontology which does not account for our experience of ourselves as always in motion.

“The *leukon* or the *eythy* is *to auto aei*, «always identical». These are ontological determinations which are always what they are; therefore they are *sophon*, the object of *sophia*”⁸⁵⁹. But surely these determinations do not fit the phenomenon of ‘life being there for itself in concern’. This, rather, is accessible to *phronēsis*, which has proved to be a way of *alētheuein* that can grasp human existence, always on the way. “*Sophia* may indeed deal with the *timiōtata*, the highest beings; but these beings are not ones that concern man in his existence.

⁸⁵⁴ GA 19 § 19 p. 137 [94] “was immer ist, was ständig schon da ist”.

⁸⁵⁵ Cf. NB 385/37 [136].

⁸⁵⁶ GA 19 § 19 p. 136 [94] “Das Dasein des Menschen ist nicht etwas, das *aei* sein will”.

⁸⁵⁷ NB 385/37 [136] “In der Umsicht ist das Leben da im konkreten Wie eines Womit des Umgangs”.

⁸⁵⁸ Cf. *ibidem* “This ontological definition gets actualized through a negative comparison with another kind of being that is considered to be being in the *authentic* sense” (“Diese ontologische Charakteristik ist vollzogen im negierenden Gehalt gegen anderes und *eigentliches* Sein”).

⁸⁵⁹ GA 19 § 19 p. 136 [94] “[D]as *leukon* oder das *eythy* ein *to auto aei* »immer identisch« ist; es sind solche Seinsbestimmungen, die immer sind, was sie sind: daher sind sie ein *sophon*, Gegenstand der *sophia*” Cf. NE VI 7, 1141a 23 ff.: “what is white (*leukon*) or straight (*eythy*) is always the same. [A]nyone would say that what is wise (*to sophon*) is the same but what is practically wise (*to phronimon*) is different”.

What concerns man is *Dasein* itself, the *akrotaton agathon anthrōpinon*, namely *eudaimonia*⁸⁶⁰. That is why, Heidegger argues, “*phronēsis* claims to be the highest mode of human knowledge”⁸⁶¹, because it is concerned with human existence itself.

But how could Aristotle confer this priority on *phronēsis* if beings in the most proper sense are for him and his contemporaries those which always are as they are, and man is in fact granted a share in this divine knowledge, no matter what the poets may say⁸⁶²? It would have the priority if it could actually be identified with *sophia*, i.e. if the mode of *alētheuein* required to disclose the being of human beings were the same as that required to disclose the being of things that cannot be otherwise. This identification “would be legitimate, provided man is *ariston tōn en tō kosmō*, i.e., provided he is, «of all the beings in the world, a being in the most proper sense»⁸⁶³. But his being is not the highest way of being: he changes, while there are things that are “always identical”, about which we cannot deliberate, as *phronēsis* does⁸⁶⁴.

As a result, an insurmountable abyss seems to separate *sophia* and *phronēsis*: what is always the same and what can be otherwise are split into two spheres of being, to be grasped in two radically different modes of *alētheuein*. But the really distressing problem is that being is not approached in a unitary sense from the

⁸⁶⁰ GA 19 § 19 p. 135 [92] “Die *sophia* mag ja von den *timiōtata*, vom höchsten Seienden, handeln; aber dieses Seiende ist dasjenige, was den Menschen in seiner Existenz nicht angeht. Das, was den Menschen angeht, ist das *Dasein* selbst, das *akrotaton agathon anthrōpinon*, die *eudaimonia*”. Cf. NE VI 7, 1141b 2f: “*sophia* is *epistēmē*, combined with *nous*, of the things that are highest by nature” (*timiōtata*).

⁸⁶¹ GA 19 § 18 p. 135 [93] “Denn die *phronēsis* erhebt von sich aus den Anspruch, die höchste Erkenntnisart des Menschen zu sein”.

⁸⁶² Cf. GA 19 § 18 for Heidegger’s comment on Aristotle’s apology of *sophia* in *Met.* I 2 and NE VI, X. For some of the references of Aristotle to poets or proverbs on this issue, Cf. *Met.* I 2, 982b 30f (Simonides) 983a 4 (proverb) and NE X 7, 1177b 31ff. (implicit reference to Euripides and Pindar).

⁸⁶³ GA 19 § 19 p. 136 [94, mod. tr.] “Die Identifizierung von *phronēsis* und *sophia* wäre dann im Recht, falls der Mensch *ariston tōn en tō kosmō* ist, falls er das »eigentlich Seiende ist von dem, was in der Welt ist«. Cf. NE VI 1141a 21f.

⁸⁶⁴ Cf. NE VI 7, 1141b 8ff.

ground up, from the phenomena. As a result, a sense that can account for the embeddedness of ‘beings whose being is at stake in their own being’ within the sense of being in general is not obtained, and being is categorised into two excluding senses, one of which will be surreptitiously absorbed by the other, and this not on the basis of a phenomenological experience but of a determined idea of being: “*sophia* has the priority in relation to beings themselves, insofar as the beings with which it is concerned have for the Greeks ontological priority”⁸⁶⁵.

As if that were not enough, because of its own structure, *phronēsis* does not seem ready to reply to the, as it were, ‘imperialist’ threat of *sophia*, as far as the ontological understanding of the being of *Dasein* is concerned. *Phronēsis* is absorbed in *praxis*, so it cannot actually develop any ontological reflection:

Phronēsis is not a *hexis meta logou monon*, it is not a mere discussing that proceeds for its own sake, but instead, already in every word, in every saying it utters, it speaks of the *prakton* and for the sake of the *prakton* (...). «*Phronēsis* must have both»: *alētheuein* and *praxis*, «or, rather, the latter still more». *Phronēsis* dwells in *praxis* still more than in *logos*⁸⁶⁶.

While *theōrein*, the activity of *sophia*, “is a completely autonomous compartment of *Dasein*”⁸⁶⁷, *phronēsis* instead “is not a *hexis* of *alētheuein* which is autonomous in itself and is only for the sake of disclosing; on the contrary, it is a

⁸⁶⁵ GA 19 § 19 p. 137 [94] “Die *sophia* hat den Vorrang in bezug auf das Seiende an ihm selbst, insofern das Seiende, auf das sie geht, griechisch *seinsmäßig* den Vorrang hat”.

⁸⁶⁶ GA 19 § 20a p. [96] “Die *phronēsis* ist nicht *hexis meta logou monon*, sie ist nicht ein bloßes für sich laufendes Durchsprechen von etwas, sondern schon in jedem Wort, in jedem Spruch, den sie tut, spricht sie vom *prakton* und für dieses (...). »Die *phronēsis* muß beides haben«: das *alētheuein* und die *praxis*, »oder vielmehr diese noch mehr«. Die *phronēsis* ist in der *praxis* noch mehr als im *logos*”. Cf. NE VI 5, 1140b 28 and VI 7, 1141b 21f. Although the first sentence might suggest that Heidegger were here confusing *phronēsis* with practical philosophy (i.e. philosophical discourse about action), the rest of the quotation shows this not to be the case. Still, elsewhere in the course (GA 19 § 9a p. 57 [40]) he makes the point crystal clear: “*phronēsis* is not a speculation about the *archē* and the *telos* of acting as such; it is not an ethics and not a science, not a *hexis meta logou monon*” (“Die *phronēsis* ist keine Spekulation über die *archē* und das *telos* des Handelns als solche: sie ist keine Ethik und Wissenschaft, keine *hexis meta logou monon*”). Cf. also § 22 and our comment below.

⁸⁶⁷ GA 19 § 16b p. 128 [88] “ein völliges eingeständiges Verhaltens des Daseins”. Cf. also § 17 p. 129 [89]; § 24 pp. 165 ff. [114 ff].

hexis of *alētheuein* which is *praktikē*⁸⁶⁸. It is “indeed an *alētheuein*, but not an autonomous one. It is an *alētheuein* in service to *praxis*”⁸⁶⁹. While it does have a share in *logos*, because it is also “*nous* and *noein* and is a genuine disclosure of the *archē*”⁸⁷⁰, the *archai* that *phronēsis* discloses—namely *praxeis*—are ones that, differently from those of *sophia*, can be otherwise. According to the Greek understanding of being, this provides an additional reason on why *phronēsis* cannot be for Aristotle the best human form of *alētheuein* from the point of view of its ontological disclosing possibilities.

7.3. Sharpening the Spear of *Phronēsis*

Before searching for a way out of the confrontation between *phronēsis* and *sophia*, though, Heidegger still devotes §§ 20 to 23 to sharpen the peculiar traits of the structure of *phronēsis*. In his own notes for the course, he marks the beginning of this stage with the heading “To take *phronēsis* more radically”⁸⁷¹. The point of departure of this “more radical” approach we have just commented: *phronēsis* is not a *hexis meta logou monon*. This is in fact a recapitulation of something already sustained in § 8, when Heidegger contrasted *phronēsis* with forms of *alētheuein* like *poiēsis* and *epistēmē*⁸⁷². He now retrieves the point for the confrontation with *sophia*, which is *nous kai epistēmē*⁸⁷³.

⁸⁶⁸ GA 19 § 8c p. 55 [39, mod. tr.] “»Aber die *phronēsis* ist keine *hexis* des *alētheuein*, die in sich eigenständig ist, die lediglich um des Aufdeckens willen ist«, sondern sie ist eine *hexis* des *alētheuein*, die *praktikē* ist” (Cf. NE VI, 5 1140b 28). Cf. also § 24 pp. 165 ff. [114 ff].

⁸⁶⁹ § 8b p. 53 [37] “Die *phronēsis* ist also *zwar ein alētheuein*, aber nicht ein eigenständiges, sondern ein *alētheuein im Dienste der praxis*”.

⁸⁷⁰ GA 19 § 21 p. 143 [98] “Es wird sich zeigen, daß auch die *phronēsis nous* und *noein*, eigentliches Aufdecken der *archē*, ist”.

⁸⁷¹ Cf. GA 19 § 20 p. 138 note 1 [95] “*phronēsis* selbst radikaler nehmen”.

⁸⁷² GA 19 § 8c pp. 54-55 [38-39].

⁸⁷³ Cf. NE VI 7, 1141a 19.

While *epistēmē* does not have *per se* a grasp of the principles with which it operates, *phronēsis* does have a grasp of its principles, but these are quite different from those of *epistēmē*. *Phronēsis* “grasps the *archai* of the beings which are thematic in it, the *archai* of human *zōē*”⁸⁷⁴. In fact, Heidegger remarks, as much as being ‘thematic’ implies being approached in a theoretical manner, i.e. from the outside, we cannot properly say that *phronēsis* has a ‘theme’⁸⁷⁵:

[*Phronēsis*] is not a study of the situation in which I find myself (...). *From the archē on, from what I want to do, from my decision to act, all the way up to the completed action itself, phronēsis belongs intrinsically to the action.* In every step of the action, *phronēsis* is co-constitutive⁸⁷⁶.

Phronēsis is always *in* the situation, as it were, always on the stage, because deliberating on what to do is a constitutive ‘part’ of the indivisible continuity of the ‘action’—the *praxis*—that I am myself. This continuity is expressed by the overlapping of *archē* and *telos* in the exercise of *phronēsis*: “the *archē* with which *phronēsis* has to do is the action itself. And the *telos* which is taken into consideration in *phronēsis* is the action itself”⁸⁷⁷. Exactly like *physis odos estin eis physin*⁸⁷⁸, nature is a way towards nature, *praxis* is a way towards *praxis*: “this entire connection from the *archē* up to the *telos* is nothing else than the full being of the action itself”⁸⁷⁹. As much as we would not be grasping the full being of nature if we were to take it for the simple appearance of a natural being, regardless of its inseparability from generation and decay, we do not grasp the full being of *praxis*

⁸⁷⁴ GA 19 § 21 p. 144 [99] “[D]ie *phronēsis* [bekommt in den Griff] die *archai* des Seienden, das ihr Thema ist, der *zōē* des Menschen”.

⁸⁷⁵ Cf. GA 19 § 22a p. 146 [100].

⁸⁷⁶ GA 19 § 22a p. 147 [101] “[*Phronēsis* ist] kein Studium der Situation, in der ich mich befinde (...). *Von der archē her, von dem, was ich will, von dem, wozu ich mich entschließe, bis zur vollendeten Handlung selbst gehört die phronēsis mit zur Handlung dazu.* In jedem Schritt der Handlung ist die *phronēsis* mit konstitutiv”.

⁸⁷⁷ GA 19 § 22a p. 148 [101] “Die *archē*, mit der die *phronēsis* zu tun hat, ist die Handlung selbst. Das *telos*, das in der *phronēsis* betrachtet wird, ist die Handlung selbst”.

⁸⁷⁸ *Physics* II 1, 193b 13.

⁸⁷⁹ GA 19 § 22a p. 148 [102] “Dieser ganze Zusammenhang von der *archē* bis zum *telos* ist nicht anderes als das volle Sein der Handlung selbst”.

if we cannot grasp it in what we have called elsewhere a ‘live picture’. Heidegger does not bring here into relief this structural connection between *praxis* and *physis* which we have already emphasized before, but the reference seems once more unavoidable. In fact, at least *technē*—which Aristotle contrasts with *praxis* as much as with *physis*—does appear in the reasoning; Heidegger recalls that “in the case of *technē* the *telos* is not the architect himself (...) The *telos* as *ergon* falls outside of *technē*”⁸⁸⁰.

In contrast with this ‘falling outside’ (*herausfallen*), the consequence of deliberation is the action itself; “not some sort of proposition or cognition, but *the bursting forth of the acting person as such*. This shows how in *phronēsis* the *ergon* is also included and for its part belongs to the being of the acting person”⁸⁸¹. That is indeed the reason why Aristotle uses not only *ergon* but also *energeia* to characterize human life, and specifically its fulfilment, *eudaimonia*. Heidegger, though, does not mention *energeia* here: he just contrasts the ‘falling outside’ of the *ergon* in *poiēsis* with the ‘falling inside’ of it in *praxis*. The term only appears later in § 25 where, in the context of a comment on Aristotle’s designation of *eudaimonia* as *energeia*, it is summarily—and surprisingly, in view of the contrast drawn here between the *ergon* of *praxis* and *poiēsis*—dispatched as meaning “nothing else than presence, pure immediate presence at hand”⁸⁸², i.e. nothing else than the way of being of the *erga* of *poiēsis*.

But the ‘more radical’ analysis of *phronēsis* is further pursued, now upon the concept of deliberation (*bouleusthai*), as contrasted in NE VI 9 with other modes of *alētheuein*. Heidegger specially lingers on Aristotle’s contrast between excellent de-

⁸⁸⁰ GA 19 § 22a p. 148 [101] “[D]as *telos* ist bei der *technē* nicht der Bausmeister selbst (...). Das *telos* qua *ergon* fällt aus der *technē* heraus”.

⁸⁸¹ GA 19 § 22a p. 150 [103] “[E]s ist nicht irgendein Satz, irgendeine Erkenntnis, sondern das *Losbrechen des Handelnden als solchen*. Damit ist gezeigt, wie in der *phronēsis* mit das *ergon* beschlossen liegt und sie ihrerseits zum Sein des Handelnden gehört”.

⁸⁸² GA 19 § 25a p. 172 [119] “*Energeia* besagt nichts anderes als Anwesenheit, reines unmittelbares *Vorhandensein*”.

liberation (*euboulia*) and opinion (*doxa*): “*Doxa* is not a seeking but instead is something one *has*. In having an opinion there resides already a certain *phasis* [assertion]: I am of the opinion *that...*; I am not seeking”⁸⁸³. In *doxa*, a raw version of *epistēmē* which in spite of its character of provisionality or ‘being on the way’, shares with *epistēmē* its basic ontological structure, I *have* an opinion, like I *have* a knowledge in *epistēmē*. This ‘having’ is there as something ready at hand (*vorhanden*) in the sense that it is *in my hands* to transfer the opinion or knowledge to someone else, who may of course refuse it as nonsense, but may welcome it and therefore come to *have* it. However, such a thing as *having* does not correspond to the ontological structure of deliberation: in deliberation I *am* seeking, I *am* making my way in life. *Being* (on the way), not *having*, describes the *alētheuein* of deliberation; or, in other words, being not as *vorhanden* but rather as inseparable from one’s own being, *praxis*. That is why, Aristotle argues, “excellence in deliberation (*euboulia*) is clearly a kind of correctness (*orthotēs*), but neither of *epistēmē* nor of *doxa*” (VI 9, 1142b 8f). The reason is that while it corresponds to *epistēmē* and correct *doxa* to *have* truth (*alētheia*), “not inquiry but already assertion (*ou zētēsis alla phasis*)” (b14), deliberation is “searching for something and calculating (*zētei ti kai logizetai*)” (b15).

Heidegger infers that “*bouleuesthai* is in general directed to something, and precisely not to the *alēthes* but, as we said, to the *boulē*, to the being resolved”⁸⁸⁴. The point had been announced some lines above, in reference to excellence in deliberation: “*Euboulia* is not directed toward truth or falsity but primarily and exclusively toward being resolved”⁸⁸⁵. However, this is odd, since *euboulia* can imply either the restricted *orthotēs* of the one who is able to find the right means for the end one is longing for, regardless of the nature of this end—in such a way

⁸⁸³ GA 19 § 22b p. 153 [105, mod. tr.] “Die *doxa* ist kein Suchen, sondern man *hat* die Ansicht. Im Ansicht-Haben liegt schon eine gewisse *phasis*: ich bin der Ansicht, *daß...*; ich suche nicht”.

⁸⁸⁴ GA 19 § 22b p. 153 [105]. “Das Wesentliche ist jedoch, daß [das *bouleuesthai*] überhaupt ausgerichtet ist auf, und zwar nicht auf das *alēthes*, sondern, wie gesagt, auf die *boulē*, das Entschlossensein-zu”.

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibidem* “Die *euboulia* ist nicht gerichtet auf die Wahrheit oder Falschheit, sondern primär und einzig auf das Entschlossensein-zu”.

that a man may deliberate correctly, with *orthotēs*, but yet get for himself a great evil (*kakon*)⁸⁸⁶, or also the *orthotēs* of *phronēsis*, which in addition ensures that the end toward which it correctly directs itself is *agathon*. Thus, when *phronēsis* is operating, there is *alētheuein*—truth is disclosed—and then deliberation is indeed directed toward truth or falsity, of course not in the narrow sense of a “determinate concept of scientificity”⁸⁸⁷, but according to the structure of the beings here disclosed, namely *praxeis*. Heidegger does linger in § 22c on this relation of *euboulia* to *kakon* and *agathon*, and acknowledges that only when guided by *phronēsis* does *euboulia* attain its utmost excellence. However, this challenges the point that *euboulia* would be just directed toward being resolved, to the exclusion of truth and falsity. Heidegger avoids relating *alētheia* to *agathon* and *kakon*, which however seems precisely the specific form of *alētheia* that Aristotle conceives as referred to *praxis*: being true as a feature of the how of the being of human beings. One might venture that, against his own warnings elsewhere, Heidegger is narrowing too much Aristotle’s idea of truth here, to exclude *phronēsis* from it.

Heidegger finally shifts to the consideration of the *prakton* as *eschaton*, as something ultimate, which is to determine the specific structure of the *nous* of *phronēsis*, in contrast with that of the *nous* of *sophia*. In NE VI 11 Aristotle indeed grants *nous* a twofoldness:

Nous is concerned with the ultimates in both directions; for both the primary definitions and the ultimates are objects of *nous* and not of argument, and in demonstrations *nous* has a grasp of the unchangeable and primary definitions (*akinēton horōn kai prōton*), while in practical reasonings (*en tais praktikais*) it grasps the last and contingent fact (*eschaton kai endechomenon*) (VI 11, 1143a 35ff).

While a grasp of *archai* such as the principle of non-contradiction (which is always as it is) is required to unfold a demonstration of things that are always as they are, a grasp of another kind of *archai* is required in the exercise of *phronēsis*, in

⁸⁸⁶ Cf. NE VI 9, 1142b 19f.

⁸⁸⁷ GA 19 §4a, p. 24 [17] *Alētheia* “richtet sich vielmehr nach dem Seienden selbst und nicht nach einem bestimmten Begriff von Wissenschaftlichkeit”.

practical affairs. The ‘theme’ of *phronēsis* is *praxis*, which can be always different (*endechomenon*), because of its belongingness to the *kairos*, because it is always brought into the particular occasion—i.e. last (*eschaton*)—by the *kairos*. In practical affairs, in addition to the theoretical knowledge that I may have about what would be desirable to do, I always have to decide what I am to do here and now, and this knowledge comes from *nous*, which Aristotle calls here a kind of perception (*aisthēsis*)⁸⁸⁸. Actually, this is not an isolated occurrence: up in NE VI 8, Aristotle develops this point, in a passage on which Heidegger concentrates his interest. What is at stake with this *aisthēsis* is not a perception in the restricted sense of apprehension of sensitive data⁸⁸⁹, but seeing states of affairs as a whole⁸⁹⁰. This is somehow similar to the *aisthēsis* that takes place in geometry: that perception “by which we perceive that the particular figure before us is a triangle; for in that direction too it comes to a stop (*stēsetai*)” (VI 8, 1142a 28f). When we perceive the triangle, it is not merely our eye that ‘sees’, as it would perceive a light in the dark, but our *nous* that ‘sees’, i.e. that understands, and thus comes to a stop. “Here it can still be said: *phainetai*, the things show themselves in this way. The only possibility here is to look on and, in looking, to grasp”⁸⁹¹. But still, the *aisthēsis* of *phronēsis* is different from that of geometry, where “it is a sheer matter of pure onlooking and constatating”⁸⁹². *Phronēsis* does not look at *settled* states of affairs like that of ‘there being a triangle before me’, but rather it *creates always new states of affairs* starting from the observation of states of affairs: “the *aisthēsis* of *phronēsis* is, as *phronēsis*, related to the *praktē*. It is, specifically, an ultimate inspection of the states of affairs, but this inspection is in *phronēsis* not a mere inspection (*kein*

⁸⁸⁸ Cf. NE VI 11, 1143b 5.

⁸⁸⁹ Cf. NE VI 8, 1142a 28: “not the perception of qualities peculiar to one sense”.

⁸⁹⁰ Cf. GA 19 § 23b pp. 160-161 [110].

⁸⁹¹ GA 19 § 23b p. 161 [111] “Es kann hier noch gesagt werden: *phainetai*, die Sache zeigt sich so. Es besteht einzig die Möglichkeit, hinzusehen und im Hinsehen zu erfassen”.

⁸⁹² GA 19 § 23b p. 163 [112] “In der Geometrie handelt es sich überhaupt nur um das reine betrachtende Feststellen”.

bloßes Hinsehen) but a circumspection (*umsichtiges Hinsehen*)”⁸⁹³: it is not “a study of the situation in which I find myself”⁸⁹⁴ but a questioning concerned, in the ‘here and now’, with the unfolding of one’s life through one’s *praxis*.

7.4. Heidegger’s Place in the *Gigantomachia*

At the end of § 23, Heidegger has sharpened enough the traits of *phronēsis* to make visible its clash with those of *sophia*, in the same terms in which the *gigantomachia peri tēs ousias*⁸⁹⁵ is framed: *aisthēsis* and *noein* as conflicting and excluding ways of grasping being:

Phronēsis is the *grasping of the this here now*, the grasp of the concrete momentariness of the transient situation. As *aisthēsis*, it is a look of an eye in the blink of an eye, a momentary look (*Augenblick*) at what is momentarily concrete, which as such can always be otherwise. On the other hand, the *noein* in *sophia* is a looking upon that which is *aei*, *that which is always present in sameness (immer in Selbigkeit gegenwärtig)*. Time—the momentary and the eternal (*der Augenblick und das Immersein*)—here functions to discriminate between the *noein* in *phronēsis* and the one in *sophia*⁸⁹⁶.

Many elements in this course and elsewhere in Heidegger’s work in the 1920s that make it tempting to think that Heidegger is directing his discussion in these pages towards an assimilation of *sophia* in *phronēsis* (Rosen)⁸⁹⁷, or putting forward a “hierarchical displacement” between them (Volpi)⁸⁹⁸, in which *phronēsis* would become the most authentic *alētheuein* for human beings. Among them we

⁸⁹³ *Loc. cit.* “Die *aisthēsis* der *phronēsis* ist als *phronēsis* auf die *prakta* bezogen. Sie ist zwar ein letztes Hinsehen auf die Tatbestände, aber dieses Hinsehen ist in der *phronēsis* kein bloßes Hinsehen, sondern ein *umsichtiges Hinsehen*”.

⁸⁹⁴ GA 19 § 22a p. 147 [101] “[*Phronēsis* ist] kein Studium der Situation, in der ich mich befinde”.

⁸⁹⁵ Cf. *Sophist* 246a.

⁸⁹⁶ GA 19 § 23c pp. 163-164 [113, mod. tr.] “Die *phronēsis* ist das *Erblicken des Diesmaligen*, der konkreten Diesmaligkeit der augenblicklichen Lage. *Sie ist als aisthēsis der Blick des Auges, der Augenblick auf das jeweils konkrete, das als solches immer anders sein kann*. Dagegen ist das *noein* in der *sophia* das Betrachten dessen, was *aei* ist, *was immer in Selbigkeit gegenwärtig ist*. Die Zeit — der Augenblick und das Immersein — fungiert hier als Discrimen des *noein* in *phronēsis* und *sophia*”.

⁸⁹⁷ Cf. ROSEN, S. 2004 pp. 256 ff.

⁸⁹⁸ Cf. VOLPI, F. 1994 p. 202. Cf. also 1984 pp. 93-94 and 2007b p. 37.

could mention the “doubling of the point of view (*Doppelung der Hinsicht*)”⁸⁹⁹ that, in the *Natorp Bericht*, Heidegger detected in Aristotle’s thematization of *phronēsis*; the play on the word *Augenblick*—which fits as well *aisthēsis* as *kairos*—and the link between presentness (*Gegenwärtigkeit*) and *sophia* in the paragraph above; or Heidegger’s statement that “*phronēsis* claims to be the highest mode of human knowledge”⁹⁰⁰. If that were the case, i.e. if he considered *phronēsis* as the highest form of *alētheuein* himself, Heidegger would be placed, in the *gigantomachia peri tēs ousias*, on the side of *aisthēsis* —against *noein*. However, the confrontation does not end with an ‘enthronement’ of *phronēsis*. Heidegger does not intend to displace the hierarchy of *phronēsis* and *sophia* in Aristotle, but rather to explain why it is thus conceived by him. Which, of course, does not mean that he does not find such a state of affairs aporetical:

One might suppose that, insofar as his own being, his own existence, is of decisive importance for a man, that being-true (*Wahrsein*) is the highest which relates to *Dasein* itself, and therefore *phronēsis* is the highest and most decisive mode of disclosure. Yet Aristotle says that *sophia*, pure understanding, is, with regard to its *alētheuein* (...), the highest possible mode of human existence⁹⁰¹.

Heidegger acknowledges that Aristotle’s decision on the superiority of *sophia* is shocking. But it does not seem to us to be the case that, against this decision, “Heidegger will time and again look for ways, both in and out of the Aristotelian opus, in which phronetic insight asserts its potential superiority over contemplative wisdom”⁹⁰². Heidegger cannot place himself on either side of the controversy: not, for sure, on the side of a pure *noein* that is incapable of grasping

⁸⁹⁹ Cf. NB 385/37 [136].

⁹⁰⁰ GA 19 § 18 p. 135 [93] “Denn die *phronēsis* erhebt von sich aus den Anspruch, die höchste Erkenntnisart des Menschen zu sein”.

⁹⁰¹ GA 19 § 24a p. 166 [114, mod. tr.] “Man möchte vermuten, daß, sofern für den Menschen sein eigenes Sein, seine eigene Existenz das Entscheidende ist, dasjenige Wahrsein das höchste ist, das sich auf das Dasein selbst bezieht, daß also die *phronēsis* das höchste und entscheidende Aufdecken ist. Trotzdem sagt Aristoteles: Die *sophia*, das reine Verstehen, ist hinsichtlich ihres *alētheuein* (...) die höchste”.

⁹⁰² KISIEL, T. 1993 p. 303.

the way of being of *Dasein*, nor on the side of an *aisthēsis* like that of *phronēsis* which, for all its ability to grasp the concrete momentariness (*Diesmaligkeit*) of *Dasein*, is restricted to the direction of *praxis*, not to its ontological determination: “it is an *alētheuein* in service to *praxis*”⁹⁰³. Concerning *Sein und Zeit*, which does not necessarily determine what is going on here, but which we cannot just ignore, Gonzalez has argued that “if the analysis of *Dasein*’s being were not purely «preliminary» to the addressing of the question of being in general, then we perhaps could find in Heidegger a complete reversal of Aristotle’s ranking of *sophia* above *phronēsis*”⁹⁰⁴. And, as a matter of fact, Heidegger’s *Endstation* is not the being of *Dasein*:

What is common to both the Aristotelian and Heideggerian conceptions of *sophia* is that the highest possibility of human existence is sought in its relation to something «outside» itself, specifically, to being, whether understood as eternal presence or otherwise⁹⁰⁵.

The way in which Aristotle allegedly understands *sophia*, due to the Greek understanding of being, makes it impossible for Heidegger to welcome it as the suitable way to uncover being, precisely because it ignores the structure of *Dasein*, the being who can entertain this uncovering. That is why since 1922 he investigates all the possibilities opened up by the *Doppelung der Hinsicht* that the discovery of *phronēsis* entails. However, *phronēsis* cannot point beyond the being of *Dasein* himself, so that the finding of a third way between *phronēsis* and *sophia* is required. It is in this respect that in *Sein und Zeit* “«Theory» and «praxis»” are only considered as “possibilities of being for a being whose being must be defined as

⁹⁰³ § 8b p. 53 [37] “Die *phronēsis* ist also *εἴπωρ* ein *alētheuein*, aber nicht ein *eigenständiges*, sondern ein *alētheuein im Dienste der praxis*”.

⁹⁰⁴ GONZALEZ, F. J. 1997 p. 31. Cf. also SZ § 41 p. 193, where it is stated that care (*Sorge*), the essential character of *Dasein*, “by no means expresses a priority of «practical» over theoretical behavior” (“Das Phänomen [der *Sorge*] drückt daher keineswegs einen Vorrang des »praktischen« Verhaltens vor dem theoretischen aus”).

⁹⁰⁵ GONZALEZ, F. J. 1997 p. 31.

care (*Sorge*)”⁹⁰⁶. Heidegger finds the ontological key that he is looking for neither in *sophia* nor in *phronēsis as they are understood by Aristotle*⁹⁰⁷. Therefore, in GA 19 Heidegger does not long for the victory of either of the factions of the *gigantomachia peri tēs ousias*; rather he intends to win them over to the search for a reinterpretation of *sophia*⁹⁰⁸. As Sadler puts it, “Heidegger does not take offence at the higher authority of *sophia* (...). [He] does not reject, but rather reformulates, the supreme question addressed by *sophia*, viz., the question of ‘being qua being’”⁹⁰⁹.

The tension that Heidegger believes to detect between *phronēsis* and *sophia*, and which he makes his best to show in its dramatic force, is precisely the frame within which a new understanding of being is to come about. In this respect, we believe Gadamer to be right in his remark that Heidegger would be following the Platonic saying that one should always make stronger the position of one’s opponent⁹¹⁰, although the seriousness with which Heidegger takes the dilemma is mainly directed at grasping the fundamental limitation of his opponent: the ontology of Aristotle would remain submissive to an unquestioned idea of being as *Vorhandenheit* in spite of the ontological possibilities unveiled by the

⁹⁰⁶ SZ § 41 p. 193 “»Theorie« und »Praxis« sind Seinsmöglichkeiten eines Seienden, dessen Sein als Sorge bestimmt werden muß”.

⁹⁰⁷ Long seems to us to read Heidegger’s interpretation as though he were to choose between *sophia* and *phronēsis as defined by Aristotle*. This leads him to regret the fact that Heidegger gives priority to *sophia* because, he argues, “[this] endorsement prevents [Heidegger] from considering the economy of values that has historically determined this priority”. Aristotle, he adds, “offers ontology the tool by which to extricate itself from the hegemony of *sophia*”, namely *phronēsis*. Long remains in the dichotomy because he does not perceive how Heidegger is searching for a kind of fusion of both determinations, and thus somehow naïvely concludes that Heidegger has missed the way out of traditional ontology just because he does not enthrone *phronēsis* (Cf. LONG, C. 2002 p. 36).

⁹⁰⁸ Cf. GONZALEZ, F. J. 1997 p. 26.

⁹⁰⁹ SADLER, T. 1996 p. 147. Cf. also, in this interpretive line, BROGAN, W. 2005 p. 140, and “A Response to Bernasconi’s «Heidegger’s Destruction of Phronesis»” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 28, Supplement (1989) pp. 149-153 (esp. p. 152); LARIVÉE, A. et al. 2001 p. 47.

⁹¹⁰ GADAMER, H.-G. 1987a p. 199. Cf. *Sophist* 246d.

characterization of *phronēsis*, which are capable of blowing up (*sprengen*) the traditional categories of being⁹¹¹.

To overcome Aristotle means to be able to bring the antithesis between *aisthēsis* and *noein* in the *gigantomachia peri tēs ousias* to a synthesis: *aisthēsis* and *noein* as a single movement, as the indissoluble totality (*unzerreißbare Ganzheit*) of *Sorge*⁹¹². Or, in other words, it means to understand that ontology is only possible as phenomenology⁹¹³: that “one must appropriate [the ground of *aisthēsis*] explicitly and not leap beyond it to a reality which is simply fabricated by theory (...). One must fasten onto precisely the *kath hekaston* of *aisthēsis* and admit it as the first factual state of beings”⁹¹⁴. This is the task that, according to Heidegger, would have been forsaken by Aristotle, who cannot help dividing being into two spheres, because he does not find the right way to conceive them in their unity:

Sophia is *Dasein*’s positionality toward the beings of the world in the full sense. *Phronēsis* is *Dasein*’s positionality towards the beings which are themselves *Dasein*. With this, however, the question arises precisely as to the meaning of being which provides the guiding line, on the basis of which Aristotle reaches the point that he can attribute to *sophia* a priority over *phronēsis*⁹¹⁵.

⁹¹¹ Cf. EPR § 10 in GA 60 p. 54 [36]. Later in 1939 Heidegger will find these possibilities in *physis*, which then takes up the place of *phronēsis*.

⁹¹² Cf. SZ § 41 p. 193.

⁹¹³ Cf. SZ § 7c p. 35: “Phenomenology is the way of access to, and the demonstrative manner of determination of, what is to become the theme of ontology. *Ontology is only possible as phenomenology*” (“Phänomenologie ist Zugangsart zu dem und die ausweisende Bestimmungsart dessen, was Thema der Ontologie werden soll. *Ontologie ist nur als Phänomenologie möglich*”). Cf. also GA 20 § 6d p. 98 [72].

⁹¹⁴ GA 19 § 12b p. 85 [59] “[M]an muß sich diesen Boden ausdrücklich zueignen, — und nicht über die von einer Theorie aus als schlecht angesetzte Realität hinwegspringen (...). Gerade das *kath hekaston* der *aisthēsis* muß man in den Griff bekommen und an ihm den ersten Tatbestand des Seienden aufnehmen”. Cf. also § 14 p. 98 [68], and GA 24 p. 466 [327] “No understanding of being is possible that would not root in a comportment toward beings” (“Kein Seinsverständnis ist möglich, das nicht in einem Verhalten zu Seiendem wurzelt”).

⁹¹⁵ GA 19 § 23c p. 164 [113] “Sofern sie Weisen des *Dasein* sind, machen sie dessen Seinsart aus: die *sophia* sein Gestelltsein zum Seienden der Welt in vollem Sinne, die *phronēsis* sein Gestelltsein zum Seienden als je eigenem *Dasein*. Damit aber stellt sich gerade die Frage, welches der Sinn von Sein ist, der den Leitfaden abgibt, auf Grund dessen Aristoteles dazu kommt, der *sophia* gegenüber der *phronēsis* den Vorrang zuzusprechen”.

7.5. *Phronēsis* and *Sophia*: Medicine and Health?

Now that we have delineated which is to our mind the, as it were, ‘outsider’ position of Heidegger in this *gigantomachia*, we can approach his own representation of the confrontation about being in §§ 24–25, which rather than the fury of a war has the coldness of a *post mortem* inspection of the battlefield. Heidegger calls up in the first place a point upon which he has insisted before in the course, namely that *phronēsis* is not autonomous because it is embedded in *praxis*—it is a *hexis praktike*⁹¹⁶. The point is reinforced by referring to Aristotle’s statements that the good “does not show itself (*phainesthai*) but to the good man (*agathos*)” (VI 12, 1144a 34) and that “it is impossible to be *phronimos* without being good” (a36 f)⁹¹⁷. Insofar as *phronēsis* is tied to one’s behaviour, it is not autonomous. On the other hand, “*sophia* is indeed autonomous, but what is thematic in it is the *aei*, hence that which has nothing to do with *genesis*, whereas human *Dasein* has its being in being *genesis*, *praxis*, *kinēsis*”⁹¹⁸.

Aristotle actually addresses the decision on which is to be the best mode of *alētheuein* for human beings. According to Heidegger, he comes to grips with it by transferring the discussion “back to a purely ontological level”, i.e. by considering these modes of being “precisely as modes of being”⁹¹⁹. And this actually seems to be the case: Aristotle holds that *phronēsis* and *sophia* “are worthy of choice because they are the excellences of the two parts of the soul respectively, even if they do not produce (*poiēin*) anything” (VI 12, 1144a 1ff). Yet, he adds, “they do produce

⁹¹⁶ Cf. § 8b p. 53 [37]; § 8c p. 55 [39].

⁹¹⁷ Cf. GA 19 § 24a p. 166 [114].

⁹¹⁸ GA 19 § 24a p. 164 [115, mod. tr.] “Die *sophia* ist zwar eigenständig, aber das, was bei ihr im Thema steht, ist das *aei*, also das, was überhaupt nichts mit der *genesis* zu tun hat, während doch das menschliche *Dasein* sein Sein darin hat, *genesis*, *praxis*, *kinēsis* zu sein”. Heidegger quotes NE VI 13, 1143b 18 ff: “*sophia* will contemplate none of the things that will make a man happy (for it is not concerned with any *genesis*)”.

⁹¹⁹ GA 19 § 24b p. 168 [116] “Aristoteles [verlegt] die Erörterung dieser ganzen Frage auf eine rein ontologische Betrachtung [zurück]”. “Die Fragestellung (...) ist solange unangemessen, als man nicht diese Seinsarten selbst als Seinsarten betrachtet”.

something, not as the art of medicine (*iatrikē*) produces health (*hygieia*), however, but as health produces health” (a3-4). This is a difficult passage, because in spite of the fact that Aristotle uses the third person of the plural (*poiouσι*), the text follows “so [i.e. as health produces health] does *sophia* produce happiness; for, being a part of excellence entire (*meros tēs holēs aretēs*), by being possessed and by actualizing itself (*tō echesthai kai tō energein*) it makes a man happy” (a4 ff). Although Heidegger reads the text as though Aristotle were referring this metaphorical *poiēin*, this ‘bringing into being’ (*zum Sein bringen*) only to *sophia*, there are a couple of reasons why we think Aristotle is referring here also to *phronēsis*. The most important is of strictly phenomenological order and has been thoroughly developed elsewhere, namely that *praxis*—to which *phronēsis* structurally belongs—is generated from *praxis* itself, analogously to how things occur in *physis*, and in contrast to the *genesis* of *erga* in *poiēsis*. Aristotle’s thorough effort to distinguish *praxis* from *poiēsis* in NE VI and to distinguish *physis* from *poiēsis* in the *Physics* and the *Metaphysics* is guided by this conviction. Secondly, the text adds: “Again, the *ergon* of man is achieved only in accordance with *phronēsis* as well as with *ethikē aretē*” (a6 f), which implies that while *sophia* may make man happy, it cannot do so without *phronēsis*, and that is why Aristotle states above that *sophia* is only “a part of excellence entire”, a part of the *ergon* of man. Yet an objection to this interpretation seems to rise in view of the remark, at the very end of NE VI, that *phronēsis* “is not supreme (*kyria*) over *sophia* (...) any more than the art of medicine is over health; for it does not use it but provides for its coming into being” (1145a 6-9). Does this imply that the structure of *phronēsis* is like that of medicine, i.e. that of a *poiēsis*?

A nearby text, which also seems to compare *phronēsis* with medicine, can shed light on this: just before transferring the discussion “back to a purely ontological level”, i.e. regarding *phronēsis* and *sophia* as ways of *being*, in the context of his comment about the uselessness of *phronēsis* for those who are not good, Aristotle says: “it *would* be enough for us to do what we do in the case of health; though we wish to become healthy, yet we do not learn the art of medicine”

(VI 12, 1143b 31ff), we just ask those who have that art. However, in the case of *phronēsis* it is *not* enough to ask the doctor, because *phronēsis* is not generated like medicine generates health, but as health does. *Phronēsis* is not a knowledge that can be just ‘had’, and thus transferred—it is a knowledge that one ‘is’, and one comes to ‘be’ it by ‘being’ it; one ‘has’ it as something that one ‘is’. As is the case of *sophia*, being possessed and actualizing itself (*tō echesthai kai tō energein*)” (1144 a6) are for *phronēsis* one and the same thing. If Aristotle is using the art of medicine here it is precisely to say what *phronēsis* is not *per se*. And while later in the text he does compare *phronēsis* with medicine, again he is not speaking of *phronēsis per se*: what is now at stake is *the relation* of *phronēsis* to *sophia*. *Phronēsis* cannot be higher than *sophia* for a strong reason that has been developed elsewhere in section I⁹²⁰: we cannot deliberate about what cannot be otherwise⁹²¹, we cannot just decide how we would like our being, and being in general, to be. To maintain the supremacy of *phronēsis* “would be like saying that the art of politics rules the gods because it issues orders about all the affairs of the state”⁹²². Analogously to how politics issues orders for the sake of the *agathon* of the *polis* but not to it, *phronēsis* issues orders for the sake of the *agathon*, but not to it⁹²³. Heidegger recognizes after Aristotle that it is hard to strike the *mesotēs*, which implies that, while there is no such thing as an *agathon* over and above beings, but instead the *agathon* in beings, *phronēsis* cannot give orders *to* the *agathon*: it can only search for it. This non-disposability of *agathon* is what we believe Aristotle to be expressing when he says, in the wide ontological sense of *being*, that *phronēsis* issues orders for the sake of *sophia*, but not to it. Because *sophia* represents our relation to what cannot be the

⁹²⁰ Cf. paragraph 2.6, pp. 76 ff.

⁹²¹ Cf. NE VI 7, 1141b 10f.

⁹²² NE VI 13, 1145a 10f. We understand this statement from a strictly ontological point of view (which however, to our mind, does not necessarily prevent it from having a religious application), according to Heidegger’s frequent emphasis on the fact the *theiōn* denotes “simply the higher mode of being of a being” (Cf. GA 19 § 19 p. 137 [94]). Cf. also NE VI 7, 1141a 20ff: “it would be strange to think that the art of politics, or *phronēsis*, is the best knowledge, *since man is not the best thing of the world*”.

⁹²³ NE VI 13, 1145a 9ff.

object of deliberation, what is not ours to change, *phronēsis* cannot just be normative for it—reality, instead, is the norm.

Still, although *pantes anthrōpoi tou eidenai oregontai physei*⁹²⁴, the *ergon* of man would be left unachieved without *phronēsis* (1144a 6f)⁹²⁵. How *phronēsis* provides for the *genesis* of *sophia* is left hanging in the air by Aristotle, but what remains is that *sophia* cannot do without *phronēsis*; and also, according to our analysis, that *phronēsis* is generated as health is generated. The comparison of *phronēsis* with medicine at the end of NE VI does not imply that *phronēsis* has the technical *structure* of medicine—it does not therefore seem enough to us to overturn the whole of Aristotle’s characterization of *phronēsis* as distinct and higher than *technē*⁹²⁶. We would find it more reasonable to see in this latter comment a certain oversight of the possible implications of the comparison on the part of Aristotle than a fundamental slip-up revealing an unthought background of his idea of *phronēsis*. Otherwise, it is odd that Heidegger, who up to here has so thoroughly maintained the specificity of *phronēsis* before *technē*, to the unnecessary extent of tearing them apart, now tends to conceive of *phronēsis* as a *technē* in order to distinguish it from *sophia*.

We have lingered on the textual analysis because Heidegger is here bestowing a great importance to the letter of the text: he is actually sorting out why Aristotle decides to give priority to *sophia*. Heidegger ignores the plural of *poiōusi*, he restricts to *sophia* this peculiar *poiēin* which ‘brings into being’ as health generates health, and instead links *phronēsis* to medicine (*iatrikē*). This, he argues,

⁹²⁴ *Met.* I 1, 980a 21.

⁹²⁵ Cf. also *Politics* VII 1, 1323b 21ff: “each one has just so much of happiness as he has of *aretē* and *phronēsis*, and of excellent and wise actions (*kai tou prattein kata tautas*)”.

⁹²⁶ *Met.* V 26, 1023b 34f “Of these things themselves, those which are so by nature (*physei*) are wholes in a higher degree than those which are so by art (*technē*)”. We consider it to have been thoroughly shown that *praxis* and *phronēsis* only come to be already as a whole, already ‘assembled’ (a term which properly belongs to *technē*, because there is no assembling of it: the whole of it arises), and we do not think Aristotle is forgetting this fundamental determination here.

“will decide the priority of *sophia*”⁹²⁷, because “a higher way of being healthy is health itself”⁹²⁸. The *theōrein* of *sophia*, unlike the *prattein* of *phronēsis*, does not have a further goal. *Phronēsis*, Heidegger argues, “leads and guides all human acting, but it is still referred to something else (*auf etwas anderes angewiesen*), namely the action itself”⁹²⁹.

To be sure, later in NE X Aristotle implies that “from practical activities (*de tōn praktikōn*) we gain more or less apart from the action (*para tēn praxin*)” (X 7, 1177b 3f). However, as we have argued elsewhere⁹³⁰, this statement includes two senses of *praxis*: while ‘practical activities’ (*ta praktika*) means all those activities that are not theoretical, ‘action’ (*praxis*) concerns as much *ta praktika* as *theōrein*. Aristotle is not playing *theōria* and *praxis* against one another, because *theōria* is a specific *praxis*, but comparing two ways of living (*biōtē*)⁹³¹: political life, which primarily requires *phronēsis*, and contemplative life, which requires both *phronēsis* and *sophia*. ‘Political life’ does not concern the *structure* of *praxis*, but the *content* of a life devoted to practical affairs, in the restricted sense of *praxis* as external actions. And ‘contemplative life’, similarly, is not a life that excludes *praxis*, but a life mainly devoted to the specific *praxis* of *theōrein*. The wide structural sense of *praxis*, which encompasses more than just external actions, that in which “the mind is most truly to act (*prattein*)”⁹³², includes contemplative life. It is because the *praxis* of *theōrein* better renders the specific character of *praxis* as autotelic, i.e. generating itself as health does, that Aristotle implies that it is a higher *praxis*.

⁹²⁷ GA 19 § 24b p. 169 [116] “An diesem *poiēin* wird sich ontologisch der Vorrang der *sophia* entscheiden”.

⁹²⁸ GA 19 § 24b p. 170 [117] “Eine höhere Art des Gesundseins ist aber die Gesundheit selbst”.

⁹²⁹ GA 19 § 24b p. 170 [117, our e, mod. tr.] “Die *phronēsis* leitet und führt jedes menschliche Handeln, ist aber auf etwas anderes noch angewiesen, nämlich die Handlung selbst”.

⁹³⁰ Cf. our pp. 79 ff. above and NATALI, C. 2001 pp. 112-176, esp. pp. 135 and 165.

⁹³¹ Aristotle “is not here examining the relations between the dianoetic virtues *phronēsis* and *sophia*, and their respective realizations, as in NE VI 13. Rather, he is contrasting two ways of living, the «philosophical» and the «political»” (*Ibidem* p. 135).

⁹³² Cf. *Politics* VII 3, 1325b 21ff.

In any case, it is surprising that after having held that “the object of the deliberation is *zōē itself*, [that] the *telos* has the same ontological character as *phronēsis*”⁹³³, or later, that *phronēsis* “belongs intrinsically to the action”⁹³⁴, Heidegger now contends that the action is “something else” than *phronēsis*. Surely, this applies for action in the restricted sense of what comes out, but not in the structural sense of *praxis*. If Heidegger now returns to the restricted sense of *praxis*, it is only to link *phronēsis* to the structure of medicine, and to reserve for *sophia* the structure of health, i.e. that in which being and producing are one and the same (health produces health through one’s own being healthy), which for Aristotle is a more fulfilled way of being. Only thus, by keeping *phronēsis* detached from this model, can the tension of the *gigantomachia* be preserved.

Nevertheless, we cannot yet understand to what extent *sophia* can be compared to human health, i.e. to what extent the comportment which is nothing but the disclosure of the everlasting constitutes the proper being of man. We can come to understand it only on the basis of the Greek concept of being⁹³⁵.

Because the contemplative life is argued in NE X to be the one that best fulfils *eudaimonia*, and Aristotle time and again insists that *eudaimonia* is *energeia*, Heidegger decidedly applies what he considers to be the Greek concept of being to *energeia*. In GA 18, as we have seen, *Anwesenheit* was rather centered on *entelecheia*, and the account of *energeia* was more ambivalent, although ultimately subordinate to it. Here, however, *energeia* “means nothing else than presence, pure immediate presence at hand”⁹³⁶. As a result, *eudaimonia* is “the presence of the fin-

⁹³³ GA 19 § 8a p. 49 [34] “Bei der *phronēsis* ist vielmehr der Gegenstand des Überlegens die *zōē selbst*; das *telos* ist vom selben Seinscharakter wie die *phronēsis*”. Cf. NE VI 5, 1140 b 6f; Cf. also DWA pp. 13-14 [229]; GA 18 § 17c p. 189 [128].

⁹³⁴ GA 19 § 22a p. 147 [101] “Von der *archē* her, von dem, was ich will, von dem, wozu ich mich entschieße, bis zur vollendeten Handlung selbst gehört die *phronēsis* mit zur Handlung dazu”.

⁹³⁵ GA 19 § 24b pp. 170-171 [117] “Aber trotzdem ist nicht verständlich, inwiefern die *sophia* mit dem Gesundsein des Menschen verglichen werden kann, d.h. inwiefern das Verhalten, das das Aufdecken des Immerseins ist, das eigentliche Sein des Menschen ausmacht. Das verstehen wir nur aus dem Sinn des Seinsbegriffs der Griechen”.

⁹³⁶ GA 19 § 25a p. 172 [119] “*Energeia* besagt nichts anderes als Anwesenheit, reines unmittelbares Vorhandensein”.

ished state (*Fertiganwesendsein*) of the living being with regard to its highest possibility of being"⁹³⁷. Heidegger further tightens this up with the definition of *eudaimonia* in NE I: *psychēs energeia tis kat aretēn teleian* (I 13, 1102 a 5f), which he translates according to the same conception of *telos* deployed in GA 18: “the pure presence at hand of the living being with regard to its ultimately actualized possibility of being”⁹³⁸. Although we have extensively argued why this static idea of *energeia* does not seem to us to fit Aristotle’s mind, and why it does not allow *energeia* to fully unfold its phenomenological and ontological potential, the point cannot be overemphasized. Heidegger’s paraphrase of the definition of *eudaimonia* in NE I is definitely consistent with his thesis on what Aristotle and the Greeks generally understand by being, but it does not pay heed to Aristotle’s constant emphasis in the NE on the performative character of *eudaimonia*, a character for which he reserves the terms *energeia* and *praxis*. The issue is patently raised in a passage of that same book, on which we have lingered above:

[I]t makes, perhaps, no small difference whether we place the chief good [i.e. *eudaimonia*] in possession (*ktēsis*) or use (*chrēsis*), in state (*hexis*) or in activity (*energeia*). For the state may exist without producing any good result, as is a man who is asleep or in some other way quite inactive, but the activity cannot; for one who has the activity (*energeia*) will of necessity be acting (*prattein*), and acting well (*eu prattein*). (I 8, 1098b 31ff.)⁹³⁹.

Whoever has an *energeia*—and *eudaimonia* is an *energeia*—will necessarily be acting, because *energeia* cannot exist without ‘producing’ any ‘result’. Human life, we have said, is a *kinēsis*, an *energeia atelēs*: man cannot exist without changing. Because our being is *praxis*, there are no parts of it which could be set aside from its *kinēsis*. *Dasein* is, as Heidegger puts it in GA 18, “such a being that, in its being,

⁹³⁷ GA 19 § 25a p. 172 [119] “Die *eudaimonia* ist also das Fertiganwesendsein des Lebenden hinsichtlich seiner höchsten Seinsmöglichkeit”.

⁹³⁸ GA 19 § 25a p. 172 [119] “[D]ie reine Gegenwart des Lebenden hinsichtlich seiner zu Ende gebrachten Seinsmöglichkeit”.

⁹³⁹ Cf. also NE I 8, 1098 b 21f “Happiness as a sort of living and faring well (*eupraxia*)”; IX 9, 1169b 29: “[H]appiness consists in life and activity (*tō zēn kai energein*)”; *Politics* VII 3 1325a 32: “happiness is activity (*praxis*)”.

depends upon its being, explicitly or inexplicitly⁹⁴⁰: even if we are not conscious of it, even if we are conscious of it but we do not like the fact, our *praxis* is in a constant restructuring. *Energieia* is *chrēsis*, not *ketēsis*, “not a thing that we possess all the time, like a piece of property (*ketēma*)”⁹⁴¹, like something *handy*. *Energieia* is our own being, and for that reason it is not *in our hands* to make it forget⁹⁴², i.e. to remove any part of it, as we would remove a finished *ergon* from a shelf. It is not *in our hands* to still the stream of *praxis* like we cease the process of a *poiēsis*, and for that reason in *praxis* we do not bring into play “a settled completeness”, but rather we are “acting anew in every moment”⁹⁴³: the structure of our being is not ‘to be ready (*Fertig*) for something’, but to be always on the way, to be always new.

This connection between *energeia* and *praxis* meant by Aristotle is allowed to come out in the first lessons of GA 18. *Energieia*, Heidegger says there, is “a how of being, such a way of being that has the being-character of *praxis*”⁹⁴⁴. However, the connection, scarcely developed in those first lessons, is now left in the shade. But light must be shed on it: if *energeia* has no less to do with the *kairos* of *phronēsis* than with the *aei* of *sophia*, Aristotle’s elucidation of the superiority of *sophia* over *phronēsis* seems not so much a *gigantomachia* that splits being into two spheres as a recognition that, although we are always otherwise, it is not ours to deliberate about what cannot be otherwise⁹⁴⁵, e.g., for our purpose, the *fact* that we are always otherwise.

⁹⁴⁰ GA 18 § 12a p. 95 [65] “[Dasein ist] ein solches Seindes, in dessen Sein es ausdrücklich oder unausdrücklich auf sein Sein ankommt”. Cf. also § 17c p. 180 [121-122].

⁹⁴¹ NE IX 9, 1169b 29f (Rackham).

⁹⁴² GA 19 § 8c p. 56 [39] “Bei der *phronēsis* gibt es nicht die Verfallensmöglichkeit des Vergessens”.

⁹⁴³ Cf. GA 18 § 17c p. 189 [128] “Wiederholung besagt nicht: Ins-Spiel-Bringen einer festsitzenden Fertigkeit, sondern *in jedem Augenblick neu aus dem entsprechenden Entschluß heraus handeln*”.

⁹⁴⁴ GA 18 § 10b p. 70 [50] “*Energieia* ein Wie des Seins, eines solchen Seins vom Seinscharakter der *praxis*”.

⁹⁴⁵ Cf. NE VI 7, 1141b 10f.

The fundamental aporia that Heidegger believes to detect in Aristotle's decision in favour of *sophia* is the fact that what is thematic in it is the *aei*, "whereas human *Dasein* has its being in being *genesis, praxis, kinēsis*"⁹⁴⁶. However, Heidegger cannot be implying that, because our being is *kinēsis*, *this very same determination* is subject itself to *kinēsis*, i.e. our being may be *kinēsis* today, but may be something else tomorrow. If the *aei* has nothing at all to do with the being of *Dasein*, then there is no point in stating anything about it, not even to say that its being is *kinēsis*. If we cannot say that the being of *Dasein* is *always kinēsis*, regardless of what we do and say, then we cannot grasp its being.

Heidegger's interpretation, both in GA 18 and GA 19, sets all its *emphasis* on the immediate and always dynamic character of our being, as distinct from what stands apart from us as available. But Heidegger cannot help implying that a certain dimension of the how of our being is not available to us: we may deliberate and decide how to act, but we cannot deliberate and decide on whether our actions are to restructure our being or not; we are the modelers of our *praxis*, but we are not the modelers of 'our being *praxis*'. Paraphrasing Aristotle on 'being white', *it is not because we think that we are praxis, that we are praxis, but because we are praxis that we who say this have the truth*⁹⁴⁷. In this respect, Heidegger's characterization of *Dasein* in *Sein und Zeit* as a "thrown project" (*geworfener Entwurf*)⁹⁴⁸ is straight to the point. The thrownness (*Geworfenheit*) or facticity of *Dasein* is as essential as its possibility (*Möglichkeit*) to the understanding of its sense of being.

The entire project of fundamental ontology hinges on the assumption that we do not create the sense of being, but rather can come to uncover and

⁹⁴⁶ GA 19 § 24a p. 164 [115, mod. tr.] "[D]as menschliche Dasein sein Sein darin hat, *genesis, praxis, kinēsis* zu sein". Cf. NE VI 13, 1143b 19f.

⁹⁴⁷ Cf. *Met.* IX 10, 1051b 6ff.

⁹⁴⁸ Cf. SZ § 58 p. 285.

safeguard it. For that reason Heidegger, like Aristotle, preserves the priority of *sophia* for the task of disclosing the sense of being⁹⁴⁹. Still, because we cannot come to understand neither our own being nor being in general by stepping aside from our own thrownness, *sophia* has to be conceived in such a way that it fits our way of being, and it is to this point that Heidegger believes Aristotle has not arrived. *Sophia* is not conceived by Aristotle in such a way that it may grasp being in a way according to the structure of *Dasein*, i.e. one that is capable to account as much for the being of *Dasein* as for being in general. Aristotle's *sophia*, Heidegger contends, leaps directly into the safety of the *aei*, of beings which are always as they are, and is thus incapable of grasping the unity between *Dasein* and *world* through which we can come to ask at all about being: the unified phenomenon of 'being in the world' (*In-der-Welt-sein*)⁹⁵⁰:

The expression *bin* is connected with *bei*. *Ich bin* (I am) means I dwell, I stay near... the world as something familiar in such and such a way (...). *Being-in is thus the formal existential expression of the being of Dasein which has the essential constitution of being-in the world*⁹⁵¹.

Dasein first and foremost *finds* itself as being in the world⁹⁵², and it is starting from this phenomenon, in which 'I' and the world appear together, that the sense of being is to be pursued. According to Heidegger's account, Aristotle would have missed—under the influence of the Greek sense of being—the ontological relevance of his phenomenological description of *phronēsis*, in which this 'finding oneself' would have appeared genuinely. However, we would like to argue that precisely this 'finding oneself' of *phronēsis* traces its roots back to the fundamental experience described in the elucidation of *energeia* in *Metaphysics* IX 6, 1048b 18-35. This point has been actually working in our argument in the form

⁹⁴⁹ Cf. notes 905 and 909 above.

⁹⁵⁰ Cf. SZ § 12 p. 53.

⁹⁵¹ SZ § 12 p. 54. "Der Ausdruck »bin« hängt zusammen mit »bei«; »ich bin« besagt wiederum: ich wohne, halte mich auf bei ... der Welt, als dem so und so Vertrauten. (...) *In-Sein ist demnach der formale existenziale Ausdruck des Seins des Daseins, das die wesenhafte Verfassung des In-der-Welt-seins hat*".

⁹⁵² Cf. "Der Begriff der Zeit" (1924) in GA 64 p. 114 [205].

of a *telos*, as *telos* is in *praxis* and *physis*—it has been imparting a direction on our thesis which can only now fully unfold. What has been working as a hypothesis up to here, can now appear as a way out of the dilemma that Heidegger believes to find in Aristotle, i.e. as a possibility to enrich the returns of this *Auseinandersetzung* on the way to *Sein und Zeit*.

8. Revisiting Metaphysics IX: *Hexis, Energeia* and Time

The clash between the paradigms of the *aei* and the *kairos* that is at the center of the *gigantomachia* between *phronēsis* and *sophia* at the end of the ‘Aristotle introduction’ in GA 19 ultimately has its roots in the alleged tension between Aristotle’s ethical and metaphysical concepts. We have suggested that emphasizing the *performative* sense of *energeia*—which beyond the mere sense of appearing, of being there (*da*), permeates not only Aristotle’s ethics, but also other works such as his *Physics* and his *Metaphysics*—may question the inevitability of this conflict.

While he obviously knew Aristotle’s connection between *praxis* and *energeia*, nowhere in his interpretation in 1922-24 does Heidegger make thematic the connection of this performative sense of *energeia* with the performative structure that he thoroughly detects in the ethics. We have analyzed above the point at which he probably gets closer to dwell on it⁹⁵³: in the important § 17 of GA 18 on *hexis*, he refers to the definition of *hexis* as an *energeia* in *Metaphysics* V 20, but he only reads *energeia* as “being-present”⁹⁵⁴. Thus seen, *energeia* actually does not seem to offer much for the understanding of the temporal structure of *hexis* and *praxis*, which is rather found in the phenomenon of striking the *mesotēs*. Through the *mesotēs* we surely gain insight into the kairological experience of *praxis*: we grasp our being from the inside, from our own experience of it. However, how to hold together the need of experiencing of our being in the *kairos* and the fact that our being is ever “stretching across time”⁹⁵⁵? *How are we to avoid, in our ontological account, the reduction of being to our experience of it in the now?*

⁹⁵³ Cf. pp. 213 ff. above.

⁹⁵⁴ GA 18 § 17a pp. 174-175 [118] “*Hexis* ist die *energeia*, »das eigentliche Da, das Gegenwärtigsein des Habenden und des Gehabten«”.

⁹⁵⁵ GA 18 § 17c p. 181 [122] “Erstreckung in die Zeit”.

The question plunges us into the core of the controversy with the Megarians that Aristotle develops in *Metaphysics* IX 3. This passage not only constitutes an important prelude of Aristotle's insights in IX 6 but also directs Heidegger, some years after *Sein und Zeit*, towards an interpretation of *energeia* that, differently from the one developed from 1922 to 1930, precisely emphasizes its performative side in relation with *hexis*. The fact that it is Heidegger himself who in 1931 changes his understanding of *energeia*, and that this change is precisely built upon the relation between *energeia* and *hexis*, sheds additional light on our approach to his interpretation of Aristotle in the 20s⁹⁵⁶.

8.1. *Energeia* and *Hexis* in 1931

Aristotle's confrontation with the Megarians is thoroughly analyzed by Heidegger in his course *Vom Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Kraft*⁹⁵⁷, devoted to *Metaphysics* IX 1-3. Although Aristotle's argument here is read positively as a refutation of a subjectivistic and *presentialist* conception of being (that of the Megarians), the paradox that we have found in the early 20s remains: according to Heidegger, Aristotle would not escape this conception despite his solid refutation of the Megarians, although the point is not ultimately argued⁹⁵⁸. Worth mentioning is also the

⁹⁵⁶ In any case, for the sake of clarity, the differences between the interpretation here and that in the 1920s must be marked out. Brogan's otherwise thorough and in-depth *Heidegger and Aristotle* sometimes fails to do so (Cf. BROGAN, W. 2005).

⁹⁵⁷ GA 33 *Aristoteles, Metaphysik Θ 1-3. Vom Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Kraft* (SS 1931) Ed. by Heinrich Hüni, 1981 [*Aristotle's Metaphysics Theta 1-3. On the Essence and Actuality of Force* (GA33)]. Translated by Walter Brogan and Peter Warnek, IU Press, 1995].

⁹⁵⁸ GA 33 § 18 p. 181 [155, mod. tr.] "Why does Aristotle, like the Megarians see the essence of the actuality of something in presence? This is a question which philosophy must do its utmost to answer. Here we must be satisfied with recognizing the fact and with having raised the question". ("Warum sieht Aristoteles das Wesen der Wirklichkeit von etwas ebenso wie die Megariker in der Anwesenheit? Das ist eine Frage, zu deren Beantwortung die Philosophie ihr Letztes hergeben muß. Wir müssen uns hier damit begnügen, das Faktum anzuerkennen und die Frage gestellt zu haben"). Rodrigo believes, as we do, that the paradox does not hold and that it is detrimental to the interpretation: "For Heidegger, this character of being that Aristotle would have updated in *Met.* IX 3, while it would surely be a step forward towards the effective being of force, would remain under the dominion of the present being of the given being. A step forward, then, but at the same time kept back within the sphere of the evidence of *Anwesenheit*. Nothing appears to me as less assured than that, and that is why I said that

circumstance that Heidegger does not get to analyze *Metaphysics* IX 6 in this course. Whether this was due to a lack of time as Volpi suggests⁹⁵⁹ or to the initial plan for the course, the fact is that this text is not dealt with again until 1939⁹⁶⁰. In any case, despite the fact that Heidegger persists in sustaining that the narrowing of the metaphysics of *Anwesenheit* applies also to Aristotle, his reading of *energeia* in 1931 is not only substantially different from that of the 1920s, but also from that of the course in the previous summer, where *energeia* is read as meaning constant presence (*beständige Anwesenheit*) and the readiness (*Fertigkeit*) of a produced object⁹⁶¹. Commenting upon the relation between a *dynamis* and its enactment (*Vollzug*), he now remarks: “*energein* and *energeia* no longer have here the originally very narrow reference to *ergon*, but nevertheless they still have the meaning of enactment”⁹⁶². We should then not overlook the fact that, *in his closest ever reading of Metaphysics IX*, Heidegger finds himself in much more agreement with Aristotle than elsewhere in his resistance to the metaphysics of *Anwesenheit*⁹⁶³.

Heidegger renders sharply the core of the controversy as Aristotle poses it: the Megarians identify *dynamis* and *energeia*, i.e. “the actuality of a force and the actualization of that force in enactment”⁹⁶⁴, insofar as they only agree to bestow the status of being on those capabilities that present themselves in operation. A

Heidegger does not take, neither here nor elsewhere, all the possible advantage of his reading” (RODRIGO, Pierre “Heidegger lecteur d’Aristote: *Dynamis* et *energeia* sous le regard phénoménologique (GA 33, Mét. Θ 1-3)” *Les Études Philosophiques* 1990 (1) pp. 353-372, p. 369 for ref).

⁹⁵⁹ Cf. VOLPI, F. 1990 p. 13.

⁹⁶⁰ Cf. WBP in GA 9 esp. pp. 354-357 [216-219].

⁹⁶¹ Cf. GA 31 *Vom Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit* (SS 1930) §§ 7-8 pp. 40 ff, esp. pp. 68-69.

⁹⁶² GA 33 § 20b p. 204 [175] “*Energein*, *energeia* haben hier schon nicht mehr die ursprünglich ganz enge Bezogenheit auf *ergon*, aber immer doch die Bedeutung des Vollzugs”.

⁹⁶³ Rodrigo, who also highlights the contrast between the 1930 and the 1931 courses, is surprised that “Heidegger abandons Aristotle, at the end of the [1931] university semester, without having fully realized that the interpretation that he has just given of the ‘effectivity of force’ (...) can contribute positively to the development of a sense of being different from that of being as constant presence (*Anwesenheit*)” (RODRIGO, P. 1990 p. 356).

⁹⁶⁴ GA 33 § 22 p. 184 [158] “[die megarische] Gleichsetzung von Wirklichkeit einer Kraft und Verwirklichung derselben im Vollzug”.

point that makes this thesis reasonable, suggests d'Angelo, is the fact that we only perceive the subsistence of a *dynamis* when we see its execution⁹⁶⁵. However, neither Heidegger nor Aristotle are willing to take our perception as the full account of the being of anything: they see eye to eye in disapproving of the subjectivistic imprint of this perspective⁹⁶⁶. How does then Aristotle confront the Megarian equation?

By *pointing to a phenomenon* that first of all allows the essence of enactment to be grasped properly and thereby allows the presence of the force which lies within it to be delimited according to its own specificity. This phenomenon is that of *learning* and *unlearning* in the broadest sense⁹⁶⁷.

Aristotle indeed notes the absurdity of conceiving of a builder who “will not have the art when he has ceased to use it, and yet may immediately build again; how then will he have got the art?”⁹⁶⁸; or of thinking, against experience, that “the same people will be blind many times in the day”⁹⁶⁹ just because they are not enacting their ability to see at certain moments. The appeal to the phenomenon of “learning and unlearning in the broadest sense” against the Megarian thesis points then towards the how of the being of *dynamis* that makes it possible for the builder, or for a being who sees, to cease enacting their respective *dynamei* without prejudice to an eventual retaking of their enactments: “Aristotle wants to bring into view for the very first time the proper manner of being actual of a *dynamis*; this occurs through the emphasis upon *dynamis echein*, having a

⁹⁶⁵ Cf. D'ANGELO, A. 2000 p. 371 (the remark does not imply that D'Angelo subscribes to the Megarian thesis). Heidegger points to this difficulty, too: the actuality of the capable “is co-determined in terms of (...) enactment; but it is not the same as such enactment” (“Die Wirklichkeit des Vermögenden (...) bestimmt sich von daher mit; [sie] ist aber nicht dasselbe”) GA 33 § 22 p. 217 [186].

⁹⁶⁶ Cf. *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 14ff. and GA 33 § 20 pp. 193 ff., esp. 200-201 [165 ff., esp. 172].

⁹⁶⁷ GA 33 § 22 p. 184 [158] “Durch den *Hinweis auf ein Phänomen*, das allererst erlaubt, das Wesen des Vollzugs recht zu fassen und damit die in ihm liegende Anwesenheit der Kraft nach ihrem Eigentümlichen zu umgrenzen. Dieses Phänomen ist das des *Lernens* und *Verlernens* im weitesten Sinne”.

⁹⁶⁸ *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 3f.

⁹⁶⁹ *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 9f.

capability”⁹⁷⁰. In fact, this is not the very first time that Aristotle does so: we have been discussing at length *Metaphysics* V 20, where Aristotle defines *hexis* (which among other senses has that of a *dynamis* to act in a certain way) as an *energeia*⁹⁷¹. Although Heidegger does not mention this passage here or elsewhere in the course, he does relate *hexis* to this problematic, some sessions before:

Dynamis echein means that something which is capable is capable in that it «has» a capability; it *holds itself* (*sich hält*) in this capability and it *holds itself back* (*an sich hält*) with this capability—and thereby precisely does not enact (...). Here we have to gather all this from the Greek word *echein*. —The meanings which I have designated here also come into play with the corresponding expression *hexis*⁹⁷².

The *echein* of *dynamis* is thus articulated in two intertwined moments: on the one hand, that of holding its own ground, its own being; on the other, the specific how of this holding: remaining self-contained in regard to enactment, not leaping into the *energein* of enactment, and yet being an *energeia*. However, the fact that a *hexis* is understood as an *energeia* threatens to collapse the refutation of the Megarians, since this refutation was precisely based on the distinction between *dynamis* and *energeia*. Heidegger depicts the tension in clear-cut terms:

On the one hand, the Megarian thesis ought to be rejected on the basis of its antithesis: the actuality of *dynasthai* as such is not to be sought in *energein*. On the other hand, for a positive determination of the actuality of *dynasthai* as such, precisely *energeia* ought now come into play. How can both of these come together?⁹⁷³.

⁹⁷⁰ GA 33 § 22 p. 188 [161] “Es gilt ihm, allererst den Blick zu öffnen für die eigene Art des Wirklichseins einer *dynamis*; das geschieht durch die Betonung des *dynamis echein*, des Habens eines Vermögens”.

⁹⁷¹ *Met.* V 20, 1022b 4f: “We call a having (*hexis*) a kind of activity (*energeia tis*) of the haver (*echontos*) and the had (*echomenon*), something like an action (*praxis*) or movement (*kinēsis*)”.

⁹⁷² GA 33 § 19 p. 183 [157] “*Dynamis echein* heißt: Das Vermögende ist vermögend, indem es ein Vermögen »hat: sich in diesem Vermögen hält und mit diesem Vermögen an sich hält, — also gerade nicht vollzieht (...). All das müssen wir hier aus dem griechischen *echein* heraushören. — Die Bedeutungen, die ich hier nannte, kommen auch im entsprechenden Ausdruck *hexis* zur Geltung”.

⁹⁷³ GA 33 § 22 p. 214 [184, mod. tr.] “Auf der einen Seite soll die These der Megariker abgelehnt werden durch die Gegenthese: Die Wirklichkeit des *dynasthai* als eines solchen ist nicht im *energein* zu suchen. Auf der anderen Seite soll gerade jetzt für die positive Bestimmung der Wirklichkeit des *dynasthai* als eines solchen die *energeia* mit ins Thema kommen”.

The way out of the *aporia*, Heidegger suggests, can be found by referring both *dynamis* and *energeia* to *kinēsis*. That the Megarians would speak of *energein*, he argues, “does not at all prove that they had a proper notion of it”⁹⁷⁴ (this is, indeed, what Aristotle contends: the Megarians have a narrow conception of *energeia* which cannot account for the being of *dynamis*, because it simply absorbs *dynamis* by equating it with enactment)⁹⁷⁵. Their mistake, Heidegger contends, is that “they did not see precisely that *energeia* qua *energeia* is *energeia kata kinēsin*”⁹⁷⁶. Since Aristotle understands *dynamis* always in relation to *energeia*, in co-determinateness (*Mitbestimmtheit*) with it⁹⁷⁷, Heidegger concludes, “the right distinction between *dynamis* and *energeia* can occur only with the prior and consistent maintenance of *kinēsis*”. *Dynamis* and *energeia* “are modes of being in movement; they are implicitly associated with this and are to be comprehended only on this basis”⁹⁷⁸.

However, is not the sense of *energeia* actually narrowed by considering it as grounded on *kinēsis*? Why would Aristotle then define *kinēsis* as a kind of *energeia* and not vice versa⁹⁷⁹? *Kinēsis* surely connects *dynamis* with *energeia*, but this does not entail that it constitutes their ultimate ontological ground: *the case seems not to be that in investigating energeia Aristotle gets to a kinetic ontological ground, but quite the opposite*. Heidegger himself acknowledges this in commenting a passage of *Metaphysics* IX 3 where Aristotle affirms that *energeia* is arrived at through the *experience* of *kinēsis*⁹⁸⁰:

⁹⁷⁴ *Loc. cit.* “Daß die Megariker sich auf das *energein* stützen, beweist noch gar nicht, daß sie den rechten Begriff davon hatten”.

⁹⁷⁵ Cf. *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 19f.

⁹⁷⁶ *Loc. cit.* “sie sahen gerade nicht, daß die *energeia* qua *energeia* *energeia kata kinēsin* ist”.

⁹⁷⁷ Cf. GA 33 § 22 pp. 215-217 [184-186] and *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 20ff.

⁹⁷⁸ GA 33 § 22 p. 216 [186] “danach kann die rechte Auseinanderhaltung von *dynamis* und *energeia* nur geschehen unter vorheriger und ständiger Festhaltung der *kinēsis*. Was bedeutet das? Nichts Geringeres als: das Vorhandensein des Vermögenden als solchen in gleicher Weise wie die Wirklichkeit im Sinne des Vollzugs sind *Weisen des In-Bewegung-seins*, auf dieses in sich bezogen und nur von daher zu fassen”.

⁹⁷⁹ *Physics* III 2, 201b 12f; 201b 27 - 202a 2.

⁹⁸⁰ Cf. *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 30ff.

dokei gar [hē] energeia malista ē kinēsis einai—movement appears to be something like a ‘being-at-work’ (*Am-Werke-sein*); the most obviously general character of *kinēsis* is *energeia*. To what extent? Where something is in movement, we do say: there is (*da es ist*) something underway, something is afoot, at work, here is an activity⁹⁸¹.

In view of this stance about the genesis of our concept of *energeia*, it is odd, Heidegger proceeds, to learn that Aristotle holds elsewhere that “the essential meaning of *dynamis* and *energeia* on the contrary, is not given (*ergibt sich nicht*) *kata kinēsin*, or, stated more carefully, not *kata kinēsin monon*”⁹⁸². And the question becomes even more obscure (*noch dunkler*), he points out, when we discover that in *Physics* III, 1-3 “Aristotle achieves this essential meaning (*wesentliche Bedeutung*) of *dynamis* and *energeia* precisely through a treatment of *kinēsis*, with a view toward movement”⁹⁸³.

References to the places where Aristotle may say that the meaning of *dynamis* and *energeia* is not given *kata kinēsin monon* are not to be found in the transcript of Heidegger’s course. There are two passages in *Metaphysics* IX, though, where those specific terms are used. Firstly, in chapter 1: “*dynamis* and *energeia* extend beyond the sphere of terms which only refer to motion (*pleon tōn monon legomenōn kata kinēsin*)”⁹⁸⁴; and later, in chapter 6: “we not only call (*ou monon legomen*) *dynaton* that whose nature is to move something else”⁹⁸⁵. However, in both passages Aristotle uses the term *legein*: it is *our understanding* of these concepts that extends further than the sphere of *kinēsis*, but not necessarily the perception or experience that sets the basis to achieve this understanding. Instead, as Heidegger

⁹⁸¹ GA 33 § 7 p. 51 [42] “*dokei gar [hē] energeia malista ē kinēsis einai* — so wie Bewegung erscheint, ist sie so etwas wie ein ›Am-Werke-Sein‹; der nächstallgemeine *kinēsis*-Charakter ist *energeia*. Inwiefern? Wo etwas in Bewegung ist, sagen wir ja: es ist da etwas im Gang, es ist etwas los, etwas am Werk; da ist eine Tätigkeit”.

⁹⁸² GA 33 § 7 pp. 51-52 [42, mod. tr.] “Die wesentliche Bedeutung von *dynamis* und *energeia* dagegen ergibt sich nicht *kata kinēsin*, oder vorsichtiger: nicht *kata kinēsin monon*”.

⁹⁸³ GA 33 § 7 p. 52 [42] “Aristoteles die wesentliche Bedeutung von *dynamis* und *energeia* gerade an der *kinēsis* gewinnt, gerade im Blick auf sie”.

⁹⁸⁴ *Met.* IX 1, 1046a 1f (Fredennick).

⁹⁸⁵ *Met.* IX 6, 1048a 28f.

rightly points out, Aristotle actually gets to *energeia* through the perception of *kinēsis*, and he makes this procedure explicit. That *kinēsis* is the starting point, however, does not necessarily entail that the sense of *energeia* should be equated with that of *kinēsis*, and that is why Aristotle makes these precisions in reference to *legein*, which in Heideggerian terms could be explained as a distinction between the ontic and the ontological. Still, Heidegger does not seem to recognize such a kind of distinction as operating in Aristotle, and tends to read ‘appearing’ (to be given, *sich ergeben*) where Aristotle says ‘understanding’. Only thus can he point towards a tension between Aristotle’s confessed phenomenological practice in IX 3 and what is implied in these passages of IX 1 and 6, where Aristotle is not speaking of the *phainesthai* of *energeia* and *dynamis*, but of our ontological understanding of them, in the precise sense in which Heidegger understands ontology in *Sein und Zeit*: “the explicit, theoretical question of the meaning of beings”⁹⁸⁶.

What Aristotle is doing in IX 3, on the other hand, is to follow his usual practice, i.e. to initiate his discussion from an account of the common view of things, to which his own ordinary experience belongs, in order to develop his own philosophical analysis. That the statement in this passage is limited to the ontical, moreover, seems to be reinforced by the usage of the verb *dokei*, the context, and the usual philosophical practice of Aristotle⁹⁸⁷. What he is meaning here, as Heidegger accurately reflects it in his paraphrase, is that when *we see* something in movement, we say: here there is something going on. In other words: movement, *kinēsis*, is the *phenomenon* that allows us to access being in the precise sense which Aristotle is pointing to. As Heidegger had put it in 1924, “[w]hat shows itself [is]

⁹⁸⁶ SZ § 4 p. 12 “Wenn wir daher den Titel Ontologie für das explizite theoretische Fragen nach dem Sinn des Seienden vorbehalten (...)”.

⁹⁸⁷ Although differently from Heidegger’s, Tredennick’s translation keeps the original position of the terms *energeia* and *kinēsis*, it also reflects the ontic character of the statement by displaying the sense of *dokei*: “it is agreed (*dokei*) that actuality is properly motion”. Ross’ translation, on the other hand, seems misleading to us, because it presents the statement as ontological: “actuality in the strict sense is identified with movement”. That the ontic sense implied by *dokei* should not be omitted is further demonstrated by what follows: “And so people do not assign movement to non-existent things, though they do assign other predicates” (IX 3, 1047a 32 ff, Ross).

kinēsis itself (...). A first step is that *kinēsis* constitutes *the genuine there-character of being (Da-Charakter des Seins)*⁹⁸⁸. However, that *kinēsis* has the ontical or phenomenological priority is not simply comparable to regard it as the *ontological ground* of being. This is precisely what we believe Aristotle to be intending to avoid with his statements in IX 1 and 6, which are meant in a strictly ontological sense. Being itself (*to on auto*) is necessarily wider than *kinēsis*, because otherwise it would remain always in a state of coming to be; being “*does not come to be nor cease to be (ou gignetai oude phtheiretai)*, for if it did it would have to come out of something (*ek tinōs gar an egineto*)”⁹⁸⁹, and we would have a process to infinity which does not make sense. This is perhaps best expressed in a passage of the *Physics* that importantly meets the characterization of *hexis* as *energeia* in *Metaphysics* V and IX:

One who possesses knowledge of a science (*epistēmēn echōn*) but is not actually exercising it (*mē theorōn*) knows the science potentially in a sense, though not in the same sense as before he learnt it. And when he is in this condition, if something does not prevent him, he actively exercises his knowledge (*energei kai theōrei*): otherwise he would be in the contradictory state of not knowing⁹⁹⁰.

The *kinēsis* of learning, thus, however much it is on the way, is necessarily also *energeia*: “of that which is changing, some part must have changed”⁹⁹¹, so that *energeia* is “prior to *dynamis*”⁹⁹² and thus to *kinēsis*. We still agree with Heidegger, though, that the problem of the Megarians is that they understand *energeia* in too narrow a manner. What is at stake is a *widening of the understanding of energeia*, and we believe with him that the concepts of *hexis* and *echein* can provide it⁹⁹³. However, if

⁹⁸⁸ GA 18 § 25 p. 287 [194] “Was sich zeigt [ist] die *kinēsis* selbst (...). Ein erster Schritt ist, daß die *kinēsis* den *eigentlichen Da-Charakter des Seins* ausmacht”.

⁹⁸⁹ *Met.* IX 10, 1051b 29f.

⁹⁹⁰ *Physics* VIII 7, 255b 1ff.

⁹⁹¹ Cf. also *Met.* IX 8, 1049b 35f, in a passage to which we return below on p. 283.

⁹⁹² *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 2f.

⁹⁹³ Cf. p. 263 above. Before in the course, Heidegger notes how, to the Megaric conception that “the actuality of a capability lies in its enactment”, Aristotle replies: “the actuality of a capability lies in its *echein*, in having” (“Die Wirklichkeit eines Vermögens liegt im Vollzug, darin stellt es sich dar und her. Aristoteles entgegnet: Die Wirklichkeit eines Vermögens als Vermögen liegt im *echein*, im Haben”) GA 33 p. 189 [163].

the widening of the understanding of *energeia* is not feasible in terms of understanding both *energeia* and *dynamis* as grounded in the wider domain of *kinēsis*, which other way out is available?

Energeia itself. Detaching ourselves from Heidegger, we aim to understand both *energeia* and *dynamis* as grounded in *energeia*. Which of course raises at least two questions: (i) is not this tautological as regards *energeia*? And (ii), again, does not this collapse the distinction between *energeia* and *dynamis* that, against the Megarians, Aristotle insists on holding⁹⁹⁴?

Ad (i): First of all, it should be noted that the idea of *kinēsis* being the ontological ground of *energeia* and *dynamis* is not only faced with a similar problem—since *kinēsis* is thus its own ontological ground—but also, as we have just argued, with a stronger one: if *kinēsis* is ultimately *kinēsis*, ‘coming into being’ is always coming into being, so that we are faced with a *regressio ad infinitum* which cannot account for its being, unless we assume that we can get to experience and to name something that has not yet come to be. In other words, the tautology here turns into a contradiction, because it erodes its own basis.

With *energeia*, on the other hand, the door seems to open for a *productive tautology*, in the direction in which Heidegger himself, at the very end of his last seminar in 1973 holds that “tautological thinking (...) is the primordial sense of phenomenology”⁹⁹⁵. Our proposal would be tautological *in the unproductive sense of the word* if the statement “at the same time (*hama*) we are seeing and have seen”⁹⁹⁶ resulted in a contradiction or proved to explain nothing. But if what is expressed by this sentence is that being does not take time to be, but instead *is* immediately,

⁹⁹⁴ “[E]vidently potentiality and actuality are different, but these views [of the Megarians] make potentiality and actuality the same, so that it is not small things they are seeking to annihilate” *Met.* IX 3, 1047a 17ff.

⁹⁹⁵ *Seminar in Zäbringen* (1973) in GA 15 p. 399 [80]: “das Denken, dem hier nachgefragt wird, nenne ich das tautologische Denken. Das ist der ursprüngliche Sinn der Phänomenologie”.

⁹⁹⁶ *Met.* IX 6, 1048b 23.

then the repetition is meant precisely to express this immediacy: *energeia* is *energein*, i.e. being is fully there from the very first moment in which it is being. There is nothing ‘belonging’ to a *tode ti*, to a ‘being here and now’ in its ‘being here and now’, which is missing or coming to be. It is in this precise sense that Aristotle holds in NE X 4—a chapter bearing evident parallelisms with 1048b—that pleasure, as opposed to *kinēsis*, is a whole in the now⁹⁹⁷.

Our clause ‘in its being here and now’ is crucial to understand why this is far from implying an understanding of being that could not account for change, i.e. for *kinēsis*—to the point that if the phenomenon of *kinēsis* proved to be rejected by this perspective, there would be indeed good reasons to reject the idea of *energeia* being its ontological ground, at least as far as finite beings are concerned. What we are implying is that the whole of the *tode ti* is here and now: insofar as it is, it is absolutely. It does not make any sense, as Aristotle states in the *Categories*, to speak of more or less in relation to *ousia*: “any given substance is not called more, or less, [than] that which it is. For example, if this substance is a man, it will not be more or less a man (*mallon kai ētton anthropos*) either than itself or than another man”⁹⁹⁸. Does this statement however collide with the thorough account of the inner change of man throughout his life in the NE, and of movement “as a sort of life” (*zōē tis*) that belongs to natural beings⁹⁹⁹? Is Aristotle implying that, insofar as things or human beings are, they cannot be more than they are? Surely not, but still the objection might be raised that ‘not meaning’ something does not imply providing the ontological account that would avoid the assumption of such meaning in one’s ontology. That is the reason why we used above the clause ‘in its being here and now’: the *tode ti*, in its *tode ti*, in its there (*Da*), is *fully* fulfilled: it is

⁹⁹⁷ Cf. NE X 4, 1174b 2ff. (b9: “for that which takes place in a moment is a whole (*en tō nyn bolon ti*)”).

⁹⁹⁸ *Categories* 5, 3b 35ff.

⁹⁹⁹ *Physics* VIII 1, 250b 14.

*entelecheia*¹⁰⁰⁰. Which does not forbid that, in an eventual intercourse with something, it may acquire new dimensions which were not in its *tode ti*, in its being here and now¹⁰⁰¹. Gonzalez has expressed this very acutely, upon commenting on Aristotle's formula *to ti ēn einai* (what it was to be) in *Metaphysics* IV¹⁰⁰², one of the ways in which he defines *ousia*:

What *now* distinguishes what a thing is in itself from what it only currently *happens to be* is what it *was* for it to be. On the level of what a thing is in itself, past and present tenses become one. This sameness of past and present is (...) what characterizes *energeia* and therefore allows Aristotle to identify *to ti ēn einai* with *energeia* (e.g., *Met.* IX 8, 1050a 15f, b2f)¹⁰⁰³.

This definition is also the object of a thorough and insightful analysis by Schelling¹⁰⁰⁴, for whom what is meant by *to ti ēn einai* is “that which a being is at each time”¹⁰⁰⁵, but only as a result of what it was to be. “The being, the *ti estin* of each thing, or *what* each thing is, becomes, in reference to what ‘is’ it (that through which it is), the *ti ēn*”¹⁰⁰⁶. An *ousia* can only *be* what it is because it *was* this, and at the same time we only come to know what it is (i.e. what it *was*) through its being here and now. The confluence of past and present in *energeia* expresses the consistency of the *tode ti*—namely, that it *is* ‘this here and now’—and, at once, the consistency of the distension within which ‘this here and now’ may become something else: *kinēsis*. This is in fact the result of *kinēsis* not being something *para*

¹⁰⁰⁰ “[O]f non existent things some exist potentially, but they do not exist, because they do not exist in fulfillment (*ouk entelecheia estin*)”. *Met.* IX 3, 1047b 1f.

¹⁰⁰¹ In fact, the intercourse not only ‘occurs’ to natural beings, but is essential to them. Thus, in the *Physics* VIII 4, while Aristotle restricts self-motion to life (255a 8), he explains how the natural motion of lifeless beings is a result of their own being; thus, e.g. “air is actually light, and will at once realize its proper activity unless something prevents it. The activity (*energeia*) of lightness consists in the light thing being in a certain place, namely high up” (255b 10ff).

¹⁰⁰² *Met.* IV 8, 1017b 21f.

¹⁰⁰³ GONZALEZ, F. J. 2008 p. 14.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Cf. SCHELLING, F. W. J. 1966 lecture 17 pp. 403-408.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Ibidem* p. 405.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Loc. cit.*

*ta pragmata*¹⁰⁰⁷. *Kinēsis* is identical with the *tode ti* that changes—so that *kinēsis* is a ‘this something’—, and any *tode ti* that changes is *kinēsis*. But both, in turn, are ultimately brought back to *energeia*. The ‘tautology’, as regards *energeia*, is expressing the arrival to a fundamental ontological ground, a ground beyond which foundation attempts cannot go without losing their sense of reality—specifically, the sense of man’s own being, which is the *topos* where the sense of being in general can be found. A very celebrated passage of *Sein und Zeit* is importantly enlightening in this respect:

[T]o see a vitiosum in this circle and to look for ways to avoid it, even to «feel» that it is an inevitable imperfection, is to misunderstand understanding from the ground up (...). What is decisive is not to get out of the circle, but to get in it in the right way. This circle of understanding is not a circle in which any random kind of knowledge operates, but it is rather the expression of the existential *fore-structure* of *Dasein* itself¹⁰⁰⁸.

To get into the circle in the right way means precisely to ask about the sense of being without betraying *in the question itself* the structure of our own experience of being, of our access to it. Before explaining how *energeia* provides this entrance, though, we must still answer the second objection.

Ad (ii): If we ground a *dynamis* like *hexis* in *energeia*, how can we avoid the collapse of the distinction between *dynamis* and *energeia*? The tautology of *energeia* is precisely the key to this question, too. The having, insofar as it is said to be, is an *energeia* itself. *But in relation to its enactment* it is a *dynamis*¹⁰⁰⁹: the having (*echein*, *energeia*) of the ability to build is what makes it possible for the builder to start

¹⁰⁰⁷ Cf. GA 18 § 26 p. 288 [195] and *Physics* III 1, 200b 32f.

¹⁰⁰⁸ SZ § 32 p. 153 (mod. tr.) “[I]n diesem Zirkel ein vitiosum sehen und nach Wegen Aus-schau halten, ihn zu vermeiden, ja ihn auch nur als unvermeidliche Unvollkommenheit »empfinden«, heißt das Verstehen von Grund aus mißverstehen (...). Das Entscheidende ist nicht, aus dem Zirkel heraus-, sondern in ihn nach der rechten Weise hineinzukommen. Dieser Zirkel des Verstehens ist nicht ein Kreis, in dem sich eine beliebige Erkenntnisart bewegt, sondern er ist der Ausdruck der existenzialen *Vor-struktur* des Daseins selbst”.

¹⁰⁰⁹ The point is not extraneous to Aristotle: “the same thing can be both potential (*dynamis*) and fulfilled (*entelecheia*), not indeed at the same time (*hama*) or not in the same respect (*kata to auto*)” (*Physics* III 1, 201a 19ff).

building (*poiein, energeia*) or for the harpist to start playing the harp¹⁰¹⁰. D’Angelo expresses this accurately after Aristotle: from the point of view of the totality of time, the *dynamis* is always an *energeia*¹⁰¹¹. It is only in relation to the process of building a house—which can be bracketed in time between a starting of the process and its ending (*peras*), marked by the finished product of the house—that the *technē* of the builder can be characterized as a *dynamis*. On its own, however, this *technē* is an *energeia*—or else, it would not be at all. Again with D’Angelo, if the builder can make a pause in the process “this is actually possible because in a certain sense *he is always building*, in the sense that the end of his capability is immanent to the capability itself, and consists *also* in its use (*chrēsis*)”¹⁰¹².

What is disclosed here, then, is the doubling of *telos* with which we have come across elsewhere: the *hexis* is fulfilled as *hexis* insofar as it *is*, but still can find a fulfillment beyond this determination, i.e. in its enactment as an action, towards which it is structurally directed, and from which it stems. In this respect, Vigo’s analysis of *hexis* as a “dynamic unity of past and future”, acknowledgedly stemming from Heideggerian insights, is very enlightening¹⁰¹³. Heidegger also expresses this continuity in a suggestive manner when he notes that, in coming to enactment,

“being trained [i.e., *hexis*, C.A.] is *not transported to something else, which in each case would be at hand*, but rather the being trained *passes over beyond itself* into something which first forms itself only in and through the passing, what we call carrying out and practicing”¹⁰¹⁴.

¹⁰¹⁰ Cf. *Met.* IX 8, 1049b 31- 1050a 3.

¹⁰¹¹ Cf. D’ANGELO, A. 2000 p. 382.

¹⁰¹² Cf. *Ibidem* p. 280 (our e).

¹⁰¹³ Cf. VIGO, A. 1996 p. 225.

¹⁰¹⁴ GA 33 § 19 p. 191 [164] (our e.) “Dabei wird das Eingebtsein nicht hinübergenommen in etwas anderes, was je vorhanden wäre, sondern das Eingebtsein führt sich über in solches, was sich in der und durch die Überführung erst bildet und was wir Ausführung und Ausübung nennen”.

This provides another hint on why Heidegger finds, in approaching *dynamis* and *energeia* through *echein* and *hexis*, an understanding of *energeia* which points beyond *Anwesenheit*¹⁰¹⁵. The unity in which this doubling occurs consists of a “passing over beyond itself” (*Sichüberführung*) of *hexis* in which *hexis* is “not transported to something else”, but *becomes itself* “something which first forms itself only in and through the passing”. This is only possible if this having that we call *hexis* is actually not had “like a piece of property (*ktēma*)”, but rather is “something that happens”¹⁰¹⁶ at once with our own being, an *energeia atelēs*, but still an *energeia*.

8.2. *Energeia* and Time

Heidegger holds, as we have seen above, that in *Metaphysics* IX 3 Aristotle intends to elucidate the essence of enactment and force (*energeia* and *dynamis*) by pointing to the phenomenon of “learning and unlearning in the broadest sense”¹⁰¹⁷. This is, though, at least implicitly, an appeal to another phenomenon that Aristotle generally assumes as accessible to human beings: *our experience of time*¹⁰¹⁸. In his reply to the Megarians—concentrated, as Heidegger points out¹⁰¹⁹, in 1047a 14: “these views do away with movement as well as becoming”—Aristotle is indeed trying to give, on phenomenological grounds, an account of *the temporal unfolding of being*, something that the Megarians themselves cannot do, precisely because they do not recognize any ontological status to *hexis*:

¹⁰¹⁵ Cf. GA 33 § 20b p. 204 [175] and note 962. After our reading of Heidegger’s acute interpretation of the discussion between Aristotle and the Megarians, it keeps surprising us that while Heidegger considers the presentalist Megarian thesis to collapse before Aristotle’s refutation (cf. GA 33 p. 212 [182]) he still holds that Aristotle remains within presentism. This thread, though, we cannot explore here: for our purpose it is not so relevant to show whether Aristotle as a whole escapes this prejudice as to show that what he is pointing to here indeed opens a domain that is beyond *Anwesenheit*, as also Volpi and Rodrigo suggest (cf. notes 511 and 963).

¹⁰¹⁶ NE IX 9, 1169b 29f (Rackham).

¹⁰¹⁷ GA 33 § 19 p. 184 [158]. Cf. note 967 above.

¹⁰¹⁸ Apart from *Met.* IX, e.g. the overall analysis of time in *Physics* IV 10-13 implies a consciousness of time, which is otherwise explicitly acknowledged: cf. e.g. *Physics* IV 11, 219a 30f and *De Anima* III, 10 433b 7. Cf. also the more implicit but relevant reference in NE IX 9, 1170a 29ff.

¹⁰¹⁹ Cf. GA 33 § 21 p. 210 [180].

Between actually seeing and being blind lies not-seeing in the sense of the non-enactment of visual perception, a non-enactment which inherently and actually is ‘able to enact at any time’. Because the Megarians cannot reconcile themselves to this fact, they are compelled to portray the transition from actual non-perceiving to perceiving as a transitionless exchange between being blind and being able to see¹⁰²⁰.

That the transition is not explained means that, while the Megarians do account for the *immediacy* with which the ‘now’ of an enactment is experienced, they cannot account for the *continuity* of this enactment in the form of a capability to enact later again. This, Aristotle argues, runs against the phenomena, because people do not move from blindness to seeing any number of times in a day. But, more crucially, the Megarians cannot explain *the continuity in time of the enactment itself*, regardless of its relation to the capability in which, as Heidegger puts it, the enactment “holds itself back” (*an sich hält*)¹⁰²¹. Heidegger does not make this explicit in these terms, but the result is that enactment is approached by the Megarians from the sole point of view of their perception of it in the now, i.e. their account of its way of being can be set only in terms of a simple succession of ‘nows’, i.e. in the naturalistic sense of time (‘now I see this enactment’, ‘then I see it again’, etc.) which Heidegger typically claims to find in Aristotle’s *Physics*, although Aristotle himself explicitly states that time is not made up of nows¹⁰²².

¹⁰²⁰ GA 33 § 20b p. 205 [176] “Zwischen Wirklich-sehen und Blindsein liegt das Nicht-sehen im Sinne des Nichtvollziehens von Gesichtswahrnehmung, welches Nichtvollziehen aber in sich ist und wirklich ist als jederzeit vollziehen können. Weil die Megariker diesem Tatbestand nicht gerecht werden können, sind sie dazu gezwungen, den Übergang vom aktuellen Nichtwahrnehmen zum Wahrnehmen als eine übergangslose Auswechslung von Blindsein und Sehendsein darzustellen?”

¹⁰²¹ Cf. GA 33 § 19 p. 183 [157]

¹⁰²² *Physics* IV 10, 218a 8. Of course, one might argue that the statement does not necessarily entail that Aristotle succeeds in conceiving time otherwise, but at least it makes clear that he was conscious of the problem. Although thoroughly arguing that Aristotle goes beyond a naturalistic conception would require at least an additional paper, if not an additional book, that is indeed one of the hypotheses of our research here. The question is dealt with in *Physics* VI (esp. 3-4), in the context of the discussion of the crucial concept of ‘continuous’ (*synecches*) which, among others, frames this book (cf. VI 1, 231a 21). In VI 3, 233b 33ff. Aristotle argues that from a certain point of view time can be divided, but from another, more fundamental and original point of view—the one that grasps its being—it cannot: “the now—the now so-called *not derivatively but in its own right and primarily*—is indivisible (...) For the now is an extremity of the past (no part of the future being in this side of it), and again of the future (no part of the past being on this side of it)”. The point is reaffirmed later: “time contains something indivisible and this is what we call a now” (234a 22f). An analogous approach is made to the question of the

Of course, we cannot deal here with the Aristotelian account of time, which is the object of special attention in Heidegger's 1927 course *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*¹⁰²³, but what seems clear is that, however underdeveloped and isolated in his works it might be, in his refutation of the Megarians Aristotle is pointing to a *characterization of being in terms of time* on the basis of a phenomenological approach to *hexis* and of its ontological characterization in a certain sense as *dynamis* and in another more fundamental sense as *energeia*¹⁰²⁴.

What in *Metaphysics* IX 3 is only implicit becomes central in IX 6 and reveals to our mind a strong parallelism with what Heidegger was seeking during all these years (i.e. on the way to *Sein und Zeit*, in the composition of this *magnus opus*, in the "new elaboration" of the unpublished third division of part 1 that was the 1927 course¹⁰²⁵, and still in the 1931 course): very summarily said, *a way out of the narrowing of ontology operated by metaphysics of presence*, which subjugates being to the spontaneity of the knowing subject and, as a result, reduces being into the unquestioned category of objects, i.e. available and finished beings, an approach which is eventually applied, as a fatal corollary, to this founding subject¹⁰²⁶. Surely,

continuity of space: cf. in this respect Aristotle's critique of Zeno's conception of space as a sum of infinite parts (Cf. VI 2, 233a 21ff).

¹⁰²³ Cf. GA 24 *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (SS 1927) esp. § 19. Gonzalez comments on part of Heidegger's analysis of time in this course and argues that Heidegger's insights provide a basis for considering Aristotle's view of time in the *Physics* as richer than the naturalistic idea that Heidegger ascribes to him (Cf. GONZALEZ, F. 2008 pp. 15-25).

¹⁰²⁴ Cf. *Physics* III 1, 201a 19ff. Cf. also VIII 4, 255a 34ff: "Wherever something capable of acting and something capable of being acted on are together, what is potential becomes actual: e.g. the learner becomes from one potential something another potential something".

¹⁰²⁵ Cf. GA 24 § 1 p. 1.

¹⁰²⁶ At the end of the *Natorp Bericht* (pp. 397-398/49 [144]), Heidegger summarizes thus his scope: "What becomes clear on the basis of these interpretations is the extent to which a particular ontology of a particular domain of being and the logic of a particular kind of addressing came to be regarded (...) as *the one and true ontology* and *the one and true logic*, and as such came to dominate not only the history of ontology and logic but also that of spirit itself, i.e., the history of human existence". (Hieraus wird sichtbar, inwiefern die bestimmte Ontologie eines bestimmten Seinsfeldes und die Logik eines bestimmten Ansprechens, der Verfallensgeneigtheit des Auslegens folgend, zu *der* Ontologie und *der* Logik wurde, als welche sie nicht nur ihre eigene Geschichte, sondern die Geistesgeschichte selbst, d.h. die Existenzgeschichte, entscheidend durchherrscht).

it would be anachronistic to try to find *this* line of reasoning in Aristotle, insofar as concepts like ‘subject’ were creations of modernity¹⁰²⁷; but it is not anachronistic—and it is Heidegger himself who does so—to search in his thought for concepts or intuitions that may make possible this line of reasoning. It is in this respect that the phenomenological insight and conceptual elucidation of *energeia* in *Metaphysics* IX 6 seems to us all the more relevant.

A point must still be reinforced before proceeding. We have argued elsewhere that if the NE comes to be valuable for Heidegger it does because of its ontological reach. The NE is surely concerned with human actions, which can be otherwise, but it is also concerned with *the ontological structure* of life and happiness, *which cannot itself be otherwise if the task to define it is to make any sense*. While deliberation is concerned with what can be otherwise, when Aristotle *holds* that “no one deliberates about what cannot be otherwise” (VI 7, 1141b 10f), he is not assuming that his statement could be otherwise, but rather he is acknowledging a fact, the truth of which he strives to demonstrate, starting from the phenomena. In other words, the discourse of the NE, however concerned it is with life in its movedness, is not a deliberation but a philosophical research, *theoria*. *From this point of view*, *Metaphysics* IX 6, 1048b 18-35—where the central topic is also life and *praxis*—does not appear as far removed from the scope of the NE as one who regarded the *Metaphysics* as a ‘purely theoretical’ discussion would tend to think (which becomes all the more evident in view of the strong parallelism of this passage with NE X 4)¹⁰²⁸.

When Aristotle says that “at the same time (*hama*) we are seeing and have seen” he is surely not describing a deliberation on how to act, but a life experience, as it takes place: *the fact* is that at the same time we are seeing and have seen. This is nothing about which I have to *make up my mind*, like in a deliberation, but

¹⁰²⁷ Cf. GA 63 § 17a, pp. 81-82 [62-63]; DWA p. 11 [227]; GA 18 § 9b pp. 56-57 [40].

¹⁰²⁸ Cf. NE X 4, 1174a 14 ff. and p. 52 above.

instead a ‘looking at’: something which my mind must try *to make out*. The experience described, therefore, is a matter of *sophia*. However, while the deliberation process described in the NE is irreducible to the theoretical explanation of this process itself in the NE, there is here an overlapping or, more precisely, a fusion of *the description* of the experience and the *enactment* of the experience itself. That is to say, when Aristotle is *writing* “at the same time (*hama*) we are seeing and have seen” he is *at the same time enacting* what he is writing: the *hama*, as it were, leaps out of the *papyrus*—the *actus signatus* fits the *actus exercitus*. The reader himself, insofar as he understands what Aristotle is meaning, reads and at the same time experiences, as much as Aristotle writes and at the same time experiences¹⁰²⁹.

What is taking place here is an intellectual experience, starting from the phenomena as they are given to a being who has *logos*. And it is a matter of *sophia*, i.e. of the interplay between *nous* and *epistēmē*: an intuition which is articulated in language¹⁰³⁰, which expresses in *logos* what is given in an experience of which *logos* itself is an essential moment: the experience (i) that I see, (ii) that I have seen, and (iii) that (i) and (ii) are given at the same time (*hama*). The *hama* is the *how* in which (i) and (ii) are given to us, and as such it is indissociable from them, it is given with them. This literally responds to the structure of the Husserlian categorial intuition, and it is not by chance that Heidegger himself traces back its roots to Ancient thought¹⁰³¹.

¹⁰²⁹ This is valid even in the limit case of conjecturing an old blind Aristotle writing this, or someone reading Aristotle in *Braille*: the capability of representing for oneself a previous experience, or the analogical relation to other phenomena comprising the same experience, such as thinking and living, provides the basis for the *phenomenological* analysis—‘phenomenological’, as Heidegger understands the term—that Aristotle is unfolding here.

¹⁰³⁰ Agnello extensively argues that *nous* itself in Aristotle has a linguistic character. This passage seems to reinforce her thesis, insofar as the grasping of the how in which the phenomena are given, which eventually is referred to with the term *hama*, contains itself the *logos* that makes possible its articulation (cf. AGNELLO, C. 2006 esp. pp. 57 ff.)

¹⁰³¹ Cf. GA 20 § 6a p. 73 [55].

Moreover, the phenomenon which Aristotle is facing, and which he is leading us to face is not *any* phenomenon, but that of life itself. The fact that the statement “we are living and have lived (*ζῆν καὶ ἐζῆκεν*)”¹⁰³² is included provides an additional hint in this respect, although the precise direction of the phenomenon is already fully present in the experience of seeing. Moreover, the experience of life here described is not that of an object standing before the gaze of *noēin*¹⁰³³, but that of something in which one finds oneself: here *Dasein* “finds itself in itself (*es befindet sich bei sich selbst*)”¹⁰³⁴, namely it finds itself *being*, which constitutes the primary relation to *Dasein*¹⁰³⁵.

Aristotle’s interest is not merely directed towards the content of what we live—to say it with Heidegger, the *Gehaltsinn* of living—nor only towards how we experience that content (*Bezugsinn*), i.e. through sight or intelligence or life itself, but also towards a central aspect of *the how of the execution itself* of our perceiving that we live (*Vollzugsinn*): we know that we know, but this knowing is experienced as something immediate—I know and I have known. And it is precisely for that reason that Aristotle is experiencing, in the enactment of the description itself, what he is describing: Aristotle is faced before his *praxis*—the *praxis* of his *theōrein*—in the enactment itself, and relates how this *praxis* immediately appears (*phainesthai*). Thus, he is reappropriating the phenomenon of living in the *formal anzeigend* sense required by Heidegger: to know is *knowing*—i.e. prior to any determination of *what* knowledge is, I am faced with the ‘live picture’ of knowledge as a *how*, as enacted. This immediacy in the enactment of *sophia* is the result of the fact

¹⁰³² *Met.* IX 6, 1048b 27.

¹⁰³³ NB p. 386/38 [136].

¹⁰³⁴ “Der Begriff der Zeit” (1924) in GA 64 p. 114 [205, mod. tr.]: “The averageness of everyday *Dasein* does not imply a reflection upon the ego of the self, and nevertheless *Dasein* has itself. It *finds* itself in itself” (“In der Durchschnittlichkeit des alltäglichen Daseins liegt keine Reflexion auf das Ich und das Selbst, und doch hat sich das Dasein selbst. Es *befindet* sich bei sich selbst”).

¹⁰³⁵ Cf. *loc. cit.*: “The primary relation to *Dasein* is not that of seeing but of *«being it»*” (“Der primäre Bezug zum Dasein ist nicht die Betrachtung, sondern das *«es sein»*”).

that *theōrein* itself—in spite of what many commentators infer from Aristotle’s contrast, perhaps somehow misleading for us moderns, of *bios theōretikos* and *bios praktikos*—is *praxis*.

In holding that while *phronēsis* cannot help being concerned with life itself, *sophia* is always concerned with other things than life itself, Heidegger does not intend to deny the possibility of concern with life for *sophia* in general, but for Aristotle’s *sophia*. He reproaches Aristotle for not being able to conceive *sophia* in such a way that it can have this concern, which results in his failure to develop a concept of being that really departs from the disclosing possibilities of *Dasein*. Aristotle would have just *seen* the *Bewegtheit* of life—he would have been “the last of the great philosophers who had eyes to see”¹⁰³⁶—but he would have built an ontology with his back to what he had seen. Therefore, if Aristotelian *sophia* “cannot take into true safekeeping human life in the how of its factual being”¹⁰³⁷ it is only because his concept of being is far too reduced. That is why Heidegger’s overall efforts from 1922 on are precisely an attempt to *conceive sophia* in such a way that it can be said to have human life “as its intentional toward-which” (*zu ihrem intentionalen Worauf*)¹⁰³⁸, and in such a way that it can actually *be executed* as a genuine movement of human life, so that a concept of being may be disclosed which is wide enough “to embrace—without deformations—what ‘being’ means when I say ‘I am’”¹⁰³⁹. As Larivée and Leduc accurately argue, “the main aim of

¹⁰³⁶ GA 24 § 19, p. 329 [232] “Aristoteles war der letzte der großen Philosophen, die Augen hatten zu sehen”.

¹⁰³⁷ NB 385/38 [136] “Das reine Verstehen bringt nicht etwa nach seinem intentionalen Charakter das menschliche Leben im Wie seines faktischen Seins in Verwahrung”.

¹⁰³⁸ NB 385-386/38 [136] “Das reine Verstehen bringt nicht etwa nach seinem intentionalen Charakter das menschliche Leben im Wie seines faktischen Seins in Verwahrung, die *sophia* hat es überhaupt nicht zu ihrem intentionalen Worauf, es ist ja ein Seindes, das ist gerade dadurch, daß es je anders sein kann”.

¹⁰³⁹ BRAGUE, R. 1984 p. 261.

Heidegger in appropriating *praxis* was indeed to restore the authentic temporal sense of *sophia*¹⁰⁴⁰.

However, in 1048b Aristotle seems indeed to be facing the phenomenon of life itself from inside life, i.e. from its own temporality. Because the enactment (*Vollzug*) of life itself is in the center of his thematic interest, to the point that Aristotle is living what he is describing, life is not seen here as something *vorhanden*: it is described according to the immediacy with which it is experienced. Aristotle does not say “life is...”, thus comprising life in a *statement* that would freeze it into a determined foreconception of being. Instead, he says: “I live... and I have lived” (b27)—and this *experience* he calls *energeia*. As Schelling, after Fichte, puts it, the act is not properly in the concept but in the experience¹⁰⁴¹. We cannot originally access *energeia* otherwise than by experiencing it—by being it—because we are *energeia* ourselves. Which is exactly the same that happens with *praxis* and *hexis*: we cannot ultimately ‘have’ them—we can just ‘be’ them. Again with Schelling, *energeia*, as opposed to *dynamis*, never becomes an attribute¹⁰⁴²—it always brings back to itself. To properly enter the circle, therefore, entails to grasp being, so to speak, as it goes along: to grasp being while it is *being*. This is only possible for a being who has *logos*, who knows that he *is*, and who can find himself being in the act of knowing, seeing, living.

In the statements that “at the same time (*hama*) we are seeing and have seen” (b23), or “we are living and have lived” (b27), Aristotle is *describing* the phenomenon of his own being as immediately experienced, like Heidegger

¹⁰⁴⁰ LARIVÉE, A. et al. 2001 p. 47.

¹⁰⁴¹ SCHELLING, F. W. J. 1966 lecture 13, p. 315 “Aristotle indeed says, only on the *occasion* (*Gelegenheit*) of the act, that one need not try to define everything, but that one must also be satisfied with analogies (...). Since it is only a question of showing what the *act* is *in general*, Fichte was not mistaken in referring us straight away to what is closest *to us*, the continuing act (*fortgesetzte That*) or, as he thought to express it in a stonger way, the *act-action* (*Thathandlung*) of our own consciousness. The act is then generally not in the concept (*nicht im Begriff*), but in the experience (*Erfahrung*)”.

¹⁰⁴² *Ibidem*: “The act does not become what the force (*Potenz*) becomes, i.e. attribute”.

describes the experience of the lectern in KNS¹⁰⁴³ or of the handling of the hammer in *Sein und Zeit*¹⁰⁴⁴. To be sure, in seeing or in living Aristotle is not here immersed in a practical dealing such as hammering, in which the world and *Dasein* appear as a single original phenomenon *through the usefulness of the hammer*. However, hammering is only a kind of practical dealing, and namely one that can only unfold within the encompassing practical dealing that is living itself. Seeing, living and thinking are also practical dealings, and specifically ones in which, as *ζῶον λογόν εχον*, one *perceives* the immediacy with which the *telos* of these dealings is attained. The phenomenological approach to seeing and living faces us at once with the immediacy with which these processes are fulfilled *and* with their continuity, both towards the past and the future. From *the inside* of my perception that I am living, i.e. from *the here and now* of my perception, this *praxis* shows itself as unlimited: I have been living (past) and at the same time I live (moving present, i.e., future). The present is the *hama*, which is none other than the continuity between past and future. The present is, as a result, nothing we can come to understand by mentally stilling the stream of time: we can only grasp being here and now as *being*. And this phenomenon, this experience, Aristotle states, we call *energeia*.

Is this however a solipsistic experience that would leave the world unthought, in the manner of a Cartesian reduction? This might perhaps be the case, if the experience of seeing could be made without there being things to be seen, or if the experience that we are living did not require the perception of our own alive body. But as it is, we perceive things and we perceive our body. Nowhere in 1048b does Aristotle hint at any kind of reduction—that would not support “the test of the facts of life (*ta erga ton bion*)”¹⁰⁴⁵. Instead, his reasoning is

¹⁰⁴³ Cf. KNS § 14 in GA 56/57.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Cf. SZ § 15 p. 69.

¹⁰⁴⁵ NE IX 8, 1179a 20f.

grounded on *the given of perception*, as in an above-mentioned passage of NE IX that would not have shocked anyone if it had been placed instead in *Metaphysics* IX:

He who sees perceives (*aisthanesthai*) that he sees, and he who hears, that he hears, and he who walks, that he walks, and in the case of all other activities similarly there is something which perceives that we are active (*energein*), so that if we perceive, we perceive that we perceive, and if we think, that we think; and (...) to perceive that we perceive or think is to perceive that we are (*einai*) (IX 9, 1170a 29ff).

However, these *energeiai* such as thinking, living, perceiving, are not perfect *energeiai*, in the sense that they are subject to change: we usually see something, and then by getting closer, putting our glasses on or watching more carefully we come to see that better, and therefore *differently*. As for life, it is clear from the NE that more than just being subject to improvement and therefore *kinēsis*, it is essentially kinetic. But then, if the *energeiai* of 1048b are not pure *energeiai*, as only the divine *energeia* can be, i.e. if they are at the same time *ateleis* and *teleion*, why does Aristotle build upon ‘being or not *teleion*’ the distinction between *kinēseis* like walking to a place and *energeiai* like living or seeing? A passage of *Metaphysics* IX 8 makes the question more pressing, and simultaneously provides the answer.

He who learns to play the harp learns to play it by playing it, and all other learners do so similarly (...). [S]ince of that which is coming to be, some part must have come to be, and, of that which is changing, some part must have changed (...), he who is learning must, it would seem, know some part of the science. It is surely clear, then, in this way, that *energeia* is in this sense also, viz. in order of becoming and of time, prior to *dynamis* (*protera tes dynameos kata genesin kai chronon*)¹⁰⁴⁶.

Learning, which in 1048b is opposed to seeing, because it takes time to be, is here assimilated with the immediacy of seeing. This is consistent with the refutation of the Megarians in IX 3, which was precisely built upon the phenomenon of learning: if I cannot say at each infinitesimal stage of a learning process that ‘I am learning and I have learnt’ to play the harp, although learning here may not still mean enough as to play a simple melody, I will never get to be able to play the

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Met.* IX 8, 1049b 31 - 1050a 3.

harp, I will never get to have that *dynamis*. That is why *energeia* is also at the basis of *dynamis* itself, making its *genesis* possible, and constituting its persistence as *hexis*.

But this, we said, seems to make the distinction between *kinēsis* and *energeia* at IX 6 problematic, because now in IX 8 ‘learning’ is seen as immediate as ‘living’. Both are *teleion* from the very first moment of their existence: otherwise they would not be at all—if learning or life are real, they are a whole in the now. And yet neither learning nor living have ‘come to an end’ just by being: their being possibilities are not exhausted—one can go on learning, one goes on living. This is entirely consistent with the rest of book IX, but what remains then of the *kinēsis-energeia* distinction in 1048b?

It is precisely by seeing this distinction through the lens of Heidegger’s conviction that ontology can only work as phenomenology that we discover its relevance. The designation of the processes of learning and living as *kinēsis* and *energeia*, respectively, is a *phenomenological* designation: learning *shows* itself as a process that takes time to be, while living *shows* itself *both* as a process that takes time to be and as an accomplished fact: life appears there, immediately, while learning does not. 1048b emphasizes this contrast, not to deny the distension of life in time, so thoroughly acknowledged in the NE, but to disclose the immediacy of being. Analogously to how the structure of *praxis* and *physis* can only be grasped through *a contrast with* that of *poiēsis*, one can only grasp the specificity of ‘living and at the same time having lived’ by contrast with ‘learning and having learnt’ or ‘building and having built’. This, however, is only an ontical contrast: we are still only halfway to the ontological. The ontological account returns back to illuminate the ontical, the phenomena from which it arose, in showing that both learning and living are immediately, because both learning and living *are*.

But this immediacy is not the only aspect to be retrieved for the ontological account: the distension in time that is experienced in learning, as a process with

a beginning (*peras*) and an ending (*peras*)¹⁰⁴⁷ in different moments of time, also has a crucial ontological weight. The phenomenon cannot be simply dismissed as a defective way of being in relation to the purity of the immediacy of *energeia*: “one must appropriate this ground explicitly and not leap beyond it to a reality which is simply fabricated by theory”¹⁰⁴⁸. And we believe that this phenomenon is assumed within the structure of being as *energeia* and *entelecheia*. One’s life is *entelecheia*, again, because there is no part of ‘this life here and now’ outside of it: it is all here and now. That the next meal today will become part of my life (insofar as it will be embodied in its metabolism) or that I plan to go to Athens tomorrow, are not part of my life as *entelecheia*, but only *dynamei*, as a *dynamis*. And yet they prove that the fact that my life is *entelecheia*, a whole in the now, does not exclude the possibility—even the need, in the case of the meal—of its change: the fact that the meal is my life only *dynamei*, and that it can become ‘my life’ as *entelecheia*, entails that my life is at a time *entelecheia* and *dynamis* or, in other words, that it is *energeia atelēs*. There is no halfway between living and not living, just like there is no halfway between being and not being. *Kinēsis* is indeed on the way; not on the way to being what it is itself, though, but on the way to being something else. That is why it is at a time fulfilled and not fulfilled, *entelecheia* and *energeia atelēs*: *kinēsis*.

Energeia atelēs: immediacy and continuity in time are concentrated in this formula, and in such a way that the phenomenological experience is safeguarded through its ontological explicitation. The continuity of an *energeia atelēs* is not that of something that persists unchanged: the non-ceasing of this life which I find myself living here and now is not an immobile replication of my finding myself living. Because my life here and now is *energeia*, because there is an identity between past and future making it real—I live and I have lived—, my life from now on is still *one and the same*, namely *my* life: an ontological account of our experience

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Met.* V 17, 1022a 4f.

¹⁰⁴⁸ GA 19 § 12b p. 85 [59]. “Man muß von diesem obzwar schlecht Aufgedeckten doch seinen Ausgang nehmen; man muß sich diesen Boden ausdrücklich zueignen”.

of identity through time is thus provided. But this identity is also experienced as a dynamic one, and that is what the term *ateleēs* indicates. The structure of *praxis*, as developed throughout the NE, is dynamic from the ground up, insofar as one cannot refrain from being so: even declining to decide is a way of deciding; even declining to act is a way of acting. Man is not granted a sort of tarrying outside its own *ēthos*: we *are* always what we *do*. Life, *praxis*, because it is *kinēsis*, cannot be classified *only* as a *dynamis* or *only* as an *energeia*: “it is a sort of *energeia*, or *energeia* of the kind described¹⁰⁴⁹, hard to grasp, but not incapable of existing”¹⁰⁵⁰.

We always already find ourselves within this distension, that is, within *kinēsis*, and within the conscience of it. The experience of what Aristotle calls *energeia* is made from the *kinēsis* that is life: human being is a *kinēsis* that, because it has *logos*, can be conscious of its own being *energeia* and *kinēsis*¹⁰⁵¹. However, *this experience cannot be the matter of phronēsis, but of sophia, which can look at life from life itself*. Surely, the practical experience of *phronēsis* gives us eyes to see our being in time:

As a being becoming unveiled and available through the *alētheuein* of *phronēsis*, the *prakton* is in the mode of *not yet* being such an such. As ‘not yet such and such’ and, indeed, as the toward-which of concern, it is *at the same time already* such and such, i.e. insofar as it is the toward-which that belongs to a concrete readiness for dealings, the constitutive illumination of which is provided by *phronēsis*. This ‘not-yet’ and this ‘already’ need to be understood in their ‘unity’, i.e. on the basis of an original givenness, with reference to which they are particular explicata¹⁰⁵².

¹⁰⁴⁹ Cf. *Physics* III 1, 201b 31f.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Physics* III 2, 202a 1ff.

¹⁰⁵¹ Volpi poses the key question in his analysis of Heidegger’s understanding of *energeia* in the 1930s, although he does not provide an answer: “How is *praxis* itself to be understood? Is it *kinēsis*, or more precisely, insofar as it implies the whole of human life, *the kinēsis tou biou*? Or is it to be understood as *energeia*?” (cf. VOLPI, F. 1990 p. 10).

¹⁰⁵² NB 383/35-36 [155, mod. tr, add. e.] “Das *prakton* als das Seiende, das im *alētheuein* der *phronēsis* unverhüllt verfügbar wird, ist etwas, was *ist* als *noch nicht* das und das Sein. Als ›noch nicht das und das‹, und zwar als Worauf eines Besorgens, *ist* es zugleich *schon* das und das, als das Worauf einer konkreten Umgangsbereitschaft, deren konstitutive Erhellung die *phronēsis* ausmacht. Das ›Noch-Nicht‹ und das ›Schon‹ sind in ihrer ›Einheit‹ zu verstehen, d. h. von einer ursprünglichen Gegebenheit her, für die das ›Nochnicht‹ und das ›Schon‹ bestimmte Explikate sind”.

The original givenness that Heidegger looks for is the moving continuum of life that we perceive in *praxis*. But the ontological elucidation of this perception cannot be the matter of a faculty that deliberates about what can be otherwise, and that is why Heidegger very reasonably does not subsume *sophia* under *phronēsis*. Still, because he considers Aristotle to conceive being as *Fertigkeit*, he cannot either remain with Aristotle's *sophia* and his overall ontological account. As he put it at the end of his last seminar in Zähringen in reference to his lifelong way, the “tautological thinking” he pursued, “the primordial sense of phenomenology (...), holds its ground before any possible distinction between *theory* and *praxis*”¹⁰⁵³.

However, we believe that Aristotle's elucidation of *energeia* in 1048b—built as it is upon a conception of *theōria* as the highest *praxis*—provides, in the experience of time described *and* always retrieved (*Wiederholen*) in it, a conceptual articulation of this unity between not yet being and *at the same time* (*Zugleich*) being already, which reverberates in Heidegger's designation in *Sein und Zeit* of care (*Sorge*), the being of *Dasein*, as a “thrown project” (*geworfener Entwurf*)¹⁰⁵⁴. Heidegger's strenuous and multifarious effort to think being starting from the experience of temporality of *Dasein* could find here a fertile soil.

¹⁰⁵³ *Seminar in Zähringen* (1973) in GA 15 p. 399 [80] (“das Denken, dem hier nachgefragt wird, nenne ich das tautologische Denken. Das ist der ursprüngliche Sinn der Phänomenologie. Diese Art Denken hält sich noch diesseits von aller möglichen Unterscheidung zwischen Theorie und Praxis”).

¹⁰⁵⁴ Cf. SZ § 58 p. 285.

Conclusion to section II

After his intensive *Auseinandersetzung* with Aristotle's NE in 1924, Heidegger does not return to *phronēsis* anymore. We do not believe this is due to an increasing interest in ontology on his part—the 1924 approach is already fully ontological—but to his ongoing search for the proper *terminology* with which an ontology of factual life could be developed. The inner tensions that Heidegger finds in Aristotle make him abandon the idea of an *Aristoteles-Buch*, yet the intensity of his engagement with Aristotle both before and after *Sein und Zeit* and the continuity of his questioning do not seem to leave much room for doubt about the fact that Aristotle is one, if not *the* fundamental dialogue partner in his intensive work in the 1920s.

However, Aristotle's understanding of *praxis* not only as *kinēsis* but also as *energeia* and *entelecheia* seems to us to open new ways of thinking that Heidegger might have followed if his understanding of *telos* in 1924 had been that of 1939. These ways might have given a different shape to *Sein und Zeit*, a work of which, for all its breakthrough insights, Heidegger himself said that it had dared too early to go too far¹⁰⁵⁵. Yet, it is more productive to open new lines of questioning than to speculate about how things could have been. Heidegger himself pointed in that direction when, in choosing a motto for his *Gesamtausgabe*, he hinted that he did not want his works to be regarded as (finished) works, but rather as ways: *Wege, nicht Werke*¹⁰⁵⁶. Here still comes to the fore the twofoldness of *ergon* operating throughout the NE and through Heidegger's powerful interpretation of Aristotle: Heidegger wants his readers to '*ergazesthai*' his works, to 'perform' them—not to

¹⁰⁵⁵ Cf. GA 12 *Unterwegs zur Sprache* Ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, 1985 p. 93: "Perhaps the basic defect of the book «Sein und Zeit» ist that I dared too early to go too far" ("Vielleicht ist der Grundmangel des Buches »Sein und Zeit«, daß ich mich zu früh zu weit vorgewagt habe").

¹⁰⁵⁶ VON HERRMANN, W. "Nachwort des Herausgebers" in GA 1 p. 437: "»Wege — nicht Werke« ist der Leitspruch, den Martin Heidegger wenige Tage vor seinem Tod für seine Gesamtausgabe letzter Hand zusammen mit dem Titelblatt handschriftlich aufsetzte".

contemplate them as a finished *ergon*, as something *fertig*. We would consider the present research to have attained its main goal if it could foster new readings of Heidegger's project, i.e. new appropriations of the phenomena he pointed at with the help of Aristotle in the early 1920s.

The evolution of Heidegger's understandings of *telos* and *entelecheia* between the 1920s and the 30s—even if it did not modify substantially his conviction that Aristotle had remained entangled in the metaphysics of presence—necessarily gives rise to a question. Could Heidegger have developed such a breakthrough approach of Aristotle's concepts of *praxis* and *phronēsis* in the 20s if he had not regarded them as conflicting with the alleged *Vorhandenheit* of the *Metaphysics*? Would he have seen in these concepts first and foremost evidence for the development of a new ontology (to which Aristotle would have only hinted, but which Heidegger alone would have developed) that could blow up (*sprengen*) the traditional categories about being¹⁰⁵⁷? In other words, might we speak here of the fecundity of a misunderstanding? At least as far as this thesis is concerned, and provided that our connection of Heidegger's ontological reading of the NE with Aristotle's elucidation of *energeia* and *entelecheia* in *Metaphysics IX* proves to be fruitful for further investigation, we might indeed believe this is the case. It is precisely through Heidegger's insistence on the danger of conceiving being as something available (*fertig*), as something to which we would not always already belong, that we have come to try to “enable Aristotle to speak again”¹⁰⁵⁸ and to continue with him “to force inquiry back to the phenomena”¹⁰⁵⁹.

An hypothesis of our work which we believe to have been confirmed is that what Heidegger found in *phronēsis* in the early 1920s he could find precisely

¹⁰⁵⁷ Cf. EPR § 10 in GA 60 p. 54 [36].

¹⁰⁵⁸ DWA pp. 1-2 [219]: “Diese Interpretation hat nun die Absicht, Aristoteles wieder zum Wort zu verhelfen”.

¹⁰⁵⁹ GA 24 p. 329 [232] “Die Untersuchung immer wieder auf die Phänomene (...) zurückzuwingen”.

because it was already operating in Aristotle's own notion of *energeia*, even if in those years he opposed the ontological paradigms represented by these concepts. Our emphasis on the relation between Aristotle's ethics and metaphysics enlarges or perhaps questions the Heideggerian paradox of an 'Aristotle left in the shade' by Western ontology who would be the cure for the hitherto 'Aristotle in the light'. Against Heidegger, we believe that the ontological force of *phronēsis*, *praxis* and *hexis*—so sharply highlighted by him—stems from Aristotle's insights into *energeia* and *entelecheia*, of which the most telling trace is to be found in *Metaphysics* IX. Yet, while Heidegger repeatedly concludes that the relations between both domains—ethics and metaphysics—are unfortunately conflicting in *Aristotle*, he hints at a link through the concept of *hexis* in the 1920s (GA 18), which becomes more explicit in 1931 (GA 33), when he considers *hexis* and *energeia* as a challenge to the metaphysics of presence. However, in the 1930s Heidegger does not unfold this connection anymore in relation to the concept of *praxis*, which in this new light might sustain an ontology stemming from *Dasein*¹⁰⁶⁰.

When we suggest that the Heideggerian paradox of 'Aristotle healing Aristotle himself' could collapse, we are not suggesting an acritical reading of Aristotle. Even less do we assume that his metaphysical insights have been always properly understood in the Western tradition. Such directions would entail considering Heidegger's effort as a superfluous overinterpretation or unnecessary interpretative violence inflicted upon Aristotle's text. This is far from being our perspective. Our efforts have been rather directed at showing how not only *praxis* and *physis* but also the central concepts of Aristotle's ontology—namely *energeia* and *entelecheia*—make it possible to escape the *Verfallungstendenz* of the metaphysics of presence. This is not a complete overturning of Heidegger's appropriation of

¹⁰⁶⁰ Ricoeur has actually pointed to the possibility of developing an ontology from the experience of *praxis* ("l'agir humain"), as the "*topos* of legibility par excellence" of the meaning of being as *energeia* and *dynamis*. (Cf. RICOEUR, P. 1990 pp. 355 ff, p. 357 for ref). While he acknowledges the relevance of Heidegger's appropriation of Aristotle for this task, he underlines the need to qualify Heidegger's views on the relation between *energeia* and *praxis*.

Aristotle, but a challenge to his conviction that there is an insurmountable conflict between the paradigms of *praxis* and *energeia*. To our mind, the perspective that opens up with this challenge can foster the productivity of Heidegger's powerful insight into the interplay between phenomenology and ontology that we also believe to dominate Aristotle's philosophy.

Heidegger emphasizes after Aristotle in NE I that the being of *Dasein* is that of a *ζῶον λογόν ἔχον πρακτικόν*. In *Metaphysics* IX 6, where *energeia* is elucidated, the *logos* and the *praxis* of its *ζῶε* are woven into one another in an original phenomenological access to the being of *Dasein*: one's *logos* perceives one's own *praxis* not through a determination that would look at *praxis* as an object detachable from oneself—as something *vorhanden*—but through the *enactment* of this perception itself. This phenomenological access to one's own being is analogous to the one that Heidegger acutely finds in the enactment of *phronēsis*. But it has something that *phronēsis* cannot provide, as Heidegger otherwise shows in his treatment of this concept in his 1924-25 course. Differently from the *alētheuein* of *phronēsis*—which, as Heidegger notes, is confined to directing action—we believe that the *alētheuein* of *sophia*, as depicted in 1048b, shows its capability of developing a research about the sense of being—in a word, an ontology¹⁰⁶¹—departing from the way in which being is originally present to us, prior to any modern distinction between objects and subject. What Aristotle is doing in 1048b, as we have argued, is very close to what Heidegger intends to establish in *Sein und Zeit* by pointing to *Sorge* as an approach to being that is prior to any distinction between *theory* and *praxis*¹⁰⁶²: in 1048b one's *theōria* unfolds at once (*hama*) with one's *praxis*; *theōria* describes its own 'being' as it becomes aware (first momentum of *logos*) and puts into words (second one) this experience. Because it has and is 'had' by *logos*, *Dasein* can discover itself being *praxis* in the enactment of

¹⁰⁶¹ Cf. SZ § 4 p. 12.

¹⁰⁶² Cf. SZ § 41 p. 193.

the *praxis* of *theōria*. Thus, it actually succeeds in explicating its own being in a genuinely original manner, i.e. within the relation of being to its own being that is characteristic of it¹⁰⁶³.

The consideration of *praxis* as *energeia* allows for an integration of, on the one hand, the approach to *Dasein* as that which can be otherwise—a being whose being is at stake in its own being—and on the other the *necessary* approach to *Dasein* as a being that belongs to the domain of what is always as it is, i.e. not only as a living body that is subject to the rhythm of nature, but also, more fundamentally, as *a being whose ontological constitution itself cannot be otherwise*. Understanding that this constitution is not subject *itself* to *kinēsis*, we argued, is a necessary condition for the project of a fundamental ontology.

The quest for this articulation between ‘what is always as it is’ and ‘what can be otherwise’ is at the core of Heidegger’s efforts in the *Sophist* course, where he comes to the conclusion that Aristotle could not avoid splitting being into two irreconcilable spheres, in such a way that one of them would win the battle. Heidegger’s point would not be well rendered if we just said that the wrong one won; the real problem to his mind was Aristotle’s failure to find an articulation between both spheres. However, we believe that such a battle does not ultimately exist in Aristotle, and that this articulation between ‘what can be otherwise’ and ‘what is always as it is’ can be actually found in the temporal experience of *praxis* in 1048b, through which *Dasein* comes to recognize its own being as embedded in being in general. In the experience of the immediacy and continuity of *energeia* in 1048b, *Dasein* does not merely acknowledge that it now lives—it acknowledges that *‘living’ is prior to perceiving that one lives, i.e. that being is prior to knowing*. It realizes that it is not the subject that grounds the world, even if the world requires a ‘subject’ to be a phenomenon—or in other words, *Dasein* discovers that while

¹⁰⁶³ Cf. SZ § 4 p. 12.

being cannot be approached otherwise than as a phenomenon, its sense is wider than that of appearing.

What precedes makes it quite evident that the philosophical problem that lies in the distinction between *phronēsis* and *technē*, or *praxis* and *poiēsis*, is at the core of Heidegger's question about being—at least in the 20s and in the 30s. Even if these Greek terms are not analyzed anywhere else by Heidegger as extensively as in the texts we have been dealing with, we believe that his life-long crusade against the reduction of the sense of being to *Vorhandenheit* has its roots in *the ontological distinction between the temporal immediacy of praxis and the distension in time of poiēsis, which appears in 1048b as intimately tied with the distinction between energeia and kinēsis*. We have tried to shed light on the delicate equilibrium that we believe Aristotle to have delineated between the components of these binomials: while *energeia* and *praxis* are respectively irreducible to *kinēsis* and *poiēsis*, they encompass them as their ontological ground. This equilibrium reopens the question of the validity of Aristotle's ontological categories for Heidegger's quest of a unitary account of being¹⁰⁶⁴. We believe that what makes possible this balanced unitary account—not a separation, nor a confusion, but a distinction according to the paradigm of *symphysis*—is Aristotle's conception of *telos*, the principle that makes things to be what they are, and at the same time leads them to be what they are called to be. *Telos* is certainly not an aim, as it were, attached to beings (*para ta pragmata*), but a determination of being itself by which beings are not *completed* but *fulfilled and at the same time open to fulfillment*. Being is fulfillment (*entelecheia*), and 'being in time' (*kinēsis*) is a continuous enactment and renewal of this fulfillment. Yet Heidegger's

¹⁰⁶⁴ Cf. e.g. GA 19 § 5a p. 29 [20] and Heidegger's letter to Richardson in RICHARDSON, W. J. 2003 (cf. pp. x-xi for ref.): "*To on legetai pollachōs*. I translate: «A being becomes manifest (sc. with regard to its being) in many ways». Latent in this phrase is the *question* that determined the way of my thought: what is the pervasive, simple, unified determination of being that permeates all of its multiple meanings?" ("*To on legetai pollachōs*. Ich übersetze: »Das Seiende wird (nämlich hinsichtlich seines Seins) in vielfacher Weise offenkundig«. In diesem Satz verbirgt sich die meinen Denkweg bestimmende *Frage*: Welches ist die alle mannigfachen Bedeutungen durchherrschende einfache, einheitliche Bestimmung von Sein?"). Volpi has rightly highlighted, from his very first works on Aristotle and Heidegger, the centrality of this question for Heidegger (Cf. VOLPI, F. 1984).

insistence on reading *telos* as completedness, because of Aristotle's supposed faithfulness to a Greek reduction of being to *Vorhandenheit*, forbids this articulation between the acknowledgment of the consistency of beings—i.e. that beings *are* in a full sense—and the account of the phenomenon of change. In the 1920s, the Aristotelian *telos* only describes 'consistency' for Heidegger, so that the circle between *logos* and the *phenomena* does not work. However, we believe that a peculiar way of consistency—namely, one that copes with change within itself—is obtained if Aristotle's *telos* is not narrowed down to 'completedness' (which is otherwise something that Heidegger significantly avoids to do in 1939). Aristotle's fruitful application of the insights of *Metaphysics* IX to his characterization of the peculiar being of life in the NE is perhaps one of the best signs that his understanding of *telos* points far beyond *Vorhandenheit*.

In his essay *Die Frage nach der Technik* Heidegger quotes Hölderlin's verses "But where there is danger,/A rescuing element grows as well"¹⁰⁶⁵ to gloss over the point that inside the fateful risk implied by the essence of technology—the reduction of being to availability and manipulation, summarized by Heidegger under the concept of *das Ge-stell*—resides the key for an overcoming of this reduction. Analogously, the 'visibility' of beings—not only of products, but also of natural beings, and of human beings themselves¹⁰⁶⁶—entails the risk of conceiving their being from the restricted point of view of what is there ready to hand, as the outcome of a production (which ultimately means to reduce being to our grasp of it). Yet, we have argued, it is only through the visibility of *telos* in *poiēsis* that we can come to grasp the 'invisibility' of *telos* in *praxis* and *physis*. Only through a contrast with our experience of *poiēsis*—a *genesis* that results in a *telos* that is different from

¹⁰⁶⁵ "Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst / Das Rettende auch", quoted in "Die Frage nach der Technik" in GA 7 p. 32 (translation of the verses, belonging to the poem "Patmos", by James Mitchell. *Poems of Friedrich Hölderlin* San Francisco: Ithuriel's Spear, 2007).

¹⁰⁶⁶ Cf. GA 24 § 20 p. 422 [297]: "Fellow humans are certainly also extant; they join in constituting the world" ("Die Mitmenschen sind eben auch vorhanden, sie machen die Welt mit aus").

the *genesis* itself—does Aristotle get to understand, in the original experience of 1048b, that (our) *finite being is a genesis that has its telos in the genesis itself*, like *physis* is a way towards *physis*¹⁰⁶⁷. In other words, while the possibility was there for Aristotle to fall prey to the temptation of reducing being to the paradigm of *poiēsis*, he was attentive enough to the phenomena as to conceive *telos* in the light of an original experience of his own *praxis*, and thus point to the more encompassing paradigm of *energeia* and *entelecheia* as suitable to grasp being. Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* actually follows a similar logic: it takes its lead from *poiēsis*, namely in the primacy of *Zubandenheit* over *Vorhandenheit*, which is only preparatory to the understanding of *Dasein*; and in turn the analysis of *Dasein* is preparatory to the understanding of being, declared from the start as the goal of this unfinished project. Perhaps *energeia* and *entelecheia*—which in Aristotle are wide enough to encompass both beings as *vorhanden* and the being of *Dasein*—could help us find a way out of the *Holzweg* of *Sein und Zeit*.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Cf. *Physics* II 1, 193b 13. Cf. also the *gignesthai* in NE IX 9, 1169b 29-30 “*energeia* clearly is something that happens (*gignesthai*), not a thing that we possess all the time, like a piece of property (*ktēma*)”.

Bibliography

1A. ARISTOTLE.....	297
1B. HEIDEGGER.....	298
1C. OTHER SOURCES.....	302
2A. COLLECTIVE WORKS OFTEN REFERRED TO	303
2B. ON ARISTOTLE.....	304
2C. ON HEIDEGGER IN RELATION TO ARISTOTLE	309
2D. OTHER LITERATURE ON HEIDEGGER.....	313
2E. OTHER STUDIES.....	316
2F. REFERENCE WORKS	317

1. Sources

Heidegger's sources are ordered according to the date of their creation (in the case of works) or of their teaching (in the case of courses), to enhance an overview of the development of his thought. This date, which is in most cases different from that of the publication, is provided in parenthesis next to the title. When available, references to English translations are provided in square brackets.

2. Secondary Bibliography

A first category (2.1) has been set for collective works that are referred to twice or more times in subsequent categories, in order to lighten the references.

Works are gathered thereafter according to their main concern. Category 2.3 refers to those works mainly revolving around the relation between Heidegger and Aristotle. Works not primarily focusing on this issue, but including substantial passages on it are placed in other categories but marked (*).

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- *On the Soul* Translated by J. A. Smith *The Revised Oxford Translation*, vol. 1
- *Physics* Translated by R. P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye *The Revised Oxford Translation*, vol. 1.
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