



**The Phenomenon of Life in Heidegger's Thought**  
**Earthliness as the Essence of Life**

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A thesis presented in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of  
Philosophy (MA)

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Leuven, 2014

## **Acknowledgments**

Essentially, I would like to express my gratitude to my promoter Professor Ullrich Melle for his patient counseling and constructive guidance. Also, I owe acknowledgments to Professor Henning Tegtmeier and David Farrell Krell, who spared their valuable time for my questions. Likewise, I want to thank Professor Johannes Fritsche and Graham Harman, who made this philosophical experience possible for me initially.

Additionally, I owe thanks to my friends Mustafa Emin Buyukcoskun, Zeyd Bohürler and Sinan Sanlier for being my companions while following the ‘homesickness for the desert’. Also, I would like to thank my friends Alisan Genc and Colin Walsh, who assisted me to improve the content of this thesis. Beyond all, I owe special thanks my girlfriend Ece Sahinoglu, who guided me both intellectually and spiritually during this process. Without her support, I would not be able to bring this work into conclusion. Likewise, my parents Fikret and Buket Isik, my sister Aysenur Isik, deserve my gratitude for supporting me all along. And lastly, I want to thank to Günter Figal and to Graham Harman -once more- for being my guides, who reminded me the crucial philosophical fact all along: ‘man is not the measure of all things’.

# The Phenomenon of Life in Heidegger's Thought

## Earthliness as the Essence of Life

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## A- Introduction

”The overman is the meaning of the earth. .... I beseech you, my brothers, *remain faithful to the earth* and do not believe those who speak to you of extraterrestrial hopes! They are mixers of poisons... They are despisers of life, dying off and self-poisoned, of whom the earth is weary: so let them fade away!”<sup>1</sup>

*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

This thesis aims to present a consideration of life within the scope of Heidegger’s philosophy. By discussing his account of life, I will try to clarify its essence according to Heidegger’s thought. Moreover, my subject matter would inevitably encompass the phenomenon of animality, since Heidegger discussed these notions side-by-side almost exclusively. This inquiry will embrace a timespan of approximately sixty years, which amounts almost to the entirety of Heidegger’s career. However, such wide interval is actually less intimidating than it sounds. Rather than a cluster of ideas, Heidegger roughly presents three main perspectives towards the phenomenon of life. In the context of our subject matter, we can refer to early (1918 to mid-1920s), middle (mid-1920s to mid-1930s) and late (mid-1930s onwards) perspectives towards the notion life. As we will see, these three phases present distinctive, yet correlated approaches towards our subject matter.

However, life is not an easy phenomenon to deal with. The notion of life does not serve itself to us on a silver platter, and thus, usually seems unintelligible and incomprehensible. Even though we constantly refer to it in our everydayness, we hardly speak about life attentively. As Heidegger will say about *zoe* [life], “[...] we think we know what that is.”<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, life barely becomes a philosophical concept. Just taking a glimpse at the number of philosophical works dedicated to the phenomenon of life would give us a hint about its ambiguous position within philosophy. With the exception of *Lebensphilosophie*<sup>3</sup>, the phenomenon of life has usually been one of the least favorite subjects of philosophy. As Giorgio Agamben puts it properly, life, ‘in our culture’, “[...] never gets defined as such.”<sup>4</sup> However, I believe that all these reasons point to the necessity of thinking about it attentively. After all, did not Heidegger teach us that the most perplexing questions are usually the most fundamental ones? In this manner, my primary goal in this thesis will not only be to illuminate the historical development of life in Heidegger’s philosophy, but also to show how such a development can be conceived, criticized and extended.

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. by Adrian del Caro, ed. by Caro&Pippin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> my rendering, Martin Heidegger: II. *Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1925-1944*, vol. 55 of *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt Am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1994), p. 90.

<sup>3</sup>i.e. ‘philosophy of life’, which is proposed by Wilhelm Dilthey.

<sup>4</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. by Kevin Attel (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 13.

Accordingly, I will try to philosophize this ambiguous term, which I hope will provide a step to overcome the prevailing perplexity concerning life.

Precisely due to its perplexing character, life has its highs and lows in Heidegger's thought. Despite our rough categorization, Heidegger's affiliation with the phenomenon of life is actually an oscillating relationship. Although Heidegger is always in dialogue with himself during his investigations, he hardly presents a steady and linear way of thinking about life. His pursuit for the phenomenon of life begins in the late 1910s, where he presents it as the most fundamental phenomenon of philosophy. The early Heidegger regards life as the originary notion that binds us both with the Origin<sup>5</sup> and with the other originary beings, i.e. plants, animals, etc. However, during and after *Being and Time*<sup>6</sup>, he presents a transition from his first perspective to the second one. Around the late 1920s, he begins to distance his thought from the notion of life and ceases to attribute originary character to it. In this phase, life is set aside to describe the mode of being of animals and is regarded to be synonymous with worldlessness. Heidegger refers to the notion of life as an inferior mode of being, whose essence is 'Captivation' [Benommenheit]. However, in the following years, he presents a change of perspective regarding life once again. According to this third and last perspective, life cannot be reduced to the mode of animality because it indicates something greater. Ultimately, Heidegger believes that life is the intensification of *phusis* [nature].

Yet, what does this journey tell us about the essence of life? Inasmuch as Heidegger's later thought admits the fact that life addresses a primary mode of Being, it gives very little detail about its essence. As I present it, life indicates originariness precisely because it is the ultimate notion that binds us to the Origin. In this manner, the essence of life is to be sought in the essence of this Origin. After our investigation, we will see that Heidegger refers to the Earth as the Origin. Accordingly, we will conclude that the essence of life is Earthliness. Beyond that, we will try to clarify how this notion of Earthliness should be comprehended.

In accordance with this brief summary of Heidegger's treatment of life, the first chapter will discuss the historical development of life in Heidegger's thought with respects to his first two perspectives. The second chapter will question the reason behind the transition from the first perspective to the second one, which I believe to be vital for our fundamental concern. Indicating the fundamental reason as SZ's account of world, the second chapter will try to explain how the notion of Earth presents an alternative to this account. The third and the last chapter will present Heidegger's post-metaphysical accounts of life and Earth. By doing so, it will try to constitute the relationship between these two notions. By bringing the pieces together, I will claim that Heidegger's account of life can be brought into conclusion by describing its essence as Earthliness.

Throughout my inquiry, I will usually use Heidegger's works as my primary sources. Such preference is essentially related to the fact that there are only a few sources, which specifically deal with Heidegger's comprehension of life. For this reason, our inquiry will essentially refer to Heidegger's oeuvres. Beyond that, Günter Figal's *Objectivity* and Michel Haar's *The Song of Earth* will be my main secondary sources.

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<sup>5</sup> The 'Origin', i.e. whence we are thrown into our situation, essentially remains untouched by Heidegger in his early period

<sup>6</sup> from this point on, I will simply refer to *Being and Time* as 'SZ'

Michel Haar's classic, *The Song of the Earth* calls attention to the rapprochement between the notions of animality and the Earth. Günter Figal's extraordinary book *Objectivity* proposes a spatial consideration of the living being on the basis of the notion of φύσις, which, to him, indicates the 'originariness of life'. Moreover, it is important to clarify that I will be referring to German terms frequently. Since I will be dealing with a German philosopher with quite a peculiar vocabulary, some terms will be referred in their original form after providing introductory renderings of them. Peculiar terms like Being, Earth, World, Origin, Open and Captivation are written in capital letters. Moreover, Greek terms will be left in their original form after providing a translation and transliteration of them.

## B- Chapter I: The Phenomenon of Life

"What if the clearing and granting of being had to do with neither 'man' nor 'Dasein' but with all the life that lives and dies on Earth, from dogs through gods, from tadpoles through peoples? .... What if the lookers and liverers, the gods and dogs .... were the proper guardians of the clearing?"<sup>7</sup>

This chapter aims to present the development of the notion of life in Heidegger's thought between the years 1918 and 1943. In our context, while the period between 1918 and 1925/6 will indicate Heidegger's first perspective concerning life, the phase between 1926 and mid-1930s will present his second viewpoint. Moreover, we will refer to his discussions of animality, which Heidegger frequently discusses alongside life. Furthermore, this timespan will disclose Heidegger's oscillating relationship with the phenomenon of life. While in the first phase he refers to life as the 'originary phenomenon', he will later regard the notion of life as an inferior mode of Being.

The examination will be held in four sections. In the first section, I will discuss how Heidegger dealt with the phenomenon of life in his early thought, which roughly corresponds to the period before the publication of *Being and Time* (1918-26). The second, third and fourth sections will deal with his second perspective concerning life, which is exemplified respectively by SZ, the 1929/30 lecture course and the 1942/43 lecture course.

### I-The Phenomenon of Life in the Early Heidegger

#### a-The Originary Character of Life

The young Heidegger believed that life is the ultimate concept. It names the most originary status within which one has found oneself. Accordingly, life indicates the most primary way in which world matters to one in this or that sense. However, the originary status of life does not mean that it names what is most handy or accessible. Rather, Heidegger thinks that it is essentially pre-reflexive and pre-theoretical; it

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<sup>7</sup> David F. Krell, *Daimon Life: Heidegger and Life-Philosophy* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 17.

precedes every theoretical stance. Life is what resists every theorizing, precisely because it runs through its own time.<sup>8</sup> It withdraws itself from any scientific and theoretical attempt to ‘grasp’ it. Every abstraction renders it an impersonal happening and is bound to be *self-referential*.<sup>9</sup> In this manner, it can only be approached through living it, which he describes as “[...] a nontheoretical or pretheoretical experience of the intensity of life.”<sup>10</sup>

Yet, how should we understand the ‘originary’ status of life? What does its originariness stand for? During this early period, Heidegger believes that there is an external source that renders every experience possible. There is “[...] an origin, that is other than the self and its ways of knowing”<sup>11</sup>, which render all things the way they are initially. Inasmuch as Heidegger does not explicate the essence of this Origin, he states that life is an “[...] emerging from that origin [...]”<sup>12</sup>. As such, this “original region”<sup>13</sup> is what makes life possible in the first place through “breath[ing] vitality into factual life [...]”<sup>14</sup>. It nourishes life through a “[...] sense of ‘blooming, buzzing confusion’ [...]”<sup>15</sup>. Accordingly, Heidegger believes that life is a notion that constitutes the ultimate relationship to this Origin. Because the Origin is essentially inaccessible to us, life is the ultimate mediator between man and the Origin. The originariness of life indicates the fact that our relationship with the Origin is constituted only through its blossoming in the form of life. Moreover, because life constitutes this peculiar relationship, it will inevitably be the ultimate subject matter of philosophy. In his 1918 lecture course<sup>16</sup>, he will designate life and lived experience as the genuine point of departure for philosophizing:

”It is one thing to *declare something as a value*, another to *take something as a value in a ‘worth-taking’*. The latter can be characterized as an originary phenomenon of origin, a constituting of life in and for itself. The former must be seen as derivative, as founded in the theoretical, and as itself a theoretical phenomenon dependent on lived life in itself.”<sup>17</sup>

Heidegger refers to life as the ‘originary phenomenon of Origin’ and designates it as the originary mode of philosophizing. Every theoretical stance should take life as its point of departure if it wishes to be originary in contrast to being merely ‘derivative’. Life is the pre-philosophical and pre-theoretical ground that renders philosophy and the sciences possible at the first hand.<sup>18</sup> As such, a genuine science should not only acknowledge its origin as life, but also should designate it as its initial subject matter. Yet if life names what is most fundamental and originary, how can we get access to it? How can the philosopher designate it as its subject matter? Heidegger believes that

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<sup>8</sup> Scott M. Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy of Life: Facticity, Being, and Language: Facticity, Being, and Language* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), p. 97.

<sup>9</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 29.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>16</sup> which is published under the name of *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*

<sup>17</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, trans. by Ted Sadler (New York: Anthlone Press, 2008), p. 38.

<sup>18</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 13, 26.

life can become accessible only if we inquire into it taking its impenetrable character into account. Rather than trying to 'grasp' it, the philosopher should let life illuminate itself:

"In value-taking there is nothing theoretical; it has its own 'light', spreads its own illumination: 'lumen gloriae'"<sup>19</sup>

Life reveals itself only when one acknowledges its originary character. However, by trying to 'grasp' and theorize life, the sciences "devivify life."<sup>20</sup> Heidegger believes that life only reveals itself to one through his living of it. What he calls the 'phenomenological life' indicates this pre-theoretical way of approaching:

"[...] [Life] is not achieved by any constructed system of concepts, regardless of how extensive it may be, but only through phenomenological life in its ever-growing self-intensification"<sup>21</sup>

Rather than an attempt to capture and grasp it, the philosopher should let life appear through living it. Only by doing so can she comprehend the originary character of life. By 1919, Heidegger would start to call this originary givenness, i.e. the most fundamental and intimate state we found ourselves in, as 'factual life'. From this point on, his essential 'task' will be "[...] understanding the *originality* of factual life [...]"<sup>22</sup>

### **b-Authenticity as the Retrieval of Life**

If life is the originary phenomenon, how can it lead us to an originary state? How can man's relationship with the Origin be constituted? Heidegger will start to seek an answer to this question in the 1920/21 lecture course<sup>23</sup>, which is dedicated to a consideration of religious life. To start with, if life is the originary phenomenon, then constituting originariness would mean nothing other than seeking the ways in which it will reveal itself. Only by letting life appear can we relate to the Origin and become originary. However, this brings another question forth: how would life appear?

Heidegger believes that life only appears in its absence. Without explicitly referring to the Aristotelian notion of στέρησις<sup>24</sup> [lack], Heidegger implies that life only 'presences' in its absence. Life is only on the basis of its lack. Moreover, he believes that a sense of insecurity is a way that provides such lack. Insecurity brings life to surface: "The uncertainty is not coincidental; rather it is necessary [for the emergence of life]."<sup>25</sup> Moreover, for him, "[...] the constant insecurity is also characteristic for what is fundamentally significant in factual life."<sup>26</sup> Life comes to fore in "[u]ncertainty, danger, possibility"<sup>27</sup>. Moreover, Heidegger refers to *molestia*

<sup>19</sup> Heidegger, *Towards the Definition*, p. 39.

<sup>20</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 45.

<sup>21</sup> Heidegger, *Towards the Definition*, p. 84.

<sup>22</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 34.

<sup>23</sup> which is published under the name of "The Phenomenology of Religious Life"

<sup>24</sup> which will later become his ultimate definition concerning the notion of Earth

<sup>25</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. by Matthias Fritsch (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), p. 73.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 160.

(hardship) as another fundament that ‘bestows’ life. Life is insofar as the human being “[...] experiences the intensification of hardship.”<sup>28</sup> For him, *molestia* is “an intensification of the self”<sup>29</sup>, which enables “life [to] live”<sup>30</sup> or the ‘self’ to “come to itself”.<sup>31</sup>

Yet, a valid question can be raised here. If life comes to surface only in *στέρεσις*, should we assume that life usually is not there? If life names the most originary state indicating our givenness, how can it disappear? Even though Heidegger believes that life indicates our most originary and fundamental state, he also thinks that it usually fades away. In everydayness, one pushes this originary state away such that it is barely sensible. Although we name both the originary and non-originary forms of living as ‘life’, Heidegger believes that only the former genuinely indicates life. In this respect, he differentiates two modes of life on the basis of their proximity to the Origin. Whereas life within which insecurity and *molestia* is encountered indicates its genuine sense, the other form addresses the ordinary way in which we ‘carry on’ in a complete indifference towards the Origin:

“Now the life in which something like *molestia* [hardship] can be experienced at all, in which—as the life growing in itself, coming to itself—the possibilities of *molestia* grow, is a life whose being is grounded in a radical having-of-oneself.”<sup>32</sup>

Whereas we name both forms as life, regardless of their originary and non-originary character, only one truly indicates life. The experiences of insecurity and *molestia* display the ways in which the non-originary life will be reoriented in relation to the Origin. They reconstitute life as a mode of a ‘radical having-of-oneself’. As such, Heidegger remarks that these experiences are the “[...] authentic appropriation in factual life experience [...]”.<sup>33</sup> *Molestia* indicates the absence within which life genuinely presences. *Molestia* and insecurity ‘appropriate’ life authentically. In contrast to these experiences, Heidegger thinks that ‘peace and security’ are the ways in which one walks away from life. Discussing the basis of religiosity, he indicates that ‘religious life’ essentially is not quest for inner peace or social conformity; it “[...] has nothing to do with the harmony [...]”<sup>34</sup>. Rather, as a form of life, religious life is genuine only insofar as it resists peace and harmony of the ‘world’:

“Those who find rest and security in this world are those who cling to this world because it provides peace and security.”<sup>35</sup>

One can refer to religious ‘life’ only insofar as it is acquired through hardship, struggle and insecurity. Such religiosity, Heidegger says, will change “[...] all self-certainty to the uncertainty [...]”<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 57.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p.182.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>36</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 56.

### c-Ruinance

In the 1921-22 lecture course,<sup>37</sup> Heidegger elaborates various aspects of life further. Essentially, he claims that philosophy is "[...] a nonmetaphysical, nontranscendental understanding of the human being [...]"<sup>38</sup>. However, to him, such method of inquiry has been neglected for a long time. This neglect, which Heidegger calls the *bankruptcy of philosophy*<sup>39</sup> [Bankrott der Philosophie], took philosophy away from its essential subject matter. Accordingly, to him, such method of inquiry addresses the "[...] one that proceeds directly from life itself [...]"<sup>40</sup>. In this respect, philosophy is nothing other than the "[...] basic mode of life itself [...]"<sup>41</sup>. How would Heidegger explicate such way of thinking as a basic inquiry of life?

To Heidegger, our everyday way of being has a strong tendency towards what he calls ruinance [Ruinanz]. For the most part, our everyday dealings are characterized by processes of making-easy and alleviation. Instead of discovering what phenomena imply every single time, we tend to secure and stabilize the meanings. Accordingly, the meaning of a concept barely changes throughout my entire life. Thus, we create for ourselves a sphere of conformity, within which stabilized meanings lead our way. Although this processes of making-easy is necessary for our everyday affairs to some extent, Heidegger believes that it also pushes us into a state of conformity and carelessness [Sorglosigkeit]. Heidegger refers to this tendency as ruinance [Ruinanz].

However, Heidegger believes that only the Origin is the genuine source of meaning. It presents the only authentic way of signification, i.e. 'taking value'. However, as indicated above, we tend to secure and stabilize the meanings of Origin by ignoring their flowing character, i.e. 'declaring value'. As such, we usually content ourselves with once-originary meanings, which is possible only on the basis of an estrangement from the Origin. For Heidegger, ruinance indicates the fallen and inauthentic state of being, within which 'declared values' hold sway. In ruinance, one creates a state of conformity, within which ever-flowing meanings are tamed and restrained. Furthermore, it means that we are no longer in relation with the Origin, and thus, not originary. In such a case, life loses its originary character and the Origin ceases to illuminate the world. Rather, the world illuminates itself through itself. Whereas the world deceptively seems self-sufficient, it is essentially a self-referential deadlock.<sup>42</sup> In the everyday mode of being, the originary region of reference –the Origin - falls prey to the quotidian world:

"[...] as life continues to become weighed down by the world, eliminating the distance between the world and itself, life blocks off access to itself."<sup>43</sup>

Ruinance indicates the state in which originariness is lost. Life as the originary phenomenon encloses itself and ceases to illuminate our way. However, Heidegger

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<sup>37</sup> published under the name of *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*

<sup>38</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 77.

<sup>39</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, trans. by Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), p. 67.

<sup>40</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 77.

<sup>41</sup> Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations*, p. 62.

<sup>42</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 83.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

believes that a solution is possible through a process called retrieval [Wiederholung]. One recovers his life from ruinance through the "[...] constant process of the reinterpretation of life's factual possibilities [...]"<sup>44</sup>, i.e. retrieval. Retrieval reestablishes "[...] a critical dimension of the factual experience of life [...]"<sup>45</sup>, which is "[...] the more original sense of speaking that precedes all theoretical articulations of life."<sup>46</sup> It implies the restoration life as the ground zero of every experience. Through it, one reconfigures the referential relations, and thus brings the world in the vicinity of Origin. "[R]etrieval involves the recovery of these connections."<sup>47</sup> Retrieval reassigns the Origin as the point of departure and the sole ground of reference: "Retrieval is necessary to recover that which remains hidden, yet reluctant, within those rigidified structures."<sup>48</sup> Only by doing so can one take up "[...] the factual possibilities of life in the depth of their originality [...]"<sup>49</sup> Moreover, Heidegger believes that retrieval can only be accomplished through disquiet.<sup>50</sup> "Disquiet is questioning, and that questioning is an en-lightening that reveals the world as it really is."<sup>51</sup>

"[...Philosophy] authentically 'brings back,' i.e., brings life back from its downward fall into decadence, and this 'bringing back' [or repetition, 're-seeking'], as radical re-search, is life itself."<sup>52</sup>

In order to retrieve life, one should let anxiety prevail precisely because it is only insofar as one is disquieted and insecure that life comes forth. Through insecurity and anxiety, life 'come to its own' and illuminates our way. Therefore, it is "[...] this experience of disquiet needs to be retrieved."<sup>53</sup>

### **d-Life and World**

From what we have seen so far, what can we say about the world and worldlihood? Does 'world' then refer to the realm of ruinance and fallenness? The answer is no, since Heidegger believes that world and life necessarily belong together. Rather than being an insignia of world, ruinance initially implies the disequilibrium of the relationship between life and the world. Accordingly, falling prey of life to world is nothing other than the disaccord of their peculiar relation. Correspondingly, Heidegger, from the 1923 lecture course onwards, starts to comprehend these two phenomena correspondingly. "The phenomenological category, 'world,' immediately names ... *what* is lived, the content aimed at in living, that which life holds to."<sup>54</sup> Therefore, "[...] life' and 'world' are not two separate self-subsistent Objects [...]"<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>50</sup> Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations*, p. 70.

<sup>51</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 80.

<sup>52</sup> Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations*, p. 62.

<sup>53</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 80.

<sup>54</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, trans. by Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), p. 65.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

Rather "[...] the one word can stand in for the other: e.g., 'to go out into life,' 'out into the world'; 'to live totally in one's world,' 'totally in one's life.'"<sup>56</sup> From this perspective, life and world are essentially two sides of the one coin; what lives has a world and what has a world lives. Moreover, corresponding to his increasing interest in the question of Being, Heidegger starts to refer to the factual life as Dasein, which is being-in-the-world.<sup>57</sup>

"The entire human being must be understood with regard to its being as ζωή, as being-in-a-world [...]"<sup>58</sup>

Around this time, life becomes an existential concept that indicates 'being-in-the-world. Everything that is alive initially has a world:

"Ζωή 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 world. An animal is not simply moving down the road, pushed along by some mechanism. It is in the world in the sense of having it."<sup>59</sup>

To the Heidegger of the early 1920s, everything that is alive has a world, precisely because life and world are mutually dependent phenomena. "Life is that kind of reality which is in a world and indeed in such a way that it has a world."<sup>60</sup> He continues to say "[f]or a primitive animal, the world can be very simple. But life and its world are never two things side by side; rather, life 'has' its world."<sup>61</sup> In this respect, "[...] we miss the essential thing here if we don't see that the animal has a world [Welt]."<sup>62</sup> Heidegger believes that every living being has a world. The sole difference between them is the degree of complexity. Moreover, he thinks that all living entities have their own peculiar modes of understanding and Being: "Understanding belongs to the mode of Being of human Dasein, and in a certain way it also belongs to the mode of Being of animals."<sup>63</sup> To the early Heidegger, being-alive essentially means being disclosive:

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. by Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 173.

<sup>58</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, trans. by Metcalf & Tanzer (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009), p. 129.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>60</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'Wilhelm Dilthey's Research and The Struggle for a Historical Worldview (1925)' in *Supplements: From the Earliest Essays to Being and Time and Beyond*, ed. by John van Buren (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002), pp. 147-177 (p. 163).

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian*, p. 169.

”To say that something is understood means that it is *manifest* in its being such and such; it is no longer concealed. In understanding, there resides something like truth, ἀλήθεια ... Insofar as understanding belongs to a being, insofar as it is alive at all, that being is disclosive; with its Being, as one characterized by understanding, other beings are uncovered in their Being. Everything that is alive, to the extent that it exists, has a *world*, which does not hold for what is not alive. Every living being is oriented to something, pursues it, avoids it, etc. .... By the very fact that a living being discloses a world, the Being of this being is also disclosed to it.”<sup>64</sup>

Inasmuch as an entity bears life, it has disclosedness in terms of truth [ἀλήθεια]. Being-alive means being-disclosive in terms of Being.<sup>65</sup> From such a perspective, life is the ground of understanding, world and truth. By the same token, every living being has its peculiar access to the Open, i.e. the realm of disclosedness. Heidegger believes that whereas Dasein’s worldlihood and disclosedness is constructed upon λόγος [logos], the animal’s is based on φωνή [voice]. The difference between the world of animal and Dasein, to Heidegger, is only one of ”gradations and levels”<sup>66</sup>.

”This disclosedness of the life of animals (i.e., the mode of cultivation, of cultivatedness, and manifestation of this disclosedness) is, for animals, characterized through φωνή, and for human beings through λόγος.”<sup>67</sup>

## II-Heidegger’s Inquiry of Life in *Being and Time*

Heidegger, in *SZ*, adopts a different perspective towards the phenomenon of life. Contrasting with his earlier thought, Heidegger, in the period of 1926-7, would reject the ordinary character of life. Thus, around this time, he departs from his first perspective radically and presents his second approach regarding life. In one of the introductory chapters, he makes it clear that life has no place whatsoever in the ontological definition of Dasein. According to him, for a proper existential analysis of Dasein, ‘we [ought to] avoid [...] [all the insufficient] expressions [like] ‘life’ [‘Leben’] and ‘human being’ [‘Mensch’] in designating the beings that we ourselves are”<sup>68</sup>. We should avoid defining Dasein as living being because “‘life’ itself as a kind of being does not become a problem ontologically.”<sup>69</sup> In this manner, he presents a clear break from his earlier thought, where there was a definite interconnection between life and Being; “[...] life=existence, ‘being’ in and through life.”<sup>70</sup> Life does not indicate originariness anymore.

<sup>64</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy*, trans. by Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008), p. 169.

<sup>65</sup> However, this does not imply that the animal has an understanding of Being. Rather, in the case of animal, it indicates the *orectic* manifestness, where a being is conceived as something that is to be avoided or pursued.

<sup>66</sup> Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian*, p. 37.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by Joan Stambaugh, ed. by Dennis J. Schmidt (Albany, SUNY Press, 2010), p. 45.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>70</sup> Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations*, p. 64.

In SZ, the phenomenon of life appears frequently in the chapters where Heidegger initiates a confrontation with the *Lebensphilosophie* [life-philosophy], with Bergson and Dilthey to be more precise. While he does not clarify its essence, it is obvious that life does not propose any actual dilemma for Heidegger anymore: "the ontology of Dasein [...] has priority over an ontology of life..."<sup>71</sup> Consequently, Dasein can never be grasped properly through referring to it as life:

"Life is neither sheer being present, nor is it Dasein. On the other hand, Dasein should never be defined ontologically by regarding it as life - (ontologically undetermined) and then as something else on top of that."<sup>72</sup>

What was once the originary phenomenon that indicated the essential definition of Dasein, now becomes a deficient and unsatisfactory concept. Life is an ambiguous and insufficient term for the existential analysis of Dasein. Moreover, Heidegger believes that whereas Dasein cannot be grasped through the phenomenon of life, life can be comprehended only through Dasein. Whatever the essence of life is, it may be disclosed by the agency of Dasein:

"The basic ontological constitution of 'life,' however, is a problem in its own right, and can be developed only reductively and privatively in terms of the ontology of Dasein."<sup>73</sup>

Even though "[l]ife has its own kind of being"<sup>74</sup> - and thus presents an actual problem - it can only become accessible through a 'privation' from Dasein. Whereas Heidegger seems to be rejecting life in the equation of Dasein - as in 'life + x = Dasein.' At the same time, he is suggesting that the essence of life can be disclosed through a privation from Dasein - as in 'Dasein - x = life'. Heidegger asserts that life can only become an ontological theme through Dasein:

"Only if this kind of Being [life] is oriented in a privative way to Dasein, can we fix its character ontologically."<sup>75</sup>

Heidegger believes that life is an insufficient phenomenon to describe the manner in which Dasein exists. Moreover, its ontological character is acquired through a subtraction from Dasein. But, if Dasein cannot be regarded purely as life, should we assume that life indicates an inferior mode of being? Or what does life name? While discussing the accessibility of life in the first division of SZ, Heidegger says that the privative interpretation discloses "what must be the case if there can be anything like just-being-alive [Nur-noch-Leben]."<sup>76</sup> In this manner, Heidegger believes that the inquiry of life discloses the mode of being that is called mere-life: "the being of animals"<sup>77</sup>. In SZ, the notion mere-life<sup>78</sup> becomes an essential definition for animals

<sup>71</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 237.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>75</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by Macquarrie & Robinson (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 1962), p. 290.

<sup>76</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 49.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 330.

<sup>78</sup> in the forms of both Nur-noch-Leben and Nur-lebenden

and plants. Moreover, the ‘living’ character of Dasein merely indicates its ‘biological and physiological’ traits:

”Even Dasein may be considered purely as life. When the question is formulated from the viewpoint of biology and physiology, Dasein moves into that domain of Being which we know as the world of animals and plants.”<sup>79-</sup>

Heidegger seems to be suggesting that Dasein is more than just a living being. Moreover, when referred to purely as life, its peculiar ontological status is reduced to that of animals and plants. Addressing Dasein as life means neglecting its ontological peculiarity. In this manner, he seems to be suggesting that life is an inferior mode of Being, which is epitomized by animals and plants. The phenomenon of life indicates Being in a lesser rank because the animals that are merely-alive do not have the sense of Being [Seinsinn]. Heidegger believes that because Dasein is the only being with *Seinsinn*, it has a distinctive status that cannot be reduced to life. Only Dasein can be affected.<sup>80</sup> Whereas the cause of the affection of the living beings remain untouched, Heidegger says that only Dasein has affection in the most proper sense:

”Only beings that in accordance with the meaning of their being [Seinssinne] are attuned -that is, beings which, as existing, have in each instance already been and exist in a constant mode of having-been- can be affected.... How the stimulation and touching of the senses in beings that are simply alive [Nur-lebenden] are to be ontologically defined [...] remains a problem for itself.”<sup>81</sup>

Does Heidegger suggest a mechanistic explanation of the living being? At this point, the essence of life and animality is an enigma. However, Heidegger assuredly claims that Dasein does not have a kinship with the rest of organic world, and thus, with life. Its ontological status prevents us from referring to it as life. If we refer to Dasein as a peculiar kind of animal, this indication can only be understood in terms of physiology, not ontology. Accordingly, Heidegger believes that Dasein loses much more than life when it dies:

”[...] the going-out-of-the-world of Dasein in the sense of dying must be distinguished from a going-out-of-the-world of what is only living [Nur-lebenden]. The ending of what is only alive we formulate terminologically as perishing [Verenden]. The distinction can become visible only by distinguishing the ending characteristic of Dasein from the ending of a life.”<sup>82</sup>

Heidegger believes that only Dasein can die. In this manner, he seems to be suggesting that there is an ontological barrier between Dasein and the rest of organic world. Dasein’s mode of Being displays an indestructible and impassable status between itself and life. However, the ambiguous ontological status of life raises plenty of questions. While rejecting the ordinary status of life, Heidegger does not clarify its essence. This is perhaps why he was to conduct a broader analysis of life and animality only two years later.

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<sup>79</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, (Macquarrie), p. 290.

<sup>80</sup> Here, Heidegger refers to the affectivity [Befindlichkeit] in the sense of Dasein’s receptive character.

<sup>81</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 330.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

### III-Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics and the Essence of Life

In SZ, the ontological statuses of life and animality were somehow perplexing and they demanded a detailed explanation. Moreover, a definite answer to the questions concerning the essence of life was to be provided. These reasons will lead Heidegger to question the issue of life and animality two years later. In the 1929/30 lecture course<sup>83</sup> Heidegger presents his most extensive treatment of life. The third part of the lecture course<sup>84</sup> is dedicated to the disclosure of the concept of world through a comparison of the world-relations of three entities: the stone, the animal and Dasein. To Heidegger, a comparative analysis is an essential method that would disclose the essential fundamentals of world.<sup>85</sup> He believes that in order to gain insight into the worldlihood of Dasein, we first have to "[...] grasp the question concerning *the essence of animality* and thus *the essence of life in general* [...]"<sup>86</sup>.

In the pursuit of the essence of the world of Dasein, Heidegger examines all three entities according to their possible proximity to the world. Right at the beginning of part three, the reader of FCM is informed about the whereto of the investigation. At the very point of departure, Heidegger makes his ultimate assertions: "*the stone is worldless [weltlos], the animal is poor in world [weltarm] and man is world-forming [weltbildend]*"<sup>87</sup>. The stone not only lacks the world, but also the possibility of a world, which makes it worldless. The animal, on the other hand, is within the world but it never has a world. The animal is 'deficient-in-the-world' because it both has and is deprived of the world at the same time. Finally, Dasein not only has a world, but it is also what grants the world its worldlihood. Therefore, Dasein is world-forming. Yet, how should we interpret these assertions?

For Heidegger, the world-relation of the stone does not propose a thorny problem. Its relation to the world is fundamentally through completely lacking it. The stone is *wordless*; it remains indifferent to everything that approximates it. The relation of the stone to the world is basically deprivation. However, the stone not only cannot constitute a relation to its surroundings, but also cannot even be deprived of such a possibility. Accordingly, the world does not even stand as a possibility to the stone; it "[...] *cannot even be deprived of something like world.*"<sup>88</sup> In the most proper sense, the stone is even deprived of worldlessness.

What about the animal? Heidegger initially makes it clear that life and animality are ontologically one. Following the definition of life in SZ as the mode of being of animals and plants, life is precisely "the kind of being that pertains to animals and plants."<sup>89</sup> In this respect, FCM will discuss animality and life as synonymous concepts. As Heidegger affirms, the world-relation of the animal, i.e. life, proposes an in-between situation. Contrary to the stone, animals have some access to the world. Animals are within world; they have some access to it. Yet, they are not worldly like

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<sup>83</sup> published under the name of *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*. From this point on, I will shortly refer to the book as FCM

<sup>84</sup> Note: originally edited as part two; will be referred as part three from now on

<sup>85</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. by William McNeill (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), p. 185.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191, 198.

Dasein. The animal feels the wind, sees the sun and tastes the flesh of its prey. Yet, this does not render them worldly like Dasein. The animal presents "an *openness* for"<sup>90</sup> something. However, even though the things are present to the animal in some sense, it, at the same time, "possesses less"<sup>91</sup> of something. Throughout the lecture course Heidegger tries to explicate the in-between situation of the animal. In order to make sense of 'inferior possession' and 'the openness for ...' of the animal, he should initially clarify how the animal relates to the beings in its surroundings.

"The animal ... somehow possesses less. But less of what?"<sup>92</sup> To Heidegger, the essential trait of animal behavior is such that it is never an unrestrained type of relating. Rather, animal behavior is always a struggle [Ringen] within an enclosed sphere. Heidegger refers to such a limit as an encircling ring [Umring].<sup>93</sup> Following these assertions, he claims that whereas Dasein comports toward things, this ability is "withheld [genommen] from the animal."<sup>94</sup> The animal is not a mechanism as traditional explanations suggest; it has a relation to its environment. But it relates to its environment in such a way that the things are somehow refused to it. Heidegger asserts that the animal is "[...] taken and captivated [*benommen*] by things."<sup>95</sup> Things are present to the animal, but such presence never leads to an apprehension of things as in the case of Dasein. For him, the way in which an animal can relate to a thing is through what he calls Captivation [Benommenheit]. "The animal can only behave insofar as it is essentially captivated"<sup>96</sup>

To Heidegger, whereas Dasein comports itself towards things, the animal is fascinated and taken [benommen] by them; things pervade, mesmerize and fascinate the animal. Its inability to leap out of its sphere and to comport itself towards things is what Heidegger calls Captivation [Benommenheit]. "Captivation designates the fundamental character of the animal's *being absorbed* in itself."<sup>97</sup> The animal relates to things through being captivated by them. In this respect, the animal's 'openness for ...' is only for its encircling ring. The animal's relating is nothing other than a reaction within its being-captivated. Even though the animal has 'some access' to the world, it never breaks out of its encircling ring. In this fashion, the essence of animality and life is illuminated. What constitutes the essence of life and the animality is nothing other than Captivation [Benommenheit]. Because animals are captivated, fascinated by things, they can only act in a non-comprehending, reaction-like manner. To Heidegger, the ways in which an animal acts is *behaving* [sich benehmen] and the way in which Dasein acts, is *comporting* [verhalten]<sup>98</sup>. Accordingly, "[c]aptivation is the condition of possibility for the fact that... the animal behaves [benimmt sich] within an environment..."<sup>99</sup>

Animals simply cannot get out of their sphere, as the Da- of Dasein proposes. In this respect, they are the ontological captives of things. "We shall describe *the specific*

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 255.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 239.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 237.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 239.

way in which the animal remains with itself, [...] this way in which the animal is absorbed in itself, [...] as captivation [Benommenheit].<sup>100</sup> Accordingly, "life is nothing but the animal's encircling itself and struggling [Ringen] with its encircling ring, a ring by way of which the animal is absorbed without its ever being with itself [bei sich selbst] in the proper sense."<sup>101</sup> This "[...] struggling [Ringen] with the encircling ring which circumscribes the totality of its instinctual activity is an essential character of life itself."<sup>102</sup> Consequently, Heidegger believes that Captivation is "the fundamental structure of life [...]"<sup>103</sup> Does the animal have a world, then? "The animal thus reveals itself as a *being which both has and does not have world*."<sup>104</sup> The animal possesses less of "what is accessible to it, of whatever as an animal it can deal with, of whatever it can be affected by as an animal, of whatever it can relate to as a living being."<sup>105</sup> Thus, Heidegger claims that the animal is deficient-in-the-world [weltarm].

Whereas Dasein comports itself towards things, this ability is "withheld [genommen] from the animal."<sup>106</sup> What exactly is this ability? In terms of what is the animal's worldlihood deficient? What is essentially withheld from the animal is "[...] the possibility of apprehending something as something"<sup>107</sup>. Animal's relation to something is never "[...] an apprehending of something as something, as something present at hand"<sup>108</sup>, precisely because "[...] the possibility of apprehending something as something is withheld [genommen] from the animal."<sup>109</sup> The animal feels the wind, sees the sun and tastes the flesh of its prey. Nevertheless, it does not comprehend the wind as wind, the sun as sun or the flesh as flesh. The animal can deal with things; it is not indifferent to its surroundings. However, because things captivate the animal, it can never apprehend the things as such. The animal cannot comport itself towards beings precisely because it lacks this 'as', which renders comporting oneself towards things in the most genuine sense possible. Dasein can comport itself towards things because it possesses this ability to see things as themselves. Such capacity is what Heidegger would conceptualize as the *as-structure* [Als-struktur]<sup>110</sup>. With the as-structure, Heidegger finds the lead concerning the question 'what constitutes the worldlihood of Dasein'. The essence of the worldlihood of Dasein is nothing other than this 'as':

"The animal's behaviour is never an apprehending of something as something. Insofar as we address this possibility of taking *something as something* as characteristic of the phenomenon of world, the 'as'-structure is an essential determination of the structure of world."<sup>111</sup>

What constitutes the world of Dasein and the essence of worldlihood thus comes forth. World is a privilege of Dasein, precisely because no being other than him can

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., pp. 238-239.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 259.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 199.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 311.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

apprehend the sun as sun, the wind as wind and the flesh as flesh. The worldlihood of Dasein, Heidegger would say, is "[...] the manifestness of beings as beings [...]"<sup>112</sup>. Dasein's difference from the rest of organic world is worldlihood, which is "the manifestness of beings as beings". "Nothing of this kind is to be found in animality or in life in general."<sup>113</sup>

However, what precisely does deficiency-in-the-world imply, then? How can we explicate the deficient character of animal's worldlihood? Even if the animal can have 'some access' to the world, Heidegger believes that this does not mean that the animal has a world. Neither does it mean that the animal becomes worldly every now and then. Rather, Heidegger claims that the *as*-structure creates an abyss between the deficient world of the animal and the world. The animal does not gain access to world from time to time, precisely because "[...] an abyss lies between them [Dasein and the animal] which cannot be bridged by any mediation whatsoever."<sup>114</sup>

"For it is *not* simply a question of a *qualitative otherness* of the animal world as compared with the human world, and especially not a question of quantitative distinctions in range, depth, and breadth-not a question of whether or how the animal takes what is given to it in a different way, but rather of whether the animal can apprehend something *as* something, something *as* a being, at all. If it cannot, then the animal is separated from man by an abyss."<sup>115</sup>

Following this assertion, Heidegger refers to the mode of worldlihood of animality as disinhibition [Entthemmung]<sup>116</sup>. The way in which the animal gets access to its surrounding is not through worldlihood, but through 'disinhibition'. The animal "[...] is intrinsically open for that which disinhibits it."<sup>117</sup> Disinhibition implies the way in which the animal has a relation to things without having a world in the most proper sense:

"[...] we do not at all find in the animal a simultaneous having and not-having of world, but rather a *not-having of world in the having of openness for whatever disinhibits*."<sup>118</sup>

The animal's access to its surroundings is not a world-having, rather it is what Heidegger calls disinhibition. Disinhibition implies the behavior by which the animal reacts towards something without relating to it. Consequently, disinhibition has nothing to do with the *as*-structure, i.e. the essence of world. Rather it implies the way in which the animal can react to things by being captivated by them. The animal gets access to a world that is essentially refused to it. Accordingly, the animal's possible 'access to the world' is actually not an access to at all. Thus, world-deficiency is by no means a form or a subcategory of worldlihood. Rather, it is a subcategory of worldlessness. Accordingly, the basic fundamentals of the Heideggerian metaphysics of life can be summarized as such: the stone is not even worldless, the animal is worldless, the man is world-forming. Consequently, FCM brings the essence of life

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p. 282.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p. 254.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p. 255.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 270.

into conclusion. In the late 1920s, Heidegger believes that the essence of life is worldlessness and Captivation.

#### IV-Rilke's Animal and the Open

In his 1943 lecture on Parmenides and Heraclitus<sup>119</sup>, Heidegger comes back to the issue of animality once more. There, he discusses the essential characteristics of the Open [Offene] with respect to Rainer Marie Rilke, who, along with Hölderlin, has always been the most prominent poet in his thought. Considering the fact that the Open [Offene] and being-in-the-world [in-der-Welt-sein] are terms that are originally coined by Rilke, the significance of his poetry on Heidegger's thought cannot be underestimated. In PRM, however, Heidegger will present a critical account of Rilke's poetry and he will question the validity of his account of the Open.

Heidegger thought that the Open names the realm of disclosedness. It indicates "the 'there' ['Da']"<sup>120</sup> of Dasein and the clearing of Being. In Heidegger's account, the Open designates the existential domain that comes forth through Dasein's disclosedness of Being. However, quite contrarily, Rilke believed that the Open designates the domain, which is accessible through animality. In some sense, Rilke thinks that the Open 'opens itself' up in the absence of disclosiveness. In the 8<sup>th</sup> of Duino Elegies, he says:

"All other creatures look into the Open [das Offene] with their whole eyes. But our eyes, turned inward, are set all around it like snares, trapping its way out to freedom."<sup>121</sup>

From such a perspective, the Open seems accessible to man only obliquely. The way we 'look' at things hinders us from seeing the Open thoroughly. Rather "[w]e know what's out there only from the animal's face[...]"<sup>122</sup> In this manner, "man is excluded from the plenitude of the 'seen' or even from ...the 'whole' or 'pure perception'."<sup>123</sup> Rilke continues to say;

"Not for a single day, no, never have we had that pure space ahead of us, in which flowers endlessly open."<sup>124</sup>

<sup>119</sup> From this point on, I will refer to the lecture course as PRM

<sup>120</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'On the Essence of Truth (1930)', in *Pathmarks*, ed. by William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 136-155 (p. 145).

<sup>121</sup> Rainer M. Rilke, *Duino Elegies and the Sonnets to Orpheus*, trans. by Jr. A. Poulin (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977), p. 55.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>123</sup> Michel Haar, *The Song of the Earth: Heidegger and the Grounds of the History of Being* trans. by Reginald Lilly (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), p. 30

<sup>124</sup> Rilke, *Duino Elegies*, p. 55.

Contrary to the unrestricted admission of the animals, man only has a restricted access to the ‘realm of pure blossoming’. Man only sees the Open through the face of the animal: ”[a]lways facing creation, all we see is the reflection of the free and open [...]”<sup>125</sup> In this manner, for Rilke, ”[o]nly animals have free access to what *is* (and is freely itself) because they see without looking, [...] without objectifying things”.<sup>126</sup> Animals are admitted to the Open precisely because ”they *coincide* with this dispossession of the self that projects it totally outside.”<sup>127</sup> Man, on the other hand, has a burden that obstructs him from freely seeing the Open. To Rilke, this burden is nothing other than the world:

”It is always world  
and never nowhere without nothing: [Nirgends ohne Nicht]  
The pure, the unguarded [space], that which man breathes,  
always knows, and does not seek.”<sup>128</sup>

It is the world that restricts our access to the Open. Man’s gaze is always an ‘in-order-to’; one categorizes and conceptualizes. For this reason, one can never glimpse this domain of pure-blossoming. Yet, how should we interpret Rilke’s account of the Open? What does his account indicate for our purpose? I believe that the Rilkean Open primarily refers to what Heidegger previously called the Origin. Its blossoming character, i.e. in which ‘flowers endlessly open’, and its withdrawal in the face of theorization, i.e. ‘world’, are in accordance with the young Heidegger’s depiction of the Origin. Moreover, given Rilke’s comprehension of life, which he names ‘being-in-the-world’ and designates as the most primal phenomenon, his account of the Open seems to be uttering the fact that man’s relation to the Origin can only be established upon ‘life’, i.e. ‘animality’. The animal has an unrestricted access to the Origin precisely because it is ‘merely-alive’ in some sense. It is alive and nothing beyond. The animal constantly abides in the Open because it is alive in such a way that it never transgresses life as man does [Da-]. In this respect, Rilke indicates that the Origin becomes accessible to man only through animality, i.e. life. Accordingly, the essential task of man will be to follow life unceasingly, which he will never be able to reduce himself into. Man will never be able to abide in the Origin and to ‘grasp’ life in its entirety. However, by seeking the guidance of life and animality, one can constitute the ways in which one will remain originary.

The way in which the young Heidegger regarded the Open was heavily influenced by the Rilkean depiction and terminology. Heidegger’s earlier philosophy was an epitome of such an explication of the Open, within which it addressed the source of the most originary phenomenon: the notion of life. In this manner, I believe that Heidegger’s early analysis of life is a quite accurate epitome of Rilke’s account. However, after his recent treatment of life, it would not be hard to guess that Heidegger opposes such depiction of the Open. Accordingly, Heidegger will confront both Rilke and his earlier assertions in PRM.

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>126</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 30.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> my rendering, Rilke, *Duino Elegies*, p. 54.

Heidegger believes that "[t]he animal [...] does not see the open, never does, not with a single one of all its eyes."<sup>129</sup> For him, the Rilkean Open is essentially an affirmation of the "superior richness and depth"<sup>130</sup> of animality, which he denies. It is in fact "[...] the absence of borders and limits, the objectless [...]"<sup>131</sup>. From Rilke's perspective, these characteristics of the Open are "[...] not thought as lack but as original whole of reality, in which the creature is immediately admitted and let free."<sup>132</sup> "Rilke inverts the relation of the power of man and of 'creatures' (i.e., animals and plants)"<sup>133</sup> and ignores the "[...] the unsurmountable essential boundary between animal and man."<sup>134</sup> This is precisely why, for Heidegger, "[...] the true definition of the Rilkean *Open* [...] [is actually] an opaque, confused ontic mass [...]"<sup>135</sup>. To him, Rilke does not realize the fact that his depiction essentially manifests a lack, an absence.

From Heidegger's viewpoint, the inaccuracy of Rilke's depiction is based on a major misconception concerning the Open. For him, the Rilkean depiction is erroneous, precisely because it does not relate to the essential feature of the Open: the truth, ἀλήθεια.<sup>136</sup> The Open cannot be comprehended properly without its relation to ἀλήθεια. Heidegger remarks, "Rilke knows and suspects nothing of ἀλήθεια, no more than Nietzsche does."<sup>137</sup> As such, both fail to see the essential component of the Open, and thus, cannot reach to its essential definition. Moreover, the Open understood through ἀλήθεια is a peculiarity of the beings that have an understanding of Being [Seinsverständnis]. Thus, not the animal, but "[m]an alone sees this open"<sup>138</sup>. Animals, on the contrary, are "suspended in something outside of themselves without ever being able to 'see' either the outside or the inside"<sup>139</sup>. In this respect, Heidegger believes that the Open in the sense of ἀλήθεια and the Rilkean Open have nothing in common. They present nothing more than a mere homonym.

By rejecting the Rilkean description of the Open, Heidegger not only confronts Rilke, but also himself. In 1924, Heidegger thought that the living being has an access to the realm of disclosedness as ἀλήθεια.<sup>140</sup> According to this account, the living being always already has an access to the Open. Approximately eighteen years later, Heidegger will reject this assertion and will claim quite the contrary: "[m]an alone sees this open"<sup>141</sup>, precisely because ἀλήθεια is peculiar to man. Yet, after the dismissal of the question concerning life, such an assertion is not unexpected at all.

However, even if he did not anticipate so, Heidegger would have to deal with the phenomenon of life for a little longer. PRM indicates a threshold between his second and third perspectives regarding the phenomenon of life. After a little while, -

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<sup>129</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Parmenides*, trans by. Rojcewicz & Schuwer (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 155.

<sup>130</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 30.

<sup>131</sup> Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p. 157.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 154.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>135</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 30.

<sup>136</sup> Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p. 152.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>140</sup> Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Ancient*, p. 169.

<sup>141</sup> Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p. 159.

approximately four years later- he will come back to the Rilkean Open once more and look at it from a different perspective. There we learn about that the Rilkean Open essentially indicates the way in which all the creatures are vitalized: "[t]he ground of [all] creatures is nature"<sup>142</sup>. What Heidegger failed to see in 1942 seems to be redeemed in the 1946 essay 'Wozu Dichter?'. The Rilkean Open points to nature, which "Rilke calls ... the utmost source [Urgrund]."<sup>143</sup> However, this is not nature in the conventional sense. Rather, it is nature in the sense of blossoming, *natura naturata* [the naturing of nature] as once called, what the tradition called φύσις [phusis]<sup>144</sup>. Moreover, the 1946 essay tells us something more important: that the Rilkean Open also indicates ζωή [life]. Heidegger remarks that Rilkean Open addresses "[...] the essence of life ... as φύσις, the emergent, that which arises."<sup>145</sup> Does this mean that Heidegger returns to Rilke's –and also his– definition of being-in-the-world as life? Is nature as φύσις indicates the Origin or its essential trait? We will seek an answer to these questions in our last chapter.

## V-Conclusion

Through the first chapter of this thesis, I tried to present the historical evolution of Heidegger's thought with regard to the phenomenon of life. This inquiry encompassed the period between 1918 and 1943, to which we referred as Heidegger's first and second perspectives regarding life. While displaying his first two accounts of life, we also tried to show that Heidegger presented a radical change of perspective in the late 1920s. Such a comprehension will last approximately sixteen years until PRM, which will indicate the threshold between his second and third approaches. Even though Heidegger, in PRM, refers to it as "the riddle of life",<sup>146</sup> he does not know that he would have to deal with this 'riddle' for a little longer.

However, before going to this third perspective, there awaits a fundamental question that demands an answer. Whereas we tried to show that Heidegger's comprehension of life has gone through a radical revision, we did not explicate the reason behind such a revision. We did not ask why the phenomenon of life has evolved from the ordinary phenomenon to an inferior mode of Being. In the proceeding chapter, we will try to explicate the reasons behind Heidegger's radical revision of life. As we will see, this will enable us to come closer to a proper definition of life.

## C- Chapter II: Spatiality of the World and *The Problem of Life*

During our treatment in the first chapter, we contented ourselves with depicting the historical development of life in Heidegger's account. In this manner, while stating that Heidegger's account of life has gone through a radical transition, we did not explicate why and how this rapid revision occurred. How can we make sense of the dramatic discrepancy between the first and second perspectives? Why does the notion

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<sup>142</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'Why Poets? (1946)', in *Off the Beaten Track*, ed. and trans. by Haynes & Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 200-242 (p. 208).

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 208.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p. 160.

of life turns from the originary phenomenon into a synonym for Captivation within such short notice? Because our primary purpose is to illuminate the essence of life, answering these questions is at utmost importance. By clarifying the reasons behind this change of perspective, I believe that we will get closer to explicating Heidegger's conception of the essence of life.

This chapter will claim that Heidegger's sudden change of perspective concerning life has its ground in SZ's account of world. SZ's demonstration of the world confines the disclosure of externality to Dasein's comprehension. Accordingly, disclosure of every being depends on their disclosedness by Dasein and has to be comprehended within the scope of Dasein's transcendental faculties. On the basis of such an account, the phenomena of nature, body and life, i.e. the external phenomena, are designated as inferior modes of Being, whose manifestness is to be sought within the temporal horizon, i.e. world. However, because these 'external' phenomena present an ontological ambiguity and incompatibility with the categories of SZ, Heidegger will have to review his account of world and the problematic comprehension of 'externality' that it brought forth. As we will try to show, the notion of the Earth will be the ultimate keyword regarding Heidegger's revision of externality in the 1930s. Our analysis will come to its conclusion by clarifying this new notion and how it presents a solution to 'the problem of externality'. Consequently, this chapter will provide the necessary basis for our consequent investigation concerning the essence of life.

## **I-The Spatiality of the World**

### **a-The Notion of World in *Being and Time***

Describing the way in which Dasein's worldlihood is constituted is one of the explicit objectives of SZ. Heidegger indicates that the primary subject matter of SZ – the question of Being - can only be illuminated by the clarification of the world and of how Dasein relates to this world:

"Thus the understanding of Being [...] just as originally implies the understanding of something like 'world' and the understanding of the being of beings accessible within the world."<sup>147</sup>

Designating the primary objective as the clarification of world, the first division of SZ pursues a definitive explication of it. Roughly, §11-24 and §69-70 are dedicated to the discussion of world, amounting to one third of the first division and one fifth of SZ overall. In this respect, how should we understand the phenomena of world and worldlihood? Inasmuch as we have briefly discussed these phenomena in the first chapter, we did not clarify their essence attentively. Let us start with the notion of worldlihood.

Dasein's worldlihood as being-in-the-world is an essential property of what Heidegger names 'being-in': "a constitution of being of Dasein"<sup>148</sup>. Essentially, the 'in' character of Dasein indicates an "[...] existential sense of involvement, such as 'being in love,' 'being in school,' or 'being in the army'."<sup>149</sup> Because its 'inness'

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<sup>147</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 12.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>149</sup> Kevin A. Aho, *Heidegger's Neglect of the Body* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009), p. 30.

implies a sense of engagement or ‘involvement’, Dasein is essentially a being that always already engages with its surroundings. In this manner, only because of this ‘inness’ does Dasein have a world. Dasein is an in-being as being-in-the-world:

”Being-in is thus the formal existential expression of the being of Dasein which has the essential constitution of being-in-the-world.”<sup>150</sup>

Yet, how does Dasein engage with its surroundings and relate to its surroundings? Where does its relating character emanate from? The answer to these questions discloses the existential character of Dasein’s worldlihood. To start with, Heidegger believes that Dasein’s understanding is constituted upon its understanding of Being. Whether we know it or not, every understanding arises from understanding of Being [Seinsverständnis]. Accordingly, the way in which Dasein ‘makes sense’ of its surroundings and relates to the world is only possible on the basis of its Seinsverständnis. Consequently, Heidegger thinks that Being is the foundation that enables Dasein to ‘have’ a world in the most proper sense.<sup>151</sup> ”Dasein understands itself and being in general in terms of the ‘world’”<sup>152</sup> precisely because ”[t]he disclosedness of the there [Da-] in understanding [...] is the disclosedness of Being in general.”<sup>153</sup> Dasein has a world inasmuch as it has Seinsverständnis.

”Beings which have the kind of being of the essential project of being-in-the-world have as the constituent of their being the understanding of being.”<sup>154</sup>

Dasein is a ‘worldly being’ because it initially understands Being. In this manner, while Being renders Dasein’s worldlihood possible, Dasein is what actualizes this worldlihood through *Seinsverständnis*. Therefore, Dasein’s being-in-the-world character is not a basic explanation of its engagement with its surroundings. Rather being-in-the-world points to the manner in which Dasein ‘is’ or exists<sup>155</sup> in the most proper sense.

Yet, what does this demonstration tells us about the notion of world? How should we comprehend the existential character of Dasein’s worldlihood in terms of the notion of world? According to Heidegger, the world by no means implies a realm that occupies a place in space. Contrary to conventional definitions of it, the world is neither a geographical domain, nor the totality of three-dimensional entities. As Heidegger’s account of worldlihood indicates, ”[...] I am ‘in’ the world not in terms of occupying a spatial location in a three-dimensional coordinate system [...]”<sup>156</sup> Dasein’s world does not amount to its surroundings. Rather, in accordance with its worldlihood, the notion of world *too* should be conceived existentially. In this manner, Heidegger believes that the world names the totality of Dasein’s engagements or ‘involvements’. It names the existential entirety of Dasein, i.e. the totality of relevance and significances.<sup>157</sup> Thus, Heidegger rejects the conventional

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<sup>150</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 55

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>155</sup> Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time, Division I* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991), p. 40.

<sup>156</sup> Aho, *Heidegger’s Neglect*, p. 30.

<sup>157</sup> Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, p. 97.

comprehension of world as a spatial, geographical domain. The totality of Dasein's spatial surroundings does not amount to world. Dasein never grasps its surrounding as a pure geographical realm, which 'exists in itself'. Rather, its comprehension is only possible on the basis of Dasein's being-in-the-world.<sup>158</sup> Our surroundings *too* are encountered on the basis of our existential involvement with them, and thus, within world. "[T]he specific spatiality of the beings"<sup>159</sup> and the spatiality of the world, is "grounded in the worldliness of the world."<sup>160</sup>

Yet, how does Dasein relate to this spatial realm? How should we conceive the fact that we comprehend the spatiality pertaining to the world within world? Heidegger says: "Dasein itself has its own 'being-in-space,' which in its turn is possible only on the basis of being-in-the-world in general."<sup>161</sup> He believes that Dasein's comprehension of spatiality is essentially an "existential spatiality".<sup>162</sup> To him, the way in which Dasein conceives spatiality refers to two fundamental characteristics: de-distancing [Ent-fernung] and directionality [Ausrichtung].<sup>163</sup> Essentially, Dasein's comprehension of spatiality is constructed upon its ability to de-distance, which means "[...] making distance disappear, making the being at a distance of something disappear, bringing it near."<sup>164</sup> Accordingly, Dasein does not 'come closer' to a place by approaching certain geographical coordinates. Rather, reaching a location or thing means that "[...] I am used to [it], familiar with [it], I take care of something [...]"<sup>165</sup> In addition, while approaching a 'location', Dasein uses directions, e.g. left, right, 'down the hill', which Heidegger names as 'directionality'. He says, "[a]s being-in which de-distances, Dasein has at the same time the character of *directionality*. Every bringing near has always taken a direction in a region beforehand from which what is de-distanced [...]"<sup>166</sup> Dasein's comprehension of spatiality indicates its ability to familiarize its surroundings with a sense of orientation. The unity of these phenomena characterizes the way in which we relate to the space: "directional de-distancing"<sup>167</sup>

### ***b-The Being of Nature***

Yet, how should we comprehend the claim that we encounter our surroundings within world? Earlier, we have remarked that Dasein's worldlihood is grounded upon its *Seinsverständnis*. While Being renders Dasein's worldlihood possible, Dasein is what actualizes this worldlihood through *Seinsverständnis*. Moreover, while Being presents disclosedness of beings, Dasein actualizes the disclosedness of beings. However, because Dasein is the only being with *Seinsverständnis*, it is also the sole agent of disclosure. Thus, Heidegger believes that only Dasein discloses and Dasein alone comprehends such disclosure. Every disclosure is both for the sake of and peculiar to Dasein.

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<sup>158</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 99.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

As an example of this demonstration, Heidegger devotes lengthy discussions to the being of nature. Likewise, he believes that nature reveals itself within the world: "[n]ature is itself a being which is encountered within the world [...]".<sup>168</sup> In this respect, Heidegger believes that the manifestness of nature should be conceived through Dasein's comprehension of it. Rather than presenting an 'externality', the manifestness of nature is for the sake of and peculiar to Dasein.<sup>169</sup> Disclosure of nature inevitably occurs within Dasein's projections. Michel Haar explains:

"Thanks to our own proper temporality we understand the solar rhythms as an element of our facticity. Nature takes part in a sort of prior past of Dasein, but a past which is for Dasein nothing exterior, rather it is taken up in Dasein's projects [i.e. transcendence]."<sup>170</sup>

Heidegger refers to nature as an 'innerworldly being'<sup>171</sup> precisely because it does present an external source of disclosure beyond the world. The nature can never 'touch' us beyond our projections. Heidegger says:

"As the categorial content of structures of being of a definite being encountered in the world, 'nature' can never render *worldliness intelligible*."<sup>172</sup>

Heidegger's account of spatiality shows that nature does not have a peculiar existence in itself. It can never illuminate our world, because 'nature itself is a 'being which is encountered in the world'. It is comprehended only through/by Dasein. Accordingly, in SZ, nature will be explicated under its categories. It either appears as raw material<sup>173</sup> and a device to measure time<sup>174</sup> [ready-to-hand] or as a matter of scientific exploration<sup>175</sup> [present-at-hand]. In any case, Heidegger's account will show us that the manifestness of nature is there for the sake of/peculiarly for Dasein's comprehension. Mountains, storms and seasonal changes affect us only within the world horizon and existentially.

Yet, how are we to understand our own spatiality, i.e. our body? Do we also experience our ownmost spatiality within world? Heidegger admits that "[t]he spatialization of Dasein in its 'corporeality' [...] contains a problematic of its own".<sup>176</sup> In any case, he believes that Dasein's sensory organs and limbs –our extensions into the exteriority- have the ability to sense only because Dasein initially has the ability to understand their manifestation. As a mode of understanding, corporeality does not propose a different type of comprehension beyond the temporal horizon.<sup>177</sup> Rather, corporeal perception is rendered possible only on the basis of *Seinsverständnis*.

In order to clarify this assertion, Heidegger gives the example of sight. To him, sight can only be grasped in terms of "explicit concepts of being and the structure of Being

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>169</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 15.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>171</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 93.

<sup>172</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 65

<sup>173</sup> Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, p.109.

<sup>174</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 70-71.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>177</sup> i.e. beyond the horizon of *Seinsverständnis*

[...]”<sup>178</sup> Accordingly, Dasein does not see because it has eyes. It sees because it has an understanding of Being: “[...] all sight is primarily based on understanding.”<sup>179</sup> Dasein senses physically only because it understands Being. Through his analysis, Heidegger wishes to show that “[...] understanding, returns to the body but does not emanate from it.”<sup>180</sup> Corporeality is not an ‘external’ mode of comprehension; the body does not ‘understand’. Rather, corporeal understanding is possible only on the basis of being-in and because of Dasein:

”Understanding constitutes the being of the there in such a way that, on the basis of such understanding [of Being], a Dasein in existing can develop the various possibilities of sight, of looking around, and of just looking. All explanation, as discovery that understands, is rooted in the primary understanding of Dasein.”<sup>181</sup>

In this manner, Heidegger rejects the idea that the manifestations of nature and body are somehow rooted ‘outside’ and external. For him, their disclosure does not present a foreign manifestation and an understanding beyond Dasein’s projections. Rather, every disclosure is inevitably ‘taken up’ within a temporal horizon, i.e. within world. Every understanding, e.g. understanding of natural phenomena, of corporal experience, etc., essentially arises from *Seinsverständnis*. Yet, at this point, we can raise couple of questions: Are the nature and body that are ‘encountered within world’ the same with *nature* and *body*? Do not storms terrorize us regardless our comprehension of them? Do we not find ourselves trying to decipher our body, which usually is in vain? Beyond all these questions, does not this demonstration suggest that Dasein’s way of being does not necessarily ‘depend’ on nature and body? Hubert Dreyfus comes to the correct conclusion: “[...] Dasein is not necessarily embodied.”<sup>182</sup>

### ***c-The Problem of Externality***

Heidegger’s account of world results in a perplexing conclusion. As Peter Sloterdijk rightly states, SZ’s demonstration of spatiality ends up with “a hypertensive ‘who’ in an uncertain ‘where’”.<sup>183</sup> Accordingly, Heidegger’s account of spatiality received plenty of criticism. In accordance with many critics,<sup>184</sup> Dreyfus states:

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<sup>178</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 143.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>180</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 35.

<sup>181</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 321.

<sup>182</sup> Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, p. 41.

<sup>183</sup> Peter Sloterdijk, ‘Nearness and Da-sein: The Spatiality of Being and Time’, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 29 (2012), 36-42 (p. 40).

<sup>184</sup> Among these Haar’s *The Song of the Earth*, Jeff Malpas’ *Heidegger’s Topology*, Sloterdijk’s “Nearness and Da-sein: The Spatiality of Being and Time” and Dreyfus’ *being-in-the-world* are the most direct ones

”The discussion of spatiality is one of the most difficult in *Being and Time*, not because it is deeper than any other discussion but because it is fundamentally confused.”<sup>185</sup>

In what respect is Heidegger’s account confused? Initially, rather than an external source of disclosure, body is presented almost as a predicable and comprehensible mechanism. Heidegger’s account of the body seems to be suggesting that the body is a redundant mass that does not present any incomprehensible manifestation. In this respect, he believes that eyes have nothing to do with sight.<sup>186</sup> SZ seems to be suggesting that Dasein would do well without his body. Likewise, nature *too* is presented in such a manner. Inasmuch as tsunamis and volcanic eruptions manifest themselves within world, droughts and floods are there for Dasein because he can initially understand them as such:

”For the Heidegger of *Being and Time* there is no doubt that we have no terrestrial roots or subsoil which originally sustain our emergence into the light of day.”<sup>187</sup>

In this respect, SZ’s account of world presents nature either as raw material or as a device to measure time. Beyond Dasein’s projections, there lies an ultimate void for him. Haar continues:

”For the being-in-the-world we are, no natural foundation can be imported from the outside as something objective and existing in itself, something beyond the world-structure, which means beyond ‘worldliness’.”<sup>188</sup>

Such a depiction of nature and the body is essentially based upon ”[...] this utilitarian, operative, and quite prosaic definition of worldhood [...]”.<sup>189</sup> Thus, although everything seems to be going relatively well on the surface, ”[...] the phenomenological transparency of the world leaves a residue: the *being* of nature.”<sup>190</sup> The questions concerning the body and nature will end up not only with an ontological ambiguity, but also with ”a hypertensive ‘who’ in an uncertain ‘where’”.<sup>191</sup> Consequently, one can know neither what these phenomena indicate, nor how Dasein relates to them. Therefore, the inquiries of body and nature will present a threat to SZ’s account of ‘worldhood’ and its categories. They would neither be ready-to-hand, nor present-at-hand<sup>192</sup> in the most proper sense. Dreyfus states that there are at least four different accounts of the ontological status of nature in SZ.<sup>193</sup> In this respect, Heidegger will have to deal with an obstacle that can be called ‘problem of externality’.

<sup>185</sup> Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, p. 129.

<sup>186</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 321.

<sup>187</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 12.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>191</sup> Sloterdijk, ‘Nearness and Da-sein’, p. 40.

<sup>192</sup> Heidegger’s conceptualization of ready-to-hand indicates the mode of being that Dasein regards by their equipmentality. Furthermore, present-at-hand refers to the mode of being of the equipment, which is decontextualized.

<sup>193</sup> Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, p. 109.

As we have tried to show in the first chapter, another phenomenon also faces a similar ambiguity: the phenomenon of life. David Farrell Krell states, "[...] the existential ontology of Being and Time fails in the face of life."<sup>194</sup> For him, the ultimate reason behind such 'failure' is the ontological ambiguity of life, which SZ presents:

"Life neither precedes nor succeeds existential analysis but remains outside it, being both necessary to it and inaccessible for it. .... [W]hat it [existential analysis of Dasein] is unable to determine is whether such a being is ever properly alive, or what such 'life' might mean."<sup>195</sup>

Fundamental ontology fails to clarify the ontological status of life. Likewise, it ends up with a Dasein that is not alive in the strict sense. As Hans-Georg Gadamer rightly claims, life, for Heidegger, "remains an ontological problem"<sup>196</sup> precisely because fundamental ontology does not "[...] permit a positive account of the mode of being of life."<sup>197</sup> The phenomena of body, nature and life 'remain outside' of fundamental ontology because they actually indicate manifestations beyond *Seinsverständnis*. As we have tried to show in the first chapter, life refers to an 'external' Origin, which is "...other than the self and its ways of knowing"<sup>198</sup>. In this respect, these phenomena will be the ultimate perplexities of fundamental ontology because they address a horizon beyond Dasein's *Seinsverständnis*. Accordingly, Heidegger's transition from his first perspective concerning life to the second one has its ground in the single fact that it indicates a horizon beyond the world and *Seinsverständnis*. As such, Heidegger's degradation of life derives from SZ's problematic account of world.

Although the essence of these 'external phenomena' will remain hidden at this point, Heidegger will realize that he has to rethink his account of the world. SZ's attempt to constitute a temporal account<sup>199</sup> of body, nature and life, i.e. "[...] the supposed priority of temporality"<sup>200</sup> over spatiality, would oblige Heidegger to revise his account. Accordingly, Dreyfus states:

"The problems of this chapter [Dasein's spatiality] can be seen as the sort of difficulties that led Heidegger to abandon the project of a fundamental ontology, i.e. an ontology that grounds all ways of Being in Dasein's way of being."<sup>201</sup>

Heidegger will eventually have to acknowledge the fact that the genuine 'how' of nature and life is not equal to an inquiry regarding their 'being', i.e. their manifestation within *Seinsverständnis*. The challenge that these phenomena propose will compel Heidegger to think beyond the limits of metaphysics. Consequently in the 1930s, he will present a radical period of self-criticism, i.e. *Kehre*, and he will try to overcome the problem of spatiality. "[...] [T]he turning [Kehre] in question was a function of *Being and Time*'s 'failure' to 'articulate the spatial and the topological as

<sup>194</sup> Krell, *Daimon Life*, p. 276.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>196</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. by Marshall & Weinsheim, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Continuum Publishing Group, 2006), p. 253.

<sup>197</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 253.

<sup>198</sup> Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy*, p. 35.

<sup>199</sup> i.e. in terms of such account of world

<sup>200</sup> Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006), p. 126.

<sup>201</sup> Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, p.133.

such’.”<sup>202</sup> We will see whether the *Kehre* will be successful in compensating for the ‘failure of Being and Time’.

## II-*Kehre* and the Notion of Earth

### a-*Kehre*

The 1930s were both challenging and fruitful years for Heidegger. It was a challenging decade because Heidegger was confronted with the fact that the inquiries of nature, life and body presented a major perplexity. The being of nature, life and body became impasses that jeopardized the project of SZ. Because these phenomena were incompatible with the categories of SZ, a satisfactory explication was impossible in the framework of SZ. However, this did not lead Heidegger into a philosophical deadlock. Rather, by acknowledging such a lack, he revised his thought to provide a satisfactory account of externality. Through the recognition of such a challenge, Heidegger’s philosophy was transformed almost immediately into a new, refreshed and fruitful thought.

For Heidegger, the mid-1930s will signify the phase, within which a process of self-criticism will be initiated. Heidegger scholars refer to this era as *Kehre*, the ‘Turn’. Discussing the *Kehre* with the attention it deserves would exceed the limits of this chapter. It should also be noted that there is no consensus on how such a Turn should be interpreted. Inasmuch as its essence is not clear, there is not one specific view that is revised. Rather, it presents an overall innovation in Heidegger’s philosophy, which exhibits a change of perspective on various issues. We have already stated that spatiality of the world has been one of the major reasons for the *Kehre*. Beyond that, various other issues like authenticity and truth would also receive a revised treatment. However, I would agree with the claim that the Turn essentially is a transition from the subjectivistic project of SZ into a philosophy of givenness and awaiting.<sup>203</sup> With the *Kehre*, what has been called a ‘philosophy of decisionism’<sup>204</sup> evolves into a philosophy of correspondence between man and givenness.<sup>205</sup>

In the 1930s, Heidegger adopts a new vocabulary to explicate his new way of thinking. Among many new concepts that come forth with the *Kehre*, a new notion, which presents a new way of thinking, overshadows others for our concern: the notion of the Earth. From its first appearance in the Hölderlin lectures until the ‘Origin of the Work of Art’, the notion of Earth prevails gradually more in Heidegger’s thought. As we will see, the notion of Earth will be the ultimate keyword of Heidegger’s new perspective regarding spatiality.

The notion of Earth initially appears in the mid-30s in a number of lectures and essays about the poetry of Hölderlin. However, the 1935 essay, ‘Origin of the Work of Art’<sup>206</sup>, is the first instance that the notion of Earth becomes an independent concept.

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<sup>202</sup> Miguel de Beistegui, ‘The Place of Place in Heidegger’s Topology’, *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 19 (2011), 277-283 (p. 278).

<sup>203</sup> Gregory Fried, *Heidegger’s Pólemos: From Being to Politics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 67.

<sup>204</sup> Mainly addressed by Hans Jonas and Karl Löwith

<sup>205</sup> The expression correspondence, however, should not be interpreted as a philosophical well-being. Moreover, this description exemplified best with the expression of ‘Philosophy of Gelassenheit [serenity, letting-be]’.

<sup>206</sup> from this point on, I will refer to it as ‘UK’

UK affirms that this new vocabulary is not a context-dependent poetic terminology. Rather, it is a major concept that proposes a new way of thinking. In the essay, Heidegger's main objective is to disclose the origin of the artwork.<sup>207</sup> Accordingly, he describes the origin of the Greek temple as follows:

"The temple's firm towering makes visible the invisible space of air. The steadfastness of the work contrasts with the surge of the surf, and its own repose brings out the raging of the sea. Tree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are. The Greeks early called this emerging and rising in itself and in all things *phusis*. It clears and illuminates, also, that on which and in which man bases his dwelling. We call this ground the earth"<sup>208</sup>

Provisionally, we may say that the Earth is the ground whereupon the Greek temple arises. Additionally, Heidegger says that *phusis* [φύσις] 'clears and illuminates' the Earth. At the first instance, Heidegger seems to be suggesting that the notion of φύσις renders the Earth possible through revealing it. Should we conclude that φύσις grounds the Earth? How to understand these notions?

### **b-Phusis**

In ancient Greek, φύσις literally means nature in the sense of natural scenery and surrounding world e.g. mountains, animals, meadows, etc. However, as in its English equivalent, it both means the surrounding world and the essence of an entity. In everyday usage, we use the term, nature, both to imply natural surroundings and characteristic trait of something. However, both Heraclitus and Aristotle use the notion beyond such semantic twofoldness. For them, nature as φύσις indicates something more profound than either surrounding world or essence. In his discussions of φύσις, Heidegger will gradually appreciate this third meaning of φύσις. However, he initially needs to clarify the twofoldness of φύσις.

In FCM, Heidegger says that φύσις has two senses. The first of these two meanings has a 'regional' character. This meaning of φύσις in terms of φύσει ὄντα [natural beings] encompasses the totality of natural beings, such as rivers and mountains. As such, φύσις in terms of φύσει ὄντα designates the regional character of nature; "[...] a distinctive region of beings, certain beings among others."<sup>209</sup> To Heidegger, φύσις in terms of φύσει ὄντα is narrower than the second sense, yet greater and more profound than the modern scientific comprehension of the nature.<sup>210</sup> According to him, the second meaning of φύσις is "[...] the essence and inner law of the matter [...]"<sup>211</sup> It is the "[...] the nature of things [...]"<sup>212</sup>, "[...] not only the nature of natural things, but the nature of each and every being [...]"<sup>213</sup> Here, Heidegger refers to the second

<sup>207</sup> However, we will only refer to the text in the context of the Earth

<sup>208</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. by Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper Collins Publishers Inc., 2001), pp. 15-87 (p. 41).

<sup>209</sup> Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p. 31.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

meaning of φύσις in terms of essence. In this context, it refers to the ‘inner law of every being’.

Beyond the explication of these two senses of φύσις, Heidegger starts referring to a third sense in the 1935 summer course.<sup>214</sup> Here, he says that the genuine meaning of φύσις points to something that goes beyond the totality of the surrounding world and of the essence. Although both implications of φύσις are accurate to some extent, it will not be valid to think them independent of each other. Thus, Heidegger says that φύσις essentially implies ‘emergence’ and ‘arising’:

”*Phusis* as emergence can be experienced everywhere: for example, in celestial processes (the rising of the sun), in the surging of the sea, in the growth of plants, in the coming forth of animals and human beings from the womb. But *phusis*, the emerging sway, is not synonymous with these processes, which we still today count as part of ‘nature.’”<sup>215</sup>

As such, the genuine meaning of φύσις is neither φύσει ὄντα, i.e. the occurrence of φύσις, nor the ‘essence’ and ‘inner law’. Rather, φύσις indicates the source and **modus operandi** of nature, i.e. emergence. In this respect, it might be suggested that it is close to idea of **natura naturata**, the naturing nature. Likewise, UK affirms that φύσις is the ”[...] aris[ing] of their own accord [...]”<sup>216</sup> of the natural beings, i.e. self-emergence:

”Now what does the word *phusis* say? It says what emerges from itself (for example, the emergence, the blossoming, of a rose), the unfolding that opens itself up, the coming-into-appearance in such unfolding, and holding itself and persisting in appearance- in short, the emerging-abiding sway. According to the dictionary, *phuein* means to grow, to make grow.”<sup>217</sup>

As such, φύσις is neither natural occurrences, nor a static essence. It is the substantive form of the verb φύω, which ”[...] means to grow, to put, come or bring forth, to produce.”<sup>218</sup> In this manner, Heidegger says that φύσις is the ”event of *standing forth*, arising from the concealed and thus enabling the concealed to take its stand for the first time.”<sup>219</sup> It is the self-emergence from the concealedness ”[...] into the light, *phuein*, to illuminate, to shine forth and therefore to appear.”<sup>220</sup> Additionally, Heidegger believes that φύσις goes beyond a static essence, because, inasmuch as it is ‘emergence into the light’, it is also a self-withdrawal. ”*Phusis* is a granting which nevertheless withholds itself, which maintains itself in hiddenness.”<sup>221</sup> As such, it is self-emergence, which also encompass a self-withdrawal. He says:

<sup>214</sup> which is published under the name, *Introduction to Metaphysics*. I will refer to it as EM from this point on

<sup>215</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. by Fried&Polt (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 15.

<sup>216</sup> Martin Heidegger, ‘The Origin of the Work of Art (1935-36)’, in *Off the Beaten Track*, ed. and trans. by Haynes&Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1-57 (p. 35).

<sup>217</sup> Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 15.

<sup>218</sup> Mark Sinclair, *Heidegger, Aristotle and the Work of Art: Poiesis in Being* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 144.

<sup>219</sup> Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 16.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>221</sup> Sinclair, *Heidegger, Aristotle and the Work of Art*, p. 144.

”While the ‘plant’ sprouts, emerges, and expands into the open, it simultaneously goes back into its roots, insofar as it plants them firmly in the closed ground and thus takes its stand. The act of self-unfolding emergence is inherently a going-back-into-itself. This kind of becoming present is φύσις<sup>222</sup>

Φύσις does not merely indicate the self-emergent character of the rose. Rather, inasmuch as it is self-emergence from the concealment, it is also self-withdrawal back into it. In this manner, φύσις goes beyond any essential trait that can be illuminated and stripped naked. Although it can be observed in φύσει ὄντα, every attempt to fixate it in terms of essence is doomed to fail. φύσις is essentially ungraspable and impenetrable. It withdraws from every attempt to illuminate it by returning into concealment. Accordingly, it can only be approached in its emergent and concealing character.

In UK, Heidegger uses the notion of φύσις to indicate the emerging character of beings. Yet, how does this process of ‘emergence’ take place? In order to clarify this further, we will initially have to inquire into the notion of Earth. When one thinks about the concept of Earth, the first meaning that comes to mind would be its planetary character. After all, Earth names the planet we dwell upon. Beyond that, it is also used to imply the surface or materiality of this planet. However, Heidegger would reject its conventional comprehensions. He says, “[...] earth is neither a particular region of beings nor, thought astronomically, a particular mass of matter [...]”<sup>223</sup> Additionally, he states that the Earth should not “be associated with the idea of a mass of matter deposited somewhere.”<sup>224</sup> If the notion of Earth indicates neither this planet nor its surface, what does it mean?

### c-The World and Earth

How to make sense of this relationship? What does the positioning of World and Earth against each other signify? Heidegger tells us that the struggle between the World and Earth exemplifies the ceaseless “[...] conflict of clearing and concealing.”<sup>225</sup> In this respect, the Earth names the realm of concealment: “Earth belongs to the dimension of withdrawal, of concealing (λήθη) [...]”<sup>226</sup> In this ‘conflict of clearing and concealing’, the Earth comes forth to negate the unconcealment of the World. Through its letheic character, the Earth is what presents the strongest opposition to the realm of unconcealment, i.e. the Open: “In the earth, [...] the openness of the Open finds the greatest resistance [...]”<sup>227</sup> The World and Earth belong together in a constant strife, which never comes to a conclusion. Both the World and Earth resist the prevailing character of one another in such a way that this struggle never ends up in a dialectical unity or harmony. World and Earth belong together in a constant strife. This struggle between the world and Earth is nothing other than the ceaseless conflict between unconcealment and concealment.

<sup>222</sup> Martin Heidegger, ‘On the Essence and Concept of Φύσις in Aristotle’s B, I (1939)’, in *Pathmarks*, ed. by William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 183-231 (p. 195).

<sup>223</sup> Sinclair, *Heidegger, Aristotle and the Work of Art*, p. 141.

<sup>224</sup> Heidegger, ‘The Origin of the Work of Art’, p. 41.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>226</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 57.

<sup>227</sup> Heidegger, ‘The Origin of the Work of Art’, p.67.

In contrast to the unconcealment [ἀλήθεια] of the World, the Earth is the realm of concealment [λήθη]. However, this dichotomy is far more complicated than the struggle of good and bad. Their relationship cannot be reduced to that of right and wrong, because Heidegger believes that ἀλήθεια is initially grounded upon λήθη. "Earth belongs to the dimension of withdrawal, of concealing (*lethe*) which holds sway in un-concealment, in *a-letheia*."<sup>228</sup> In this manner, the World finds its ground primarily upon the Earth. However, although λήθη is the foundation of *aletheia*, λήθη can be rendered intelligible only on the basis of ἀλήθεια. Accordingly, inasmuch as Earth strives to pull the World into its letheic originariness, the World fights back by attempting to negate its letheic background: "The world tends to annul the 'ground', whereas the Earth tends to dehistoricize, to decontextualize the 'decisions' of the world."<sup>229</sup> The strife between World and Earth names the ceaseless conflict of the concealing past [immanence] and the unconcealing future [transcendence].

#### d-The Earth

In the light of UK's depictions, what else can we say about the Earth? In UK, Heidegger refers to the Earth as a "homeland [heimatliche Grund]."<sup>230</sup> The Earth, 'on which and in which man bases his dwelling', provides the basis not only for man, but also for everything upon it.<sup>231</sup> It is the 'sheltering agent', which protects and preserves everything. However, this is not to say that the Earth is a reserve or a ground of experience. The Earth can neither be found in its materiality, nor can it be observed on its surface. Even though its materiality cannot be denied, equating the Earth with mere materiality is not accurate. Accordingly in EM, Heidegger would say, "we must aim at the thing's belonging to the Earth rather than saying that it is the Earth."<sup>232</sup> In this manner, its support is by no means a mere material basis. Rather, Heidegger says that Earth is essentially inaccessible and undisclosable. "The Earth is essentially self-secluding."<sup>233</sup> It "shrinks from every disclosure and constantly keeps itself closed up."<sup>234</sup> In this respect, although it provides the ground for everything, it remains undisclosable and ungraspable. The Earth cannot be illuminated or rendered intelligible. Because it is essentially self-secluding, it always resists any attempt to illuminate it. As the ceaseless struggle between the World and the Earth indicates, neither the World can be reduced to its ground, nor can the Earth be illuminated. Rather, the Earth withdraws itself from every attempt to cognize it. "Earth possesses a secret ground that resists every elucidation and that does not yield to the violence of an ex-plication or ex-position."<sup>235</sup> As the geologist takes a sample of it in order to comprehend its quality, it withdraws and secludes its essence. "[...] earth breaks every attempt at penetrating it."<sup>236</sup> In this manner, the Earth appears as the ground of humankind, which is neither accessible nor graspable. However, the fact that it is not

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<sup>228</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 57.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>230</sup> Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', p. 21.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>232</sup> Sinclair, *Heidegger, Aristotle and the Work of Art*, p. 155.

<sup>233</sup> Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', p. 46.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>235</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 57.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*

a ground of experience does not mean that it is unapproachable. Rather, the Earth lets itself be recognized through letting it appear in its letheic character:

”The earth is openly illuminated as itself only where it is apprehended and preserved as the essentially undisclosable, as that which withdraws from every disclosure, in other words, keeps itself constantly closed up.”<sup>237</sup>

How should we understand this illumination within darkness or ἀλήθεια within λήθη? Or contrariwise, what does the darkening within illumination and λήθη within ἀλήθεια imply? To Heidegger, this process is nothing other than truth. The ceaseless struggle between the concealment of the Earth and unconcealment of the World is the source and origin of ἀλήθεια, truth. He states that the “[t]ruth is *wy* as the conflict between lighting and concealing in the opposition of World and earth.”<sup>238</sup> Truth is neither synonymous with illumination, nor is it a possession of the World. Rather it ‘happens’ or is ‘won’<sup>239</sup> through the struggle of the World and Earth.

Truth ‘happens’ only on the basis of the conflict of the World and Earth. Αλήθεια [aletheia] cannot be comprehended without λήθη [lethe] that makes it possible principally. The Open, the realm of unconcealment, is possible only on the ground of the constant πόλεμος<sup>240</sup> [polemos] of the World and Earth. The ceaseless πόλεμος of World and Earth is what grants the Open its essence. However, there remains one last question that still needs to be answered. What about the relation between φύσις and Earth? Does one precede the other or do they basically mean the same thing?

At least from a linguistic point of view, we might suggest that they are not the same. Etymologically, φύσις indicates the natural law, the principle of nature, the originating power or growth.<sup>241</sup> Democritus used it as a synonym for animal instinct. Empedocles and Plutarch employed it synonymously with the Origin, ἀρχή [arche]. Yet, it is never used to imply a sheltering ground like the Earth. For the Earth in the sense of the terrestrial basis, Greeks rather used ‘γῆ’ [gē] or ‘γαῖα’ [gaia]. Consequently, φύσις does not seem to indicate a ‘ground’, ‘on which and in which man bases his dwelling’. Accordingly, Mark Sinclair states:

”Heidegger does not, strictly speaking, identify a thinking of Earth with the early Greek thinking of phusis. ‘The Origin’ states only that the emerging into presence, rather than the emerging and concealing of being, is what the Greeks called phusis.”<sup>242</sup>

If φύσις and Earth are not equivalent, what is the relation between them? They are not the same, yet they are not completely distinct either. The relation between φύσις and Earth is not disclosed explicitly in UK, which causes a major perplexity. Haar refers to this dilemma by asking “[c]an we say then that ‘Earth’ is the non-metaphysical equivalent of φύσις?”<sup>243</sup> Inasmuch as φύσις is referred to as emergence, it is not clear

<sup>237</sup> Heidegger, ‘The Origin of the Work of Art’, p. 25.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>240</sup> i.e. war, struggle

<sup>241</sup> Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 8th ed., s.v. “φύσις” (New York: American Book Company, 1897).

<sup>242</sup> Sinclair, *Heidegger, Aristotle and the Work of Art*, p. 145.

<sup>243</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 49.

whether this emergence is equivalent to the nourishing and sheltering function of the Earth. UK suffices to say that φύσις illuminates the Earth. For a decisive account of φύσις and Earth, we will have to wait a little bit longer.

### e-The Realm Beyond the World

Through the *Kehre*, Heidegger acknowledges the realm beyond the world and manifestation out of the range of *Seinsverständnis*. The notion of Earth implies that there lies a domain ‘beyond’ the subjectivistic world of Dasein. Joseph Fell says:

”In reading SZ, one easily falls into the habit of picturing ‘world’ as a sort of evanescent field that Dasein has always already projected over an inherently meaningless environment. By 1935, world is picturable as supported by the earth, as the finite articulation of earth. ‘Ground’ is no longer simply Dasein’s Being-in-the-world. It is now to be construed more literally, as the solid and supportive earth, the fundamentum of world.”<sup>244</sup>

As such, UK presents a new presentation of reality, which now should be thought of both in terms of the World and Earth. The World, which is described in the same manner as in SZ or FCM, is now described as supported/restricted by the Earth. Thus, UK assigns a new player into the old game by presenting the notion of the Earth along with that of the World. As we have seen, the Open and truth are no longer synonymous merely with the unconcealment of the World. Rather they come forth only through the constant πόλεμος of the World and Earth. Jeff Malpas says:

”It is essentially a shift from a focus on world as the realm of cleared, open projection—[...] to world as it stands in relation to the realm of that which is unmanifest, that which is concealed and impenetrable. It is a turn toward what Heidegger, by the mid-1930s, will come to call ‘earth’ [...]”<sup>245</sup>

Accordingly, by the 1930s, Dasein is no more the measure of all things. In the UK, ”the world is still defined as a network of possibilities...”<sup>246</sup>, yet in a less ‘utilitarian’ and ordaining manner, which is to be supported by the Earth. *Kehre* affirms that there lies an ‘unmanifest’ realm beyond Dasein’s transcendental faculties. By naming the realm beyond the categories of SZ, the notion of Earth presents a potentiality for an unrestricted apprehension of spatiality, which the fundamental ontology did not allow. While the notion of Earth acknowledges an independent manifestation beyond Dasein’s projections, φύσις, i.e. the self-emergent character of nature, implies that natural occurrences have ”[...] their autonomy, their self-standing, their sovereignty, their dignity.”<sup>247</sup> In this manner, the notion of Earth presents a potentiality for revisiting the phenomena of nature, body and life. In the next chapter, we will see how the account of Earth will be actualized regarding our subject matter, i.e. the phenomenon of life.

<sup>244</sup> Joseph P. Fell, *Heidegger and Sartre: An Essay on Being and Place* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 196.

<sup>245</sup> Malpas, *Heidegger’s Topology: Being, Place, World*, p. 188.

<sup>246</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 57.

<sup>247</sup> Bruce V. Foltz, *Inhabiting the Earth: Heidegger, Environmental Ethics, and the Metaphysics of Nature* (New York: Humanity Books, 1995), p. 127.

### III-Conclusion

In this chapter, we tried to explicate the fact that Heidegger's transition from his first perspective towards life to the second one is an outcome of SZ's account of world. SZ's demonstration of spatiality simply does not allow a manifestation beyond *Seinsverständnis*. In this manner, the Heidegger of SZ conceives the notion of life as an inferior mode of Being precisely because it addresses a horizon beyond Dasein's projections. However, Heidegger's Turn will acknowledge this neglect and will try to compensate for this account. Epitomized by EM and UK, the *Kehre* indicates a Turn into a philosophy of givenness, within which the realm beyond the World is acknowledged. In this manner, it presents a potentiality for a new way of looking at the phenomena of nature and life, which is to be actualized.

### D- Earthliness as the Essence of Life

In the last chapter, we indicated that the 'problem of life', which emerges due to Heidegger's second perspective towards it, is actually an epitome of SZ's problematic account of world and its spatiality. We also indicated that the notion of Earth presents a potentiality for a genuine interpretation of life beyond the precarious demonstration of fundamental ontology. Yet, how should we interpret these consequences? How would they assist us in terms of our initial subject matter, i.e. the essence of life?

This chapter will try to show that the notion of life acquires its primary and originary status in Heidegger's late thought. Moreover, such recognition has been possible only in the light of the notion of Earth and the 'topological' orientation it will bring. On the way to his "topology of being"<sup>248</sup>, Heidegger will show us that the notion of life essentially indicates a non-metaphysical and 'placed' phenomenon. Following Heidegger's account, we will try to clarify his third perspective towards the notion of life. Furthermore, by pursuing this account, we will try to clarify the essence of life.

### I-The No-Longer-Metaphysical Thought and Life

#### a-The Second *Kehre*

Earlier, we claimed that the *Kehre* should not be understood as a monolithic change of perspective. Rather, *Kehre* should be conceived as the beginning of many other turns, which take place at various times. Supporting this idea, Heidegger, in the 1940s, presents another Turn. The idea that there lies a realm beyond the world, i.e. the Earth, leads Heidegger to depart from metaphysics completely. In the long run, 'the failure of fundamental ontology' causes an entire dismissal of metaphysics by Heidegger.

Accordingly, in the 1943/44 lecture course on Heraclitus<sup>249</sup>, Heidegger proposes a new way of thinking. Under the guidance of Heraclitus and Hölderlin, he realizes that his previous ideas remained restricted precisely because it sought answers within metaphysics. However, genuine philosophy requires thinking beyond metaphysics.

<sup>248</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'Seminar in Le Thor 1966', in *Four Seminars*, trans. by Mitchell & Raffoul (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), pp. 35-64 (p. 47).

<sup>249</sup> from this point on, I will simply refer to the lecture course as 'HRK'

Consequently, Heidegger proposes a no-longer-metaphysical way of thinking<sup>250</sup> originating from the not-yet-metaphysical thinking of Greeks.<sup>251</sup> By thinking the ‘unthought thought’, Heidegger unveils the path to a radical and distinctive philosophy. While doing so, he conducts an investigation of an old concept: ζωή [life].

### **b-Life and *Phusis***

In the lecture course, Heidegger initially rejects the conventional rendering of ζωή as life: “[w]e carelessly translate this word with life, because we think we know what that is.”<sup>252</sup> To him, ζωή implies something deeper than the everyday rendering of it as life. Refusing other philosophical interpretations of it, Heidegger remarks, “we also see that the appeal to the living and life always includes an interpretation of its Being within itself.”<sup>253</sup> At the first instance, it does not seem that Heidegger has changed his mind after all. With this remark, it seems that the question, which is at stake, is still metaphysical, i.e. ‘the being of life’. Yet, the no-longer-metaphysical thought has a different point of departure: φύσις. “We would like to learn what life, in the sense of ζωή, implies through the aforementioned example of the notion of φύσις....”<sup>254</sup> In this manner, Heidegger does not fall prey to a metaphysical orientation. Rather, a no-longer-metaphysical inquiry of life through the notion of φύσις enables us to see the “essential proximity of life and being”<sup>255</sup> without falling prey to metaphysics.

In correspondence with its earlier definitions, Heidegger construes φύσις as “the pure emergence, in whose openness and lights everything appears”.<sup>256</sup> Furthermore, to him, the root of ζωή, ζα- essentially indicates a nexus with φύσις: “[i]n Greek way of thinking, ζα- means the pure emergence in terms of arising and appearing, e.g. in breaking-forth.”<sup>257</sup> He proceeds to claim that φύσις, ζωή and φάος [light] essentially derive from the same root: φάος, φῶς.<sup>258</sup> According to his interpretation, both ζάω [to live] and ζωή [life] “mean nothing other than emergence into ..., and to unclothe and open itself in the Open.”<sup>259</sup> Thus, he believes that ζωή essentially indicates a ‘bringing-into-the light’: “In Greek sense, ζωή designates that which is particularly self-emergent, especially self-unfolding and most prevailing.”<sup>260</sup> ζωή and φύσις name the same thing:

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<sup>250</sup> Heidegger, Martin: *II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1925-1944*, vol. 55 of *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt Am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1994), p. 108. My rendering.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid. My rendering.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 90. My rendering.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 91. My rendering.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid., 92. My rendering.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., 104. My rendering.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid., 102. My rendering.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 94. My rendering.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid., 94. My rendering.

<sup>260</sup> Foltz, *Inhabiting the Earth*, p. 132.

”The ζα- is the essential ground, within which various modes of ‘upon-and-apart’ and going-forth arises. Ζῆν [to live] means the self-emergence, the opening-of-itself into the Open. Τὸ ζῶον [the animal] is not the animal and not the creature in somehow an incidental and indefinite sense; rather ζωή says: the self-emergence-into-the-exteriority and the emergent essence.”<sup>261</sup>

Heidegger suggests that ζωή addresses something greater than ζῶον. Ironically enough, such method of inquiry, i.e. restricting life with animality, was the very same method that SZ and FCM presented. As we have tried to show in the first chapter, equating life with animality was the guiding thread of Heidegger’s second perspective. However, HRK’s account of life rejects such demonstration and claims that life, as ζωή is φύσις, i.e. self-emergence. ζωή indicates ‘arising into the Open’.

How does Heidegger clarify the nexus between these affiliated concepts? Heidegger states that the root, ζα-, essentially implies an intensification [Verstärkung].<sup>262</sup> In this manner, ζωή names the intensification of φύσις.<sup>263</sup> Life refers to a strengthened and decisive mode of self-emergence and self-withdrawal. In ζωή, φύσις obtains a τέλος [telos] in the form of intensification. Accordingly, it should be clear that rather than merely animality, ζωή refers to all φύσει ὄντα [natural beings]. It points to the self-emergence of every living being.

### c-The Divine Animal

Through HRK, Heidegger acknowledges the incorrectness of FCM’s claim that there lies an abyss between man and the animal. Converging in a single of existence, man, animals and plants are all self-emergent beings. Yet, where does this leave us, if Heidegger is rejecting his previous claims? What is an animal? He explicates:

”What the Greek word ζῶον implies lies so far from all the modern ways of thinking of it as animality, that the Greeks even named their gods as ζάω [living].”<sup>264</sup>

Accordingly, Greeks referred to ζῶον as a broader concept to encompass both the animals and Gods. For them, ζῶον implied a form of divinity. In a quite mystical passage, Heidegger illustrates the Greek experience of the animality, i.e. divinity, through the example of ‘bird’. To him, such experience ”comes to presence in the singing of the message, the call and the magic ... [by which] the bird is carried away and brought closer to the Open.”<sup>265</sup> He continues to say:

<sup>261</sup> Heidegger, *Vorlesungen 1925-1944*, p. 108. My rendering.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid., 95. My rendering.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid. My rendering.

”But this requires also the sealing and the preservation of the concealed, [lethe] e.g. in mourning. The bird, flying, singing is bound to and knows the Open.”<sup>266</sup>

In this manner, Heidegger likens such experience to metempsychosis, i.e. the movement of soul to another body. In the following lines, he explicates the essence of animality in correspondence with such divine ‘encounter’:

”The original words ζῶον, ζωή lie far away from the animal [Tierwesen], which does not mean to say that the Greeks did not know what the animals were. Rather, they [the Greeks] brought these words into a peculiar relationship with the divinities. As such, the animal is neither thought zoologically, nor in an indeterminate and 'christianly' manner, which designates it merely as ‘low’ with regards to the 'higher' man. Rather, the Greeks thought that the animal is determined precisely in terms of ζῶον, i.e. that which arises, that which then peculiarly repose and that which does not voice and utter itself.”<sup>267</sup>

Heidegger denies the scientific description of animality and the hierarchy that comes along with it. The Greek thinking does not situate the animal in contrast to man, and thus does not designate it as ‘low’. ζῶον implies a broader concept than its zoological and ‘Christian’ conceptualizations as the animal. It indicates the self-emergent being with a ‘peculiarity’. Can we say that man *too* is a ζῶον, then? Although ζῶον should be understood as the epitome of ζωή, Heidegger does not explicitly name man as ζῶον. Inasmuch as ζωή encompasses animals, gods and man, ζῶον is not said of man. Rather, he peculiarly refers to animals and gods as ζῶον. How to understand such a configuration? I believe that the ‘peculiar’ status of ζῶον prevents us from naming man as such. To Heidegger, ζῶον indicates animals and God, i.e. ‘the emergents’, which are in repose and serenity. It names the self-emergent beings, which are divine and do not utter themselves. Accordingly, although man is a living being that bears ζωή, this does not render him a ζῶον in the Greek sense. In the case of animals and gods, ζῶον implies a mode of ζωή with a peculiarity. The question whether ζῶον can be broadened to define to man in certain cases, e.g. anxiety, uncanniness, remains a mystery.

## II-The No-Longer-Metaphysical Earth

Heidegger’s second Turn, i.e. the no-longer-metaphysical thought, inquires into the notion of life beyond the scope of metaphysics and resolves the ‘problem of life’, which SZ and FCM revealed. In the following years, Heidegger examines another concept in the light of this new way of thinking. He addresses another notion that necessitates being thought of beyond metaphysics: the notion of Earth. In the 1950s, we acknowledge that UK comprehended the concept of the Earth under the sway of metaphysics. However, genuine thinking requires us to think beyond its limits. Accordingly, Heidegger will ask a fundamental question: What does the notion of ‘ground’ imply? What is the fundamental ground of beings?

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<sup>266</sup> Ibid. My rendering.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid. My rendering.

The 1955/56 lecture course<sup>268</sup> is dedicated to discuss the Leibnizian principle saying ‘nothing is without reason’: *nihil est sine ratione*. ”One translates it: nothing is without a reason [Grund].”<sup>269</sup> Similar to its English rendering, the German word *Grund* means both reason and ground. Yet, Heidegger believes that Leibnizian claim, which says nothing can be without a ground/reason<sup>270</sup> [Grund], does not reflect the truth. Accordingly, he puts forward a single line by the 17<sup>th</sup> century mystic Angelus Silesius:

”The rose is without why, it blossoms because it blossoms”<sup>271</sup>

The rose blossoms because it blossoms. Following the Leibnizian pattern, we should say that the *Grund* of the blossoming of the rose is its blossoming. Looked at from the Leibnizian point of view, the tautology present in the quote indicates the fact that the rose is actually without *Grund*. However, Heidegger thinks otherwise. Rather than saying that the rose is without a *Grund*, Heidegger believes that the *Grund* of the rose is ‘grounded in itself’:

”The ‘because’ of the fragment simply points the blooming back to itself. The blooming is grounded in itself, it has its ground [Grund] with and in itself. The blooming is a pure arising on its own, a pure shining.”<sup>272</sup>

The blossoming of the rose indicates that it ”[...] has no ground, [rather] it is ground itself.”<sup>273</sup> The rose is the *Grund* of itself. From this point of view, Heidegger clarifies what *Grund* means:

”Ground is that upon which everything rests, that which is already present as what supports all beings. The ‘because’ names this supportive presence before which we simply pause. The ‘because’ points to the essence of grounds [Grunde].”<sup>274</sup>

According to him, *Grund* is what provides beings their place; it is the dwelling of beings, ‘upon which everything rests’. In this manner, *Grund* has nothing to do with ‘reason’; it is not ‘reason’ that enables the rose to blossom. In this case, what is the ground of beings?

”Thinking carefully, we nevertheless must agree that what *Grund* means -namely, depth and Earth and footing- simply has nothing immediately to do with Reason and perception.”<sup>275</sup>

*Grund* has nothing to do with reason, because the *Grund* of the beings is the Earth, which is a footing and dwelling. Earth as footing is what makes the coming-into-being of beings possible. All beings arise and emerge upon this basis. Yet, how does

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<sup>268</sup> It is published under the name, ‘Principle of Reason’. From this point on, I will simply refer to it as PR

<sup>269</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, trans. by Reginald Lilly (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991), p. 3.

<sup>270</sup> from this point on, I will refer to it simply as Grund

<sup>271</sup> Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, p. 35.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., 127

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid., pp. 98-99.

this process of coming-into-being function? As indicated before, the *Grund* of the blossoming of the rose has its own *Grund*. Accordingly, rather than indicating a creation *ex nihilo*, the Earth is what grants beings their own *Grund*. Being comes into being upon the Earth by being ‘being qua *Grund*’.<sup>276</sup> Only because beings are ‘being qua *Grund*’ can they arise on their own. To this coming-into-Being, i.e. arising upon the Earth by being ‘being qua *Grund*’, Heidegger would say φύσις<sup>277</sup>, i.e. “[...] pure arising on its own, a pure shining [...]”.<sup>278</sup> In this respect, by grounding φύσις, the Earth enables beings to emerge on their own. Rather than creation *ex nihilo*, Earth grants beings φύσις, i.e. their self-emergent and self-withdrawing character. The Earth is the ground of every being by grounding the φύσις.

In this respect, PR designates a crossroads in Heidegger’s philosophy. Through it, we learn that the notion of ‘ground’ presented a metaphysical/metaphorical comprehension until now. However, as Heidegger says, “[t]he metaphorical exists only within metaphysics.”<sup>279</sup> The no-longer-metaphysical interpretation of *Grund* illuminates the fundamental ‘ground’ of beings: the Earth. With PR, Heidegger shifts “[...] from the representational sense of *Grund* as reason to the homey, originary sense of *Grund* (earth as ground) and to *Boden* (soil) and *Bodenständigkeit* (the indigenous, or rooted).”<sup>280</sup> Accordingly, Joseph Fell remarks:

“Earth is not a category, nor is it advanced by Heidegger as a speculative ground. It is intended concretely, as an experienced place. Here the philosophical term ‘ground’ ceases to be metaphorical; its original, literal, root meaning is recalled.”<sup>281</sup>

PR shows that the prevailing metaphysical comprehension of ‘ground’ has essentially been “blind to the Earth”.<sup>282</sup> Through PR’s inquiry of the Earth, “[...]thinking enters into the breadth and depth... ”<sup>283</sup> and “[...]being finds its repose[...]”<sup>284</sup> Heidegger realizes that he has to think τόπος [place] originarily. The genuine thinking necessitates inquiring into τόπος profoundly:

“The ‘single’ and ‘simple’ goal of Heidegger’s thinking for the rest of his career will be to ‘remember’ adequately the character of this place which has been so forgotten in displacement that it now appears as ‘nothing’. [As such] the metaphysical topology breaks down for lack of a common ground (topos) in which to root its branches [...]”.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>280</sup> Robert Mugerauer, *Heidegger and Homecoming: The Leitmotif of Later Writings* (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 2008), p. 317.

<sup>281</sup> J. Fell, *Heidegger and Sartre*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>282</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 19.

<sup>283</sup> Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, p. 111.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Fell, *Heidegger and Sartre*, p. 207.

### III-The Earth as the Origin

Through his no-longer-metaphysical thinking, Heidegger arrives at the essential ground of beings: the Earth. Following PR, "[...] place, and with it topology, begins to emerge in a clearer and more articulated fashion"<sup>286</sup> in his philosophy. To conceive how this radical orientation will affect his thought, we first have to clarify the relation between φύσις and Earth.

In PR, Heidegger refers to φύσις as the coming-into-being of beings, which encompasses both a self-emergence and a self-withdrawal. Yet, how can we clarify this originating character of φύσις explicitly? In an essay from 1939, which is called *On the Essence and Concept of Φύσις in Aristotle's Physics B, I*, Heidegger deals precisely with this aspect of φύσις. By citing a passage from Aristotle's *Physics*, his inquiry initially illuminates the origin of φύσις:

"Φύσις therefore, is what has been said. Everything that possesses this kind of origin and ordering [ἀρχή] 'has' φύσις."<sup>287</sup>

Heidegger primarily indicates the source of φύσις as *arche* [ἀρχή]. Traditionally, ἀρχή is translated as the beginning, origin and foundation.<sup>288</sup> Most Aristotelian interpreters translate it as the first principle or the first cause. In the essay, Heidegger chooses to render it as the 'origin and ordering' or 'originating and ordering Origin'<sup>289</sup>. All the same, Aristotle's passage indicates that the function of φύσις should essentially be understood in terms of its relation with ἀρχή. To 'have' φύσις necessarily points to ἀρχή. In this respect, the inquiry of ἀρχή precedes and encompasses the one concerning φύσις. Walter Brogan says:

"Aristotle establishes in *Physics A* that the study of *phusis* is the study of the *arche* of natural beings. Our task in the *Physics*, he says, is to further delineate the nature of this *arche*."<sup>290</sup>

Both for Aristotle and Heidegger, the study of φύσις would inevitably include the inquiry of ἀρχή. Because ἀρχή is the source of φύσις, its originating essence can be disclosed by comprehending their relationship thoroughly. But if ἀρχή is the first cause of everything along with φύσις, why do we assume that their relationship will disclose distinctiveness? Following Heidegger, we might say that their nexus is beyond a relationship of cause and effect. Consequently, Heidegger attempts to clarify the nexus between φύσις and ἀρχή through another translation from Aristotle's *Physics*:

<sup>286</sup> Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World*, p. 183.

<sup>287</sup> Heidegger's Translation of Aristotle's *Physics*, 192 b32-33, Heidegger, 'On the Essence and Concept', p. 198.

<sup>288</sup> Liddell & Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. "ἀρχή".

<sup>289</sup> Heidegger, 'On the Essence and Concept', p. 189.

<sup>290</sup> W. Walter Brogan, 'Double Arche: Heidegger's Reading of Aristotle's Kinetic Ontology', *Angelaki Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 2 (2006), 85-92 (p. 86).

”Accordingly, φύσις is something like origin and ordering and therefore originary [source] [...] in which it antecedently [...] exercises originating and ordering power (ἀρχε) primarily in itself *and* from itself and *toward itself* and thus *never* in such a way that the ἀρχε would appear (in the being) only incidentally.”<sup>291</sup>

According to Heidegger’s translation, Aristotle associates φύσις to ἀρχή peculiarly because the former exercises the function of the latter. In every occurrence of φύσις, we inevitably observe its link with ἀρχή. As such, Heidegger refers to φύσις as the originary source, i.e. that which reveals the originary character of the Origin, i.e. ἀρχή. In this manner, it belongs to ἀρχή not incidentally, but primarily. If we return to the example of the rose, φύσις enables rose to be a φύσει ὄν, i.e. a being that ‘has’ φύσις, through binding it with ἀρχή. In such case, φύσις would be a kind of mediator between the rose and ἀρχή. However, as Heidegger points out, such a relation between ἀρχή and φύσις is not an ‘incidental’ one. Inasmuch as ἀρχή is not a mere point of departure, the self-emerging character of φύσις does not mean it can do well without its origin. Rather, both φύσις and ἀρχή refer back to each other constantly. In this respect, φύσις will always already be in a nexus ἀρχή. φύσις names what unceasingly and inevitably functions as the ἀρχή:

”Hence the ἀρχε is not like the starting point of a push, which pushes the thing away and leaves it to itself. Rather, something determined by φύσις not only stays with itself in its movedness but precisely goes back into itself even as it unfolds in accordance with the movedness (the change).”<sup>292</sup>

ἀρχή does not merely execute the self-emergence of the rose and retreats back. Rather, the rose always already contains originariness in the sense of ἀρχή within. In this manner, the relation between ἀρχή and φύσις is circular rather than linear. Moreover, this circular correspondence illuminates the twofold character φύσις. As we recall, φύσις indicates both self-emergence and self-withdrawal. Accordingly, φύσις indicates both a self-emergence from ἀρχή and a self-withdrawal to it. Αρχή is both the whence of the self-emergence and whither of the self-withdrawal. Φύσει ὄντα exemplifies the twofold character of φύσις the best. Accompanying the self-emergence of the rose, there is even a more decisive self-enclosing and retreat-back to its roots. Accordingly, Heidegger says:

”While the ‘plant’ sprouts, emerges, and expands into the open, it simultaneously goes back into its roots, insofar as it plants them firmly in the closed ground and thus takes its stand. The act of self-unfolding emergence is inherently a going-back-into-itself. This kind of becoming present is φύσις.”

As the Origin of φύσις, ἀρχή indicates both the whence and whither of it. In this manner, ἀρχή is an ‘originating and the ordering’ Origin rather than a static point of departure: ”[...] ἀρχή is a governing beginning that never remains behind, and, in this, is *origin*.”<sup>293</sup> Because it names the ‘originating and ordering’ Origin, φύσις can

<sup>291</sup> Heidegger’s translation of Aristotle’s *Physics*, 192 b20-23, Heidegger, ‘On the Essence and Concept’, pp. 194-5.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, p.195.

<sup>293</sup> Günter Figal, *Objectivity: The Hermeneutical and Philosophy*, trans. by Theodore D. George (Albany: SUNY Press, 2010), p. 309.

never do without it. As such, it always already implies originariness. Inasmuch as an entity ‘has’ φύσις, it always bears its originariness with it. Yet, do we know what this source of φύσις indicates? Do we have an idea what ἀρχή might be? Even though the 1939 essay does not give an answer to this question, we actually obtained an answer already in PR. By referring to it as the source of φύσις,<sup>294</sup> Heidegger provides an answer approximately fifteen years later: The Earth as footing is source of φύσις, and hence, ἀρχή. The Earth is the ἀρχή and the source of φύσις. It names both the whence and whither of φύσις:

”Grund is the sort of thing from which we arise and that back to which we return [...]”<sup>295</sup>

What has been referred as ἀρχή and defined as the ‘originating and ordering Origin’ indicates nothing other than the Earth. The Earth as footing is where φύσις arises and withdraws in such a way that it ‘never remains behind’:

”The earth is that whence *phusis* arises, that into which it withdraws, and hence that which continually sustains self-emergence itself.”<sup>296</sup>

However, the fact that it can never be left behind does not mean that the Earth is simply perceptible. The Earth grounds φύσις in such a way that it remains concealed. Heidegger remarks, “[t]he earth is essentially self-secluding.”<sup>297</sup> While rendering self-emergence possible, it essentially remains self-secluding. In this respect, the Earth possesses a twofold character. Although it is self-secluding, it is also something solid, i.e. ‘footing’. Even though it cannot be experienced, it is not a void. The Earth is the self-withdrawing footing. Insofar as it is always already ‘here’, i.e. it ‘never remains behind’, it is not to be found anywhere. How can we say that the Earth *is*, then? Precisely like the Heidegger’s earlier depictions of life, Earth is there only through στέρησις [lack] of itself. The Earth comes to presence only in its absence. As Heidegger says, it can be illuminated only in its self-secluding character.<sup>298</sup> Accordingly, the Earth is both here and away at the same time; it is the most intimate that does not come close. While providing the foothold for us, it also secludes itself. Günter Figal says:

”[...] because of being this very base, [the Earth] also restricts these stances [to penetrate into it], since as base of any activity, theoretical or practical, it cannot be overstepped.”<sup>299</sup>

Not only is the Earth self-withdrawing footing, but it is also a footing that grounds beings. As such, it presents another twofoldness. However, its dual characteristic is essentially related to φύσις. Figal says, “[w]hoever sees the earth only as solid forgets the fire within [...]”<sup>300</sup> This fire is nothing other than φύσις. Because Earth grounds φύσις, it is also a footing that grounds beings. Moreover, because it ‘never remains

<sup>294</sup> Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, p. 57.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>296</sup> Foltz, *Inhabiting the Earth*, p.136.

<sup>297</sup> Heidegger, ‘The Origin of the Work of Art’, p. 46.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>299</sup> Günter Figal, ‘The Meaning of the Earth’, *Research in Phenomenology*, 32 (2012), 210-218 (p. 210).

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*

behind', it both grounds and shelters beings at the same time. "[t]he earth both supports and restricts."<sup>301</sup> Φύσει ὄντα exemplifies this situation the best. Inasmuch as a φύσει ὄν emerges upon the Earth, it also expands its roots earthwards. Accordingly, accompanying the emergence of φύσει ὄντα from the Earth, there is a more decisive return to it. In φύσει ὄντα, the Earth never remains behind in such a way that it both indicates their past and future. A φύσει ὄν is obliged to be originary, it can never detach itself from the Earth. In this manner, the Earth names both the whence and whither of every φύσει ὄντα.

#### IV-Earthliness as the Essence of Life

Following the articulation of the notion of the Earth, Heidegger realizes that he has to think τόπος thoroughly. He realizes that τόπος names a new way of thinking that is obscured by metaphysics. In the *Moira* essay, he says: "[...] [our way of thinking] never perceives place, τόπος, as an abode..."<sup>302</sup> However, his no-longer-metaphysical way of thought overcomes this problem to a certain extent by designating the Earth as the initial ground of beings. The Earth, which is itself a τόπος and footing, is the ground of beings. In the light of PR, Heidegger's philosophy moves towards a way of thinking that will inquire into τόπος in its entirety. Accordingly in the late 1970s, Heidegger will actualize this idea and will name his most recent orientation 'topology of being'. In those years, Heidegger's thought intends to inquire into "[...] the 'question concerning the place or location of being,' from which the name 'topology of being' arose."<sup>303</sup> Accordingly, he designates "the three steps along the way of thinking"<sup>304</sup> as: "Meaning-Truth-Place (τόπος)".<sup>305</sup> Heidegger believes that thinking about Being primarily requires inquiring into the 'placed' character of Being. In this manner, the more Heidegger approaches the idea of place, the more he comprehends that beings need a ground to come into Being. The more he moves towards spatiality, the more he realizes that Da-sein presupposes a 'thereness' [Da-]. The Heidegger of late 1970s will realize the crucial fact: that Being and beings has to be conceived in terms of their topological, i.e. placed, characteristic:

" The return to the Origin that is at the heart of Heidegger's topology is the return to the 'place,' the proper 'topos,' in which we already find ourselves, and in which philosophy itself arises [...]"<sup>306</sup>

Consequently, The Earth will name this topological Origin, on which beings arise and come into Being. Moreover, it is the footing that nourishes every φύσει ὄν through φύσις. As such, φύσις indicates the *modus operandi* of this topological Origin. It breathes the originary character of this Origin into every φύσει ὄν: "φύσις is originariness; everything originary has the essence of φύσις."<sup>307</sup> Accordingly, φύσις

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<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'Moira (Parmenides VIII, 34-41)', in *Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, trans. by Capuzzi&Krell (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1984), pp. 79-102 (p. 99).

<sup>303</sup> Heidegger, 'Seminar in Le Thor 1966', p. 47.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World*, p. 57.

<sup>307</sup> Figal, *Objectivity*, p. 309.

enables φύσει ὄν to emerge on the Earth through providing them with originariness, i.e. Earthliness. Moreover, because φύσει ὄν indicates the living being whose mode of being is life, the Earth also names the Origin of life. Every living being, i.e. being which ‘has’ life, essentially arises from the Earth. From the ground and soil of Earth, “[...] comes vegetation, which is life, upon which all other forms of life depend.”<sup>308</sup> “[...] the happening and the accomplishment of life, inasmuch as life occurs thanks to the Earth.”<sup>309</sup> In this manner, φύσις indicates the “[...] originariness of life.”<sup>310</sup> It demonstrates the manner in which life emerges from the Earth.

However, the relation between life and Earth does not merely indicate a relationship of cause and effect. As an epitome of the nexus between φύσις and the Earth, the Earth names both the whence and whither of the living being. Life emerges upon the Earth and returns to it. To every life, there belongs an even more decisive death. The Earth indicates the whence of life and whither of death. Frank Schalow says: “[...] earth distinguishes the darkest recesses of any indeterminacy, of a void that gives life and takes it away.”<sup>311</sup> Accordingly, in the light of Heidegger’s consideration of Earth, the essence of life reveals itself. Because life emerges from the Earth as footing, it indicates nothing other than the spatial and ‘placed’ character of the living being. As Figal confirms, “[l]iving beings are *essentially* spatial [...]”.<sup>312</sup> Life names the ‘placed’ character of the living beings. Malpas states:

“Even though the fact of situatedness, of the ‘placed’ character of life, will always be articulated in personal terms, what is nevertheless at issue [...] is not the specific character of such situatedness [...] but instead the simple fact of worldly situatedness or placedness as such.”<sup>313</sup>

φύσις breathes originariness into the living being. As HRK indicates, φύσις develops into life by gaining intensity<sup>314</sup> and τέλος. It evolves into life by acquiring the intensity and the τέλος of the Origin. Furthermore, it would be plausible to suggest that this intensity and τέλος of the Earth essentially points to τόπος. The Earth as footing indicates a τέλος in this form, i.e. τόπος. As such, beings emerge from the Earth and come into being as ‘being qua τόπος’ via φύσις. Accordingly, φύσις essentially brings the living being into life by providing them with τόπος, i.e. τέλος of the Earth. We can name this τέλος as Earthliness and this fulfilled τέλος as life. φύσις ‘actualizes’ the Earth by bringing this Earthliness into being in the form of life. In this manner, life indicates the accomplishment and actualization of the topological Origin. It essentially names Earthliness.

Accordingly, Heidegger, in his last years, acknowledges the spatial character of beings: “[...] things themselves are places and do not merely belong to a place.”<sup>315</sup>

<sup>308</sup> Figal, ‘The Meaning of the Earth’, p. 210.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>310</sup> Figal, *Objectivity*, p. 310.

<sup>311</sup> Frank Schalow, *The Incarnality of Being: The Earth, Animals, and the Body in Heidegger’s Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), p. 92

<sup>312</sup> Figal, *Objectivity*, p. 326. Emphasis mine.

<sup>313</sup> Malpas, *Heidegger’s Topology: Being, Place, World*, p. 41.

<sup>314</sup> Heidegger, *Vorlesungen 1925-1944*, p. 95.

<sup>315</sup> Martin Heidegger, ‘Art and Space’, *Centre for Research Architecture*, accessed May 26, 2014, <http://roundtable.kein.org/sites/newtable.kein.org/files/Art%20and%20Space.pdf>. p.

Every being essentially indicates a τόπος. However, in the case of living beings, this ‘placed’ character gains a peculiarity in the form of life. Along with every living being, Dasein *too* indicates a τόπος: “[...] being-there [Dasein] already implicates the idea of place—being-there [Dasein] is itself a ‘topos’.”<sup>316</sup> Accordingly, life essentially names this originary and ‘placed’ [τόπος] character of the living beings. It indicates the mode of the living being as ‘being-in-the-earth’. The essence of life, then, is Earthliness.

### V-Homecoming to the Desert

The essence of life is Earthliness. Life indicates our ‘placed’ and originary character, which ‘never remains behind’. However, taking the scope of this thesis into account, we have left an initial topic untouched. Although this question can only be asked properly in the light of our discussions, it still indicates the most important issue of all. How are we to interpret the originary character of life? What does the fact that the essence of life is Earthliness say about our human condition?

Heidegger always believed that man is essentially ‘fallen’. The ‘fallen’ character of man is essentially epitomized by the feeling of homelessness that one always already feels under one’s skin. In this manner, Homecoming, i.e. retrieval of originariness, becomes perhaps the most important questions of all. Accordingly, when investigated attentively, Heidegger’s primary objective that persisted in his philosophy all along has been Homecoming [Heimkehr]. His pursuit of originariness lasted almost sixty years by seeking various ways to return to the home. How does man achieve her homecoming? Just to look at the Heideggerian terminology concerning ‘homecoming’ is dazzling: homeland [Heimat], primary homeland [Urheimat], homelessness [Heimatlosigkeit], being-at-home [Zuhause], uncanniness [Unheimlichkeit], dwelling [sich aufhalten], rootedness [Verwurzelung], ground [Grund], primary ground [Urgrund], base [Boden], autochthony [Bodenständigkeit], primary origin [Ursprung], source [Herkunft], return [Umkehr], place [Ort], region [Gegend] and so on.<sup>317</sup> No wonder that Heidegger the man was ‘at home’ in his hut. However, Heidegger the philosopher strived to be at-home in his entire career. He sought a path from homelessness to homecoming all along.

As we have seen, early Heidegger’s answer to homecoming was life. As the originary phenomenon, it constituted our relationship with the Origin, i.e. home. However, SZ would not accept such external horizon for Homecoming. As with everything else, Homecoming is to be actualized within the horizon of Being. Metaphysics being the *modus operandi* of such pursuit, SZ sketched a homecoming to ‘authentic potentiality for Being’. Yet, “[...] after thinking towards being for all these years, at the moment of his arrival [...] [Heidegger] find[s] that being remains strange: it conceals a more primal home.”<sup>318</sup> Heidegger realizes that Dasein’s familiarity with Being does not render it ‘homey’ at all. Where to find home, then?

Heidegger’s Turn to the no-longer-metaphysical thought of Greeks refers the fact that “what he [Heidegger] had taken to be home – being – is not in fact home.”<sup>319</sup> This

<sup>316</sup> Malpas, *Heidegger’s Topology: Being, Place, World*, p. 179.

<sup>317</sup> Mugerauer, *Heidegger and Homecoming*, p. 24.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid.*

new orientation shows him that "[...] metaphysics is not the ground of philosophy, but rather arises from a ground."<sup>320</sup> His wandering among Greeks tells Heidegger that home is not to be found within metaphysics:

"How would a homecoming questioning proceed? Heidegger has learned from Hölderlin that one possible way to a no-longer-metaphysical home lies through a return to the not-yet-metaphysical Greeks."<sup>321</sup>

Homecoming essentially indicates "a past home, present homelessness and future homecoming"<sup>322</sup>. Accordingly, Heidegger realizes that the way to the future homecoming essentially requires overcoming the present metaphysical homelessness. Quite appropriately, Heidegger finds his Homecoming in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>323</sup> In those years, he realizes that home is actually nearer than he thought. He acknowledges that there is an "[...] ordinary place where we are (become) at home. The Greek word τόπος names this, though it has become forgotten."<sup>324</sup> The home is actually as near as the place, which Heidegger the man already knew. In his final years, Heidegger appreciates the fact that the Earth as τόπος names this home and dwelling. He says:

"The way in which you are and I am, the manner in which we humans are on the earth, is *Buan*, dwelling. To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell."<sup>325</sup>

The Earth names the home that Heidegger's philosophy strived to locate for long years. In this manner, Homecoming essentially indicates retrieval of this Earthliness, i.e. life. The homecoming of man indicates learning to dwell on this ground through retrieval of life. Heidegger says:

"Soul has its homecoming to its own mode of abiding insofar as it comes home and begins to dwell upon the earth [...]"<sup>326</sup>

Heidegger's topology of Being confirms that Homecoming can only be achieved on and through the Earth, which he refers to as "the abode of man"<sup>327</sup>. Heidegger says, "[t]he soul only *seeks* the earth; it does not flee from it."<sup>328</sup> However, such an answer essentially conceals a deeper and greater question. For dwelling upon Earth does not mean having one's feet upon its surface, how can we learn to dwell upon the Earth? How can we retrieve Earthliness? Thus, the initial question concerning the Homecoming is immediately transformed into the one concerning 'learning to dwell upon the Earth'.

<sup>320</sup> Figal, *Objectivity*, p. 33.

<sup>321</sup> Mugerauer, *Heidegger and Homecoming*, p. 268.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*, 452.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, 267.

<sup>325</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'Building Dwelling Thinking', in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings*, ed. by David F. Krell (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2008), pp. 343-365 (p. 96).

<sup>326</sup> Mugerauer, *Heidegger and Homecoming*, p. 380.

<sup>327</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'The Question Concerning Technology', in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. by William Lovitt (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1977), pp. 3-36 (p. 107).

<sup>328</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'Language in the Poem', in *On the Way to Language*, trans. by Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1982), pp. 159-199 (p. 163).

In UK, Heidegger says the genuine work of art "[...] lets earth be an earth."<sup>329</sup> Truth only 'happens' by letting Earth be an Earth. Accordingly, dwelling upon the Earth initially necessitates letting Earth be an Earth: "We become at home on the earth only by letting earth be earth [...]"<sup>330</sup> Yet, how do we 'let Earth be an Earth'? Do green spaces or organic farming let Earth be an Earth? Or does 'ecological living,' within which we try to constitute a harmonious relationship with 'nature' and 'Earth,' accomplish this task? Contrary to these 'mild' options, Heidegger's account of Earth would indicate a distinctive 'letting'. In PRM, he indicates that letting the Earth appear means letting it appear in the δαίμονιος τόπος, i.e. where "[...] 'demonic' shines up upon, or down upon, the earth."<sup>331</sup>

Following Heidegger, only when we let Earth shine in δαίμονιος τόπος, "[...] in which the uncanny [φύσις] dwells in a peculiar exclusivity."<sup>332</sup> do we truly let Earth be an Earth. Contrary to our projections, within which we 'harmoniously' live with the tamed Earth of ours, learning to dwell on the Earth requires letting its 'demons'<sup>333</sup> [δαίμονες] hold sway. We learn to dwell on Earth only through letting its divinities [δαίμονες] captivate, mesmerize and terrorize us. Accordingly, Homecoming initially necessitates letting Earthliness be Earthliness and letting the Earth 'shine upon us' in the δαίμονιος τόπος. In this manner, Homecoming not only demands retrieval of life, but also the creation of the δαίμονιος τόπος in our life-worlds. It requires us to broaden the wilderness and uncanniness of 'the sub- and the supraterrrestrial'<sup>334</sup> [Earth] towards the world. It call for expanding the desert and jungle, i.e. δαίμονιος τόπος, 'worldwards'. In this manner, Homecoming is essentially a homecoming to δαίμονιος τόπος. Retrieval of Earthliness depends on creating δαίμονιος τόπος, where Earth is let be an Earth.

This thesis begins with a quote by Nietzsche Zarathustra, where he 'beseeched' us to "remain faithful to the Earth".<sup>335</sup> This was no coincidence considering the fact that Heidegger introduced the notion of Earth in the result of his gradual interest in Nietzsche<sup>336</sup>. For Heidegger, the strife of the World and Earth essentially indicated the struggle between Apollonian and Dionysian.<sup>337</sup> Moreover, just like Heidegger, Nietzsche *too* dreamed a Homecoming. To him, the Homecoming was possible only on the basis of 'remaining faithful to the Earth'. Nietzsche foresaw a possible Homecoming on the basis of an ever-lasting strife for the Earthliness. Interestingly enough, Nietzsche's Homecoming *likewise* addressed a Homecoming to a τόπος δαίμονιος, which he referred as "homesickness for the desert".<sup>338</sup> Nietzsche's home was the jungle and the desert, where the Earth arises in at its utmost δαίμόνιον [divinity]. The jungle and the desert, i.e. δαίμονιος τόπος, is where the captivating and

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<sup>329</sup> Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', p. 24.

<sup>330</sup> Mugerauer, *Heidegger and Homecoming*, p. 391.

<sup>331</sup> Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p. 118.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>335</sup> Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke*, p. 6.

<sup>336</sup> Dale A. Wilkerson, 'The Root of Heidegger's Concern for the Earth at the Consummation of Metaphysics: The Nietzsche Lectures', *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy*, 1 (2005), 27-34 (p. 28).

<sup>337</sup> Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, p. 108.

<sup>338</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. by. Carol Diethe, ed. by Keith Ansell-Pearson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 57.

mesmerizing ‘song of the Earth’<sup>339</sup> can be hearkened the most. Man’s Homecoming depends on hearkening its ‘homesickness for the desert’. It requires expanding this desert and jungle ‘worldwards’. This is the ultimate task, which goes on anonymously throughout the world without being referred as such.

## VI-Conclusion

In the last chapter of this thesis, we tried to present Heidegger’s last perspective towards life. Moreover, we tried to show how his last account of life can be brought into conclusion. By discussing various traits of the notion of Earth, we indicated that life emerges from the Earth with a peculiarity. The Earth nourishes and shelters in such a way that ‘it never remains behind’. Moreover, following Heidegger’s various inquiries concerning φύσις and Earth, we tried to bring an explicit definition to Heidegger’s third and last way of looking concerning the notion of life. Following the dim light of the ‘topology of Being’,<sup>340</sup> we indicated that the essence of life indicates the topological character of the living being. We brought this chapter into conclusion by claiming that the essence of life is Earthliness. Moreover, in the last section, we inquired into the question concerning life in terms of Homecoming. We tried to show that Homecoming essentially demands ‘letting Earth be an Earth’. We concluded our chapter with the argument that this task essentially requires letting the Earth ‘shine upon us’ in δαίμωνιος τόπος.

## E- Conclusion

This thesis was written with the aim to disclose the essence of life in accordance with Heidegger’s thought. My primary goal has been not only to illuminate the historical development of life in his philosophy, but also to show how such development can be comprehended, criticized and extended. Accordingly, in the first chapter, we have tried to show Heidegger’s first two perspectives towards life. Initially we have seen that the early Heidegger conceived the phenomenon of life as the most fundamental trait of our existence. He thought that life is the originary phenomenon that binds us to the Origin. After presenting Heidegger’s first perspective towards life, we have moved to his second viewpoint, which comes to fore during fundamental ontology. Accordingly, we tried to demonstrate the transition of life in Heidegger’s viewpoint from the originary phenomenon to be conceived a synonym for worldlessness.

In the second chapter, we tried to explicate the reasons behind such radical transition. While indicating that the fundamental source of this revision is SZ’s account of world, we also tried to show that Heidegger’s second perspective ends up with an ontological ambiguity concerning life, i.e. ‘the problem of life’. Following this, we have tried to illustrate the notion of Earth and to indicate how it presents a revision to SZ’s account of world. Without explicitly discussing its relation to our subject matter, we indicated that the notion of Earth present a potentiality for the revision of ‘the problem of life’.

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<sup>339</sup> Heidegger, *Vorlesungen 1925-1944*, p. 247.

<sup>340</sup> This statement indicates the fact that ‘topology of Being’ is only actualized in Heidegger’s last years. For his reason, he did not have the potentiality to explicate his thought entirely.

In the last chapter, we have seen how Heidegger's revision concerning spatiality actualizes in our subject matter. As we tried to present, Heidegger's third perspective towards life affirms its originary character implicitly. By discussing his later conceptualization of the Earth, we continued to our inquiry by claiming that the Earth names the Origin. In this manner, we aimed to display that the Earth grounds every being. Moreover, as we have tried to demonstrate, the grounding character of the Earth has a peculiar case in the case of living beings. The Earth both shelters and nourishes living beings so that it 'never remains behind'. Consequently, we have seen that Heidegger's inquiry of life can be brought to conclusion by designating it as the originary phenomenon that is grounded on the notion of Earth. Life essentially indicates the mode of living being, which addresses its self-emergence from the Earth, i.e. birth, and a self-withdrawal to it, i.e. death. Moreover, the originary and topological character of life names one and the same thing: that it springs forth from the Earth as τόπος. In this manner, the essence of life names Earthliness. We have concluded our thesis by discussing how the retrieval of Earthliness, i.e. life, can be accomplished. We came to the conclusion that retrieval of Earthliness essentially demands letting 'Earth be an Earth', and thus, letting Earthliness be an Earthliness. In this manner, Homecoming initially requires the creation of δαίμονιος τόπος in our everyday world.

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**Abstract**

This thesis aims to discuss Heidegger's philosophy concerning the phenomenon of life with a special emphasis on its historical development throughout his thought. Discussing various phases that Heidegger presents regarding the notion of life, this thesis will also try to bring his later perspective into a conclusion, which Heidegger himself did not. Accordingly, the initial claim of this thesis will be that Heidegger's later perspective regarding the phenomenon of life can be brought to the conclusion with regards to the notion of Earth. Following his latest orientation of 'topology of Being', this thesis will claim that Heidegger's later treatment of life can be settled by defining it in terms of the notion of Earth. Because life emerges from the Earth as *topos* with a peculiarity, life is essentially a topological phenomenon. Following this, I will claim that Earthliness names the essence of life.

**Keywords:** life, animality, phusis, Earth, Origin, topology, place, homecoming, Earthliness, topos

**Word Count: 21,900**

