Chapter 3: Truth and Being

The notion of truth plays a central role in Heidegger's work, both early and late. As Heidegger points out: "In ontological problematics *Being and truth* have, from time immemorial, been brought together if not entirely identified... If we are to give an adequate preparation for the question of Being, the phenomenon of *truth* must be ontologically clarified."[1] Indeed, as we noted in the first chapter, Aristotle locates being-true as one of the senses of 'Being' that requires unification, and Heidegger not only follows him in this, but even tends to take being-true as the primary sense, through which the others are to be unified.[2] Moreover, the shift in Heidegger's work that occurs after *Being and Time* coincides with a reorientation of the question of Being from the 'meaning' to the 'truth' of Being. However, what Heidegger means by 'truth' here is very different to what we ordinarily mean by it. Rather, when he talks of truth as *aletheia*, *unconcealment* (*Unverborgenheit*), *disclosedness* (*Erschlossenheit*), or *clearing* (*Lichtung*), he is talking about the *ontological ground* of the ordinary notion of truth. The inquiry into being-true as the primary sense of 'Being' is meant to unify the other senses precisely insofar as it uncovers this primordial phenomenon of truth.

The aim of this chapter is to account for the central role of truth within Heidegger's thought, and to make sense of the shift away from the 'meaning' to the 'truth' of Being, by showing precisely what this primordial notion of truth consists in, and precisely how Heidegger takes it to ground the ordinary notion of truth. To do this, we will first examine Heidegger's initial account of truth in section 44 of *Being and Time*, and consider a well known objection to it made by Ernst Tugendhat.[3] We will then explore how the account changes in *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 'On the Essence of Truth', and 'On the Origin of the Work of Art'. What we will see is that there are in fact two changes in Heidegger's account: a change in the argument through which the ordinary conception of truth is grounded in the primordial conception, and a substantive shift in the account of the primordial notion of truth itself. The first change has the effect of undermining Tugendhat's

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[1]   *B&T*, p. 228.
[2]   This is evident in the way he approaches the unity of the different aspects of Being he derives from the copula, both in *BPP* (p. 223) and *FCM* (p. 338).
[3]   Tugendhat, 'Heidegger's Idea of Truth' in *The Heidegger Controversy*, ed. Richard Wolin, pp. 245-263. This paper is in fact a precise of a larger work by Tugendhat on the notion of truth in both Husserl and Heidegger's work (*Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger*), which unfortunately has not yet been translated into English.

criticisms, but it is the more substantive change which underlies the fundamental shift between the earlier and later work.

1. Truth in *Being and Time*

Turning to the account of truth in *Being and Time*, the first thing that needs to be explained is precisely what the ordinary conception of truth that Heidegger is trying to ground consists in. The first subsection of section 44 lays out what Heidegger calls the 'traditional' conception of *truth as agreement* (*Übereinstimmung*). This is the classical view which takes truth to be a matter of correspondence between what is expressed in an assertion and the thing of which it is asserted (*adequatio intellectus et rei*). Although they are closely related, we must not confuse this *traditional* view of truth with what I have called the *ordinary* view.[4] The ordinary view takes truth to be a matter of the *correctness* (*Richtigkeit*) of assertions.[5] The traditional view is already a *philosophical interpretation* of the ordinary view, which takes correctness to consist in a relation of correspondence between the assertion (or the expressed content) and the thing. We will examine Heidegger's criticisms of this interpretation shortly. Heidegger's strategy in section 44 is to provide an alternative interpretation of what truth as correctness consists in, in opposition to the traditional view, and then to show how the traditional view can be seen to arise out of this. On this basis, he can then reveal the more primordial ontological structure upon which this account of truth depends, which he will in turn name 'truth'.

i) Assertion

In order to present Heidegger's account of what truth as correctness consists in, it is first necessary to explain his account of assertion in more detail. We are now in a position to flesh out the basic account of assertion as *apophantic discourse* provided in the first chapter, on the

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[4]   This mistake is made by a number of commentators, including Wrathall ('Heidegger and Truth as Correspondence') and Carman (*Heidegger's Analytic*, ch. 5).

[5]   This is not talked about explicitly in section 44, but Heidegger explicitly identifies the ordinary view of truth as correctness in *OET* (p. 118) and *BQP* (p. 9), in ways that show that the latter is not being criticised, but merely grounded in a more primordial phenomenon. This very clearly shows that Heidegger distinguishes between truth as correctness, which he aims to ground, and truth as corresondence, which he criticises. This aspect of the later works should not be seen as a change from *Being and Time* as much as a refinement of the terminology and the structure of the explanation. Importing this refined terminology back into *Being and Time* lets us pinpoint more precisely where the genuine changes in the account occur.

basis of the account of understanding, interpretation and discourse given in the second chapter. The essential point made there was that, although all forms of discourse "let something be seen", they do so *indirectly*, whereas assertion does so in a *direct* fashion. What this means is that although other forms of discourse (such as requesting, assenting/refusing, suggesting, etc.) facilitate collective interpretations of our shared possibilities, they only bring to light and allow us to re-articulate aspects of our *fore-having* in the context of organising action towards some goal (even if the goal is not necessarily a shared one). For instance, the social activity of playing football (or soccer) involves a whole team of players working together to achieve a goal (in this case, literally 'goals'), and this involves various different sub-activities, such as passing the ball, manoeuvring into accessible positions, tackling, taking shots, etc., but it also involves the various communications between the players through which they work out and modify their roles within the wider activity at any given point. The acts of expression through which the players communicate are not something other than the activity, but are a genuine part of the activity itself. Even in cases such as driving a car, where we must co-ordinate our actions with others, but without any shared goal, communication with other drivers is a part of the activity of driving itself. The point is thus that most types of discourse form *expressive parts* of other activities, whereas assertion can also take place outside of the context of other activities. Another way of putting this is to say that the kind of collective interpretation which most discourse enables is essentially *circumspective*. Assertion is an essentially decontextualised form of discourse, even if it is sometimes bound up within the context of some activity, and as such it enables a form of *non-circumspective* interpretation.

Heidegger claims that assertion is a derivative mode of interpretation.[6] Indeed, he claims that the as-structure found in assertion (the *apophantic* 'as') is a modification of that found in circumspective interpretation (the *hermeneutic* 'as'). However, he makes these claims before he introduces discourse as an existentiale. Given the way in which interpretation depends upon this existentiale, we can see that the way in which assertion modifies interpretation is actually a matter of the way it modifies the existential structure of discourse that ordinary *circumspective* interpretation depends upon. Heidegger claims that there are three different aspects of the structure of assertion: *pointing out* (*Aufzeigen*), *predication* and *communication*. Pointing out is the primary feature of assertion, upon which

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6   *B&T*, p. 154.

the other two are based, and it corresponds to *what is talked about* in discourse. Precisely what distinguishes assertion's function of pointing out from the way in which other forms of discourse pick out what is talked about in them is basically what we discussed in the last paragraph. In circumspective interpretation, even though we are rearticulating our understanding of our possibilities for action, we nonetheless encounter entities as bound up in the role they occupy in the context of some wider activity. This means that even when *we talk about* the entity in a non-assertoric fashion (requesting it, suggesting it, etc.) what is primarily in view is not the entity, but the larger context of which the entity is a part. By contrast, it is the fact that assertion focuses attention upon the entity itself which makes something like a *decontextualised* understanding of it possible.

Predication is the aspect of assertion which corresponds to *what is said* about what is talked about in discourse. Predication is made possible by pointing out, but it is what effectively carries out the decontextualisation discussed above. Importantly, Heidegger thinks that in predicating some determinate character of an entity (or the *subject* of the predicate) we are not adding something on top of the grasp we already have of it. Rather, he takes it that predication is a matter of *restricting* our view so as to focus on a particular aspect of our understanding of it.[7] The understanding we have of the entities we encounter is initially a *unitary* one. It is constituted by our grasp of all of the various possible relations it stands in within its environmental context. The primary function of predication is to pick this unitary understanding apart so that we can focus upon some aspect of it in *isolation* from others. Heidegger's example is the assertion "the hammer is too heavy", in which the predicate 'too heavy' makes explicit some of the features of the equipmental context the hammer is bound up in (e.g., the specific way it is inappropriate for my current task), while ignoring others (e.g., its appropriateness or inappropriateness for others).

This leads us to the specific way in which communication is modified in assertion. Heidegger takes assertion's communicative function to be "letting someone see with us what we have pointed out by way of giving it a definite character"[8], which enables us to engage *collectively* in non-circumspective interpretation. However, Heidegger also points out that "As something communicated, that which has been put forward in the assertion is something that Others can 'share' with the person making the assertion, even though the entity which he has pointed out and to which he has given a definite character is not close enough for them to

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[7]   Ibid., p. 197.
[8]   Ibid.

grasp and see it."[9] What Heidegger means here by 'not close enough' should not necessarily be understood in spatial terms, but indicates that assertion enables us to indicate aspects of the entity even to those who lack the prior understanding of it out of which these are isolated. We noted earlier that words are bits of equipment governed by expressive norms, and the same applies to the assertions that are constructed out of them. This is what enables assertions to be 'shared' and used by those who lack a prior understanding of that which they talk about. The prior understanding of what is talked about is filled in for by the practical ability to use the relevant words, which itself refers to an understanding of the more general relations between types of equipment. This highlights the second function of predication, namely, its *abstraction* of the relevant determination from the specific details of the way it is manifest in the given entity. To take up the earlier example, the fact that the hammer is 'too heavy' can be communicated independently of a grasp of the specific way in which it is too heavy for the task at hand, whether it is a matter of overall weight or weight distribution, and the particular way in which this affects the task.

The fact that assertions can be easily shared in this way also enables a derivative form of assertoric discourse that Heidegger calls *idle talk* (*Gerede*). This is what happens when assertions become entirely detached from the prior understanding in which they are grounded, and become like free floating counters that can be traded within conversation. We might say that idle talk is what one does when 'one doesn't know what one is talking about'. However, this must be understood not to mean that one can't *justify* what one is saying, but rather that one doesn't *understand* what it is one is referring to.[10] In essence, what goes on in idle talk is that our practical ability to deploy words and assertions within conversation outruns our understanding of the things they talk about. This is possible because we can simply copy the usage of Others, rather than deriving an understanding of word use from an understanding of things. For example, we can imagine a conversation at a dinner party in which the host raises the topic of economic policy, say, whether central banks should engage in 'quantitative easing', because it is a topic that 'everyone is talking about'. In this situation, it is quite possible that there could be a rudimentary conversation, in which several of the guests each repeats various assertions (and even more fully formed arguments) that they have heard others make about the topic, even when none of them have any real grasp of what

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[9]   Ibid.
[10]   John Haugeland describes idle talk this way in his response to Brandom's account of idle talk ('Reading Brandom Reading Heidegger').

'quantitative easing' actually involves. This example demonstrates Heidegger's claim that idle talk is an *inauthentic* form of discourse. This is because it shows that precisely what idle talk consists in is making assertions on the basis of the impersonal authority of the One, i.e., saying *what one says*, rather than a matter of engaging in any genuine interpretation of some prior understanding.[11] Because of this, idle talk is one of the features of Dasein's falling we mentioned earlier.

There is one final aspect of Heidegger's account of assertion that must be addressed. This is the special relationship between assertion and *occurrence*. As we've noted, assertion has the ability to provide decontextualised interpretations of entities, such that what is said about them can potentially be shared and understood outside of the context of a particular activity, or even outside of a particular environmental context within which it is situated. It does this through *pointing out* the entity directly, in such a way that particular aspects of it can be *isolated* from the totality of its involvements and *abstracted* from the particular ways they are instantiated in this totality. Now, assertion needn't provide an entirely decontextualised interpretation of an entity. This can be seen in Heidegger's example, where what is predicated of the hammer is still a matter of the functional norms governing the use of hammers within a certain activity (i.e., that it is 'too heavy' for them). Heidegger claims that there are many possible layers of decontextualisation: "assertions about the happenings in the environment, accounts of the [available], 'reports on the Situation', the recording and fixing of 'facts of the case', the description of a state of affairs, the narration of a state that has befallen."[12] All of these retain something of the purposive character of our ordinary experience. However, at the limit point we reach *theoretical* assertions, such as "this hammer has a mass of 0.6 kilograms", which are entirely decontextualised. Theoretical notions such as mass are interpretatively derived from our practical understanding of features such as heaviness, but become independent precisely insofar as our grasp of the use of the corresponding words ('mass') within assertions pulls apart from our practical understanding of available equipment. It is this process of decontextualisation in which the derivation of the occurrent from the available consists.[13] For Heidegger, our understanding of occurrent entities

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[11] It should be noted that, just as Heidegger has a nuanced conception of the relationship between authenticity and inauthenticity more generally, his conception of the relationship between assertion and idle talk is more complex. In truth, for Heidegger, there are various degrees to which the understanding underlying our use of language can be deficient, and thus much of our everyday language use is idle in some form, often by necessity.

[12] *B&T*, p. 201.

[13] Brandom, in his paper 'Heidegger's Categories in *Sein und Zeit*' (*Tales of the Mighty Dead*, ch. 10), provides

is thus based upon our capacity for assertion.

ii) Truth: Being-uncovering, Uncoveredness, and Disclosedness

Now that we've gone over Heidegger's account of assertion, we're in a position to explain the account of truth provided in section 44. We will start by addressing Heidegger's criticism of the traditional view. The traditional view tries to interpret the truth of an assertion as consisting in a relation between the assertion, or the *ideal* content it expresses, and the *real* object which it represents. The character of this relation is described as a matter of agreement, correspondence or similarity. The problem Heidegger has with this view is that it gives us no adequate way of understanding what this relation itself consists in. We can make sense of various ordinary forms of correspondence, such as the equality of two numbers, or the similarity of two objects, but, in the case of truth, we do not know what it is about either relata that is meant to correspond to the other. The split between the ideal Being of the content and the real Being of the object leaves us at a loss as to what kind of Being the relation exhibits. This criticism isn't really elaborated on very well, but it functions as a springboard for Heidegger's own approach.

Heidegger opens his account by offering a phenomenological analysis of the process of confirmation (or demonstration) of the truth of an assertion. He begins by way of an example: "Let us suppose that someone with his back turned to the wall makes the true assertion that 'the picture on the wall is hanging askew.' This assertion demonstrates itself when the person who makes it, turns around and perceives the picture hanging askew on the wall."[14] Heidegger takes it that the truth of the assertion is manifest in this moment of demonstration, wherein we encounter the object as being the way the assertion claims it to be. However, this phenomenon must be interpreted in a very particular way. First, Heidegger maintains that when we assert something we are related to the entity that is thereby pointed

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a nuanced account of this process of derivation that is certainly more detailed than anything Heidegger ever explicitly provided. Regardless of the independent interest of Brandom's account, it is difficult to see it as what Heidegger had in mind. This is due to the central role that *inference* plays in it. Brandom agrees that it is the the fact that our grasp of the use of words within assertion pulls apart from our practical grasp of equipment that enables theoretical understanding, and thus grasp of entities as occurrent. However, he sees this as a grasp of the inferential roles that assertions play within discourse and the way these words systematically contribute to them. Heidegger says almost nothing about inference in *Being and Time* and his other work, and explicitly criticises conceptions of discourse that focus upon reasoning. This makes it very hard to think that it could play the important role Brandom ascribes to it. We will discuss these issues further in chapter 4, part 3, section *ii*.

[14] *B&T*, p. 260.

out. Even if the person in the example never turns around, and so never has the perceptual experience which confirms their assertion, the assertion nonetheless relates them to the picture *itself*, and not to anything like a 'representation' of the picture. As Heidegger explained in the introduction, an assertion *allows* an entity to manifest itself, which is to say that it lets us encounter an entity, or grasp it, even though this encounter is not a perceptual one. Second, Heidegger holds that the moment of confirmation is not thereby a comparison of a representation with what is represented, nor is it "an agreement between the 'contents of consciousness' among themselves."[15] Rather, the assertion "is confirmed, when that which is put forward in [it] (namely, the entity itself) shows itself *as that very same thing*. "*Confirmation*" signifies *the entity's showing itself in its selfsameness*."[16] What this means is that both the assertion and the perceptual encounter with the picture involve the picture manifesting itself in some way, and the confirmation of the assertion is the *coincidence* of these manifestations.

This idea is derived from Husserl's account of truth in the sixth of his *Logical Investigations*. Husserl takes it that both the assertion (or judgement) and the correlative perception are *intentional acts* directed at the same thing, and that truth is revealed in a secondary or *founded* act, in which the objects of primary intentions are *identified*.[17] Heidegger's account is very similar – both the 'letting be seen' of the assertion and the more straightforward perceptual encounter are ways of Being toward the entity in question, i.e., *comportments* of Dasein, and 'the entity's showing itself in its selfsameness' is a relation these comportments stand in to one another. However, Heidegger rejects the notion that truth is equivalent to an *identity relation*. For Husserl, the founded act is an act of identification, and the identity relation is its *object*. For Heidegger, this makes truth something like a state of affairs which is encountered within the world, as if it were a relation between two extant things. Thus, instead of taking truth to consist in a *static* relation at which comportment aims, he takes it to be a *dynamic* relation between comportments.[18]

This point is hard to appreciate, given the simplicity of the example Heidegger provides. Moreover, the example can easily be read as indicating that this relation can only

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[15]   Ibid., p. 261.
[16]   Ibid.
[17]   Heidegger provides an in depth analysis of Husserl's concept of truth in History of the Concept of Time (pp. 50-55), although it is not yet particularly critical. He also discusses it in the as yet untranslated *Logik: Die Frage nach Der Wahrheit.* Dahlstrom provides a good summary of the latter (pp. 104-108).
[18]   This is a point made by Tugendhat ('Heidegger's Idea of Truth', p. 253), but is discussed in more detail by Dahlstrom (Ibid.).

hold between assertions and the direct encounters we have with entities in experience, such as circumspective concern. This would severely limit the scope of demonstration. If nothing else, it would preclude inferential justification as a means of demonstrating assertions. The answer to both problems is to consider the role that *interpretation* plays here. First of all, our encounters with entities within the world are not simply a matter of immediate understanding, but involve the active development of this understanding in interpretation (principally in circumspective interpretation). Secondly, we can engage in collective interpretation, through which we develop our shared understanding, by communicating with one another, and assertion is a particular form of such communication – one which facilitates non-circumspective collective interpretation. This means that assertoric discourse can do more than merely be confirmed by understanding garnered in concern and circumspective interpretation – it can actually engender the very understanding through which its assertions are confirmed.

This is a more detailed version of the point made when we discussed Heidegger's preliminary account of discourse in the first chapter, namely, that discourse can open up the possibility of genuine discovery that is not for that matter perceptual discovery. For example, if myself and a friend were searching my house for my cars keys, and in the course of searching we made assertions, communicating to one another where the keys are not (e.g., "the keys aren't in the kitchen", "they aren't in the living room", etc.), this would constitute a process of collective interpretation through which we narrowed down the possibilities for locating the keys. Through this process of interpretation it is possible for us to discover that the keys are in the bedroom, without having directly encountered the keys there, in virtue of having systematically eliminated the other viable options, or having uncovered additional clues to their whereabouts. Our understanding of the environment has been reconfigured by this process, such that when I say "the keys are in the bedroom", the assertion coincides with it. The demonstration of the truth of an assertion through explicitly drawing inferences between assertions is just one particular form of this kind of interpretation.

For Heidegger, interpretation is an ongoing process through which we develop some understanding, and, as in the above example, this can involve the *integration* of understanding garnered through various different comportments, both perceptual and communicative. The salient point here is that the relation of coincidence between an assertion and another comportment is not something fixed, but is an aspect of this *dynamic* process of

interpretation. Moreover, it is something revealed within the process of interpretation itself. Returning to the previous example, when we actually search the bedroom, the understanding on the basis of which my assertion was confirmed continues to be elaborated, possibly culminating in a direct encounter with the keys, but also possibly involving the uncovering of things incompatible with the understanding just established (e.g., the keys' absence, or the keychain without the keys). In the former case, the confirmation is in a certain sense deepened. In the latter case, the integration of this understanding results in the *disconfirmation* of the assertion. In essence, the relation between the assertion and the wider interpretation shifts, changing as our current understanding of the situation develops. What it is for us to demonstrate the truth of an assertion is to make explicit the accord between the assertion and our *current* understanding.

On the basis of this analysis, Heidegger makes a bolder claim. He contends that the "*Being-true* (*truth*) of the assertion must be understood as *Being-uncovering*."[19] What Heidegger means by this is that what is demonstrated in the confirmation of the assertion is nothing other than its eliciting of a manifestation. Heidegger is claiming that there is nothing *added* to a confirmed assertion, it is simply the case that we explicitly grasp the role a genuine assertion already plays. What is this role though? It is nothing other than the contribution the assertion makes to the kind of interpretation outlined above. The assertion uncovers just insofar as it is *used* as equipment within this process of interpretation. Referring back to the above example, each of the assertions that myself and my friend make in searching for the car keys plays a part in the collective interpretation through which the search is organised. Their truth does not need to be demonstrated for them to play such a role, rather, the demonstration merely makes this role explicit. If, in the course of our search, we encounter things that are at odds with these assertions, then, in the process of integration, the assertions are disconfirmed, and are thus *discarded*, ceasing to play a part in the ongoing process of interpretation.

On the basis of the above, we can see that Heidegger's example provides a *limit-case* of Being-uncovering. This is because the only use to which the assertion is being put is in the process of interpretation that demonstrates its accord with our understanding. In effect, what is thereby demonstrated is that it is *available for use* in the process of collective interpretation through which we develop our understanding further. We must be clear that this is not a kind

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[19]   *B&T*, p. 261.

of availability that *all* assertions present. It is always possible for us to use assertions that have been disconfirmed in various ways, for example, by using them to lie. As such, there is some sense in which all assertions are available for use, but it is not the case that all assertions are *appropriate* for use in interpretation. When an assertion is confirmed we grasp its appropriateness *explicitly*, but we nonetheless *implicitly* grasp the appropriateness of those assertions that we are already using, just as we have a circumspective grasp of the appropriateness of the tools we are using in a given activity. This means that those assertions that are disconfirmed are like broken tools that we discard after their *inappropriateness* for the task becomes evident.

Heidegger's account of the truth of assertions is thus a kind of *pragmatist coherentism*. It is initially pragmatist because the truth of an assertion consists in its appropriateness within the context of a particular kind of *practical activity*, namely, interpretation. It is coherentist because this appropriateness is a matter of how the assertion fits within the activity of interpretation. It is then doubly pragmatist because the activity of interpretation is ultimately grounded in Dasein's practical engagement with entities in the world. The collective interpretation facilitated by assertion is still principally a matter of organising action, and this means that such interpretations are directly sensitive to the success or failure of action. In this case, the truth of an assertion is thus sensitive to its impact upon action. Even strictly *theoretical* interpretation, which is completely decontextualised, is still derived from ordinary practical understanding. As such, the truth of theoretical assertions is still sensitive, albeit to a much lesser degree.

Nonetheless, there is still more to Heidegger's account of truth. Although he has now provided an alternative account of what truth as correctness consists in, he claims that: "Being-true as Being-uncovering, is a way of Being for Dasein. What makes this very uncovering possible must necessarily be called 'true' in a still more primordial sense. *The most primordial phenomenon of truth is first shown by the existential-ontological foundations of uncovering*."[20] He thus locates two successively more primordial senses of 'truth' by uncovering the existential structures which make possible the Being-uncovering of assertions. The second sense of 'truth' he establishes is what he calls the *Being-uncovered*, or *uncoveredness* (*Entdecktheit*), of entities in contrast to the Being-uncovering of assertions. In essence, whereas Being-uncovering refers to the way in which assertions *elicit* manifestation,

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[20] Ibid., p. 263.

Being-uncovered refers to the *manifestation* which is thereby elicited. However, Heidegger takes uncoveredness to refer not just to the manifestations elicited by assertion, but to manifestation *as such*. His claim is that the specific form of manifestation that is evidenced in assertion is dependent upon the structure of manifestation as such, and so, that this deserves to be called 'true' in a more primordial sense. There is thus a sense in which all comportments 'uncover' that subsumes the Being-uncovering of assertions.

Heidegger reaches the most primordial level of truth in Dasein's *disclosedness*. This is nothing other than the existential structure of Dasein as Being-in-the-world as we have already laid it out, namely, as: "[disposedness], understanding, and discourse... [pertaining] equiprimordially to the world, Being-in, and to the Self".[21] As we have already explained, Dasein is its 'there', and disclosedness names the way in which Dasein is revealed to itself *as* its 'there'.[22] However, this is equivalent to the projection or opening up of the world as such, as the horizon within which beings can be encountered. Disclosedness is the condition of the possibility of uncoveredness, because it provides the framework within which there can be anything like a comportment that uncovers an entity. It is on this basis that Heidegger takes disclosedness to be the most primordial form of truth. Furthermore, Heidegger claims that truth fundamentally *belongs* to Dasein. He explains this by way of a now infamous example:-

> *'There is' truth only in so far as Dasein is and so long as Dasein is.* Entities are uncovered only *when* Dasein *is*; and only so long as Dasein *is*, are they disclosed. Newton's laws, the principle of non-contradiction, any truth whatever – these are true only as long as Dasein *is*. Before there was any Dasein, there was no truth, nor will there be any after Dasein is no more. For in such a case truth as disclosedness, uncovering, and uncoveredness, *cannot* be. Before Newton's laws were discovered, they were not 'true'; it does not follow that they were false, or even that they would become false if ontically no discoveredness were any longer possible. Just as little does this restriction imply that the Being-true of 'truths' has in any way been diminished.[23]

Truth and falsity as ordinarily understood are statuses that assertions have in the context of

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[21]   Ibid.
[22]   Heidegger is a bit more clear about the terminology in *BPP*, where he uses the more general term 'unveiling' (*Enthüllen*) to indicate the understanding grasp of something, and treats uncovering and disclosing as species of this, corresponding to the unveiling of extant entities and Dasein, respectively (p. 215).
[23]   *B&T*, p. 269.

practices of collective interpretation that are not only carried out by Dasein, but are only possible on the basis of Dasein's existential constitution. If there is no Dasein, there can be no such interpretation, and thus, neither can there be truth or falsity.

We have now presented the essential elements of Heidegger's account of truth in *Being and Time*, but there are two final aspects of it to address: the account of how the traditional conception of truth emerges, and Heidegger's conception of 'untruth'. Taking the former first, Heidegger's account of the way truth comes to be interpreted as correspondence depends upon his account of assertions as equipment deployed in interpretation.[24] As already noted, we have a *practical* grasp of assertions as equipment to be used in interpretation, and of their status as appropriate for interpretation (i.e., truth). We also have a practical grasp of the thing the assertion points out, and the relation of pointing out, in virtue of our understanding of the expressive possibilities the thing presents us with. Heidegger's claim is that, when we try to understand truth in a *theoretical* fashion, we convert the assertion into something *occurrent*, and truth into a property this occurrent thing possesses. We then understand this property as consisting in a relation between two occurrent entities – the assertion and the thing pointed out. For Heidegger, this automatically confuses the issue, as the status of true assertions is something they have precisely in virtue of their *available* character.

Moving on to the latter issue, Heidegger's account of truth incorporates a notion of *untruth* that is not synonymous with falsity. It is important to examine how this stands in *Being and Time*, as the way it changes signals the more substantial shift in Heidegger's account we mentioned earlier. The important section is the following:-

> In its full existential-ontological meaning, the proposition that 'Dasein is in the truth' states equiprimordially that 'Dasein is in untruth'. But only in so far as Dasein has been disclosed has it also been closed off; and only in so far as entities within-the-world have been uncovered along with Dasein, have such entities, as possibly encounterable within-the-world, been covered up (hidden) or disguised.[25]

The fact that Dasein is in untruth thus does not indicate that Dasein is prone to any particular falsity, but rather something about its existential structure, namely, that it makes possible

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[24]   Ibid., p. 267.
[25]   Ibid., p. 265.

covering up just as much as *uncovering*. The issue is what this covering up consists in. Although Heidegger talks of Being-uncovering as something specific to assertion, he nonetheless takes it that uncovering *as such* is something that is common to all kinds of comportments, including non-assertoric forms of discourse and circumspective concern. However, in the introduction he claims that only assertoric discourse can cover up.[26] He also seems to indicate that such covering up is simply the opposite of the truth of assertions. This would tend to indicate that covering up was equivalent to false (or incorrect) assertion, which would mean that only those assertions which are discarded from the process of discursive interpretation cover up.

However, Heidegger provides a more expansive account of what it is for an entity to be covered up further on:-

> There are various ways in which a phenomena can be covered up. In the first place, a phenomenon can be covered up in the sense that it is still quite *undiscovered*. It is neither known nor unknown. Moreover, a phenomenon can be *buried over* [*verschuttet*]. This means that it has at some time been discovered but has deteriorated [verfiel] to the point of getting covered up again. This covering-up can become complete; or rather – and as a rule – what has been discovered earlier may still be visible, though only as a semblance... This covering-up as a 'disguising' is both the most frequent and the most dangerous, for here possibilities of deceiving and misleading are especially stubborn.[27]

It is important to note that what Heidegger is principally discussing here is not covering up, but rather *coveredness*. This distinction is analogous to that between uncovering and uncoveredness discussed earlier. The first form of coveredness here discussed is *undiscoveredness*. It makes sense to introduce Heidegger's interpretation of the Greek word for truth – *aletheia* – in relation to this. He reads *aletheia* as a privative construction (*a-letheia*), that thus translates as 'unhiddenness'.[28] On this basis he takes it that, for the Greeks, truth is the removal of something from its original hiddenness. The notion of

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[26] Ibid., p. 57.
[27] Ibid., p. 60.
[28] Ibid., 262. Heidegger's etymology of *aletheia* and the corresponding reading of the significance of the word for the Greeks have been definitively debunked (Friedlander, *Plato*, Vol. 1, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London (1958), ch. XI), but we need not accept their historical accuracy to understand their significance for his own account of truth.

undiscoveredness corresponds to this original hiddenness that our uncovering comportments (not limited to assertion) remove entities from. We can thus see how Heidegger lends support for his account of truth from his interpretation of the Greek notion.

What is important about undiscoveredness as *original* hiddenness is that it is not something brought about by Dasein. As such, there is nothing like an *act* of covering up involved here. However, the other two forms of coveredness discussed – *burriedness* and *disguisedness* – are engendered by Dasein. The salient point here is that covering up can only be performed upon something that was previously uncovered. Moreover, covering seems to come in degrees: burrying over is only a *partial* covering up, whereas disguising is *complete*. Indeed, disguising results in the conversion of an ordinary manifestation into a *semblance*, wherein the entity appears as something wholly other than it is. What exactly then does this covering up consists in? The key to this is provided by the specific existentiale which Heidegger claims makes covering up possible: Dasein's falling.[29]

When Heidegger claims that Dasein is in untruth, he does not simply mean that it is possible for Dasein to make false assertions, but something broader. As noted earlier, falling indicates Dasein's tendency to be absorbed within the public world of the One. The specific aspect of this that we have discussed is idle talk, wherein Dasein uses assertions that it takes over from Others without entirely understanding them. Now, we claimed earlier that Heidegger thinks that inauthenticity is for the most part unavoidable. This fact extends to the practice of assertion, meaning that most assertoric discourse is idle to some extent. This might initially seem like a bold claim, but it is lessened when we realise that assertoric discourse can be idle to different degrees, depending upon how well the assertions are grasped. There can be discussions in which someone only just overreaches their understanding of what they are talking about, just as there can be those in which someone is simply parroting what they have heard without any understanding of it whatsoever. In essence, what happens in idle talk is that we use assertions taken on from Others in interpretation, but we do not use them *properly*. Our lack of understanding prevents them from playing the role that they should to some degree. This means that the entities that were initially uncovered by these assertions are now *covered up* to some degree. We can thus see that in this case the degree to which an entity is covered up is the same as the degree to which assertions about it are used *improperly*. In essence, burrying over and disguising are ways in

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[29]   Ibid., p. 264.

which our understanding, and our ability to interpret it, are degraded or mutated by our tendency to take over one another's claims without genuinely engaging with them.

We can now identify the common thread characteristic of covering up in general. It is the fact that all assertoric discourse that covers up involves some level of *improper* usage of assertions. In the case of straightforwardly false assertions, their inappropriateness for use is contextually dependent upon the state of the current interpretation. Although there are ways such assertions could be used properly within different contexts, it is improper to use them *at all* within the current one.[30] In the case of burrying over, it is not that it is improper to use the relevant assertions within the context of the current interpretation *at all*, but rather that particular ways in which they are being used are improper, i.e., that they are being *misused* to some extent. This is what constitutes the fact that burrying over is a *partial* covering up. In disguising, assertions are used in a way that is *completely* inappropriate, but this can be either a matter of a total misunderstanding of the appropriate use of the assertion (the limit-case of burrying over) or a matter of deliberate misuse, which includes the use of straightforwardly false assertions in deception.

2. Tugendhat's Criticism of Heidegger on Truth

Now we have finished presenting Heidegger's account of truth in *Being and Time*, we can turn to Tugendhat's criticism of it. There are really two distinct objections that Tugendhat proposes. First, Tugendhat criticises Heidegger's account of the truth of assertions as Being-uncovering, by arguing that the way Heidegger alters Husserl's account of truth is problematic. Secondly, Tugendhat argues that Heidegger's transposition of the word 'truth' from the correctness of assertions to uncovering and disclosedness is fundamentally illegitimate.[31] In addressing the first criticism, we must make clear that Tugendhat's own presentation of Heidegger's account of Being-uncovering is not as nuanced as the one we have provided here. This is evident in the fact that he can't make any sense of Heidegger's

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[30] There are some obvious apparent counter examples to this, such as hypothetical reasoning, but it must be recognised that such counter examples involve something which modifies the context in relation to which the usage is inappropriate, so as to make it appropriate.

[31] In his paper 'Why Tugendhat's Critique of Heidegger's Concept of Truth Remains a Critical Problem', William H. Smith does a good job of summarising most of the attempts by Heidegger interpreters to address Tugendhat's critique. However, he fails to distinguish the two distinct objections I've outlined here, tending to focus on the latter one. This is problematic, because, as I will show, Heidegger's account of truth changes in a way that makes it immune to the first criticism, while remaining susceptible to the latter.

notion of covering up.[32] Nonetheless, the central thrust of this criticism is still successful. It consists in the claim that Heidegger makes an unwarranted move from the idea that the truth of an assertion consists in uncovering an entity *as it is in itself* to the idea that it consists in uncovering an entity *as such*. Heidegger does indeed make this move, almost unnoticeably: "To say that an assertion "is true" signifies that it uncovers the entity as it is in itself. Such an assertion asserts, points out, 'lets' the entity 'be seen' ([*apophansis*]) in its uncoveredness. The *Being-true* (*truth*) of the assertion must be understood as *Being-uncovering*."[33]

Tugendhat claims that this move is the essence of Heidegger's alteration of Husserl's account of truth. We can confirm this if we recall Heidegger's rejection of Husserl's conception of truth as consisting in a static identity relation between the objects of two intentional acts that itself constitutes the object of the founded act which identifies them. Heidegger's objection to this was that it makes truth into a state of affairs within the world. However, regardless of how problematic this is, it also makes the truth of the assertion independent of the act of identification itself. The act of identification is the only way in which the truth of an assertion can be given, but the identity, and thus the truth, is something other than its givenness. When, in opposition to this, Heidegger takes the truth of an assertion to consist in a dynamic role that it occupies within interpretation, he collapses the distinction between truth and its appearance. Put in a different way, what is true becomes equivalent to our current understanding. An assertion that is *currently* uncovering is true, rather than an assertion that uncovers the thing *as it is in itself*.

On this basis, Tugendhat claims that Heidegger can't properly distinguish between truth and falsity. If this were the case, then Heidegger could not claim to be providing an interpretation of truth as the correctness of assertions, as there could be no correctness without the corresponding possibility of incorrectness. Tugendhat reaches this conclusion in the following way. He takes it that Heidegger equivocates between two different senses of 'uncovering', namely, a sense in which all assertions uncover, and a sense in which only true assertions uncover.[34] This leads to a situation in which a false assertion is said both to uncover and cover up at the same time, implying that covering up is something that comes in degrees. Tugendhat then claims that this makes no sense. Ultimately, he holds that the only way that falsity could be described as covering up is if it were a matter of covering up the entity as it is

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[32] Tugendhat, 'Heidegger's Idea of Truth', pp. 254-255.
[33] *B&T*, p. 261.
[34] Tugendhat, 'Heidegger's Idea of Truth', pp. 253-255.

in itself.[35] Now, given the interpretation we have already provided, we can see that Tugendhat is wrong on this point. Although Heidegger is far from clear in his use of the word 'uncovering', his account can be reconstructed without equivocation.

We have already noted that there is a very general sense in which all comportments uncover, and a more restricted sense in which only assertions uncover. This restricted sense refers to the function of assertion as *pointing out*, or as letting an entity be seen. As we have also noted, it is only at the level of assertion that anything like covering up occurs. The difficulty emerges in making sense of Heidegger's claim that true assertions *do nothing more than* uncover (in the sense of pointing out) while false assertions (as well as idle, misleading and outright deceptive assertions) cover up *in addition to this*. We can make sense of this if we recognise that covering up is not really something additional but is in fact *privative*. We can understand this by making an analogy with other forms of equipment. If in the process of building a bookcase I require a hammer, but I select the a hammer that is inappropriate for the task at hand, I am not doing something *other* than hammering, I am simply doing it *wrong*. In this case, I am doing it wrong because the tool is inappropriate in the context of the particular activity I am engaged in, but it is equally possible for me to pick an appropriate hammer and use it improperly. In both cases, what I am doing is a *privative* form of the correct action. The same holds for assertion. Covering up is not something entirely *other* than uncovering, it is simply a matter of uncovering *incorrectly*. Heidegger thus has provided a distinction between truth and falsity, by making it a matter of correctness (and incorrectness) within a certain kind of interpretational activity.

Nonetheless, Tugendhat's first objection still has teeth. Although Heidegger can draw a line between truth and falsity, it is not a fixed line, but a dynamic one that shifts as our understanding develops. Truth is always indexed to our current understanding. This makes sense of the claim that there is no truth or falsity without Dasein, as they cannot be without understanding, and there is no understanding without Dasein's disclosedness. This is the real significance of his abandonment of uncovering the in itself in favour of uncovering as such. The problem is that when Heidegger modifies Husserl's account, making truth a dynamic status that assertions have in virtue of their place within interpretation, he collapses the distinction between the truth of an assertion and the fact that we treat it as true. This needs to be qualified slightly, because Heidegger holds that assertions can be true without being

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[35] Ibid., p. 255.

demonstrated. This means that there can be a distinction between the truth of an assertion and our *explicitly* treating it as true, but this is only because it is a species of treating an assertion as true, alongside *implicitly* treating it so. It is worth pointing out that it is perfectly legitimate to try and give an account of truth in terms of what it is for us to treat an assertion as true.[36] However, this is not what Heidegger does, rather, his account precludes us from making sense of the notion of *taking* something to be true (or false) at all.

It is perfectly possible for Heidegger to make a distinction between the appropriateness of something and our taking it to be appropriate. His whole account of significance as constituted by functional norms is dependent upon it. The difference consists in the fact that our actions are subject to assessment and correction in accordance with the impersonal authority of the One. It is thus entirely possible for Heidegger to make *some* form of distinction between us taking the way we use assertions to be appropriate and their actual appropriateness. This is manifest in the kind of covering up that takes place in idle talk, wherein it is entirely possible to think one is using assertions one has taken over from Others properly while nonetheless failing to. However, this can't be extended to the kind of covering up we find in straightforwardly false assertions. Whether a given assertion is appropriate (true) or inappropriate (false) in the context of a given interpretation is determined by norms about which we can be mistaken. There is thus a distinction between how any given person treats an assertion and how *one* treats the assertion. However, Heidegger cannot draw any distinction between how *one* treats an assertion and the assertion's *truth-value*.

This might seem innocuous, insofar as it seems that one should treat assertions in certain ways depending upon their truth and falsity. For instance, if nothing else, there is a good sense in which one shouldn't make or assent to false assertions.[37] The problem here is that Heidegger seems to gave gotten the order of explanation wrong. Instead of taking the falsity of an assertion as the *reason* why we shouldn't assert it, Heidegger takes its falsity to *consist* in the fact that we shouldn't assert it. He then gives us an independent account of why we shouldn't assert it and takes falsity to consist in this. However, this strategy precludes Heidegger from making sense of the notion of taking something to be true or false. This can be demonstrated by taking a further look at disconfirmation. If we take an assertion to be true (e.g., 'the car keys are in the bedroom'), but then disconfirm it in the process of

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[36] Cf. *Making It Explicit*, ch. 5.
[37] There is an excellent discussion of this norm of falsity in Daniel Whiting's paper 'Should I Believe the Truth?', in *dialectica* (2010) 61, pp. 213-224.

interpretation, then it would ordinarily make sense for us to say that we were incorrect in taking it to be true. However, we can't make sense of this on Heidegger's account, because it is perfectly possible that, at the time, we were correctly following the norms governing interpretation, i.e., that we were treating it as *one should* treat it. The assertion may be inappropriate for us in interpretation *now*, but it was entirely appropriate *then*. Heidegger has no way of making disconfirmed assertions *retroactively* inappropriate.[38] This means that whether or not we are correct in taking something to be true is not relative to our *current* understanding. But, given that truth *is* relative to our current understanding, this means that there is no correlation between correctly taking an assertion to be true and the truth of the assertion. This is patently absurd.[39] The only way around this would be to let all assertions have different truth-values at different times.[40] However, this is even more absurd. Heidegger's account of the truth of assertions thus fails, precisely because of the illegitimate move Tugendhat identifies.

This leaves us with Tugendhat's second objection. There is an obvious sense in which this follows from the first objection. If Heidegger's account of the truth of assertions as Being-uncovering is inadequate, then his argument that disclosedness is the condition of the possibility of Being-uncovering does not justify the claim that it is a condition of the possibility of such truth. However, the objection really runs deeper than this. It amounts to a criticism of the very idea that the condition of possibility of truth can be named 'truth' in a more primordial sense. Even if Heidegger can develop an independent argument for disclosedness as the condition of the possibility of truth, this deeper objection would still be a problem. However, although the deeper objection is legitimate, it has nothing more than a

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[38] There is one way that Heidegger could potentially respond to this, by drawing a distinction between the ways in which a piece of equipment can be revealed as inappropriate in a given context. In the first case, a piece of equipment can become inappropriate when the context of the activity changes, such as the pan I intended to use becoming too small when two additional guests arrive at my dinner party. In the second case, a piece of equipment can be revealed to have always been inappropriate, in virtue of some aspect of the context that I had not initially grasped. This would be the case if I invited a friend and their family, thinking they had two fewer family members than they in fact did. Heidegger would seem to be able to respond to the objection if disconfirmation were the latter kind of case. However, an activity of interpretation can't work in this way, because interpretation acts upon our *current* understanding. This understanding thus forms the context of interpretation. A change in our understanding is therefore a change in context.

[39] It is important to point out that being correct in taking an assertion to be true is not a matter of being *justified*. One can take oneself or others to be justified in holding an assertion true without thereby actually committing oneself to its truth.

[40] It is not absurd to think that some kind of relativity might hold for some types of assertion, such as epistemic modal claims (cf., John MacFarlane, 'Epistemic Modals Are Assessment-Sensitive', in *Epistemic Modality*, ed. Brian Weatherson and Andy Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming)), but it is absurd to think it holds for all claims.

terminological impact on Heidegger's philosophy. The question regarding the conditions of the possibility of truth is independent of what we are permitted to name them. Indeed, towards the end of his work Heidegger seems to accept the objection, and dissociates what he calls *aletheia*, disclosedness, or clearing, from truth as it is ordinarily understood.[41] As such, we needn't worry about the second objection in spelling out Heidegger's conception of these conditions.[42] We will nevertheless continue to refer to Heidegger's primordial sense of 'truth' for the sake of convenience.

3. Truth After *Being and Time*

Having set the scene by considering Tugendhat's objections to Heidegger's account in section 44, we can now elaborate the two distinct ways in which Heidegger's conception of truth shifts after *Being and Time.* The first shift occurs in *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, and has the effect of undercutting Tugendhat's first objection, even in the strengthened form we presented above. The second shift occurs in 'On the Essence of Truth', and it heralds a change in Heidegger's approach to the question of Being as such. Although this second change occurs in 'On the Essence of Truth', its significance is not always appreciated. To make this clearer we will also consider the way that the same insight is presented in 'On the Origin of the Work of Art', which develops a more accessible way of presenting the idea.

i) Bindingness, Openness, and Freedom

The first change in Heidegger's conception of truth after *Being and Time* is precipitated by his recognition that he had previously placed too much emphasis on the analysis of the true positive assertion, treating false and negative assertions as derivative.[43] Whereas his previous strategy was to give an account of what the truth of assertions consists in (Being-uncovering), and then to demonstrate the conditions of its possibility (uncoveredness and disclosedness), his new strategy is to give an account of the conditions of the possibility of assertions being *either* true of false, or what we will call *truth-aptness*. Ultimately, he reaches the same conclusion as he did in section 44: disclosedness (understood as *freedom*) is the condition of

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[41] 'The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking', pp. 446-448.
[42] I am thus in disagreement with Smith's assessment of the importance of this objection (cf. fn. 32).
[43] *FCM*, pp. 336-337. It should be noted that Heidegger addresses the topic of truth in the course of giving an account of the *logos*, rather than by addressing it directly, as he did in section 44 of *Being and Time*.

the possibility of truth. However, the argument that produces this conclusion is different, and this is principally because his account of the truth of assertions has changed. He retains the idea that assertions are characterised by pointing out, but the truth and falsity of assertions is now understood as their possibility of pointing *toward* and pointing *away from* entities, and thus as *revealing* or *concealing* them, respectively.[44] This does mean that the falsity of an assertion (concealing or covering up) can still be understood as a matter of pointing out *incorrectly*. However, the salient point is that this correctness is no longer determined by the dynamic role it occupies in interpretation, but by the entity which is pointed out. This is indicated by the fact that Heidegger takes us to be *bound* by an entity in making assertions about it.[45] This binding character of the entity reintroduces the idea that revealing the entity is a matter of revealing it *as it is in itself*, and in doing so it voids Tugendhat's first objection.

The binding character of entities is a kind of *authority* that those entities exercise over whether the assertions we make about them are correct (or true). However, this binding character is something that is *conferred* on entities by Dasein. We bind ourselves to entities in making assertions about them – we undertake a *responsibility* to speak of them as they are. Whether we have fulfilled this responsibility is something that can be assessed, and the entity itself provides the standard for such assessment. The truth-aptness of assertions is thus dependent upon our ability to bind ourselves to entities in this way. Heidegger's strategy is thus to locate the condition of the possibility of truth in the condition of the possibility of this binding. Heidegger employs this strategy in both *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* and in 'On the Essence of Truth'. He provides essentially the same argument in each, although it is presented slightly differently. For the sake of convenience, we will present a reconstructed form of the argument found in both, and will only point out differences between the two if they are relevant to the way that the latter expands upon the argument.

The argument begins by noting that the possibility of being bound by an entity in making assertions about it is itself dependent upon the possibility of being able to assess the *conformity* of the assertion to the entity, i.e., of being able to *compare* them in a way which reveals either *accord* or *discord* between them.[46] Without the possibility of assessment, there can be no corresponding responsibility. This is because without it there is no meaningful sense in which the responsibility has a *determinate* content, insofar as this involves drawing a

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[44] Ibid., pp. 309-312.
[45] Ibid., p 339.
[46] *FCM*, p. 339; *OET*, pp. 120-122.

distinct boundary between successful and unsuccessful attempts to fulfil it. The second main point is that the possibility of assessment is conditional upon being able to encounter the entity in question, or that entity's being manifest. It is then only a small step from this to the claim that truth-aptness is dependent upon the manifestness of entities as such – what Heidegger previously called *uncoveredness*, but here names *openness* (*Offenheit*). We can thus see this argument beginning to converge with the approach Heidegger took in section 44. However, Heidegger does not take the straightforward route of grounding openness in Dasein's disclosedness that he did there.

Instead, he argues that this openness must essentially grant Dasein a certain amount of *leeway* (*Spielraum*) in its relation to entities, in order for the kind of comparison that assessment presupposes to take place.[47] He also phrases this as the claim that Dasein must be free *for* entities in order that it can bind itself to them.[48] Both texts see this being free for as the basic structure of Dasein's *freedom*, but they describe it in different ways. It can be quite difficult to understand what Heidegger means by this, but, in this case, the different ways that the two texts describe this being free for entities are complementary. We will address the description provided in 'On the Essence of Truth' first, as it is somewhat more in depth than that of the other work. Here, Heidegger identifies *being free for* with *letting beings be*, but this notion of 'letting-be' (*Gelassenheit*) is to be understood in a very specific way:-

> Freedom for what is opened up in an open region lets beings be the beings they are. Freedom now reveals itself as letting beings be... However, the phrase required now – to let beings be – does not refer to neglect or indifference but rather the opposite. To let be is to engage oneself with beings.[49]

The leeway we must have in order to perform the comparison of our comportment with the entity, which is thus a condition of being bound by the entity, does not consist in anything like an indifference toward it. It rather requires that we engage the entity in some way. However, the form of this engagement must also be understood in a specific way:-

> To engage oneself with the disclosedness of beings is not to lose oneself in them; rather, such engagement withdraws in the face of beings in order that they might

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[47] *FCM*, p. 339.
[48] Ibid. ; *OET*, p. 123.
[49] *OET*, p. 125.

reveal themselves with respect to what and how they are, and in order that presentative correspondence might take its standard from them.[50]

Letting-be thus involves a balance between *engagement* with entities and *withdrawal* from them, a balance which makes possible the manifestation of entities *as* they are. However, precisely what this balance is and why it is required is hard to discern from within the text. This is where the account provided in *Fundamental Concepts* provides a useful supplement:-

> Being open for... is from the very outset a *free holding oneself toward* whatever beings are given there *in letting oneself be bound*. The possibility, which can become binding, of tuning in to beings, this relating to them in comporting oneself in such and such a way, *is characteristic in general of every ability and comportment as distinct from capacity and behaviour*. In the latter we never find any letting oneself be bound by something binding, but merely a sphere of instinctual drives becoming disinhibited while remaining captivated.[51]

What becomes clear when we read the two texts together is that the notion of *freedom*, as the condition of the possibility of truth-aptness, is being opposed to the mode of Being of *animals* that he lays out in *Fundamental Concepts*.[52] On this account, animals do encounter entities, but they are *captivated* by them in such a way that they simply respond to them. In this sense, animals are thoroughly *lost* in entities in the way that Heidegger claims the engagement which constitutes letting-be must avoid. Animals have no freedom in the sense that entities do not confront them with *choices* between possible actions, but simply activate their drives, triggering instinctual responses. The salient point here is that although animals do encounter entities, they do not encounter entities *as* entities. A lizard sitting on a rock encounters the rock, but does not encounter it *as* a rock.[53] For Heidegger, animals do not exhibit the *as-structure* that characterises Dasein's encounters with beings.[54] Moreover, this is precisely because animals are not confronted with choices between possible actions.

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[50] Ibid.
[51] *FCM*, p. 342, emphasis added.
[52] Ibid., ch. 3-5. It must be noted that we are not endorsing Heidegger's account of animals. He famously abandons it after *Fundamental Concepts*, at least insofar as he never again tries to delineate the mode of Being of animals in distinction from that of Dasein. Nonetheless, it provides a real insight into the precise positive features of Dasein's Being that Heidegger takes to make truth-aptness possible.
[53] Ibid., pp. 196-198.
[54] For a full explanation of the as-structure and worldhood, see chapter 2.

As we explained in the previous chapter, the *pure significance* in terms of which Dasein encounters any entity as the *type* of entity it is is constituted by Dasein's grasp of the *general* possible relations that such entities could enter into with other types of entities in the context of different types of activities. These general possibilities are *mediated* by Dasein's grasp of its environment and its purposive orientation, resulting in a certain set of *particular* possible actions that it is immediately presented with. Dasein's understanding of the possibilities for action it is immediately presented with in any situation is thus based upon an *implicit* grasp of the entities within that situation *as* the type of entities they are. In addition, the specific ways these particular entities are manifest (e.g., as too heavy, as the right colour, etc.) are dependent upon this grasp of them as a given kind of entity – the revelation of *how* an entity is is dependent upon the revelation of *what* the entity is. The fact that animals lack anything like pure significance, which is to say a pre-given set of normatively structured ways of dealing things that present them with a variety of particular possibilities for action in any given situation, means that entities cannot "reveal themselves with respect to what and how they are" to them. Heidegger calls this the animal's *poverty in world*, insofar as worldhood *is* significance.[55]

On this basis, we can begin to see what the balance between engagement and withdrawal consists in. Dasein must be engaged with entities insofar as it is only through its practical *concern* for them that they can appear *as* entities at all, but this engagement must at least be detached enough that entities can display the variety of possibilities in which our understanding of them as *what* and *how* they are consists. We can thus see that *openness* – the manifestness of entities as such – is dependent upon *freedom* as so construed. However, there is more to the idea of leeway than this. In order for entities to show up *as* entities, Dasein must not be lost in entities in the way that animals are, but this is only a *necessary* and not yet *sufficient* condition of the possibility of truth-aptness. As the whole discussion of falling in *Being and Time* shows, there are plenty of ways for Dasein to lose itself in entities that do not thereby amount to animality. It is entirely possible for Dasein to become *absorbed* in its practical dealings with things to such an extent that, although it is not thereby *captivated* by them, it is in no position to take them as an authoritative standard by which its or others' statements are bound. Comparison is itself a possible way of comporting to an entity, and it requires us to *let the entity be* what it is in respects which exceed its immediate involvement

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[55]   *FCM*, Part II, ch. 4.

in our practical dealings. Even though our grasp of entities is always grounded in a practical *engagement* with them, it must exceed any particular engagement; we must be able to *withdraw* from engagement enough to let various aspects of an entity manifest themselves to us. We will consider this in greater detail further on.

We have thus located two distinct senses in which freedom is a condition of the possibility of truth-aptness, corresponding to two different ways in which freedom is to be understood. On the one hand, freedom names the fact that Dasein encounters beings in terms of the way they provide it possibilities for action. In this sense, freedom is a necessary condition of openness, or of the manifestness of entities as such. On the other hand, freedom names the possibility of withdrawing from our immediate dealings with entities so as to let them manifest in different ways. In this sense, freedom underlies a particular kind of openness that is necessary for comparison, and thus for truth-aptness. However, there is a third sense in which freedom is a condition of the possibility of truth-aptness. This is hinted at, albeit briefly, in *Fundamental Concepts*:-

> The provision of, and subjection to, something binding is in turn only possible where there is *freedom*. Only where there is this possibility of transferring our being bound from one thing to another are we given the leeway to decide concerning the conformity or non-conformity of our comportment toward whatever is binding.

This third sense of freedom is better outlined in the earlier essay 'On the Essence of Ground':-

> Yet whatever, in accordance with its essence, casts something like the "for the sake of" projectively before it, rather than simply producing it as an occasional and additional accomplishment, is that which we call *freedom*. Surpassing in the direction of world is freedom itself... In this transcending that holds the "for the sake of" toward itself there occurs the Dasein in human beings, such that in the essence of their existence they can be obligated to themselves, i.e., be free selves. In this, however, freedom simultaneously unveils itself as making possible something binding, indeed obligation in general.

Here Heidegger identifies freedom with the projection of world, but singles out an essential structure which underlies this, namely, Dasein's understanding of itself as the ultimate end of all of its actions. He claims that the projection of world is genuinely called freedom insofar as it makes it possible for one to be obligated to oneself. Dasein is only a 'free self' insofar as it can be obligated to itself.[56] Moreover, he argues that this self-obligation is the condition of the possibility of all other forms of obligation, or *binding*. The implication here is that we are only bound by anything insofar as we bind ourselves to it, and the ground of this is the possibility of self-obligation.[57] As such, freedom in this sense is a condition of the possibility of binding ourselves to an entity in making assertions about it, and thus of the truth-aptness of those claims.

Finally, we must recognise that these three different senses of freedom are not really distinct, but are all aspects of the same structure. In essence, freedom is just another word for Dasein's mode of Being and the various existential structures which make it up. In other words, as we hinted at earlier, freedom *is* disclosedness. This is made very explicit in 'On the Essence of Truth':-

> Freedom is not merely what common sense is content to let pass under this name: the caprice, turning up occasionally in our choosing, of inclining in this or that direction. Freedom is not mere absence of constraint with respect to what we can or cannot do. Nor is it on the other hand mere readiness for what is required and necessary (and somehow a being). Prior to all this ("negative" and "positive" freedom), freedom is engagement in the disclosure of beings as such. Disclosedness itself is conserved in ek-sistent engagement, through which the openness of the open region, i.e., the "there" [*"Da"*] is what it is.[58]

We can now see the extent to which this argument recapitulates the basic result of the argument of section 44. It is thus somewhat understandable that the two arguments are not usually differentiated by commentators.[59]

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[56] This connects up with Heidegger's analysis of the Kantian conception of subjects as ends in themselves in *BPP* (Part I, ch. 3), but a full analysis of this connection would distract us from the relevant point here.

[57] As such, it appears that Heidegger endorses something like the Kantian conception of autonomy, but he does not really expand upon it enough to make a detailed analysis of how he differs from Kant and others worthwhile. However, we will discuss the notion of autonomy further in chapter 4.

[58] *OET*, p. 126.

[59] Cf. John Sallis, *Double Truth*; Mark Wrathall, 'Heidegger on Truth as Correspondence'; Ernst Tugendhat, 'Heidegger's Idea of Truth' (as explained in section 2 above). This list is by no means exhaustive, but is fairly representative on this point.

However, we have to be careful not to ignore differences in Heidegger's account of the specific structure of freedom, disclosedness or existence between the various texts under consideration. As has explained in the last chapter, in *Fundamental Concepts* Heidegger exchanges his analysis of Dasein's mode of Being in terms of the temporalisation of time for an analysis of Dasein (or man) as essentially *world-forming*. Although this is not really a rejection of his earlier temporal analysis, it does contain some ideas that are in the very least novel in relation to *Being and Time*. He takes world-forming to be a unitary phenomenon which is nonetheless composed of three moments: "[1.] holding the binding character of things toward us; [2.] completion; [3.] unveiling the [B]eing of beings."[60] The first of these is what he was discussing under the heading of 'being free for' earlier. The second is "the *prior forming of the 'as a whole' already prevailing*".[61] As we described in the last chapter, the world is the totality of beings, or beings *as a whole*, but it is not for that matter a definite set of entities. Rather, it is the 'how' of beings as a whole as projected *in advance* of any of our encounters with beings – a *horizon* within which all beings are encountered. Completion is the aspect of world-forming which constitutes this horizon. The third moment is the pre-ontological understanding of Being which underlies any encounter with a being *as* a being. The unitary phenomenon of which these are aspects is the same projection of world described in *Being and Time* and *Basic Problems*, but the three moments do not map easily onto the various existentialia described therein.

Now, in and of itself this is not especially problematic. We don't need to map the account of Dasein's mode of Being given in *Fundamental Concepts* onto that given in *Being and Time* exactly. Nonetheless, it is important to understand the threefold structure of world-forming provided in the former. The reason for this is that, although, as we have seen, the arguments given in *Fundamental Concepts* and 'On the Essence of Truth' are commensurate up to a point, the latter extends the argument further, and this involves modifying the picture of freedom given in the former slightly.

ii) Concealing, Mystery, and Earth

We can now turn to the second change in Heidegger's conception of truth after *Being and Time*, which occurs in 'On the Essence of Truth', and which arises from the essay's extension

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[60] *FCM*, p. 348.
[61] Ibid.

of the argument developed in *Fundamental Concepts*. As just noted, this rests on a slight modification of the notion of freedom deployed in the latter. As such, we will begin our exposition by explaining this modification. In essence, it consists in conceiving letting beings be as a form of *mood* or *attunement* (*Stimmung*), albeit in a very special sense: "As engagement in the disclosure of being as a whole as such, freedom has already attuned all comportment to being as a whole... Letting beings be, which is an attuning, a bringing into accord, prevails throughout and anticipates all the open comportment that flourishes in it".[62] This may initially seem fairly problematic, given the account of mood given in *Being and Time*, because this only allows us to be in one mood at any given time. Given that letting beings be is supposed to be some kind of structural element of Dasein's Being, this would preclude us from being in any other moods. However, as was hinted in Chapter 2[63], Heidegger's account of mood changes after *Being and Time*, so that we exhibit different *levels* of mood. This means that two people can share a wider mood that is characteristic of their cultural epoch (e.g., the wonder of the Greeks, the progressive attitude of the enlightenment, postmodern malaise, etc.), while nonetheless having higher level moods which modify this in different ways (e.g., excitement, depression, listlessness, etc.). Nonetheless, taken together these moods disclose the individual's world *as a whole*, in precisely the way that the unitary mood of *Being and Time* does.

The important point to recognise then is that letting beings be is not one mood among others, but is a kind of *structural* mood common to all Dasein. It lies at the basis of mood as such, much as disposedness did in *Being and Time*. This is not to be confused with the so called fundamental moods (*Grundstimmungen*), such as anxiety and boredom, that Heidegger deals with in various places.[64] These fundamental moods are essential possibilities of Dasein, grounded in its existential structure, but they are not for that matter always in effect. We may be able to enter into anxiety or boredom simply in virtue of our existential structure, but doing so is an extreme and occasional event, one that many individuals will never experience. In distinction, letting beings be is both common to all Dasein in virtue of their existential structure and always in effect, as that mood on top of which others added. This is an important change from *Fundamental Concepts* insofar as it collapses the distinction between

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[62] *OET*, p. 128. Although being free for is at times described as a matter of "tuning in" to beings in *FCM* (p. 342) it isn't elaborated upon in connection to attunement in the way it is in 'On the Essence of Truth'. The difference between them on this point should perhaps be seen as less of a change of opinion than the explicit development of a pre-existing theme.

[63] See Chapter 2, fn. 25.

[64] Cf. *B&T*, § 40 ; *FCM*, Part I.

the first and second moments of world-forming. By providing the basic structure of mood letting-be thereby provides the basic structure through which the world is disclosed 'as a whole' in advance. This means that *being free for* and *completion* are not properly distinct. This is not a drastic change from *Fundamental Concepts*, but it is essential to the argument that Heidegger proceeds to give.

Before we can give this argument, we need to explain one further aspect of letting beings be. This is introduced best by quoting the relevant passage:-

> However, because truth is in essence freedom, historical man can, in letting beings be, also *not* let beings be the beings which they are and as they are. Then beings are covered up and distorted. Semblance comes to power. In it the nonessence of truth comes to the fore. However, because ek-sistent freedom as the essence of truth is not a property of man; because on the contrary man ek-sists and so becomes capable of history only as the property of this freedom; the nonessence of truth cannot first arise subsequently from mere human incapacity and negligence. Rather, untruth must derive from the essence of truth. Only because truth and untruth are, *in essence, not* irrelevant to one another, but rather belong together, is it possible for a true proposition to enter into pointed opposition to the corresponding untrue proposition.[65]

The crucial point here is that it is possible to *not* let beings be. This might seem to undermine our interpretation of letting beings be as a structural mood. However, it is important to note that one does not let beings be to some extent *in* letting them be. What this indicates is that not letting beings be is actually a *modification* of letting them be, rather than something opposed to it. Nonetheless, it is an important fact that this structural mood can be so modified. Luckily, we need not look far to understand how this modification functions. This is because it is explicitly related to *covering-up*.

As already explained, in *Being and Time*, covering-up has its existential ground in falling, and falling is the existential structure underlying Dasein's *absorption* in the world. This connects to our discussion of the second sense of freedom in the last section, wherein freedom consisted in the possibility of withdrawing from beings *in contrast* to being absorbed in them. There it was established that we must be able to withdraw from entities in order to

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[65] *OET*, pp. 127-128.

enable them to manifest in such a way that a genuine comparison becomes possible. However, we did not elaborate on this contrast between withdrawal and absorption. This contrast becomes much clearer when we relate it to the account of covering-up provided in *Being and Time*.

As explained earlier, covering-up is not primarily a matter of making false assertions, but involves burrying over and disguising, which are activities through which Dasein 'distorts' the manifestation of beings and thus brings 'semblance' to power. Absorption makes this possible, because it involves becoming lost not only in our practical dealings with entities, but also in the public world of the One, insofar as the One articulates the significance of these dealings. This underlies our tendency to take over and deploy assertions made by Others, insofar as we tend to say 'what one says'. This tendency then makes possible systematic *misuse* of assertions, which is broader than incorrectness in the sense of falsity, and this misuse is the basis of covering-up. Now, we cannot retain the account of covering-up as the misuse of assertions *exactly* as it is given above, because the account of the truth of assertions that it was based on has changed, but its essential features can be transferred to the new account of truth.[66] The salient point is that our tendency to take over Others' assertions *as true* is dependent on the possibility of *substituting* the authority of the entities to which we are *bound* in talking about them for the authority of Others under the guise of the One. It is in encouraging this substitution that absorption facilitates covering-up.

This gives us a deeper insight into the nature of the withdrawal. Just as we must be able to *refrain* from immediately dealing with entities *as one deals with them*, we must also refrain from simply talking about entities *as one talks about them*. Talking about entities is just another kind of dealing with them, and we must be able to hold back from the kind of immediate *absorbed* talk about them that we are accustomed to. In essence, in order to confer upon entities authority over how we talk about them, and thereby bind ourselves to them, *we must withdraw our own authority, and by extension the impersonal communal authority of the One, over how it is correct to talk about them.* However, it is important to note that this

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[66] We will not attempt to give an updated account of covering-up, principally because it is not necessary for the task at hand. However, it is also the case that Heidegger does not examine covering-up in any serious detail here or elsewhere in his work. The account of covering-up presented in our interpretation of *Being and Time* is very much a reconstruction on the basis of the role it would have to play within his account of Dasein and the scant remarks he makes about it. There is even less in the later work on which we could base such a reconstruction. As such, giving a definitive account of how Heidegger's conception of covering-up changes would be very difficult. In truth, it is likely that Heidegger did not have a fully worked out conception, but simply appealed to that which he had roughly worked out in *Being and Time*.

withdrawal of authority is never absolute. We are always in a position of having to defer to the authority of Others in some way, and we will always require shared norms governing the use of words, without which discourse would be impossible. As we noted in the last section, most of our talk is *idle* to some extent, and necessarily so. Authenticity can only ever emerge out of inauthenticity, as we cannot comport ourselves to anything without the pre-given significance articulated by the One. Put another way, withdrawal is always based upon engagement, and engagement is always structured by the One.

We can thus delineate two interrelated senses of withdrawal. First, as initially suggested earlier, there is a withdrawal from beings as immediately involved in our practical dealings with them. This allows for the possibility of beings manifesting in a variety of aspects which exceed our immediate concerns with them. This corresponds roughly to the decontextualising power of assertion discussed earlier, which enables us to develop a grasp of entities in various degrees of isolation from the practical contexts in which they are found. Secondly, there is the withdrawal of authority discussed above. This allows the variety of aspects the entity manifests not just to exceed our immediate concerns, but also to go against the ways of talking about it provided by the One. Taken together these constitute a variety of possible combinations of withdrawal from and engagement with beings. These are the various ways that the basic structural mood of letting beings be can be modified.[67]

We can thus see that *not* letting beings be is neither a state opposed to letting beings be, nor is it something that we do absolutely, but is in fact something that we can do to different extents with regard to different beings. For example, a research scientist might be very careful to allow the particular kind of entities (e.g., family units, fungus, electrons, etc.) they are studying to manifest themselves as they are, so that his and others' conjectures about them may genuinely be confirmed or disconfirmed by the object. In doing so he can be very careful not to take over unconfirmed assumptions about the entities, and to allow the entities to manifest themselves beyond the limited contexts of our usual engagements with them. Nonetheless, it is entirely possible that the rest of his life is given over to pure idle talk about entities, and other forms of absorption wherein he does not let them be for the most part. Moreover, even his careful attention to the entities in question would still depend upon

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[67] We might also conjecture that this modification is not something distinct from the way other moods which are layered on top of letting-be modify it. The extent to which we let various different entities be would then be determined by the various overlapping moods that we are in at a given time, even though this would not be the only effect those moods have. If this reading is correct then *letting beings be* is what replaces the notion of *disposedness* in *Being and Time*, as the *existential* structure which is modified by the various *existentiell* moods.

certain pre-given experimental practices and theoretical assumptions to which he has a more or less critical attitude.[68]

As such, Heidegger has recapitulated the account of untruth he gave *Being and Time*, once again showing how it is grounded in the same basic structure which makes truth possible, namely, freedom. However, it is at this point that he begins to extend the argument of *Fundamental Concepts*, by further developing the notion of untruth found in *Being and Time*. The basis of this is as follows:-

> The question concerning the essence of truth thus first reaches the original domain of what is at issue when, on the basis of a prior glimpse of the full essence of truth, it has included a consideration of untruth in its unveiling of that essence. Discussion of the nonessence of truth is not the subsequent filling of a gap but rather the decisive step toward an adequate posing of the *question* concerning the essence of truth.[69]

The whole account of the essence of truth as freedom provided up until this point (and originally expounded in *Fundamental Concepts*) is only a preliminary *glimpse* of the real essence of truth. This preliminary account is necessary so that we can get a proper grip on untruth, or the *nonessence* of truth. This nonessence must then be grounded in the proper essence of truth, just as untruth was grounded in disclosedness in *Being and Time*. The difference is that this move will not simply return us to freedom (or disclosedness) as it did there, but will take us deeper to the genuine essence of truth.

The first move of this extended argument is thus to locate some deeper form of untruth, distinct from the kind of covering-up described in *Being and Time*. Heidegger does this by leveraging his account of letting beings be as the basic structure underlying the disclosure of the world as a whole. To quote the relevant sections at some length:-

> Letting beings be, which is an attuning, a bringing into accord, prevails throughout and anticipates all the open comportment that flourishes in it. Man's

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[68] We can see a certain affinity here between Heidegger and philosopher's of science who put forward a two-levelled account of science, in which the ordinary experimental work done by scientists, and the claims it produces, are dependent upon a theoretical (and practical) framework which makes it possible. Cf. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, and the work of Imre Lakatos, Paul Feyerabend, and Larry Laudan, among others.

[69] *OET*, p. 128.

comportment is brought into definite accord throughout by the openedness of being as a whole. However, from the point of view of everyday calculations and preoccupations this "as a whole" appears to be incalculable and incomprehensible. It cannot be understood on the basis of the beings opened up in any given case, whether they belong to nature or to history.[70]

The disclosure of beings *as a whole* is the projection of world as a *horizon* within which absolutely any particular entities we encounter can be situated. This horizon organises all of our possible encounters with entities in advance. Nonetheless, the 'as a whole' itself cannot be comprehended either as a definite set of entities, or in terms of any of the entities we encounter within it at all. Continuing the quote:-

> However, what brings into accord is not nothing, but rather a concealing of beings as a whole. Precisely because letting be always lets beings be in a particular comportment that relates to them and thus discloses them, it conceals beings as a whole. Letting-be is intrinsically at the same time a concealing. In the ek-sistent freedom of Da-sein a concealing of being as a whole propriates [*ereignet sich*] Here there *is* concealment.[71]

Dasein encounters entities in terms of its possibilities for engaging with them. It immediately encounters particular possibilities thrown up by particular entities that it encounters, but this is possible because those entities appear within a horizon which organises their general possibilities in advance (along with structures which mediate between general and particular). As we discussed in the last chapter, understanding has the structure of projection, and projection is always the projection of possibilities. The projection of world is the totality of all such projection, and it is as such the projection of the *totality of possibilities*. It is to some extent indifferent to what *actual* entities will be encountered, but it organises *all* of the possible actual situations that we could find ourselves in in advance.[72] Nonetheless, despite its *totality*, there is an important sense in which the world is *not* exhaustive. Letting-be *conceals*

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[70] Ibid., p. 129.
[71] Ibid., pp. 129-130.
[72] The best statement of this is found in *MFL* (p. 192), where Heidegger says that "World, as the totality of the essential intrinsic possibilities of Dasein as transcending, surpasses all actual beings. Whenever and however they are encountered, actual beings always reveal themselves... only as a restriction, as one possible realization of the possible, as the insufficient out of an excess of possibilities, within which Dasein always maintains itself as free projection."

beings as a whole as well as *disclosing* them insofar as there is a tension between the *completeness* of its disclosure and its *non-exhaustiveness*.

To understand this, we must remember that the understanding which constitutes the world is entirely revisable, and that to some extent this revision takes place on the basis of the encounters with particular entities that it makes possible. It is obvious that it does not provide us with a prior understanding of all kinds of entities with regard to every aspect they could manifest. There is thus a good sense in which the world does not constitute the totality of what is *really* possible. Nevertheless, the world presents itself as *complete* in virtue of its horizonal structure, which is to say in virtue of the prior disclosure of the 'as a whole' which underlies it. This means that the world is projected as the space of all that is possible, the complete structure in terms of which all particular entities are made manifest, despite the fact that it is in fact *deficient*, and thereby always revisable. It is important to understand that this deficiency does not amount to a simple difference between *what we take to be true*, and *what is really true*. It is rather an *essential deficit* present in the structure which makes possible anything like propositional truth (i.e., freedom/disclosedness). The process through which the world is revised and expanded is also the process through which we become able to make and assess the truth of claims about new entities and new aspects of entities. It is through this process that new forms of explicit theoretical understanding are made possible, and old forms are adapted and developed.

Moving on, we have to be very careful to interpret this part of the text correctly. This is because it might initially seem that concealing, like covering-up, is something performed exclusively by Dasein. That this is not the case is the real innovation of the essay:-

> Concealment deprives *aletheia* of disclosure yet does not render it *steresis* (privation); rather, concealment preserves what is most proper to *aletheia* as its own. Considered with respect to truth as disclosedness, concealment is then undisclosedness and accordingly the untruth that is most proper to the essence of truth. The concealment of beings as a whole does not first show up subsequently as a consequence of the fact that knowledge of beings is always fragmentary. The concealment of beings as a whole, untruth proper, is older than every openedness of this or that being. It is also older than letting-be itself, which in disclosing already holds concealed and comports itself toward concealing.[73]

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[73] Ibid., p. 130.

When Heidegger says that here there *is* concealment, he is not talking about a concealment that is produced by letting-be. Rather, concealment corresponds to what was called *undiscoveredness* in *Being and Time*, but is here termed *undisclosedness*. It is that original hiddenness out of which entities are brought by disclosedness, or Dasein's projection of world. It is thus 'older' than letting-be, and prior to Dasein itself. In *Being and Time* Heidegger mentioned this kind of concealment as a form of *coveredness*, but did not thematise it, instead focusing upon those forms of coveredness that were engendered by Dasein's covering-up. The innovation of the present essay is to extend his account of untruth by properly thematising concealment.

Just as there were several different senses of 'uncovering' in section 44 that had to be disentangled, we find a plurality of different senses of 'concealing' in play in this text. First, there is the sense in which letting-be is concealing. This is revealed to be a matter of *holding* concealed, or of comporting towards a more originary form of concealing. This second, more original sense corresponds to 'concealment' as outlined above. It is not to be construed negatively, as a *deficit* in Dasein, but positively, as an *excess* of beings over our ability to disclose them. Heidegger takes the first sense of 'concealing', wherein Dasein's projection of world effaces what is in excess of it, to depend upon the second sense, which names this excess. However, there is a third sense of 'concealing' that follows from the second:-

> What conserves letting-be in this relatedness to concealing? Nothing less than the concealing of what is concealed as a whole, of beings as such, i.e., the mystery; not a particular mystery – that, in general, mystery (the concealing of what is concealed) as such holds sway throughout man's Da-sein.[74]

There are various entities which are in excess of our disclosedness, either completely or in some particular respect, and these are things that are *concealed*, or *mysteries*. However, the world is subject to revision, and through this it is possible for us to bring what is concealed into unconcealment, at least to some extent. The third sense of concealing, which underlies or *conserves* letting-be in its relation to concealment, is the concealing of what is concealed *as a whole*. It is not a matter of any particular entity or group of entities being in excess of our projection of world, but of a constitutive excess of the whole of beings *as such* over our projection of world. It is thus not any particular mystery, but the basis of mystery *as such*.

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[74] Ibid.

Heidegger calls this third form of concealing *the mystery,* which thereby names the *constitutive excess* of beings as a whole over our projection of world.

Heidegger has thus found a much deeper sense of untruth – the mystery – which he calls "the proper nonessence of truth".[75] However, the argument is not yet finished. Heidegger reveals a fourth sense of 'concealing', which he calls "the forgottenness of the mystery".[76] To explain this properly it helps to recapitulate the three forms of concealing we have already introduced. Each conceals 'what is concealed', but in a different way.[77] The second sense of 'concealing' we discussed is the most primitive. It conceals 'what is concealed' in the sense that it is what *brings about* its concealment. Importantly, 'what is concealed' is not yet taken *as a whole*, and so we are talking about the concealing that underlies distinct mysteries. The first sense we discussed, the way in which letting-be 'conceals', is not a matter of bringing about concealment, but of concealing concealment itself. Letting-be conceals insofar as it tends to *obscure* the presence of mysteries. The third sense, the mystery, is again a matter of bringing concealment about, rather than obscuring it, but this time with respect to beings *as a whole*. The new fourth sense of 'concealing' is the concealing of concealment *as a whole*, the obscuring (or forgetting) of the mystery itself. The difference between this and the first sense of 'concealing' is that the first names the concealing of whatever mysteries there happen to be, whereas the former names the concealing of the constitutive excess that grounds all such mysteries. Our four senses of 'concealing' are thus organised along two axes: the distinction between *bringing about* and *obscuring* concealment, and the distinction between concealing *particular* beings and concealing beings *as a whole*.

The important fact is that the obscuring of *mysteries* (first sense) and the forgetting of *the mystery* (fourth sense) do not have a separate origin, but are both a matter of Dasein's freedom in letting-be.[78] Moreover, Heidegger takes it that they are both grounded in Dasein's tendency to become absorbed in its immediate dealings with beings in the world, or its tendency to turn itself "toward the most readily available beings."[79] The turning toward the

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid., p. 131.

[77] Here we must disagree with William Richardson, whose interpretation of the essay is admirable in its detail but flawed in its execution (*Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, Part II, ch. 1). Richardson is not careful enough in distinguishing the different ways in which 'what is concealed' is concealed. For instance, he takes *the mystery*, as the concealing of what is concealed, to be a matter of disguising the fact that there is concealment, which could be read as equivalent to either the first or the fourth sense outlined above, either of which would be incorrect. This is an understandable error, given the maddening plurality of Heidegger's use of the word 'concealing' here, but it is an error nonetheless.

[78] *OET*, p. 131.

[79] Ibid., p. 132; see also p. 129.

readily available and the turning away from the mystery constitute the same movement, which Heidegger calls *erring*. This movement is a tendency inherent in the very structure of Dasein's mode of Being, which Dasein is always bound up in to some extent. He names this structural feature of Dasein *errancy*.[80] He explains it as follows:-

> Errancy is the essential counter-essence to the primordial essence of truth. Errancy opens itself up as the open region for every opposite to essential truth. Errancy is the open site for and ground of *error*. Error is not merely an isolated mistake but the realm (the domain) of the history of those entanglements in which all kinds of erring get interwoven.[81]

So, in searching for the essence of truth in the essence of untruth, Heidegger has uncovered the mystery as the proper *nonessence* of truth, and errancy as the *counter-essence* of truth. Moreover, errancy is conceived not simply as the basis of the forgottenness of the mystery, but as the ground of a whole variety of types of *error*:-

> Error extends from the most ordinary wasting of time, making a mistake, and miscalculating, to going astray and venturing too far in one's essential attitudes and decisions. However, what is ordinarily and even according to the teachings of philosophy recognised as error, incorrectness of judgements and falsity of knowledge, is only one mode of erring and, moreover, the most superficial one.[82]

Errancy is the ground of *falsity* in the sense of incorrectness, but it extends beyond this to other forms of error. It is also what makes possible the absorption through which we *fail* to let beings be to different degrees. As such, errancy is that which unifies the various forms of covering-up we have taken over from *Being and Time*, from ordinary falsity to burrying over and disguisedness. Insofar as errancy provides the ontological ground of these phenomena, we can see which existential structure from *Being and Time* that it corresponds to. The movement of erring is Heidegger's reformulation of the movement wherein Dasein's thrownness causes it to become *absorbed* in the world, and the errancy which grounds it is

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[80] He also describes erring as *insisting*, and errancy by claiming that "*As ek-sistent, Dasein is insistent*" (Ibid, p. 132), but these terms do not really add to the description. They simply serve to tie the notion of errancy to Dasein's existential structure more deeply through the affinity between the words 'ek-sistence' and 'insistence'.
[81] Ibid., p. 133.
[82] Ibid., pp. 133-134.

his reformulation of the corresponding notion of *falling*.

The correspondence between falling and errancy helps us understand the way that errancy ties together covering-up and the various ways concealment is obscured. Errancy is a tendency of Dasein – a tendency to be *led astray*. The most basic forms of this leading astray are those through which concealment is obscured, through which letting-be conceals concealment, and brings about a forgottenness of the mystery. After this, there are the various ways that Dasein can *not* let being be, which undermine the possibility of truth-aptness within our various discourses upon entities. However, insofar as errancy is a tendency, there is also the possibility of resisting it, and not being led astray.[83] Just as it is possible to *withdraw* from beings in genuine forms of letting-be, so it is also possible to turn back toward the mystery. This possibility of turning to the mystery is incredibly important, insofar as Heidegger identifies it with a question: "The glimpse into the mystery out of errancy is a question – in the sense of that unique question of what being is as such and as a whole. This questioning thinks the question of the *Being* of beings".[84] Errancy is a tendency to be lead astray by *beings*, to become absorbed in our dealings with them within the world, as articulated by the impersonal authority of the One. This absorption takes a whole variety of forms in relation to the variety of beings that can be encountered in the world, but insofar as we are absorbed, we forget Being in favour of beings. There are thus a variety of possibilities for withdrawing from our absorption in beings, but only in the limit-case where we fully withdraw do we approach Being itself. This approach is the question of Being.[85]

Leaving the question of the connection between the mystery and Being for now, Heidegger is finally in a position to lay out the essence of truth:-

> The disclosure of beings as such is simultaneously and intrinsically the
> concealing of being as a whole. In the simultaneity of disclosure and concealing,
> errancy holds sway. Errancy and the concealing of what is concealed belong to
> the primordial essence of truth. Freedom, conceived on the basis of the in-sistent

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[83] Ibid., p. 134.
[84] Ibid., p. 135.
[85] On this basis we can extend the reinterpretation of the notion of mood suggested in footnote 67 above. Letting-be is the existential structure which is modified by various existentiell moods. These moods engender different combinations of withdrawal and engagement in relation to different entities within the world. The variety of moods thus constitutes the variety of degrees of not letting-be. Given this, those moods wherein we withdraw from beings completely, in which the possibility of asking the question of Being consists, are the *fundamental moods*. This fits in well with the way Heidegger connects anxiety and the question of Being in *Being and Time* (§40) and the general philosophical significance he gives to the other fundamental moods he writes about at different points (*FCM*, Part II; *BQP*, ch. 5).

ek-sistence of Dasein, is the essence of truth (in the sense of the correctness of presenting) only because freedom itself originates from the primordial essence of truth, the rule of mystery in errancy.

Now, it seems here that Heidegger is claiming that the relation between the mystery (the nonessence of truth) and errancy (the counter-essence of truth) is the primordial essence of truth. However, if we interpret this to mean that the possibility of turning toward and away from the mystery is somehow prior to freedom, then we will have gone astray. That the text suggests this reading is problematic, and why we will supplement it with the account of the essence of truth provided in 'On the Origin of the Work of Art', which does a better job of outlining the structure which Heidegger is trying to uncover.

The aim of the essay 'On the Origin of the Work of Art' is to uncover the essence of *art* itself, as that which makes possible given works of art. Heidegger takes a long and circuitous route to get to this essence, which we will not endeavour to retread here. What is important is that the account of art he provides is intimately connected to an account of truth. This account is presented in terms that differ substantially from those in 'On the Essence of Truth', but it shares its essential features. Examining the essence of truth as it is presented here will make clear the structure that Heidegger is aiming at in the latter essay. The two most important terms in this account are *world* and *earth*. Heidegger spends quite a lot of time in the essay re-explaining the notion of world, but it is essentially the same as the notion of world developed in *Being and Time* and carried forth in the works we have been considering. It is the horizon within which beings can appear, and it is fundamentally structured in terms of equipment, or the practical possibilities that things offer to Dasein.[86] The notion of earth is far more interesting:-

> Earth is that which comes forth and shelters. Earth, irreducibly spontaneous, is effortless and untiring. Upon the earth and in it, historical man grounds his dwelling in the world... The earth appears openly cleared as itself only when it is perceived and preserved as that which is essentially undisclosable, that which shrinks from every disclosure and constantly keeps itself closed up.

If Dasein projects or opens up a world, it does so *upon* the earth. If the world is the original

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[86]   *OWA*, p. 171.

unconcealing of beings as a whole, out of which particular beings can become manifest, then earth is that upon which this unconcealing works. However, this does not mean that it becomes unconcealed, but that it is that which *resists* unconcealing. It is the original *concealing* of beings as a whole which constitutes the *excess* of beings over Dasein's disclosure. It is 'irreducibly spontaneous', 'effortless' and 'untiring' precisely insofar as this is a *perpetual* excess of beings over Dasein's projection of world. As such, for the earth to appear *as* earth is not for it to be *exhausted* by unconcealing, but for it to be revealed in its *inexhaustibility*. In short, earth is the new name Heidegger gives to *the mystery*.

For Heidegger, "World and earth are essentially different but are never separated."[87] This essential character of the relation between the two is very important, and it is equally important that it is not a static relation, but a *dynamic* one. Earth and world exist in a constant to and fro, a play of concealing and unconcealing. We have already seen this to some extent. The world can be revised, and its revision can open up new domains and aspects of entities that were previously concealed. However, this process of revision is not necessarily a smooth process of expansion, wherein the world comes to encompass ever more of the earth at a steady rate, even if it can never exhaust it. We are thrown into a world which is already culturally articulated, but it can just as easily contract as it can expand. There are many tales throughout history of the collapse of whole cultures and the corresponding collapse of the intricate practices and systems of understanding that were bound up with them. This is a fairly dramatic example, but the loss of practical mastery and understanding through which a world decays need not be so drastic. Moreover, there are points at which the earth *thrusts* up into the world, where mysteries or previously un-encountered problems make themselves felt, where the reliable ways of dealing with or thinking about entities fail us. Indeed, such events often precipitate the expansion of world, as we adapt to the problems they pose by developing new ways of dealing and thinking.[88] There is thus a dynamic interplay between world and earth that takes a variety of forms.

Heidegger names this dynamic interplay the *strife* between earth and world.[89] It is this

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[87] Ibid., p. 174.
[88] Connecting this back to the parallels we drew between Heidegger's account of truth and two-levelled approaches in the philosophy of science, the scientific anomalies which bring about crisis within a given scientific paradigm that Kuhn describes in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (ch. 6-9) are perfect examples of points at which the earth announces itself, manifesting the inadequacy of world, thought here as the inability of the basic assumptions, terminology and practices of the paradigm to cope with them. Moreover, these periods of crisis lead to precisely the kinds of reconfiguration of the world suggested, wherein new paradigms emerge to deal with the relevant anomalies.
[89] *OWA*, p. 174.

primal strife which constitutes the essence of truth for Heidegger: "The essence of truth is, in itself, the primal strife in which that open center is won within which beings stand and from which they set themselves back in themselves."[90] This relates to art insofar as Heidegger takes it that the work of art is one of the various forms which strife takes, or one of the ways in which it can *happen*. The work of art *instigates* strife between earth and world.[91] We don't want to engage in a detailed analysis of Heidegger's account of the work of art, but elaborating on this claim will prove useful. What it means is that the work of art is a being within the world that nonetheless plays some role in *setting up* the world, while also *setting forth* the earth in relation to it. Crucially, this is something which all forms of art do, regardless of whether they *represent* anything. The Greek temple instigates strife just as much as Van Gogh's painting of a pair of shoes. The work sets up the world insofar as it makes present the culturally articulated significance that constitutes it, or insofar as it makes the world present *as* world. This can be done in a variety of ways. For Heidegger, the Van Gogh painting makes present the world of the peasant whose shoes they are, which is to say their culturally articulated way of life. The peasant's world is different from our own, but it nonetheless illuminates our world *as* world. In contrast, the temple did not simply present their world to the Greeks, but it actively *organised* it. The temple embodied and established the religious practices around which Greek life revolved. Even if it no longer organises our world in the same way, it presents the world of the Greeks and in doing so illuminates *our* world.

This function of the work of art in setting up a world is more clearly articulated by Levinas, who appropriates Heidegger's conception of world:-

> The assembling of being which illuminates objects and makes them meaningful is not just an accumulation of objects. It amounts to the production of those non-natural beings of a new type which are cultural objects – paintings, poems, melodies – but also to the affects of any linguistic or manual gesture of the most ordinary activity, which are creative in their evocation of former cultural creations. These cultural "objects" assemble into totalities the dispersion or accumulation of beings; they shine forth and illuminate, they express or illuminate an epoch, as we were indeed accustomed to say. To collect into a

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[90] Ibid., p. 180.
[91] Ibid., pp. 180-181.

whole, that is, to express, that is, to make meaning possible is the function of the "object – the work or cultural gesture."[92]

What Levinas is talking about here in terms of 'assembling' or 'collecting into a whole' is the production of a world in the Heideggerian sense – the construction of a horizon which organises all of our encounters with entities in advance. His claim is that the production of cultural artifacts such as artworks plays a part within the constitution of a world. It is a form of social 'expression' through which we constitute a common cultural world within which things take on significance. In essence, works of art play a special role in the social process through which the world is articulated, and although they may be more or less relevant to the world as it is *currently* articulated (as with both of Heidegger's examples), as artworks, they nonetheless still present the world in its worldhood.

In setting up the world, the artwork also sets forth the earth. To understand this it is important to recognise that the way in which we encounter the artwork is different from the way we encounter equipment, occurrent entities or other Dasein. Although it shares a thingly character with occurrent entities, and a workly character with at least some equipment, it has a mode of Being all its own. When we encounter the artwork *as* artwork, we do not encounter it in terms of our possible ways of dealing with it. This allows us to encounter the material that composes the artwork in a way which escapes whatever practical significance it may have. As Heidegger says, in setting forth, the various colours, shapes, textures, sounds, and the various matters that make up the artwork are allowed to "shine forth".[93] However, this shining forth does not correspond to us merely looking at the artwork as an occurrent thing, noting the various properties it has in abstraction from their practical significance. Instead, these features of the artwork are made manifest *as* escaping our ways of dealing with and talking about them. In the same way the artwork makes present the world *as* world, which means as something projected *upon* the earth. It presents itself as our cultural articulation of a horizon of significance *in the face of mystery*, and thereby lets that mystery be present. Heidegger also describes this more enigmatically as allowing a god to become present, not as an additional being that becomes present behind the artwork, but as the face of the mystery which it presents.[94] The artwork instigates strife insofar as it presents a dual tension, between

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[92] Emanuel Levinas, 'Meaning and Sense', in *Collected Philosophical Papers* (p. 81).
[93] *OWA*, p. 173.
[94] Ibid., pp. 167-169. This is much more literally the case with the temple, and with his other example of statues of gods. When our practices have yet to tame the sea, to make it something reliable which we can

the cultural articulation of world and the earth which lies in excess of it on the one hand, and the intentions of the artist/spectator and the matter which lies in excess of them on the other.

We can now see that the essence of art, that which grounds the possibility of works of art, is itself nothing created by man. As Heidegger notes:-

> Because it is in the essence of truth to establish itself within beings, in order thus first to become truth, the *impulse toward the work* lies in the essence of truth as one of truth's distinctive possibilities, by which it can itself occur as being in the midst of beings.[95]

The possibility of the artwork is something derived from the very essence of truth itself. This helps us to relate the account of the essence of truth Heidegger provides here with that tentatively presented at the end of 'On the Essence of Truth'. When Heidegger says that the essence of truth is the rule of mystery in errancy, he does not mean that it is the possibility of turning toward and away from the mystery which makes possible freedom. Rather, he is simply elaborating the same structure – the strife between earth and world – by showing that in and of itself it provides all the various possibilities of being led astray, and not being so led, up to and including asking the question of Being. The essence of truth makes possible the question of Being just as it makes possible the creation of artworks, as an essential and abiding possibility of Dasein's freedom.[96]

4. From the Meaning to the Truth of Being

We have now provided a comprehensive interpretation of Heidegger's theory of truth and the changes that it undergoes after *Being and Time*. Our task is now to explain the shift Heidegger undergoes in the 1930's from understanding the question of Being in terms of

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ignore, the statue of Poseidon incarnates its mysterious untameable excess. It lets us present to ourselves a mystery that can then be incorporated to some extent within our dealings *as* a mystery. However, Heidegger's 'gods' should not be interpreted as requiring anything like explicitly *religious* practices to evoke. Poetry, conceptual art, and even science fiction can let us enter into relations to aspects of our lives and the broader universe that seem irredeemably mysterious or uncontrollable, without thereby *deifying* them. More generally, it is reasonable to interpret Heidegger as taking gods to be present whenever the earth disrupts the world, regardless of whether we engender this disruption or not. This broader notion of the godly seems to be what is at play in Heidegger's account of the fourfold, which is discussed at the end of section 4 of this chapter.

[95] Ibid., p. 187.

[96] The idea that Heidegger takes the essence of truth to be the same play between clearing and concealing is held out by the fact that this is the way he tends to articulate it after *OWA* (Cf. *BQP*, pp. 177-180).

meaning to understanding it in terms of *truth*[97], and the significance this has for his formulation of the question. To do this it's important to understand how the notion of truth fits into the initial formulation of the question laid out in the last chapter. What we showed there was that the question is supposed to proceed by locating the dual unity of aspects and modes in the structure of the horizon within which entities are encountered, or the world. The structure of this horizon was originally understood in terms of Dasein's temporality (in *Being and Time* and *Basic Problems*), but this emphasis waned in subsequent works (e.g., *Fundamental Concepts*). The intimate relationship between Being and truth that Heidegger posits in *Being and Time* derives from the fact that truth *as disclosedness* is another name for the process through which this horizon is projected, and thus that in which its structure consists. This means that, for Heidegger, the inquiry into the unity of the manifold senses of Being by way of being-true as the primary sense is effectively equivalent to locating this unity in the structure of the world. There is thus an important sense in which the meaning of Being *is* truth, even if this is not initially emphasised.

It is this fact that connects Heidegger's earlier concern with the meaning of Being and and his later concern with the truth of Being.[98] In both cases he is concerned with truth understood as the process through which the horizon within which entities appear is produced – truth as *aletheia*. This means that we cannot interpret the shift between them as a matter of moving from understanding Being in terms of time to understanding it in terms of truth, insofar as the concern with truth is already implicit in his initial formulation of the question of the meaning of Being. An alternative way of describing this shift in Heidegger's work, which comes from Richardson[99], is that it involves a change in focus from Dasein to Being itself. This is obviously false if it is understood to mean that Heidegger did not concern himself with Being itself in his early work.[100] Although this work is dominated by the

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[97] It's difficult to delineate the contours of this shift, as the changes in Heidegger's view in the early 30's are not made particularly explicit. For our purposes, I'll define the shift as beginning after *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* and culminating in *Contributions to Philosophy*, where Heidegger explicitly announces his concern with the truth of Being. I'm also going to treat much of Heidegger's work after *Contributions* as endorsing the same fundamental position laid out below. We will address the transitional period in the early 30's in more detail in chapter 4.

[98] There are several points where Heidegger indicates that the question of the meaning of Being and the question of the truth of Being seek the same thing. Cf. 'Letter on Humanism', pp. 240-241; *CP*, p. 8; *Four Seminars*, pp. 46-47. However, it should be noted that Heidegger tends to overstate the continuity of his project, and there are real discontinuities here, as we will see shortly.

[99] Richardson, p. 238.

[100] As Hans Ruin has pointed out ('Contributions to Philosophy', in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. H. Dreyfus and M. Wrathall, Blackwell (2005), p. 367), this claim is equally false if taken to indicate that Heidegger is no longer concerned with Dasein in his later work. Indeed, we will see both that Dasein retains an essential role within the later work, and that his way of approaching it changes to some degree. What is at issue here

existential analytic of Dasein, it is explicitly undertaken with the aim of properly formulating and then carrying out the inquiry into Being itself. However, correctly interpreted it indicates two distinct changes in Heidegger's position: a *methodological* change and a *substantive* change.

The methodological change it signals is his abandonment of the attempt to formulate the question by way of an existential analytic of Dasein. This does not mean that Heidegger abandons all of the results of the existential analytic. As we've seen above, he continues to deploy these and to revise them in his subsequent work, even if this never amounts to the kind of systematic analysis found in *Being and Time*. Rather, it means that the inquiry into the Being of Dasein ceases to play the dual role we identified in the first chapter. The real significance of the rejection of meaning is that Heidegger ceases to understand the question as a matter of interpreting our pre-ontological understanding, and he ceases to take Dasein as that which must be interrogated in order to determine the horizon of this interpretation. In short, the whole attempt to *argue* that Being must be understood in terms of the process through which the world is opened up (i.e., truth) is abandoned, and this process is taken as the object of the question *directly*.

Heidegger achieves this through a subtle redefinition of what he means by 'Being', which he sometimes makes explicit by distinguishing between the Being of beings (*das Sein des Seienden*) and Being as such (*das Sein als Solche*), Being (*Sein*) and Beyng (*Seyn*), or Being and *Ereignis*.[101] The former term in each case retains the original sense of Being, namely, that which determines beings as beings, whereas the latter term is synonymous with the process through which the world is opened up. As such, when Heidegger discusses the truth of Being he is really talking about the truth of Beyng, and by this he equally just means truth itself: "The truth of [Beyng] is the [Beyng] of truth".[102] This has the effect of splitting Heidegger's original question in two: into what he calls *the guiding question* and *the grounding question*.[103] The former is the central topic of the metaphysical tradition as

is the precise methodological structure and role of the inquiry into Dasein within Heidegger's project.

[101] For the equivalence of the first two distinctions see Heidegger's letter to Richardson (Richardson, pp. XIV-XVI), and for the equivalence of the latter see *CP*, p. 22. I have chosen to leave the word 'Ereignis' untranslated as none of the standard translations (e.g., 'appropriation', 'event of appropriation', 'enowning', etc.) manage to make the notion any more intelligible, and I have chosen to translate 'Seyn' as 'Beyng' rather than 'be-ing' as it more closely corresponds to Heidegger's own lexical distinction. Finally, it is important to note that not only does Heidegger change his terms for expressing this distinction, but that he is not especially consistent in deploying it. He often uses the word 'Being' to refer to either side of the distinction, which causes many interpretative problems.

[102] *CP*, p. 66.
[103] *CP*, §34

Heidegger understands it, the question concerning beings as beings, or Being in its original sense, and the latter is the question of the truth of Being/Beyng, or the question which inquires into Ereignis. What this means is that Heidegger reformulates the question of Being in such a way that he exorcises its connection to Aristotle's problem of the many senses of 'Being' and the ontological problems of the metaphysical tradition that follows him, in precisely the way that he avoids in the early work, as we argued in the last chapter. However, it's important to understand the shape this takes, as it amounts to a reconfiguration of Heidegger's relation to the tradition, rather than an outright rejection of it.

Heidegger originally thought that the metaphysical tradition that followed Aristotle failed to raise the question of Being *explicitly*, but that it was nevertheless concerned with Being *implicitly*. Moreover, in doing so it tended to misunderstand Being by thinking it in terms of beings (e.g., in terms of beingness, a highest being, or both). Heidegger's own attempt to raise the question explicitly (and to formulate it properly) was meant to be concerned with the same thing as Aristotle and the tradition, but in a way that avoided this pervasive misunderstanding. He thus thought that the metaphysical tradition was defined by a problem to which there was a genuine solution, albeit one that was unachievable within its scope. It is for this reason that we can talk of Heidegger's initial project as a matter of *reorienting* metaphysics.

However, in splitting the question of Being into the guiding and grounding questions, he abandons this position. He now thinks that there is no such solution. There is no account of beings as beings that is not articulated in terms of beings themselves. There is no single way of dividing Being into its various aspects and modes, or a single unifying structure that relates them. There is only the variety of ways that the guiding question has been answered in the history of metaphysics: "It is still infinitely more impossible to represent "Being" as the general characteristic of particular beings. There is Being only in this or that particular historic character: [*Physis*], [*Logos*], [*Hen*], [*Idea*], [*Energia*], Substantiality, Objectivity, Subjectivity, the Will, the Will to Power, the Will to Will."[104] In essence, Being *is* beingness, and it takes on different forms in different historical epochs. Heidegger calls this succession of epochs the history of Being. However, although he thinks that there is no solution to the question concerning beings as beings, he still thinks that it is important insofar as it directs us to ask after that which makes this history possible, namely, truth or Ereignis. This is why they

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[104] *OCM*, p. 66.

are called the guiding question and the grounding question, respectively. Heidegger's project is now that of *overcoming* metaphysics, not in the sense of rejecting it, but rather of moving beyond it towards its very ground.[105]

The final aspect of the methodological change is a matter of the way that Heidegger approaches the formulation of the question. Previously, the structure of the question and the constraints upon its proper formulation were derived from the structure of the questioner, independently of any detailed account of the nature of the object of the question. This is to say that even if some pre-theoretical understanding of Being was presupposed by the question, one needed no additional theoretical grasp of Being in order to formulate the question of the meaning of Being. However, in moving to the question of the truth of Being Heidegger comes to understand the structure of the question in terms of a prior account of its object, i.e., in terms of his theory of truth. The interpretation of the question from 'On the Essence of Truth' discussed above is representative. There the question is principally understood in relation to the structure of strife itself (and the relation between mystery and errancy that it involves), in terms of a kind of fundamental mood counterposed to erring. From this point on, Heidegger increasingly formulates the question in terms of such fundamental moods (e.g., terror/distress, restraint/reservedness, mindfulness, etc.) and their relation to Being itself (e.g., the abandonment by Being, the withdrawal of Being, etc.).[106] This presupposes not only his revised theory of truth, but also the elements of the analytic of Dasein upon which it is based (which we have shown to be quite extensive). This means that the formulation of the question is still dependent upon the existential analytic, but that this dependence is no longer circumscribed by the strict methodological roles it was assigned in *Being and Time*. All of this indicates a definite methodological laxity in comparison with the earlier approach to the question of Being.

The substantive change that Richardson's characterisation indicates is a consequence of the move from truth as *disclosedness* to truth as *strife*. This move consists in the fact that

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[105] Heidegger also calls this "the step back out of metaphysics into its essential nature" (Ibid., p. 51). It should also be noted that Heidegger explicitly denies that turning our concern towards Ereignis itself constitutes an epoch, even a final epoch (*FS*, p. 61). The overcoming of metaphysics is not the end of the history of Being, but the point at which it "appears *as* history of Being" (Ibid.).

[106] Cf. *CP*, pp. 9-17; *BQT*, pp. 170-179; *M*, Part III. There is obviously much more that could be said here about the various ways in which Heidegger attempts to articulate the character of the grounding question, of which the passages just referenced are merely examples. However, not only would this take up precious space, but it would also be unlikely to contribute much to the current enterprise. Heidegger is notoriously obscure on the topic of what asking the grounding question consists in and the precise nature of the 'second beginning' that it supposedly heralds. This problem will be addressed to some extent in chapter 4, part 2.

the process through which the world is produced is no longer understood solely in terms of Dasein's projection (unconcealing), but in terms of the relation between this projection and that which is constitutively in excess of it, namely, the earth (concealing). As we've already noted, the other name that Heidegger comes to give this relation is Ereignis. The consequence of this move is that whereas truth (and thus the meaning of Being) was previously understood to be dependent upon Dasein, Dasein is now seen as dependent upon truth (or Ereignis). To understand this reversal we must further unpack the structure of Ereignis, the essential features of which follow from the structure of the strife relation as we've explained it above. First, it is important to understand that the earth is not in excess of any *particular* projection of a world, but is that which is in excess of *every* such projection. There are many culturally articulated ways of grasping beings as a whole, but they all aim to grasp the *same* whole. The earth is the *singular* locus of resistance in relation to all projections. Second, it is important to understand that Ereignis is similarly not the relation between any *particular* projection and the earth, but is the relation between it and *every* such projection. This means that insofar as the earth is singular, so too is Ereignis.[107]

However, although Ereignis is singular, it is not for that matter a being, anymore than the earth is a being. It is nothing like a highest being that would ground the existence of all other beings. Moreover, although the word 'Ereignis' can also be translated as 'event' (and is often so translated), it is not an event in the sense of something that occurs within time.[108] It is not this or that happening of strife, but that *through which* all strife happens. Rather, insofar as it is the process through which the world is (or worlds are) constituted, Ereignis is the condition under which anything can be encountered *as a being* or *within time*.[109] This is what Heidegger is getting at in the lecture 'Time and Being' when he claims that instead of saying that 'Being is' or that 'time is', we must say that 'there is Being' and 'there is time'.[110] The phrase 'there is' is translated from the german '*es gibt*', which in this case is more aptly translated as 'it gives'. Heidegger claims that Ereignis is the 'it' in 'it gives Being/time',

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[107] "The term [*Ereignis*] here no longer means what we would otherwise call a happening, an occurrence. It now is used as a *singulare tantum*. What it indicates happens only in the singular, no, not in any number, uniquely." (*PI*, p. 36).

[108] "One should bear in mind, however, that "event" is not simply an occurrence, but that which makes any occurrence possible." (*TB*, p. 19).

[109] It is important to remember that Heidegger never abandoned the idea that the horizon within which entities are encountered should be understood temporally, he simply de-emphasised the concept of time in favour of that of truth. His account of the opening up of the world as involving the temporalisation of time persists in an altered form in various works, including *Contributions to Philosophy* (in the account of time-space or *Zeit-Raum* (Part V, Section *d*)) and *On Time and Being* (in the four-dimensional account of time (pp. 10-16)).

[110] *TB*, pp. 4-5.

which emphasises its bare singularity. He also holds that man (or Dasein) is that to which the gift is given, and that Ereignis is nothing other than the process through which it is given to man. All this fits with the account of strife given earlier, but the last point might be seen to contradict the reversal of dependence we've just indicated. If Ereignis is nothing other than the process of giving Being/time to man, surely it must thereby be dependent upon man?

This must be true in some sense, insofar as the process through which the world is opened up essentially involves Dasein's projection. We thus cannot understand Ereignis without understanding the role that Dasein plays within it. However, the reverse is also true. Heidegger claims that "If man were not the constant receiver of the gift... Man would not be man."[111] This means that there is no Dasein independently of Ereignis, because what Dasein is (or the essence of man) is determined solely by the role it plays within the process through which the world is opened up. As Heidegger also puts it: "man belongs to [Ereignis]."[112] This would seem to indicate a kind of reciprocal dependence between Dasein and Ereignis, which does not yet amount to the promised reversal. The reversal is only apparent once we see the asymmetry between the ways in which Dasein and Ereignis depend on one another. The crucial point is that whereas particular Dasein are dependent upon Ereignis in order to be Dasein, as they are Dasein only insofar as they are involved in the strife process, Ereignis is not dependent upon any of these involvements. Ereignis may be nothing other than the process through which Dasein's world is constituted (through which Being/time is given to Dasein), but this does not mean that there is no Ereignis without particular instances of Dasein. Ereignis is the relation between the earth and whatever Dasein there happen to be, even if there happen to be none.

It is perhaps better to articulate this point in terms of the relation between Ereignis and earth. If the world is our *understanding* of beings as a whole, then earth is the whole *in itself*. This means that the earth is intrinsically indifferent to whether there are any Dasein, or what we would commonly call their *existence* (not to be confused with the mode of Being of Dasein (*Existenz*), which we would commonly call its *essence*). Whatever there is in itself may or may not include entities capable of projecting open a world. However, the earth is still characterised by its resistance to such possible projection even in its absence. The fact that the earth is in excess of any projection of world is something which is independent of the fact that there is such projection, i.e., whether there are Dasein. But this just names the relation

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[111] Ibid., p. 12.
[112] Ibid., p. 23; cf. *CP*, §128.

between the earth and the possibility of Dasein, and this is all that Ereignis is. It is the relation between the singular earth and the plurality of projections of world, *as* the relation between it and the role of Dasein, or the essence of man. Ereignis thus derives its independence from the existence of Dasein from that of the earth, in precisely the way that it derives its singularity from that of the earth.

In essence, Ereignis is nothing other than the *structure* of the earth, or, to think of it in more colloquial terms, the structure of *reality* itself. This lets us understand the issue of dependence in a different way, perhaps best summarised by Miguel de Beistegui:-

> "This, then, is how we need to understand the fact that [B]eyng "needs" man: not as a relation of dependency born of a structural lack, but as a relation of generosity born of an irreducible plenitude... [the] "need" of man is a need made possible by its essence alone, a need which, furthermore, does not so much presuppose the space of the human as it makes it possible."[113]

What this means is that the structure of reality essentially *incorporates* the possibility of an entity that can open up a horizon within which entities can be encountered. That there could be something like man is not negotiable. Just as the possibility of the artwork is something contained in the very essence of truth, so it is with the possibility of Dasein.[114]

The final aspect of the Ereignis that must be understood is its relation to the history of Being discussed above. As we've already noted, Heidegger takes it that Ereignis is what makes the succession of metaphysical epochs that constitutes the history of Being possible. This aspect of Ereignis is what Heidegger calls *sending*, or the way in which 'it' *gives* Being to man.[115] Precisely how this works is fairly easy to articulate if we contrast it to Heidegger's earlier position. As we've already explained, Heidegger always understood the significances that constitute the world to be revisable. However, he originally thought that Being (the structure of beings as such) consisted in features of the world that were not subject to this process of revision. Heidegger's abandonment of the idea of a historically invariant structure of Being consists in acknowledging that these features of the world are revisable after all. Whereas he originally took there to be a set distribution of aspects and modes of Being, and a

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[113] De Beistegui, pp. 138-139.

[114] This makes sense of Heidegger's claim, in 'On the Essence of Truth', that man does not possess freedom, but that freedom possesses man (*OET*, p. 127), at least once we recognise that freedom is grounded in the deeper essence of truth as strife, or Ereignis.

[115] *TB*, p. 8.

fixed way in which they were interrelated, he now takes these to be flexible.[116]

However, that they are flexible does not mean that they are readily revised. The conception of Being that these features constitute is *the* central feature of any given culturally articulated world, and it is for this reason that Heidegger takes its revision to quite literally *define* historical epochs. Heidegger's claim that such revisions are 'gifts' on behalf of Ereignis follows from his account of the process of revision in terms of the strife between earth and world. It is the fact that the earth's disruption of the world *engenders* its revision that licenses the ascription of a certain *activity* to Ereignis. This need not imply that we are simply *passive* receivers of this gift, but simply means that we are involved in a process that is beyond our own control. Taken as a whole, this process through which our culturally articulated worlds are revised is nothing other than the unfolding of *history* itself, within which the history of Being is simply the central, defining narrative.[117] It is this fact which licenses the parallel claim that Ereignis gives time as well as Being, insofar as Heidegger principally understands time *as* history.[118]

We've now provided a fairly comprehensive account of the substantive shift involved in Heidegger's transition to the truth of Being. Although his terminology and way of presenting his position undergoes further changes, even to the extent that he ultimately abandons the word 'truth' as a name for his topic of concern[119], his account of it remains essentially the same. This is not to say that there aren't any further changes in the account, but simply that these are not principally revisions of it. Even when Heidegger turns to his famously obscure *fourfold* (*das Geviert*) of earth (*Erde*), sky (*Himmel*), gods (*Göttlichen*) and mortals (*Sterblichen*), the same structure is ultimately at work.[120] The mirror-play between the

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[116] It is nonetheless up for debate precisely *how* flexible he takes them to be. For instance, Heidegger thinks that the way that the notions of essence (what-being) and existence (that-being) have been understood and the way their relation has been articulated is a central feature of the progression that constitutes the history of Being (cf. 'Metaphysics as History of Being'), but it is not clear whether he thinks that some such understanding of these notions and their relation is an *essential* feature of any epoch, or that they could be replaced altogether.

[117] The idea that the history of Being is the central feature of history as such helps to explain Heidegger's various claims to the effect that history (considered specifically as Western history) begins with the original raising of the question of Being, or the 'first beginning' in relation to the 'second beginning' that the overcoming of metaphysics heralds (cf. *OET*, pp. 126-127; *BQP*, §31-33 ; *CP*, p. §85, §87, §91).

[118] For an excellent discussion of the relation between temporality and history across Heidegger's work, see Charles Guignon's essay 'The History of Being', in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. H. Dreyfus and M. Wrathall, Blackwell (2005).

[119] See fn 40.

[120] Cf. 'The Thing'. Here I am very much in disagreement both with Graham Harman's interpretation of the fourfold (*Tool-Being*, ch. 2, §19) and with that of Julian Young ('The Fourfold', in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger: Second Edition*, ed. Charles Guigon). Although they are both to be commended for attempting to provide a clear account of what the fourfold consists in, their interpretations go astray in

four, which opens up a space (or *open region*) within which beings can appear, is merely the reworking of the notion of strife and its essential consequences. Mortals stand for Dasein, or the freedom which projects world, sky is the world as the horizon within which beings appear, earth remains the concealing which resists and refuses world, and the gods are just those mysteries made present described in the account of art above, whose incarnation is made possible by the essential structure of strife. Mortals open up a world, and the earth, in its never-ending war with world, pokes through into the world in places, coming face to face with mortals in the form of the gods.[121] This constant interplay is simply the perpetual and dynamic reconstruction of the horizon within which beings can appear as beings.

Having adequately cashed out both the methodological and substantive dimensions of the shift between the early and later work, we're now in a position to make some comparisons which address both dimensions. In the last chapter we saw that Heidegger's initial formulation of the question of Being puts him in close proximity to Kant's project, insofar as it makes of it an inquiry into the conditions of the possibility of *intelligibility* analogous to Kant's inquiry into the conditions of the possibility of *experience*. In both cases they appeal to certain historically invariant (existential/transcendental) features of the structure of the inquirer (Dasein/subject) in a way meant to provide definitive solutions to (at least some of) the problems of classical ontology and metaphysics. The crucial difference between them is that Heidegger *reorients* metaphysics by demonstrating that the original problem with which the tradition is concerned leads to this kind of inquiry, whereas Kant *redefines* metaphysics by rearticulating its subject matter in essentially epistemological terms.[122] We can now usefully contrast Heidegger's later attempt to *overcome* metaphysics

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several ways. Harman fails to recognise the significance of the notion of beings *as a whole*, and so treats concealing as something which is restricted to each being individually, thereby failing to see the innovations introduced in *OET* and *OWA*. He also explicitly denies that the world is a horizon projected by Dasein, and thus is very strangely unable to claim that mortals correspond to Dasein. This leads him to interpret the fourfold not as the structure through which such a horizon is produced, but as the intersection of two distinctions found within each being, between its revealed (sky, mortals) and concealed (earth, gods) aspects on the one hand, and its properties (gods, sky) and its bare particularity (earth, mortals) on the other. Young also ignores the correspondence between the fourfold and the twofold strife of earth and world. On this basis, he interprets earth and sky too literally, taking them to compose the domain of *nature*. He then interprets gods and mortals as composing the domain of *culture* over against this. This division fails to do justice to the complexity of the fourfold structure. However, his suggestion that the gods should be read as playing a similar role to the 'heroes' of *B&T* does deserve closer scrutiny than I can devote to it here.

[121] I am indebted to Miguel de Beistegui's analysis of the fourfold in his book *Truth and Genesis* (ch. 4-5) for underlining the essential continuity between the fourfold and the twofold structure of earth and world.

[122] There are of course many other important differences between Heidegger and Kant, the most prominent of which being that Kant did not understand the transcendental structure of the subject as special mode of Being. Heidegger saw this as Kant's failure to thematise the Being of subjectivity in the way he had thematised that of nature (*B&T*, p. 45).

with both of these.

Principally, it has a renewed similarity to Kant's project insofar as it is now directly concerned with conditions of the possibility of intelligibility (truth/Ereignis), but no longer directly motivated by the question of Being as originally understood. However, it breaks with both Kant and the earlier project in two ways. On the one hand, it rejects the possibility of definitive solutions to the problems of classical ontology, insofar as the relevant aspects of the structure of intelligibility are taken to be historically variable (i.e., anything like Kantian categories are taken to be mutable). On the other, it situates these conditions of intelligibility within the structure of reality itself. This latter move is the most interesting, because it does not amount to identifying the conditions of intelligibility with the structure of the things themselves (e.g., Hegel's identification of Being and thought). Instead, it constitutes a peculiar radicalisation of Kantianism that suspends the inaccessibility of the in-itself only to inscribe within it the very structure of this inaccessibility. This means inscribing within it the possibility of the confrontation between it and man, through which history is produced.

However, in this respect Heidegger's later position has more in common with metaphysics ordinarily construed than with either of its predecessors. Of course, there are legitimate questions as to whether Heidegger can consistently articulate this kind of liminal claim, let alone whether he can adequately justify it. Leaving these concerns to one side, what is perhaps most interesting about it is that it is a claim about reality understood *as a singular whole*, rather than a claim about beings *in general*.[123] It is this fact that enables Heidegger to deny that it is a metaphysical claim at all, given his own account of what metaphysics is. This indicates that there is a certain residue of the ordinary notion of metaphysics sufficient to differentiate between Heidegger's later position and Kantianism, which is nonetheless not incorporated within the definition of metaphysics he provides. For the moment, this will have to remain an intriguing possibility. We have now adequately circumscribed Heidegger's attempts to formulate the question of Being and the relations between them. We must now turn to assessing them, in order that we might see where and how Heidegger goes wrong.

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[123] This is another disagreement between my interpretation and Harman's, who holds that Heidegger takes individual beings to be in excess of our understanding of them, and that this is a characteristic of beings in general (*Tool-Being*, ch. 1).