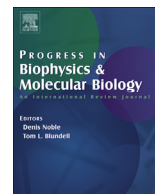




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Heideggerian dynamics and the monadological role of the ‘between’: A crossing with quantum brain dynamics



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ABSTRACT

Heideggerian theory is retrieved as a dynamics, the “Godly event” of *das Ereignis* (“enowning”), which is unexpectedly compatible with a version of quantum brain dynamics. In both the “between” (*das Zwischen*) has the fundamental role of the *dis-closure* that is *Existenz*. Heidegger's harsh critique of technology and science does not apply to revolutionary quantum brain dynamics. The crossing between Heidegger and quantum brain dynamics, as well as one fundamental ontological difference, illuminates both. To our surprise this difference turns out, *contra* Heidegger, to be monadological. The monadological conception is applied to long-standing problematics of measurement in quantum physics and consciousness in philosophy. Heideggerian *Existenz* is affirmed as fundamentally non-computational but is reformulated as a dynamical process of monadological *dis-closure* that radically deconstructs transcendent world.

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1. Introduction

Martin Heidegger lumped science with technology, toward which he was deeply critical (Heidegger, 1977). He would disdainfully “leave it [science] to its mania for its own usefulness” (Heidegger, 1999: 198). It is interesting to learn that Heidegger was a long-time friend of Heisenberg and possibly influenced the latter regarding the role of subjectivity in quantum physics (Heelan, 2013). This social fact makes the present discussion of Heideggerian “dynamics” perhaps less *ausgefallen*.

The focus here will be especially on Heidegger's *Beiträge Zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* (1989) or *Contributions to philosophy (from Enowning)* (1999), of which a sympathetic reader (Schmidt, 2001) states, “... I must be honest and say that what is fundamentally prominent about this book is that it is *exceedingly difficult*” (p. 33). The present discussion can be considered a kind of post-modern “re-trieve” of the *Beiträge*. And to lay my cards open on the table, I am less concerned about what Heidegger might have actually thought than what I think he could have thought had he *contra hoc* been interested in brain functioning and overtly embraced quantum theory.

So what follows is more of a selective *Rundtanz* in which Heideggerian ideas and quantum brain dynamics interrogate each other and accommodate to each other in a way that would surely

not please Heidegger. My discussion, then, is an unapologetic “appropriation” of Heidegger and gesture to the richness of his thought. As will be brought out, the quantum turn also forces one crucial but instructive departure from Heideggerian ontology, which reinterprets quotidian “world thrownness.”

Some would deny any attempt to discuss Heideggerian concepts apart from his own language and framework. Thus Emad (2001), who is one of the brave translators of the *Beiträge*, insists that “it is incumbent upon us to stay with Heidegger's language” and “we who come after Heidegger should stay with his words” (243). But Emad's injunction applies only to a language imbued with metaphysics.

The notion of a more familiar, more intelligible, more traditional language is a notion with which metaphysics attempts to obfuscate *Ereignis* by interpreting it according to metaphysical criteria of “comprehensibility and incomprehensibility of things.” (Emad, 2001: 243)

Quantum physics is a deep *critique* of metaphysics (though metaphysical predilections may persist, as in the Copenhagenist role of the subject in collapse of the wave function). What is to be investigated here is an *existential* rapprochement with quantum physics which would align quantum physics with continental thought. To obtain that rapprochement it will be necessary to “deconstruct” the very world in which *pace* Heidegger we always find ourselves already thrown.

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Now it must be admitted that quantum brain theory (e.g. Jibu and Yasue, 1995; Hameroff and Penrose, 1996; Mender, 2013; Travis et al., 2010; Vitiello, 1995, 2001, 2004) remains a peripheral and suspect model in the highly successful and still powerfully burgeoning brain sciences. The most widely known and discussed of these quantum brain models is that of Hameroff and Penrose (2014a, 2014b). However, there is no great gap in conventional brain science akin to the problematic “ultraviolet catastrophe” that spurred Planck to formulate a revolutionary quantum physical conception at the turn to the 20th century. Heidegger's (1927/1962) observation remains applicable to the happy brain sciences of today.

The real “movement” of the sciences takes place when their basic concepts undergo a more or less radical revision which is transparent to itself [unnoticed]. The level which a science has reached is determined by how far it is *capable* of a crisis in its basic concepts. (p. 29)

Any crossing in the sheaf of discourse between Heideggerian strands of thought and revolutionary quantum brain theory is unanticipated. If the cost be a calamity for common sense in the resulting deconstruction of world, we should not have expected anything less!

2. The abgrund (der Abgrund)

Any attempt to connect Heidegger with some other discourse runs into the immediate problem of what Heidegger's key terms mean. Not only are some of these terms very difficult to translate into English—see the Editors' Introduction to the *Beiträge* (Heidegger 1999)—but the same term takes on different meanings in different Heideggerian works (See Inwood's (1999) strenuous labors in his excellent *A Heidegger Dictionary*). Heidegger specifically writes “for the few and the rare” (1999, part 1, section 5), uniquely those whose “seeking yearns for the abgrund” (10). Heidegger most stoutly resists appropriation, as is attempted here.

Der Abgrund or the abgrund is not a kind of foundational ground ... “is” does not even apply. “It” lacks all objectuality, is devoid of any presence, indeed in principle completely stays-away (*Wegbleiben*). Abgrund is sheer undecided emptiness (*Leere*), yet at the same time its withdrawal sustains “the fullness of what is still-undecided” (269), that is, *der Abgrund offers possibility*. Strictly speaking, the abgrund is pre-objectual, pre-space-time, indeed “unspeakable” (to borrow Bell's (2004) fine term from quantum physics).

Abgrund is not a type of ground but a dynamics, which Heidegger terms *das Ereignis* and is commonly translated as an “event,” the welling-up (en-, *Er-*) of an event of “appropriation.” Emad and Maly's (1999) translation of *Er-ignis* as “enowning” is as awkward as “appropriation,” in that both translations imply a duality of active/passive (owning/owned, appropriating/appropriated) (For a discussion of the ramifying signification of *das Ereignis* in Heidegger see Inwood (1999, 54–57)). *Das Ereignis* is the unspeakable dynamics of the unspeakable abgrund, whereas it is the role of the entity which Heidegger calls *Dasein* to dis-close the “gift” given by the closed dynamics.

One of the great difficulties in reading Heidegger is his tendency to come at ideas from odd directions. At first blush one would not think that “the Gods” (*die Götter*)—or better, the “Godly ones”—would have any connection to an event of appropriation. Yet to Heidegger's way of thinking the Godly ones are integrally connected to *das Ereignis*.

The ‘godly ones’, then, are appearances or manifestations of what it means to be ‘divine’ or ‘sacred’. They are concrete

manifestations of the inexhaustibly rich reality of being divine. (Crowe, 2007 237)

The plural “the gods” is thus not a quantitative decision about divine entities, but is the designation of the richness of the openness or undecided quality of the divine which is gathered into the ultimate God. (Prudhomme, 1993 449)

The Heideggerian dynamics of unspeakable abgrund is a divine enriched dynamics.

3. Being and time

Heidegger's first major work (dedicated to Husserl) was *Sein und Zeit*, Being and Time (1962), and thirty five years later came *Zeit und Sein* (1972). Being and time, time and being, are central to his thought.

Es gibt Sein. Es gibt Zeit. (Heidegger, 1972 16)

The unspeakable and divine *Ereignis* dynamics gifts Being and gifts Time to the entity *Dasein*, who is required for the disclosure of Being-as-presence and required for temporality (*Temporalität*).

Da-sein is the entity who is “there,” *Da*. The meaning of the *Da* is not the spatial “there” of someone standing there at the podium. The meaning of the *Da* can be seen when we shake the sleepy-head awake in the morning and ask, “Are you there?” Meaning: do you now exist? Are you thrown amidst my transcendent world or are you still in a sleepy stupor, in no world or even absorbedly still *Da* amidst an inner dream world?

By its very nature, *Dasein* brings its “there” [*Da*] along with it. ... *Dasein* is its disclosedness. (Heidegger, 1962 171, italics original).

The *Da* is existential, the case of the living entity that is the *Dasein*. The very Being of the *Da* is disclosure.

The meaning of ‘Being’ is straightforward.

From the dawn of Western-European thinking until today, Being means the same as presencing. (Heidegger, 1972 2)

But time and temporality do not mean anything like what we usually understand.

For time itself is nothing temporal, no more than it is something that is (Heidegger, 1972 14).

Temporality continually *stretches* a time horizon of past, present and future. Now this moment; now this semester. Yesterday; yesteryear. What will be tomorrow; what will be next century. The dynamics of temporality stretches time; temporality temporalizes our horizon.

But temporality does more than temporalize our horizon. It spatializes our horizon too. What is close and what is far away are stretched at every moment (Close by on the veranda. Close by in Los Angeles.). Temporality for Heidegger (1982) is ecstatic-horizonal, projects beyond itself in virtue of tuning an attunement, *situates*.

[B]eing attuned is to be grasped as the *fundamental nature of our Dasein* (Heidegger, 1995 89).

Temporality is transcendental for our very Husserlian intentionality.

This concept of “attunement” is key to appropriating Heidegger

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