

Truth, Theft and Gift: Thoughts on *Alētheia*

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In discussing truth in *Being and Time* Heidegger speaks of this as always involving a robbery (*ein Raub*). This is a revealing word but not noted by commentators. Is it an incidental metaphor not to be taken too seriously? Or does it help us focus on something of the informing orientation to being and truth marking the Heidegger of *Being and Time*? This reflection offers thoughts on *Alētheia* in light of the meaning of theft. Significantly, the later Heidegger witnesses an ontological attunement entirely other to that of a robber who steals what is not his own. This attunement is closer to one of being graced or gifted by being rather than stealing secrets from the hiddenness of being. What terms do we need to make sense of theft and gift; how do we turn from, get from, theft to gift? How get from *Polemos* to *Gelassenheit*? Does Heidegger leave us in the dark on this great question?

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I.

In treating of truth there is a remark of Heidegger and a revealing word that has not occupied the attentions of commentators but that warrants reflection. The remark, with the revealing word, is:

Die Wahrheit (Entdecktheit) muß dem Seinden immer erst abgerungen werden. Das Seinde wird der Verborgenheit entrissen. Die jeweilige faktische Entdecktheit ist gleichsam immer ein Raub. Ist es Zufall, daß die Griechen sich über das Wesen der Wahrheit in einem privativem Ausdruck (ἀ-λήθεια) aussprechen? (Heidegger 1941, § 44, c, p. 222).

Truth (discoveredness) must always first be wrested from being. Beings are torn from concealment. The actual factual discoveredness is, so to say, always a kind of *robbery*. Is it a matter of chance that the Greeks

express themselves about the essence of truth with a *privative* expression (a-lētheia)? (Heidegger 1996, 204).

I am struck by the word "*Raub*." What significance can we glean from the word? Is it an incidental metaphor not to be taken too seriously and to be passed over to more conceptually weighty concerns? Or does it help us focus on something of the informing orientation to being and truth marking the Heidegger of *Being and Time*? I think there is something to this suggestion and want to offer some reflections centering on it.

I find the matter interesting also in helping us come to a question that I do not think Heidegger himself has adequately addressed or answered. The word is revealing because it is also concealing. I am thinking of this matter: the word "robbery" could not describe the orientation that opens up in Heidegger after his so-called *Kehre*: purportedly from *Dasein* to *Sein* itself, now putatively addressing itself to the human. The ontological attunement of this latter orientation is often thought to reflect a kind of *reception* of the truth of being, especially by the privileged poet and thinker, rather than just any wresting from concealment (or indeed "transcendental constitution") on *Dasein's* part. This later Heidegger is the herald of an ontological attunement entirely other to that of a robber who steals what is not his own. This attunement is closer to one of being graced or gifted by being rather than stealing secrets from the hiddenness of being. My interest in the present circumstance is mainly on hidden virtualities in the earlier Heidegger, though with the aim of allowing one to come to the question about the later Heidegger: What terms do we need to make sense of theft and gift; how do we turn from, get from, theft to gift? Does this turn entail, not our raiding the hidden, but our being graced by it? What must the hidden be like if it graces us? Does Heidegger, early or late, satisfy us in relation to such questions?

II.

What is the relationship between truth and theft? This is not a question often asked. The Seventh Commandment of Moses's Ten is: Thou shalt not steal. Here, stealing is a breach of a divine command. Among other things, theft is an ethical infringement of the moral law, also an infringement relative to laws of property we find in human communities. We steal what does not rightfully belong to us and deprive the rightful owner of what we have stolen. There is a breach of an order of trust in connection with what is thought not rightfully to be ours. Taking what belongs to someone else we *violate an order of trust*.

This order itself suggests a sometimes unstated, sometimes explicated, bond between different human beings, perhaps between human beings and other beings, whether natural or divine. A bond lays its charge on us to be respected; to engage in theft is to disrespect, to breach, perhaps even mutilate, that bond.

What of truth? One might make the argument that truth has also something to do with a bond of trust, calling for a kind of fidelity between human beings and being as other. I would speak of our being truthful as the charge to be truthful, a charge immanently experienced, reflecting that bond of trust, very often unnamed. The charge, though immanently undergone, already holds us in an unstated relation to truth that is also other to us, and not just simply an immanent matter simply that we can claim as our own.

I would stress this doubleness: first, being true to self in the sense of being truthful in fidelity to an inner exigence that initially we do not determine through ourselves alone; second, being true to what holds of being as other to us, and hence being true in a manner that opens itself, or is opened to, a sense of being other than us, again being that is not our own simply. One might claim that our being truthful not only acknowledges an inner exigence but also the claim on us of truth as other to us. We do not claim truth in the second sense, we are claimed by it. And there can be an owning of us, in the sense of our being called on to appropriate to ourselves a fitting sense of truth as more than ourselves. There can be senses of "owning" that put pressure on legal senses of owning, indeed moral senses of owning. There can be an existential appropriation of the truth which is fully receptive in respect of a more ultimate sense of truth as not simply a position of oneself, indeed perhaps not of anyone at all.¹

I will not develop the point here but merely state it: there is a sense of *confidence* involved in thinking in which our questioning of what is true already reveals itself to be in a bond with the truth that is the object of its quest. I speak of the confidence of thinking, and in that word "confidence" we find the word "fides": faith or trust. Confidence is a "trust with." It always entails a bond with what is other, even as this exhibits a receptive openness, even secret love of that other. In that second regard, the confidence goes ontologically and existentially deep into the very roots of our being.

¹ I have treated of these themes elsewhere, *Being and the Between* (SUNY, 1995) chapter 12; *The Intimate Strangeness of Being: Metaphysics after Dialectic* (Catholic University Press, 2012), chapter 8; *The Voiding of Being: The Doing and Undoing of Metaphysics in Modernity* (Catholic University Press, 2020), chapter 7.

Confidence, trust, calls on an already operative receptivity and relativity to what is other. Fitting relativity to either truthful self-being or to truth as other calls forth noetic respect, even reverence. These remarks must suffice here, though I have explored some of these matters elsewhere (Desmond 2012, chapter 8).

The things just detailed place us in a space entirely different to that conjured up by the word "theft." What now of theft? Theft is derivative or secondary. There is something that is first prior to the theft, the thing to be stolen, whatever that may be. Theft is not only dependent upon that prior thing but parasitical on it. Theft relates derivatively to what has some being for itself; it takes hold of it, taking it out of its being for itself, into a space in which a claim, again of a derivative sort, is made on this prior thing. There is a usurping dimension to this claim; the prior thing is not let be as it is in its priority.

Quite the opposite, when the prior thing is thus taken hold of, it is not allowed to be for itself; what it is now is to be for the thief claiming it for himself. The claim is more of the thief than of the thing itself. Theft wrests the thing itself from its proper "ownership." This wresting is not a restoration or restitution of the prior thing to its "ownness," or proper being for itself. Quite the opposite, it is now transposed from its prior home to a kind of borrowed "home," perhaps even a kind of captivity in the hands of the one who has carried out the theft. Everything about theft indicates a refusal of proper boundaries, invasion of the space not properly belonging to the thief, a kind of kidnapping of the thing and the making of it homeless, and all in the name of a thief who simply on his own behalf claims the right to take possession of what is not his, properly speaking.

There is more that might be said about the nature of theft, but enough has been said to raise the question of how theft could have anything to do with truth. If we take theft to be reflective of our relation to truth, how must truth itself then be reconceived in accord with the lineaments of what it means to commit a theft? It should be evident that the violence involved in theft, be it epistemic or ontological or ethical, must differ substantially from the relation to truth hinted briefly at above in my talking about the confidence of thought.

III.

Let me turn now to some aspects of Heidegger's discussion of truth as found in *Being and Time*. Much hangs on the contrast of the two conceptions with which Heidegger works: the traditional view of truth as *homoïōsis/orthōtes*

(ὁμοίωσις / ὀρθότης), and the sense of being in the truth that he wants to present in connection with *alētheia*, ἀλήθεια. This second is said to be more primordial, while the first is derivative. Something like propositional adequation, taken by Heidegger as the traditional conception, is not original enough; philosophically we are asked to grant a more primal sense of *alētheia*.

One might argue: in the absence of granting some sense of *alētheia* as primary, we cannot do justice to the identification of truth as adequation; we must presuppose being in the open space of being true before we can determine in a more specified sense the truth of determinate propositions or judgments. Putting the stress only or primarily on *orthótes* might fit well with the foregrounding of determinate truths, fitting also with our determination of knowing in relation to beings. But it would lead to the recessing, if not forgetting of the more original enabling of *alētheia* that is not itself a determinate truth. What enables determinate truths is not simply another determinate truth.

I think there is much to be said for, and said about, such a move made by Heidegger, and one can see the rationale of his point. What is said to be the traditional conception of truth fixes us on the foregrounded determinacies of our knowing of being; *alētheia* recalls us to a being in the truth that is not to be fixed in terms of determinate, foregrounded truth. The later Heidegger speaks of his philosophical task as entailing a step back (*ein Schritt zurück*) out of metaphysics, but one could argue that something like such a “step back” is ingredient in metaphysical thinking about the enabling sources of being and thinking. This need not necessarily cleave to the Heideggerian character (see Desmond 2020; Desmond 2024).

Something of Heidegger’s stress on the ontological difference of being and beings hangs in the air. What is this more primordial sense of truth and how do we get to it? Is it an ontological indeterminate by contrast with the determinacies of more adequated cognitions? If it is only indeterminate, what more can we say about it that would satisfy the philosophical desire for intelligibility and determinate articulation? Do we need terms more satisfactory than the contrast of the determinate and the indeterminate?

Heidegger addresses only *two* approaches to truth and does not mention various idealistic views stressing internal coherence, or pragmatic theories bringing our sense of truth more intimately into connection with praxis. Since offering this dyad of *orthótes / homoiôsis* and *alētheia* it has been disputed that an earlier Greek sense of *alētheia*, say, in Homer, is not significantly different to *orthótes*. The point was particularly pressed by Paul Friedländer, a

colleague of Heidegger while at Marburg. There is a late concession of the point by Heidegger, but there is no dwelling on the point to the degree one might consider proper, given its crucial place in the architecture of Heidegger's thought (Friedländer 1958, chapter XI).²

Consider here the senses of truth connected with dialectical *self-determination*, such as we can find in Hegel. Hegel suggests there is more than the dyad of the determinate and the indeterminate in drawing attention to the determination of the indeterminate by the negativity of thinking and its orientation to holistic self-determination. Worth noting in Hegel also is a contrast between the "correct" determinacies of propositional truths established by the representational thinking of *Verstand* and the self-completing holism of the truth of *Vernunft*, itself articulated in a dialectical movement from the indeterminate to the determinate to the self-determining (Hegel, 1991).³

Might the matter be put differently, not quite in the line of the Heideggerian dyad or the Hegelian triad? In line with the doubleness of being truthful and receptive to truth as other, is there an *overdeterminacy* at issue, neither indeterminate, determinate or self-determining? Is there a "too muchness" manifest to original astonishment that is not exhausted by determinacies, nor self-determinations, and that is not also simply an indeterminacy? This overdeterminacy, while other, is not simply estranging since it is both intimate and strange; it enables the confidence of thought in whose bond we are held in all our seeking of the true (Desmond 2012, chapter 10). And what place would robbery have in all of this?

I venture that Heidegger's discussion is thought-provoking with respect to the determinacy of a more univocal truth by contrast with the indeterminacy of equivocal truth/untruth. Heidegger has a point in directing us to a sense of being true that is more primordial than propositional truth. In the language I use, we must presuppose our already being in a porosity to the

² Socrates offers a playful yet serious etymology of *alētheia* in the *Cratylus* (421b): he connects it to the divine motion of the universe, because it is a *divine wandering* (*theia ale*). See also the excellent article by Robert J. Dostal. Dostal confirms one's sense of a certain hermeneutical violence in Heidegger's interpretation of Plato's Cave, especially with respect to the going up to the surface of the earth, and into the light of the sun. Rather than the benign violence of the beautiful, as one might put it pace the *Symposium*, rather than the sudden porosity and the *passio essendi* that comes to expression in erotic self-surpassing, one thinks of a wilful *conatus essendi* forcing its way to the top, mirroring a *polemos* with too many traces of *eros turannos* (Dostal 1985).

³ See, for instance, *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences, Part I*, § 24, Zusatz 2; § 25 (Hegel 1991).

true in order for us to be able to determine in this way or that the truth-worthiness of this or that determinate proposition. Is Heidegger's doublet of propositional adequation and *alētheia* analogous to the doublet of the *kataphatic* and the *apophatic*? Perhaps, and yet there is more to be considered: not only what each is but also the relation of *betweening* that joins the two and keeps them apart. Heidegger might be seen to point to an indispensable opening beyond determinable and determinate truths. The nature of this opening is at issue. What passes as *betweening* in this opening is also at issue. My question again here is how appropriate or revealing a word "theft" is to describe that *betweening*?

Significant here in Heidegger's sense of *alētheia* is the stress on the *privative* nature of the unconcealing. *To alēthes* is the unhidden, *das Unverborgene*. *Alētheia* is the privation of hiddenness, *Unverborgenheit*. It is in this particular connection that Heidegger uses the likeness of a robbery (*ein_Raub*) when speaking of the uncovering of truth in *Being and Time*. Heraclitus said nature loves to hide, *phúsis krúptesthai phileî*, φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ, (Diels 1952, Frag. B 123), but there are different forms of hiding, and not all forms of hiding provoke robbery or yield to it. Some hidden things reveal themselves, they do not have to be forced. Some hidden things await on our wooing of them from their secret recesses. Wooing is an appeal of love to the mystery of the beloved, in hope of coaxing the loved one with gentle regard into the open. Wooing and stealing are very different things. There is deep pathos in wooing. Of course, there is the counterfeit wooer, namely, the seducer who wants to have, not love the other. Some hidden things can be stolen but we must break into them to take hold of them in the measure we would have them for ourselves.

If I use the language of an overdeterminacy that is not indeterminate but more than determination and self-determination, there is a too-muchness to the overdeterminacy that can never be stolen. Even if we were to steal some of it, there is always more that is reserved. Reserved, even when it might come out of its hiddenness, as it shows itself, without at all having to be stolen. Here again I use the language of the primal porosity of our being true. The matter cannot be fully described in terms of any oscillation between an indeterminate *alētheia* and a determinate *orthótes*. A privative unconcealing is not quite true enough to the overdeterminacy of the mystery as giving the porosity and enabling our *passio essendi* as itself a *conatus essendi* for the truth. *Passio essendi*: there is receptivity and being endowed with porosity to the true. *Conatus*

essendi: there is seeking for truth and endeavoring to come to know it, to the utmost possible for us.

If there is a doubleness here of *passio* and *conatus*, it is not simply one of the indeterminate and determinate. One might venture that in the *conatus* that is endeavoring to know is to be found a kind of ontological “connaturality” between our being true and the true as other to us. This “connaturality” as a betweening is always overdeterminate, not just indeterminate, and in excess of our determination and self-determination. Elsewhere I have spoken of this as an agapeic surplus rather than the negation of a hiddenness and privative unhiding. Our being true is an agapeic service of the truth (Desmond 1995, chapter 12). The word that least come to mind is “theft.”

On *Verborgenheit* and nature loving to hide, as always Heraclitus provokes thought. The form in which *phusis* loves to hide is not insignificant: *philia* is after all a friendship and in *philia* much of love can hide. We speak of a lover, a friend, stealing into one’s heart, stealing one’s heart. That stealing is not the *Raub* that Heidegger seems to intend.

Hegel loved Heraclitus, as did Nietzsche. Hegel offers a sense of the true ultimately as *self-manifesting*. Complications aside in relation to different possibilities of being self-manifesting, one can diversely see the true as offering itself in such self-manifestation. If nature love to hides, it hides in being out in the open; but being out in the open it gives itself as more primordial than hiding or keeping itself hidden. If the revealing of being involves a concealing, a concealing that being itself conceals, as Heidegger seems to suggest, then the revealing is itself retracted in the revealing and hence is so hard to distinguish from concealing that we seem unable to say anything about what is revealed. Being revealing itself then means knowing nothing. The hiding that hides itself collapses into itself and hence vanishes beyond revealing and concealing. Indeed, how could one say anything at all about that “vanishing beyond.” Unless it shows itself; and then we must again reinvoke a betweening: between mystery and manifestation. Being out in the open: this is a not inappropriate way to talk about manifestation, and yet it is not one hostile to the reserve of reticence that marks the mysterious. The porosity of being offers the between space of communication in which beings come plurivocally to passing. But it is also the threshold of the mystery of the overdeterminacy that gives all determinacy and self-determination.

IV.

It is not only in *Being and Time* that the invocation of robbery in relation to truth is to be found. In *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, a lecture course of 1929/30, there is a revealing section on *logos* and *alētheia* where *alētheia* is said to be “something stolen, something that must be torn from concealment” (Heidegger 1995, 27 – 30). One is put in mind of other thefts: that of Prometheus and the fire, that of Augustine and the pears. How does the thief of truth become the shepherd of Being (*der Hirt des Seins*)? How do we move, or are moved, from the stealing of the withheld to the grace of the bestowing, from the enemy to the good shepherd?

And Heidegger does speak of the need of an enemy, even the need to create the enemy. The importance of *Kampf* and *Polemos* are to the fore. Sometimes an almost Manichean tinge comes to mind in his dyadic style of thinking, a dyadic style inflected by the equivocal sense of being. If *alētheia* always entails robbery, the ontological attunement at issue is not unlike the need of an enemy. *Kampf*, Heidegger says revealingly,

does not mean ἀγών, a competition in which two friendly opponents measure their strengths, but rather the struggle of πόλεμος, war. This means that the struggle is in earnest; the opponent is not a partner but an enemy...An enemy is each and every person who poses an essential threat to the Dasein of the people and its individual members. The enemy does not have to be external, and the external enemy is not even always the more dangerous one. And it can seem as if there were no enemy. Then it is a fundamental requirement to find the enemy, to expose the enemy to the light, or even first to make the enemy, so that this standing against the enemy may happen and so that Dasein may not lose its edge (Heidegger 2010, 73).⁴

The political edge to these remarks is reflective of an ontologizing of Heidegger’s commitments at the time:

The enemy can have attached itself to the innermost roots of the Dasein of a people and can set itself against this people’s own essence and act against it. The struggle is all the fiercer and harder and tougher, for the least of it consists in coming to blows with one another; it is often far more difficult and wearisome to catch sight of the enemy as such, to bring the enemy into the

⁴ Heidegger speaks in a Lecture Course from Winter 1933 – 1934 of the enemy, even of the need to create the enemy (Heidegger 2010, 73).

open, to harbor no illusions about the enemy, to keep oneself ready for attack, to cultivate and intensify a constant readiness and to prepare the attack looking far ahead with the goal of total annihilation (Heidegger 2010, 73).

There is something not noble in the thought. This thought is almost exactly the opposite to the view entailed by the confidence of thought. Truer thinking does not need an enemy, does not arise from an enemy; as agapeic, it is before and beyond enmity. Should not the untrue be the enemy? The untrue, even the false, is not the enemy but sometimes shows the mutilated face of the true.

Heidegger's likening to theft of our unconcealing puts me in mind of a revealing passage in Schopenhauer where he speaks of our access to Kant's thing-in-itself. Heidegger expressed disdain for Schopenhauer, but I see analogies between them. In Schopenhauer there is the perplexity of how we get from self-insistent will to released will-lessness, in Heidegger how we get from *Polemos* to *Gelassenheit*. In Schopenhauer there is a *periagōgē* or *Kehre* in which will as willing itself vehemently reverses into a releasing will-lessness, whether in art with contemplation, or in ethics with compassion, or in religion with a kind of unselfing. Heidegger's *Kehre* seems to turn from the more *conatus*-driven, wilful resoluteness of his earlier thought, understood by him in his polemical sense, even to the need of an enemy, to the released *Denken* of later *Gelassenheit*. We move from theft to being graced, from *Polemos* to *Gelassenheit*, but again our question is: How? How does *Denken* later become *Danken*? If unconcealing once was theft, how does theft become thanking? What does thanking suggest about the secret sources of being and thinking?

Schopenhauer says in relation to the hiddenness of the thing-in-itself that "we ourselves are the thing-in-itself," and further that a "way from within (*ein Weg von innen*) stands open to us..." Notice his terms to describe this way: "It is, so to speak, a subterranean passage (*ein unterirdischer Gang*), a secret alliance (*eine geheime Verbindung*), which, as if by treachery (*Verrath*), places us all at once in the fortress (*die Festung*) that could not be taken by attack from without" (Schopenhauer 1977, 228 and Schopenhauer 1996, vol. 2, 195). In treachery what manifests itself as the true is the false, the false manifests itself as the true. The way to the true thing is by secret subterfuge, by betrayal rather than by fidelity to an original confidence. Treachery puts one in mind of a confidential secret desecrated. One is again minded of the theft of fire by Prometheus, by contrast, say, with the gift of fire that marks Pascal's experience in the night, recounted in his "Memorial," or "the eternally living fire" of Heraclitus (Diels 1952, Frag. 30). Hannah Arendt points out that

Heidegger once, and once only, it seems, refers to Prometheus as “the first philosopher” in his Rectoral Address, “The Self-Assertion of the German University,” at Freiburg in 1933. The thieving titan, she says, is nowhere else mentioned in Heidegger’s work (Arendt 1978, vol. 2, 173).

There is some family resemblance between Schopenhauer’s *Verrath* in his underground access and Heidegger’s robbery wresting *alētheia* from hiddenness into *Unverborgenheit*. Over both the treachery and the robbery hangs the *suspicion of a crime*. Heidegger’s wresting of *alētheia* from hiddenness has hints of Schopenhauer’s revealing language of the fortress (*Festung*). We must break into the secure self-enclosure of the thing-in-itself; it does not open itself; its enclosure provokes our betrayal of its reserve for itself. We ourselves are a kind of underground. If one were to liken our passage underground here to a *periagōgē*, it is the *reverse* of the Platonic turn up to the sun. It is a going down into the cave and deeper than the darkness of the first cave of phenomenal appearances.

Robbery as crime, treachery as transgression, both hint of a taking possession of what is not one’s own. In Schopenhauer, paradoxically, taking possession of what is not one’s own occurs in one’s own self. It is striking how he still cannot avoid speaking of a secret bond (*eine geheime Verbindung*). Does the secret bond confirm something of the confidence of thought, previously noted? Neither robbery nor treachery answers to the agapeic service of the true that is metaxological truthfulness, and yet they cannot be thought through without some reference to it. In both, the true does not reveal itself in a self-manifestation that gives itself for the “beholding from” of the receiver. There is no ontological generosity of the true as originating its self-communication as given into the keeping of intimate mindfulness. There is an invasion of a sanctuary, or a break-in into the primordial. Robbery too is a breaking into the otherwise self-enclosed. It is not a waiting reverently for what seems closed on itself to open itself up. Wresting something secret out of the intimate, theft is the inversion of gift. Being is not a being given by the intimate origin to our endowed porosity and patience to what gives itself. Theft is not the invitation to mindfulness of its gift.

The language I have just used is closer to the way the later Heidegger wants to speak, but again how he gets from theft to gift remains enclosed in enigma. If I am not mistaken, in both the earlier and later Heidegger there is an equiprimordiality of hiding and revealing which yet tilts asymmetrically

towards a more primal hiddenness.⁵ One recalls also the idealist claim after Kant that no given gives itself purely if not mediated by the more active interventions of transcendental subjectivity, and its descendants. In Hegel thinking as negativity does its work in our relation to what is given and this in effect means there is no givenness which is outside the scope of mediating thought. The correlative in Heidegger might be connected to the happening of unhidden: *Es gibt Sein*, and yet it turns out that there is no unhiddenness of truth without us. Even if being turns to us, there is no truth of being if we do not turn to it. The later Heidegger seems still haunted by the inheritance of his earlier view that there is no truth without Dasein.

The overdeterminate sense of the being given of being, in its coming to be, is there in the porosity of being and hence is not to be defined in terms of the privative or the negative.

Hegelian negativity is not quite theft but it is not gentle with gift. Any givenness must be taken and assimilated to thinking via the energy of negativity. Letting be is not its nature. I grant there is a deep tension in Hegel between negativity and (at his best) a granting of a kind of letting be, not entirely unlike a tension in Heidegger, say, between being given and projecting (Desmond 2003, 254 – 257). Dialectic in Hegelian and post-Hegelian form is shaped by the dyad of determination and indeterminacy, and in Hegel's own case, by the transformation via negation of indeterminacy into self-determining thinking. I take Heidegger's doublet of the hidden and the unhidden to set a course against the apotheosis of self-determining thinking. Yet dyadic moves seem to be at work in his thinking and give it shape. One might wonder about the sufficiency of the dyad of the determinate and the indeterminate, allowing movement back and forth between them, inviting also a "deconstruction" of the determinate and a regress to the indeterminate as a more primal origin. If this gets at something in Heidegger, it is also *without* dialectic as unfolding the energy of negativity and mediating the space between hiddenness and manifestation.

Heidegger can gesture towards a space of betweening in the middle between indeterminacy and determinacy. This between space cannot be

⁵ One might be tempted here to think of a kind of *Deus absconditus*, to speak theologically, of the hyperbolic God who dwells in light inaccessible. One could not say the same for nature naturing, or nature natured. In another sense, though, this hyperbolic God is nothing but self-revealing, even granting the asymmetrical transcendence of the divine. This God is not the Heideggerian origin, this self-retracting source that in being turned out of itself is turned back in to itself.

univocally determined or dialectically self-determined. At the same time, one does not find a wording of the between in the systematic manner I have proposed and developed in metaxological terms. Heidegger's between(ing) is not univocal or dialectical but remains equivocal (Desmond 1995 and Desmond 2003, chapter 7). Very broadly, we sense something more like the reiterated play of univocal determination and equivocal indetermination, coupled with a repeated ground note of the equivocality of the self-concealing origin, even should the origin communicate something destined of itself in the half-light of the unhidden. There is not enough of what I would see as the paradoxical doubleness of the porosity of being. If this porosity is to be thought as indeterminate at all, this must be given the more affirmative name of the overdeterminate: the always more that, when we try to determine or self-determine it, passes beyond us, before us, as if almost nothing, and not ourselves. Full and empty, it manifests the kind of saturated equivocality relative to which the metaxological calls for finesse. Heraclitus – differently taken to heart by Heidegger, as indeed by Hegel and Nietzsche – comes to mind when he says: “ὁ θεὸς ἡμέρη εὐφρόνη, χειμῶν θέρος, πόλεμος εἰρήνη, κόρος λιμός; God is day night, winter summer, war peace, satiety famine” (Diels 1952, Frag. 67).⁶ This god of Heraclitus, unlike Hermes, is not the god of thieves.

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⁶ On how I differently see Heraclitus in the light of “saturated equivocality,” as I call it, see “Flux-gibberish: For and Against Heraclitus,” in *The Voiding of Being*, chapter 8.

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