

Translating Heidegger translating *Wesen*

(Part One)

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Die wörtlichste Übersetzung ist noch keineswegs die *wortgetreue*, ...
 The best word-for-word translation is still far from being *true to the word*, ...
 Martin Heidegger *Anaximander* (GA78, G51)

Das sogenannte Übersetzen und Umschreiben folgt immer nur dem *Übersetzen*
 unseres ganzen Wesens in den Bereich einer gewandelten Wahrheit.

So-called translating-cum-*transposing* and transcribing only ever ensue from
 the translating-cum-*transporting* of our whole *essenzenz*(ing) into the
 domain of a transformed truth.
 Martin Heidegger *Parmenides* (GA54, G18)

Aber bloße Wörter sind noch keine Worte.
 But mere words are less than very words by a long shot.
 Martin Heidegger *Heraklit* (GA55, G44)

§1. A preliminary observation on the task of ‘translating Heidegger translating ...’

The fragments of the so-called “pre-Socratic philosophers”, Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus among them, may well be acknowledged in the ordinary historical sense [historisch] as paving the way for the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle to come. From a being-historic perspective [seinsgeschichtlich gesehen], however, these three early Greek thinkers in particular are worthy of much more attention than they have hitherto received *as* the pioneering thinkers of the inception [Anfang] of occidental thinking who they are: above all, in their primordial leaping ahead of, with their hitherto barely observed or heeded ‘head start’ [‘Vorsprung’] on, the later beginning [Beginn] or ‘origin’ [‘Ursprung’] of ‘philosophy’, i.e. metaphysics, in the occident, as founded by Plato and Aristotle. For Heidegger, the early Greek thinkers who, prior to Plato and Aristotle, think within a radius of the inception of occidental thinking and whom he calls “the inceptual thinkers” are three in number. Their names are Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus. In the early 1940s, Heidegger penned four lecture courses devoted to the task of translating and interpreting the incipient keywords and sayings of each of these pioneering thinkers. The courses, all published posthumously, are contained in three editions of the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe* which I shall cite, in brief, as *Anaximander* (GA78)¹ *Parmenides* (GA54)², and *Heraklit* (GA55)³.

1 “*Anaximander* (GA78)” is an abbreviation for the manuscript of a University of Freiburg lecture course that was not delivered by Heidegger, presumably penned during the

In one of these volumes [GA78, G51] Heidegger indicates that when it comes to translating the Saying [Spruch] of the inceptual thinker Anaximander:

The most literal or best word-for-word translation is still far from being *true to the word*, because the translative [übersetzende] measuring-up of the corresponding words and word-groups in the different languages by no means guarantees the truth to the word in respect of which what is worth(while)-thinking itself will primarily be said.

In another of these volumes [GA54, G18] where he differentiates so-called translating-cum-transposing [Übersetzen] and transcribing [Umschreiben] from the translating-cum-transporting [Übersetzen] of our whole *essenz(ing)* [Wesen] into the domain of a transformed truth [Wahrheit]—notably that of the Greek word ἀλήθεια in the saying of the inceptual thinker Parmenides—Heidegger goes on to say:

Only if we are already suitably conveyed [übereignet] with regard to this translating-cum-transporting [Übersetzen] are we in the care of the word. Only with such a well-grounded respect for the language can we take care of the usually easier and more limited task of translating the foreign word into one of our own.

The translation of one's own language into its ownmost word, by contrast, always remains the more difficult task. So the translation of the word of a German thinker into the German language, for example, is especially difficult, because here the stubborn preconception maintains its opinion that, as German speakers, we would understand the German word right away, since it surely belongs to our own language, whereas of course when it comes to translating the Greek word, we have yet to learn that foreign language before anything else. However the extent to which and the reason why every conversation and every saying is an original translating within one's own language and what "translating" ["Übersetzen"] properly means here, cannot be discussed in more depth at present. Perhaps an opportunity will

summer / autumn of 1942, and that was first published posthumously under the title "Der Spruch des Anaximander" ["The Saying of Anaximander"], being Volume [Band] 78 of the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, Vittorio Klostermann GmbH, Frankfurt am Main, edited by Ingeborg Schüßler, 2010.

2 "*Parmenides* (GA54)" is an abbreviation for the lecture course delivered by Heidegger at the University of Freiburg during the winter semester of 1942 / 43 that was first published posthumously under the title *Parmenides*, being Volume 54 of the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, Vittorio Klostermann GmbH, Frankfurt am Main, edited by Manfred S. Frings, 1982, 2nd Edition 1992.

3 "*Heraklit* (GA55)" is an abbreviation for the two lecture courses delivered by Heidegger at the University of Freiburg during the summer semesters of 1943 and 1944, respectively titled "Der Anfang des abendländischen Denkens" ["The inception of occidental thinking"] and "Logik. Heraklits Lehre vom Logos" ["Logic. Heraclitus' teaching of the Logos"], and that were first published posthumously under the main title *Heraklit*, being Volume 55 of the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, Vittorio Klostermann GmbH, Frankfurt am Main, edited by Manfred S. Frings, 1979, 2nd edition 1994.

present itself from time to time during the course of these introductory lectures on ἀλήθεια to experience and to learn something thereof.

In the third of these volumes [GA55, G44f], Heidegger intimates, by way of an incidental remark on the task of translating, what is required if our translating of the inceptual thinker Heraclitus is to be “not just word for word, or literal, but true to the word” in his sense. To draw further upon what Heidegger requires of his own translating of the incipient saying [des anfänglichen Sagens] of Heraclitus, “the words must receive their power to name and their arrangement from the already-prevailing truth to the integral word, i.e. to the whole of a Saying [eines Spruches].” But let us beware, as Heidegger warns, that “each translation remains a stopgap measure, one expedient or ancillary to the need.” And:

In the event of translation [G45] of the very words of Heraclitus, the need or predicament is great. Here the translating-cum-*transposing* [Übersetzen] will be a translating-cum-*transporting* [Übersetzen] to the other shore, over to the little-known bank located on the far side of a tidal stream of great breadth. The voyage may simply founder under the circumstances, and mostly ends with a shipwreck. In this domain of translating all translations are either very poor or not so poor; they are always poor. The translation attempted here will be no exception to this rule. Where the field is one of general comprehensibility and of business dealings translations can do without interpretation [Auslegung]. Where the domain is that of the elevatory word of poetizing and of thinking translations are at any moment in need of interpretation because they themselves are an interpretation. Such translations can then either initiate the interpretation or else they can consummate it. But precisely the consummating translation of the very words of Heraclitus must necessarily remain as obscure as the original word.⁴

4 As a matter of academic style, it is often standard editorial practice in English publications, and this is almost invariably the case in licensed English translations of volumes of the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, for supposed “foreign words or phrases that are not in common usage” to be printed in italics when they appear in an English sentence. In *Anaximander* (GA78), *Parmenides* (GA54), and *Heraklit* (GA55), the main ‘foreign languages’ at issue are German, ancient Greek, and Latin. The enormous potential for unresolved ambiguity and equivocation concerning what does and does not truly belong in italics per the original language (in this case, the respective German edition), is exacerbated by the concomitant standard editorial practice in English publications of taking the word or phrase that is not of English origin out of italics and reverting to roman for the purpose of indicating that the word would otherwise, for emphasis, be printed in italics! In the present context, where for his own purposes Heidegger italicizes in a singular and thought-provoking way throughout his German text in particular, the practice of italicizing any German words or phrases that are not in common usage when they appear in an English sentence and of then reverting to non-italicized roman type when any of the thus italicized German text needs to be italicized in and of itself, i.e. *not* in the service of mere academic style but *to serve Heidegger’s purpose*, would be far too confusing for words. The above citations of my interpretation of Heidegger’s distinction between “Übersetzen” and “Übersetzen”, where these two German words are interpolated in square brackets in the English sentence, should suffice to highlight the problem. In my translation of

To the extent that my ‘translating Heidegger translating ...’ in the following paragraphs [§§2. ... ff] does accomplish, as far as possible, a “not-so-poor” translation in this vein, I am content to regard my present interpretation of the keywords and sayings of Martin Heidegger that are addressed in this [essay](#) as having taken some small, though not insignificant steps toward achieving that goal. And a precious few of these achievements are, to my knowledge, unprecedented in the English-speaking world of so-called “Heidegger translators”.

**§2. ... das *wesentliche* Wesen (des Seins);
‘Wesen = *essentia*, οὐσία’ und ‘Wesen ≠ *essentia*, οὐσία’**

Take, for the time being, my interpretation of the challenge to all of us of contending with and seeking to unveil an elegant solution for how to translate the German verbal noun ‘Wesen’ (and alas, all cognate and compound words: ‘Anwesen’, ‘Abwesen’, ‘Unwesen’, ...) without ‘essentially’ [‘*wesentlich*’] falling into the trap to which so many commentators after Heidegger have alluded should we persist, irrespective of all that we might otherwise have learned from him, in translating into English the German keyword(ing) of being [des Seins] “das Wesen” with the generally accepted—often correct [richtig] yet untrue [unwahr, un(ge)treu]—rendition, “the essence”.

As to the correctness or accuracy [die Richtigkeit] of the translating English word “the essence”, from the Latin *essentia* verbatim, it will hardly be disputed that in the main this merely substantive rendition of the verbal substantive “das Wesen” is still a good English approximation to the traditional understanding of this German keyword in both everyday and philosophical language. But it is also

the relevant passage in both *Parmenides* (GA54) and *Heraklit* (GA55) the two German words (not in English common usage) each appear exactly as respectively italicized and romanized by Heidegger in the German edition, not inversely, as per the standard editorial practice for uncommonplace “foreign words or phrases” in an English sentence which would ‘(un)intentionally’ have the emphasis of these two words reversed so that “[Übersetzen]” would appear on the printed page or on screen as “[Übersetzen]” and vice versa when the opposite is true, thereby distorting my English translation of (Heidegger’s thought in) the passage. I shall leave in abeyance here the deliberate departure of my rendition from the more literal, mere word-for-word translation of *Übersetzen* with *translating* and *Übersetzen* with *translating*, where these individual words are thus being matched almost mechanically with those to which they correspond lexically, and where, without ‘extraneous’ interpretive retrieval of the underlying signification by the translator (not possible here), the *essentially* [*wesentlich*] altering signification of the respective word elements that are alternately italicized and romanized by Heidegger would be somewhat, if not altogether, buried in translation. In the service of first and foremost rendering legible through my direct translation of passages from the German original what is indicantly true to the very words, I therefore refrain in what follows herewith and elsewhere from the said stylistic practice.

fair to say that the close approximation is true only to the translated, and in its turn translating, word “Wesen” in the latter’s tendentially all-prevailing, almost exclusively substantive sense of ‘Wesen(heit) = essentia’, not therefore unequivocally and univocally as implied. For, the ostensibly accurate rendering of “das Wesen” with “the essence” is inherently already the expounding of an interpretation of what is worth(while)-thinking in translation that also remains untrue to the different significations of the same word “Wesen”: the univocal and the equivocal. More precisely, the rendering remains untrue to the full sway of the power to name and the settled arrangement [Fügung] (ἀρμονία) from which the original German word hails insofar as it avails itself of such that is pervasively true to the word that it understands to be true to the word per se and on which understanding it relies while also passing over and not allowing to become apparent what is incipiently co-named with the dually-signifying word “(das) Wesen”, from the German infinitive ‘wesen’—the latter translating for its part (in the present context) the Latin ‘esse’, in English ‘to be’ or, more literally, ‘to essence’—as a *verbal* noun(ing). In this mainly unapparent, incipiently verbal sense, the ambiguous verbal substantive “Wesen” ≠ ‘Wesen(heit) = essentia’ but more closely resembles ‘wesen = esse’. Accordingly, could we not better approximate the German verbal noun(ing) “das Wesen” to the correspondingly cognate (with Latin esse) English verbal noun(ing) and say, albeit likewise unequivocally and univocally, “the essencing” instead of “the essence”? Yes, but surely only if this alternately accurate English construct of the German verbal substantive, ostensibly free from equivocal expression and obfuscation, did not involve, ‘in essencing’ [‘im Wesen’], obliquely casting aside and passing over the inconspicuous ‘belonging-together’ of the different significations of “das Wesen” and, by way of mere substitution, unilaterally reversing our alternately correct, merely substantive rendition of the ‘univocal’ primacy of the nominal over the verbal signification that is nonetheless still, rather disconcertingly, also ‘unequivocally’ true to the very same word.

So in terms of the general drift of its mostly undisputed veracity [Richtigkeit, Wahrhaftigkeit] as the best word-for-word rendition of the generally accepted primacy of the nominal over the verbal signification in conformity [Übereinstimmung] with the traditionally ‘Latinized-Latinizing’ understanding of the translated-translating German word “(das) Wesen” in the sense of ‘Wesen(heit) = essentia’, the Latinate translating word “(the) essence” is by no means unambiguously but rather disconcertingly true to the original German word, be the latter univocally translated and ‘Latinized’ or for its part univocally translating and ‘Latinizing’. To opt for the partially-signifying word essence, from Latin essentia, to transpose into English the dually-signifying German word Wesen in its merely substantive sense of ‘Wesen(heit) = Wesenheit’ to transpose

in its turn the Latin substantive *essentia* to transpose in its turn the ancient Greek substantive οὐσία, is to opt into, whether advertently or not, the only partially-understood historic trend of this pervasive thread of ostensible truth [Wahrheit, veritas, ἀλήθεια] running right through the language of occidental thinking in its somewhat obliquely unanimous expression.

However by indirectly continuing with the trend of construing “das Wesen” only as a substantive and not attending directly to its co-essentially verbal signification, by not proceeding at once from the full sway of what is incipiently co-signified in the German verbal noun ‘Wesen’, the translating English substantive “the essence” is manifestly not, to paraphrase Heidegger, receiving its power to name and its arrangement from the already-prevailing truth [Treue] to the integral word ‘(das) Wesen’, i.e. to the whole of its saying; and that *essentially* renders mute the translating word “the essence” in connection with what still remains unsaid and unthought in whatever the translated, and in turn translating, word “das Wesen” says and thinks. By relying upon the prevailing trend of thinking ‘essence = Wesen(heit) = essentia = οὐσία’, the gist of the substantively-imbued language from which “the essence” speaks, clearly ignores Heidegger’s appraisal of the question-worthy legacy with which we are saddled in respect of not just the settled mainstream voice but also the unsettling silent say and indeed full sway of the translating word “das Wesen”, a translating that, as Heidegger indicates to his readers in other contexts [GA54, G18; GA55, G62ff], will always already be taking place even within our own [German] language *before* any translating that may occur on the occasion of a dialogue between two different languages. For, the English construction of what manifestly holds sway in the prevailing German translation of “Wesen” into its ostensibly ownmost word such that ‘essence = Wesen(heit) ...’ directly veils our access to an inceptive thinking of the elusive ‘truth’ [‘Wahrheit’, ‘veritas’, ‘ἀλήθεια’] of this positively ambiguous keyword of being [Sein] in the sense of being(ness) [Seiend(heit)], a thinking that springs from attending to the inconspicuous arrangement in which the *essential* s(w)aying of the word ‘Wesen(heit)’ is obliged to s(w)ay what it s(w)ays in such a (s)way; and hence it indirectly veils our access to an inceptive thinking of any question-worthy justification on our part for the univocal and unequivocal veracity of the translating word “the essence” in accord or agreement [Übereinstimmung] with the mainstream voice but not in concert [im Einvernehmen] with the full and silent s(w)ay of our likewise settled and yet *essentially* unsettling construction of ‘the truth’, the latter being in lockstep with what manifestly holds sway in the prevailing German translation of “die Wahrheit” into its ostensibly ownmost word in terms of ‘(die) Richtigkeit’ and ‘(die) Übereinstimmung’.

The insidious trap is one that we set for ourselves whenever we are attracted by the apparent easiness of relying upon and sticking to the parameters of the commonplace, namely metaphysical construction of such English, German, Latin, or Greek keywords of conventional and essential occidental thinking, only to have them proved difficult when we become ensnared in the stumbling block of our own interpretation. The foremost obstacle in the present instance comprises the many pitfalls associated with undiscerningly retaining the standard English translation “(the) essence” to render the obscurely ambiguous German keyword “(das) *Wesen*” where the latter has, on the one hand, like its standard English counterpart, the prevailing, predominantly substantive signification of *essentia* = οὐσία that “arises at the earliest in Greek thinking with the thought of Plato” [Heidegger GA55, G122] and, on the other, the unprevailing, incipient verbal signification of *esse* = εἶναι that is concomitantly left out of the equation.

The obfuscation of the ambiguous German keyword ‘*Wesen*’ lies in the fact that, in defiance of its primordial character as a *verbal* noun, the incipient (co-)signification of *Wesen*, n. = *wesen*, v. is forfended and the forfending itself is forgotten in its translating-cum-*transposing* of the predominant understanding and standard interpretation of *Wesen*, n. = *Wesen(heit)*, n. to translate into German the Latin substantive noun *essentia* to translate, in its turn, the Greek substantive noun οὐσία. However by concertedly focusing our interpretation on letting become apparent what is not apparent in what is, it also becomes clear that notwithstanding any oblique obfuscating of its dually-unitive s(w)aying, the translating word ‘*Wesen(heit)* = *essentia* = οὐσία’ (in)directly articulates and *transports* us into a distinctive ‘belonging-together’ of *Wesen*, n. and *wesen*, v. with scarcely a trace or none at all of the latter. This translating’s ‘leaving-little-or-no-trace’ of what the Latin grammarians called the “infinitive mood” [“modus infinitivus”] of the Germanic verb ‘(zu) *wesen*’ — in English ‘to be’ or, more constructively, ‘to essence’ — and hence its unspoken barring of access thereto, entails leaving unsaid and unthought the incipient time word of being [(zu) *sein*] in its primordial sense of the unapparent s(w)aying for the time being of the (un)translated word of being(ness) [= *Seiend(heit)*]. The translation is not just the unspoken interpretation and habit of thinking from which “das *Wesen*” is spoken but its legation and the passing down of its long tradition as the inconspicuous arrangement of the very words in which be-ing, i.e. being, itself [das *Seiend*, d.h. das *Sein*, selbst] is given co-essentially to enpropriate the rend(er)ing of its own *Wesen* as ‘*Wesen(heit)*’ (= ‘*Seiend(heit)*’) while also bestowing favour on the self-concealing of its incipient ‘*wesen*’ (= ‘*sein*’). Nonetheless, (the verbal nouncing of) *wesen*, v. can never be altogether expunged from the translated and translating word *Wesen(heit)*, n. because it belongs together ‘in essencing’ [‘im *Wesen*’] therewith and hence with

the entire history and the epochal destiny(ng) of the *wesentlich* clear(ing) arrangement in which the keyword ‘Wesen(heit)’ *is, was, and will be* invested with the merely nominal power to bring itself, at the same time, both in and out of consort with itself.

Insofar as our partially-signifying Latinate-English word “the essence” [and Latinate-German equivalent “die Essenz”] transposes the dually-signifying German word “das Wesen” in its exclusively substantive sense of ‘Wesen(heit) = Wesenheit’, it too, is invested with the merely nominal power to bring itself, at the same time, both in and out of consort with itself. Through its partial reception of the translating German keyword “(das) Wesen” in the vein of ‘Wesen(heit) = essentia = οὐσία’, the inmostly verbal co-signification of this prevailing trend of occidental saying and thinking in the vein of ‘wesen = esse = εἶναι’ is unwelcome to our translating Latinate substantive “(the) essence” [Germ: “(die) Essenz”]; this standard English translation of the verbal substantive “(das) Wesen” is *essentially* unreceptive to *also* receiving its power to name and its arrangement from the already-prevailing truth to the unprevailing *verbal* sway of the German language of ‘(das) Wesen’, i.e. to the whole of its saying including the ‘wesen’ (OHG & OE ‘wesan’) of its Germanic verb-root “wes” in the sense of the time words ‘(ver)weilen’ [‘to while’], ‘wohnen’ [‘to dwell’], and ‘sich aufhalten’ [‘to stay’, ‘to spend time’], from whence (ἀρχή) it incipiently takes its bearing (as a nouning of wesen, v.).

Indeed the clearing self-disclosure and self-occlusion of the epochal destiny(ng) of our substantively-imbued saying and thinking in the occident such that ‘essence = Wesen(heit) = essentia = οὐσία’, as the inconspicuous way in which the *essenzenz* [die Wesung] of being itself lets loose yet withholds therein the primordial differentiation of its very keywords in respect of their obscurely ambiguous history proper, says it clearly enough in that despite our best efforts it is so hard for us to hear and to translate within the original language, be it English, German, Latin, or Greek, the primordial saying in such keyword(ing)s of how being itself clears to reveal-conceal itself, let alone to hear and to translate into another language this saying and thinking of being and the oblivion of what therein remains unsaid and unthought. And this primary difficulty of first and foremost translating our own language into its ownmost word, whether or not as ‘native speakers’, can be seen to apply not only to conventional but also to *essent-ial* thinking and translation. That Heidegger’s ‘not-so-poor’ translating-cum-*transporting* [Übersetzen] of his own German language into the care of its ownmost word sets out to retrieve an inceptive interpretation of what is ‘in *essenzenz*’ [‘im Wesen’]—and still is [ist] as having been [gewesen] and yet to be [noch zu sein]—lost in the unapparent history proper of ‘the essence’

[‘des Wesens = der Wesen(heit)’] of be-ing [des Seiend], that is, of being [des Seins] as ‘being(ness)’ [als ‘Seiend(heit)’] since the time that ‘philosophy’ as metaphysics first began with Plato and Aristotle right up to the present day, especially in the accustomed German translation and interpretation of the dually-signifying keyword of being [Sein] “Wesen” in the prevailing sense of ‘Wesen(heit) = essentia = οὐσία’, and never balks from doing so, throws a big spanner in the works for his English (and not just his English) translator.

Heidegger in his grace has bestowed upon his interpreters a seemingly insurmountable translation difficulty that may well be happily consigned to oblivion for time and again wrapping its own ‘Wesen’ in a shroud of mystery, leaving us unguided and unadvised. When called upon to translate into English (or another language) what is *wesentlich* thought by Heidegger in the German word “das Wesen” we are very much at a loss. How to convey this German keyword(ing) of conventional and especially *essential* thinking in a translation that is not just univocally word for word but equivocally true to the word? Since ‘das Wesen’ is literally capable of double interpretation, having two equally plausible word-for-word significations of relatively uncertain bearing upon one another when thought not merely conventionally but *essentially*, it is tempting to go right ahead and equivocate with rendering *either* “the essence” *or* alternately “the essencing” of our English language while haply sur-rendering it up, whether inadvertently or not, to the mystery of its ‘either-or’ partiality. So who else besides a diligent ‘Heidegger interpreter’ would choose not to give in to this benighting logic of what does not always already appear to be crystal clear? Who else would resolve to return the favour advisedly, having due regard for giving into the care of their own language the enigmatic thought expounded in the thinker’s gleanings of the settled and yet unsettling translating of “das Wesen” of his own German language into its ownmost word? The enigma laid out for the interpretation and for rendering in the sense of giving back, giving in return, restoring, of clarifying, and also of sur-rendering in the sense not just of giving in to the dark and obscure but of giving it over to light and clear thinking, is the distinctive going-together of ‘Wesen = essentia’ *and* ‘Wesen ≠ essentia’. Being always already at a loss when called upon to render the prevailing (and so too the unprevailing) arrangement of the German wording of the integral word “das Wesen” *wesentlich*, i.e. *essentially*, who among us would not choose rather to let Heidegger’s pioneering bestowal of what is incipiently worth(while)-expounding in the enigmatic thought of this keyword(ing) of being slip back into forgetfulness once and for all before bestowing ourselves in appreciation therefor and having, as it were, to rebestow it, in retranslation, upon others?

Show me one self-respecting translator apprised of what is discerningly difficult to impart, or re-impart, in the texts of Martin Heidegger as *essentially*, i.e. *wesentlich*, worth(while)-thinking who would not discreetly prefer to convey this particular enigma to the too-hard basket (where it best be left to its own devices) and I shall eat my very words.

§3. ... das Wesen des Seiend (d.h. des Seins) als die Wesen(heit) der Seiend(heit)

Latin *essentia* translates, in turn, Greek οὐσία in the manner of the Greek for being (τὸ εἶναι) as, literally, ‘beingness’ or, in Heidegger’s German translation of the Greek word for word, for “das Sein” as ‘die Seiendheit’; and so too, in the same Latin-Greek-English-German semantic-etymological chain: Latin *praesentia* translates, for its part, Greek παρουσία for the present-ing / present-ing (τὸ παρῆναι) as ‘the presence’ or, in Heidegger’s German translation of the Greek word for word, for “das Anwesen / die Anwesenung” as ‘die Anwesenheit’; while Latin *absentia* translates, for its part, Greek ἀπουσία for the absent-ing / absent-ing (τὸ ἀπεῖναι) as ‘the absence’ or, in Heidegger’s German translation of the Greek word for word, for “das Abwesen / die Abwesenung” as ‘die Abwesenheit’. Moreover, in antiquity Latin *essentia* was used to some extent synonymously with Latin *substantia* (the latter corresponding literally to ancient Greek ὑπόστασις which was, in turn, also translated verbatim into late Latin *hypostasis*), a substantive belonging to the verb *substare*, to stand or be under or underlie, to render polydimensional Greek οὐσία (εἶναι) in the substantively one-dimensional sense of the English loan-translation “substance” and German Lehnübersetzung “Substanz”.

Although the alternate rendering of οὐσία with *substantia* later becomes a standard translation-equivalent of its rendering with *essentia* to imitate the Greek for being (τὸ εἶναι) as beingness, Latin *substantia* also takes root in the language as a more narrowly ‘hypo-static’ understanding of ancient Greek οὐσία than Latin *essentia* without the fuller breadth of signification of the latter in its varied (albeit still substantively one-dimensional) metaphysical interpretation, let alone that of ancient Greek οὐσία (εἶναι) itself, including having, in its own way, a partial affinity with the ‘substantive’ naming of ‘being(ness)’ connoted by the complementary word ‘*substantia*’. Insofar as a distinction is drawn between the respective ‘substant-ive’ force of *essentia* and *substantia* to understand, i.e. to re-translate into another language, only the ‘hypostatic’ dimension of οὐσία in the manner of the Greek for be-ing, i.e. being, as beingness [Seiend, d.h. Sein, als Seiendheit], *essentia*, *Essenz*(ialität) / *Wesen*(heit), *essence*, obtains the conventional and essent-ial signification of the what(-being)ness or what(-is)ness [Was(-seiend)heit] oder Was(-ist)heit] and nature of a thing [Natur eines Dinges]

or, in ‘meta-physical’ parlance, of the being in its being(ness) and the being(ness) of the being; while *substantia*, *Substanz*(ialität), substance concentrates and consolidates an alternately one-dimensional Latinate under-standing, i.e. re-interpretation, of ambiguous Greek οὐσία (εἶναι) at one moment as the underlying, ‘hypostatic’ being(ness) [Seiend(heit)] as substantiality [Substanzialität / Wesenhaftigkeit, substantialitas] or subsistency [Subsistenz, subsistentia] of a being in itself, subsisting by itself, as substance, and the next as the being itself [das Seiende selbst] in its substantial and subsistent being(ness)-in-itself as a substance. And indeed not without the twist of meaning that this alternate rendering of Greek οὐσία with or inspired by Latin *substantia* imposes upon the Greek word according to Heidegger for, to translate what he writes in *Heraklit* (GA55) [G56]:

... although the ordinary ear may balk at this, we can say the ‘beingness’ [die ‘Seiendheit’] is what earmarks the being [das Seiende] as one such as it is. ¶But this word renders only the literal translation of the Greek word οὐσία, a word that was of course translated as ‘*substantia*’ and distorted as to its signification by the Romans.

And what of the twist of meaning that the alternate rendering of Greek οὐσία with or inspired by Latin *essentia* imposes for its part upon the Greek word for being (τὸ εἶναι) as ‘beingness’? For, when translated as ‘*essentia*’ the ambiguous Greek word ‘οὐσία (εἶναι)’ was, from Heidegger’s perspective, likewise and otherwise distorted as to its signification by the Romans. To the present day, an abstruse remnant of this distortion of the Greek signification of ‘being(ness)’, of ‘Seiend(heit)’, (co-)essent-ially lays itself out for the interpretation in the traditional twisting about of the quintessentially verbal import of the German verbal substantive “Wesen” through the latter’s tendentially all-prevailing, almost exclusively substantive signification of ‘Wesen(heit) = *essentia* = οὐσία’ in defiance of its unprevailing, incipiently verbal (co-)signification of ‘wesen = esse = εἶναι’.

So if we too are going to have recourse to the relevant cognates of Latin ‘*esse*(ntia)’ to translate into English the established trend in the occident of *thinking* the primarily ‘hypostatic’ dimension of the Greek word ‘οὐσία (εἶναι)’ *through* the German word “Wesen” as ‘Wesen(heit) = (*esse*)ntia = οὐσία (εἶναι)’, we must surely take care not to acquiesce in this imposing ‘twist’ to the Greek understanding of ‘Seiend(heit)’ [‘being(ness)’] by dint of our own, merely ‘substantive’ English rendition of “das Wesen” with our partially-signifying Latinate loan-translation “the essence”. For when thought not just conventionally but (co-)essent-ially, our stand-alone translating word “the essence”—like its cognate German counterpart “die Essenz”—is but one partial fold of the simple twofold that comprises the full sway (waving, hovering) of the

dually-signifying agnate German word “das Wesen” with its at once prevailing *nominal* (co-)signification of the ‘Wesen(heit) = essentia = οὐσία’ and our sense of “the essence” *and* unprevailing *verbal* (co-)signification of the ‘wesen = esse = εἶναι’ and our sense of “the essencing”.

Our preliminary thinking-through of the potential for a suitable English translation of this translating that is always already taking place within the German language of “das Wesen” has been with a view to an English rendition thereof that is, in Heidegger’s sense, “not just word for word but true to the word”. Thus far we might allow ourselves to venture the following: Whilst our translating word “the essence” is to be retained in any English rendition befitting the original translating of the language of “das Wesen” into its ownmost word *as* the word of being [des Seins] that it *is* [*ist, est, ἔστιν*], “the essence” [Germ: “die Essenz”] standing alone is *essentially*, i.e. *wesentlich*, unfit to best signify the full sway of the translated and in turn translating German word in the settled arrangement of its wavering and hovering as such, i.e. with regard to the ‘whole twist’ of its saying as ‘Wesen(heit) = (esse)ntia, οὐσία (εἶναι)’.

In his 1935 lecture course *Introduction to Metaphysics* (GA40)⁵, in a section devoted to the (grammar and) etymology of the word “Sein”, Heidegger draws from the linguistic research of his time to report briefly on what the science of linguistics knows about the word stems that are evident in the inflections of the verb “sein”. And he suggests that current knowledge and information about this is hardly definitive; not so much because new facts can ensue but because it is to be expected that what is hitherto known will be examined with new eyes and a more genuine questioning. He acknowledges that the inflection of the verb “sein” is determined in its full multiplicity by three different stems or verb-roots [G75ff (G54ff)]: 1. “es”; 2. “bhû, bheu”; and 3. “wes”. And it turns out that German “sein” (with Latin “esse”, Greek “εἶναι”, ...) is cognate with the first of these verb-roots while German “wesen” is cognate with the third. Our English word “be”, among other Indo-European forms (eg. in German, Greek, and Latin), is cognate with the second.

For the purposes of this [essay](#), it is worth noticing that of the four keywords of being(ness), of Seiend(heit), in the configuration ‘essence, Wesen(heit), essentia,

⁵ “*Introduction to Metaphysics* (GA40)” is an abbreviation for the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe* edition of the lecture course *Einführung in die Metaphysik* delivered by Heidegger at the University of Freiburg during the summer semester of 1935 that was first published in 1953, 4th edition 1976, by Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen, being Volume 40 of the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, Vittorio Klostermann GmbH, Frankfurt am Main, edited by Petra Jaeger, 1983. Page numbers of the 1983 German edition of the *Gesamtausgabe* include those of the 1953 (1976) Max Niemeyer Verlag publication.

οὐσία’, three of them, namely, Latinate-English essence, Latin *essentia*, and Greek οὐσία, share “the oldest and authentic stem word”⁶ of the verb ‘to be’ [‘sein’] whose basic form is the verb-root “es” (es-/’s-) in the sense of ‘to live’ [‘leben’]⁷, from whence (ἀρχή) the following inflections of this Indo-European verb-root, to name a significant few of these cognate forms, also take their bearing: English “is” and (probably) “are”; German “ist” [“is”], “sind” [“are”], “seiend” [“(to be) be-ing”], and “sein” [“(to) be”]; Latin “(e)sum” [“am”], “est” [“is”], and “esse” [“(to) be, (to) essence”]; and Greek εἰμί [am], ἔστιν [is], and εἶναι [(to) be]. “It remains noteworthy,” as Heidegger points out, “that in all Indo-European⁸ languages the “is” [das “ist”] (ἔστιν, est ...) stays the course from the very inception.”

By contrast, the agnate English words “be” and “being(ness)” and German words “bin” [“am”] and “bist” [“are”] point paradigmatically to *their* cognate Indo-European verb-root “bheu” (*bhū- < *bhūə-) in the sense of ‘come to be’, ‘become’ [‘werden’], and ‘grow’ [‘wachsen’], from whence (ἀρχή) Greek φύω, φύσις, and the time word φύειν, ‘arise’ [‘aufgehen’], with its associated verb-root φυ-.⁹ And when the incipient language of the latter is associated with φα-, φαίνεσθαι, not just in the vein of what linguistics may tell us about the word stems that are evident in the inflections of the (German) words for ‘to be’ and ‘to essence / essenz’ but also in the vein of Heidegger’s archessentially¹⁰ being-historic thinking-through of the distinctive time words “sein” and “wesen”, then the Greek word φύσις, one of the keywords of the inceptual thinkers in their sayings of the essenz(ing) of the truth of being [des Wesens der Wahrheit des Seins], can be gleaned not merely conventionally as “nature” [“Natur”] and as

6 “[d]as älteste und eigentliche Stammwort” Heidegger GA40, G75 (G54)

7 “... life / (the) living, that which is (the) living, that which stands and goes and rests from whence of itself per se: that which is independent, standing on its own. [... das Leben, das Lebende, das, was von ihm selbst her in sich steht und geht und ruht: das Eigenständige.]” Ibid.

8 Heidegger prefers the term “Indo-Germanic” [“indogermanisch(e)”] GA40, G76 (G54)

9 “To this [bhû, bheu] stem belongs the Greek φύω, to arise, to prevail, to come to stand from whence of itself and to remain standing. Up to now, this bhû has been construed according to the standard and superficial conception of φύσις and φύειν as nature and as “growing”. From the perspective of a more primordial interpretation that stems from the critical engagement with the inception of Greek philosophy, the “growing” turns out to be an arising which remains determined in turn by present-ing / presenz(ing) and appearing. [Zu ihm gehört das griechische φύω, aufgehen, walten, von ihm selbst her zu Stand kommen und im Stand bleiben. Dieses bhû wurde bisher nach der üblichen und äußerlichen Auffassung von φύσις und φύειν als Natur und als “wachsen” gedeutet. Von der ursprünglichen Auslegung her, die aus der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Anfang der griechischen Philosophie stammt, erweist sich das “wachsen” als aufgehen, das wiederum vom Anwesen und Erscheinen her bestimmt bleibt.]” Ibid.

10 For a sense of what is meant by the “arch” that is prefixed to “essentially” here, see the [home](http://www.archessenzenz.com) page at www.archessenzenz.com

“to grow” [“wachsen”] but essentially [*wesentlich*] as “that which is (the) arising into the light, φύειν, to luminate, to shine, and therefore to appear ...”¹¹. The perfective tenses of Latin *esse* “fui” [“I was”, etc.] are also cognate with this verb-root.

Which brings us to the agnate German word “Wesen(heit)”—the exception in the otherwise cognate configuration ‘essence, *Wesen(heit)*, *essentia*, οὐσία’—and its incipient verb “*wesen*” with its distinctive stem “*wes*” as the third of the three verbal stems that are addressed by Heidegger in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* (GA40) as determining the full s(w)ay of manifold inflections of the German word “*sein*”. The Germanic verb-root *wes* (Sanskrit *vas-*) from whence (ἀρχή) the Old High German and Old English *wesan*, ‘to be’ in the sense of the time words ‘(ver)weilen’ [‘to while, (a)bide’], ‘*wohnen*’ [‘to dwell’], and ‘*sich aufhalten*’ [‘to stay, spend time’]; so too our English inflections of this verb-root “*was*” and “*were*”, the latter being cognate with German “*wesen*” [“to be”, “to essence / *essenz*”], “(ist) *gewesen*” [“(having) been (in *essenz(ing)*”], “*war*” [“was”], and “*waren*” [“were”]. Further, as Heidegger writes [GA40, G76 (G55)]:

The participle “*wesend*” [“*essent(ing)*” / “*essenzing*”] is still preserved in *an-wesend* [pre-sent(ing) / pre-senzing], *ab-wesend* [ab-sent(ing) / ab-senzing]. The substantive “*Wesen*” primordially signifies not the *Was-sein* [what-being], the quidditas, but the *Währen* [lasting, tarrying, abiding] as *Gegenwart* [the (being) present (or around or there), being (the) present], *An-wesen* [pre-sent-ing / pre-senz(ing)] and *Ab-wesen* [ab-sent-ing / ab-senz(ing)]. The “*sens*” in Latin *prae-sens* und *ab-sens* has been lost. Does “*Dii con-sentes*” mean the gods pre-sent(ing) / pre-senzing together?

From the three stems we glean the three clearly determinate incipient significations: *leben*, *aufgehen*, *verweilen* [to live, to arise, to while]. Linguistic science confirms them. Linguistics also ascertains that these incipient significations are nowadays obsolete; that no more than an “abstract” signification “*sein*” [“to be”] has survived. Yet here a decisive question begins to form: How and in what respect are the said three stems in agreement as a trifold arrangement? What supports and guides the saga of being? In what does our saying of being repose – pursuant to all of its linguistic inflections? Are both, this saying and the understanding of being, the same, or not? How in the saga of being does the differentiation of being and the being essence / *essenz*? As valuable as the abovementioned ascertainments of linguistics are, this cannot be the end of the matter. For, pursuant to these ascertainments, the *questioning* must first begin.

Thus the paradigm—or better: the collection [Sammlung] (λόγος) of semantically and ‘onto-logically’¹² related paradigm-fragments¹³—of the time word ‘*sein*’ in

11 “das ins Licht Aufgehende, φύειν, leuchten, scheinen und deshalb erscheinen ...” Ibid.

12 ‘onto-logic’ < the λόγος of τὸ ὄν, τὸ εἶναι, of the being in its being and of the being of the being [des Seienden in seinem Sein und des Seins des Seienden].

German and ‘to be’ in English, one of the Germanic languages, exhibits side by side a diverse range of inflected forms derived from the roots or radices of three different Indo-European stems or bases; and in English itself, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), perhaps forms derived from four Indo-European bases. The three (perhaps four) distinctive bases of “the verb” ‘to be’—some of which also provide forms of the corresponding “verb” in other Indo-European languages—are said, in the etymology section of the OED entry for *be, v.*, to be “unrelated”. Yet in showing (or not showing) themselves side by side in manifold and intermingling inflections¹⁴, how can the radical words (or fragments of a word) comprising, each in their own way, the English verb ‘to be’ (and so too the German verb ‘sein’) as an integral whole, be truly “unrelated”? They may not be related as cognates, those born together of or coming from a single radix among the three (or four) radices that apparently mingle or blend together to make up the full paradigm of one such Germanic verb. However they can still closely relate to and integrate with one another as agnates, those born near to or beside one or other of those determining radices. Which is why these interrelating paradigmatic fragments may incipiently exhibit (or inhibit) themselves beside one another in various arrangements or configurations [Fügungen] of the inflected ‘verb’ as equally-essential [gleich-wesentlich] radical forms diverging from and converging with one another to articulate in various renderings the integrative (and so too disintegrative) interaction of our English time word ‘to be’ (> the *bheu-* radix) and its counterpart German time word ‘sein’ (> the *es- / 's-* radix), essentially (> the *es-* radix), respectively *wesentlich* (> the *wes-* radix), as integral parts of the whole wording of the word both within and between their respective languages.

In our translative-cum-transportive after-thinking after Heidegger’s appreciation of the λόγος as, in *essenz(ing)*, i.e. in *essenizing* [im *Wesen*, d.h. in der *Wesung*], the forgathering of being [die *Versammlung des Seins*], the distinctive Indo-European verb-roots pertaining to the manifold inflections of our English word “to be” and our German word “sein”, may or may not present themselves in

13 This delineation of the anomalous time words ‘sein’ and ‘be’ is a slight variation on Roger Lass’s description of ‘to be’ “in the rest of Germanic as well as in OE” as cited by Jeremy J Smith in *Old English: A Linguistic Introduction*, Cambridge University Press, 2009:

The anomalous verbs raise many complexities, and are subject to suppletion, especially ‘to be’ which is, in Roger Lass’s description, ‘not a single “verb”, but a collection of semantically related paradigm-fragments – in the rest of Germanic as well as in OE’ (1994:170).

14 OED etymology for *paradigm, n.*: “< post-classical Latin *paradigma* ... < ancient Greek *παράδειγμα* pattern, example, precedent < *παρα-*para- prefix¹ + *δείγμα* sample, pattern (< the stem of *δείκνυμι* to show (see deictic *adj.* and *n.*) + *-μα*: see *-oma comb. form*), after *παραδεικνύμι* to exhibit beside, show side by side.”

certain arrangements betwixt and between the various forms of these respective time words for being as a heartspring of essent-ial [wesentlichen] saying and thinking and translating in the occident. Through a diverse gathering of paradigmatic agnates (and cognates) of our English and German time words for ‘to be’ [‘sein’] incipiently showing (and not showing) themselves side by side with Latin *esse* and Greek εἶναι, these paradigm-fragments may be gleaned all at once as giving voice to a somewhat disconcerting harmonia that can never narrowly define but only ever intimate the full range of inflections that are wont to play upon one another in the midst of a polyarchic interplay that is ownmost to our shared occidental language and thinking of being.

Take, for instance, the configuration ‘essence = *Wesen*(heit) = *essentia* = οὐσία’ where, like its Latinate-English counterpart the “essence”, the “*Wesen*” as *Wesen*(heit) is also the standard German translation for the Latin “*essentia*”, although the unparenthized substantive noun “*Wesenheit*” would be a more literal rendition. Except that, unlike its Latinate-English counterpart and the Latin substantive noun it quite accurately (if one-sidedly) translates, “*das Wesen*”, as Heidegger highlights, is in truth a *verbal* noun(ing), to wit, the nouning of the germ. verb infinitive “*wesen*” — “*esse*” in Latin and, in English, “to be” or, again more constructively, “to essence”.

For, in contrast to the way all of the said keywords of being [Sein] as, essent-ially [wesentlich], being(ness) [Seiend(heit)] – namely, essence, *Wesen*(heit), *essentia*, οὐσία, – are traditionally understood and interpreted within and between their respective languages, and this is true for conventional and essent-ial occidental thinking alike in Heidegger’s appraisal, his thinking of the differentiation of being [das Sein, *esse*, τὸ εἶναι] from beingness [die Seiendheit, *essentia*, ἡ οὐσία] and thus of what is incipiently (un)intended (yet invariably left unattended) in the verbal noun (phrase) “*das Wesen*”, purposely does not hear this keyword just in the conventional, predominantly *substantive* sense of the German ‘*Wesen*(heit)’ translating the Latin ‘*essentia*’ or hypostatic Greek ‘οὐσία’, on the contrary. Heidegger’s thinking also attends *wesentlich* to the primordial ‘*wesen*’ in ‘*Wesen*(heit)’ to translate the ‘*esse*’ in ‘(esse)ntia’ to translate the ‘εἶναι’, so to speak, in ‘οὐσία (εἶναι)’, i.e. he pays heed to the patent yet latent, the incipient yet forgotten, ‘infinitive mood’ and ‘essenzing’ [‘*Wesung*’] of the time word for ‘to be’ [‘sein’, ‘esse’, ‘εἶναι’] at the historic heart of what still remains unsaid and unthought in our conventional, not to mention even our essent-ial, understanding of this German verbal noun and these Latin and Greek substantive nouns respectively.

Here is a snippet of what Heidegger has to say in *Heraklit* (GA55) on the hitherto barely noticed or experienced ‘head start’ [‘*Vorsprung*’] of the pioneering

‘inception’ [‘Anfang’] of occidental thinking in leaping ahead of the later beginning [Beginn] or ‘origin’ [‘Ursprung’] of ‘philosophy’, i.e. metaphysics, in the occident, which is to say, in leaping ahead of the kind of occidental thinking that was founded by Plato and Aristotle guided by the leading question, ‘What is the being?’ (τί τὸ ὄν); on how in thinking τὸ ὄν – the being – the thinker thinks τὸ εἶναι – being, namely: the being of the being; and on how the thinking of being (εἶναι) as beingness (οὐσία) since the time of Plato and Aristotle, a thinking that subsequently goes by the name of “metaphysics” to persist as our metaphysical way of thought in the occident right up to the present moment, is in contrast to the way the ‘participial’ word of the being (τὸ ὄν, τὰ ὄντα, τὸ εἶναι) is especially thought “not substantively but verbally” in the sense of being (τὸ εἶναι) by those pioneering thinkers whose inceptive thinking pursuant to and purveyant of what is incipiently worth(while)-thinking is “not yet metaphysics” but who think within a radius of the ‘inception’ of occidental thinking; whom we call “the inceptual thinkers”; and “whose names are Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus” [GA55, G4]. In a nutshell [GA55, G57f]:

But while τί τὸ ὄν is being questioned, the question is not set on the respective being, the being that prevails at the time [das jeweilige Seiende] but goes beyond (μετά) this ‘over’ to the being of the being. The question τί τὸ ὄν does not think the τὰ φυσικά but thinks μετὰ τὰ φυσικά. The thinking that thinks unto the οὐσία, beingness, goes beyond the being that prevails at the time over to being. It is a thinking μετὰ τὰ φυσικά, i.e. ‘metaphysics’. Occidental thinking is metaphysics since the time of Plato and Aristotle right up to the present moment. Whereas the thinking of the inceptual thinkers is not yet metaphysics. They too think being no doubt. But they think it in another way. They too are acquainted with the being no doubt. But they experience it in another way. Therefore if the inceptual thinkers ever do say the very words τὸ ὄν, τὰ ὄντα, the being [das Seiende], then as pioneering thinkers they especially think the ‘participial’ word not substantively but verbally; τὸ ὄν, the being, is thought in the sense of be-ing [des Seiend], that is, of being [d.h. des Seins]. τὸ ὄν or according to an earlier form of the word τὸ εἶναι is for Parmenides synonymous with τὸ εἶναι. –

Supposing, then, that the verbal noun(ing) “das Wesen” in the saying of the inceptual thinker *after* Heidegger, is intended in the sense of the kind of *essential* thinking-in-pursuance [or after-thinking: Nachdenken] that while neither ‘not yet’ nor ‘just so’ metaphysics is nonetheless still a thinking-in-purveyance [or fore-thinking: Vordenken] of the historic truth of being within radius of “another inception”, one that, after Heidegger, would follow in the wake of the abovenamed pioneering thinkers’ “first inception” – where, ‘im Wesen’, being [Sein] (εἶναι) essences / essences and conceals its essencing / essencing – with a “step-back” from the substantively-conceived “Sein” of metaphysics in the accustomed sense of ‘Seiend(heit) = Seiendheit (οὐσία)’, i.e. from the metaphysics of the being in its being(ness) and the being(ness) of the being, into

the incipient language of these very keywords of being, in that case, what is named and thought with this ambiguous keyword of being [des Seins] *Wesen*, n. is also ‘in essencing / essencing’ [‘im *Wesen*’] being [\neq being(ness), i.e. *Seiend(heit)*, but rather: = *sein*] in the sense of *wesen*, v. [\neq *Wesen(heit)*, n.]; and this means that the going-together of the substantive ‘*Wesen*’ with the incipient verb ‘*wesen*’ from whence it comes ($\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\acute{\eta}$), that this belonging-together of those that differ as, in essence / *essenz* (- cum - essencing / essencing) or better: in *essenz(ing)* [im *Wesen*], one and the same, is now, more than ever before, especially understood ‘verbally’, i.e. in a (somewhat parenthesed phrase-)word pertaining to the whiling [Verweilen] of time.

On this interpretation, the respective whiling of the time words “*sein*” [“(to) be”] and “*wesen*” [“(to) essence”] *through* their verbal noun(ing)s “*Sein*” and “*Wesen*” is archessentially crucial to our appraisal of what is *wesentlich* worth(while)-translating in the enigma of ‘*Wesen* = *essentia*, οὐσία’ and ‘*Wesen* \neq *essentia*, οὐσία’ *after* Heidegger.

In this regard, it is incumbent upon us to remember his time-honouring distinguishment of the “being-historic” [“*seinsgeschichtlichen*”] question(ing) of being, ‘How does being essence / *essenz*?’ [‘Wie west das *Sein*?’] from the metaphysical question(ing) of being since the time of Plato and Aristotle: ‘What is the being?’ [‘Was ist das *Seiende*?’] ($\tau\acute{\iota}$ τὸ ὄν;) And because metaphysical thinking is to the present moment more or less oblivious to distinguishing the former question of being as such from the latter question of the being as such, we need to bear in mind that the thinking that prepares to think this distinguishment of the question(ing) of being cannot come from within metaphysics itself where, while *not* being questioned as such, so Heidegger, the truth (not of the being’s but) of being’s essencing [Wesung] and the self-concealing thereof will remain, in *essenz(ing)* [im *Wesen*], *essentially* [*wesentlich*] sheltered and concealed.

In 1935, Heidegger, in his lecture course *Introduction to Metaphysics* (GA40), reflects on how even as far back as *Being and Time* (GA2)¹⁵, first published in 1927, his venture upon an ‘other-than-metaphysical’ thinking of being [Seinsdenken] was focussed on how, by contrast with the metaphysical question concerning the being as such [dem *Seienden* als solchem], the question

15 “*Being and Time* (GA2)” is an abbreviation for the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe* edition (Bd. 2) of *Sein und Zeit*, the latter first published 1927 in *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* Bd. VIII and simultaneously as special edition, subsequently published 1976 by Max Niemeyer Verlag Tübingen, being Volume 2 of the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, Vittorio Klostermann GmbH, Frankfurt am Main, edited by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, 1977.

concerning being as such [dem Sein als solchem] is of another *essenz*(ing) [Wesen] and another provenance [Herkunft] [GA40, G20f (G14f)]:

“The question of being” according to the widely known and accepted construction means: questioning pursuant to the being as such (metaphysics). Thought in terms of “Being and Time” however, “The question of being” calls for: questioning pursuant to being as such. This signification of the title is the appropriate one in respect of the matter and the language; for “The question of being” in the sense of the metaphysical question concerning the being as such *does not* especially *question* thematically concerning being. The latter remains forgotten.

In oblivion to the truth of being’s *essenzenz* [Wesung] and the self-concealing thereof, to this day the metaphysical question(ing) of being that was founded by Plato and Aristotle guided by the leading question, ‘What is the being?’ has developed to (re)present (or propose) itself [sich vorzustellen], without questioning proper from a being-historic perspective, as, ‘in essence’ [‘im Wesen’], ‘problemated’ [‘thrown or put forward’ < προ- pro- + βλήμα throw] for academic discussion or scholarly disputation by the contrivance of its productively-(re)presentative casting-forth [herstellend-vorstellenden Entwurfs] of the question(ing), solid-set and moulded by the strength of its own volition, the will-power of the (human) being from whence (ἀρχή) the question(ing) emanates [ausgeht] and wherein it is grounded [gründet], as a solid set of “problems” for solution within the seemingly unhampered out-bounds [Aus-gänge] of the metaphysical cast of thought coming-out-of-itself [aus-sich-heraus-gehend] as its pervasive point of departure [beherrschenden Ausgang], i.e. its ‘principle’ [‘Prinzip’]¹⁶; not however as a question-worthy archessentially being-historic interplay of the utmost outbound(ing)s of being and (the) human being such that the ordinarily historic [historisch] trails and travails of the solidified problems and indeed ‘problematics’ thrown up by our metaphysical question(ing) as a self-empowering and self-sustaining cast(ing) of human thought upon being is all at once cast upon us by the properly historic [geschichtlich] *essenzenz* [Wesung] and truth [Wahrheit] of being itself. The representative response to the leading question of philosophy as a casting-forth of the essence [Wesen(heit)] of (being as beingness of) the being in oblivion to having always already been forecast to take its lead *as* a thinking of being(ness) from the out(ward-)bounding [hinausgehenden] truth, to wit, deconcealment [Entbergung] of being’s *essenzenz* [Wesung] and overcast by the self-concealing thereof, is, from this tentatively being-historic outlook, the inelegant and limited solution to an essentially precast set of problems thrown up by our metaphysical question(ing) of being that, in the forgottenness of the (out)going-together of being and human being, is more or less (in)bound to (re)present itself, with its

16 Cf. Heidegger GA55, G225

solid grasp of (being as beingness of) the being, from within the hampered horizon of the “Wesen”—as ‘Wesen(heit), essentia, οὐσία’—of metaphysics.

To think pursuant to and purveyant of ‘the metaphysical problematics’ *and* ‘the being-historic interplay’ of this distinguishment of the questioning of being therefore requires our essentially stepping back from the unquestioned, predominantly ‘nominal’ naming power of our (re)representative casting-forth of the “essence” or “Wesen”—as ‘Wesen(heit), essentia, οὐσία’—(of being as the beingness) “of the being” [“des Seienden”]. Whereunto? Unto, perchance, the *co-essentially* ‘verbal’ language and ‘time-wording’ of the properly historic truth of “being” ≠ “beingness” [des “Seins” ≠ der “Seiendheit”] that, within radius of “another inception” of occidental thinking, still shelters and conceals itself ‘in essence / essenz’ [‘im Wesen’] *and* ‘in essencing / essenizing’ [‘im Wesen’] as now, more than ever before, question-worthy: worthy of questioning as the unprevailing whiling of the self-concealing essenz(ing), i.e. essenizing [Wesen, d.h. Wesung], i.e. presenizing and absenizing [d.h. Anwesenung und Abwesenung] of be-ing [des Seiend], that is, of being itself [des Seins selbst].

The unsettling “leap” [“Sprung”] – into the outbound(ing)s – of metaphysical thought that will be required to part from the solid grasp of our settled representation [Vorstellung] of the Wesen as ‘Wesenheit = essence / essenz’ (of being as beingness) “of the being” and to stir our dawning appraisal [Besinnung] of the essenizing [Wesung] “of being” may be tempered by the transitional experience of this alternately being-historic casting off of metaphysical thought into the ‘abyssal grounding’ [‘abgründige Gründung’] of how the historic truth of being essences / essenizes and conceals its essenizing / essenizing, as yet another, albeit altogether other, en-propriation [Er-eignis], of the incipient ‘wesen = sein’ of being [Sein] *and* human being [Menschsein].

In *Besinnung* (GA66)¹⁷ and elsewhere, Heidegger gives “the thinking of being” [“das Seinsdenken”] that, within radius of “another inception” of occidental thinking, prepares to think this differentiation of the being-historic from the

¹⁷ “*Besinnung* (GA66)” is an abbreviation for Volume 66 under the title “Besinnung” [“Appraisal”] of the Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, Vittorio Klostermann GmbH, Frankfurt am Main, edited by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, 1997. Composed in 1938/39, *Besinnung* (GA66) is one of several being-historic ‘treatises’—or better: ‘cast(ings) of thought’—penned by Heidegger between 1936 and 1941 from the horizon of his ‘stepping back’ from our inbound metaphysical cast of thought upon being (in oblivion to the truth of how being as beyng essences / essenizes and conceals its essenizing / essenizing) in light of his appraisal of the ‘wesen = sein’ of our casting of thought upon being as an essentially precast thinking of being [Denken des Seins]: an *enpropriation through beyng* that is given to being always already cast upon us, i.e. upon our casting of thought upon being, by the incipiently enpropriating ‘wesen = sein’ of beyng itself.

metaphysical question(ing) of being, another name. He calls it “the thinking of beyng” [“das Denken *des* Seyns”] whereby, ‘im Wesen’, the unquestioned (by metaphysics) (a)ground(ing) of the “properly (i.e. en-proprietarily) historic”¹⁸ differentiation itself is thought to be *essentially* gleaned, in a uniquely transitional and preparatory way, from the beyng-historic questioning of the question of beyng [GA66, G247]: “How does beyng essence / essenz? Which is the truth of beyng? [Wie west das Seyn? Welches ist die Wahrheit des Seyns?]”. And he intimates [GA66, G340] that while going through, in an appropriately beyng-historic thinking-through [seynsgeschichtlich erfahren], the (re)presentative response to the metaphysical question(ing) of being as a casting-forth of being as beingness of the being in oblivion to the essencing and truth of beyng,

even the apparently self-mighteous awakening of (the) human being to the solid ascertainment [Fest-Stellung] of being as beingness will *be enpropriated through beyng*; even the (re)presentative [vorstellende] casting-forth [Entwurf] of being as beingness of the being (a representing that does *not* cast or throw itself off into the truth of beyng) is one that is cast by beyng itself to the extent that, for the questioning “pursuant to” [“nach”] being, the thrownness in the measure of its esse(ncing) [wesensmäßig] has to remain *sheltered and concealed* [verborgen].

In Heidegger’s 1938 / 39 *Appraisal* [Besinnung] (GA66) and elsewhere, “another inception” of occidental thinking, another awakening of (the) human being to an alternately being-historic casting-forth of being as beyng, is one that *essentially* allows for and does not begrudge itself *as* a thinking of beyng [Denken *des* Seyns]; and hence a recasting of the incipient going-together of occidental being and human being that *is enpropriated through beyng*.

The appreciation of (the) human being for an other-than-representative response to the casting-forth of being as beingness, one that *is prepared* to cast or throw itself off—so far as its inbound metaphysical casting of thought upon being as beingness is concerned—into the essencing and truth of being as beyng, is, for Heidegger, tempered by the transitional beyng-historic experience of this alternate to the metaphysical thinking-through of being as equally-*essentially* [gleich-wesentlich] cast by beyng. The casting off of the metaphysical casting-forth of being as beingness in oblivion to the essencing and truth of beyng is thus experienced as a casting off *from* the representative casting of thought upon being as beingness *into* the outbound(ings) of a properly beyng-historic question(ing) of how the truth of being, respectively beyng, essences / essenzen and conceals its essencing / essencing, one that is equally-*essentially* (re)cast upon us, i.e. upon our conventional and even our essential thinking and not

¹⁸ “eigentlich (d.h. er-eignet) geschichtlich”; Cf Heidegger GA66, G351ff

thinking of being by howsoever the inconspicuous cast of being, respectively beyng, likewise remains – albeit otherwise than metaphysically – sheltered and concealed in *essenzenz*(ing), i.e. in *essenzenz*, [im *Wesen*, d.h. in der *Wesung*], and in bestowing favour on the self-concealing thereof.

In Heidegger's appraisal, then, there can be no transition from a metaphysical to a more inceptive being-historic saying and thinking of being, no casting off of our go-to representative casting-forth of being as beingness of the being in oblivion to the *essenzenz* and truth of beyng, that is not prepared to cast itself off into the outbound(ing)s of a “properly, i.e. enpropriatingly, historic” question(ing) of how the truth of being, respectively beyng, *essenzenz* / *essenzenz* and conceals its *essenzenz* / *essenzenz* as *such*. And it appears to be this other inception of occidental thinking alone that acclaims and declares itself to the thinker Heidegger to be what is singularly worth(while)-thinking.

To draw on Heidegger's thought in *Heraklit* (GA55) a few years later (1943 / 44) on a matter of no small moment and import in this regard, to wit, that which is worth(while)-thinking in our usual tendency to neglect without dismay the inconspicuous time word ‘being’ that we are always already intending and mean-ing in our explicit and silent everyday discourse even without our ever thinking upon and remembering this incipient “going-together of ‘being and time’ ”; specifically in connection with the conventional bent of our ordinarily hypostatic understanding of the ambiguity of the participle as the word par excellence that partakes of both nominal *and* verbal signification; and especially in connection with how, by way of contrast with our everyday understanding, the thinker *essentially* thinks the participium τὸ ὄν, das Seiende, das Sein [the being, being], which is the participle of all participles because the word ‘Sein’ [‘being’] is the word of all words per se [GA55, G58f]:

Rather than speaking of *verbum*, verbal – a rubric of the Latin grammarians – let us say: ‘Zeitwort’ [‘time word’]. As the word of all words per se, the word ‘being’ [‘Sein’] is the incipient time-word [Zeit-Wort] par excellence. As the word of all words per se, the time word ‘being’ names ‘the time of all times’. Being and time belong together incipiently. The time will come when thinking [G59] is behoven to commemorate this going-together of ‘being and time’ – otherwise it will be in danger of forgetting what for the thinking of the thinkers remains worth(while)-thinking.

What if our ‘unassuming’ everyday saying and thinking of being while comporting with the being were one day to take stock of our only ever chasing after the being in oblivion to being? What if we were ever to slow down beyond all measure to give heed to our unapparent saying and thinking of the word ‘being’ itself, including the inflections of this word, as the incipient time-word par excellence that we are always already intending and meaning in our explicit

and silent discourse while comporting with the being including other human beings even without our ever thinking upon and remembering this incipient “going-together of ‘being and time’ ”? What then? Then it may well be hard to envisage, i.e. to represent, [vorzustellen] *in the usual way* how, ‘im Wesen’, any insight into such that for the thinking of the (inceptual) thinkers remains worth(while)-thinking is to eventuate (i.e. enpropriate). That is to say, to eventuate, as an altogether other-than-metaphysical enpropriation of the incipient ‘wesen = sein’ of being *and* human being.

And in the meanwhile?

To paraphrase (with some amplification) what Heidegger in *Heraklit* (GA55) exhorts us to take into consideration on this score [G60]:

Should we pause for one moment to consider for ourselves whether we can envisage anything by the word of all words per se that we are always vaguely meaning without thinking, but are still undersanding as the inconspicuous time word that may be none too fully expressed and is not especially observed on its own account, our initial impression is likely to be that the word ‘being’ including the inflections of this word, particularly the small and commonplace word ‘is’, seems not to represent anything, since, after all, we are hardly able to envisage anything (any being?) by it; the small word ‘is’ [‘ist’] in particular, nothing less than an inflection of the word ‘being’ [‘sein’], seems instead, to represent nothing at all; or at least nothing (no being?) worth mentioning or bothering about as worthy of remembrance and of our commemorative thinking upon, certainly not as an inflection of the very word in respect of which, wonder of all wonders, all saying and thinking of and all comporting with the being in oblivion to being resonates and resides. “All the same,” Heidegger insists [GA55, G60],

“the word ‘is’ [‘ist’], is not just empty talk. Everybody understands it and yet nobody grasps what is understood. ...

And in this light, he observes [G60], while bearing in mind *the* historic ‘definition’ of the “Wesen” of (the) human being for the Greeks, namely ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, that, for him [G223], “articulates the coinage of the human being whose destiny(ng) is the occidental and the occidentally determinate world history of humankind”¹⁹,

19 With Heidegger clearly anticipating in what follows his yet to be unfolded interpretation of the λόγος especially during the second lecture course [GA55, summer semester 1944, “Logic. Heraclitus’ teaching of the Logos”] in connection with the determination of the essenz(ing) [Wesensbestimmung] of (the) human being [in essenz(ing): des Menschenwesens] for the Greeks [G223]: “ἄνθρωπος ζῶον λόγον ἔχον – the human (being) is that living being [in essenz(ing): das Lebewesen] who has the λόγος and by virtue of the λόγος is singled out as worthy of distinction.”

It would be best were we dismayed by a situation where the human being whose mark of distinction ‘in essenz(ing)’ [‘im Wesen’] is ‘to have the word’ and be able ‘to say something’, that precisely the human being never even mentions as worthy of remembrance or so thinks upon the word of all words per se and thus in neglect of any such commemorative thinking thereupon forgets the word in which all saying resonates and resides.

In the first place and for the most part however, we are little dismayed by nor inclined to spare a thought for this *essentially* [*wesentlich*] disconcerting state of affairs. Hence the resilience of the obstinate impression that any thinking which has the audacity to try to think through the differentiation of “being” [“Sein”] from “the being” [“das Seiende”] and of the ‘verbal’ from the ‘substantive’ signification of the participial word *ö*v *essentially*, i.e. as that which acclaims and declares itself to the thinker to be what is ‘in essencing’ [‘im Wesen’] *also* worth(while)-thinking, is ‘in essence’ [‘im Wesen’] engaged, so far as this impression is concerned, in nothing more than esoterics and a worthless ploy to make a play on mere words. To translate what Heidegger in *Heraklit* (GA55) forestalls in this regard [G60f]:

The impression that (situating) discussions [Erörterungen] concerning the being and being are indulging in some idle witchcraft with mere words per se [G61] may by all means persist. Also, no harm is done when thinking time and again gives the ‘impression’, which it does perforce on someone who is unthinking, that to make thinking, which is laborious enough as it is, even harder for our contemporaries is a consciously contrived devilry. Yet one day surely the insight could for once be grasped firmly by those brave enough that the reason for the disconcerting impression that thinking makes may be due not to the skewered paths taken by thinkers but might just be found to lie directly with ourselves, that is, with the simple, albeit therefore at once startling event (of enpropriation) [Ereignis] that we all, that the historic human being would no longer think of being but only ever chase after the being. The oppressive cloud of oblivion to being that hangs over historic humankind is the enduring reason why (situating) discussions concerning the ‘substantive’ and ‘verbal’ signification of the word *ö*v seem empty and outlandish to us, a reason that is also enduring in a sheltered and concealed way as a consequence of this very oblivion.

But on the other hand, if the word ‘being’ including the inflections of this word, particularly the small and commonplace word ‘is’, does continually prevail throughout all our thinking and comporting such that without an understanding of this word we could not for a moment comport with the being in the midst thereof and be a being ourselves, if all and sundry, the greatest and the smallest, befalls us solely through the ‘ether’ of being, then despite all oblivion, how close to us must being surely be? If we just pause to think pursuant thereto, perhaps the moment will come when the dismay over the forgottenness of being turns to wonder over how close we are to what at first looks like nothing but an esoteric artificiality proffered by a thinking that is way off the mark, close, that is, to what the most insipid of all everyday words, the inconspicuous ‘is’, names, close, that is, to ‘being’ And it is this

alone that acclaims and declares itself to thinkers to be what is worth(while)-thinking.

Should we have taken all of this into consideration, we will perhaps already want to be more cautious with respect to our begrudging of what are apparently nothing but long-winded discussions concerning our translating into the English language of Heidegger's translating into his own German language the whiling of the inconspicuous German time words "sein" ["(to) be"] and "wesen" ["(to) essence"] through the 'ether' of their verbal noun(ing)s "Sein" and "Wesen".

Bearing in mind that, ordinarily, and leaving aside any allowance that may be afforded to poetizing and to thinking, the infinitive verb '(zu) wesen' is without a doubt as awkward and unacceptable to the contemporary German ear as 'to essence' is to the English one, is it any wonder that in both languages any appreciable insight into the whiling of the inconspicuous time word corresponding to their respective German and English substantives somehow or other gets lost in translation, as one may glean from a lexicon of good repute? Or, that the unmistakably *verbal* noun (phrase) "the essencing" stands out like a sore thumb in English in contrast to its (albeit predominantly substantively-understood and thus) easily mis-taken German counterpart: "das Wesen"? You only need to look up these collected words in a reputable dictionary to see why and how this might be so according to the respective dictionary interpretation of how one rightly reads and understands them, be it through the *nouning* of wesen, v. into the German verbal noun "Wesen" or through the *verbing* of the English substantive noun "essence" into essence, v.. In Deutsches Wörterbuch ["DWB"] Wesen, n. is the substantivization / nouning of the old germ. verb infinitive *into* the verbal substantive / noun; yet in this 'noured verbing' the paradigmatic function of that infinitive, in its present form wesen, v. (OHG & OE wesan, v.), has together with its verb-root *wes* in the sense of 'verweilen, wohnen' ['to while or bide, to dwell'] been all but forfeited per DWB; Whereas, in the Oxford English Dictionary ["OED"], the derivation of a much-depleted verb infinitive (essence, v.) *from* a far more extensively signifying Latinate substantive (essence, n. = *essentia*, n.)—that to all intents and purposes shows (in full view) barely a trace of the verb-root *es* from which it still takes it bearing—appears to almost reverse the countervailing germ. connection to source that traces the origin *from* the incipient yet forfeited functioning and signification of wesen, v. that Heidegger wants to retrieve *to* what has become the predominantly substantively-understood verbal *substantive* in Wesen, n.: OED etymology essence, v. < essence, n.²⁰ purports only a somewhat impotent

20 "< French *essence*, < Latin *essentia*, < **essent-em*, fictitious present participle of *esse* to be, in imitation of Greek *οὐσία* being, < *ὄντ-*, stem of present participle of *εἶναι* to be."

verbing of the noun but, with no dedicated entry at all, as far as I can tell, for ‘essencing’, not this potentially much more potent nouning of the undepleted verb infinitive ‘to essence’.

The omission from the OED of a dedicated entry for this ‘construct’ of a verbal noun “essencing” is of course indicative of its taken-for-granted absence, *with little regard for its absent-ing in absentia*, as a key ‘noured verbing’ of being – of ‘to be’ in the paradigmatic intimation of ‘to essence’ – from the English language generally. But this should not deter us one iota from the challenge of translating Heidegger’s attempts at retrieval of the whiling of the retreating German time words “sein” and “wesen”, in which all saying of their correspondingly advancing verbal substantives “Sein” and “Wesen” resonates and resides, into the English language. And the interpretive attempts to do just that in the elevatory domain of poetizing and of thinking after Heidegger’s critical engagement with and disengagement from metaphysics will surely one day find their way into the OED (just as his pioneering commemoration of the essent-ially co-signifying time words that our conventional and even essent-ial thinking passes over when relying upon the merely substantive conception of “(das) Sein” and “(das) Wesen”, will likely find its way eventually into the DWB). The absence of the absent-ing in absentia does go some way, however, to showing how hard it is to grapple with, let alone to think through, the enigma of ‘translating Heidegger translating *Wesen*’ not only univocally word for word but equivocally true to the word, to name just one German keyword(ing) of being (not to mention, inextricably, its likewise and otherwise enigmatic cognates and compounds), and expecting an English reader to go along with whatever translation decisions we take to this end.

In this regard, perhaps we can learn yet more from what Heidegger indicates in *Heraklit* (GA55) concerning the question of how the thinkers think the ambiguity of participial words per se, to wit, of those words par excellence that partake of both nominal and verbal signification, and the fact that whatever signification we are behoven to think pursuant to the meaning intended by the thinker cannot be decided straightforwardly [GA55, G71f]:

True to form, we can think the participle either nominally or verbally; it is also possible for us to understand the participle both ‘nominally’ and ‘verbally’ at once, and then again the emphasis can be placed either on the [G72] verbal or the nominal aspect.

Precisely the same can be said in relation to the signification we are behoven to think pursuant to and purveyant of the meaning intended by the thinker Heidegger (*and not just Heidegger*) for the dually-signifying verbal substantive “das Wesen”. However under circumstances where we can hardly extricate

ourselves from our cultivation of the being in oblivion to being to find our way in the thinking of being, the only help for us, if any is to be had at all, will undoubtedly come, as Heidegger suggests in connection with the participle, from the diligence with which we attend to thinking pursuant to the incipient word [G85]:

This diligence also involves our attending to the possibilities of suitable translation. Meanwhile, what we have found is that when the thinkers are essentially [wesentlich] thinking participial words per se they are in any case thinking the verbal signification first of all.

In a similar vein we could tentatively venture: when the thinkers are essentially [wesentlich] thinking the dually-signifying word “das Wesen” per se, they are in any case thinking the verbal signification first of all.

So if the Latinate-English translating word “the essence” speaks only as a substantive and hence only partially for the predominantly substantively-understood verbal noun *Wesen* (in the sense of *Wesen(heit)*, n.) = *essentia*, οὐσία, while leaving aside *Wesen* (in the sense of *wesen*, v.) ≠ *essentia*, οὐσία, but rather: = *esse*, εἶναι, the latter signification being for the inceptual thinker after Heidegger the quintessential co-signification here, how can the translating-cum-*transposing* word “the essence” adequately translate-cum-*transport* us to the almost silent shells upon the shore of the translated (and, in turn, translating) German word “das Wesen”, over to the not-so-well-known yet uplifting bank of incipient verbal (co-)signification that none but the thinker, above all the inceptual thinker, seems to regard as (co-)essentially worth(while)-thinking?

The question of suitable translation and the merely substantive rendition of the German verbal substantive “das Wesen” is likewise worthy of our attention for its bearing upon the interpretation of two compound verbal noun(ing)s: “das Anwesen” and “das Abwesen”: To what extent is our Latinate-English translating word “(the) presence”, from the Latin *praesentia* verbatim, to render the German word “(das) Anwesen”, of the same ilk and following the same trend of our Latinate-English translating word “(the) essence”, from the Latin *essentia* verbatim, to render the German word “(das) Wesen”? Does it too speak only as a substantive and hence only partially for the predominantly substantively-understood verbal noun *Anwesen* (in the sense of *Anwesen(heit)*, n.) = *praesentia*, παρουσία, while leaving aside *Anwesen* (in the sense of *anwesen*, v.) ≠ *praesentia*, παρουσία, but rather: = *praesesse*, παρῆναι? And similarly, in the countervailing sense: To what extent is our Latinate-English translating word “(the) absence”, from the Latin *absentia* verbatim, to render the German word “(das) Abwesen”, also of the same ilk and on trend likewise in

speaking only as a substantive and hence only partially for the predominantly substantively-understood verbal noun *Abwesen* (in the sense of *Abwesen(heit)*, n.) = *absentia*, ἀπουσία, while leaving aside *Abwesen* (in the sense of *abwesen*, v.) ≠ *absentia*, ἀπουσία, but rather: = *abesse*, ἀπεῖναι? —

Yet there is something else to take into consideration and it is this: To what extent is our *likewise* take on the English translation of the German wording of these distinguished compound cognate keywords pertaining to the “*Wesen*” of being *otherwise* question-worthy, perchance for not having due regard to the distinctive way in which such keyword(ing)s of the same ilk are *in other words* unlike and quite capable of all at once trending in one direction of conventional or essential thinking while bucking that trend in another? The elucidation of this two-pronged questioning would take us too far from the primary focus here and must be reserved for another occasion. Suffice it to say, that by dint of the essentially [*wesentlich*] altering signification that is also true to the very words, our manner of attending to and discerning the distinct possibilities of suitably translating the ambiguous verbal noun “*Wesen*” may not simply carry over in like manner to those of its kindred verbal substantives.

In light of the above: If our question-worthy (still metaphysical) interpretation impels us to disregard the co-essentially verbal signification that is (un)apparently in bank, in store for our gleaning, in order to retain the standard word-for-word English translation of “*das Wesen*” with “the essence”, our readers will be unable to retrieve the (un)intended ‘essencing’ therein to which Heidegger’s ‘post-metaphysical’ thinking within radius of “another inception” of occidental thinking attends because our own thinking pursuant to the exclusive, substantively-imbued metaphysical language and thinking of German *Wesen* in the well-worn sense of ‘*Wesen(heit)* = *Wesenheit* = *Essenz*’ will not allow it, will not restore the forgathering logos of our essential word-in-translation to what can be more inceptively gleaned all at once as truly at stake. We are therefore precluded from our translating Heidegger translating *Wesen* ‘true to his word’. Our translator’s foreword or preamble to our English interpretation of this particular keyword in the German texts of Martin Heidegger may implore our readers to listen verily for and not already ignore, as we are emphatically doing, the attention on the part of Heidegger to retrieval of the ‘little-heard-of’ that is nonetheless being disregarded in our own translating of the integral word “*Wesen*” in the exclusively nominal sense of ‘*Wesen(heit)* = *essentia* ...’, but unless we ourselves desist from our silent observance of this signification alone, perchance by not rendering ourselves deaf to substituting “the essencing” for “the essence” (?), our language and thinking in the solely-declared name of “the essence” will inevitably defy that request; and it will defy that request for having

not yet eluded so pervasive a ‘nominal’ power as metaphysics and its unquestioning logic.

Would not therefore “(the) essencing”, as verbal noun corresponding to the incipient time word ‘to essence’ in the sense of essence, v. = esse, v. be a more observant, a better word-for-word, English translation for the other side of the ‘equation’ whereby the German verbal noun “Wesen” can be heard, ‘in essencing’ [‘im Wesen’], as much more akin to *wesen*, v. = *esse*, v. than, ‘in essence’ [‘im Wesen’], to *Wesen(heit)*, n. = *essentia*, n.? If we are going to pay heed thereto, is not our attentive ear for the little-heard-of ‘essencing = esse’ through the usual din of ‘essence = essentia’ going to render ourselves open to hearing the better, if not the best, word-for-word English translation of this German keyword *Wesen*, n., at least when it comes to what is essentially worth(while)-thinking in translation?

But then again, given that the essencing \neq the essence and cannot adequately stand in for the latter *holus bolus*, nor vice versa, how to determine straightforwardly which of the two contending English translations of “das Wesen” is to be exclusively observed while disregarding the other as the signification primarily intended in this or that context by the thinker Heidegger? Or for that matter, by any other thinker or poet or anyone else besides whose usage of the German word “das Wesen” may be referred to or cited in Heidegger’s text with or without definitively leaning in the direction of heavily favouring one fold of the simple twofold at the expense of the other? Moreover, why is the ostensibly best ‘Heideggarian’ translation with an admittedly somewhat stilted Latinate-English verbal noun for a far less stilted German verbal noun ‘im Wesen’ [‘in essencing’] not also the one that is closer to being ‘im Wesen’ [‘in essence’] true to the ‘epochal’ legation, the ‘withholding’ destiny(ng), of this most obscurely ambiguous word? We may well ask.

For, the alternately-translating word “essencing” is not the Latinate-English equivalent of the translated and translating German word “Wesen” in the sense of ‘*Wesen(heit)* = *essentia* ... ’ but a mere substitute therefor. So on the occasions that we do boldly go and make the substitution with the seemingly better of the alternate word-for-word English translations of this inflection of being, we will thus be exclusively observing what is essent-ially the unprevailing verbal signification of the translated and in turn translating word in favour of the prevailing nominal one and, in so doing, silently forfeiting access, in translation, to what is co-essent-ially a *unifold*, yet *twofold* reciprocal connection betwixt and between the *advancing* essence (of the essencing) and the *retreating* essencing (of the essence) that, to be true to the lopsidedly-ambiguous s(w)aying of the dually-unitive word “Wesen” in the sense of ‘*Wesen(heit)* = (*esse*)ntia,

οὐσία (εἶναι)’, is ‘in essence [im Wesen]’ and ‘in essencing [im Wesen]’ always already *contending* to heavily favour one more or less obtrusive fold of the protrusive twofold at the expense of the other; or, in other words, to suppress and supplant without a rival. The English translator seems compelled to alternate and at the same time not to alternate in this or that context between the best of two more or less mutually exclusive word-for-word translations, each of which is for the most part an unequal contender to be true to the word in its own right, yet neither of which standing alone as mere substitute words-in-translation can possibly gain access to and transport us into their mutual belonging-together in the unapparent differentiating of the very word that is altogether at stake as *one* such as it is in respect of the whole; and in respect of which the two are so at one ‘im Wesen’ that one of the tendentially exclusive (co-)significations will almost invariably prevail to leave the reticent other out of contention. So we are simply damned if we do and damned if we don’t. And either way, our readers will be hard pressed to follow *our* train of Heidegger’s thought. Whoever tries to think in his sense may well have to think the positively ambiguous word ‘Wesen’ both ‘nominally’ and ‘verbally’ *all at once* such that indeed the prevailing nominal and the unprevailing verbal significations of this distinguished keyword(ing) of being become thought-in-translation in one purposely determined interconnection: *the essenz(ing)*. And that is precisely the situation.²¹

If our translation of the German language of “das Wesen” is to be, as far as possible, “not just word for word, or literal, but true to the word”, then our interpretation must therefore come to grips with the following: here we have in the one dually-signifying keyword of being the long tradition and habit of thinking of a verbal noun(ing) whose predominantly substantively-understood signification as ‘Wesen(heit) = essentia ...’ obtrudes itself upon and so belies its very ‘wesen = esse ...’, its very ‘essencing’; or, to spell the same Latinate-English word in another way, its very ‘essencing’. So unless our English translation transports us altogether into precisely *this* consummately-differentiating signification of ‘Wesen = essentia, οὐσία’ and *Wesen ≠ essentia οὐσία*’, our interpretation will be denied access to Heidegger’s retrieval of the obscure and inextricable “going-together of ‘being and time’” that is unreservedly left out of contention but is still very much in reserve for clear thinking as, *co-essent-ially*, not just word for word but true to the word that *is* “das Wesen”, i.e. that verily *lets* this very word *be*, i.e. *essence / essenz* [d.h. ... *läßt ... sein*, d.h. *wesen*] as one such as it is in respect of the whole.

21 Cf. Heidegger GA55, G76

The main pitfall that therefore comes to mind with retaining the standard English translation “the essence” to render the German phrase-word “das Wesen” where “Wesen” has the sense of ‘Wesen(heit) = essentia = οὐσία’ is that the English translator is hereby asking of their own interpretation and hence of their English reader, be it wittingly or unwittingly, the impossible: to read the contending verbal noun “essencing”, also incipiently true to the corresponding German sense of the verbal noun “Wesen” as a nouning of *wesen*, v. translating *esse*, v. and εἶναι, v., into “the essence” as mere word-for-word translation of only the prevailing nominal fold of the protrusive twofold whenever it appears on the page whatever the context, a big ask that the translator’s express language and thinking in the name of “the essence” alone will unavoidably belie. Why? Because this merely substantive word-in-translation is inept when it comes to saying and to thinking the full sway of what the translating German keywording of be-ing [des Seiend], i.e. of being [d.h. des Seins], “das Wesen” is altogether otherwise intending to say and to think: the inmosty propiately revealing-concealing truth, as in de-concealment, of being itself as given to enpropriating the rend(er)ing of its own ‘Wesen(heit) = Seiend(heit)’ while also bestowing favour on the self-concealing of its incipient ‘*wesen = sein*’.

§4. ... die Wahrheit des Wesens (des Seins) und das ‘*wesen = sein*’ der Wahrheit

Re: “truth, as in de-concealment”. It is hard to approximate Heidegger’s translating within his own German language of “die Wahrheit” with “die Ent-bergung” as a kind of “Lichtung” [(lighting-and-)clearing] of the incipiently self-concealing ‘*wesen = sein*’ of being, drawing as it does upon his interpretation, notably in *Parmenides* (GA54), of “das Wesen” of the ancient Greek word for truth, for Wahrheit, for veritas: ἀ-λήθεια; whereby, after Heidegger’s appraisal of the ‘*wesen*’ of the ambiguous “ἀ-” in “ἀ-λήθεια” to guide his translating of the dually-signifying “Ent-” in “Ent-bergung”, the prefix “de-” in “de-concealment” not merely *privatively* understood as an English match for the prevailing negatory German signification of (the otherwise ambiguous) “Ent-” of “Ent-bergung” in our sense of the “taking away” or “removing” of the withdrawing concealment [der entziehenden Verbergung] (λήθη) to arrive at a revelatory understanding of truth [Wahrheit] (ἀλήθεια), as, literally, unconcealment [Unverbergung] and, more literally, unconcealedness [Unverborgenheit]; *also* [zugleich], with increasing regard to allowing for and not begrudging the contending “concealment” in “de-concealment”, *intensively*, in the affirmative sense, perhaps, of the ‘de(r)iving of and unto)-concealment’. For, as Heidegger indicates in *Parmenides* (GA54) [G197]: “the Ent-bergung does not just mean the taking away and removal of a Ver-bergung, a

sheltering-concealment.” It also means the enhancing and accentuating of “bergung” – the latter understood here in our sense not only of “concealment” but of “sheltering-recovery”, of “gathering-in”, of “securement”, of “rescue”, of “retrieval” – with the “Ent-” of “Ent-bergung” on this occasion adding intensive, not privative, force thereto: Ent-*bergung* [de-concealment] as against Ent-bergung [*de*-concealment]; or in other words: derivation of and unto concealment / sheltering-recovery in the deconcealedness [Entborgenheit] (ἀλήθεια) as against mere deprivation thereof and thereunto in the unconcealedness [Unverborgenheit] (ἀλήθεια); just as the prefix “de” in our English word “deverbal” in the sense of ‘deriving of and unto’ a verb(al) adds intensive rather than (de)privative force to what is true to the word as such. By contrast, the “de” of “deverbify” adds (de)privative rather than intensive force to the word “verbify”. To verbify means, gramatically speaking, to convert a word that is not a verb, such as a substantive, into a verb. When substantives become verbified they are called verbal and deverbal nouns and nominal participles. To the extent that deverbifying a verbal or deverbal noun deprives the noun of its verbal or deverbal character and, so to say, reconverts it to a non-verbal or non-deverbal substantive, the “de” of “deverbifying” is against the verbifying and in favour of re(turning to)-substantifying the substantive. In like manner, the “de-” [“Ent-”] of “de-concealment” [“Ent-bergung”] can be both *with / for* and *against (strife)* the essential concealment / sheltering-recovery and rescue [bergung] at the heart of its inception in a two-fold sense: opposed to or unfavourably disposed toward it; *and* favourably drawn back to or towards or close to and nearing (against) the heart of its inception.

It is just as hard with our word-element “concealment” alone to convey the more nuanced “bergung” of the German word “Entbergung” as one such as it is in respect of the whole. The “bergung” of “Ent-bergung” has a more diverse meaning in German than does its rendering into English with the “concealment” of “de-concealment”. Indeed “concealment” aptly translates “Verbergung” as a deverbal nouning of the German time word “verbergen”, the compound of bergen, v., which also means, even more emphatically than the latter, “to conceal”. Thus the rendering into English of the “bergen” of “Ent-bergen” with the “concealing” of “de-concealing” likewise draws (rather too) heavily upon the more emphatic German sense of this verbal noun corresponding to bergen, v. as “Verbergen”. As to their more diverse meaning in the German original, however, we may still catch a glimpse of the way in which the verbal noun “Bergen” and the deverbal noun “Bergung”, and the compounds thereof, respectively take their cue, each in their own way, from the diverse whiling of the time word “bergen” in which all saying of its corresponding verbal and deverbal substantives and the compounds thereof essentially [*wesentlich*] resonates and resides.

To render the more nuanced meaning of the “bergen” in “Entbergen” (and concomitantly the “bergung” in “Entbergung”) means to embrace not only our English sense of the words ‘concealing’ and ‘sheltering’ and ‘gathering-in’ and ‘containing’ and even ‘burying’ but also, in a more (de-)revelatory sense, those of ‘recovering’ and ‘salvaging’ and ‘rescuing’, all of which together throw a somewhat diffuse, more obscure light on the “going-together”, each according to its own, of the prevailing revelatory signification and the unprevailing de-revelatory source from and unto which, ‘im Wesen’, truth as de-concealment translating Wahrheit as Ent-bergung derives what is apparently and not-so-apparently true, in *essenz(ing)*, to the very words. The accentuated *de-concealing*, the *Ent-bergen*, of the more apparent *de-concealment*, the *Ent-bergung*, the latter understood per Heidegger [GA54, G198] as “the sublating [Aufheben] of a concealment [einer Verbergung], and indeed first of all the withdrawing concealment (λήθη), then also the *dissembling* [*verstellenden*] and *distorting* [*entstellenden*] one (ψεῦδος)”, becomes *all at once* [*zugleich*], when more inceptively gleaned, an accentuated *de-concealing* [Ent-bergen], an enhanced sheltering-recovering and rescuing [Bergen], i.e. taking back and unto itself and holding to its own of the unconcealed in the unconcealedness. But the Entbergen [deconcealing] that always already keeps safely in reserve the enhanced *Bergen* [*sheltering-concealing and recovering*] that is equally-essential [*gleich-wesentlich*] to its *Entbergen* [*deconcealing*] gives rise, as Heidegger indicates [GA54, G198], not only to the deconcealed as the unconcealed [Entborgenes als Unverborgenes].

As both a *deconcealing* [Entbergen] and a *deconcealing* [Entbergen], the deconcealing is not just opposed to, or against, concealedness [Verborgenheit]. It does not refer only to “unconcealedness” as the taking away and removing of concealedness. “The deconcealing [das Entbergen]”, Heidegger elucidates [GA54, G198],

is also »for« the sheltering-concealing and recovery [die Bergung] of the unconcealed in regard to the unconcealedness of the presencing [der Anwesenung], i.e. in regard to being [das Sein]. In such sheltering-concealing and recovery there first arises the unconcealed as a being [das Unverborgene als ein Seiendes]. »De-concealing« — that now says to bring into a sheltering-recovery [eine Bergung]: that is, to safekeep [verwahren] the unconcealed in regard to the unconcealedness.

To an appreciative thinking²², the *de-concealing*, the *Ent-bergen*, of the not-so-apparent *de-concealment*, the *Ent-bergung*, of the unconcealed [des

²² “appreciative thinking”: translating Heidegger’s translating of Heraclitus’ τὸ φρονεῖν in Fragment B112 with “das sinnende Denken”: “the appreciative thinking”. Cf. *Heraklit* (GA55) G373ff

Unverborgen] as a being, keeps safely in reserve the enhanced sheltering-recovering of the self-concealing being of the being that, in the first place and for the most part, is barely intimated as co-essential to the full sway (wavering, hovering) of our more accustomed sense of deconcealing as *deconcealing* [Entbergen als *Entbergen*]. In that more accustomed negatory sense the “de” of “deconcealing” is only privatively understood as essent-ially *against*, and not also co-essent-ially *for* (the sake of), the concealing [das Verbergen] and the self-concealing [das Sichverbergen] and the sheltering-recovering and rescuing [das Bergen] of the ‘wesen = sein’ of being [Sein] as, in *essenz(ing)* [im Wesen], *essenzing* [wesend], i.e. *presenzing* [anwesend] *and* *absenzing* [abwesend]. For all that must necessarily remain as obscure as the original word in any consummating translation of Heidegger’s thinking of being [Seinsdenken als Denken *des* Seyns], our translating of his translating of the revealing-concealing truth, as in deconcealment, of being itself into its ownmost word in his own German language, is behoven to attend likewise and otherwise to the dually-signifying ways of approaching in translation the foregathering [die Versammlung] (ὁ Λόγος) of what is true to the word that is nonetheless still barely intimated in two strokes of otherwise accentuated word-elements: a deconcealing way to glean and to gather-in, in one stroke of saying, while saying the like along with the Logos (ὁμολογεῖν), the simple twofold that comprises the strife-bound belonging-together of our prevailing and unprevailing appreciation of [Sinn für] the truth [Wahrheit] (ἀλήθεια) of being as, in *essenz(ing)*, i.e. in *essenzing*, de-concealment [Ent-bergung].

In the vein of appreciative after-saying and after-thinking after [im sinnenden Nachsagen und Nachdenken nach] Heidegger²³, being itself, in clearing and so revealing itself through all of its epocally-historic manifestations and transformations, is neither ‘in essence’ nor ‘in essencing’ patently obvious. Yet the illumine [die Helle] in respect of which being essences / essences in the open(-reveal) in the sense of ‘Wesen(heit) = Seiend(heit)’ while bestowing favour on the self-concealing of its incipient ‘wesen = sein’ is, in *essenz(ing)*, more patent in its appreciable latence than anything patently obvious; therefore being remains and essences / essences within the purview of its own illumine as the inconspicuous or unapparent [das Unscheinbare]. The unforthcoming illumine of being, still holding itself in reserve while shining so splendidly in the clearing of the reveal as to outshine in splendor the being one and all, reposes in itself and only ever in itself because, in *essenz(ing)* [im Wesen], being equally-essentially [gleich-wesentlich] bestows favour on self-concealing. And thus does being oblige human being by giving appreciable inklings of and illumining itself as that

23 Cf Heidegger GA55, G142ff

in the clearing of the reveal which is incipiently sighted, especially beheld, albeit not initially and for the most part, indeed often never at all. Under circumstances where, as Heidegger suggests, we can hardly extricate ourselves from our cultivation of the being in oblivion to being to find our way in a thinking of being, we will likely remain oblivious to such inklings or be inclined to ignore their unobserved and unheeded illuminations altogether. Still, being in the clearing of its ‘Wesen(heit) = Seiend(heit)’ is incipiently given to our own, indeed surely our ownmost, saying and thinking as *also* bestowing favour on the self-expropriating of its ownself for its own sake or rather for the sake of its own, indeed surely its ownmost ‘wesen = sein’. Without being immediately apparent, this inconspicuous illumine of being, should we pay heed thereto, still obliges our interpreting of the German language of “das Wesen” with an *appropriately* disconcerting interruption to what normally warrants our attention. It does so by giving just a hint, a slight intimation, of the openly dark and obscure ‘essence(-cum-essencing)’, respectively ‘essenz(cum-essenizing)’, or better: *essenz(ing)* that, to an appreciative saying and thinking, is lightly and clearly received, and not just conventionally but co-essent-ially, as a patent yet latent, incipient yet forgotten, disclosure of the settled and yet unsettling “Wesen” of be-ing [des Seiend], i.e. of being [d.h. des Seins] itself.

We oblige ourselves to remember the favour with an attendant *letting-be* [sein-lassen] and *letting-essence / essenz* [wesen-lassen] of the usually unapparent self-concealment and self-withdrawal and self-sequestering associated with the forgathering truth [der versammelnden Wahrheit], as in *de-concealment* (the derivation of and unto concealment), of being’s equally-essentially [gleich-wesentlich] bestowing favour on the self-expropriation of its ownmost for its own safekeeping. This remembrance is integral to our attendant *letting-propriate* of the enpropriating to which the *de-concealing* [Ent-bergen] of being itself in also bestowing favour on the enhanced *sheltering-recovery* [Ent-bergung] of its own gathering-in [Bergen] is concomitantly given to the openly dark and obscure concert of understanding [Einverständnis] (ὁμολογία)²⁴ that is so worth(while)-saying and -thinking and -translating [das also Zu-sagende und -denkende und -übersetzende]. Providing that human saying and thinking and translating enters into and adjusts itself to the discernibly inconspicuous behest thereof, the enpropriation [das Ereignis] of being and all at once the saying and thinking and translating of human being may give us just a hint of the incipient ‘wesen = sein’ that this inkled enpropriation enpropriates, i.e. brings into its own and holds to its own,

24 Cf. Heidegger (GA55), G242ff

‘im Wesen’ as always already *essential* to [*wesentlich für*] the belonging-together proper of being [Sein] and human being [Menschsein].

**§5. ... das *wesentliche* Wesen (des Seins) als
‘Wesen(heit) = (esse)ntia = οὐσία (εἶναι)’**

Earlier it was intimated that the standard English translation “(the) essence” to render “(das) Wesen” in the prevailing sense of ‘Wesen(heit) = essentia = οὐσία’ is inept when it comes to saying and to thinking what can be inkled as the full sway of this German keyword(ing) of occidental being in the prevailing(-cum-unprevailing) sense of —

‘essenz(ing) = Wesen(heit) = (esse)ntia = οὐσία (εἶναι)’.

On this interpretation, our go-to English phrase-word “the essence”, whilst a good approximation to the greater sway of “das Wesen” in its prevailing sense, is unadvisedly unreceptive to *also* receiving its power to name and its distinguished arrangement from the already-prevailing(-cum-unprevailing) troth to the unprevailing *verbal* sway of the translated and in turn translating German phrase-word, i.e. to the whole of its saying. Should we pay heed thereto, the “esse” inrooted in “the essence” and with that ‘the essencing’ that is *also* true to the corresponding German co-signification of the verbal noun “Wesen” as a nouning of *wesen*, v. translating *esse*, v. and εἶναι, v., must surely be given its proper due.

How so? How can the ‘esse’ of the ‘(esse)nce’ translating, so to speak, the ‘wesen’ of ‘Wesen(heit)’, so easily ignored and left to its own devises in our widely accepted yet merely partially-signifying Latinate substantive “the essence”, being the standard English counterpart of “das Wesen” per se, be properly allowed for and not begrudged in a more suitable translation thereof? Perchance only through the diligence with which we attend to thinking pursuant to and purveyant of the incipiently verbal s(w)ay of the nominally-accentuated arrangement [Fügung] (ἀρμονία) of the German phrase-word with regard to the whole of its s(w)aying. On this interpretation, what remains *essentially* [*wesentlich*] unsaid and unthought — still intended yet almost invariably left unattended — ‘in essence [im Wesen]’ is, ‘in essence(-cum-essencing) [im Wesen]’, an altogether more distinguished and primordial rend(er)ing of what is *co-essentially* true to the wording of the German word, *advisedly* so, in the prevailing(-cum-unprevailing) sense already articulated.

And therein lies an indication of the apparent and the not-so-apparent truth, as in de-concealment, of be-ing, i.e. being, itself [des Seiend, d.h. des Seins, selbst] as

given to enpropriating the rend(er)ing of its own ‘Wesen(heit) = Seiend(heit)’ while also bestowing favour on the self-concealing (self-occluding, self-parenthesing) of its incipient ‘wesen = sein’. Such that is *also* true to the word is properly allowed for and not begrudged in our express and silent rendering of the full sway of the German language of (das) *Wesen*” as, (co-)essentially, ‘Wesen(heit) = Seiend(heit)’ only when our *letting-be* and *letting-essence* of the more reticent and less obtrusive *de-concealing* sheltering-recovery and concealment [*ent-bergenden* *Bergung* und *Verbergung*] that is equally-essential to this epochally-historic *de-concealment*, as in sublating *dis-closure*, of being itself is *also* in play; and that means *essentially*, i.e. *wesentlich*, in play in the being-historic interplay. In the event, our rend(er)ing thereof may well be indicative *all at once* of the openly dark and obscure concert of understanding that is equally-essential to our own, indeed surely our ownmost, ‘Wesen = [Da-]Sein’. Only then do we properly allow for and not begrudge the very ‘wesen = [da-]sein’ that, ‘im *Wesen*’, is *gleich-wesentlich* to being and to our human being. Only then can our saying and thinking tentatively *be* a *letting-be* and *essence* as a *letting-essence* of this distinguished belonging-together proper of being and human being.

The translation may be tentative, an initial stab in the dark at an imperfectly good approximation to the univocation and equivocation of the German language of “das *Wesen*” and the mystery of its ‘either / or’ partiality, and it is clearly still wanting in refinement, but in “the essence(-cum-essencing)” we can already discern the potential for a less partial more wholesome English rendering of the prevailing(-cum-unprevailing) ‘truth’ of the German phrase-word than is evident in either of our hitherto best, and therefore most question-worthy, word-for-word translations: *either* in “the essence” *or* alternately, and with a nod to translating Heidegger if need be, “the essencing”.

Leaving in abeyance for the moment the already-anticipated potential for improvement to the translation of “das *Wesen*” that is now being suggested as genuinely true to the word, a hint of my alternative approach is that whilst my advisedly ‘not-so-poor’ English translation of “(das) *Wesen*” as ‘Wesen(heit)’, being the standard German translation of ‘essentia = οὐσία’, is essentially cognate with the merely substantive Latinate noun “(the) essence”, being the standard English translation thereof, it is by no means unambiguously synonymous therewith in disregard of the incipient ‘wesen’ in ‘Wesen(heit)’ and the ‘esse’ in ‘(esse)ntia’ and the ‘εἶναι’, as it were, in ‘οὐσία (εἶναι)’. How so? Because, in a word, my English translation is co-essentially cognate with the Latinate-English word “(the) essencing” as, ‘im *Wesen*’, the unprevailing fold of the prevailing German twofold. It therefore does not eschew but embraces the

enigma that Heidegger is always at pains to address in his appraisal of the ‘metaphysical problematics’ and the ‘being-historic interplay’ of ‘Wesen = essentia, οὐσία’ and ‘Wesen ≠ essentia, οὐσία’ whereby, despite being a verbal noun, the German word “Wesen” is all too easily mis-understood and mis-taken by conventional and even essent-ial thinking in none other than the predominantly and exclusively substantive sense of ‘Wesen(heit)’, per the ‘essentia = οὐσία’ that it almost invariably translates. Pursuant to my all-in-one – and ‘one (is) all’ – rendering of the at once prevailing and unprevailing significations of the verbal substantive “das Wesen” there is thus no need to alternate exclusively and occasionally between the one advancing and the other retreating fold of the protrusive twofold of the English translating word, between the merely substantive noun “(the) essence” and the merely verbal noun “(the) essencing”, such that on the occasion of observing the partiality of the former the English translator exclusively dispenses with that of the latter, and vice versa.

My advisedly ‘not-so-poor’ English translation of “(das) Wesen” as ‘Wesen(heit) = (esse)ntia = οὐσία (εἶναι)’ is therefore not impelled to jump ship from the relative safety of so imperfectly coming to terms with the question mark hanging over the perplexing configuration of ‘the essence(-cum-essencing)’ that *is* “das Wesen”, as some English translators have ventured, perhaps in sheer frustration on the part of the interpreters wanting to avoid having to enter the fray of this particular ‘verbal controversy’, to plunge headlong into the choppy waters of another by resorting to a word-in-translation that is deliberately selected for being *not cognate with Latin essentia*.²⁵ Nor is it impelled by the tacit acquiescence in any such notion to take this headlong plunge without having first thought right through the relevant cognates of (esse)ntia to their perplexing configuration in the abovenamed enigmatic word-in-translation that *is*, i.e. *essences (and obsolesces-parentheses its essencing)* as, “das Wesen”, even tentatively, *before* ruling the same inadmissible as an imperfectly good approximation to the German original.

Once the enigma of ‘Wesen = essentia ...’ and ‘Wesen ≠ essentia ...’ is tentatively laid out for the interpretation in my appraisal as the seemingly insurmountable translation difficulty of, in a word, ‘essence and essencing’ viewed not as a dichotomous split into two mutually exclusive words-in-translation, either “the essence” or alternately “the essencing”, but rather as a simple twofold of both at once with the accent principally on the former, these cognates of (esse)ntia, each as one such as it is in respect of the

²⁵ As proposed by Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary in their Translators’ Foreword (pp. xxxi-ii) to *Mindfulness*, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006, their English translation of Martin Heidegger’s *Besinnung* (GA66) Ibid.

word as an integral whole, can then be ruled in or out as suitable candidates (and contenders) to translate the openly dark and obscure nominal(-cum-verbal) power to name and the distinguished arrangement of the prominent German language of “das Wesen” into its ownmost word in our own English language as ‘the essence(-cum-essencing)’, respectively ‘the essenz(cum-essenzing)’, or better: the essenz(ing). But to rule them out *not* (co-)essent-ially as such, but merely ‘on principle’, i.e. on the basis of nothing more cogent or irrefragable as the pervasive point of departure (ἀρχή) than *their being cognate with Latin essentia*, this undertaking, in my view, is a risky venture. For, the question that now looms large for the interpreter, mindful that even consummate translations in the elevated domain of poetizing and of thinking are “always poor” (per Heidegger GA55, G45), is how to forbear a “not-so-poor” English translation *with* the cognates of (esse)ntia rather than risk a “very poor” one *without* them.