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Ψυχή and Bewegtheit: soul as movement in early heideggerian interpretation of Aristotle

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Abstract:

In his early thought, Heidegger reads Aristotle and gets from him an important idea of moods (*Stimmungen*). At first he denounces the metaphysical interpretation of ψυχή as ουσία, which leads to think that moods are something to remove. Heidegger claims that soul is instead a movement-towards: human being is moved by his πάθη. Motility is not just a physical problem but an anthropological element, given by moods. At the beginning of each movement there is a στέρησις, a lack: soul's limit, human finitude. Movement is the real essence of facticity: *Stimmungen* and *Bewegtheit* are almost the same.

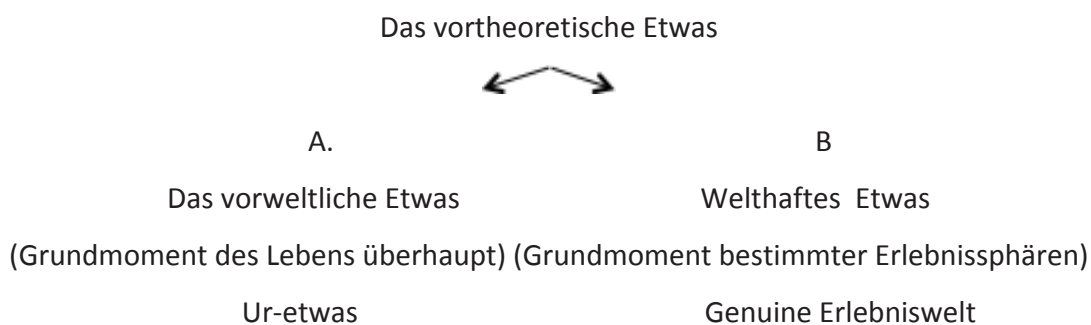
Key-Words: Moods; Movement; Pathos; Aristotle; Soul.

1. Heidegger and moods: the pathical element of existence

At the origin of Heidegger's thought an interesting question can be found, not only in order to understand Heidegger himself, but to understand our personal being-in-the-world. What are moods? Which is the role of affectivity, of the pathical moment, in our existence? We have to understand if our being subject of affections and emotions is an element of closure and limit or if it is maybe the sign of our relation to Being, as

something that overflows and characterizes our humanity and freedom in a positive way. It seems to us that these “pre-logical” moments may hide the possibility of a real relation with things and with other human beings.

Before giving an answer to these questions, we should introduce the problem of emotions in Heidegger’s early thought and we must understand the roots of the world that in *Being and time* expresses the affective level of human experience – *Befindlichkeit*. The structure of the Dasein in *Being and time* is constituted by three existential elements: *Befindlichkeit*, *Verstehen* and *Rede*. The first is the most important in order to understand what “to be situated” in the world means, and to gain a deeper insight we must recognise that this *Befindlichkeit* is not an issue raised in 1927 but finds its origin in Heidegger’s early thought. The question, inherited by phenomenology, about the intentionality of conscience, finds its place in the first lectures in Freiburg in opposition to Husserl’s path. Heidegger presents a model of experience which is not intentional, but based on the pre-worldly. We can clearly see it in the course of 1919, *Die Idee der Philosophie und das Weltanschauungsproblem* (that will become famous as *Kriegsnot Semester*), where he first claims something that will give shape to all his future thinking-path: we should break the supremacy of the theoretical¹. In this lectures we also find the tool for this demolition: it is the first and still uncertain discovery of what is here called *vorweltlich*, which what will later become, in *Being and time*, *Befindlichkeit*. At the end of one lesson, Heidegger traces on the board a framework that represents the stratification of our cognitive process:



We can clearly understand that before the theoretical we find two moments, not only one (as claimed for example by Husserl, with the idea of *Lebenswelt*). There is not only the worldly pre-theoretical (B), but also a more original level, thanks to which we can reach the *Ur-etwas*: that which makes every experience possible. This level is exactly what we mean by *pathical*, and the aim of Heidegger’s philosophy is tear down the primacy of the theoretical, always present in the story of Western philosophy. We can find a confirmation that this level is the *pathical* one not only on the basis of the examples present in the lecture² but also thanks to another lecture. In the analysis of Paul’s

1. M. HEIDEGGER, *Die Idee der Philosophie und das Weltanschauungsproblem*, in *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie*, GA Bd. 56/57, hrsg. B. Heimbüchel, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1987.

2. An important example: the sun rising in Thebe in the morning of the victory compared to the sun for

letters and with Augustine's texts, we came across expressions such as «fundamental fact (*Grundlegende*)», «fundamental experience (*Grunderfahrung*)», always relating to moments of factual life such as anguish, joy, pain³. As an example, Heidegger defines the love of God for men as “the fundamental fact (*das Grundlegende*)”, and not as a theoretische *Erkenntnis*. The first moment, the one that ontologically comes before knowledge, is our understanding of ‘being called’, preceded by something else (in this case, divine love), and this being-preceded always shows up through moods like anguish (*Bedrängnis*), pain (*Leiden*), uncertainty (*Unsicherheit*), agitation (*Unruhe*) and even *Angst*. That is why we should consider the *Befindlichkeit* not as a neutral “being-in-a-situation” but as the pre-theoretical affective tuning.

The term *Befindlichkeit* itself is full of meaning: *sich befinden* means to feel oneself in a certain mood, not only our being-here; the fact then that in the above quoted text about Augustine it is used as a translation of *affectio/affectiones* confirms that what Heidegger means with this word is clearly oriented towards the affective, pathological aspect of existence.

After this short introduction on *Befindlichkeit*, we can now deal with the questions that began our study: which role do affections have in our every day life? Are they something that obstructs our being ourselves or a constitutional moment of our psyche? In order to find an answer to these questions, Heidegger finds an interesting interlocutor, an author that is often present in his lectures, especially in his first period: Aristotle. Heidegger often denounces the metaphysical interpretation of Aristotle's thought, which creates a dualistic vision of the human being and his being-in-the-world; the origin of this misunderstanding is, in his opinion, the classical and metaphysical interpretation of *ψυχή* as *ουσία*, as a permanent essence for which movement is something «added» at a later time, something to keep under control. The clearest examples of this interpretation are emotions and mood: in a static vision of soul as substance, they are something negative, temporary movements with a minimal ontological meaning and no metaphysical meaning. This idea of *ψυχή* can be very dangerous: it may bring us to believe that events, traumas and emotions are something to remove from a «normal» life, something that may damage us. Moods, emotions and feelings should then be diminished and possibly removed.

Heidegger's interpretation of Aristotelian *ψυχή* brings us instead to a genuine vision of the human being, where emotions and traumas can be helpful in order to shape a personality. Our facticity and limit, i.e. our temporality, is not only the primary element of our being, but also the element towards which it may be possible to establish a real

an astronomer (Ibidem, p. 74) or the one of the happiness when, in the morning, we enter in a room full of sunlight (Ibidem, p. 46).

3. M. HEIDEGGER, *Einleitung in die Phänomenologie der Religion, in Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens*, GA Bd. 60, hrsg. M. Jung - T. Regehly - C. Strube, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

relationship with our Self and, also, it is the opening-element towards transcendence. I will try to outline this interpretation through some works where Heidegger reads Aristotle, using the *Stimmungen* as a tool to get into his thought – *Stimmungen*, moods, i.e. the affective moment of our existence.

2. Heidegger's phenomenological reading of Aristotle: πάθος and substance

The first moment is the course that Heidegger takes in Freiburg during the summer semester of 1924, *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*⁴. The subject is Aristotelian *Rhetoric* and thanks to a deep analysis, Heidegger describes the πάθος as the main element of the relationship between the rhetorician and the listener.

Diese πάθη, Affekte, sind nicht Zustände des Seelischen, es handelt sich um eine *Befindlichkeit* des Lebenden in seiner Welt, in der Weise, wie er gestellt ist zu etwas, wie er eine Sache sich angehen lässt⁵.

That which in rhetoric speech has to be raised is not a momentary emotion of the soul but the *Befindlichkeit des Lebenden in seiner Welt*: affections are not only fleeting and superficial moods – what is here in question is the world itself, in a relationship that is not theoretical but pathical. Heidegger gives us then a clear description of the soul: «*Things (γενόμενον) that are found in the soul are of three kinds - passions (πάθη), faculties (δύναμις) and states of character (εξίς)*»⁶.

Heidegger describes the πάθος as a *γενόμενον* of human soul. *γενόμενον* is «what happens to the being», πάθος is then «*das, was in der Seele wird*»⁷. In this sense, affections and emotions are not something secondary that strikes a soul that already exists as a substance, but something that happens inside the soul, an event that shapes its essence. The entire Heideggerian reading of Aristotelian anthropology will be affected by this starting point, the definition of πάθος as a way of a becoming (*Weise des Werdens*) of the soul – Heidegger will even claim that πάθος determines our being-in-the-world in a fundamental way⁸. If soul determines who we are, πάθος determines our very being ourselves: πάθος is therefore a *Seinsbegriff*⁹. If the soul is an alterable being, we can describe it as a non-static being also from a kinetic point of view: πάθος

4. M. Heidegger, *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*, GA Bd 18, hrsg. von M. Michalski, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 2002.

5. *Ibidem*, p. 122.

6. Aristotle, *Nicomachean ethics*, II, 5, 1105b19-21.

7. «Πάθος gehört also zu dem, was in der Seele wird». *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*, p. 168.

8. «Wichtig ist das Mitgegebenheit der πάθη als γινόμενα, Weisen des Seins selbst, sofern wir leben, Weisen des Werdens, betreffend das Sein-in-einer-Welt»; «...wie das πάθος Bezeichnete das Sein-in-der-Welt in einem fundamentalen Sinne bestimmt». *Ibidem*, p. 169.

9. «Schon dadurch ist πάθος als ein Seinsbegriff angezeigt, weil das πασχειν in der Gegenüberstellung zum ποιειν ein Grundmoment darstellt für die Analyse der κινήσις, des Seins im Sinne des Bewegtheits». *Ibidem*, p. 172.

is then a fundamental concept in the analysis of κίνησις, of being as *Bewegtsein*, being-in-movement.

Going on in our reading, we find the comment to a passage of the *Metaphysic* where the four meanings of πάθος are listed. The first (attribute, quality) specifies the vulnerability of a being, the fact that something may happen to it (passieren) and it is ignored by Heidegger. This is very important: to refuse the idea of attribute hides implicitly the refusal of the idea of substantia, of a permanent 'layer' – here we can see the difference between Heidegger's interpretation and the classic one. The second meaning (changing of a characteristic) specifies the possibility of being struck by something external and change (*umschlagenden Mit-einem-Geschehen*). The third one (painful change) is said painful only because someone feels it as such, because someone's *Stimmung* is affected. This third meaning is the one related to our corporality: we feel something because of our being corporal. At last, πάθος indicate that something strikes one to a large extent (βλαβεραι αλλοιώσεις και κινήσεις): Heidegger leaves the idea of painful affection aside and generalizes it as «*something which strikes me*»¹⁰.

We can see that Heidegger underlines, in every one of these meanings, the aspect of movement. Πάθος is then something related with the living being (*das Seins des Lebenden*), particularly with his «*being disposed in a certain way (Je-und-je-sich-befinden)*». The πάθος always strikes someone (*schlägt einen ein*) and moves one, putting one in a certain disposition (*Befindlichkeit*). Here it is where the word that will become one of the three elements of the existential structure in *Being and Time* appears for the first time. Here it is pointed out that πάθος is not something isolated, a qualitative mutation inside existence — rather it determines the subject in his being-disposed in the world, within a context, and every affection shapes this disposition in each and every moment. Therefore we could say that every event, every trauma, every affection shapes the soul. The πάθος is not an isolated moment of our cognitive experience, a qualitative mutation in our existence, but something that can deeply change our active disposition in the world.

Die Art und Weise des Aus-der-Fassung-Kommens, Aus-der-Fassung-gebracht-Werdens ist dem Sinn nach so, dass sie wieder gefasst werden kann: Ich kann mich wieder fassen, ich bin einen bestimmten Moment, in einer Gefahr, im Moment des Schreckens, in Fassung. Ich kann die durch den Schrecken gekennzeichnete Befindlichkeit beziehen auf ein mögliches Gefasstsein dafür. So hat also πάθος in sich selbst schon den Bezug auf εξις.¹¹

This disposition, being disposed in a certain way (*Je-und-je-sich-Befinden*), is nothing

10. «*Was mir passiert, was mir zuleide geschieht. Wir haben dafür einen entsprechenden Ausdruck: Das und das ist ein Schlag für mich*». *Ibidem*, p. 195.

11. *Ibidem*, p. 171.

else but the constitution of the ψυχή, its being in the world not as a static substance but as a vital essence shaped by that what we live. Heideggerian interpretation leads to a non-dualistic vision of Aristotle's thought – the ψυχή is then considered as the primary εντελέχεια of man. It is then clear that for Heidegger the affective moment is not a step to overlook in order to establish a real relationship with the world but it is the beginning of this relationship itself. Only from this being-disposed can relations be established, from the affective moment that opens the man up and disposes him in a certain attitude. Another important sign of the collapse of every dualism on emotions is the third meaning of πάθος in Aristotle: the life of the body with his feelings and passions. Heidegger reads the *De Anima*: «*It seems that all the affections (πάθη) of the soul happen along with the body (εἶναι μετὰ σώματος)*»¹². Heidegger recognizes that every affection is affection of a body. Again, he looks at a non-dualistic Aristotle: passions and body are inseparable, there is no inert matter but *Leiblichkeit*: every affection is then an entire modification of human life, of the εντελέχεια that makes it up and that goes always together with his being-a-body (*leibmäßig*). We have to leave every kind of dualism apart: Heidegger in this interpretation of Aristotle sets himself before every division between material and non-material (division that will anyway be latent in his thought until the creation of the concept, in his *Denkweg*, that will perfectly express this kind of unity – *Stimmung*). But the πάθη are now described as originally united phenomena, unity of which is given by the being of man itself¹³.

The pathical moment allows then an openness, a movement-towards, because it disposes the Dasein in a certain way. This is the real meaning of *Befindlichkeit*, with a huge debt towards Aristotle: being passively struck means to find ourselves disposed in a certain way, being affectively in-tune to and remain in this 'being tuned in the world'. We are always disposed, always affectively tuned – we move from one mood to the other, from an affection to another, but we cannot avoid them. But this limit, our being always tuned, is not a negative limit, but first and foremost our greatest resource: our moods open us, they are not moments to be overlooked but rather situations that dispose us in towards a certain openness, in a movement.

One important element to underline is that for Heidegger this pathical aspect of our existence is one capable of opening the Dasein toward the ethical moment. If we take the example of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the rhetorician has to persuade the listener acting on his διάθεσις, his passive disposition. For Heidegger, as we said, every mood is directed towards the outside, towards the definition of the self and of the world – and this allows also the possibility of decision. In Heidegger's interpretation, the εξίς (active disposition) is a particular πάθος in which the moment of concentration

12. *Ibidem*, p. 203, reading Aristotle, *De Anima* A.1, 403a16.

13. «*Die ursprüngliche Einheit des Phänomens der πάθη liegt im Sein des Menschen als solchen*». *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*, p. 177.

prevails over the tendency of dispersion; it is the «rechte Sichbefinden», something like a harmonious situation made possible also by the exercise of the φρόνησις, that Heidegger in this text translate with *Umsicht*. It is interesting to notice that, as often reminded by Gadamer, Heidegger was used to translate φρόνησις with *Gewissen*, conscience¹⁴. If we consider *Being and time*, where conscience is the crucial place of the moment of decision, and we compare it to what was said above about the ‘right *Befindlichkeit*’ as the real moment of decision (*Augenblick*), we can clearly observe how the place of conscience is deeply linked to *Befindlichkeit*, even more, to emotions and the pathical moment. It seems to us that the moment of concentration, of decision, is made possible by the direction given by that sphere of human existence which man cannot control, dominate or choose. Something comes before, something which we cannot erase and which allows us to disperse or to concentrate, to choose ourselves. The decision to take can emerge only via something that cannot be objectified. The impossibility to objectify the original element of pleasure and pain puts both in the *Grund* of our existence (that is why Heidegger will call them *Grundbefindlichkeit*). The “how” of our life (the εἶς, as Aristotle would say) can arise only through that, which we cannot possess. Before any meaning that can be given to the world, before the theoretical and scientific moment, before the division ‘rational/irrational’, these *Grundbefindlichkeit* show a path which open to the definition of the *Wie* of the human existence, of meaning. An important direction of life is already hidden within moods, and already in virtue of moods we can call ourselves ‘human’. The possibility, for the *Dasein*, to be fully himself, to stay in his *Da* and to guard it is already contained in the *Befindlichkeit* itself.

3. Soul as movement

We have to take into consideration another element in order to fully understand Heidegger’s interpretation of Aristotelian anthropology. In the lectures of 1924 the focus is on the affective aspect, and reputedly the most important aspect of Aristotle, the λόγος, may seem to be have been forgotten. It would be an error to think that Heidegger looks at the human ψυχή as subject to moods and without rationality because of this interest in *Befindlichkeit*. We must then comprehend which is the role of λόγος in the definition of ψυχή.

The human *Wesenbestimmung* is the λόγος, clearly as κατηγορεῖν but also as
 14. An important example is Heidegger’s course of 1924 – 1925 on the Sophists, to which are referred this lines: «*Erstmals wurde mir davon etwas bewußt, als ich Heidegger 1923 – noch in Freiburg – kennenlernte und an seinem Seminar über die Nikomachische Ethik des Aristoteles teilnahm. Wir studierten die Analyse der φρόνησις. Heidegger zeigte uns am Arisoteles-Text, dass alle Techne eine innere Grenze besitze: ihr Wissen sei kein volles Entbergen, weil das Werk, das sie zu erstellen verstege, in das Ungewisse eines unverfügbar Gebrauchs entlassen werde. Und nun stellate er den Unterschied zur Diskussion, der all solches Wissen, insbesondere auch die bloße δόξα, von der φρόνησις schied (1140 b 29). Als wir an diesem Satz unsicher und ganz in die griechischen Begriffe verfremdet heruminterpretierten, erklärte er brüsk “Das ist das Gewissen!”*». H.-G. Gadamer, *Marburger Theologie*, pp. 199- 200, in H.-G. Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 3, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen 1987.

απόφαινησται: λόγος doesn't only mean «what» — it also means εσχατον, goal, the teleological direction. Λόγος, and not only ψυχή, has to be understood as something not already ontologically formed, but especially in its teleological aspect. Ουσία is a being; every being, as a being, is an essence, with two aspects: υλη and ειδος. The form defines the limit of the substance and shapes in this way its singularity. υλη represents, then, the infinite possibilities of the substance, which are limited by the form. Substance (i.e. soul) is then the movable, mobile and living determination, the possibility of taking shape and accepting a fulfilment of this shape. This «taking shape» is nothing but the victory of act on potency, preserving the ontological meaning of εχειν: it is εντελέχεια. Substance, for Heidegger, isn't something static and definitive but the vital act, the incessant active determination of one possibility. In a living being it is the first εντελέχεια, the coming to life itself. This means that we have to look at the soul not only as a substance but also as the origin of movement and, most of all, as τέλος, as εσχατον. It is the soul as εντελέχεια that makes each human being a unity because of its movement toward something.

That is why the soul opens up the world, and every organ of living being works in order to make this openness possible. In Aristotle there is no contempt of the senses, because the soul would have, without them, no possibility to define its τέλος, and it is clear that the soul, in every level of development, is directed outside itself and towards the world. The limit makes possible the movement-toward, the openness to the world given by the πάθος of the ψυχή. It is clear therefore that the ψυχή is not to be considered as something concluded but, instead, as something characterised by temporality. This means that affections and moods are the real openness and element of incessant definition, of movement. Man itself is, therefore, movement:

Das in Bewegung Seiende wurde bestimmt als Gegenwärtigkeit des Seienden in seinem Seinkönnen. κίνησις macht also das Da aus des in Bewegung Seienden, des Bewegten. Bewegtes ist aber (vgl. pros ti) Sein im Bezug zu Bewegedem, im Mitdasein eines κινουιν bzw. κινετικόν. Wie ist das Da dieses mit dem in Bewegung Seienden als Bewegtem Mitdaseienden zu bestimmen?¹⁵.

Movement is a fundamental element in order to understand the being of life as a self-fulfilment of the Self and the being of the beings as presence. The ψυχή is an uninterrupted movement, as showed by moods where we always find ourselves. We can here begin to understand Heidegger's procedure: what Aristotle would have ascribed to nature, to the world of physics (whose main object is the being-in-movement), is for Heidegger also a characteristic of the human world, it is a fundamental aspect of the Self, of life as facticity.

¹⁵. *Ibidem*, p. 392.

We can now take another step that allows to fully understand the meaning of soul as movement. We have to define the ψυχή not more only via negationis, knowing that it is not static substance, and instead move to discover the real meaning of soul as movement. In order to do this we have to look at the programmatic text, in which Heidegger summarises his interest toward Aristotle. In Autumn 1922 Heidegger sends his candidacy for a place as extra-ordinary professor at the Philosophy Faculty of Marburg and Göttingen. The deans of the two universities, Paul Natorp and Georg Misch, asked Heidegger's professor Edmund Husserl for a summary of the academic activities of his pupil – to whom Husserl asks in turn for a short text about his own research due to the poor amount of publications. That is the origin of *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation*, better known as *Natorp Bericht*¹⁶. Part of this text will reappear in the lectures on Aristotle of 1924 (which we analysed), but lots of aspects will be forgotten or left aside by Heidegger. It is interesting to show how the subject of this text may give us an important key in order to understand the ψυχή and his relation with temporality. This is clearly visible in a sentence present in the text: «*Die philosophische Forschung ist der explizite Vollzug einer Grundbewegtheit des faktischen Lebens und hält sich ständig innerhalb desselben*»¹⁷.

Life of facticity (*faktischen Leben*) is the affective level of existence, the level tuned by the *Stimmungen*, which in *Being and time* is the level of *Befindlichkeit*. This is the fundamental level of human ψυχή, the one that shapes it, the one of the events that every day open it up towards existence and towards that relation with things, relation that Heidegger calls *Umgang* or, even better, *Sorge*. This ψυχή, claims Heidegger, is characterised by a fundamental motility (*Grundbewegtheit*) that philosophy has to investigate. Philosophy (and in a certain way also psychiatry) has to be the fulfilment of life's tendency to explain itself, a natural and innate tendency. This is also the explanation of the overused quotation of 1924 where Heidegger speaks about the *Da* of *Dasein* as a κίνησις – human being is first of all motility, *Bewegtheit*. His being is unceasing openness, movement-toward – not only the movement of philosophical research but also and especially of our everyday dwelling (*wohnen*) the world and relationships, a dwelling that is not already given and built, a sense that is not given by someone else but that, precisely because soul is *Bewegtheit*, and therefore has to be written and chosen step by step.

16. This work has three editions. The first one, based on the text sent to Göttingen, published in 1989: *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation*, hrsg. von H.-U. Lesung, Dilthey Jahrbuch, 6 (1989), pp 237-69. The second is based on Heidegger's typewritten document : *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Ausarbeitung für die Marburger und die Göttinger Philosophische Fakultät (1922)*, hrsg. von V. G. Neumann, Reclam, Stuttgart 2003. The third one appears in the *Gesamtausgabe*, and it contains a complete revision of sources and adds important elements in the notes: *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation). Ausarbeitung für die Marburger und die Göttinger Philosophische Fakultät (Herbst 1922)*, in M. Heidegger, *Phänomenologische Interpretationen ausgewählter Abhandlungen des Aristoteles zur Ontologie und Logik*, GA Bd. 62, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 2005, pp. 341-419.

17. *Ibidem*, p. 351.

If the movement (*Bewegung*) is the worldly characteristic of being, motility (*Bewegtheit*) is its ontological and existential definition. Motility is therefore not only a worldly problem, but also a real *Grundprinzip*, ontological structure of ψυχή. And if the human being is always affectively connoted (because of moods), he is in-movement-towards. The Dasein is movement-towards because his ουσία is not a static substance which suffers something (but that would be, in se, already perfect and concluded once created); at its root there is a radical motility, a movement-towards. Once again Heidegger finds in Aristotle the answers to the question raised by Husserl, once again he destroys the traditional interpretation that gives a fundamental value to the Aristotelian doctrine of substance and he underlines again human finitude as fundamental. Human life is then made up of a *Grundbewegtheit*, a dealing with (*Umgang*) the world that brings him, as a being-in-movement, to create. The soul is then not only passively connoted but in se active, tendency-towards. If the Dasein is opened to the world by his affective connotation, and if this movement is the main characteristic of facticity, it is clear that we need to examine the *Grundbewegtheit* on an ontological and anthropological level, and not only on a physical one. *Grundbewegtheit* is the bridge between physics and anthropology, the answer to the question about the relation between that which the ψυχή endures and its activity, between the *Stimmungen* that strike it and the freedom that it shows in every occasion.

4. Motility in the Physic: an anthropological concept

In order to get to the final step of our inquiry into the ψυχή as movement, we have to then move towards the analysis of this motility, and in order to do this we have to look at the short but efficient explanation that Heidegger unfolds, in the *Natorp Bericht*, on Aristotelian *Physic*, that he claims to be «*das Grundbuch der abendländischen Philosophie*»¹⁸. Why give such an importance to the *Physic*? What pushes Heidegger to that point? The answer is easy: phenomenology, in which he lives. Heidegger is at the search, in the first '20, of the «*Sachen selbst*», not of absolute and pure principles but of a way that has to be found through things and towards things. This is the reason of his interest in Aristotle, who considered being in its being-moved. The young Heidegger is looking for the cause of years of missing phenomenological vision, the cause of the metaphysical interpretation of Being that distanced philosophy from the «*Sachen selbst*». In the *Physic*, Heidegger finds the tool to break the system, to make clear that Aristotle himself has to be read and understood as a philosopher of life more than of principles and causes: the *Physic* is read by Heidegger as an essay about life, about living and being of man. The main topic of the essay is showed in Heidegger's accurate words: «*das zentrale Phänomen, dessen Explikation Thema der Physik wird,*

18. M. Heidegger, Vom Wesen und Begriff der Φυσικ. Aristoteles, Physik B, 1 (1939), in Wegmarken, GA Bd 9, hrsg. von F.-W. von Herrmann, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1967, p. 312.

ist das Seiende im Wie seines Bewegtseins»¹⁹.

Here Aristotle discusses life in terms of movement, and Heidegger reads him precisely because of this aspect: as a phenomenologist in search of ontology. For Heidegger, and this is very important for us, the description of beings' motility in the *Physic* is not only about non-living things or about the worldly level. The interest for the *Physic* is actually an anthropological one: he studies the movement of beings in order to understand facticity, i.e. the relation between temporality and Dasein. That's why we, interested in the ψυχή, are pushed to the problem of motility in the pages of the *Physic*. The being of Dasein is movement of life, a non-closed movement:

Der Seinscharakter der ἐξις und damit der ἀρετή, das heißt: die ontologische Struktur des Menschseins, wird aus der Ontologie des Seienden im Wie einer bestimmten Bewegtheit und der ontologischen Radikalisierung der Idee dieser Bewegtheit verständlich²⁰.

In the *Physic* Aristotle claims that the central aspect of beings is their being moved, their «*Aussein auf etwas*»; this characteristic is what Heidegger calls Vorhabe, preliminary condition: it is the motility of «*factual*» life that has intentionality. This ontological pre-possession is clearly defined by Aristotle, claims Heidegger: his researches are "*Forschungen, deren Gegenstand erfahren und vermeint ist im Charakter des Bewegtsein, in dessen was im vorhinein mitgegeben ist so etwas wie Bewegung*"²¹.

That's why for Heidegger, and for us as well, it is very important to consider the *Physic*: here being, or better, the Da of the Dasein, has as fundamental characteristic the fact of being moved and, as a consequence, the possibility to produce and to move itself. It is moved because he moves towards something, as opened-up, and for this reason the *Physic* for Heidegger is not an essay about philosophy of nature but of a real ontology of facticity – because the topic is the first characteristic of being, its moving-towards.

The *Physic* may be an ontology of becoming, of human temporality, because for Aristotle that which is only a part of Being is instead for Heidegger the whole being as becoming, facticity and limit, *Bewegtheit des faktischen Leben*: life. This lets us see movement as the last horizon and main characteristic of Being itself, as suggested also by the fact that in the first typewritten document sent to Misch Heidegger says his research is «about the ἀρχή» but, in the final document, he writes «*research on the κίνησις*»²².

Not only therefore, natural being, but the constitution of the Self, of Dasein's life. And 19. *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation)*, p. 371. On this point, we should also remember the provocation present in these pages about the concept of substance, that becomes very clear after our analysis of the 1924' text: «*Auch da, wo grundsätzlich die Gegenstände nicht mehr als 'Substanzen' im rohen Sinne angesprochen werden (wovon übrigens Aristoteles weiter entfernt war, als gemeinhin gelehrt wird)*...». *Ibidem*, p. 367.

20. *Ibidem*, p. 386.

21. *Ibidem*, p. 374.

22. *Ibidem*, p. 391.

it is in fact from the analysis of the Dasein that Heidegger once again sets off.

"*In der eigenen Faktizität ist als wirksam da das Wie, in dem schon die 'alten Physiker' die 'Natur' gesehen, angesprochen und besprochen haben*"²³. Heidegger deeply considers the critiques that Aristotle holds towards the Ancients and underlines that they are built on the «*entscheidenden Grunderfahrung: wir setzen von vornherein an, esibt Seiendes in Bewegung*»²⁴.

The last step that we have to take is taken by Heidegger in a partially traditional way: the movement of the ψυχή, movement-towards, is something like a lacking, an imperfection (στέρησις). But Heidegger is here revolutionary, because he claims that the lacking, the becoming and the possibility are the fundamental categories of Aristotelian ontology. In Heidegger's interpretation, στέρησις emerges from a very particular way of thinking of movement, which considers movement as a fundamental characteristic of our world of temporality and cannot be addressed to the perfect sphere of Being. If for Aristotle this is negative because it is something missing, for Heidegger it is the central heart and definition of the first characteristic of being: his limit.

In order to understand the value of στέρησις, we look shortly at another text: *Vom Wesen und Begriff der Φύσις. Aristoteles, Physik B, 1* (1939)²⁵. Here motility is defined as something that is not already at its end, but instead it is something to produce, to bring to Anwesenheit. In this text what was already in the Natorp Bericht is fully explained: the concept of ἐνέργεια as made of lacking (στέρησις) and act (εντελέχεια), and it is also said that «*in der στέρησις verhüllt sich das Wesen der φύσις*»²⁶. The movement, moving from possibility to act, is not something to be defined but to be described (it is original, i.e. not definable). Heidegger follows the Aristotelian description of the structure of movement: the act doesn't realize the potency by making the potency turning into act — instead, the actuality of potency consists in staying (Halten) in his character of potency.

Heidegger can claim this because he follows Aristotle who always makes examples of a productive movement (the building of a house, the shaping of a statue) and for Heidegger this means that movement is always caused by a lacking. This στέρησις is always at the beginning of the process, the form that will be at the end is a form that is missing at the beginning. Being is then, for Heidegger, not the «being-product», the substance (as the Greeks affirmed, in the metaphysical interpretation), but motility itself (*Bewegtheit*), the process of becoming itself. Heidegger changes here the entire list of the meanings of being present in tradition. For Heidegger, at first we

23. *Ibidem*, p. 392.

24. *Idem*

25. M. Heidegger, *Vom Wesen und Begriff der Φύσις. Aristoteles, Physik B, 1* (1939), in *Wegmarken*, GA Bd 9, hrsg. von F.-W. von Herrmann, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1967.

26. *Ibidem*, p. 297.

find categories, then true/false, then act/potency and at last accident. Heidegger puts instead the movement as the central one.

Writing about movement, Heidegger finds also another (even bigger) topic, the one of active and passive potency – and we are pushed to think about it with him. In which position is the ψυχή? If we showed that ψυχή is *Bewegtheit*, is it because it is moved or because it can move something else? Heidegger's reception of this ambiguity is clear if we think about moods and affections: in the subject who lives an affection, the openness to endure it and the activity that presents itself as an answer are not two separate but on the contrary deeply united moments, there is no cause-effect relationship but radical cohesion. For Heidegger, actually, causality works only inside movement, and not vice-versa. He uproots causality from the metaphysical soil and puts it in the metaphysical soil of becoming, of physics – to the point that Physics itself becomes an ontology, a real 'archeology', science of the origin (ἀρχή). With regards to movement, Aristotle says that movement is in what is moved («in something else/different», ἄλλο, from what can move), because an act of what is moved by moving being. There is then only one act of two separate things, motor and that which is moved; the movement is then in «other», remaining anyway divided, as a unique reality to which we can refer different notions. The solution is then complicated: in this ἄλλο is both the unity and the separation of the act. Something is in potency both because it has the potency of enduring and because it is the ἄλλο in which is found the active potency: in the ἄλλο the potency of enduring and of movement touch each other and are a unique potency.

Potency and activity are the elements that characterize the ψυχή: we need therefore to understand whether strikes the soul is also determining it or if the ψυχή has in itself an element of newness, of tendency-towards that may characterize it without limiting it to what it endures. We need to understand, therefore, if that which the ψυχή endures is, at last, a limit or maybe a resource. The answer, as we saw, is precisely *Bewegtheit*: it works as radical unity in the entirety of Heideggerian thought about the ψυχή. Just like being is seen for Heidegger as an orientated motility, an unstable and restless dynamic, the *Stimmungen* that shape the ψυχή are fundamental elements that already have the possibility to give an orientation even before the theoretical moment.

What we said until now finds its heart in Heidegger's idea of destroying the classic Aristotelian ontology and to point towards the ontology of motility as the real and original sense of Being, and the *Bewegtheit* as constitutive element of reality and of the human being, capable of making every πράξις possible. That's why Heidegger will in a course of 1931 translate δύναμις with Kraft, strength: the unity of being that goes beyond every multiplicity is the character of Kraft that every being has. This seems to Heidegger to avoid that apparent detraction of the world and of the becoming that

may be found in classic interpretations of Aristotle. Because of this act comes before potency, form comes before action; for Heidegger the primacy goes to potency, to the *vis activa* as lacking and not as completeness.

For Heidegger, we can say, the being in movement (*das Seiende in Bewegung*) is nothing else than the pre-possession of Being (*Seins-Vorhabe*), the κίνησις itself. The *vorweltlich*, the affective sphere of human ψυχή, is a natural movement-towards, tendency and activity, not only something endured but rather something that actively moves us. The *Vorhabe*, the pre-worldly itself, is the ontological pre-possession, the movement; it is the level of πάθος, always a movement-towards in which we already find ourselves, that we do not create but in which every *Dasein* finds itself. *Stimmung* and *Bewegtheit* are, therefore, almost synonymous.

The real being of the ψυχή is not then the static essence but its motility, the process of becoming. Movement is the real essence of facticity, and this movement is nothing else than our being endured by our experience by events, traumas, emotions. The ψυχή, as *Bewegtheit*, is not static but to be continuously discovered. But what does this concretely mean? It means that the finitude of the ψυχή is not to be considered, or as a limit to be deleted, a deficiency of a perfect and static substance – it is indeed the primary characteristic in which to inquire. Affectivity, our finding ourselves in moods that we don't choose and that often crush or surprise us is the element that characterizes us as human beings, because it moves us to the search of meaning which lies behind experience, rather, it pushes us to create a meaning, because that which crushes us cannot leave us motionless.

But it means also, and we should think long about this, that we have to forget every determinism: if the *Stimmungen*, the traumas, the events move our ψυχή and don't decrease it to static substance, it means also that these events and traumas cannot determine the ψυχή in its deep itself. It means that the *Dasein* is irremediably more than its limit, its trauma. It means that the events themselves move the soul to overflow, to something more. It means, at last, that we do not only need a philosophy but also a psychiatry that doesn't flatten the ontological on the ontic, but which allows space for rifts, for fractures through which we may see something more enter. Moments of finitude, like the *Stimmungen*, but moments that can open to a meaning that is not already defined, delivered to a human being like an already-lived-experience: a meaning to be constructed, a journey to be undertaken with the aid of the experience of limit.

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