

Letter on "Humanism"^a

Translated by Frank A. Capuzzi¹

[145] We are still far from pondering the essence of action decisively enough. We view action only as causing an effect. The actuality of the effect is valued according to its utility. But the essence of action is accomplishment. To accomplish means to unfold something into the fullness of its essence, to lead it forth into this fullness – *producere*. Therefore only what already is can really be accomplished. But what "is" above all is being. Thinking accomplishes the relation of being to the essence of the human being. It does not make or cause the relation. Thinking brings this relation to being solely as something handed over to thought itself from being. Such offering consists in the fact that in thinking being comes to language. Language is the house of being. In its home human beings dwell. Those who think and those who create with words are the guardians of this home. Their guardianship accomplishes the manifestation of being insofar as they bring this manifestation to language and preserve it in language through their saying. Thinking does not become action only because some effect issues from it or because it is applied. Thinking acts insofar as it thinks. Such action is presumably the simplest and at the same time the highest because it concerns the relation of being to humans. But all working or effecting lies in being and is directed toward beings. Thinking, in contrast, lets itself be claimed by being so that it can say the truth of being. Thinking accomplishes this letting. Thinking is *l'engagement par l'Être pour l'Être* [engagement by being for being]. I do not know whether it is linguistically possible to say both of these ("*par*" and "*pour*") at once in this way: *penser*,

^a First edition, 1949: What is said here was not first thought up when this letter was written, but is based on the course taken by a path that was begun in 1936, in the "moment" of an attempt to say the truth of being in a simple manner. The letter continues to speak in the language of metaphysics, and does so knowingly. The other language remains in the background.

c'est l'engagement de l'Être [thinking is the engagement of being]. Here the possessive form "de l' . . ." is supposed to express both subjective and objective genitive. In this regard "subject" and "object" are inappropriate terms of metaphysics, which very early on in [146] the form of Occidental "logic" and "grammar" seized control of the interpretation of language. We today can only begin to descry what is concealed in that occurrence. The liberation of language from grammar into a more original essential framework is reserved for thought and poetic creation. Thinking is not merely *l'engagement dans l'action* for and by beings, in the sense of whatever is actually present in our current situation. Thinking is *l'engagement* by and for the truth of being. The history of being is never past but stands ever before us; it sustains and defines every *condition et situation humaine*. In order to learn how to experience the aforementioned essence of thinking purely, and that means at the same time to carry it through, we must free ourselves from the technical interpretation of thinking. The beginnings of that interpretation reach back to Plato and Aristotle. They take thinking itself to be a τέχνη, a process of deliberation in service to doing and making. But here deliberation is already seen from the perspective of πράξις and ποίησις. For this reason thinking, when taken for itself, is not "practical." The characterization of thinking as θεωρία and the determination of knowing as "theoretical" comportment occur already within the "technical" interpretation of thinking. Such characterization is a reactive attempt to rescue thinking and preserve its autonomy over against acting and doing. Since then "philosophy" has been in the constant predicament of having to justify its existence before the "sciences." It believes it can do that most effectively by elevating itself to the rank of a science. But such an effort is the abandonment of the essence of thinking. Philosophy is hounded by the fear that it loses prestige and validity if it is not a science. Not to be a science is taken as a failing that is equivalent to being unscientific. Being,^a as the element of thinking, is abandoned by the technical interpretation of thinking. "Logic," beginning with the Sophists and Plato, sanctions this explanation. [147] Thinking is judged by a standard that does not measure up to it. Such judgment may be compared to the procedure of trying to evaluate the essence and powers of a fish by seeing how long it can live on dry land. For a long time now, all too long, thinking has been stranded on dry land. Can then the effort to return thinking to its element be called "irrationalism"?

^a First edition, 1949: Being as event of appropriation [*Ereignis*], event of appropriation: the saying [*Sage*]; thinking: renunciative saying in response [*Entsagen*] to the saying of the event of appropriation.

to be. This enabling is what is properly "possible" [*das "Mögliche"*], whose essence resides in favoring. From this favoring being enables thinking. The former makes the latter possible. Being is the enabling-favoring, the "may be" [*das "Mög-liche"*]. As the element, being is the "quiet power" of the favoring-enabling, that is, of the possible. Of course, our words *möglich* [possible] and *Möglichkeit* [possibility], under the dominance of "logic" and "metaphysics," are thought solely in contrast to "actuality"; that is, they are thought on the basis of a definite – the metaphysical – interpretation of being as *actus* and *potentia*, a distinction identified with that between *existentia* and *essentia*.³ When I speak of the "quiet power of the possible" I do not mean the *possibile* of a merely represented *possibilitas*, nor *potentia* as the *essentia* of an *actus* of *existentia*; rather, I mean being itself, which in its favoring presides over thinking and hence over the essence of humanity, and that means over its relation to being. To enable something here means to preserve it in its essence, to maintain it in its element.

When thinking comes to an end by slipping out of its element it replaces this loss by procuring a validity for itself as τέχνη, as an instrument of education and therefore as a classroom matter [149] and later a cultural concern. By and by philosophy becomes a technique for explaining from highest causes. One no longer thinks; one occupies oneself with "philosophy." In competition with one another, such occupations publicly offer themselves as "-isms" and try to outdo one another. The dominance of such terms is not accidental. It rests above all in the modern age upon the peculiar dictatorship of the public realm. However, so-called "private existence" is not really essential, that is to say free, human being. It simply ossifies in a denial of the public realm. It remains an offshoot that depends upon the public and nourishes itself by a mere withdrawal from it. Hence it testifies, against its own will, to its subservience to the public realm. But because it stems from the dominance of subjectivity the public realm itself is the metaphysically conditioned establishment and authorization of the openness of beings in the unconditional objectification of everything. Language thereby falls into the service of expediting communication along routes where objectification – the uniform accessibility of everything to everyone – branches out and disregards all limits. In this way language comes under the dictatorship of the public realm, which decides in advance what is intelligible and what must be rejected as unintelligible. What is said in *Being and Time* (1927), sections 27 and 35, about the "they" in no way means to furnish an incidental contribution to sociology. Just as little does the "they" mean merely the opposite, understood in an ethical-existential way, of the selfhood of persons. Rather, what is said there contains a reference, thought in terms of the

man (*homo*) become human (*humanus*)? Thus *humanitas* really does remain the concern of such thinking. For this is humanism: meditating and caring, that human beings be human and not inhumane, "inhuman," that is, outside their essence. But in what does the humanity of the human being consist? It lies in his essence.

But whence and how is the essence of the human being determined? Marx demands that "the human being's humanity" be recognized and acknowledged. He finds it in "society." The "social" human is for him the "natural" human. In "society" human "nature," that is, the totality of "natural needs" (food, clothing, reproduction, economic sufficiency), is equably secured. The Christian sees the humanity of man, the *humanitas* of *homo*, in contradistinction to *Deitas*. He is the human being of the history of redemption who as a "child of God" hears and accepts the call of the Father in Christ. The human being is not of this world, since the "world," thought in terms of Platonic theory, is only a temporary passage to the beyond.

Humanitas, explicitly so called, was first considered and striven for in the age of the Roman Republic. *Homo humanus* was opposed to *homo barbarus*. *Homo humanus* here means the Romans, who exalted and honored Roman *virtus* through the "embodiment" of the παιδεία [education] taken over from the Greeks. These were the Greeks of the Hellenistic age, whose culture was acquired in the [152] schools of philosophy. It was concerned with *eruditio et institutio in bonas artes* [scholarship and training in good conduct]. Παιδεία thus understood was translated as *humanitas*. The genuine *romanitas* of *homo romanus* consisted in such *humanitas*. We encounter the first humanism in Rome: it therefore remains in essence a specifically Roman phenomenon, which emerges from the encounter of Roman civilization with the culture of late Greek civilization. The so-called Renaissance of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Italy is a *renascentia romanitatis*. Because *romanitas* is what matters, it is concerned with *humanitas* and therefore with Greek παιδεία. But Greek civilization is always seen in its later form and this itself is seen from a Roman point of view. The *homo romanus* of the Renaissance also stands in opposition to *homo barbarus*. But now the in-humane is the supposed barbarism of Gothic Scholasticism in the Middle Ages. Therefore a *studium humanitatis*, which in a certain way reaches back to the ancients and thus also becomes a revival of Greek civilization, always adheres to historically understood humanism. For Germans this is apparent in the humanism of the eighteenth century supported by Winckelmann, Goethe, and Schiller. On the other hand, Hölderlin does not belong to "humanism," precisely because he thought the destiny of the essence of the human being in a more original way than "humanism" could.

the Greek ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, but rather a metaphysical interpretation of it. This essential definition of the human being is [154] not false. But it is conditioned by metaphysics. The essential provenance of metaphysics, and not just its limits, became questionable in *Being and Time*. What is questionable is above all commended to thinking as what is to be thought, but not at all left to the gnawing doubts of an empty skepticism.

Metaphysics does indeed represent beings in their being, and so it also⁴ thinks the being of beings. But it does not think being as such,⁵ does not think the difference between being and beings. (Cf. "On the Essence of Ground" [1929], p. 8; also *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* [1929], p. 225; and *Being and Time*, p. 230.) Metaphysics does not ask about the truth of being itself. Nor does it therefore ask in what way the essence of the human being belongs to the truth of being. Metaphysics has not only failed up to now to ask this question, the question is inaccessible to metaphysics as such. Being is still waiting for the time when It itself will become thought-provoking to the human being. With regard to the definition of the essence of the human being, however one may determine the *ratio* of the *animal* and the reason of the living being, whether as a "faculty of principles" or a "faculty of categories" or in some other way, the essence of reason is always and in each case grounded in this: for every apprehending of beings in their being, being in each case⁶ is already cleared, it is⁷ appropriated in its truth. So too with *animal*, ζῶον, an interpretation of "life" is already posited that necessarily lies in an interpretation of beings as ζωή and φύσις, within which what is living appears. Above and beyond everything else, however, it finally remains to ask⁸ whether the essence of the human being primordially and most decisively lies in the dimension of *animalitas* at all. Are we really on the right track toward the essence of the human being as long as we set him off as one living creature among others in contrast to plants, beasts, and God? We can proceed in that way; we can in such fashion locate the human being among beings as one being among others. We will thereby always be able to state something correct about the human being. [155] But we must be clear on this point, that when we do this we abandon the human being to the essential realm of *animalitas* even if we do not equate him with beasts but attribute a specific difference to him. In principle we are still thinking of *homo animalis* – even when *anima* [soul] is posited as *animus sive mens* [spirit or mind], and this in turn is later posited as subject, person, or spirit. Such positing is the manner of metaphysics. But then the essence of the human being is too little heeded and not thought in its origin, the essential provenance that is always the essential future for historical mankind. Metaphysics thinks of the human

But ek-sistence thought in this way is not identical with the traditional concept of *existentia*, which means actuality in contrast to the meaning of *essentia* as possibility. In *Being and Time* (p. 42) this sentence is italicized: "The 'essence' of Dasein lies in its existence." However, here the opposition between *existentia* and *essentia* is not what is at issue, because neither of these metaphysical determinations of being, let alone their relationship, is yet in question. Still less does the sentence contain a universal statement [157] about *Dasein*, in the sense in which this word came into fashion in the eighteenth century, as a name for "object," intending to express the metaphysical concept of the actuality of the actual. On the contrary, the sentence says: the human being occurs essentially in such a way that he is the "there" [*das* "Da"], that is, the clearing of being. The "being" of the *Da*, and only it, has the fundamental character of ek-sistence, that is, of an ecstatic inherence in the truth of being. The ecstatic essence of the human being consists in ek-sistence, which is different from the metaphysically conceived *existentia*. Medieval philosophy conceives the latter as *actualitas*. Kant represents *existentia* as actuality in the sense of the objectivity of experience. Hegel defines *existentia* as the self-knowing Idea of absolute subjectivity. Nietzsche grasps *existentia* as the eternal recurrence of the same. Here it remains an open question whether through *existentia* – in these explanations of it as actuality that at first seem quite different – the being of a stone or even life as the being of plants and animals is adequately thought. In any case living creatures are as they are without standing outside their being as such and within the truth of being, preserving in such standing the essential nature of their being. Of all the beings that are, presumably the most difficult to think about are living creatures, because on the one hand they are in a certain way most closely akin to us, and on the other they are at the same time separated from our ek-sistent essence by an abyss. However, it might also seem as though the essence of divinity is closer to us than what is so alien in other living creatures, closer, namely, in an essential distance that, however distant, is nonetheless more familiar to our ek-sistent essence than is our scarcely conceivable, abysmal bodily kinship with the beast. Such reflections cast a strange light upon the current and therefore always still premature designation of the human being as *animal rationale*. Because plants and animals are lodged in their respective environments but are never placed freely into the clearing of being which alone is "world," they lack language. [158] But in being denied language they are not thereby suspended worldlessly in their environment. Still, in this word "environment" converges all that is puzzling about living creatures. In its essence, language is not the utterance of an organism; nor is it

held back (cf. *Being and Time*, p. 39). Here everything^a is reversed. The division in question was held back because thinking failed in the adequate saying^b of this turning [*Kebre*] and did not succeed with the help of the language of metaphysics. The lecture "On the Essence of Truth," thought out and delivered in 1930 but not printed until 1943, provides a certain insight into the thinking of the turning from "Being and Time" to "Time and Being." This turning is not a change of standpoint^c from *Being and Time*, but in it the thinking that was sought first arrives at the locality of that dimension out of which *Being and Time* is experienced, that is to say, experienced in¹⁰ the fundamental experience of the oblivion of being.^d

By way of contrast, Sartre expresses the basic tenet of existentialism in this way: Existence precedes essence. In this statement he is taking *existentia* and *essentia* according to their metaphysical meaning, which from Plato's time on has said that *essentia* precedes *existentia*. Sartre reverses this statement. But the reversal of a metaphysical statement remains a metaphysical statement. With it he stays with metaphysics in oblivion of the truth of being. For even if philosophy wishes to determine the relation of *essentia* and *existentia* in the sense it had in medieval controversies, in Leibniz's sense, or in some other way, it still [160] remains to ask first of all from what destiny of being this differentiation^e in being as *esse essentiae* and *esse existentiae* comes to appear to thinking. We have yet to consider why the question about the destiny of being was never asked and why it could never be thought. Or is the fact that this is how it is with the differentiation of *essentia* and *existentia* not a sign of forgetfulness of being? We must presume that this destiny does not rest upon a mere failure of human thinking, let alone upon a lesser capacity of early Western thinking. Concealed in its essential provenance, the differentiation of *essentia* (essentiality) and *existentia* (actuality) completely dominates the destiny of Western history and of all history determined by Europe.

Sartre's key proposition about the priority of *existentia* over *essentia* does, however, justify using the name "existentialism" as an appropriate title for a philosophy of this sort. But the basic tenet of "existentialism" has nothing at all in common with the statement from *Being and Time* – apart from the

^a First edition, 1949: In terms of the "what" and "how" of that which is thought-worthy and of thinking.

^b First edition, 1949: Letting itself show.

^c First edition, 1949: I.e., of the question of being.

^d First edition, 1949: Forgivenness – $\Delta\tau\theta\eta$ – concealing – withdrawal – expropriation: event of appropriation.

^e First edition, 1949: This distinction, however, is not identical with the ontological difference. Within the latter, the said distinction belongs on the "side" of being.

not consist in his being the substance of beings, as the "Subject" among them, so that as the tyrant of being he may deign to release the beingness of beings into an all too loudly glorified "objectivity."

The human being is rather "thrown" by being itself into the truth of being, so that ek-sisting in this fashion he might guard the truth of being, in order that beings might appear in the light of being [162] as the beings they are. Human beings do not decide whether and how beings appear, whether and how God and the gods or history and nature come forward into the clearing of being, come to presence and depart. The advent of beings lies in the destiny^a of being. But for humans it is ever a question of finding what is fitting in their essence that corresponds to such destiny; for in accord with this destiny the human being as ek-sisting has to guard the truth of being. The human being is the shepherd of being. It is in this direction alone that *Being and Time* is thinking when ecstatic existence is experienced as "care" (cf. section 44c, pp. 226ff.).

Yet being – what is being? It "is"¹¹ It itself. The thinking that is to come must learn to experience that and to say it. "Being" – that is not God and not a cosmic ground. Being is essentially¹² farther^b than all beings and is yet nearer to the human being than every being, be it a rock, a beast, a work of art, a machine, be it an angel or God. Being is the nearest. Yet the near remains farthest¹³ from the human being. Human beings at first cling always and only to beings. But when thinking represents beings as beings it no doubt relates itself to being. In truth, however, it always thinks only of beings as such; precisely not, and never, being as such. The "question of being" always remains a question about beings. It is still not at all what its elusive name indicates: the question in the direction of being. Philosophy, even when it becomes "critical" through Descartes and Kant, always follows the course of metaphysical representation. It thinks from beings back to beings with a glance in passing toward being. For every departure from beings and every return to them stands already in the light of being.

But metaphysics recognizes the clearing of being either solely as the view of what is present in "outward appearance" (ἰδέα) or critically as what is seen in the perspective of categorial representation on the part of subjectivity. This means that the truth of being as the clearing itself remains concealed for metaphysics. [163] However, this concealment is not a defect of metaphysics but a treasure withheld from it yet held before it, the treasure of

^a First edition, 1949: Gathered sending [*Ge-schick*]: gathering of the epochs of being used by the need of letting-presence.

^b First edition, 1949: Expanse: not that of an embracing, but rather of the locality of appropriation; as the expanse of the clearing.

speech, insofar as we represent the latter at best as the unity of phoneme (or written character), melody, rhythm, and meaning (or sense). We think of the phoneme and written character as a verbal body for language, of melody and rhythm as its soul, and whatever has to do with meaning as its spirit. We usually think of language as corresponding to the essence of the human being represented as *animal rationale*, that is, as the unity of body-soul-spirit. But just as ek-sistence – and through it the relation of the truth of being to the human being – remains veiled in the *humanitas of homo animalis*, so does the metaphysical-animal explanation of language cover up the essence of language in the history of being. According to this essence, language is the house of being, which is appropriated by being and pervaded by being. And so it is proper to think the essence of language from its correspondence to being and indeed as this correspondence, that is, as the *home of the human being's essence*.

But the human being is not only a living creature who possesses language along with other capacities. Rather, language is the house of being in which the human being ek-sists by dwelling, in that he belongs to the truth of being, guarding it.

So the point is that in the determination of the humanity of the human being as ek-sistence what is essential is not the human being but being – as the dimension of the ecstasis of ek-sistence. However, the dimension is not something spatial in the familiar sense. Rather, everything spatial^a and all time-space occur essentially in the dimensionality that being itself is.

[165] Thinking attends to these simple relationships. It tries to find the right word for them within the long-traditional language and grammar of metaphysics. But does such thinking – granted that there is something in a name – still allow itself to be described as humanism? Certainly not so far as humanism thinks metaphysically. Certainly not if humanism is existentialism and is represented by what Sartre expresses: *précisément nous sommes sur un plan où il y a seulement des hommes* [We are precisely in a situation where there are only human beings] (*Existentialism Is a Humanism*, p. 36). Thought from *Being and Time*, this should say instead: *précisément nous sommes sur un plan où il y a principalement l'Être* [We are precisely in a situation where principally there is being]. But where does *le plan* come from and what is it? *L'Être et le plan* are the same. In *Being and Time* (p. 212) we purposely and cautiously say, *il y a l'Être*: “there is / it gives” [“*es gibt*”] being. *Il y a* translates “it gives” imprecisely. For the “it” that here “gives” is

^a *Plato's Doctrine of Truth*, first edition, 1947: Space neither alongside time, nor dissolved into time, nor deduced from time.

the development of "Spirit" is not untrue. Neither is it partly correct and partly false. It is as true as metaphysics, which through Hegel first brings to language its essence – thought in terms of the absolute – in the system. Absolute metaphysics, with its Marxian and Nietzschean inversions, belongs to the history of the truth of being. Whatever stems from it cannot be countered or even cast aside by refutations. It can only be taken up in such a way that its truth is more primordially sheltered in being itself [167] and removed from the domain of mere human opinion. All refutation in the field of essential thinking is foolish. Strife among thinkers is the "lovers' quarrel" concerning the matter itself. It assists them mutually toward a simple belonging to the Same, from which they find what is fitting for them in the destiny of being.

Assuming that in the future the human being will be able to think the truth of being, he will think from ek-sistence. The human being stands ek-sistently in the destiny of being. The ek-sistence of the human being is historical as such, but not only or primarily because so much happens to the human being and to things human in the course of time. Because it must think the ek-sistence of Da-sein, the thinking of *Being and Time* is essentially concerned that the historicity of Dasein be experienced.

But does not *Being and Time* say on p. 212, where the "there is / it gives" comes to language, "Only so long as Dasein is, is there [*gibt es*] being"? To be sure. It means that only so long as the clearing of being appropriates does being convey itself to human beings. But the fact that the *Da*, the clearing as the truth of being itself, appropriates is the dispensation of being itself. This is the destiny of the clearing. But the sentence does not mean that the Dasein of the human being in the traditional sense of *existentia*, and thought in modern philosophy as the actuality of the *ego cogito*, is that entity through which being is first fashioned. The sentence does not say that being is the product of the human being. The Introduction to *Being and Time* (p. 38) says simply and clearly, even in italics, "Being is the *transcendens* pure and simple." Just as the openness of spatial nearness seen from the perspective of a particular thing exceeds all things near and far, so is being essentially broader than all beings, because it is the clearing itself. For all that, being is thought on the basis of beings, a consequence of the approach – at first unavoidable – within a metaphysics that is still dominant. Only from such a perspective does being show itself in and as a transcending.

[168] The introductory definition, "Being is the *transcendens* pure and simple," articulates in one simple sentence the way the essence of being hitherto has been cleared for the human being. This retrospective definition of the essence of the being of beings¹⁶ from the clearing of beings

"Remembrance" [*Andenken*]. *Tübinger Gedenkschrift* [1943], p. 322). The homeland of this historical dwelling is nearness to being.^a

In such nearness, if at all, a decision may be made as to whether and how God and the gods withhold their presence and the night remains, whether and how the day of the holy dawns, whether and how in the upsurge of the holy an epiphany of God and the gods can begin anew. [But the holy, which alone is the essential sphere of divinity, which in turn alone affords a dimension for the gods and for God, comes to radiate only when being itself beforehand and after extensive preparation has been cleared and is experienced in its truth.] Only thus does the overcoming of homelessness begin from being, a homelessness in which not only human beings but the essence of the human being stumbles aimlessly about.

Homelessness so understood consists in the abandonment of beings by being. Homelessness is the symptom of oblivion of being. Because of it the truth of being remains unthought. The oblivion of being makes itself known indirectly through the fact that the [170] human being always observes and handles only beings. Even so, because humans cannot avoid having some notion of being, it is explained merely as what is "most general" and therefore as something that encompasses beings, or as a creation of the infinite being, or as the product of a finite subject. At the same time "being" has long stood for "beings" and, inversely, the latter for the former, the two of them caught in a curious and still unraveled confusion.

As the destiny that sends truth, being remains concealed. But the destiny of world is heralded in poetry, without yet becoming manifest as the history of being. The world-historical thinking of Hölderlin that speaks out in the poem "Remembrance" is therefore essentially more primordial and thus more significant for the future than the mere cosmopolitanism of Goethe. For the same reason Hölderlin's relation to Greek civilization is something essentially other than humanism. When confronted with death, therefore, those young Germans who knew about Hölderlin lived and thought something other than what the public held to be the typical German attitude.

Homelessness is coming to be the destiny of the world. Hence it is necessary to think that destiny in terms of the history of being. What Marx recognized in an essential and significant sense, though derived from Hegel, as the estrangement of the human being has its roots in the homelessness of modern human beings. This homelessness is specifically evoked from the destiny of being in the form of metaphysics, and through metaphysics

^a *Plato's Doctrine of Truth*, first edition, 1947: Being itself preserves and shelters itself as this nearness.

a dawning world destiny that nevertheless in the basic traits of its essential provenance remains European by definition. No metaphysics, whether idealistic, materialistic, or Christian, can in accord with its essence, and surely not in [172] its own attempts to explicate itself, "get a hold on" this destiny, and that means thoughtfully to reach and gather together what in the fullest sense of being now is.^a

In the face of the essential homelessness of human beings, the approaching destiny of the human being reveals itself to thought on the history of being in this, that the human being find his way into the truth of being and set out on this find. Every nationalism is metaphysically an anthropologism, and as such subjectivism. Nationalism is not overcome through mere internationalism; it is rather expanded and elevated thereby into a system. Nationalism is as little brought and raised to *humanitas* by internationalism as individualism is by an ahistorical collectivism. The latter is the subjectivity^b of human beings in totality. It completes subjectivity's unconditioned self-assertion, which refuses to yield. Nor can it be even adequately experienced by a thinking that mediates in a one-sided fashion. Expelled from the truth of being, the human being everywhere circles around himself as the *animal rationale*.

But the essence of the human being consists in his being more than merely human, if this is represented as "being a rational creature." "More" must not be understood here additively, as if the traditional definition of the human being were indeed to remain basic, only elaborated by means of an existentiell postscript. The "more" means: more originally and therefore more essentially in terms of his essence. But here something enigmatic manifests itself: the human being is in thrownness. This means that the human being, as the ek-sisting counterthrow [*Gegenwurf*] of being,^c is more than *animal rationale* precisely to the extent that he is less bound up with the human being conceived from subjectivity. The human being is not the lord of beings. The human being is the shepherd of being. Human beings lose nothing in this "less"; rather, they gain in that they attain the truth of being. They gain the essential poverty of the shepherd, whose dignity consists in [173] being called by being itself into the preservation of being's truth. The call comes as the throw from which the thrownness of Da-sein

^a *Plato's Doctrine of Truth*, first edition, 1947: What is it that now is – now in the era of the will to will? What now is, is unconditional neglect of preservation [*Verwahrlosung*], this word taken in a strict sense in terms of the history of being: *wahr-los* [without preservation]; conversely: in terms of destining.

^b First edition, 1949: Industrial society as the subject that provides the measure – and thinking as "politics."

^c First edition, 1949: Better: within being qua event of appropriation.

