

The Transitional Breakdown of the Word: Heidegger and Stefan George's Encounter with Language

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Poetry holds a particular position among the arts.
It alone knows the secret of arousal [*erweckung*]
and the secret of transition [*übergang*].¹

In 1928, one year after the publication of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, a volume of poetry was published by Stefan George (1868–1933), the aging poet who, as master of the extremely influential literary and academic George Circle (*George-Kreis*), had become one of the intellectual leaders of early 20th-century Germany.² The volume, which was to be George's last one, bore an ominous title: *Das Neue Reich*, “Kingdom Come,” or, “the New Realm,” “the New Reich.” It contained poems written during and after the First World War and voiced a disappointment, shared by many German artists and intellectuals, with the forms of political and cultural modernity dominant in the Weimar Republic. With an evocative emphasis on themes like war, visionary leadership, and artistic and military heroism, the first part of the anthology heralds the coming restoration of a German Reich—not so much as a political form of government but rather as an intellectual and spiritual realm,

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based on the guidance of the visionary poet-artist. In a poem entitled “Der Dichter in Zeiten der Wirren” (“The Poet in Times of Confusion”), a title reminiscent of Hölderlin’s famous question, “whereto poets in meager times?” (*wozu Dichter in dürftiger Zeit?*),³ George proclaims the following task for the poet-bard:

er holt aus büchern
Der ahnen die verheissung die nicht trägt
Dass die erkoren sind zum höchsten ziel
Zuerst durch tiefste öden ziehn dass einst
Des erdteils herz die welt erretten soll . . .
er heftet
Das wahre sinnbild auf das völkische banner
Er führt durch sturm und grausige signale
Des frührots seiner treuen schar zum werk
Des wachen tags und pflanzt das Neue Reich.

he [the bard] retrieves from books
Of ancestors the pledge that does not fail
That those selected for the highest aim
First drag through deepest wastelands; that the world
Shall once be rescued by the continent’s heart . . .
he attaches
The true symbol to the popular banner
He leads through storm and daybreak’s dismal signals
His loyal troops and sets them to the work
Of sober day and plants the Realm To Come.⁴

Given its title and its thematic emphasis, it is no wonder that this work by George, who was already regarded as a national hero, also attracted the attention of the National Socialist movement, keen on identifying the “New Reich” with the Third Reich. Soon after Hitler became Chancellor in January 1933, George was offered the presidency of the Prussian Academy of Poetry (which he declined) and was warmly greeted on his 65th birthday by the new Reich Minister of Propaganda,

Joseph Goebbels, himself an ardent admirer of George's work. While apparently not without some sympathies for the "national movement," George did not want to become associated with the new regime. His death in December 1933 spared him from experiencing the full reality of the new German Reich, but also made him unable to prevent the exploitation of his work by Nazi cultural politics; at Goebbels' behest, the German national book award was (temporarily) renamed the "Stefan George Prize."⁵ In the long run, however, George's aristocratic ethos and aestheticism turned out to be ill-adapted to a totalitarian mass ideology. One of the principal conspirators in the July 1944 plot against Hitler's life, Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg, was a former member of the George Circle. According to some accounts, Stauffenberg's last words at his execution invoked George's "secret Germany," the spiritual Reich, as a symbol of resistance.⁶

Of the numerous volumes of poetry published by George, *Das Neue Reich* was the one that caught the attention of Heidegger who, even after his quick personal disillusionment with National Socialism, was careful to lecture mainly on works and authors considered politically acceptable in the Third Reich.⁷ In his 1939 seminar on *Herder's Treatise on the Origin of Language (1772)*, attempting a radical reflection on the concept of language prevalent in Western metaphysics and its unthought foundations, Heidegger also makes some inconclusive remarks on *Das Neue Reich*,⁸ declaring enigmatically: "George speaks, barely intimating it, in a transitional way [*übergänglich*]."⁹

What does Heidegger mean by "transition" (*Übergang*) and "transitional?" These expressions gain special significance in the posthumously published *Contributions to Philosophy* from 1936–38. Here he speaks of a transition from the "first beginning" (*der erste Anfang*) of Western thinking to its *other* beginning (*der andere Anfang*).¹⁰ This transition is a historical process that characterizes the presently unfolding philosophical—or rather, post-philosophical—epoch: "The *Contributions* enact a questioning along a pathway which is first traced out by the transition to the other beginning, into which Western thinking is now entering."¹¹

For Heidegger, the “first beginning” is the point of departure that provides the guiding framework for the development of Western philosophy, all the way from the Presocratics and Plato up to Nietzsche. The thinking that remains within the sphere of the first beginning—by Heidegger’s definition, Western metaphysics as such—is primarily occupied with Aristotle’s fundamental ontological question concerning beings *qua* beings (*to on hê on*), in other words, the pure *being-ness* of determinate beings as specific instances of “to be.” According to Heidegger’s seminal claim, the implicit ideal and standard of beingness in Greek metaphysics is *constant presence*, i.e., permanent and self-identical accessibility to immediate awareness—for him, the concrete sense of Aristotle’s *ousia*.¹²

In Heidegger’s historical narrative, the Western metaphysics of presence unfolds through several historical phases. Whereas the Greeks conceived of presence as the givenness of beings to the primarily receptive sense perception (*aisthêsis*) and intuitive apprehending (*nous*), modern, Post-Cartesian metaphysics increasingly discovers the ideal form of presence in the *cogito*, the indubitably certain presence-to-itself of self-conscious human subjectivity.¹³ Heidegger asserts that this metaphysics of subjectivity finds its culmination in the fundamental notions of Nietzsche’s philosophy—for him, the eternal recurrence of the same as the inherently meaningless basic nature of reality and the will to power as the value-creating and endlessly self-enhancing driving force behind subjectivity—which exhaust the last possibilities for thinking implicitly contained in the Greek beginning, thereby bringing about the completion and end of the metaphysical tradition.¹⁴ With Nietzsche, we enter an epoch in which the initial Greek receptivity and openness of thinking to the spontaneous self-givenness of beings, *physis*, is increasingly superseded by the active domination of reality in the form of positive techno-science.¹⁵

With Nietzsche’s metaphysics, philosophy is completed. That means: It has gone through the sphere of prefigured possibilities. Completed metaphysics, which is the ground for the planetary manner of thinking,

gives the scaffolding for an order of the earth that will supposedly last for a long time. . . . But with the end of philosophy, thinking is not also at its end, but in transition to another beginning.¹⁶

The eventual release of thinking from the confines of the now oversaturated Western metaphysics would require a profound transformation, a transition to another point of departure. Techno-scientific modernity, the outcome of metaphysics, focuses its attention on rendering reality more and more purely present, available, and controllable as material for the productive purposes of human subjectivity. Transitional thinking, in its turn, entails an awareness of the way in which the meaningful givenness of something as present is dependent upon and refers back to a multidimensional background context that is, as such, *not* a determinate thing and therefore *not* immediately present, unaccessible, un-wieldy – *no-thing*. It is the differentiation of *something* from a context of no-thing-ness that “gives” beings as meaningful *in* a singular context, *in* a concrete temporal situation; thus, the meaningfulness of presence is no longer regarded as an accomplishment of the meaning-giving activity of subjectivity, but rather as a finite and temporal *gift* that man receives.¹⁷

The only name the later Heidegger would consistently give to this still largely virtual and only gradually emerging postmetaphysical possibility of thought is “Being-historical” or “Being-destinal” (*seyns-geschichtlich*) thinking. Being-historical thinking experiences Being (*Seyn*, now with the archaic spelling to distinguish it from *Sein* in the metaphysical sense of beingness) in terms of a historical “destiny” (*Geschick*) that “dispatches” (*schicken*) meaningfulness to the human being in historically changing configurations, as an “event” or a “taking-place” (*Ereignis*) that overtakes and appropriates (*ereignet*) human being to be its situational and contextual “place” (the *Da* of *Da-sein*, now conceived of as an essential historical *possibility* of being-human).¹⁸ We begin to sense a profound kinship between Heidegger’s postmetaphysical “other beginning” and George’s vision of a post-modern, poetic New Realm, of “a younger generation, measuring man and thing / Once more with

proper measures.”¹⁹ In a Heideggerian reading, this “proper measure” would be one that does not forge man and thing into two poles of a technical process of manipulation, but is rather given to us by the reciprocal interaction between the spontaneous disclosure of meaningful presence and the human capacity to experience and articulate meaning.

Since this capacity is essentially discursive and linguistic, the transition to another beginning would also entail a profound transformation in the human being’s relationship to language in the sense of discursive meaningfulness, *logos*. In Heidegger’s reading of the Heraclitus fragments—especially fragment B 50, “When you have heard not me but discursive articulation [*logos*] itself, it is well-advised to agree with it [*homologeîn*]: All is One [*hen panta*]”²⁰—*logos* originally means the discursive articulation of meaningful reality as an articulated, differential, and oppositional but still ultimately unified and consistent totality. *Logos* is therefore Heraclitus’ name for Being as such. In this initial sense, it is something that the human being does not possess but must instead hearken and consent to.²¹ Already in Aristotle, however, *logos* becomes first and foremost a human *attribute*: man is defined as *zôon logon echon*, the living creature that *disposes of* discursivity.²² In the seminal book of Western logic, Aristotle’s *De interpretatione*, *logos* is defined as a complex vocal utterance signifying something; its ideal mode is *logos apophantikos*, the declarative proposition that predicates something of something.²³

In Heidegger’s formulation, the human being’s relationship to language has since Aristotle been dominated by *logic* in the broad sense of a theoretical and normative account of linguistic and discursive meaningfulness.²⁴ In modern times, this approach gradually develops into a formal calculus of language that aims at abstracting, from the contingencies and ambiguities of the historically situated and developing “ordinary language,” a universal and unambiguous system that could then be used to further the lucid, coherent, and efficient transmission of information.²⁵ Language is understood as an instrument of communication that can be perfected through grammatical and syntactic calculation, based on the model of a simple declarative

proposition consisting of subject and predicate. Certain liberties are, of course, granted to poetic language; in the Romantic paradigm, poetry is not declarative but performative, i.e., it does not purport to convey information concerning external facts but rather serves the poet's emotional self-expression and self-assertion as a creative subject.²⁶ However, in this case as well, language is seen as an instrument of subjectivity, as a means subjugated to a purpose.

In the Heideggerian transition, the instrumental view of language, as well as the entire metaphysical view of language as a system of material signs, spoken words or written symbols equipped with a declarative meaning, begins to falter. What is ultimately called into question here is the notion of linguistic discursivity as a means that the human being has at her disposal for communicating pre-given ideal meanings. From the transitional perspective, language is rather experienced as something that "has" the human being, as the basic meaningful articulation of reality into a relational whole which, precisely because of its relational and referential structure, is at once both unified and differentiated. Language is not an entity that could be possessed, but rather the discursive articulation of meaning that always "precedes" the human being, in the sense that we are always born into an already prevailing language.²⁷

It is obvious that this articulation is not universal but always tied to the historical and cultural world that we enter at birth. Indeed, the language we are born into *is* our culture, it *is* the historically developed interpretation of reality that we must adopt and that must adopt us; for it is not until we learn to speak that we truly enter our community. As Heidegger puts it in his 1936 Rome lecture on "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry":

Language is not just a tool which man possesses alongside many others; rather, language first grants the possibility of standing in the midst of the openness of beings. Only where there is language, is there world Only where world holds sway is there history. . . . Language is not a tool at man's disposal but rather the event

[*Ereignis*] which disposes of the highest possibility of being-human.²⁸

This experience of language is one that has perhaps, to some extent, always been familiar to poets—the ones who most constantly expose themselves to language. Heidegger’s readings of poetry concentrate on those modern poets whom he considers “transitional,” that is, poets whose work calls into question metaphysical notions of language and remains on the lookout for a new dimension of ultimate meaning—a divinity or holiness—beyond the reach of techno-scientific control. For Heidegger, the first and foremost “transitional” poet is Hölderlin, the “poet’s poet,” acutely aware of the absence of the holy.²⁹ Nonetheless, he also had high regard for turn-of-the-century German poets such as Trakl, Rilke, and George, all of whom Hölderlin strongly inspired.³⁰

In a long meditation on language, a cycle of three lectures from 1957–58 entitled “The Essence of Language,” as well as in the shorter 1959 lecture “The Word,” Heidegger studies George’s poem “Das Wort” (“The Word”) from *Das Neue Reich*. This poem is, for Heidegger, an account of a transitional encounter and experience (*Erfahrung*) with language—an encounter in which the Romantic notion of expressive poetic language is unexpectedly shattered and supplanted by the acknowledgement of another essence.

Das Wort

Wunder von ferne oder traum
Bracht ich an meines landes saum

Und harrte bis die graue norn
Den namen fand in ihrem born—

Drauf konnt ichs greifen dicht und stark
Nun blüht und glänzt es durch die mark ...

Einst langt ich an nach guter fahrt
Mit einem kleinod reich und zart

Sie suchte lang und gab mir kund:
"So schläft hier nichts auf tiefem grund"

Worauf es meiner hand entrann
Und nie mein land den schatz gewann ...

So lernt ich traurig den verzicht:
Kein ding sei wo das wort gebricht.

The Word

Wonder or dream from distant land
I carried to my country's strand

And waited till the twilit morn
Had found the name within her bourn –

Then I could grasp it close and strong
It blooms and shines now the front along ...

Once I returned from happy sail,
I had a prize so rich and frail,

She sought for long and tidings told:
"No like of this these depths enfold."

And straight it vanished from my hand,
The treasure never graced my land ...

So I renounced and sadly see:
Where word breaks off no thing may be.⁵¹

The short poem, consisting of six two-line stanzas and so simple as to appear almost naïve, recounts two homecomings of the narrator-poet. The poet returns twice from a distant land, i.e., from a region beyond his domain and sphere of control, to his own country. On both occasions, he brings something back home with him: first a "wonder or a dream," then a "prize" or "treasure." But in order to be brought into the poet's country, these hitherto unidentified presents must first be

poetically named, for otherwise they can gain neither stable identity nor permanence—in Hölderlin’s words, “but what endures / is established by poets” (*Was bleibet aber / stiften die Dichter*).⁵² The naming takes place at the “strand,” i.e., at the limit of the poet’s domain; here an old Germanic goddess of fate, the *norn*, retrieves names from the bottom of her well. Upon the poet’s second homecoming, however, the *norn* fails to discover any name for the singular treasure he is now carrying, and instantly the treasure vanishes from his hand. The poem ends in a renunciation (*verzicht*): the poet recognizes that “where word breaks off no thing may be.” Without a naming word, the frail and ephemeral treasure cannot become a *thing*, i.e., a self-identical and stable being.

Heidegger reads this poem very carefully and minutely, laying great weight even on the scanty punctuation. However, in the wider context of his thought, it is not hard to see the core issue here: for Heidegger, George’s poem recounts a transformation and transition in the poet’s relationship to language.⁵³ At first, the poet’s assumed task is to conquer and appropriate new property through the naming use of language; the *norn* and her well are freely at his disposal for this function. But the disappointment on the second occasion, the unexpected unavailability and breakdown of the word and the subsequent loss of the treasure, force the poet into a resignation that marks a profound change in his attitude.

Firstly, the poet now realizes his own dependency on language. It is language itself and not the poet that grants beingness—stable meaning and identity—to beings. To rephrase Wittgenstein: the limits of the poet’s country are the limits of his language. But the second, more important discovery is that there is something for which there is no word, something that cannot be captured and made into a thing through naming. Heidegger stresses that we must not take the breakdown of the word in the second part of the poem as a contingent failure in which no suitable word simply happens to be present. The evanescent treasure must be something which *cannot* as such be named.

What is this treasure that essentially evades naming? For a hint we must look to the title of the poem—the Word. The treasure for which

there is no word is the *word itself* in its essence as language.⁵⁴ The word that is experienced here is not a thing, a signifier that is somehow semantically related to a meaning, a signified. Rather, it is the functioning of *logos*, the very articulation of a thing into a determinate meaningful thing. As Heidegger compactly puts it: “The word makes [‘be-things,’ *bedingt*] the thing into a thing.”⁵⁵ Language as *logos* is the dynamic context for discursively constituted beings, the background event that can never itself become a being, resisting all objectification. In the words of the “Letter on ‘Humanism,’” it is the “house of being.”⁵⁶ Language can never be simply a tool for the creative subjectivity of the poet, but the poet is always dependent on the language that precedes him and is constituted as a poet only by and through language.

Heidegger thus arrives at his famous chiasmus: “*The essence of language: the language of essence.*”⁵⁷ The lectures started off with the question concerning the essence of language; an attempt to answer this question turns it around. The essence, *Wesen*, the way in which language prevails and takes place, is precisely in articulating, constituting, and thus rendering possible stable and definite identities of things. The essence of language is thus to be the very becoming-essential of essences, the event whereby beings become beings, linguistically articulated, nameable entities, and which cannot itself be similarly captured in a name. The purpose of Heidegger’s reading of George is to show the impossibility of what the title “The Essence of Language” might have led us to expect: a theoretical grasp or formal definition of language as an entity.⁵⁸ The poetic subject of George’s poem is compelled to accept with sadness and resignation that language as such, the becoming-speakable of things, is itself unspeakable.

However, Heidegger emphasizes that this resigned discovery is not, in spite of its sad mood, a failure.⁵⁹ It is an important experience that results in a decisive change of attitude. George’s encounter with language fruitfully inverts the attempt to speak the essence of language into a silent experience of the essence of language as the unspeakable eventful origin of speakability and, thus, of essentiality. Even though the poet “fails” to capture the essence of language in a name

or concept, this essence is indirectly disclosed—and thus “brought to word”—in the way in which the word works in naming and thereby granting relative permanence. Accordingly, Heidegger’s lecture is not primarily a discourse *on (über)* the essence of language, but rather allows an indirect encounter with this essence by drawing our attention to the way discoursing takes place *from* and *on the basis of (von)* language. This is what Heidegger means by “experience,” *Erfahrung*, in the emphatic sense: a journey (*Fahrt*) along the path of language as an event.⁴⁰

The poet’s resignation or renouncement is a positive one—it is the first step in the transition from the modern ideal of a subjectivist and technological mastery of reality towards a wholly other approach. The resignation involved here corresponds to the attitude or mood that Heidegger, following Master Eckhart, calls *Gelassenheit*—“serenity” or, more literally, “releasement,” “surrender,” “having-let-go,” “letting-be.”⁴¹ For him, this expression signifies a transformation of the relationship to things and to oneself predominant in modernity—namely, willing, more precisely characterized by Nietzsche as *will to power*, in which things are ultimately disclosed as means or material for the boundless self-enhancement of subjectivity. However, “releasement” does not mean simply a passive submission to a higher, divine will; it is “beyond the distinction between activity and passivity.”⁴² Like the concept of “resolve” (*Entschlossenheit*) in *Being and Time*, “releasement” rather signifies a release from an exclusive concentration on things as present and a receptivity to their contextual background, which the later Heidegger calls *Gegend* or *Gegnet*, “region” or “country”—that against which (*contra, gegen*) things are encountered as present.⁴³

With regard to the contemporary technological framework, “releasement” means simply accepting that whereas the meaningfulness of things is normally and first and foremost constituted to us in terms of usefulness, instrumentality, and controllability, *the fact that it is so constituted is not* itself of our own making or under our control.⁴⁴ The historically determined and contextual articulation of meaning—i.e., Being in the postmetaphysical sense—is not “subjective,” it is rather

what makes us into the “subjects” that we are. As this discursive articulation is precisely the essence of language, “releasement,” in the case of language, means recognizing that the language we have grown into, the way of discussing and addressing things and their mutual relations prevalent in the specific historical world we live in, is not dependent on our will. Instead, it is we who are dependent upon the linguistic and discursive framework that precedes us. In the first instance, it is language that “speaks”; the human being speaks only insofar as she “responds” or “corresponds” (*entsprechen*) to language, i.e., conforms to a linguistic framework and makes use of its finite resources.⁴⁵ The human being is first and foremost a recipient and correspondent of language. With regard to language, releasement means letting meaningfulness show itself in the event of its discursive articulation and accepting that this event itself remains inarticulate. The event of Being cannot be studied as something that is; nor can the happening of language be discussed in the same manner as linguistically articulated meanings.

Whereas naming words always more or less inevitably direct our attention to the beings that they name, the breakdown of the word makes us receptive to the unnamable “is,” the event of Being that lets beings be present. Thus Heidegger translates the last line of the poem to say, in a positive manner: “An ‘is’ arises where the word breaks down.”⁴⁶ The breakdown of the word signals the discontinuity, the rupture or “leap” (*Sprung*)⁴⁷ entailed by the transition from metaphysics to another beginning—a transition that opens up a new experience of the “is,” of Being itself in its full dimensionality. The new realm disclosed by the breakdown is the uncontrollable background dimension of meaningfulness on which we ultimately depend, even though the full extent of this dependency is yet to be elaborated in Western thought.

A comparable experience of a neglected and concealed background and of an unknown dependency is suggested by the work of Stefan George, in whose words I conclude:

Kehr in die heilige heimat
Findst ursprünglichen boden
Mit dem geschärfteren aug
Schlummender fülle schooss
Und so unbetretnes gebiet
Wie den finsteren urwald ...

Turn back to the holy homeland
Find the original soil
With an eye now grown sharper
The bosom of slumbering fullness
And a district as unexplored
As the murkiest forest ...⁴⁸

Horch was die dumpfe erde spricht:
Du frei wie vogel oder fisch –
Worin du hängst · das weisst du nicht.

Hear the earth's roar from below:
You who are free like birds or fish –
Your dependency · you do not know.⁴⁹

Notes

- 1 Stefan George, “Über Dichtung II” [1895] in *Werke: Ausgabe in zwei Bänden*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Düsseldorf: Helmut Küpper, 1968), 531 [hereafter, SGW 1]. My translation. Note George’s unusual—and not thoroughly consistent—practice of spelling even nouns in lower case, contrary to the normal German orthography.
- 2 I am thankful to an anonymous reviewer for an immensely helpful comment on this paper.
- 3 From Hölderlin’s elegy “Brot und Wein” (“Bread and Wine,” 1800–01). Cf. Martin Heidegger, “Wozu Dichter?” [1946] in *Holzwege*, 269–320 = “What Are Poets for?” in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 91–142.
- 4 Stefan George, “Der Dichter in zeiten der Wirren: Dem Andenken des Grafen Bernhard Uxkull” [1921] in SGW 1, 418. My translation. Translated as “The Poet in Times of Confusion” in *The Works of Stefan George*, trans. Olga Marx and Ernst Morwitz, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1974), 363–65.
- 5 On George’s relationship to National Socialism, see Robert E. Norton, *Secret Germany: Stefan George and his Circle* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 722–46; Ritchie Robertson, “George, Nietzsche, and Nazism” in *A Companion to the Works of Stefan George*, ed. Jens Rieckmann (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005), 189–205.
- 6 See Michael Baigent, *Secret Germany: Claus von Stauffenberg and the Mystical Crusade against Hitler* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1994), 66–67.
- 7 The most extensive study of Heidegger’s readings of Stefan George is Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, *Die zarte, aber helle Differenz: Heidegger und Stefan George* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1999). See also Dieter Thomä, “Die späten Texte über Sprache, Dichtung und Kunst: Im ‘Haus des Seins’: eine Ortsbesichtigung” in *Heidegger-Handbuch: Leben-Werk-Wirkung*, ed. Dieter Thomä (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2003), 320–21.

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- 8 GA 85: 61, 69-72 = *On the Essence of Language*, 51, 59-62.
- 9 GA 85: 72 = *On the Essence of Language*, 62; tm.
- 10 GA 65: 166-224 = *Contributions to Philosophy*, 117-75.
- 11 GA 65: 4 = *Contributions to Philosophy*, 3; tm.
- 12 SZ 25-26; *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, 154 = *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 216.
- 13 *Nietzsche* II, 363-438 = "Metaphysics as History of Being" and "Sketches for a History of Being as Metaphysics" in *The End of Philosophy*, 1-54 and 55-74.
- 14 GA 65: 107-66 = *Contributions to Philosophy*, 73-115; *Nietzsche* I, 425-32 = *Nietzsche* 3, 3-9; *Nietzsche* II, 177-80 = *Nietzsche* 4, 147-49.
- 15 "Die Frage nach der Technik" [1953] in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 9-40 = "The Question Concerning Technology" in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 3-35.
- 16 "Überwindung der Metaphysik" [1936-46] in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 79 = "Overcoming Metaphysics" in *The End of Philosophy*, 95-96; tm.
- 17 "Zeit und Sein" [1962] in *Zur Sache des Denkens*, 16-24 = "Time and Being" in *On Time and Being*, 16-23.
- 18 Cf. GA 65: 3 = *Contributions to Philosophy*, 3; GA 66: 68-80, 89-94, 333-61 = *Mindfulness*, 55-65, 74-78, 297-321; GA 69: 86-88, 115, 165-73. Cf. Alejandro Vallega, "'Beyng-Historical Thinking' in Heidegger's *Contributions to Philosophy*" in *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy*, ed. Charles E. Scott and others (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), 48-65; Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, "*Contributions to Philosophy* and Enowning-Historical Thinking" in *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy*, 105-26.
- 19 Stefan George, "Der Dichter in zeiten der Wirren" in SGW 1, 418: "Ein jung geschlecht das wieder mensch und ding / Mit echten maassen misst." My translation.
- 20 Heraclitus, Fragment 22 B 50, in *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker: Griechisch und deutsch*, 6th ed., ed. Hermann Diels and

- Walther Kranz (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1951). My translation.
- 21 See GA 55: 185–402; “Logos (Heraklit, Fragment 50)” [1951] in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 199–221 = “Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B 50)” in *Early Greek Thinking*, 59–78.
- 22 Aristotle, *Politica*, ed. David Ross (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), I.2.1253a7–10.
- 23 Aristotle, *De interpretatione*, ed. Lorenzo Minio-Paluello (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949), chapters 1–6.
- 24 GA 17: 13–41 = *Introduction to Phenomenological Research*, 9–31; GA 21: 127–61 = *Logic: The Question of Truth*, 107–35; GA 29/30: 416–507 = *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World-Finitude-Solitude*, 287–349; GA 55: 186–237; “Der Weg zur Sprache” [1959] in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 244–45 = “The Way to Language” in *On the Way to Language*, 114–15.
- 25 “Das Wesen der Sprache” [1957–58] in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 160 = “The Nature of Language” in *On the Way to Language*, 58–59; “Der Weg zur Sprache” in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 263–64 = “The Way to Language” in *On the Way to Language*, 132–33.
- 26 On poetry from a “logical” point of view as the non-propositional expression of a “feeling of life,” cf. Rudolf Carnap, “Überwindung der Metaphysik durch logische Analyse der Sprache” [1931–32], *Erkenntnis* 2 (1931–32): 239–40; “The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language,” trans. Arthur Pap, in *Logical Positivism*, ed. Alfred J. Ayer (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1959), 78–80.
- 27 GA 65: 177 = *Contributions to Philosophy*, 124; GA 85: 56–57 = On the Essence of Language, 46–47. Cf. Daniela Vallega-Neu, “Poietic Saying” in *Companion to Heidegger’s Contributions to Philosophy*, 66–80.
- 28 “Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung” [1936] in *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, 37–38 = “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry” in *Elucidations of Hölderlin’s Poetry*, 55–56; tm.

- 29 “Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung” in *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, 34 = “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry” in *Elucidations of Hölderlin’s Poetry*, 52.
- 30 On the relationship between Hölderlin and George, see Stefan George, “Hölderlin” in SGW 1, 518–21. Cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Hölderlin und George” [1971] in *Gesammelte Werke*, 9: *Ästhetik und Poetik II: Hermeneutik im Vollzug* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1993), 229–44; “Hölderlin and George” in Dieter Nisgeld and Graeme Nicholson, eds., *Hans-Georg Gadamer on Education, Poetry and History: Applied Hermeneutics*, trans. Lawrence Schmidt and Monica Reuss (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992), 93–109. It should be noted that the first complete edition of Hölderlin’s collected works was begun in 1912–16 by a close disciple of George, Norbert von Hellingrath (cf. Heidegger’s “Das Wesen der Sprache” in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 182 = “The Nature of Language” in *On the Way to Language*, 78.)
- 31 Stefan George, SGW 1, 466–67. English translation by Peter D. Hertz in Heidegger, “Words” in *On the Way to Language*, 140. Translated as the “Word” in *The Works of Stefan George*, 408. For related readings of the poem, see William Waters, “Stefan George’s Poetics” in *A Companion to the Works of Stefan George*, 46–47; Michael M. Metzger, “In Zeiten der Wirren: Stefan George’s Later Works” in *A Companion to the Works of Stefan George*, 119–20.
- 32 From Hölderlin’s poem “Andenken” (“Reminiscence”); cf. “Das Wesen der Sprache” in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 171–72 = “The Nature of Language” in *On the Way to Language*, 68; “Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung” in *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, 41 = “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry” in *Elucidations of Hölderlin’s Poetry*, 58.
- 33 “Das Wesen der Sprache” in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 184–85 = “The Nature of Language” in *On the Way to Language*, 79–81.
- 34 “Das Wesen der Sprache” in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 192–93 = “The Nature of Language” in *On the Way to Language*, 86–88; “Das

- Wort" [1959] in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 228–36 = "Words" in *On the Way to Language*, 146–54.
- 35 "Das Wort" in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 232 = "Words" in *On the Way to Language*, 151.
- 36 "Brief über den 'Humanismus'" [1946] in GA 9: 313 = "Letter on 'Humanism,'" *Pathmarks*, 239.
- 37 "Das Wesen der Sprache" in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 200 = "The Nature of Language" in *On the Way to Language*, 94.
- 38 "Das Wesen der Sprache" in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 174–76 = "The Nature of Language" in *On the Way to Language*, 70–72.
- 39 "Das Wesen der Sprache" in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 169 = "The Nature of Language" in *On the Way to Language*, 66–67; "Das Wort" in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 235–36 = "Words" in *On the Way to Language*, 153–54.
- 40 "Das Wesen der Sprache" in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 159–62, 168–70, 174–80 = "The Nature of Language" in *On the Way to Language*, 57–60, 65–67, 70–76; "Das Wort" in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 223–24 = "Words" in *On the Way to Language*, 143–44.
- 41 "Zur Erörterung der Gelassenheit: Aus einem Feldweggespräch über das Denken" [1944/45] in GA 13: 37–74 = "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking" in *Discourse on Thinking*, 58–90; "Gelassenheit" [1955] in GA 16: 517–29 = "Memorial Address" in *Discourse on Thinking*, 43–57.
- 42 "Zur Erörterung der Gelassenheit" in GA 13: 41 = "Conversation on a Country Path" in *Discourse on Thinking*, 61.
- 43 "Zur Erörterung der Gelassenheit" in GA 13: 63–64 = "Conversation on a Country Path" in *Discourse on Thinking*, 81.
- 44 "Gelassenheit" in GA 16: 527–28 = "Memorial Address" in *Discourse on Thinking*, 54–55.
- 45 "Die Sprache" [1950] in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 32–33 = "Language" in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 216.
- 46 "Das Wesen der Sprache" in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 216 = "The Nature of Language" in *On the Way to Language*, 108; tm.

- 47 On the transitional “leap,” see GA 65: 225–89 = *Contributions to Philosophy*, 159–203.
- 48 Stefan George, “Geheimes Deutschland” in SGW 1, 426. My translation. Translated as “Secret Germany” in *The Works of Stefan George*, 371–74.
- 49 Stefan George, “Horch was die dumpfe erde spricht” in SGW 1, 463. My translation. Translated as “The brooding earth decrees below” in *The Works of Stefan George*, 406. Cf. GA 85: 61, 72 = *On the Essence of Language*, 51, 62; “Das Wesen der Sprache” in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 184 = “The Nature of Language” in *On the Way to Language*, 79.