

Time in a Moment

The Temporality of Activity and Essence in Aristotle (with and against Heidegger)

Francisco J. Gonzalez

Focused on Heidegger's 1924 course, Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie, in addition to the reading of Aristotle's account of time in the 1927 Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie, the present paper aims to show how Aristotle's conception of 'essence' as the what-it-was-to-be (to ti ēn einai), as well as his related conception of energeia as simultaneously being and having-been in the now, challenge the interpretation of being and time Heidegger wishes to attribute to him while confirming and developing a very different interpretation that emerges, even and indeed especially on Heidegger's own reading, through Aristotle's explicit account of time in Physics IV.

Nun ist das Merkwürdige, daß die Griechen das Sein interpretiert haben aus der Zeit: οὐσία besagt Anwesenheit, Gegenwart. Weil Sein das besagt, ist das eigentliche Sein das, was nie nicht da ist, das immer da ist: ἀεὶ ὄν.
(Cassel Lecture, p. 206)

Central to Martin Heidegger's interpretation of the Greeks, and therefore to his account of the whole history of metaphysics, is the thesis that for the Greeks 'being' meant 'presence'. This interpretation has been extremely influential, provoking many and diverse subsequent attempts to overcome what has come to be known as «the metaphysics of presence». This interpretation attributes to the Greeks not only a certain interpretation of being but also a certain interpretation of time, or specifically, an interpretation of being from the perspective of a naïve interpretation of time. A crucial text here is Heidegger's recently published SS 1924 course, *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*¹. It is here that Heidegger provides the most thorough ar-

¹ Gesamtausgabe 18, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 2002; hereafter, GA 18.