

Spirit-power talking

*Die Welt als eine Welt zum Welten bringen, ist: es noch einmal mit den Göttern wagen.*¹

καὶ ὁ μὲν περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα σοφὸς δαιμόνιος ἀνήρ²

Hartshorne saw Heidegger as “retreating back and back into the philosophical past, as though Aristotle was closer to the truth than the Scholastics, the pre-Socratics than Aristotle, and someone or something, I’m still not sure what, truer than the pre-Socratics.”³ The texts of late Heidegger can be read as a prosopography of spirit-powers, ethnography’s ‘metapersons;’ in light of which the retrogression Hartshorne noticed can be understood as one ‘through transcendentalism to immanentism.’ What those two terms mean in the context of this suggestion takes a few minutes to install.

Heidegger was born into Christianity, a transcendentalist culture. The Axial Age civilizations were the first to develop “the perception of a sharp distinction between the mundane and transmundane worlds;”⁴ “An ontological breach opens up between a transcendent realm and a mundane one;”⁵ “Transcendental breakthrough occurred when in the wake of second-order weighing of clashing alternatives there followed an almost unbearable tension threatening to break up the fabric of society, and the resolution of the tension was found by creating a transcendent realm and then finding a soteriological bridge between the mundane world and the transcendental.”⁶

Thus the second distinctive feature of transcendentalism is soterorexis, rescue-craving. “Escape from mundane existence – or salvation – becomes the main goal . . . Transcendentalism launches an all-out assault on the immanentist project of securing a flourishing existence in the ‘here and now’ by insisting that any such ‘flourishing’ is relatively worthless. Ultimate purpose

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte): Gesamtausgabe Band 94*: 209: <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=94.00&pg=209> . “Heidegger’s thought betrays what the philosopher was: the final and probably most vehement obstrucater of modernity. The *Schwarze Hefte* are nothing other than the wild attempt to combat the project of the ‘disenchantment of the world’ by any philosophical and non-philosophical means available.” Peter Trawny, *Freedom to Fail: Heidegger’s Anarchy* (tr. Ian Alexander Moore and Christopher Turner 2015) 48. Again: *noch einmal mit den Göttern wagen soll, um so eine geschichtliche Welt zu schaffen*. GA 39: 221: <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=39.00&pg=221> .

² Plato, *Symposium* 203a.

³ *The Philosophy of Charles Hartshorne* (ed. Lewis Edwin Hahn 1991) 22. See Martin W. Woessner, *Heidegger in America* (2011) 25-26.

⁴ S. N. Eisenstadt, “Introduction: The Axial Age Breakthroughs—Their Characteristics and Origin,” in *The Origins and Diversity of Axial Age Civilizations* (ed. S. N. Eisenstadt 1986) 3.

⁵ Alan Strathern, *Unearthly Powers: Religious and Political Change in World History* (2019) 47.

⁶ Yehuda Elkana, “The Emergence of Second-order Thinking in Classical Greece” in *The Origins and Diversity of AAC* 64.

is drained out of mundane existence in order to concentrate it in the attainment of the transcendentalist objective. This is salvation, liberation, or enlightenment. . . . The transcendent dimension may be defined as that which is attained by liberation or salvation.”⁷ In his *Seinsgeschichte* Heidegger’s word for such transcendentalism is ontotheology, the disaster that befell the West and crushed *der erste Anfang*. His final project attempted to restore an immanent realm in order to salvage flourishing-of-existence in the here and now.

Immanentism, in the ethnographic sense, “is the result of *universal* features of the human mind . . . ‘The attribution by humans to non-humans of an interiority [and also specifically *Intentionalität*] identical to their own’ . . . [and is] the default mode of human religiosity.”⁸ The index-phenomenon of immanentist culture is spirit-power thinking;⁹ “The promiscuous attribution of personhood.”¹⁰ “In Immanent regimes all significant material ‘things’ are enspirited inasmuch as they embody animating powers with characteristics of persons;” “these metahuman beings and forces are intrinsic in and a precondition for all human activity;”¹¹ “the basic immanentist proposition [is] that human flourishing lies in the hands of metapersons.”¹²

To anticipate a point, spirit-power thinking is a ‘conserved core process’ in the evolution of human culture and transcendentalism is not. “[I]t must be underlined that immanentism is a universal feature of religion, found in every society under the sun. Transcendentalism is not: it is rather the consequence of a series of intellectual revolutions that took place in particular parts of Eurasia in what has been called the ‘Axial Age’ of human history – the middle centuries of the first millennium BCE.”¹³

In the light of spirit-power thinking Heidegger’s description of *Alltäglichkeit* is grossly deficient. This lack is most evident in *Being and Time*’s account of using a hammer. Heidegger’s exposition of usage-and-breakdown purports to characterize a universal phenomenon of *Existenz*. But, Sahlins observes, “For the greater part of human history and the greater number of societies, human existence, as culturally constituted, has been heteronomous, subject to the governance of metaperson sources of life and livelihood. . . . nothing is undertaken without enchantments, the initial invocations of the spirits who potentiate the human social action.”¹⁴ Heidegger’s *Hammerträger* summons no spirit, chants no spell, speaks no charm, prays no prayer. For Dobu

⁷ *Unearthly Powers* 50, 51-52, 48.

⁸ *Id.* 18 (his italics), 30 (quoting Phillipe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture* (tr. Janet Lloyd 2013)), 5.

⁹ Marshall Sahlins, with the assistance of Frederick B. Henry Jr., *The New Science of the Enchanted Universe: An Anthropology of Most of Humanity* (2022) 35, “following native North American usage.”

¹⁰ *Unearthly Powers* 27.

¹¹ *The New Science* 6-7, 2.

¹² *Unearthly Powers* 108.

¹³ *Id.* 7.

¹⁴ *The New Science* 175.

Islanders, by contrast, “Canoe lashing will not hold the canoe together at sea, however firmly the creeper may be wound and fastened, without the appropriate incantation being performed over its lashing.”¹⁵

When the hammer-wielder encounters breakdown, the tool goes from *zuhanden* to *vorhanden*, the user ‘goes *thematisch*’ to diagnose the problem, and that’s the whole of the experience per Heidegger’s account. In immanentist cultures that is never the whole of the experience of breakdown. For example,

“The gods had to be removed from the canoe of the ranking Tikopia chief (the Ariki Kafika) so that it could be repaired. . . . when a borer was discovered in the hull, the expert craftsman immediately summoned the gods of the canoe. ‘Look you hither on the canoe that I am handling here.’ A borer {Firth writes} ‘can be coped with not only by physical means but also by the power [*mana*] of the gods.’ For the *mana* part, a famous adze of divine origin had to be borrowed from another chief, an instrument especially useful in canoe work because it embodied a certain god in his manifestation as a gray reef eel known for its sharp teeth and its ferocity. On striking with the adze, the craftsman would invoke the eel-god, and then, it is said, ‘the decay and the borer disappear. He eats them on the instant, they vanish, and the insect dies.’ So, it happened in this instance: the repairs were accomplished, and in the end the gods of the canoe were restored to the vessel.”¹⁶

At the stage of *Being and Time* Heidegger was still thinking within the transcendental universe, the legacy of the *Achsenzeit*, his (our) heritage. Yet we can see through Sahlins’s eyes that already in *Being and Time* Heidegger was presenting immanentist symptoms. Sahlins perceives among immanentist societies “a common rule of exogamous unilineal orders, matrilineal or patrilineal: that the life-giving and death-dealing ancestral powers of one’s own line, the social soul of people’s inner being, is complemented by the individual outer powers contributed by the in-marrying others—affinal/maternal kin in patrilineal organizations, affinal/paternal kin in matrilineal systems—who compose the bodily powers by which the person manages in life.” Sahlins goes further and conjectures as a principle of all immanentist cultures that “the human spirit/soul is double, consisting of an inherent social soul, generically human or specifically ancestral, and an acquired individuated soul, by means of which the life potentials of the former may be realized.”¹⁷ This immanentist principle of the double soul shows up in *Being and Time* as

¹⁵ *Id.* 23, quoting Reo Fortune, *Sorcerers of Dobu: The Social Anthropology of the Dobu Islanders of the Western Pacific* ([1932] 1989).

¹⁶ *The New Science* vii, quoting Raymonf Firth, *Primitive Polynesian Economy* (1950).

¹⁷ *The New Science* 52, 53.

the complementarity of *das Man* and *Seinkönnen*, the social being on the one hand and on the other the power by which Dasein gets authentically individuated to the extent luck allows.

The transition into Axial culture “was the translation of divinity from an *immanent* presence in human activity to a *transcendental* ‘other world’ of its own reality, leaving the earth alone to humans, now free to create their own institutions by their own means and lights.”¹⁸ And yet by Bellah’s Rule of religious evolution ‘Nothing is ever lost.’¹⁹ Sahlins accordingly remarks the “persistence of immanent elements in all . . . transcendental regimes. Immanence continues in many forms, from ‘folk beliefs’ in hinterland regions, or descents of divinity from heaven to earth in saintly apparitions and miraculous interventions, to ascents of humanity from earth to heaven in shamanistic séances and miraculous and prophetic aspirations.”²⁰ As in, “Looking about me, I found characters/ Human and otherwise.”²¹

That is to say, spirit-power thinking is conserved. Though Bellah never identifies it as such, spirit-power thinking is the preeminent phenomenon of what he means by ‘conserved core process.’²² Monotheism is a transcendence-variant of spirit-power thinking. The God of monotheism is a metaperson who climbed atop the heap of its cohort and yet must still play ceaseless whack-a-mole in suppressing the others as they continually rise up.²³ “Monotheism is set up to destroy other religious forms”²⁴ and proceeds by intermittent campaigns of

¹⁸ *Id.* 2.

¹⁹ “At this point it might be worth noting a central principle that has governed all my work on religious evolution: Nothing is ever lost.” Robert N. Bellah, “What is Axial about the Axial Age?” 46 *European Journal of Sociology* 69, 72 (2005). By discounting the *nur* it’s possible to see the principle as foreshadowed by Karl Jaspers: *Die alten Kulturen bestehen nur fort in den Elementen, die in die Achsenzeit eingehen, aufgenommen werden von dem neuen Anfang. Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte* (1949) 22. In a précis of the book Jaspers repeats the point: “The old cultures survived only in those elements that were assimilated by the new beginning and became part of the axial age.”:

<https://www.commentary.org/articles/karl-jaspers/the-axial-age-of-human-history-a-base-for-the-unity-of-mankind>

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²⁰ *The New Science* 4.

²¹ James Merrill, *The Changing Light at Sandover* (1982). As in, “despite my intention and all my best efforts to write a standard, chapter-based book, this text has insisted on being structured in a way that resembles the structure of Stambaugh’s own book: as a series of brief topical engagements. I have yet to fully understand why the material wants to be addressed in this way, but that it does, I am sure.” Katherine Withy, *Heidegger on Being Self-Concealing* (2022) 4.

²² Bellah takes the concept from Marc W. Kirschner and John C. Gerhart, *The Plausibility of Life: Resolving Darwin’s Dilemma* (2005). Bellah, as he says, “comes close to stating the central argument” of his book by noting “Merlin Donald’s scheme of cultural evolution as involving successively the emergence of mimetic, mythic, and theoretic culture” and suggesting that “Perhaps each of these is a ‘conserved core process,’ never lost even though reorganized in the light of new core processes, each promoting variation, adaptive and innovative, but each essential to cultural integrity.” Robert N. Bellah, *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age* (2011) 65.

²³ For the story of how El, at first just one among many Elohim, rose to rule as the One and Only see Benjamin Uffenheimer, “Myth and Reality in Ancient Israel” in *The Origins and Diversity of AAC* 135-168.

²⁴ *Unearthly Powers* 71.

annihilation; but because spirit-power thinking is conserved, monotheism entails a forever-theomachy.²⁵

Again because of this conservation principle transcendentalist traditions continually “form amalgams with immanentism.” Monotheism has fused together spirit-power thinking and transcendentalism “by connecting salvation to the worship of a metaperson.” Christianity in particular “does not so much as abolish all other metapersons as (a) wipe away other pantheons [‘When Jesus came the Corn Mothers went away’²⁶] and replace them with a new, simplified set, and (b) order that set according to ethical and soteriological principles.” The general result of amalgamation is that “fully realised transcendentalisms came to reproduce forms of immanentism.”²⁷

Sahlins says, citing Vico, “The gods do whatever men are doing,” and takes “this Vichian dictum to be the cardinal principle of the cultures of immanence.”²⁸ Drawing on the work of Ellen Basso, Bellah reports that the Kalapal of central Brazil “classify various beings according to the sounds they make. The ‘powerful beings,’ who were there ‘at the beginning,’ express themselves through ‘music.’ Human beings use ‘speech.’ Other animate beings, including animals, have ‘calls.’ Inanimate things make ‘noises.’ Among the powerful beings are Agouti, Taugi, Thunder, Jaguar, and others. ‘Agouti is a sneak and a spy, Taugi an effective trickster, who can penetrate illusions, Thunder the most dangerous of powerful beings, Jaguar a violent bully who is easily deceived.’”²⁹ Spirit powers do whatever people are doing and, as intentional beings, intend what humans do; including our inveterate treachery, trickery, danger, violence.³⁰

²⁵ A “more insidious feature of the Christian worldview” is “that of a world of competing ‘religions.’” *Id.* 47.

²⁶ Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (1991).

²⁷ *Unearthly Powers* 84, 5, 55, 76, 84.

²⁸ *The New Science* 25.

²⁹ *Religion in Human Evolution* 139.

³⁰ On the other side of the world a Chukchi shaman told Waldemar Bogoras, “All that exists lives. The lamp walks around. The walls of the houses have voices of their own. Even the chamber-vessel has a separate land and house. The skins sleeping in the bags talk at night. The antlers lying on the tombs arise at night and walk in procession around the mounds, while the deceased get up and visit the living.” With the affective consequence that “We are surrounded by enemies. Spirits always walk about invisibly with gaping mouths. We are always cringing, and distributing gifts on all sides, asking protection of one, giving ransom to another, and unable to obtain anything whatsoever gratuitously.” Hutton comments, “It seems that the relationship of the Chukchi with their environment was more than usually adversarial, but the sense of an animate universe provided in these statements has been recorded among all Siberian peoples.” Ronald Hutton, *Shamans: Siberian Spirituality and the Western Imagination* (2001) 59-60; quoting Bogoras, *The Chukchee* (1908). Same phobic vibe in *Exhuma* (dir. Jang Jae-hyun 2024) set in modern Korea, with lively portrayal of shamanic performance starting at 28:26. *The Exorcist* for animists.

In Heidegger's late texts we find that 'The abundance of *Intentionalität* prompts generosity of distribution.'³¹ An eminent interpreter of these texts is Andrew Mitchell, who writes that "While Heidegger's later remarks on stones, waters, plants, and animals are nowhere near as extensive as the earlier elaboration, they nonetheless mark decisive shifts away from the thought espoused in [*The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*]." Shifts amounting to nothing less than "a reconfiguration of Heidegger's conception of world, moving beyond his earlier treatments found in the period of fundamental ontology as well as in his middle works." A profound change; "The consequences of this should not be underestimated."³²

The change is no more salient than in the treatment of stones (*Gestein*). Recall that in FCM "the stone is wordless." In the late period, as Mitchell says, "the thought that stone would have no access to the world around it is completely abandoned;"³³ now stone **speaks**. In texts of 1950 and 1953 Heidegger glosses the poetry of Georg Trakl, commenting ('tm' indicates the translation is Mitchell's)

"The threshold, as the carrying out of the between, is hard because pain has turned it to stone;" "the pain that became appropriated to stone did not harden into the threshold in order to congeal there. Pain presences enduringly in the threshold as pain." (GA 12:24/PLT 201, tm).

"Pain conceals itself in the stone, the pain that, by turning to stone, preserves itself in the closedness of the stone;" "the old stone is pain itself, insofar as it looks earthily [*erdhaft anblickt*] upon mortals;" "the colon after the word 'stone' at the end of the verse signifies that here *the stone* is speaking [*hier der Stein spricht. Der Schmerz selbst hat das Wort.*];" "Silent since long ago, it now says to the wanderers [*Langher schweigend sagt er den Wanderern*] who follow the stranger nothing less than its own reign and perseverance." (GA 12:59/ OWL 182, tm).³⁴

These passages are not merely Heidegger's paraphrase of Trakl's use of the pathetic fallacy; rather, Heidegger treats the poetry as **reporting** the *Befindlichkeit* of stone. He does the same with Hölderlin's *The Ister*: "The rivers cannot be 'poeticized images' [as in the trope of personification] or 'signs of' something because they in themselves are 'the signs,' 'signs' that are no longer 'signs' of something else, nor symbols of something else, but are themselves this

³¹ Gomes writes (not about Heidegger) "The fuzziness of belief allows for generosity of application." Anil Gomes, "Tilosophy," 46 *London Review of Books* 20 June 2024: <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v46/n12/anil-gomes/tilosophy> .

³² Andrew Mitchell, *The Fourfold: Reading the Late Heidegger* (2015) 88, 89.

³³ *Id.* 90.

³⁴ *Id.* 91, 92. <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=12.00&pg=24> ; <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=12.00&pg=59> .

supposed ‘something else.’”³⁵ What ‘something else’? “In the element of the river spirit a singular love wafts to our heart [*Im Element des Stromgeistes weht uns einstige Liebe durchs Herz*].”³⁶ The ‘something else’ is *Stromgeist*, *Steingeist*, and so on. “Like the stone previously mentioned,” notes Mitchell, “the tree itself speaks: ‘The oaktree itself spoke [*Die Eiche selber sprach*]: only in such growth is there grounded what lasts and fructifies.”³⁷ Of Trakl’s *blaue Wild* Heidegger asks, “who is the blue deer that the poet calls out to? An animal? Certainly. Only an animal? By no means. For it is supposed to remember [*Denn es soll gedenken*].” (GA 12: 41/OWL 166, tm).³⁸

Mitchell acknowledges that the stone’s speaking is perplexing, yet he shows that it follows from Heidegger’s tenet that “the human does not speak, but instead ‘*language speaks*.’ Consequently, [Mitchell continues] language (the *logos*) is no longer a property of the human, something it would possess, but is liberated from the human interior and set loose in the world. The *logos* comes to fill the world for the medium of what appears. Otherwise put, the medium of appearance is itself a medium of meaning. . . . The stone is able to speak to us because the stone is ‘in’ sense.”³⁹ Even *der Schmerz* in the stone *hat das Wort*.⁴⁰

Put another way, the stone and the pain and the tree are able to speak, the stream able to send love, the blue deer to remember, because each has *inua*. Among Greenland Inuit there is, or was around 1890, “the belief that in every natural object there dwells a particular being, called its *inua* (that is, its owner)—a word which, characteristically enough, signified originally human being or Eskimo. According to the Eskimos, every stone, mountain, river, lake, has its *inua*; the very air has one. It is still more remarkable to find that even abstract conceptions have their *inua*; they speak for example of the *inua* of particular instincts or passions.”⁴¹ (So despair, hilarity, sorrow, lust, every mood, feeling, disposition, has its *inua*.) Sahlins generalizes using *inua* as a technical term: “In any given culture of immanence, virtually anything and almost

³⁵ *Id.* 97; GA 53:204; <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=53.00&pg=204> .

³⁶ *Id.* 96; GA 75:64; <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=75.00&pg=64> .

³⁷ *Id.* 100; GA 13:88; <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=13.00&pg=88> .

³⁸ *Id.* 110; <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=12.00&pg=41> .

³⁹ *Id.* 92.

⁴⁰ This *logos* resembles *mana* of spirit-power thinking. *Mana* as described by Sahlins is “the hypostatization of godly power as a quality divided off from deity itself and proliferating as a force of vitality and mortality within human society. . . . Oceanic *mana* is the classical locus of the form . . . But Oceanic *mana* is only one, if often taken as paradigmatic, of a large family of divinely imparted powers, including [string citation omitted] as well as Islamic *baraka*, and even *charisma* in its original Weberian sense of divine inspiration—not to mention the similar potencies locally known to numerous other peoples.” *The New Science* 120.

⁴¹ *The New Science* 74; quoting Fridtjof Nansen, *Eskimo Life* (tr. William Archer 1893).

everything may be a nonhuman person: not only animals and plants, but stones, streams, winds, fire, sun, stars, cliffs—any or all may have their inner *inua*.”⁴²

“The greatest gods excepted,” Sahlins writes, “in many immanentist societies, everything that is a person has a master, a metaperson that governs all the beings of a given kind or a given habitat.” Heidegger tells us that “The earth is the building bearer, what nourishingly fructifies, tending waters and stones, plants and animals [*hegend Gewässer und Gestein, Gewächs und Getier*].”⁴³ The role of earth here is, to use Sahlins’ words, “as the parent of the individuals of its domain, [who] cares for, protects, and otherwise disposes of their fate.”⁴⁴

The *Ge-* prefix is Heidegger’s marker for metapersonality. *Gewässer und Gestein, Gewächs und Getier* are not waters and minerals and organisms; they are inhabitants of earth’s domain, dwelling under earth’s care. Heidegger writes “We name the collection of mountains [*der Birge*] that are already gathered together, united of themselves [*von sich her einig*] and never belatedly [*nie nachträglich*], the mountain range [*das Gebirge*].”⁴⁵ (The formidable Front Range has a persona obviously different from the mellow Ouachitas and the desolate Chinatis.) Heidegger goes on, “We name the collection of ways we are inclined to such and such [*zumute ist*] and can feel ourselves so inclined, disposition [*das Gemüt*].” As the Inuit might say, one’s *inua*. So also, “By thinging, things carry out world. Our old language calls such carrying *bern, bären*—Old High German *beran*—to bear; hence the words *gebaren*, to carry, gestate, give birth, and *Gebärde*, bearing, gesture. Thinging, things are things. Thinging, they gesture—gestate—world.”⁴⁶ *Gebärde* names the *inua* of the thinging thing.

What of *das Geviert*? The fourfold is the comity between spirit powers and mortals, and the dynamics of this comity is ‘world.’

“Earth and sky, divinities and mortals, belong together, united from themselves [*von sich her einig*], in the single fold of the unifying fourfold [*des einigen*]

⁴² *Id.* 75. Or *kami*. “From earliest times, the Japanese people have worshipped Kami. Kami may be the spirits of a particular place or natural forces like winds, rivers, and mountains. Kami such as these would neither be regarded anthropomorphically nor be seen as embodying moral principles. Some are intimidating, and not all of them are good to humans.” Helen Hardacre, *Shinto: A History* (2017) 1. The ‘way of kami’ in Studio Ghibli films accounts in part for their affinity with late Heidegger. See Jonas Čeika, “A Heideggerian Analysis of Studio Ghibli’s Films”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wCY9SqyVoo&t=1s>. Hardacre comments on Shinto in *Princess Mononoke* at 546-549. Cf. πάντα πλήρη θεῶν. Perhaps first a folk-saying, later attributed variously to Thales, Heraclitus, and Pythagoras. See M. L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (1971) 208, 145 fn. 2.

⁴³ GA 79:17; <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=79.00&pg=17>.

⁴⁴ *The New Science* 81.

⁴⁵ *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures: Insight Into That Which Is and Basic Principles of Thinking* (tr. Andrew J. Mitchell 2012) 30. GA 79:32; <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=79.00&pg=32>.

⁴⁶ *Poetry, Language, Thought* (tr. Albert Hofstadter 1975) 197; <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=12.00&pg=19>.

Gevierts]. Each of the four in its way mirrors the essence of the remaining others again. . . . In this appropriating-lighting way, each of the four reflectively plays with each of the remaining others. . . . The mirroring that binds them to this space of freedom is the play that entrusts each of the four to the others by the folded support [*zutraut aus dem faltenden Halt*] of this bringing into ownership. None of the four insists on its separate particularity. . . . We name the appropriating mirror-play of the single fold the earth and sky, divinities and mortals, the world. . . . The unity of the fourfold is the fouring. . . . The fouring essences as the appropriating mirror-play of the ones that are simply entrusted to each other [*einander Zugetrauten*]. The fouring essences as the worlding of the world. The mirror-play of world is the round dance of appropriation.”

Non-intentional beings do not play, neither do they dance.

There exists an important class of spirit powers in immanentist cultures which Sahlins labels ‘antihuman metapersons.’ Heidegger devotes an entire lecture to ‘the danger,’ *die Gefahr*, the *Wesen—inua or kami or daimon—of das Ge-Stell: Das Wesen des Ge-Stells aber ist die Gefahr*. And another lecture in the same series describes the menace of this anti-human *Ge-Stell*. Roughly, *Ge-Stell* is to *Geviert* as Jesus was to the Corn Mothers, the transcendental destroyer of an immanentist way of being.

‘Human flourishing lies in the hands of metapersons’ and for the sake of human flourishing Heidegger summons yet another one, *das Rettende*. He quotes Hölderlin’s verse *Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst/ Das Rettende auch*, and explains, “Where the danger is as danger, that which saves is already there. The latter does not insert itself alongside the former. What saves does not stand next to the danger. When it is as the danger, the danger itself is what saves. The danger is what saves insofar as, from out of its essence, it brings what saves.”⁴⁷

One mistake is to understand *das Rettende* as an endogenous recuperation-mechanism, as calculative rationality would have it.⁴⁸ Rather it is a metapersonal power: “What genuinely saves is what guards, guardianship [*das Wahrende, die Wahrnis*]. . . . In the essence of danger

⁴⁷ *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures* 68; GA 79: 72: <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=79&pg=72> .

⁴⁸ As Hirschman does. “This book takes a further, more radical step, in recognizing the importance and pervasiveness of slack. It assumes not only that slack has somehow come into the world and exists in given amounts, but that it is *continuously being generated* as a result of some sort of entropy characteristic of human, surplus-producing societies. . . . Firms and other organizations are conceived to be permanently and randomly subject to decline and decay, that is, to a gradual loss of rationality, efficiency, and surplus-producing energy, no matter how well the institutional framework within which they function is designed. This radical pessimism, which views decay as an ever-present force constantly on the attack, generates its own cure: for as long as decay, while always conspicuous in some areas, is hardly in undisputed command everywhere and at all times, it is likely that the very process of decline activates certain counterforces.” Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (1970) 14-15; his italics.

there essences and dwells a grace [*west und wohnt eine Gunst*], namely the grace of the turn of the forgetting of beyng into the truth of beyng." *Gunst* ('favor')—as distinguished from blind chance, dumb luck, etc.—intends an object. Heidegger continues: "In the essence of the danger, where it is as the danger, there is the turn to guardianship, there is this guardianship itself [*ist diese Wahrnis selbst*], there is that which saves of beyng [*ist das Rettende des Seyns*]." ⁴⁹ So typhoon, destroyer of their towns and dreaded by the Japanese, became their rescuer as *Kamikaze*, 'divine wind,' when it wrecked Kublai Khan's fleet and thereby saved Japan from Mongol invasion. Thus reinforcing the people's notion of Japan as blessed among nations. ⁵⁰

Mitchell writes,

"Too often commentators have taken flight from the perplexity of thinking through the fourfold in Heidegger's work by assimilating it to some outside framework or set of concerns, be they Platonic, Aristotelian, Ancient Greek more generally, Native American, Chinese, Hölderlinian, or a recasting of Heidegger's own *Being and Time*. But even when this is not the case, commentary has not remained very close to the actual wording of Heidegger's text."⁵¹

I accept Mitchell's interpretation of the philosophical import of these texts.⁵² I merely suggest that their actual wording expounds the basis in pan-intentionality of spirit-power religion.

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⁴⁹ *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures* 68, 69; <https://www.beyng.com/gaselis/?vol=79&pg=73> .

⁵⁰ "Japan is a land under the protection of the Kami; the land, the sovereign, and the people derive from the Kami." *Shinto* 164. On the salvific *Kamikaze* of the 13th century see *id.* 165-166.

⁵¹ *The Fourfold* 4.

⁵² He writes: "The fourfold provides an account of the thing as inherently relational;" "I develop a conception of mediation and relationality as operative across Heidegger's thinking of the thing;" "To think the finitude of things is to think the mediacy of the world. . . . What appears in this world does so in conjunction with everything around it. There is nothing that does not exist in this relational way. . . . the fourfold names the structural minima for the mediated, finite existence of things. As such, the fourfold grants us insight into what I take to be the center of Heidegger's later thinking, a thinking of mediation and relationality;" "A thing is no simple presence, nothing that can be understood as an independent and relationless unit of objective presence. . . . They are nodes of relation, not inert and dumb objects;" "To think things as relational means that no thing exists independent of another and that to ex-ist is already to be held out and supported by a context." *Id.* 3, 4, 5, 11, 15. Not a million miles from Mahayana Buddhism's *sunyata*, 'emptiness;' i.e. no *svabhava*, no standalone essence, no τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι; all is 'dependent arising,' *pratityasamutpada*. Lucid primer here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ILmGpgzYIM> . Detailed account in Francis H. Cook, *Hua-yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of Indra* (1977).