Heidegger on Negation

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# Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the meaning of a much-maligned and misunderstood passage in the history of philosophy: namely, the passage in Heidegger’s “What is Metaphysics?” where he says, among other things, that “the nothing nothings”.

In what follows, I will show that two issues stand behind these remarks. Most immediately, Heidegger is addressing a view about the origin of the logical concept of negation. He does so however, in order to demonstrate the general inadequacy of that view as an explanation of the origin of *any* logical concept. The view in question is the sophisticated form of constructivism explicated by Husserl in his *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, but in its germ going back to his *Philosophy of Arithmetic*. The ultimate aim of the remarks are to recover a correct understanding of the relationship between logic and metaphysics, and thereby to dismiss a pervasive but falseunderstanding of that relationship that, by misconstruing the object of the latter discipline, effectively prevented the very possibility of doing metaphysics in the genuine sense.

# The Argument

Parallels to issues about negative truthmakers in truthmaker theory.

# Some Remarks on the import of the argument today

# Conclusion

# Bibliography

Dummett, *The Logical Basis of Metaphysics*

Husserl, *Philosophy of Arithmetic*

Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*

Heidegger, “What is Metaphysics?”