

Heidegger on Heraclitus: *Kosmos/World as Being Itself*

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ABSTRACT: This essay draws on texts previously untranslated into English, and in particular Heidegger's brilliant 1943 lecture course on Heraclitus, to show how Heidegger understood *kosmos* as an early Greek name for Being itself (*Sein selbst*). The contemporary scholarship has altogether missed the significant role that this Greek *Ur-word* plays in his later thinking. The "gleaming," "adorning" *kosmos*—which the later Heidegger understood to be "world" (*Welt*) in the fullest and richest sense—is not in the first place any kind of transcendental-phenomenological "projection" of the human being; rather, it is the resplendence of the "ever-living" Being-unfolding-way itself from out of which both the gods and human beings come to pass and pass away. The independence of *kosmos/Being itself* in relation to the human being is highlighted. An *Ode* by Pindar and a painting by Andrew Wyeth are also considered.

"Beauty belongs to the essential unfolding of Being."
—Heidegger (GA 73.1: 134)

"Kosmos [as physis] shimmers ungraspably through everything."
—Heidegger (GA 15: 282)

The shining star in the night sky is beautiful. Yet what always struck Heidegger as even more beautiful was the "hidden" motion—the way—wherein and whereby the star comes to shine so brightly. This "way" he named Being in distinction from beings (the "ontological difference"), and, as he saw it, Being was named *kosmos* by Heraclitus. In a number of earlier studies, I have elucidated how Heidegger understood the earliest Greek thinkers to have caught sight of the Being-way and named it as *physis*, *aletheia*, and the primordial *Logos*. Yet only in passing have I addressed his reflections on *kosmos* as an early Greek name

for Being itself (*Sein selbst*), and the contemporary scholarship has altogether missed the significant role that this Greek *Ur*-word plays in his later thinking. The “gleaming,” “adorning” *kosmos*—which the later Heidegger understood to be “world” (*Welt*) in the fullest and richest sense—is not in the first place any kind of transcendental-phenomenological “projection” of the human being; rather, it is the resplendence of the “ever-living” Being-unfolding-way itself from out of which both the gods and human beings come to pass and pass away.

I. PINDAR’S “GOLD” NAMES BEING ITSELF

On 9 September 1966 in Le Thor, Heidegger highlighted for his French colleagues his reading of Heraclitus’s understanding of *kosmos* (GA 15).¹ Not long after this meeting, he engaged the matter again in the joint seminar with Eugen Fink in the winter semester 1966–1967 at Freiburg (GA 15). The dialogue with Fink, as interesting as it is, is a more difficult source to draw upon because it is often not clear what precisely Heidegger’s position is in relation to Fink’s. In any case, all of his statements on Heraclitus’s *kosmos* made in the 1950s and 1960s rest principally upon his detailed and lengthy reading of fragment 30 in his lecture course on Heraclitus given at Freiburg during the summer semester of 1943. Although he discussed fragment 30 in reflections prior to 1943, we may consider the 1943 lecture course to be his principal reading of *kosmos*.

In *Heidegger’s Way of Being*, two chapters are devoted to Heidegger’s brilliantly creative readings of Heraclitus’s fragments in the lectures courses in 1943 and 1944, which were collected in GA 55, published in 1979, but not yet translated into English. In the chapter titled “Sentinels of Being,” I made note of his reading of *kosmos*, but in the present essay I would like to develop his line of thinking more completely and draw out the implications more fully.²

Yet to accomplish this, we must take a step back to a lecture course on the *Spruch* of Anaximander that he had prepared in 1942 but did not deliver. The text of the lecture course was recently published as GA 78 in 2010, and the reading that he unfolds is as compelling as the readings of Parmenides and Heraclitus that he undertook in this same extraordinarily creative period of the early 1940s. In this lecture course text, he also undertook a lengthy discursus on several lines from Pindar’s *Isthmian Ode 5*, and his commentary is especially important for our purposes. To crystallize his elucidation: After carefully laying out the ancient Greek experience of Being as temporal shining-forth, he turns to the opening lines (verses 1–18) of Pindar’s *Ode*. Heidegger is especially concerned with the first three lines, which in English translation are usually rendered:

Mother of the Sun, Theia of many names,
Because of you men value gold [*chryson*] as mighty
above all other things [*periosion allon*];³

He focuses on Pindar's words *periosion allon*, and he notes that these words are said in relation to "gold" (*chryson*, 67). His effort is to clarify this relation.

He observes that *periosion* is the Ionian form of the word *periousios* (60), and this tells us that Pindar's word speaks to *peri* and *ousia*—the "around" (*peri*) "what-comes-to-presence" (*ousia*). For Heidegger, *periosion allon* in this line speaks not simply to what shines forth (beings and beings as a whole) but moreover to the shining or gleaming or glowing that *allows* everything (*allon*) to shine forth in the first place. What is principally brought into view is the unique radiance or gleam (*Glanz, glänzen*) that lets or allows every particular being, as well as the whole ensemble of beings, to shine forth in the first place. How, then, is this unique and primordial gleam named by Pindar? The word in the *Ode* is "gold," which is esteemed by human beings above "everything" else because its distinctive lustre is a manifestation of the goddess of "light," Theia. Thus, as Heidegger reads the lines, Pindar had caught sight of and composed a hymn to that which allows all beings to be—and this is Being itself. Pindar glimpsed the very essencing of Being as "gold" as that which "gleams about or around" (*umglänzt*) all beings. The originary Greek experience of Being was brought to language in this poetizing: "Pindar's song thinks Being in the name of gold" (94).⁴ Being is named in the Greek word *einai*, Heidegger tells us, and Pindar's word "gold" is precisely "this illuminating and illuminating-about-and-around illumination [that] gives us the hint into *einai*" (295). The human being "glimpses" Being itself as "gold," but he warns that this must not be construed in a manner that would bring Being under the yoke of the human being:

From out of this essence of the human being we first experience wherein the Greek of the "Greek human being" lies. "The Greek human being" does not provide the measure for the understanding of "Being," but rather it is the manner in which "Being" clears itself as *einai* that determines the essence of the human being. The lighting-clearing itself [*die Lichtung selbst*] calls to the human being in the dispensation of its essence. (295)

The full significance is this: The "lighting-clearing itself" "calls" or *grants* the human being. *Die Lichtung selbst* is Being and not the human being.

II. HERACLITUS'S *KOSMOS* IS BEING ITSELF

With all this in mind, we turn to his elucidation of fragment 30 in the 1943 lecture course (GA 55). His reading is related to his elucidations of the other fragments of Heraclitus, and already in the lecture course he had clarified that "fire" (*pur*) is to be understood as that which allows all beings to flame up in the first place and that the "lightning flash" (*keranos*) is that which "steers" all beings into their proper place. The "fire" and "lightning flash" of Heraclitus's sayings are names for the pure emerging that is *physis*, which in turn is a name for Being itself. Ac-

ording to Heidegger, Heraclitus is always drawing our attention to that which *enables* all beings to be as they are, and as they are in relation to one another in the ensemble. Being itself as *physis* as “ever-living fire” as “lightning flash” is this pure temporal emerging-manifesting way that has gone overlooked in the history of metaphysical thinking. Yet Heraclitus also named this “way” as *kosmos*.

Heidegger’s remarks on fragment 30 in the lecture course are dense and difficult to decipher, and no doubt this is one reason that the significance of his elucidation of *kosmos* has been largely passed over or missed. His play with the language is brilliant but also obscure and overdone; nevertheless, his fundamental point is clear enough, and that is what I wish to focus upon. He tells us once again that what Heraclitus was seeking to bring into view in the sayings was *physis* as the pure “emerging” that “opens up” all beings in the first place: *physis* as “the inapparent joining, the noble opening up, the from-out-of-itself essencing lighting-clearing” (163). It is from out of *physis*, this “lighting-clearing joining,” that “appears and shines forth beings as a whole.”

This shining-joining, he continues, which allows all beings to shine forth and steers them together in the ensemble is named in the German language with the words *das Schmücken* and *das Zieren*. These are two words often mentioned and favored by Heidegger but, again, often overlooked by commentators. The two words are very close in meaning, and in English, we have a variety of words that we may employ to translate: emblazoning, adorning, embellishing, decorating, bedecking, decking out, festooning, gracing. It is best that we keep all of these English words in play as we follow Heidegger’s discussion because his key point is that *das Schmücken* and *das Zieren*, this emblazoning and adorning, does not in the first place refer to any particular being or thing that shines forth brilliantly, but rather to “the lighting-clearing letting-appear” itself (*das lichtende Erscheinenlassen*) by which and through which everything is steered to its proper place and radiates and gleams in its own way. *Physis* is this “primordial emblazoning and adorning” (*das ursprüngliche Schmücken und Zieren*), but this is also the fundamental meaning of the Greek word *kosmos* as employed by Heraclitus: “*kosmos ist die Zier*” (163), Heidegger states. *Kosmos* is another name for the primordial emblazoning-adorning, and both words, *kosmos* and *die Zier*, also convey the sense of what “stands out” and is “noble” and full of “honor” (*Ehre, Auszeichnung*). Accordingly, the highest god Zeus bore the name *kosmos*, and the Cretans called their political leaders *kosmoi*. Yet more fundamentally, the sense is of all beings—everything—“appearing in the light, standing in the open of renown and radiance” (164).⁵

In naming *kosmos*, therefore, Heraclitus was naming the genuine to-be-thought (*das Zu-denkende*), and the to-be-thought is not simply beings or even beings as a whole, but that which enables all beings to be, namely, Being itself. As Heidegger clearly and explicitly puts it: “*die ‘Zier’—kosmos—*is then indeed to be said of Being itself” (164). He cautions that we must not read back into Heraclitus’s *Ur-word* our

modern understanding of “cosmos” and “cosmology,” for these terms can do no better than refer to beings as a whole. Rather, we must understand *kosmos* from out of “the oneness of essence (*Wesenseinheit*) with *physis*, *harmonia*, and *me dunon pote*,” and this means thinking *kosmos* as the emblazoning-adorning that lets beings, and beings as a whole, flare up and gleam in the first place. In this sense, then, *kosmos* as *die Zier* is precisely “the lightning flash” (*der Blitz*) and “the fire” (*das Feuer*) spoken of by Heraclitus in several other fragments. *Kosmos* is as *die Zier* the “dispensing” or “sending” (*schickende*) of beings-along-their-way and as such:

This emblazoning-adorning thus thought as [the] lighting-clearing joining, [that is, as] *physis*, *zoe*, *harmonia*, is the emblazoning-adorning fire itself, the lightning flash. *Kosmos* and fire say the Same. (164)

Only with these considerations in mind, he maintains, can we approach in a truly thoughtful way fragment 30, in which we find the key word *aeizoon*, the “ever-living”:

kosmon ton auton hapanton oute tis theon oute anthropon epoiesen, all' en aei kai estin kai estai pur aeizoon, haptomenon metra kai aposbennumenon metra.

Fragment 30 is typically translated into English along the lines of:

This world, which is the same for all, no one of gods or men has made; but it was ever, is now, and ever shall be an ever-living fire, with measures kindling and measures going out.

We will return to Heidegger’s own translation of the fragment, but it is more helpful to attend first to his commentary. He notes that the fragment speaks to *kosmos* as *die Zier* as the joining and ordering of all beings as a whole. All beings are the emblazoned and adorned in the ordered ensemble, and this ensemble he refers to as the “apparent harmony” (*harmonia phanere*). Yet in his view, Heraclitus’s chief concern was with the “inapparent harmony” (*harmonia aphanes*), that is, the “hidden” joining and ordering motion through and throughout all beings. This fundamental “difference” (*Unterschied*) between the “inapparent harmony” (*kosmos*) and the “apparent harmony” of all beings is brought to light by the fragment, according to Heidegger, and we hear in his characterization of the matter an echo of his life-long concern with the “ontological difference,” or simply the “difference,” between Being and beings. Our getting into view this fundamental “difference,” he further explains, thereby enables us to understand Heraclitus’s fragment 124 (and fragment 54). According to these sayings, even the most beautiful ordering of beings is nothing more than “a heap of spilled debris” in comparison to the joining-ordering that is *kosmos* itself (165; also see GA 15: 282). In other words, for Heidegger as he reads Heraclitus, *kosmos* (as Being itself) is always prior in importance—and prior in “beauty”—to beings and even to their splendid array in the ensemble.

III. THE PRIMACY OF BEING ITSELF AS *KOSMOS*

It is precisely the priority and primacy of Being itself that Heidegger understands to be highlighted in fragment 30. He notes that the singular emblazoning-adorning (*die Zier*), and therefore *kosmos*, is lost from view when the focus is on beings in their resplendence. This focus on beings, he suggests, also moves the human being (or the gods) to the center of attention at the expense of the primordial emblazoning-adorning. Yet in the saying, Heraclitus is explicit and emphatic that the primordial emblazoning-adorning is “not made or produced, neither by one of the gods nor by one of the human beings.” By way of clarifying this, Heidegger adds this crucial line: “*physis* is beyond the gods and human beings” (166). What is more:

Every metaphysical kind of consideration, whether it proceeds with God as the first cause or with the human being as the center of all objectifying, fails if it should attempt to think what is given to be thought in this saying [of Heraclitus]. *Prior to every being and prior to every origination of a being from a being, Being itself essences [west]. It [Being itself] is nothing made and has therefore also no determinate beginning at a point in time and no corresponding ending of its existence.* (166, italics mine)

There are several important points to be considered. Heidegger proposes that Heraclitus’s *kosmos* as Being itself is altogether missed not only by the kind of traditional metaphysical thinking that posits a divine being as the first cause, but also by the kind of modern transcendental-phenomenological thinking that posits the human knower as the center of all objectifying. Thus we hear in the first line a critique of the thinking of Descartes-Kant-Husserl as much as a critique of the thinking of Plato-Aristotle-Aquinas. Furthermore, the priority and primacy of Being itself in relation to all beings is made perfectly clear in the second sentence. Being itself is not a being; Being itself is the temporal way wherein and whereby all beings come to pass and, as such, is prior in importance and more luminous and beautiful than any particular being or than beings as a whole.

Since Being itself is prior to every being, it is therefore prior to the human being. This means that in the structural relation of Being to the human being, Being precedes and exceeds the human being and is in no way reducible to what is posited or constituted in “meaning” by the human being. Simply put, therefore, Being is not dependent upon the human being (or the gods). The third sentence affirms that this is indeed the case. Heidegger takes very much to heart Heraclitus’s words in fragment 30 that Being as *kosmos* is the “ever-living fire” that “always was, is, and always will be.” Being as *kosmos* is the without-beginning-and-without-end temporal unfolding of beings that is *independent* of the human being. Being is not any kind of onto-theological supreme entity or first cause or first principle, but it is *also* not that which is correlated with the human being in such a way

that it is dependent upon the human being. The second and third sentences tell us that Being “is” or “essences” even if the human being is not, and—let us be clear—this means that his position is simply incompatible with Husserl’s, or with any other, strictly transcendental-phenomenological approach. A text such as this one, unfortunately overlooked in the recent scholarship, attests to the effect of the “turn” in Heidegger’s thinking after the late 1920s and makes evident that the later Heidegger’s thinking of Being is at a great distance from the “transcendental idealism” of his teacher, Husserl, and from all other “transcendental” philosophical perspectives that would maintain that there is “Being” only insofar as there is the human being.

IV. KOSMOS AS BEING ITSELF IS “MEASURE” FOR ALL BEINGS

Heidegger once more offers a cautionary note that Heraclitus’s thinking on *kosmos* (as Being itself) is not addressed and appreciated in the understanding of “cosmos” in the natural sciences (166–7). For now, we can let his observation stand, but, in fact, there may be good reason to think that the richest reflections in contemporary astro-physics do indeed dovetail, or at least touch upon, what Heidegger was seeking after in elucidating the Heraclitean *kosmos* as Being itself. Even so, this is a discussion for another time.

There is in the lecture course text at this point (167–8) a parenthetical remark wherein he seeks to clarify the “temporal” character of the “eternal” *kosmos*. For Heidegger, “eternity” does not mean without time, but clarifying the proper character of the “time” of “eternity,” that is, the primordial “time” proper to *kosmos*, is a difficult matter, which he only raises as an issue in the paragraph. Nevertheless, this brief remark is noteworthy because it highlights once again how the later Heidegger was concerned to think the “temporality” (*Temporalität*) of Being directly and not through the *Zeitlichkeit* of the human being (*Dasein*), which was his early attempt in *Being and Time*.⁶

He proceeds with the elucidation of fragment 30 with a kind of summary statement: “the essencing emblazoning-adorning (*die Zier*), which is prior to all that is makeable and producible, [and] in whose radiance gleams the lighting-clearing (*die Lichtung*) of everything illuminated-cleared, is *pur aeizoon*, the ever-emerging fire” (168). In his view, enough has been said to show how *kosmos* is the primordial emblazoning-adorning as “ever-living” and “ever-emerging” “fire” and how, therefore, *kosmos* is another name for *physis* and *harmonia*—and for Being itself. There remains to elucidate the last part of the fragment, which reads:

pur aeizoon, haptomenon metra kai aposbennumenon metra.

Usual English translation: “an ever-living fire, with measures kindling and measures going out.”

Heidegger's translation: "*Feuer immerdar aufgehend, entzündend sich die Weiten, sich verlöschend die Weiten.*" (168)

My translation of Heidegger's: "fire ever-emerging, expanses kindling themselves, expanses extinguishing themselves."

In this part of Heraclitus's saying, Heidegger finds a difficulty with the translation of the Greek word *metra* or *metron*. He notes that *pur* (fire) is named together with *metron*, and therefore "fire" (as *physis*) and *metron* are thought together. *Metron* is therefore in "essence" related to *physis*, *harmonia*, and *kosmos*, and he inquires into the proper translation of *metron*. "Measure" (*Maß*) is a "correct" translation, he observes, but he is wary of this word "measure" because it has come to mean something very different in the modern mathematical thinking of the natural sciences. For the natural sciences it is perfectly evident how fire alternately blazes up and is extinguished: This happens "according to measures," which means according to certain "laws of nature" that are comprehensible in exact mathematical terms. This modern scientific understanding of "according to measures" is an obstacle to a proper understanding of Heraclitus's saying, yet it has become so predominant and unquestioned that it compromises the translations of the fragment by philologists such as Diels-Kranz and Snell, both of whom translate the word *metra* (*metron*) in the fragment with "*nach Maßen*," "according to measures" (169).

The modern scientific understanding of *kosmos* as "fire" igniting and extinguishing "according to measures" will not do, but neither will any "theologically metaphysical cosmological" attestations be helpful. Simply having recourse to the "Old Testament" will not suffice, he observes; the real challenge is to make a concerted effort to understand Heraclitus's words in a truly Greek manner (170). As he reads the Greek, *haptomenon* means more precisely to "alight" in the sense of "making light, letting become bright, lighting, opening up the light." This gets us a step closer toward understanding what *metron* means in the saying. *To metron* does indeed mean "measure" in the sense of a measurement of weight or length, but this is not the primary or primordial sense of the word. A measuring stick can "measure" only because space has been "measured out" or opened out in the first place, so, for Heidegger, the fundamental meaning (*die Grundbedeutung*) of "measure" is as "dimension," "expanse," "the open." When the Greeks spoke of *metron thalasses*, they did not mean a measurement of the sea but rather "the expanse of the sea" or "the open sea" (170). Accordingly, we are now able to catch sight of what Heraclitus was seeing and saying: *physis-kosmos-pur-(fire)-die Zier* (as the primordial emblazoning-adorning) is the primordial measuring out that is the lighting-clearing (*die Lichtung*), the expanse (*die Weite*), the open (*das Offene*), in which and by which all beings shine forth. Yet we must not forget that *physis* as "the ever-emerging fire" is "self-concealing" and "self-closing" as well;

there is always borne along the dimension of reserve and sheltering. It is thus that, according to the fragment, “the ever-emerging fire” endlessly kindles *and extinguishes*, lightens *and darkens*.

Only by virtue of *kosmos* as *die Zier* as the Open can all beings—including human beings—be at all. Thus Heidegger concludes his remarks in this section by affirming once more that in no way does fragment 30 say that the primordial “fire” as *kosmos* as *physis* unfolds itself “according to” measure; rather, *physis* is the measure of all, it is “the measure-giving”:

The ever-emerging fire directs itself not in the first place “according to” measures, but rather gives the measures in the properly understood sense of *metron*. The primordial emblazoning-adorning [*Zier*], *kosmos*, is the measure-giving; the measure that *kosmos* gives is it itself as *physis*. (171)

V. KOSMOS IN LATER WRITINGS

As I mentioned at the outset, Heidegger and Fink discussed at some length fragment 30 in their joint seminar in 1966–1967 (GA 15). Some of the basic elements of Heidegger’s 1943 reading are clearly discernible in their exchange, but one probably learns more about Fink’s position than Heidegger’s. A more direct and personal later reference to *kosmos* may be found in *Sojourns*, the philosophical travelogue that he composed at the time of his first visit to Greece in 1962 (GA 75). Upon their ship reaching the island of Rhodes, “the island of roses,” and “as the blue of the sky and the sea changed by the hour,” he meditated on the “dark fire” brought to the Greeks from the East and how it inspired Greek thought and poetry (229). It was along this way that Heraclitus came to think the flaring up of all that is present as *kosmos* as *der Schmuck* and *die Zier*, the emblazoning-adorning, which was not created or made by the gods or humans (229). More precisely, *kosmos* as *die Zier* names “the illuminating, that which brings something to shine forth”; it names “the ever-emerging fire,” which, according to fragment 30, endlessly measures out all things. And with such meditations, Heidegger related in the journal, he thus passed the day “in conversation with Heraclitus” (230).

In 1966, he reprised his reading of fragment 30, this time with French colleagues and friends in a seminar in Le Thor on 9 September at the house of the poet René Char (GA 15). Heidegger begins with a full translation of the saying that calls to mind his 1943 reading:

This *kosmos* here, insofar as it is the same for all and for all that is, none of the gods, as well as no one of the human beings, has brought it forth, [for] it always already was and it is and will be: inexhaustibly living fire kindling itself in measures, extinguishing in measures. (280)

His reading that follows is a highly condensed version of his 1943 reading, but several of his comments deserve additional consideration. He states that fragment 30 speaks to the “eternity” of the Heraclitean *kosmos*, and, as he had in the earlier reading, he observes that this eternity must be thought in terms of time: “eternity does not prevail over time” (281). What the saying points to is that “this world here has not been made, since it was already there at all times” and that “it is simply said [in the fragment] that as far back as one may go, *this* ‘world’ was already there.” Thus he affirms once more the priority and independence of *kosmos*/world in relation to human beings (and the gods).

In this reading, Heidegger specifically calls attention to his use of the word “world” (*Welt*) in speaking of the Heraclitean *kosmos*, and this is significant. He is, as always, careful to distinguish the Heraclitean world/*kosmos* from modern conceptions of “world” as a great space or container for all other beings. The Heraclitean world/*kosmos* is rather “a way of being” (*eine Weise zu sein*), and he proceeds to elucidate *kosmos* in terms of *die Zier* and *der Schmuck* and “gold” (281–2)—all of which we have already discussed. Yet what needs to be highlighted here is that, for Heidegger, “world” is primarily and primordially the Heraclitean *kosmos* (as Being itself) and *not* that which is projected by the human being and thereby dependent upon the human being. The Greek word *kosmos* as used by Heraclitus manifests “the fundamental relation of the Greek language to nature (*Natur*),” which “consists in letting nature itself open in its radiance.” For this reason, he adds, the Greek language “names the *kosmos* as older (*älter*) than gods and human beings, who remain related back to it [*kosmos*], since no one of them could ever have brought it forth” (282). Again, we must appreciate the full import of Heidegger’s statement: *kosmos*/world/Nature is “older” than the gods and human beings. In other words, the essential unfolding of *kosmos*/world/Being is both structurally and temporally prior to the gods and human beings and in no way dependent on them.

CONCLUDING REFLECTION

The National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., recently mounted an exhibition of a number of paintings by the American artist Andrew Wyeth, and the centerpiece of the show was Wyeth’s 1947 painting *Wind from the Sea*.⁷ The image is simple enough: an open window through which we see a field of dry grass and two dirt tracks that lead to the shore. Beyond the open field, there are clusters of dark woods and above the woods a big, blank sky. Yet on the interior side of the window, there is a sudden motion that breaks the stillness of the composed elements. The nearly transparent lace curtains hanging at the window billow out gently; a wind has caught them and lifted them up and out into the room. It is this surprising, spontaneous motion that captivates. All at once, we realize that everything in the

image—the window, the grass, the water, the woods, the sky—is not static and still, but in motion. Everything is being moved along by this hidden breath of air.

Wyeth, we may say, captured in an image what Heidegger brought to language and what he understood Heraclitus to have brought to language: the “hidden harmony” (*harmonia aphanes*) that moves all beings along their way and “shimmers ungraspably through everything.” Being as *physis* as *kosmos*. The unfolding—the way—of all beings, which is not a being itself but the Being-way of all beings that is indeed manifest—yet only indirectly and glancingly. The Being-way cannot be “seen” in any usual way, and for this reason, it is “inapparent” or “hidden.” Yet it “gleams” nonetheless for those who are open and receptive and accepting: in the billowing of a curtain; in the low murmur of a propeller plane making its way across the soft summer sky; in the puff of white snow drifting off the branches of a pine tree on a cold, calm winter’s day; in the luminous moon suddenly emerging from behind thick clouds in the harvest-time night sky. Heidegger caught sight of what artists and poets have seen all along, and he brought it into a poetic philosophical language that is original and compelling. It is all too easy to lament the difficulty and obscurity of some of Heidegger’s language in his thinking the Being-way, but the challenge—and reward—is to come to see in his saying the very matter itself (*die Sache selbst*)—and then to say it again for ourselves.

NOTES

1. All references to Heidegger’s works are to the volumes in the *Gesamtausgabe* (*Complete Works*) published by Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main. The initial reference is in each case to GA + volume number, and all subsequent references are simply to the page number.
2. Richard Capobianco, *Heidegger’s Way of Being* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014). Both *Heidegger’s Way of Being* and the earlier *Engaging Heidegger* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010) seek to reaffirm and restate the core matter of Heidegger’s thinking, namely, Being as radiant manifestation, and thereby to counter certain recent strict “transcendental-phenomenological” readings of Heidegger that maintain the reduction of Being to “sense” or “meaning” and, therefore, the dependence of Being upon the human being.
3. *Pindar II*, The Loeb Classical Library, trans. William H. Race (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), 174–5.
4. For a further discussion of “gleaming” and “gold,” see *Heidegger’s Way of Being*, chap. 2.
5. The relation of the word *kosmos* to Zeus and to Cretan political leaders is mentioned by Heidegger in the 1966 seminar at Le Thor (discussed below); GA 15: 281.
6. The recently published so-called “Black Notebooks” offer valuable supplementary insights into Heidegger’s thinking and the development of his thinking. For example, in the first Notebook, GA 94, in a “reflection” dated from 1934–1935, Heidegger offers a remarkably pointed comment on the insufficiency of *Being and Time* and on

the necessary transition to the thinking of the “temporality” of *Being itself* (as “the essencing of truth” and as “the clearing” itself):

Being and Time is not a “philosophy about time,” and even less so a teaching on the “temporality” [*Zeitlichkeit*] of the human being, but rather clearly and surely a path to the grounding of the truth of Being; of *Being itself*, and not of beings, and also not of beings *as* beings. Leading the way is the leap ahead into “Temporality” [*Temporalität*], into that wherein primordial time with primordial space essence together *as* unfoldings of the essencing of truth, of its [truth’s] transporting-transfixing clearing [*Lichtung*] and concealing. Of course, [therefore], the first, insufficient version of the third section of the first part of *Being and Time* had to be destroyed. (GA 94: 272; Heidegger’s italics)

7. *Andrew Wyeth: Looking In, Looking Out*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 4 May–30 November 2014.