

RUPTURE, EVENT, BEING:
UNDERSTANDING *EREIGNIS* IN LATE HEIDEGGER

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Abstract:

Heidegger's contribution to the relationship between being and event is foundational for the contemporary philosophy of the event. Here, I articulate the significance of Heidegger's *Ereignis*, arguing that it is the event of being's ruptured unfolding. First, I analyze the claim "Being essences as *Ereignis*" in *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, paying particular attention to the shift from "essence" to "essences." Second, I suggest, through an analysis of Heidegger's 1949 essay "The Turning," the etymological ancestor of *Ereignis*, *Eräugnis*, reveals the dynamic meaning of the event through the imagery of the "lighting flash." Third, I return to *Beiträge* to argue that Heidegger's descriptive use of fissure (*Zerklüftung*) nuances the dynamic meaning of *Ereignis* as an evental rupture. Demonstrating that being essences as a ruptured unfolding, I finally contend that thinking through these ruptures as "decisions" allows a historiographical glimpse into the shifting arrangement of beings.

Future thinking is a *course* of thought, on which the hitherto altogether concealed realm of the [essencing] of be-ing is traversed and so is first cleared and attained in its most proper character as *Ereignis*.

Martin Heidegger (*CP*, 5)

Heidegger's use of the term *Ereignis* has been a topic of dissension among Heidegger scholars since *Beiträge*'s publication in 1989. Is it, perhaps, an "*a priori* opening" as Thomas Sheehan contends or, rather, is it "only another name for being itself" as Richard Capobianco suggests?¹ In this paper, I offer an interpretation and demonstrate the significance of Heidegger's *Ereignis* as it is used in *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* and *Die Geschichte des Seyns*.² I

1. Thomas Sheehan, "A Paradigm Shift in Heidegger Research," *Continental Philosophy Review* 34 (2001): 1253—9.

Richard Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger* (Buffalo, NY: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 34-51.

The debate is neither limited to these two interpretations nor are the positions the two definitive poles of these interpretive disputes. I only use them here to demonstrate the stark differences between interpretations in this discussion.

2. Martin Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, *Gesamtausgabe* Band 65, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1989), hereafter, when quoted from the German, parenthetically cited as GA65, followed by the page number; E.T., *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana UP, 2012), hereafter parenthetically cited as *CP*, followed by the page number. All such references to the English translation will be from this edition, unless otherwise noted.

Martin Heidegger, *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, *Gesamtausgabe* Band 69, ed. Peter Trawny (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2012); E.T., *The History of Being*, trans. William McNeill and Jeffrey Powell (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2015), hereafter parenthetically cited as *HB* followed by the page number.

contend that *Ereignis* can be understood as the event of be-ing's ruptured unfolding.³ I show this in three sections, with each focusing on key passages surrounding *Ereignis* during the time Heidegger was drafting the two private monographs.

In section one, I turn to where Heidegger first states, "Be-ing essences as *Ereignis*" in *Beiträge*. I then unpack what this shift from "essence" to "essences" entails, introducing the focal point of my investigation. In section two, I contend that the etymological ancestor of *Ereignis*, *Eräugnis*, further reveals *Ereignis*' meaning through the imagery of the "lighting flash" found in Heidegger's 1949 lecture "The Turning." In section three, I then argue that Heidegger's use of fissure (*Zerklüftung*) in *Beiträge* illustrates *Ereignis* as the event of be-ing's ruptured unfolding and further contend that thinking through these occurrences as "decisions" permits a glimpse into the dynamic movement that *Ereignis* conveys. Finally, I conclude this paper with what further investigations may reveal about *Ereignis* and directions such investigations can take in future works.

In my analysis, I mostly choose to leave the term *Ereignis* untranslated. Nevertheless, when I do choose to use a term or phrase, I follow the second translation of *Beiträge*, translated by Daniela Vallega-Neu and Richard Rojcewicz, in using "event" (the standard English translation of the German term).

I. *Ereignis*: Time-Space

Heidegger writes in *Beiträge* that "be-ing 'is' not a being," "be-ing is not something...in itself [and] for itself," and "be-ing is not, as in metaphysics, the 'highest'" (*CP*, 19, 13, and 236).

3. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, "Translator's Introduction" to *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 2nd Ed. by Martin Heidegger (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2014), x. The word "be-ing" is an English translation of Heidegger's use of the old German spelling of being, *das Seyn* (as opposed to *das Sein*). The hyphenated English translation is meant to emphasize this verbal meaning of the term.

Insofar as be-ing cannot be regarded in these terms, it must no longer be understood as “essence” or any other reconceptualized variation throughout the history of Western metaphysics, i.e., substance, representation, reason, etc. (*HB*, 24-6). Heidegger instead writes, “*Das Seyn west als das Ereignis:*” be-ing *essences* as the event (GA65, 30; emphasis added). It is Heidegger’s use of essence as a verb that first indicates the shift to understanding be-ing as evental (*CP*, 226). It first implies a kind of emergence: a coming forth.⁴ From essence to *essencing*, Heidegger poses the question of being dynamically. Yet, *Ereignis* is not simply temporal, neither meant to be understood linearly nor dialectically. Instead, Heidegger offers us a way to understand this in terms of a happening or presencing. In shifting the usual noun to the unusual verb, Heidegger emphasizes *movement*, but as Vallega-Neu points out this verb is unique in that the movement imbued is neither active nor passive. In this way, the verb form Heidegger uses bears close resemblance to the Greek “middle voice,” where the subject of the sentence is fundamentally tied together in its verb and predicate—implies its verb and predicate, as opposed to “Being” performing the action of “Event.”⁵ The very grammar of the saying then is meant to illustrate be-ing as happening. Posing the question of be-ing dynamically, Heidegger further elaborates on this “activity” in *Beiträge* (*CP*, 26):

The basic framework of this happening is the time-space arising from it. The time-space is what juts out for measuring the fissure of be-ing. As the juncture of truth, time-space is originally the site of the moment of the event (*Augenblicks-Stätte des Ereignisses*).

4. Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 2nd Ed., trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2014), 126. From hereon parenthetically cited as *IM*, followed by the page number.

On how the *er-* in *Ereignis* indicates emergence (thus appropriating emerging), cf. Robert B. Dewell, *The Semantics of German Verb Prefixes* (Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2015, 127.

5. Daniela Vallega-Neu, *Heidegger’s Poietic Writings* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2018) 4-5.

As the essencing of be-ing, *Ereignis* is further characterized as a happening through and by which “time-space” arises, indicating that it is neither just a representational event within time and space nor some *a priori* event preceding time and space. On the contrary, it is the eventuating of time-space itself.

This immediately is a distancing away from a mathematical understanding of time and space. Time-space is not meant to suggest the events where time and space intersect as if the two are entities in a vacuum playing on a dimensional plane. Rather, Heidegger emphasizes the dynamic simultaneity of time-space as *timing* and *spacing*. Just as with the noun “essence,” Heidegger shifts these words into verbs to illustrate the relational movement inherent in them: time-space is always already involved with the emergence of things, whose dynamic, fluid web of relations comes together to build a site out of which some thing occurs. For example, in *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, Heidegger describes this site-making through a bridge: “the banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses them...it brings stream and bank and land into each other’s neighborhood” such that the stream, bank, and land become what they are through being gathered together in the bridge.⁶ The emergence of things always occurs in the midst of other things and it is through this site that they are opened to be what they are within that web of relationships. Similarly, time and space are not containers in which these sites are made but are instead building the site along with everything else. More accurately, they are like simultaneous interstices through which things emerge. In other words, these open sites are the basic framework of this happening, where time-space arises, giving a structure to these dynamic relationships ever anew. The eventuating of time-space itself suggests that *Ereignis* just is the unfolding of that

6. Martin Heidegger, “Building, Dwelling, Thinking” in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York, NY: Harper Perennial Modern Thought, 2013), 150.

Gail Stenstad, *Transformations: Thinking After Heidegger* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 92.

happening where “truth,” which is “the disclosure of...what and how something is,” bursts forth or “juts out.”⁷ Further clarifying how time-space functions may help unravel what this means.

Heidegger gives us a further clue when he describes time-space as “*Augenblicks-Stätte des Ereignisses* (the site of the moment of the event),” which recalls the ecstatic temporality of “the moment” (*Augenblick*) introduced in *Being and Time*. There *Augenblick* signaled the critical juncture where *Dasein* steps out into the open and projects itself into the future amidst a world in which it already finds itself and against a backdrop that already claims it. Heidegger describes the temporality of the moment as *ecstatic*, from *ek-stasis*: “outside-itself.” In the moment, then, *Dasein* is not pinned down to a particular instant in time, but stands outside of any localizable instant, constantly carried away into: 1) a world we have already been thrown—an embodied history; 2) the possibilities we project (i.e., where we are heading next: the next choice, place, or situation); 3) the very midst of things in which we find ourselves. The ecstatic temporality of the moment signifies the fact that *Dasein* is always more than it is and “must be understood in terms of the world it inhabits and the possibilities it pursues.”⁸ If the moment is the “ecstatic [site of] exposedness to the open” for *Dasein* then time-space, as the site of the moment of *Ereignis*, is similarly the open site out of which be-ing essences as the event, illustrating how the question of be-ing is posed dynamically as always something more than it is. Specifically, the site of the moment of the event indicates that time-space breaks out into the “open,” where be-ing is always more than it is. This notion, in fact, is emphasized by Heidegger’s choice to use “*seyn*” over “*sein*” (E.T., “be-ing” over “being”) in *Beiträge* to “indicate that being is here no longer thought

7. Martin Heidegger *Poetry, Language, and Thought*, (New York, NY: Harper Colophon Books, 1975), 36.

8. Richard Polt, *Time and Trauma: Thinking Through Heidegger in the Thirties* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2019), 14.

metaphysically” and is instead, Heidegger continues, “the thinking of the historicity of be-ing” (*CP*, 344).

As such, time-space is both the site out of which be-ing as event can be thought in its historical unfolding and the happening of that unfolding. Heidegger explains that as the open site, time-space “juts out” in “junctions of truth,” which we understand as the “fissure of be-ing.” We understand and measure these fissures, historically, as epochs of be-ing’s essencing or as Vallega-Neu succinctly explains, “as the event of appropriation [*Ereignis*] out of which epochs of being occur.”⁹ The unfolding of these epochs are further discussed in Heidegger’s *The History of Beyng*.

In §75 of *The History of Beyng*, Heidegger indicates that be-ing’s essencing must not be viewed in terms of a pre-given process or progressive movement, “but rather [as] suddenness—sheer and precipitous—of grounding from out of *the event*” and again in §76 as “the sudden moments of foundering and precipitous collapse” (*HB*, 79). As such, be-ing’s unfolding must be understood as a ruptured unfolding where these epochs are neither fixed positions on the line of history nor necessary stops along “Being’s” progress (as if “Being” were teleological, historicist, or autonomous). Rather, it is unpredictably transformative and always more than the precise moments (*Augenblick-Stätte*) of its epochal configuration. It unfolds through precipitous gatherings—grounding arrangements of things—and sudden collapses—abrupt breaks in those arrangements. Rupture is used to describe this “unfolding” to account for these sudden gatherings and breaks appropriate to be-ing’s emergence. This means, as indicated above, that (1) be-ing *appears* differently in each epoch and (2) be-ing could have unfolded differently at each fissure “point” (de-cision). Both guide the next two sections in answering the questions:

9. Daniela Vallega-Neu, “Ereignis,” in *The Bloomsbury to Heidegger*, ed. François Raffoul and Eric Nelson (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016), 288.

What does it mean for be-ing to emerge in junctures of truth? And how can the essencing of be-ing rupture?

II. *Eräugnis*: the Junctures of Truth

Truth was described above in terms of disclosure. Importantly, the excerpt from *Beiträge*, when describing time-space as the site of the moment also indicates that it occurs “as the juncture of truth.” As such, truth is not only understood in terms of disclosure, but also as eruptive. Truth *breaks forth* out into the open. This additionally characterized time-space. Time-space, Heidegger states, is in fact the happening of truth (*CP*, 305). These terms used to describe this eruptive activity: breaking forth, jutting out in different junctures, happening, and disclosing all depict truth as something that alights and appears. In this section, I contend that “junctions of truth” can be understood through the imagery Heidegger offers in his lecture on “The Turning.” Intimately tying truth to the notion of “lighting up” indicates how the essencing of be-ing ruptures.¹⁰

Just as the imagery of *Augen-blick*, translated literally as “blink of the eye,” helped the reader of *Being and Time* come to grips with *Dasein*’s ecstatic activity, Heidegger similarly helps us come to grips with be-ing’s essencing as the event. *Er-äugnen*, a verb meaning “bringing before the eye,” captures the “sudden and precipitous” character of be-ing’s ruptured unfolding, most notably through the image of a lightning bolt’s emergence and disappearance.¹¹ By using the etymological ancestor of *Ereignis*, *eräugnen*, Heidegger guides us

10. Graeme Nicholson, *Heidegger on Truth: Its Essence and Its Fate* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019), 154-9. For an excellent treatment of truth, I refer readers to Graeme Nicholson’s book.

11. Albert Hofstadter, Introduction to *Poetry, Language, and Thought*, xix.
Stenstad, *Transformations: Thinking After Heidegger*, 78.

Cf. Richard Polt, *The Emergency of Being: On Heidegger’s Contributions to Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2006), 5 & 87. Polt briefly takes this imagery up in direct relation to the formula: “Das Seyn west als das Ereignis.”

through the “activity” briefly discussed in §1. One of the clearest passages where Heidegger gives this imagery is in the 1949 lecture “The Turning.” He states:

This sudden self-lighting is the lightening-flash. It [be-ing] brings itself into its own brightness, which it itself brings along and brings in. When...the truth of being flashes, the essenc[ing] of being clears and lights itself up. Then the truth of the essenc[ing]...of being turns and enters...into that which now is the epoch of being.¹²

And later:

In-flashing [*Einblitz*] [of this sudden self-lighting] is ‘the disclosing coming-to-pass’ [the event/*das Ereignis*] within being itself. The Event [*Ereignis*] is bringing to sight that brings into its own [*eignende Eräugnis*].¹³

The junctures of truth, in be-ing’s essencing, flash. What this means is that the “truth of be-ing” is what is brought to sight at each juncture. Heidegger describes this as flashing, where the “flashing” signals be-ing’s emergence or “turn into an epoch.” In other words, truth, as a juncture in be-ing’s essencing, lights up differently in different epochs. Importantly, when Heidegger writes “truth of be-ing” or “junctures of truth” he does not mean what counts as “right” or “correct” in some juncture, but rather simply what is being disclosed. Indeed, in keeping with the imagery Heidegger provides, “truth” is “unconcealment” or as “that which is brought before the eye” (*er-äugnen*).¹⁴

In the above passage, Heidegger paints the picture of a sudden flash, calling the vivid image of the lightening flash of a lightning bolt to canvas. A lightning bolt gathers positive and negative charges and breaks clear with a sudden flash, bringing the surrounding area to light.

12. Martin Heidegger, “The Turning,” in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York, NY: Harper Colophon Books, 1977), 44.

13. Ibid., 45. Emphasis added. Interestingly, this last sentence only appears in Lovitt’s translation of “Die Kehre.” It is in neither Gesamtausgabe Band 79 of the Bremen and Freiburg Lectures nor, subsequently, Andrew Mitchell’s English translation thereof. Therefore, it is unclear if this was a sentence Heidegger later edited out in the Gesamtausgabe or was simply added in the copy given to Lovitt. Nonetheless, this phrase clearly demonstrates the connection between the imagery of *Er-äugnis* and the activity of *Ereignis* (turning).

14. Daniella Vallega-Neu, *Heidegger’s Poietic Writing: From Contributions to Philosophy to The Event* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2018), 5-6.

Using this imagery, be-ing gathers and enables a configuration of beings only to break clear disruptively, flashing and bringing the things that be to light anew, such that as Richard Polt writes, “one can survey one’s current world, acting in light of what has been and may be.”¹⁵ Yet, as said above, this flashing (the truth of be-ing) and what is illuminated (the things that be) differs from epoch to epoch, which is to say that the relationship between be-ing and the things that be differ from epoch to epoch (*IM*, 3).¹⁶ *Eräugnis* illustrates this in the sense of what is seen in the flashing light. For, how things light up “before the eye” indicates the epoch.¹⁷ Just as a lightning bolt breaks forth when the difference in charges overflows, it is perhaps because the site of the moment (*Augenblick-Stätte*) always indicates that be-ing is more than it is in the current configuration that it breaks forth out of this ineluctable difference anew. The motor of this site is always transformative then because be-ing is never wholly captured but properly *evental*, which is to say driven by a gathering/breaking forth activity.

The second passage explicitly shows that *Eräugnis*’ imagery reveals *Ereignis*’ meaning. Crucially, Heidegger notes that this *einblitz*, the self-lighting of be-ing, is the event in be-ing itself. *Ereignis* just is the activity described or as Albert Hofstadter writes, “the very process by which the emergence into light and clearing occurs.”¹⁸ Lovitt then provides the English translation, “the event is the bringing to sight into its own” with the three German terms in

15. Polt, *Time and Trauma*, 17.

16. To ask about this relationship is to thus ask how it stands with be-ing, what Heidegger calls “The Grounding Question.”

Cf. *CP*, 13. It is important to note that be-ing and the things that be are not separate entities which relate to each other, but, in the very sense of the imagery provided in this section, as the same. He writes in *Beiträge*, “Yet, be-ing is not something ‘earlier’—existing in itself, for itself. Instead, the event [*Ereignis*] is the temporal-spatial simultaneity for be-ing and beings.”

17. Cf. *CP*, “The Grounding,” §188, §193, §209, §214, and especially §218 and §229.

18. Hofstadter, introduction to *Poetry, Language, Thought*, xx.

parentheses: “*Ereignis...eignende Eräugnis*.” These terms indicate, perhaps, that *Eräugnis* just is what is proper to *Ereignis*. This implies that *Eräugnis* provides the imagery to understand the meaning and “activity” of *Ereignis*: the event is properly what is brought into view. Indeed, William McNeill confirms this when he examines this exact phrase. He writes, “*Ereignis*...announces itself...as the ‘lightning flash’ of being itself that strikes our eye.”¹⁹ As such, *Ereignis* does not just describe be-ing but is the ruptured unfolding of be-ing—what be-ing “is”.²⁰ But this is just to say what Heidegger himself already tells us, “Be-ing essences as the event” (GA65, 30).²¹

This etymological ancestor also gives us further insight into what is meant in *Beiträge* when Heidegger states, “As the juncture of truth, time-space is originally the site of the moment of the event” (*CP*, 26). This site is undoubtedly the site of the lighting-flash; the truth of be-ing erupting out of its difference in perpetual revision (gathering and breaking). Heidegger confirms in *Beiträge*, “Time-space as the essential occurrence of truth...[and] the *site of the moment*:...the where and the when of the history of be-ing as self-clearing and self-concealing” (*CP*, 296).²² The self-clearing and self-concealing, understood in terms of the passage from “The Turning,” are the self-lighting of be-ing itself (i.e., the truth of be-ing). The “where and the when,” then are distinguished by the epoch, which the truth of be-ing provides.

19. William McNeill, “On the Essence and Concept of *Ereignis*: From *Technē* to Technicity,” in *After Heidegger*, ed. Richard Polt and Gregory Fried, 251-262 (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield International Ltd., 2018), 259.

20. Richard Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger* (Buffalo, NY: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 34-5.

21. Sheehan, “A Paradigm Shift in Heidegger Research,” 196-198.

22. In other words, be-ing unfolds in junctures of truth (time-space), where the truth of be-ing is grounded differently depending on such juncture.

In other words, this makes the “site of the moment of the event,” perhaps, as Eric Nelson describes the point of “[seeing] differently out of the difference” of these epochal breaks.²³ But, the lighting-flash is sudden. Given this, nothing guarantees the way one “sees” in an epoch. What is seen—be-ing—is not the result of a linear or progressive unfolding. It is instead the result of fissure, a sudden rupture within be-ing, which mortals experience as the truth of be-ing (*IM*, 166 and 181-87). This fissure is not merely a transition but a disruption and emergence. This disruption is what is most characteristic of be-ing’s essencing as *Ereignis*.

III. *Zer-klüftung* and *Ent-scheidung*: Fissure as Disruption and Decision

Just as *Eräugnis* illustrated *Ereignis* as the flashing that brings the things that be to sight, fissure, as the disruption from epoch to epoch, is the activity of *Ereignis* whereby the things that be “light up” differently.²⁴ In this section, I contend that a close examination of the German terms and semantic play demonstrate how rupture is the best way to conceive of the activity of the event.

The truth of be-ing juts out from the fissure—this is the event of be-ing’s ruptured unfolding. The very word *Zer-klüftung* (fissure) attests to this as *-klüftung* (“cleaving between”) is further nuanced by *zer-*, which implies the dissolution of prior continuity. *Zer-*, in fact, is often translated as *dis-* in English to capture this schematic meaning.²⁵ Fissure, then, can also be

23. Eric Nelson, “History as Decision and Event in Heidegger,” 108.

24. Polt, *The Emergency of Being*, 151. Calling to mind the imagery of §2, Polt describes fissure as “flashpoints, rifts that emerge as the volcanic event of be-ing deploys itself.”

25. Dewall, *The Semantics of German Verb Prefixes*, 169.

Emad and Maly, translator’s preface to *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, xxxvi. Because *klüft* is how the English “cleft” or the verb “to cleave” is derived, Emad and Maly translate *Zerklüftung*, *erklüftung*, and other words surrounding it, as cleavage.

understood as dis-ruption.²⁶ Indeed, fissure is what is meant by “ruptured unfolding,” the discontinuity or, literally dis-rupture, that defines the event. Thus, the essencing of be-ing ruptures precisely because that is what it means for be-ing to essence as *Ereignis*. Heidegger indicates this in §157 of *Beiträge*: “The fissure [*Zerflüftung*] is the inner, incalculable splitting open of the appropriation [*Er-eignung*], i.e., the splitting open of the [essencing] of be-ing” (*CP*, 220). If be-ing essences as *Ereignis*, fissure is the incalculable activity of the event (i.e., be-ing’s essencing).

Incalculable, the breaks of be-ing’s ruptured unfolding do not pre-exist their occurrence and, as such, are not pre-determined. Since they are not pre-determined, Heidegger explains the breaks are instead the result of a *de-cision*. De-cision implies that these epochal arrangements could have been otherwise. But, if be-ing has no agency, how can be-ing “make a decision”?

Heidegger clarifies in §43 of *Beiträge* that while we are inclined to think of de-cision in terms of human action or “something that occurs in an either/or,” this is not what the de-cision of be-ing implies. Instead, “de-cision is [simply] an original determination of beings as such out of the [essencing] of be-ing” (*CP*, 71). No surprise then that de-cision (*Ent-scheidung*), as what makes fissure possible, implies a cut or breaking off and into the essencing of be-ing, an incision. This incision, as Vallega-Neu explains, “articulates both...a closure and an opening.”²⁷ As an original determination, the de-cision is about the relationship between be-ing and the things that be (i.e., how they come to sight). Each cut originally determines beings anew, but on the condition that be-ing exceeds itself in the site of this incisional moment. To recall the imagery of §2 (*Er-äugen*) the eye closes on the previous way of seeing and opens to the possibilities of be-

26. Polt, *The Emergency of Being*, 151. Polt’s account of fissure as a “volcanic eruption” and the way the truth of be-ing “juts out” from fissure entices me to amend dis-ruption to dis-(e)ruption to account for the full activity.

Cf. *CP*, §49, “decision is the erupting fissure of be-ing itself.”

27. Vallega-Neu, “Thinking in Decision,” 248.

ing anew.²⁸ Yet, the original determination is not infinitely open ended, but decisively closed and opened in moments of different determinations.

As such, be-ing's de-cision "is not made but *occurs* in such a way that it can be intimated" through thinking.²⁹ In the history of Western metaphysics, be-ing has unfolded under several names (e.g., *physis*, *ousia*, *energia*, will to power), each of which, Heidegger explains is the unfolding from an essential de-cision (*HB*, 24-5). It is the occurrence of be-ing's de-cisions, fissure, that allows us to think differently out of these different epochal arrangements. That is, thinking the de-cision of the first beginning allows us to think otherwise than what occurred. In this way, *Ereignis* is thus simultaneously 1) the event of be-ing's ruptured unfolding and 2) the thinking of this ruptured unfolding historically. Both contribute to overcoming Western metaphysics in preparation for, what Heidegger calls, the other beginning.

IV. Conclusion

What are we then supposed to expect from our first gropings...? (*CP*, 219)

Above, I analyzed Heidegger's *Ereignis*, paying close attention to the play on German terms and etymology. My analysis homes in on the meaning of the specific phrase "Be-ing essences as the event" to demonstrate that this sentence reveals the activity of "be-ing." I specifically argue that this activity can be understood in terms of the event of be-ing's ruptured unfolding through an analysis of time-space, the truth of be-ing, and fissure. It was my intention for each to bring us closer to understanding what Heidegger means by *Ereignis*. Yet, this has only been a preliminary and preparatory interpretation. This preliminary understanding of

28. Ibid. Vallega-Neu explains being in de-cision as be-ing's shift underneath one. One must respond to this decision even if one did not make it. She provides ample examples including the birth of a child, the diagnosis of a terminal illness, and falling in love.

29. Nelson, "History as Decision and Event in Heidegger," 101. Emphasis retained.

Ereignis is thinking the essencing of be-ing in its ruptured unfolding or “thinking being as and in its historical happening.”³⁰ As such, I do not offer a complete depiction of *Ereignis*, only one that indicates what is especially novel about Heidegger’s use of the term.

Future articles may pose the question of why we must think from *Ereignis* in order to overcome the first beginning? The answer may be that it is through thinking the breaks of be-ing that we can effectively think otherwise. In other words, we must really think through these different ruptures to creatively think out of their difference without falling prey to the same pitfalls of the history of Western metaphysics. In this sense the problem, perhaps, becomes hermeneutical as much as ontological. As hermeneutical and ontological, we must engage in, what Heidegger termed in *Being and Time*, destructuring (*Destruktion*) and, perhaps what he termed in *Beiträge*, inventive thinking (*erdenken*).³¹ Future works may find that overcoming the first beginning requires both.

Indeed, if one were to venture the full expanse of this project, it would require exploring the relationship between “thinking *Ereignis*” as, what Heidegger terms, *seynsgeschichtliche Denken* (being-historical thinking), and thinking *from Ereignis* as, perhaps, *erdenken* (inventive thinking). One might find that *Ereignis*, *Geschichte des Seyns*, and *seynsgeschichtliche Denken* are intricately related to Heidegger’s notion of *inventive thinking* insofar as they all entail destructuring and creativity.

Nonetheless, this preliminary interpretation of *Ereignis* permits us to begin anew. As we move toward thinking the event of be-ing’s ruptured unfolding, we may begin to think be-ing anew despite our position in the undergoing epoch.

30. Vallega-Neu, *Heidegger’s Poietic Writings*, 1.

31. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, §6 and §75 (21-5, 372) & *CP*, §21, §106, §117, §256, and especially §265.

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