

Introduction

Wandel, Wandlung, and Verwandlung

The Heidegger change is a machine that accomplishes changes (*Wandeln*), transformations (*Wandlungen*), and metamorphoses (*Verwandlungen*). It operates in thought as a converter (*Wandler*), an instrument of variable structure that can function as a retort transforming cast iron into steel, as a grist mill that turns groats into flour, and as a converter of tension—both analog to digital and digital to analog—and of monetary value.

The Heidegger change carries out conversions of ontological, symbolic, and existential regimes: the mutation of metaphysics, the metamorphosis of man, the metamorphosis of God, the change of language, the transformation of the gaze, and even the molting of Heidegger himself.

Because it operates at once *in* and *on* Heidegger's thought, the Heidegger change both belongs to it and does not. It works within and beyond it. In fact, the Heidegger change is an invention resulting from a decision of reading—my own. This decision consists in the *empowerment* (*Ermächtigung*) of three linked notions that, although omnipresent in his texts, seem to sleep in them on account of the conceptual penumbra that holds them together. It concerns precisely

the notions of *Wandel*, *Wandlung*, and *Verwandlung*—“change, transformation, and metamorphosis”—which constitute what I will call *the triad of change*, and which I will most often simply designate with their initials: *W, W, & V*.

Still unnoticed despite its decisive importance and never distinguished by Heidegger himself, the triad has been left waiting its *exegetical switching-on*. I am borrowing the word “empowerment” from the 1931–32 lecture course on Plato entitled *On the Essence of Truth*. The Good, Heidegger declares there, is “empowerment” in the sense that it makes *able, capable, and possible*. “The proper and original meaning of ἀγαθόν refers to what is good (or suitable) for something, what can be put to good use. ‘Good!’ means: it is done! It is decided! (*es wird gemacht! es wird entschieden!*). . . . The good is the sound, the enduring.”¹ Constituted as a philosophical machine and through that empowered, the triad *W, W, & V* would then be what confers on Heidegger’s thought its power and vigor, and what at the same time makes it *good for something* and *fit for something else*, an energy greatly needed in the world of today for reasons the present work has the task of *developing, reaffirming, and remobilizing*. The Heidegger change—It is done! It is decided!

It is done through *us*—meaning by you and me. The Heidegger change can only be put to work on condition of a shared mode of speech. In effect, *to address the reading, to speak of Heidegger to someone* already comes down to engaging his philosophy, the very one said to be completely void of address (of the “you” [*toi*] and “all you” [*vous*]), in its own transformation(s), its actual *opening to the other*. The other: the one that you are, and the one you will be.

You—neither “Heideggerian” nor “anti-Heideggerian,” you all know about “the affair.” You came to Heidegger only after these damning, unappealable biographical and political revelations, and you know them in detail. So having doubts or illusions about them is unacceptable to you. Nevertheless, you have the strange feeling that Heidegger’s thinking is always right before you, holding itself back like a shadow waiting to be freed. It is high time, then, for a new perspective on what is waiting there. You are not guilty for wanting to continue to think, you are not guilty for realizing you cannot make it without Heidegger or for being a philosopher, and you are not afraid to move against consensus—you are free.

More Than a Title

THREE “CHANGES” IN ONE

Let’s unpack, in order to start, the polysemia of this strange title—*The Heidegger Change*—which is above all made possible by its syntactic mutability. “Change” at once has the value of a substantive and a verb, and three principal ways of understanding the formula, then, are possible. If change is taken as a noun, “the Heidegger change” expresses, first, a genitive tie: the change *of* Heidegger; secondly, it indicates a trade name: the change called Heidegger; and third, if change is heard as a verb, “the Heidegger change” then designates a device whereby Heidegger is changed.

Genitive tie. In Old French syntax, the elision of the preposition “*de*”—as in “*le Change [de] Heidegger*,” the first, French title of the book—expresses a relation of belonging. Read in this manner (the change

of Heidegger), the title announces a study devoted to the Heideggerian concept of change, which is to say, first of all, to Heidegger's understanding of change.²

Trade name. "The Heidegger change" can be just as much interpreted as a trademark or proprietary name. In chess, there is "the Fischer defense," while the steel industry has "the Bessemer converter," particle physics has "the Geiger counter," and economics, "the Tobin tax." A proper name becomes a sort of common noun bearing the imprint of a style or idea. Seen from this point of view, the title can be read as the name given a unique and particular change. *The Heidegger change* announces, then, a project that aims to discover what Heidegger, and he alone, has changed—to the point that it can be given his name.

Verb machine. If the "change" in "the Heidegger change" is understood to be the imperative form of the verb "to change," the title can be characterized as a means of commanding Heidegger to transform or change, through another, magic formula hidden within it: "*Heidegger, change!*" The success of this utterance is confirmed by the French title, since "*change*" can be understood to be in the present indicative there: "*Heidegger change,*" that is, "Heidegger changes." Announced, then, is an exegetical approach that will construct, page-by-page, this change-machine.

At this inchoate stage of the inquiry, you begin to understand that touching upon the triad of change, inquiring into the Heideggerian understanding of change, and taking stock of what Heidegger has changed and how he himself is now changing comes down to *changing, transforming, and metamorphosing the interpretation of Heidegger's thought in its entirety.*

It is urgent that we proceed today to this metabolic crossing.

AN UNTRANSLATABLE DISCRETION

Quite surprisingly, this crossing and resource for change [*change*] in and of Heidegger's thought has never really been examined. Although the triad *W*, *W*, & *V* touches the essential—in its relating to being, beings, *Dasein*, God, language, and metaphysics—it has not yet been made the object of a thematic analysis.

It is true that Heidegger does not offer the least specification of the meaning of *Wandel*, *Wandlung*, and *Verwandlung*. He frequently makes use of the three terms in the same paragraph or phrase, but does so without distinguishing between them or specifying their import. He never submits them to etymological research or a thinking translation, nor does he have recourse to High German, derivations, or interpretations. Even though he constantly *mobilizes* these words, he seems not to *vest* them. The names for change never partake in the glorious destiny of “historical decisions” but instead remain, from his oeuvre's start to its finish, *ordinary words*. In a disquieting manner, they seem to keep at a respectful distance from the traditional, technical concepts of change (*Änderung*, *Veränderung*, *Werden*/becoming) as well as from those *changes to a new time* that promise “the other thinking”: the turning (*Kehre*), the playing-forth (*das Zuspiel*), and the leap (*Sprung*).³

The nontechnical, hypocategorical status of *W*, *W*, & *V* no doubt explains why the translators do not pay any particular attention to the triad. They contend with it in a perfectly casual manner, as though they were unburdened of all care for exactitude. In *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, for example, the term *Verwandlung* is sometimes translated as

transformation, sometimes as mutation, and sometimes as modification. In *The Essence of Truth*, *Wandlung* is variously translated as “revolution, change, or turning” without any explanation or justification. As we will very often see, there is no concern for consistency in the translation of the three notions of the triad—neither inside each text, nor from one translator to the other.⁴

This looseness can be easily understood. It is in fact no easier to establish in German a rigorous distinction between *Wandel*, *Wandlung*, and *Verwandlung* than it is to make apparent the differences between, in French, *changement* and *transformation*, and, in English, change and transformation, or even those between, in both languages, *mutation*, *metamorphosis*, and *muer* or molting/turning into. Moreover and reciprocally, every attempt at subjecting the triad to a uniform translation produces quite contestable effects. This becomes evident when reading, for example, the American translation of *Beiträge zur Philosophie—Contributions to Philosophy*—where all three notions are rendered as “transformation.”

The point is not to fault the translators but to express surprise that they neither noticed nor commented on this *baseline untranslatability*, nor attempted to examine it closely. A sort of textual pulp, the triad defies capture and says in its own way—without dazzle but very surely, between slackness and rigidity and at a distance from major philosophemes—what, however, happens to major philosophemes: *they change*.

THE BASIC OCCURRENCES OF W, W, & V

Now that you are beginning to make out in the penumbra the uncanny tentacles of the triad, you see

that you are before an infinitely flexible aptitude, an incredible capacity for mutability and convertibility, an unsuspected suppleness that has foiled the vigilance of the commentators and translators. You are beginning to understand that *W, W, & V* could be the *secret agent* of Heidegger's philosophy, what *sustains and clandestinely guides* the destiny of the essential. In which case you understand as well that our work will not consist in brutally summoning this agent and making it appear in full day. Since it has been trying to get our attention, it demands being treated as merits it—to *be recognized*, that is, *without being presented*. It is up to us, then, *to create an unprecedented approach to change*; to take account of it without filling it in or betraying it with the discrepancy that exists between the at first glance loose and vague use Heidegger makes of the triad and the decisive importance of what it is tied to. Such an approach, as much through its form as by what it moves toward, opens, as the double foundation of Heidegger's philosophy, the mysterious space of *the fantastic in philosophy*.

Before circumscribing this space, however, it would be useful to adumbrate the basic domains where the triad is deployed.

MAN'S METAMORPHOSIS INTO *DASEIN*

In the first place, *Wandel, Wandlung, and Verwandlung* express *what happens to man*. Man is going to change, man is going to metamorphose. In *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* or the 1929 lecture "What Is Metaphysics?" Heidegger announces *the metamorphosis of man into its Dasein*: "This requires [*hierzu wird verlangt*] that we actively complete the transformation of the human being into its *Dasein* [*die*

Verwandlung des Menschen in sein Da-Sein . . . nachvollziehen].”⁵ This metamorphosis is just as much a recurrent motif in *Contributions to Philosophy*: “Man metamorphoses [*der Mensch verwandelt*],” Heidegger declares there. Prepared with “the other beginning” is “the metamorphosis of man himself [*die Verwandlung des Menschen selbst*]” or the “transformation of man itself [*vollige Verwandlung des Menschen*].”⁶

THE DESTRUCTION OF METAPHYSICS AND THE METAMORPHOSIS OF PHILOSOPHY

The metamorphosis of man into *Dasein* is inseparable, furthermore, from the overcoming (*Überwindung*) and transformation of metaphysics: “If our thinking should succeed in its efforts to go back into the ground of metaphysics, it might well help to bring about a change in the human essence [*einen Wandel des Wesens des Menschen mitveranlassen*], a change accompanied by a transformation [*Verwandlung*] of metaphysics.”⁷

But this metamorphosis and transformation are also confounded with the movement of the *Destruktion* or destruction of metaphysics. In “What Is Philosophy?” Heidegger insists on the positive meaning of the *Destruktion* that had already been brought to light in *Being and Time*; destruction, he says, is not annihilation but *metamorphosis* (*Verwandlung*). “We find,” he declares, “the answer to the question, ‘What is philosophy?’ not through historical assertions about the definitions of philosophy but through conversing with that which has been handed down to us as the being of being. The path to the answer to our question is not a break with history, no repudiation of history, but is an appropriation and metamorphosis of what has been handed down to us

[*Aneignung und Verwandlung des überlieferten*]. Such an appropriation of history is what is meant by the term ‘destruction’ [*solche Aneignung der Geschichte ist mit dem Titel ‘Destruktion’ gemeint*].⁸ Destruction should be understood, then, as a *transformative rupture*, as the movement by which thinking henceforth “prepares its own transformation [*seine eigene Wandlung vorbereitet*].”⁹

MUTATION OF THE RELATION TO BEING

Wandel, *Wandlung*, and *Verwandlung* are also used to characterize the mutation of the relation to being that arises with the other thinking, a simultaneous mutation of the metamorphosis of the human and its *Dasein*, and the transformation of metaphysics. “The relation to being . . . changes [*der Bezug zu Sein wandelt sich*],” Heidegger declares in *Contributions to Philosophy*. What promises itself to thought is “a complete change of the relations to beings and to being [*ein volligen Wandel der Bezüge zum Seienden und zum Seyn*],”¹⁰ a motif presented for the first time in the conclusion of “The Essence of Truth” and taken up again in the “Summary” of the seminar on *Time and Being*. In *Contributions*, Heidegger again affirms that “metamorphosed” *Dasein* is capable of “transforming” the “separation” of being from beings into a “simultaneity [*Gleichzeitigkeit*].”¹¹

THE TRANSFORMATION OF LANGUAGE

The coming of this simultaneity or contemporaneity, the announcement of “the other thinking,” implies, too, a “metamorphosis of language.” In *Contributions*, Heidegger asks: “Can a new language for Being be invented? No. [*Kann eine neue Sprache für*

das Seyn erfunden werden? Nein.]” It is only possible to metamorphose [*verwandeln*] the sole language that would be available to us: “the language of beings.” What would thereby appear is a “transformed saying [*gewandelte Sagen*].”¹² In *The Question of Being*, he wonders: “In which language does the basic outline of thinking speak which indicates a crossing of the line?” This crossing carries with it a “necessary metamorphosis [*Verwandlung*] of language and a mutation in the relation to the essence of language” [*ein gewandeltes Verhältnis zum Wesen der Sprache*]. But Heidegger specifies that “this metamorphosis [*Verwandlung*] does not come back to the exchanging of an old terminology for a new one.”¹³ Imposing itself here is the idea of a *metamorphosis of language right on language*.

METAMORPHOSIS OF THE GODS

At last, the gods: if they return, they will return *changed*, so that no one recognizes them. Heidegger effectively announces their “hidden metamorphosis [*ihre verborgene Verwandlung*].” The last God appears at the crossing of the arrival and flight of the ancient gods. It does not arise as would a *new* divinity but is born from *the secret transformation* of the previous gods. In *Sojourns*, Heidegger affirms: “The gods of Greece and their supreme god, if they ever come, will return only transformed to a world [*nur Verwandelt in eine Welt verkehren*] whose overthrow [*umstürzenende Veränderung*] is grounded in the land of the gods of ancient Greece.”¹⁴

THE FANTASTIC, OR THE WEIGHT OF LIGHTNESS

You can see that locating the trace of *W*, *W*, & *V* in Heidegger’s texts immediately raises a formidable dif-

ficulty. The triad clearly carries, on the one hand, the heavy burden of expressing, once again, *the change of man, of thinking, of the relation to being, of God, and of language*. But what is just as clear is that it *bears this load lightly*. In fact, as I have already indicated, Heidegger never pauses over it. It is up to us, then, to produce its *gravity* by determining exactly in what way man, thinking, the relation to being, God, and language are for Heidegger transformable and convertible instances; it is left to us to unfold *the general economy of this mutability*. This task corresponds precisely to an elaboration of “the Heidegger change.” Empowering *W, W, & V* entails conferring the reality proper to them on the philosophical system that, much like the mystery of a body—its energetic expenditures and phenomena of assimilation and degradation—regulates the *changes, exchanges, and substitutions* at work in Heidegger’s thought, the very conditions of its mobility and life. Empowering the triad grants us access to the *ontological metabolism* that renders possible all its changes, mutations, and transformations. I call such a point of access *fantastic*.

Simultaneously a mode of visibility and manifestation, the fantastic here designates the phenomenality of ontico-ontological transformations—those of man, god, language, etc.—which unveil the originary mutability of being while revealing at the same time that being is perhaps nothing . . . but its mutability.

To the extent that the mutability of being is not—not, that is, a being—its reality is necessarily imaginary, if by imaginary we understand, as Heidegger invites us to, a nonobjective modality of presence free of every reference and referent. Such a reality, visibility, and phenomenality form and determine in the same move a philosophical inquiry aimed at these. Seeing the change of being—being as

(ex)change [*change*]*—*seeing that which changes, seeing the incision of the other in man, God, and thinking is only possible for the philosopher if she invents a manner of ensconcing herself in this hole or cavity in thought that always refuses itself to concepts and that the triad, through the very emptiness of its name—*W*, *W*, & *V**—*constantly invites investing as merits it: otherwise. Otherwise than conceptually, that is, which means two things: otherwise than through recourse to traditional philosophical techniques, and otherwise than through the Heideggerian philosophemes that are nonetheless immediately available for expressing change in the full day of the text—time, historicity, *Ereignis*, and all the figures of the turning or leap.

Constructing the Heidegger change therefore demands that we both locate and create *the level of intelligibility specific to the change required by the structure of Heidegger's thinking itself* inasmuch as it opens in itself this distance or gap between the manifest character of its aims (the overcoming of metaphysics, time, history, *Ereignis*) and *the scarcely nameable—W, W, & V—*background movement that is their obscure support and indispensable accomplice. What matters is that we experience and test *the metabolic potential* of this thought, the sole one to have only ever spoken to us, from the forgetting of being to the coming of the other thinking, of *what is never seen*.

Both the mode of visibility of ontological metabolism and the intelligibility and evidence of the never seen, the fantastic “in philosophy” designates at once a kind of approach to change and the very strangeness of what changes and is going to change. It also manifests, by consequence, the uncanniness of the fantastic to itself: its irreducibility to a genre or

category of discourse, its resistance to every relegation of itself to a conventional domain, to what Roger Caillois calls “the fantastic of principle or obligation.”¹⁵ The philosophical fantastic is contemporary with the bringing to light, in the twentieth century, of the ontological difference and, by way of consequence, the possibility of thinking being without beings. It never designates “an element exterior to the human world” (that of “composite monsters, infernal fawns, the irruption of demonic, grotesque, or sinister creatures”), but describes the foreigner on the inside, the whole of the metabolic force that sleeps without sleeping in what is, the very face of being that concepts cannot say without losing face.¹⁶

As an imaginary production without referent and pure ontological creation, the fantastic characterizes the apprehension *and* the regime of existence of *what cannot be presented, of, that is, what can only ever change*. Eclipsed by the metaphysical tradition and only *prepared* by the other thinking, change risks *being an unprecedented mode of being*.

Constructing the Heidegger change therefore involves elaborating the schematizing instance that will alone permit us to perceive, with Heidegger and beyond him, this *conceptually depatriated* place—the very enigma of our philosophical moment—*this point of rupture and suture between metaphysics and its other* that imposes upon philosophy, whether it admits it or not, its limit; a limit that it also *its reality*. *This point is the phantasm of our philosophical reality. Lodged at the heart of the triad, it is what gets displaced with it; unlocatable, undatable, and unthinkable, it is nonetheless the motor of thought*. I would like us now, you and me, to engage together its unforeseeable, constantly changing motility.

The Situation of the Question of Change in Heidegger's Thought

“CHANGE”: CHANGE, EXCHANGE, SUBSTITUTION

This surprising image of an ontological metabolism in which the dividing line of change (which runs between the ancient and the new) is constantly changing is what imposed the title *The Heidegger Change* on me. I felt that the French word *change* had the merit of exactly situating the space of deployment of the essential significations of the triad *Wandel*, *Wandlung*, and *Verwandlung* in Heidegger's thinking—an intermediary space between *change*, *exchange*, and *substitution*. The substantive *change* in effect signifies, first, change in the sense of *succession*, *alternation*, or *variability*: that of seasons, moods, affections, and objects of desire. Second, it designates (a sense largely missing in English) barter, the *exchange* of one object for another, and what is given *for* and can also replace what one gives up or be through that its equivalent; “change” is also of course given following transactions that involve paper money. By extension, it is in French a name for the place where economic negotiations are carried out, such as *le marché des changes* or foreign exchange market (the Bourse's stockbrokers thus being *agents de change*). An old term of venery, *change* designates, finally, the *substitution* of a new animal for the one initially put out for the hunt. This last signification can still be heard in the expression *donner le change*—to dissimulate, in the sense of throwing off the scent or trail, as well as to pass the torch or to relay.

It must nonetheless be admitted that these French significations of exchange (*Tauschung*), barter, currency exchange or change (*Wechsel*), and substitu-

tion (*Austauschen*) do not precisely coincide in German, as etymology immediately shows in the case of *Wandel*, *Wandlung*, and *Verwandlung*. Why then am I authorized to make use of the word *change*, which in French allows for the conflation of significations that German distinguishes more clearly?

ANOTHER READING HAS ALREADY BEGUN

My response is to say that tracking Heidegger's thinking of change necessarily leads one to take account of an *exchange*.

An exchange, first of all, of a center of gravity. Now that your attention has been drawn to the triad, the same thing will happen to you as did me: you will see it and nothing else but, and no longer be able to ignore it—you will see it everywhere in Heidegger's oeuvre, throughout each of his books and lecture courses. From here out, the triad will predominate in your readings. In fact, another reading has already begun. In letting yourself be taken by the strange rhythm of the triad, in letting yourself be put under the spell of the leitmotif of *W, W, & V*—by the fantastic announcement of a change of man, god, being, language, and philosophy—you are already in the course of reaching *another Heidegger*. *An almost imperceptible but nonetheless vertiginous difference has begun to open up right on the ontological difference. This self-difference of difference is nothing but its ontological dimension.*

From the moment you decided to follow the occasional pulsation of change, you have without noticing it been distracted from the difference between being and beings. It no longer monopolizes or snatches up, as was its habit and as you had been taught it should, all your energy as a reader [*lecteur/lectrice*]

of Heidegger; it no longer holds you. Henceforth, you will no longer be able to keep in focus the difference between being and beings but only the difference between *differing* and *changing*. The center of gravity of your reading has already been displaced. You have, without realizing it, *exchanged difference for change*.

An ontological exchange, secondly. In spite of this, you have not abandoned difference. Quite the opposite: you are about to discover that *exchange* is its origin. Meaning? From within the clear-obscure fantastic that has become our abode, you start to make out the silhouette of a sort of *go-between*. *W, W, & V* progressively draws your attention to this traveler, this runner or mule [*passeur*] that until now you would have only ever distractedly glanced at: *essence* or *Wesen*. *The difference between differing and changing directs your gaze to the difference between being and essence—for to behold essence is to witness change.*

When Heidegger heralds the change, metamorphosis, and mutation of man, gods, being, the relation to being, language, and philosophy, he does not have in mind a transformational event that would suddenly come to affect from the outside instances that would have first been originally intact and identical to themselves. Man, God, philosophy, and the rest indeed are, as we saw, *changing and changed from the outset*, which is to say *originally exchanged*. What else is metaphysics besides *the history of an exchange*—Heidegger calls it *eine Verwechslung*, a confusion—*between being and beings*? “From its beginning to its completion, the propositions of metaphysics have been strangely involved in a persistent confusion of beings and being,” one reads in “Introduction to ‘What Is Metaphysics?’”¹⁷ Heidegger further speci-

fies, in a note added to the text in 1949, that what must be heard in *Verwechslung* is change, *Wechsel*, and exchange, *Auswechslung*. “Confusion: remaining tied to passing over to Being and back to beings [*das Hinüber zu Sein und das Herüber zu Seiendem*],” he writes. “One always stands *in* the other and *for* the other [*im anderen und für das andere*], ‘interchange’ [*Wechsel*], ‘exchange’ [*Auswechslung*], first this way, then the other [*bald so, bald so*].”¹⁸

Difference, then, presupposes the exchangeability, and thus the nondifferentiation, of instances that differ. Ontological difference therefore remains unthinkable outside the very possibility of its occlusion; that is to say, outside the originary possibility of being and beings changing into each other. Now essence is precisely their point of convertibility. Throughout the metaphysical tradition, Heidegger writes, “essence is only the other word for being,”¹⁹ and essence, he furthermore says, must be understood as “beingness,” *Seinendheit*. Beingness takes being’s place, which “enters its service.”²⁰ This originary (ex)change—ontological mastery and servitude—corresponds to the going-in-drag [*travestissement*] of essence, and is the most basic resource of metaphysics.

This being-in-drag corresponds to a transformation (*W*, *W*, & *V*) of originary mutability into immutability, *Unwandelbarkeit*. The essence of a thing is effectively what in it does not change. This exchange of mutability for its opposite is exactly what originally *gives change* [*donne le change*] *in philosophy, throwing it off the trail*.

Although the difference between being and essence is different from that between being and beings, it should nonetheless, you must grant me, not be located within the foyer of *another* difference—

neither within some other ontological difference nor within a difference different than the ontological difference. *The problematic of change brings to light a differing that is not the alternative to ontological difference, but which constitutes the site of Heidegger's thinking of change.*

TOWARD AN ONTOLOGICAL REVOLUTION

The mutation (*W*, *W*, & *V*) of the mutable into the immutable that presides over metaphysics' destiny will, Heidegger declares, undergo yet another change: the *putting back into play of ordinary mutability* that occurs with the transformation of man, god, the relation to being, language, and philosophy.

What takes place at the end of metaphysics is not, as could be believed, the end of exchange but rather *an (ex)change of the first change—a new exchangeability of being and beings*. A new exchangeability that does not occlude their difference but instead frees essence from the burden of its old immutability so that it is rendered forever *unrecognizable*. The entirety of Heidegger's thinking is thus devoted to uncovering the conditions of a new ontological exchange. An exchange without violation [*rapt*], usurpation, and domination but an exchange nonetheless—one that *Ereignis* prefigures.

The Heidegger change, understood once more as a trade name ("the change called Heidegger"), is nothing less than the instrument of *an ontological revolution*.

I invite you to discover all the surprises that Heidegger's thought has in store when read as a thinking of mutation, and to see everything that difference and consequently destruction owe to transformability.

The Migratory-Metamorphic Articulation

This transformability is even more difficult to think because of the fact it governs a double economy. You have perhaps caught on that there are effectively *two (ex-)changes*. One where essence *doubles* being—is given for it—and another where essence is the coming and advent of being itself. *Each of these (ex-)changes also shelters a metabolic regime that is proper to it . . .* and yet both express it using the same words: *W, W, & V*. Heidegger conceives, for instance, the history of metaphysics' epochs as a sequence of “transformations [*Abwandlungen*]” and “mutations [*Wandlungen*],” while “the other thinking” is also said to open a “transformation [*Wandlung*] of Western history.”²¹

The dividing line between the two (ex-)changes is nonetheless decisive—relentlessly imprinting and effacing itself, it threatens to appear and disappear.

FORM AND PATHWAY

How, then, can this line be rigorously apprehended? We will consider more closely our three terms *Wandel*, *Wandlung*, and *Verwandlung*. All three obviously signify change, transformation, mutation, turning-into, conversion, and commutation. . . . We immediately realize, however, that these significations are ordered along two principal axes that together reveal a fundamental articulation constitutive of all change: a *migratory* axis, and a *metamorphic* one—as though “change” always means at once *change of route* and *change of form*.

A certain proximity indicated by the dictionaries ties *Wandlung*—transformation—to *Wanderung*,

migration or peregrination. *Wandern* signifies traveling without destination, strolling about, and incessant and directionless change, as happens in the *Wanderhalle*, the concourse or waiting area [*salle de pas perdue*]. Heidegger himself insists on the kinship between *wandeln* and *wandern* that Hölderlin brings out in his poem “*Der Ister*.” Apropos the “migration [*Wanderung*]” of “the stream” that Hölderlin calls “the changing [*der Wandelnde*],” Heidegger declares: “Change has here the sense of migrating, going, but at the same time of becoming other [*Wandeln hier als Wandern und gehen, aber zugleich als Ändern, Fortnehmen*].”²² Change takes shape, then, as a way forward while paths, reciprocally, are revealed to be continually changing.

Wandeln and *wandern* are, moreover, iterative forms of *wenden*, which means to turn; *die Wende* also signifies turning,²³ and *Wandeln* is to change by following a series of bends and turns or reversing course. The triad of *W*, *W*, & *V* outlines, then, the trace of a development that weaves around and tacks, a progress without aim. We can see, too, that *Wandel*, *Wandlung*, and *Verwandlung* always for Heidegger convey an *advance* that is at the same time a *turning back*, a progression that is also a *roaming* or *rambling*.

Wandel, *Wandlung*, and *Verwandlung* are equally employed in contemporary German to designate processes of metamorphosis. If the register of form (μορφή) is not present in the etymology of the three terms, there is nonetheless little difference in German between the usages of *Metamorphose* and *Verwandlung*. This is what elsewhere authorizes Kafka’s *Verwandlung* to be translated into French as *La Métamorphose* and into English as *The Metamorphosis*. In the same manner, the title of a chapter from *Thus*