



## Narcissism, Nationalism and Philosophy in Heidegger

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### Abstract

*This paper contrasts the notion of “willing” in Heidegger’s politics with the notion of “dawning” in Heidegger’s philosophy. It argues that, in the political text, the attunement of Dasein to what-is is centred in the notion of Dasein’s “willing” of what-is, while in the philosophical text it is centred in the notion of what-is “dawning” on Dasein. It maintains that the attitude to anxiety essential to a “dawning” of what-is is not reached in Heidegger’s “The Self-Assertion of the German University”. It concludes by maintaining that, rather than being attuned to what-is, the will in the “The Self-Assertion of the German University” is attuned to its own relationship to what is in a narcissistic rather than a philosophical way; that is, it territorializes “dawning” as a relation to “what is”, and makes “dawning” of “what-is” its “own” in the same way as any nationalism makes a culture, a language or a geographical region its own. In contrast to the narcissism of nationalism, philosophy, as outlined by Heidegger in the essay “What Is Metaphysics?”, is the experience of allowing what-is to “dawn” on Dasein rather than a preoccupation with “willing” of “dawning” as one’s own relation to Being.*

### Introduction

This paper will show that the relationship between *Dasein* and what-is in the text *What Is Metaphysics?* (hereafter referred to as “the Essay”) is fundamentally different from the relationship between these same two terms in Heidegger’s Rectorial Address entitled *The Self-Assertion of the German University* (1985) (hereafter referred to as “the Address”). Whereas in the Essay a resolute attunement to “what-is” is said to “dawn” (1948, p. 347) on - or, in the German original, “uber uns kommen” (1955, p. 41) - *Dasein*, in the context of the Address the German is called upon to “will” (1985, p. 479) a resolute relationship to “what-is”. The difference between “dawning” (“uber uns kommen”) and “willing” is, as I will maintain, a basis for conceptualising a difference between Heidegger’s philosophy and his politics. Allowing what-is to dawn on us through being overcome by the strangeness of what is, is the basis of philosophy as an attunement to what is.

My choice of texts is guided by the writing of

Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe (1989, p. 271), who maintains that the Essay is recognised as a philosophical text and the Address is recognised as a political text, a text in which Heidegger outlines his proposals for the development of the mission of the German university in the context of the emergence of National Socialism. As Lacoue-Labarthe points out, the Rectorial Address is also one of the political texts that Heidegger never disavowed (1989, p. 271).

Having shown that the relationship between *Dasein* and what-is as used in the Address is different from the self-same relationship as it occurs in the Essay, I will “deconstruct” the relationship as it occurs in the Address. My “deconstruction” will take place in terms of the language of Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology as developed in *Being and Time*. Using the latter language, I will demonstrate that, whereas in the Essay *Dasein* is called upon to be attuned to what-is, in the Address the German people are called upon to be attuned to their attunement to what is. Furthermore, in the Address the attunement to the attunement to what-is takes on a particular

form. It is, as Heidegger reiterates in the Address, an attunement in which the German is called upon to will attunement to what-is. In the Address, rather than being reflexively “attuned” to what-is, the German is called to will his or her form of “attunement” to what-is.

If, as is outlined in the Essay, we take an attunement to what-is as the key characteristic of metaphysics or philosophy, then the focus of the Address is a call to the German people to will themselves to become the philosophical or the metaphysical people. For the willing of the attunement to what-is, is the will to be the philosophical people. It is this characteristic of willing itself into being the philosophical people that makes the form of summoning in the Address nationalistic and narcissistic. For, as Isaiah Berlin has shown, a characteristic of nationalism is a care not so much for the land, language, culture or religion, but for the fact that it is “our” language, culture, religion or land (1979, p. 342). Amplifying this point, Ernst Gellner points out that, in nationalism, we are concerned with willing “ourselves” through the language, religion, culture or land that we are already alienated from (1983, pp. 57-58). Instead of caring for the land, language or culture, we come to care for preserving and protecting our way of caring for the land, language and culture. In nationalism we care for the way in which the land reflects us back to ourselves, giving us our sense of identity and belonging, finding purpose in striving after ourselves - in willing ourselves into being.

In these terms, Heidegger’s concern in the Address is with the way in which, under conditions of alienation from themselves, philosophy acts as a mirror through which the German people can identify themselves and take pride in themselves. In the Address, he articulates the “our” relationship of the German people to philosophy. Just as a nationalist is preoccupied with a culture as being “ours”, so Heidegger, in the Address, is preoccupied with philosophy as being “ours”, i.e., with the “German-ness” of philosophy. There is, in the Address, a shift away from unpacking the dimensions of philosophical attunement as such, to a preoccupation with a nation who, existentially lost, need to find their identity by naming themselves as the caretakers of philosophy. Philosophy becomes a means to an end; a means by which the German people are mirrored back to themselves and a means by which they can bring themselves into being.

This is the clue which suggests that the Address is a narcissistic discourse. Narcissism is a preoccupation, under conditions of estrangement, with the mirrored self or nation. It is the will to hold onto the way in which the self is mirrored through an other being. In

narcissism I am interested in the other to the extent that the other reflects me back to myself. I hold onto the way the other mirrors me. I attempt to become the mirrored self, but I will always fail. For the mirrored self is nothing more than an image. In the Address, Heidegger is calling on the German people to will their mirrored self. They are called upon to will their German will - their German attunement to what-is. It is not “what-is” as such that needs to be tended to, but the image of the German people that is reflected in the mirror of being attuned to “what is” that is attended to. The Germans need to hold onto philosophy - need to will themselves as a philosophical people because it reflects them back to themselves.

In contrast to the politics of the Address, in his philosophy, as outlined in the Essay, Heidegger is not attuned to summoning the Germans to will their own way of being attuned to the world. That it is the Germans - or any particular people - who are attuned to what is, is not even a theme of discussion in the philosophical text. In the Essay, Heidegger is concerned with describing the attunement of *Dasein* to what is, rather than with the identity of the people who are attuned to what-is. In the Essay, he is not concerned with a people appropriating “dawning” or “disclosure” or “unconcealment” as “our” - a nation’s - attunement. The difference between a dawning or emergent attunement to what-is and an appropriation of “dawning” as a form of attunement is the articulation of the difference between Heidegger’s politics and philosophy in strictly hermeneutic phenomenological terms. Philosophical “attunement” is an emergent “attunement” to what-is, whereas the political “attunement” is characterised by a possessive attunement of “dawning” and the experience of “unconcealment”.

In the Essay, “dawning”, as the basis of attunement to what-is, is made possible by a resolute (*entschlossenheit*) dwelling in anxiety - not by willing ourselves out of anxiety, but by allowing ourselves to be “struck dumb” (1948, p. 336) by dread. By being struck dumb by anxiety, *Dasein* is overcome by the strangeness of what-is and, by embracing the strangeness of what-is, *Dasein* finds itself in the midst of asking the question of what is. In the German original this is expressed as follows: “Einzig weil das Nichts im Grunde des Daseins offenbar ist, kann die volle Befremdlichkeit des Deinden über uns kommen. Nur wenn die Befremdlichkeit des Seienden uns bedrängt, weckt es und zieht es auf sich die Verwunderung. Nur auf dem Grunde der Verwunderung ... entspringt das ‘Warum?’. Nur weil das Warum als solches möglich ist, können wir in bestimmter Weise nach Gründen fragen und begründen” (1955, p. 41).

In the Essay, the crucial issue is to be able to embrace the nothingness of anxiety and strangeness. For Heidegger, the key to understanding this form of staying in the anxiety and strangeness is resolve (*entschlossenheit*). Resolve is, as Hubert Dreyfus maintains, the power of *Dasein* to stay in its powerlessness - rather than attempting to will itself out of its powerlessness or state of being struck dumb (1993, p. 319). It is as *Dasein* stays with its anxiety that what-is dawns upon it: "There where the danger is apprehended as the danger so the saving power grows". Heidegger is fond of quoting Holderlin. In this context, to be consistent with his philosophy, Heidegger ought to have encouraged the German people to dwell in their anxiety - in their danger and in the lostness of their will, so that they could apprehend themselves as living in the "danger" and "anxiety" of a lost will. For only as they dwell in and embrace the anxiety of their lostness do they prepare themselves for an attunement to their own situatedness, and it is only in their embracing of their own situatedness that what-is opens up to dawn on them. However, the more they will their attunement to what-is, the more what-is recedes into the background. And the more Heidegger can only call for a holding onto an image of an attunement to what is.

Like a psychotherapist, Heidegger needed to provide a "holding environment" through which the German people could stay with their danger and allow the saving power to grow by being attuned to the danger as the danger. But Heidegger failed in this regard. He attempted to will them out of their danger and, in so doing, confused the mirrored image of philosophy with the "authentic" activity of philosophising.

The exposition that follows is divided into two sections. In the first section, I shall compare the relationship between *Dasein* and what-is in the two texts, showing that in the Essay an "attunement" to what-is "dawns" on *Dasein*, while in the Address the German is called upon to will" an "attunement" to what-is. In the second section, I shall demonstrate that the form of "attunement" in the Address is not an "attunement" to what-is, but is a wilful - a narcissistic and nationalist - "attunement" to an "attunement" to what-is.

### Resoluteness

The notion of a resolute will (*entschlossenheit*) is central to the Address. This Address is a call by Heidegger to the German people to will themselves. The demand to will themselves is expressed on a number of dimensions. It is expressed quite explicitly when Heidegger says that the destiny of the German people depends on the extent to which "we, as a

historical-spiritual people, still and once again will ourselves" (1985, p. 480). To "will ourselves" means that we will "that our people fulfil its historical mission" (*ibid.*). To will its mission is also to will its "essence" (1985, p. 471). Will to essence is also a will to science, for science, Heidegger believes, defines the essence of the German people. By willing their essence as science, Heidegger believes that the German people will be fulfilling their historical mission.

In what follows, I shall demonstrate that Heidegger's notion of resoluteness (*entschlossenheit* - as the dwelling in uncertainty necessary for questioning) in the Address does not meet the conditions of "entschlossenheit" or resoluteness as set out in his philosophical texts. I shall demonstrate that, in spite of the fact that, in the Address, Heidegger writes of the nihilism of the death of God, the level of anxiety which underpins resoluteness is not reached in the Address, and, therefore, the condition of fundamental questioning, of a questioning of "what-is" does not in fact take place in the Address. This will allow me to suggest that Heidegger's concept of the will or desire of the Germans for themselves is not a resolute but a pre-resolute, nationalist desire. For, as I will show, it is not a resolute desire that emerges out of anxiety, but is something that is artificially imposed on anxiety, or, as it is named in the Address, the death of God.

As outlined in the Essay, dawning is the condition of an attunement to what-is. Dawning of what-is is possible only when, through anxiety, the human being loses all sense of its identity and being at home in the world. Only when the human being has nothing, no one and no category of being upon which to rely, is it thrown into this reflexive mode of attunement. As long as the human being has a sense of who it is, it cannot articulate the question of what-is. As Heidegger puts it: "Dread holds us in suspense because it makes what-is in totality slip away from us. Hence we too, as existents in the midst of what-is, slip away from ourselves along with it. For this reason it is not 'you' or 'I' that has the uncanny feeling, but 'one'. In the trepidation of this suspense where there is nothing to hold on to, pure *Da-sein* is all that remains" (1948, p. 336).

What is noteworthy in this quotation is that when dread - or, as Heidegger calls it in *Being and Time*, anxiety - forms the basis of questioning, "we too ... slip away from ourselves". This means that we have no sense of a particular self at all. It is "one" - *Da-sein* or being there - and not "you" or "I" that is left after such an experience. This suggests that in dread - or, as I have throughout this text called it, anxiety - there is no sense of personal, geographical and thus

national identity that can be affirmed. There is no sense of the familiar through which to make sense of our being-in-the-world. We do not confront ourselves as either individuals or people of particular cultures or nations - all these dimensions are deprived of meaning. And it is only when they are deprived of meaning that we become attuned to what-is as such. We come to question what-is when all our sense of self and the familiar has been undermined.

It is the notion of a particular familiar self that is not undermined in the Address: the "German" as a political, geographical and personal identity is not undermined by the nihilism experienced in the "death of God". In the Address, it seems that the death of God gives rise not to "one" or pure "*Da-sein*", but to the notion of the "German" (1985, pp. 474), which is a particular form of *Dasein*. In the Address, Heidegger implies that what survives and is affirmed in the experience of the death of God, what survives the advent of nihilism, is the notion of "German-ness". For, where in the face of nihilism God loses all meaning, the category "German" is still a meaningful category. The "Germans", more powerful than God in their ability to withstand nihilism, are going to enable the world to survive in the face of the death of God. In the Address it is a particular national you or I that finds itself attuned to the question of what-is.

Even for Holderlin - Heidegger's hero - the event of the death of God left only the categories of time and space rather than specific objects or categories within space and time as themes of concern: "At such a moment, the man forgets himself and the God, and turns around, admittedly in a holy way, like a traitor. At the extreme limit of suffering, nothing indeed remains but the conditions of time and space" (Lacoue Labarthe, 1989, p. 43).

What Holderlin's observation implies is that, when we forget God, we also forget "man" in all his determinations. Therefore the notion of "German-ness" - amongst all categories within the world - is itself made insignificant in the face of the death of God, for this is a particular spacio-temporal category. For "German-ness" is a form of "Man". There is no identity that survives nihilism. And it is only in the experience of the absence of worldly identity that we experience space and time. Or, in Heideggerian terms, it is only in the anxiety of no-thingness that we experience "what-is" as such. On Heidegger's own terms, developed in *Being and Time* and in the *Essay*, to be in anxiety or to be placed in the "storm" (1985, p. 480), as Heidegger suggests the German is, would be to have no political or cultural "roof" over one's head. In such anxiety there is no "German" but only "one".

The Address gives every indication that the being of the German is not in question, but the taken for granted basis of all questioning. However, as Scott notes, Heidegger does question the average everyday ways of the German as a means of restoring it to its authenticity, but he does not question the notion of German-ness itself. This is a category that seems to survive all kinds of ruptures and alienations. The Germans must discover their true way and to this extent they must place themselves in question. That there is an essential German-ness is, however, not placed in question. Its integrity is assumed throughout the text. Again, Scott points out that Heidegger admits to not knowing the essence of the German, but he nevertheless unquestioningly believes that there is an essence that is German, that is beyond doubt (1990, pp.164-166), and that can be known; for, as Scott puts it, the university governs itself in terms of a German essence "they know they do not know". The function of the German University is to retrieve the "essence that is lost to view" (1990, p.152).

It therefore seems fair to say that, in the Address, questioning takes place not in the attunement of the "one" or "*Da-sein*" - as in the *Essay* - but in the context of the taken for grantedness of German-ness. The Germans are the horizon in which all questioning happens, but the being of the "German" is not itself exposed to questioning. Yet, in the *Essay*, it is only when the category of the "German" - as all other onticities - is placed in question that the question of "what-is" can possibly be raised, for it is only as we let go of all everyday and ontic categories that we are able to be attuned to the question of being: only when, in the insignificance and rupture of meaning experienced in dread or anxiety, we are no longer "Jew" or "German" can we ask the question of what-is. Only when all political, social, psychological and cultural categories have been ruptured, the question of what-is becomes a significant theme.

It must therefore be maintained that, in terms of Heidegger's philosophy as developed in the *Essay*, the German cannot be the condition of possibility of being attuned to what-is. For it is only in anxiety, when the category "German" has lost all meaning, that the possibility of being attuned to what is arises. From the Heideggerian perspective, resoluteness is possible only when the human being affirms that it has no identity, no-thing to hold onto; no home, no ideals, no ground. Exemplary of a resolute will is Heidegger's concept of the figure of Socrates: "All through his life and right into his death, Socrates did nothing else than place himself into this draft, this current, and maintain himself in it. This is why he is the purest thinker of the West. This is why he wrote nothing" (1968, p. 17).

In terms of the notion of resoluteness, what needs to be highlighted in this latter quote is the fact that Socrates “maintained” or affirmed himself in the “draft”, in the homelessness and the unknown. He did not know where the draft would blow him, but he resolutely allowed himself to be carried by it. To be Socratic, as Heidegger quotes Hölderlin, is to be “a sign that is not yet read,” a sign that does not know its destiny in advance, that does not know where it is headed but affirms the fact of not knowing where it is heading. In the Address, Heidegger maintains that the Germans, like Socrates, are themselves cast into a “storm” (1985, p. 480), but instead of resolutely affirming or maintaining themselves in the unknown direction in which the wind would blow, they are called upon to will the direction of the will in the name of science, themselves, their German-ness and their essence. They are called upon to will the end of the storm. Even though they are in a storm, they know the end to which they aspire. They want and will their German-ness. Rather than calling the Germans to will themselves, Heidegger, in line with the resoluteness required for deconstruction, ought to have called the German people to affirm their own homelessness and powerlessness. This affirmation of homelessness and powerlessness would be the grounds upon which an openness to what-is would “dawn” (1948, p. 347) and announce itself, for it is through the affirmation of homelessness that we are ready to articulate the existential questions being posed by such homelessness.

The will of the Germans for themselves is not shown to be something that announces itself through resoluteness. This presencing of German-ness through rupture has not been demonstrated in the Address. If anything, as already shown, the death of God - the crisis articulated in the Address - gives rise to an attunement to “one” or *Da-sein* and not to German-ness. Heidegger does not show how the death of God gives rise to the presence of the German to itself. It seems that Heidegger, in the Address, has manipulated his perspective on nihilism and anxiety in favour of his conception of the German mission. This possibility is suggested by a point made by Hans Sluga, who believes that it was by imposing his theory of crisis as questioning on to the German that the German comes to be seen as that Being in terms of which the questioning of Being becomes possible. He maintains that the Heideggerian notion of crisis, in the context of the Address, was “not an empirical idea waiting for confirmation but a regulative ideal, an a priori that structured the perception of the world for those who were in its grip. It determined their philosophical thinking as well as their political involvement” (1993, p. 67).

As an a priori, the language of crisis, the death of God, its meaning and significance, was imposed on the everyday reality of the German rather than being generated out of it. While there might be evidence that the Germans in the 1930s were in crisis, Heidegger does not supply any deconstructive evidence to suggest that the crisis experienced by the Germans was to do with the death of God and that the Germans qua Germans were most equipped to respond to this crisis. In fact, to reiterate a point already made, we can say that, if the crisis was to do with the death of God, then it was not specifically a crisis which could involve the German, but would involve humankind as a whole; for in such a crisis, not even the Germans as an historical identity could have a sense of themselves as Germans, a sense worth fighting for or preserving. But Heidegger does maintain that the Germans had a sense of mission, purpose and destiny as Germans, and yet they were in the grips of the death of God.

The fact that Heidegger did not show that German-ness announces itself through deconstruction suggests that the mode of reasoning in the Address cannot be characterised in the name of deconstruction. Indeed, as I have already claimed, most of the significant terms in the context of the address remain undeconstructed and are used in a way that presupposes that their common sense meaning is shared and self evident. This includes terms like “ourselves”, “essence”, “German-ness” and “spirit”. In the words of George Steiner, Heidegger’s language in the Address is “kitsch” (1996, p. xxvii). Translating this latter term into Heideggerian vocabulary, it is an “average everyday” (ab)use of his own language. If anything, the process of reasoning in the Address is an imitation of the process of deconstruction. It makes connections which appear to be deconstructive, but it does not demonstrate the actual steps of the deconstruction.

In his later writings, Heidegger maintains that a people cannot find themselves and their home by striving after themselves. As he says: “The native or indigenous cannot be acquired through a compulsive and brutally coercive grasping of one’s own being - as if the latter could be fixed like an empirical state of affairs.” T. S. Eliot amplifies Heidegger’s point in maintaining that culture cannot be willed: “Culture is the one thing that we cannot deliberately aim at. It is the product of a variety of more or less harmonious activities, each pursued for its own sake: the artist must concentrate upon his canvas, the poet upon his typewriter, the civil servant upon the just settlement of particular problems as they present themselves upon his desk, each according to the situation in which he finds himself” (Bantock, 1970, p. 62).

From a Heideggerian perspective, a culture, heritage, religion and average everyday intelligibility is not something that can be an object of my will because it defines the very conditions in which I will. It is not something for me, but something that I myself am “in”, something that defines the horizon in which I am attuned to the world. I cannot will the way in which my will is attuned or absorbed in the world. Heidegger expresses the impossibility of the mission of the will to will in the following way: “Inasmuch as the will wills the overpowering of itself, it is not satisfied with any abundance of life. It asserts power in overreaching - i.e., in the overreaching of its own will. In this way it continually comes as the selfsame back upon itself as the same” (1977, p. 81).

We can also say that background familiarity, as well as our being shaped by the way we are involved in the world, are not the kinds of things that form the subject matter of the will. We cannot will the background of familiarity that we have with a place, because the background is not an explicit object in itself but emerges into being only through involvement and interaction. And, as has already been said, we cannot will how our identity is going to emerge out of our interactions within an environment, for it does not emerge in terms of a blue print; rather, we discover who we are only through the interactions in which we have been involved.

It is this understanding that is absent in the Address. Here Heidegger calls upon the German, alienated from its mission, to will its own being, to will to be involved in the question of what-is and thus to will its own will and way of being involved in the world, which according to Heidegger is a will to oneness-to-what-is. In the Address, the German is not retrieving its essence, its spirit, and its mission, but is called upon to will itself to engage in these activities. In Heidegger’s own terms, however, this is not something that can be willed, but a concern that arises through the resolute acceptance of anxiety. In his later writings, Heidegger will admit the logic of this mistake when he says that the nation can “never be the goal and purpose” of itself. A comment by Martin Buber in this regard is apt: “[No] nation in the world has this [self-preservation and self assertion] as its only task, for just as an individual who wishes to preserve and assert himself leads an unjustified and meaningless existence, so a nation with no other aim deserves to pass away” (1963).

As Guignon points out, by 1936 Heidegger acknowledges that the Volk can “never be the goal and purpose” of itself and that the endeavour to see the Volk in such a way is a function of “me-centred” thinking (1993, p. 34). A nation that constitutes itself as its only task is a nation that wills its own will (for

all tasks involve an activity of willing). This point was never foreign to Heidegger the philosopher, who, even in *Being and Time*, believed that the self does not constitute itself by striving after itself, but by turning away from itself.

In the next part of this paper, I wish to develop the hermeneutic phenomenological form of such “me-centred” thinking, of a thinking which makes itself its own goal and purpose. I will focus on the central role played by the will in the Address. I shall deconstruct the will in terms of Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology as set out in *Being and Time*, demonstrating that it may be thought of not as an attunement to what-is but as an attunement to an attunement to what-is.

### **Narcissistic and Nationalistic Attunement to Attunement**

The subject matter of the will in the Address - “essence”, “ourselves”, “spirit”, “mission” and “science” - remains undeconstructed. The notion “ourselves” does not have the ontological status of entities present-at-hand or objects of equipment ready-to-hand. An “essence” is not like a hammer or a chemical structure. We do not know what it means to “will” “ourselves”. What practices are we involved in when we are said to be “willing” “ourselves”? We know what it means to manipulate and use a hammer, but what does it mean to be involved in ourselves? In the context of the Address, the form of practices corresponding to the notion of willing ourselves remains unclear. We do not know the ontological status of the notions of the “German”, “mission”, “spirit”. Even the term “will” remains undeconstructed in the Address. There is no outline of the logic of willing in the Address.

In order to clarify the meaning of the practices corresponding to the notion of “willing ourselves”, I wish to deconstruct the language of the Address in terms of the language of *Being and Time*. For in *Being and Time* Heidegger maintains that the language of the will is not an ontologically primordial language, but a language which needs to be deconstructed in terms of the language of *Dasein*’s way of caring and concern. For the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, to will something is to care for or be involved in it: “Willing and wishing are rooted with ontological necessity in *Dasein* as care. ... [Care] implies ontologically a relation to entities within-the-world. Care is always concern and solicitude” (1985a, p. 238). For Heidegger, to care is to care for some thing or entity. It is to stand in relationship to something ready-to-hand or present-at-hand. It is to be attuned to an other. This means that to “will” is to be attuned to or involved in some being or entity: “If

willing is to be possible ontologically ... the prior disclosedness ... of something with which one can concern oneself (the world as the 'wherein' of being-already)" (1985, pp. 238-239) must be given.

It is as a form of the language of involvement as developed in Being and Time that I propose to analyse the language of the Address. The question that I propose to address is: how are we, in the hermeneutic phenomenological terms developed by Heidegger in Being and Time, to understand the call of the Germans to will themselves, and their essence?

In the language of Being and Time the notion of "ourselves" is not an ontologically basic category but is deconstructable in terms of the notion of being-in-the-world. For Heidegger, the notion of "ourselves", understood ontologically, can never be an isolated subject that is independent of an objective world. "Ourselves" always presupposes and contains an irreducible relationship between *Dasein* and world. It is thus a form of relationship or of being involved with the world. This would mean that to will "ourselves" - the theme of the Address - is to will a particular form of relationship to or involvement in the world. It is to will a particular form of attunement to the world.

Next we need to unpack the notion of the "will" that wills "ourselves". In the context of the language of Being and Time, "will" is not an ontologically basic category but always finds expression in a particular form of involvement. To will is to be "involved in". It is to be concerned with or attuned to. This suggests that both the terms "will" and "ourselves" are forms of being attuned to or involved in the world. For, as already demonstrated, the notion of "ourselves" is an attunement or involvement in the world. Therefore, when we are concerned with willing ourselves, we are attuned to our way of being attuned to the world. Rather than the will being attuned to the ready-to-hand, it is attuned to its own attunement to the ready-to-hand. This is a form of attunement that does not occur to *Dasein* in its everyday state. For in its everyday state *Dasein* is absorbed in the world. This means that it is attuned to the ready-to-hand or even the present-at-hand, but not to its ways of being attuned to the ready-to- and present-at-hand. Being involved in or attuned to "ourselves" needs to be contrasted with being involved in something ready-to-hand. Being involved in ourselves means being involved in our attunement or involvement in the ready-to-hand. We are thus not concerned with the ready-to-hand itself, but with the relationship that we have to the ready-to-hand.

The same analysis seems to apply to all of the terms which constitute the subject matter of the Address;

the notion of the "German" refers to a particular way of being attuned to or involved in the world, for to be a "German" is to be involved in the world in particular kinds of ways. Therefore, to will the German is to be involved in or attuned to a particular form of involvement or attunement to the world. For the German to will itself as German is to will a particular attunement to the world, and thus to will a certain mood, a certain way of caring and seeing and experiencing. Similarly, for the German to will its "mission" is to will its way of being involved in the world, for in hermeneutic terms a "mission" is a way of being involved in the world. It is important to note that willing is not the only, but a particular, form of being attuned to attunement. It is a territorial or possessive relationship to attunement; a possessive relationship to "our" way of doing things.

Heidegger speaks about the German people's will to "be a spiritual people" (1985, p. 476). This is a people with a particular care for being-in-the-world, and thus to will itself as a spiritual people is to will a way of caring. To will a particular way of caring is to be attuned to a particular way of being attuned to the world. Heidegger also speaks about the willing of the essence of science and the essence of the German way of being. The word essence in Heideggerian terms often refers not to an item of equipment or object present-at-hand, but to a particular relationship or attunement between being and world, and thus to will an essence is to will a particular form of relationship to the world. It is to be attuned to a particular form of attunement. Similarly, to will the essence of science is to will a way of relating to the world, for science is not a being in itself but a certain way of being attuned to the world. Therefore, to will science is to will a certain way of being attuned to the world which means to be attuned to a form of attunement.

Put in more general terms, the focus of the Address is not "what-is" but a particular people's relationship to "what-is". Whereas the Essay is concerned with what-is, the Address is concerned with the relationship of the German to what-is. To be concerned with the Volk or German-ness is, as Heidegger says, to be "me-centred", and, as I am claiming, to be "me-centred" means to be focused on the German's relationship to what-is rather than being attuned to what-is itself. These are existentially different concerns. To will the German's relationship to what-is is to highlight not what-is as such but the relationship of the German to what-is. It is to focus on calling the German into a particular attunement; an attunement of wonder towards what-is. He who already wonders about what-is does not need to be manipulated in such a way. To be concerned with the question of what-is as such is to be absorbed by and

involved in what-is. To be concerned with the German's concern with what-is is to be absorbed with the German's absorption and involvement in what-is. In the first case, what-is is the theme of concern, while, in the second case, there is an existential distance and withdrawal from what-is in which the relationship to what-is becomes a theme to be willed. The Germans are called upon to will that their will is directed at what-is. They are called upon to will themselves to will a particular form of concern, namely a oneness to what-is. They are called upon to be attuned to their way of being attuned to the world.

Yet, as already mentioned, in the Essay the will is struck dumb by anxiety in such a way that all willing fails: "All affirmation fails" (1948, p. 336) in the face of dread - even the self affirmation of the German people. If, as demonstrated in the previous section of this paper, the will in the Address is not a resolute will, then what kind of will is it? In Heidegger's critique of Nietzsche he invites us to consider the possibility of a will that wills itself: "What the will wills it does not merely strive after as something it does not have. What the will wills it has already. For the will wills its will. Its will is what it has willed. The will wills itself" (Heidegger, 1977, p. 77). On the basis of Heidegger's analysis of Nietzsche, it seems fair to suggest that, in the Address, the kind of will that Heidegger is writing about is a will that wills itself. In his critique of Nietzsche, Heidegger goes a step further and suggests that one of the forms of a will that wills itself is a will to power, for power is nothing other than the power of the will. If this is the case, then it can be maintained that the Address is a call for Germans to will their own power.

The difference between and attunement to what-is and a wilful attunement to an attunement to what-is is also the difference between Heidegger's philosophy and his politics. To raise the question of what-is and the kind of people who stand in relationship to what-is is to raise two different kinds of questions, each having their own form of attunement. The philosophical question is characterised by openness to what-is, whereas the nationalist response is characterised by a territorialization of openness to what-is. In the latter case, "openness-to-what-is" becomes the privilege of the German, and "openness-to-what-is" becomes the object of the German will. Rather than being open to what-is, the nationalist wills openness-to-what-is. The nationalist logic is characterised by the demand that the German people will themselves to stand in relationship to what-is - that is, they must will their attunement to what-is. They, who are estranged from their mission (namely an attunement to what-is), must will the return of their mission. They must will themselves to will what-is. In the face of the rupture of everydayness, the

philosophical attunement, rather than calling for a willing of an openness-to-being, resolutely allows itself to be deconstructed. It does not posit openness-to-Being, as an object of will, for it accepts that its will is numbed and thus unable to posit anything as an object of will. The resolute being can affirm nothing other than its numbness. It cannot will that which will emerge out of its numbness. It cannot will that an openness-to-Being will emerge out of its paralysis. Such an openness to what-is emerges as a consequence of the affirmation of paralysis and not as an object of will. In Heideggerian terms, openness to "what-is" "dawns" (Heidegger, 1955, p. 347) and "forces itself" (Heidegger, 1955, p. 348) on the human being through its affirmation of paralysis. The distinction between philosophy and nationalism in Heidegger can be traced to a distinction between a resolute attunement and a will that wills its own way of being attuned to the world.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that a difference between Heidegger's philosophy and his politics revolves around the different ways in which he employs the notion of resoluteness. His philosophy is characterised by a resolved deconstruction of "what-is", while his politics is characterised by a territorialization of "what-is". In his philosophy, what-is is said to "dawn" on *Dasein*, while, in his politics, there is a willing of a relationship to what-is.

Perhaps one of the limitations of Heidegger's philosophy is that he fails to distinguish the conditions under which anxiety leads to an authentic questioning of what-is and an inauthentic endeavour to territorialize what-is. He acknowledges that anxiety is a frightening experience and that in the fright we either recoil from the terror or stand with firm resolve in the terror. The question is: what leads us in one or the other way? Heidegger does not answer or even address the question. Yet it is a crucial question. For, as any psychotherapist would know, anxiety does not lead inevitably to attunement either to self or to what-is. In anxiety, *Dasein* can remain in a state of terror in which it is too anxious to be responsive to what-is as such. In principle, the psychotherapist provides a holding environment in which a client or patient can be secure enough to explore the anxiety of being. Heidegger does not open up the question of such a holding environment. It seems that such an environment is vital to moving from an anxiety of terror and territorialisation to one of disclosure and dawning. Perhaps it is the case that Heidegger in his politics did not make this transition. Anxiety, far from being a dawning or disclosive experience, was an overwhelming experience which took on a persecutory form. Heidegger was emotionally

confused. I will let Herbert Marcuse have the last word when, in a letter to Heidegger after Auschwitz, he says: "The difficulty of the conversation seems to me rather to be explained by the fact that people in Germany were exposed to a total perversion of all concepts and feelings, something which very many accepted only too readily. Otherwise, it would be impossible to explain the fact that a man like yourself, who was capable of understanding western

philosophy like no other, were able to see in Nazism 'a spiritual renewal of life in its entirety', a 'redemption of occidental *Dasein* from the dangers of communism' (which however is itself an essential component of that *Dasein*!)" (Marcuse, 2005).

### About the Author



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