Freedom as Response-ability:

Agency and Artistic Creativity in the Work of Martin Heidegger

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Abstract

The origin of this thesis can be traced back to a deceptively simple question that struck me when reading Hegel for the first time: What, if anything, can be made of human freedom when we live in a world that has a profound impact on who we are and what we do? Unhappy with the way existentialist reactions to Hegel characterized freedom as our ability to step out of our world and determine our identity through our own decisions and will, but nevertheless inspired by Heidegger's depiction of human agents as always already in the world, this thesis answers the aforementioned question by turning the existentialist conception of freedom on its head: that is, instead of characterizing freedom as detached decisionism, I argue that freedom is a function of our ability to recognize and respond to the disparate demands our world places upon us. Specifically, and unlike Heidegger's existentialist interpreters, I read Heidegger's account of authenticity as a case of engaged-agency in which we clarify the possibilities others make available and then act accordingly. There is, however, a certain limitation to this interpretation of human agency: namely, that treating freedom as an active response to the wants and needs of others binds the agent to possibilities present in her current situation and therefore fails to capture the kind of freedom we associate with cultural transformation or artistic creativity. Hence, this thesis addresses a second set of questions: What conditions make historical change possible? And how is it that artists are able to alter the world? In response to the first query, I turn to Heidegger's claim that we are in truth and in untruth as well as his discussion of *Gelassenheit* to argue that the play between the possibilities present in a particular culture and those that are excluded by it along with a release from our present activities create the conditions for cultural transformation. In reply to the second question, I examine Heidegger's account of the happening of truth and show how thinkers and artists are able to reveal the possibilities concealed in their culture through the creative use of language. Finally, I contend that the freedom associated with cultural transformation and artistic creativity is also a form of responsibility insofar as the success of a given transformation depends on others recognizing that transformation as valuable and thus worthy of their support.

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Abbreviations

1. Works by Heidegger

AM: *Aristotle's Metaphysics*
Basic: *Basic Concepts*
B&T: *Being and Truth*
BCAP: *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*
BP: *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*
BQ: *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected "Problems" of "Logic."*
BT: *Being and Time*
BW: *Basic Writings*
CP: *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enknowing)*
CPC: *Country Path Conversations*
DT: *Discourse on Thinking*
EGT: *Early Greek Thinking*
ET: *The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Parable of the Cave Allegory and Theaetetus*
FCM: *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*
FoS: *Four Seminars*
GA: *Gesamtausgabe Vol 1-102*
HCT: *History of the Concept of Time*
Ister: *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister."*
ID: *Identity and Difference*
IM: *An Introduction to Metaphysics*
KPM: *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*
LQT: *Logic: The Question of Truth*
M: *Mindfulness*
MFL: *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*
N: *Nietzsche 1-4*
OWL: *On the Way to Language*
P: *Parmenides*
PIA: *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*
PIK: *Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*
PLT: *Poetry, Language, Thought*
PM: *Pathmarks*
PR: *The Principle of Reason*
PRL: *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*
PS: *Plato's Sophist*
PT: *The Piety of Thinking*
QCT: *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*
TB: *On Time and Being*
WCT: *What Is Called Thinking?*
WIP: *What Is Philosophy?*
WT: *What Is a Thing?*

2. Other Works Cited with Abbreviations

PS: G.W.F Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*
CPR: Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Pure Reason*
BGE: Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*
WTP: Friedrich Nietzsche, *Will to Power*

GM: Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*
PI: Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*
RFM Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*
RPPI: Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology Vol. 1*
Z: Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettle*

Introduction

The origin of this thesis can be traced back to a deceptively simple question that struck me when reading Hegel for the first time: What, if anything, can be made of human freedom when we live in a world that has a profound impact on who we are and what we do? Unhappy with the way existentialist reactions to Hegel characterized freedom as our ability to step out of our world and determine our identity through our own decisions and will, but nevertheless inspired by Heidegger's depiction of human agents as always already in the world, this thesis answers the aforementioned question by turning the existentialist conception of freedom on its head: that is, instead of characterizing freedom as detached decisionism, I argue that freedom is a function of our ability to recognize and respond to the disparate demands our world places upon us. Specifically, and unlike Heidegger's existentialist interpreters, I read Heidegger's account of authenticity as a case of engaged-agency in which we clarify the possibilities others make available and then act accordingly. There is, however, a certain limitation to this interpretation of human agency: namely, that treating freedom as an active response to the wants and needs of others binds the agent to possibilities present in her current situation and therefore fails to capture the kind of freedom we associate with cultural transformation or artistic creativity.[1] Hence, this thesis addresses a second set of questions: What conditions make historical change possible? And how is it that thinkers and artists are able to alter the world? In response to the first query, I turn to Heidegger's claim that we are in truth and in untruth as well as his discussion of *Gelassenheit* to argue that the play between the possibilities present in a particular culture and those that are excluded by it along with a release from our present activities create the conditions for cultural transformation. In reply to the second question, I examine Heidegger's account of the happening of truth and show how artists are able to reveal the possibilities concealed in their culture through the creative use of language. Finally, I contend that the freedom associated with cultural transformation and artistic creativity is also a form of responsibility insofar as the success of a given transformation depends on others recognizing that transformation as valuable and thus worthy of their support.

In Chapter 1, I identify our agency with our responsibility to others, but such an account is confronted with two difficulties. First, the bulk of Heidegger's work on being-with in Division I of *Being and Time* is dedicated to a discussion of social norms that facilitate our inauthentic tendency to turn-away from the fact that we are always in a position to choose our particular path in life. Second, Heidegger's analysis of choice and action in Division II is often read as a depiction of the authentic circumstances that free us from the social norms of our community. Hence, after sketching the worldliness of the world in which we act and emphasizing my account of being-with, I consider Heidegger's notion of inauthenticity and authenticity, respectively. I then argue that our tendency toward inauthenticity can be overcome and that authenticity actually involves cultivating a clear sense of the potentialities present in our cultural inheritance and then choosing to make one of those potentialities one's own. Finally, I indicate a conservative aspect or 'creativity limit' in Heidegger's account of our authentic existence: that is, characterizing agency in terms of our ability to clarify and adopt one of the potentialities present in our community implies that our choices are restricted to options that are

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[1] Although it is possible to draw a distinction between cultural transformation and artistic creativity by arguing that the expressive work of an individual artist is creative but not necessarily transformative, for the purposes of this thesis I will be using the terms interchangeably to capture the phenomenon Heidegger calls 'the happening of truth' whereby the world around us is alterned when a concealed aspect of reality is revealed.

currently available. Thus, the concept of authentic action fails to capture the freedom we associate with cultural transformation or artistic creativity.

Chapter 2 considers a powerful objection to what I see as the conservative tendencies in *Being and Time* via a reading of John Haugeland's work on the relationship between truth and authenticity as these notions are expressed in Heidegger's *magnum opus*. Unlike scholars who read Heidegger's account of authenticity as a formalized version of Nietzscheian or Kierkegaardian existentialism, Haugeland reads Heidegger's appeal to anxiety, guilt, death, conscience, and resoluteness as crucial features in Heidegger's attempt to come to terms with the meaning of being. Briefly, Haugeland argues that the self-understanding achieved when we adopt a particular potentiality-for-being involves both understanding and disclosing the being of entities and aspects of our world – 'in knowing how to be me,' as he puts it, 'I must know how to deal with the entities amidst which I work and live'[2] – so turning toward ourselves entails 'getting the entities *themselves* right.'[3] This, for Haugeland, means that when we take responsibility for our existence by choosing a specific potentiality we take responsibility for the truth of entities disclosed therein. Yet taking responsibility for the truth of entities not only entails getting our facts right; it also involves testing the potentialities and disclosures of being through which we have access to facts, and therefore requires that we open ourselves up to the possibility of taking potentialities and disclosures back. And if, as Haugeland suggests, authenticity entails opening ourselves up to the possibility of taking potentialities and disclosures of being back (and thus involves opening ourselves up to the reception and projection of new potentialities), then Haugeland's interpretation of authenticity casts doubt on what I have called the 'creativity limit' in *Being and Time*.

Since Haugeland presents his reading of authenticity in relation to truth, I begin chapter 2 by recasting my conservative reading of authenticity in terms of Heidegger's claim that we are in truth and in untruth. I then offer a detailed sketch of Haugeland's position and put forward several objections to it. First, I contend that his emphasis on authentic truth fails to account for the truth of our inauthentic existence, and therefore fails to appreciate the fact that we get entities right in our average everydayness as well. Second, and in light my previous criticism, I argue that Haugeland misses the extent to which authenticity is only a *modified* way in which we relate to the world as it is presented in everydayness. Third, I claim that Haugeland produces an account of authenticity that only makes intuitive sense in the empirical sciences but actually lacks a conceptual basis full stop. The idea here is that if entities are only *meaningfully* presented via disclosures of being, then those entities cannot serve as an *intelligible*, independent standard upon which disclosures are based. Finally, I consider an alternative to Haugeland's grounding of ontic and ontological truths in existential truth via a different reading of Heidegger's claim that 'the most primordial, and indeed the most authentic, disclosedness in which Dasein, as a potentiality-for-being, can be, is the *truth of existence*.'[4]

Although my first and second chapters focused on Heidegger's account of the conditions that enable us to choose and act as we do, Heidegger sees his analysis of human agency as a means to achieve his *primary* end of clarifying and coming to terms with the meaning of being. As he puts it: 'We shall proceed towards the concept of being by way of an interpretation of a special entity, Dasein, in which we shall arrive at the horizon for the understanding of being and for the possibility of interpreting it.'[5] In

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[2] Haugeland, John, 'Truth and Finitude: Heidegger's Transcendental Existentialism' in *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity*, ed. Wrathall & Malpas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000) p.58-9

[3] Haugeland, p.55

[4] *BT* 264/221

[5] *BT* 63/39

order to arrive at the horizon for an understanding of being, Heidegger breaks the first part of *Being and Time* down into three divisions in which he begins with a 'Preparatory Fundamental Analysis of Dasein', moves to a discussion of 'Dasein and Temporality', and concludes with a study of 'Time and Being'. However in *Being and Time* as we have it, Heidegger decided against publishing the third division in which the decisive turn from Dasein to being was set to take place, because the concepts and methods employed in his text prevented it.[6] So after offering an extremely dense and detailed interpretation of what it means to be a human being, Heidegger asks if the question of being 'can...be answered by going back to the *primordial constitution-of-being* of that Dasein by which being is understood?'[7] In the 'Letter on Humanism' Heidegger writes:

> The adequate execution and completion of this other thinking that abandons subjectivity is surely made more difficult by the fact that in the publication of *Being and Time* the third division of the first part, "Time and Being," was held back. Here everything is reversed. The division in question was held back because thinking failed in the adequate saying of this turning and did not succeed with the help of the language of metaphysics.[8]

And in a late publication that bears the same title as the withheld division of *Being and Time*, Heidegger goes so far as to say that his early 'transcendental manner of questioning still speaks the language of metaphysics,' so 'the fundamental experience of *Being and Time* is that of the oblivion of being.'[9] This, of course, is a remarkable claim, given that Heidegger's stated aim in his *magnum opus* is to work out the meaning of being. It also implies that Heidegger's analysis of human agency in *Being and Time* thwarted his attempt to turn from Dasein to being. And in chapter 3, I argue that the conservative trend I see in *Being and Time* coincides with what Heidegger later saw as the oblivion of being at work in that text: namely, that human activity (and Heidegger's reliance on concepts relating to it) obscures the potentialities-for-being through which entities and aspects of the world that are currently concealed could be revealed.

Heidegger, alas, does very little to clarify what he meant when characterizing the limits of *Being and Time* in terms of metaphysics, subjectivity, or the oblivion of being, so I begin chapter 3 by explaining what metaphysics and subjectivity mean for the later Heidegger and briefly state why he believes they lead to the oblivion of being. I then go on to offer a fairly detailed account of the relation between Dasein and being as it is presented in *Being and Time* and developed in the later essays in order to pin-down what is obliterated in *Being and Time's* oblivion of being. From here I demonstrate why the early Heidegger's emphasis on choice and action engenders the oblivion of being by making connections between *Being and Time* and the later Heidegger's critique of technology. In doing so, I draw on Bret Davis' alternate readings of resoluteness to show how the idea of subjectivity and the jargon of authenticity prevented Heidegger's intended turn from Dasein to being. Finally, I look at the later Heidegger's effort to come to terms with the meaning of being through a revised vocabulary of releasement, and I succinctly discuss the meditative thinking that makes cultural transformation and artistic creativity possible.

Chapter 4 turns to Heidegger's writings on language, truth, and art. In 'The Origin of the Work of Art', Heidegger tells us 'art is truth setting itself to work.'[10] The truth that sets itself to work in the work of art is not what we traditionally understand by truth – i.e., the accurate representation of reality through a certain idea, image, or sign –

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[6] See *BW* 231, *CP* 317, *TB* 29, *N4* 141
[7] *BT* 488/437
[8] *BW* 231
[9] *TB* 29
[10] *PLT* 38 [Hereafter OWA]

but rather the disclosure of reality that is achieved in the presentation of a world. Heidegger offers two key examples of this phenomenon in OWA: a painting of a pair of peasant shoes by Vincent Van Gogh and an Ancient Greek temple. According to Heidegger 'the Van Gogh painting is the disclosure of what the equipment, the pair of peasant shoes, *is* in truth,'[11] and in this instance truth sets itself to work in the work of art by clearly presenting the peasant shoes as the peasant shoes that they are in relation to the soil, grain, and other aspects of a peasant woman's world. Of the Greek temple Heidegger remarks:

> It is the temple-work that first fits together and at the same time gathers around itself the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire the shape of destiny for human being. The all-governing expanse of this open relational context is the world of this historical people... [And through the temple-work,] tree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are.[12]

Whereas the Van Gogh painting explicitly presents the peasant shoes by making them stand out against other features of the peasant woman's world, the Greek temple serves as a reference point which constitutes a specific historical world and all that appears in it. Speaking of the temple, Heidegger says 'the work opens up a *world* and keeps it abidingly in force,' and it is precisely 'the temple, in its standing there, [that] first gives to things their look and to men their outlook on themselves.'[13] Here truth sets itself to work in the work of art by creating a context in which entities, aspects, and dimensions of reality are concurrently determined and disclosed as the entities, aspects, and dimensions that they are. Despite the apparent lack of wordiness in painting, architecture, and other forms of art, Heidegger brings OWA to a close with the assertion: '*All art*, as the letting happen of the advent of the truth of what is, is, as such, *essentially poetry*.'[14] The reduction of *all* our creative activities to poetry is related to the communication achieved via their symbolic form as well as a function of their ability to 'bring beings into being' through a 'poetic projection' that 'sets itself into the work as figure' and 'thrusts up the unfamiliar and extraordinary and at the same time thrusts down the ordinary and what we believe to be such.'[15] In fact, Heidegger says 'language itself is poetry in the essential [disclosive] sense,' and he claims that 'language alone brings what is, as something that is, into the open for the first time.'[16] As a totality of signs organized in a system of reference relations, 'language, by *naming* beings for the first time, first brings beings to word and appearance' and 'only this naming nominates beings *to* their being *from out of* their being.'[17] Heidegger even goes so far as to cite the final line in Stefan George's poem, 'Words', which reads: 'Where the word breaks off no thing may be,'[18] but in OWA Heidegger never shows us what enables signs, names, and words to bring beings into being. Therefore, chapter 4 looks back to *Being and Time* and forward to Heidegger's later essays on language to see how truth happens, how words work, and how words work as works of art.

Specifically, chapter 4 begins with a brief summary of Heidegger's considered views on truth and then maps them onto to OWA to tentatively sketch what is at stake

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[11] *PLT* 35
[12] *PLT* 41
[13] *PLT* 43, 42
[14] *PLT* 70
[15] *PLT* 72-3
[16] *PLT* 72, 71
[17] *PLT* 71
[18] *OWL* 60

when truth sets itself to work in works of art. I then offer a reading of propositional truth and our disclosedness in *Being and Time* that explicitly commits the early Heidegger to a pragmatic view of language whereby our intelligible use of words presupposes the meaningful disclosure of our world achieved in our practical activities. The idea here is that if entities are concealed, then no sense can be made of our assertions indicating or failing to indicate said entities. Although the disclosure of entities may be necessary for assertions to indicate them, the unconcealment of entities is not sufficient for explaining how the meaning of a specific sign is fixed to them. What is more, basing our intelligible use of words on the meaningful disclosure of entities achieved in our practical activities raises doubts about the extent to which 'language alone brings what is, as something that is, into the open for the first time.'[19] Thus, I complicate the picture of language presented in *Being and Time* by looking at Heidegger's concept of discourse as well as a communicative approach to language in order to elucidate the distinct set of norms that fix our words to dimensions of our world disclosed through our purposive activities. The fact that our meaningful use of words presupposes discursive norms that swing free from practical activity does, however, open the door to a constitutive model of language in which the allegedly meaningful disclosure of entities achieved in our practical activities presupposes our meaningful use of language. Much of Heidegger's later work is consistent with the constitutive view, and I endorse it insofar as it can explain his claim that language alone brings beings into being. But this approach to language appears to do away with the idea that entities must be intelligibly disclosed before our assertions can indicate them, and thus calls into question Heidegger's adherence to the traditional notion of propositional truth. In an attempt to address this criticism of the constitutive view, I examine the way thinkers and poets alter our discursive norms through formal indications and poetic projections to create new potentialities-for-being and in doing so I show that the origin and subsequent operation of propositional truth is best understood as the determination of an otherwise indeterminate signification through the filling of an empty indication or projection. I bring chapter 4 to a close by returning to a theme set out at the beginning of this thesis and briefly show that any successful presentation of an alternative potentiality-for-being by thinkers, artists, or, to use Heidegger's term, 'poets' requires that others recognize said potentiality as useful, valuable, or necessary and thus be willing to support the institutions that sustain said potentiality.

Finally, I briefly considering the moral implications of the account of freedom as response-ability sketched above. Specifically, treating freedom as a function of our ability to respond to the disparate demands other people place on us suggests that the value of an agent's action is bound up with the extent to which others see those actions as satisfying certain wants and needs. Tracing the value of our actions to the disparate demands others place upon us implies that moral worth is rooted in our responsibility to others. But it also raises the specter of moral relativism – different cultural and historical communities tend to recognize different ways of life as worthwhile – and its corollary: that the good in any given community is simply an expression of power-relations between a certain set of people. With that said, this thesis comes to a close by pointing in the direction of future research: namely, exploring the extent to which ethical relations between humans originates in the responsibility we have for one another and suggesting that the work of Emmanuel Levinas, Alistair MacIntyre, and Isaiah Berlin show that the goods pursued in various human communities is not purely a function of power-relations within those communities, but a response to the disparate wants and needs human beings have *as* human beings.

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[19] *PLT* 71

1. Conservative Tendencies:
Authenticity and Agency in *Being and Time*

Heidegger begins *Being and Time* by stating that the 'aim in the following treaties is to work out the question of the meaning of *being*.'[20] In order to clarify this question and ultimately offer an interpretation of the meaning of being, Heidegger provides a detailed analysis of the being to whom and understanding of being belongs: the human being.[21] Briefly, the idea is that by understanding the being of an entity that understands being we come to understand what it means to understand being *simpliciter*. As Heidegger puts it: 'Understanding of being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein's being,' such that 'with and through [Dasein's] being, this [understanding of] being is disclosed to it.'[22]

Human beings understand being through what Heidegger calls our 'potentialities-for-being.' Potentialities-for-being refer to the social roles and norms that determine our being and the being of entities present in our world. If I take up the activity of building houses, then I am a carpenter for whom hammers, nails, skill saws, tape measures, and tool belts appear as equipment that allow me to complete my task.[23] The fact that who I *am* and what entities *are* is determined by the potentialities-for-being that I adopt implies that *being* is internally related to my choices and actions. And this, in turn, suggests that the meaning of being can be worked out through an analysis of human agency.

With that said, I read *Being and Time* as a perspicacious account of the conditions that enable us to choose and act as we do. Specifically, I take Division I's discussion of worldliness, being-in, and being-with as exemplifying the public conditions of action, whereas I interpret Division II's description of anxiety, guilt, death, and conscience as indicating the individuating conditions of choice. But the aim of this chapter is to build upon Heidegger's account of being-with by arguing that our freedom is a function of our ability to recognize and respond to the opportunities that others make available as well as the demands they place upon us.

Any attempt to identify the source of our agency with our relation to others is, however, confronted with two difficulties. First, the bulk of Heidegger's work on being-with in Division I is dedicated to a discussion of social norms that facilitate our inauthentic tendency to turn-away from the fact that we are always in a position to choose our particular path in life. Second, Heidegger's analysis of choice and action in Division II is often read as a depiction of the authentic circumstances that free us from the social norms of our community. Hence, after sketching the worldliness of the world

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[20] *BT* 22/4 Macquarrie and Robinson translate the German noun *Sein* as capital-B 'Being', but since being is not normally capitalized in English, and in an attempt to eliminate the temptation to associate 'being' with God, I prefer to translate *Sein* as small-b 'being' and will therefore modify all translations accordingly.

[21] Heidegger's word for human being is *Dasein*, literally, there-being, and it is meant to capture the fact that the essence of a particular human is determined by the space, place, or world in which she exists. For the purposes of this thesis, I will leave *Dasein* untranslated and follow Heidegger's claim that 'each of us is himself' Dasein (*BT* 27/7). But for a 'free-wheeling' interpretation of Dasein that attempts to capture Heidegger's reluctance to identify Dasein with standard terms that refer to individual human beings such that 'chemistry is Dasein – and so are philately, Christmas, and Cincinnati' see John Haugeland, 'Heidegger on Being a Person,' *Nous*, XVI (1982): 15-26.

[22] *BT* 32/12 [I have removed the italics in the first half of this quotation]

[23] Carpentry, of course, is just one of many potential examples. But it is important to note that potentialities-for-being are not restricted to employment or career related activities. Haugeland captures this nicely when writes 'Dasein's possibilities are ways in which it *can* live,' and goes on to say "we' (end-of-millennium westernes, say) *can* use money to buy food and clothing of our choosing, *cannot* run around in public without clothes, *must* pay taxes, and *need* licenses if we are to operate automobiles.' See Haugeland, 'Truth and Finitude: Heidegger's Transcendental Existentialism' in *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity*, ed. Wrathall & Malpas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000) p.58

in which we act and emphasizing my account of being-with, I consider Heidegger's notion of inauthenticity and authenticity, respectively. I then argue that our tendency toward inauthenticity can be overcome and that authenticity actually involves cultivating a clear sense of the potentialities present in our cultural inheritance and then choosing to make one of those potentialities one's own. Finally, I indicate a conservative aspect in Heidegger's account of our authentic existence: that is, characterizing agency in terms of our ability to clarify and adopt one of the potentialities present in our community implies that our choices are restricted to options that are currently available. Thus, the concept of authentic action fails to capture the freedom we associate with cultural transformation or artistic creativity.

The Worldliness of Dasein's World

Again, Heidegger's aim in *Being and Time* is to question the meaning of being. To do this, Heidegger claims that 'we must make a being – the inquirer – perspicuous in his own being.'[24] This being, which Heidegger says 'each of us is himself and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its being,'[25] is Dasein. We, however, are not simply one being amongst others; for unlike other beings, we relate questioningly our being, our being is a question for us. And if, as Heidegger asserts, the question of the meaning of being is internally related to our being, then clarifying our being amounts to a clarification of the question of the meaning of being itself.

Given the internal relation between Dasein and being, Division I of *Being and Time* offers a 'preparatory analysis' of Dasein. According to this analysis, we always find ourselves in a meaningful world that specifies our identity, the appearance of entities, and the horizon of our future potentialities. In Heideggerese, the being of Dasein is a unified whole comprised of being 'ahead-of-itself-being-already-(in-the-world) as being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world)'.[26]

This interpretation is based on an analysis of the world of our everyday activities. Heidegger turns to everydayness because it is closest to us, but also because such a study avoids reducing us to objects. Objects, for Heidegger, are 'present-at-hand' entities that stand before us as self-sufficient substances with fixed essences.[27] Dasein, however, 'is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very being, that being is an *issue* for it.'[28] Stating that our being is an issue suggests that our identity as, say, a baker or a butcher, is questionable and open to change. And the fact that our identity is open to change means that we are the 'entity whose *what* is precisely to be and nothing but to be.'[29] In short, 'the essence of Dasein as an entity is its existence,'[30] which implies that Heidegger's attempt to perspicuously explicate our essence must focus on our concrete existence.

Unlike present-at-hand entities that have specific properties and a set location in three-dimensional space, we move, breathe, and live in a meaningful world. Our 'being-in-the-world' is a matter of engaging with entities and interacting with others in a context

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[24] *BT* 27/7
[25] *BT* 27/7
[26] *BT* 237/192
[27] By 'self-sufficient substance' I simply mean what Descartes means by 'substance': namely, 'a thing which exists in such a way as to depend on no other thing for its existence.' See Descartes, *Selected Philosophical Writings*, trans. J Cottingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) p.177. For a detailed account of the 'present-at-hand' and Heidegger's various (and confusing) uses of the concept, see Denis McManus, *Heidegger and the Measure of Truth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) p.51-75
[28] *BT* 32/12
[29] *HCT* 110
[30] *BT* 345/298

we call home. Crucially for Heidegger, our everyday existence is not essentially a question of explicitly knowing that such and such is the case: that is, it is not characterized by constantly and consciously breaking down the world into a collection of present-at-hand entities and then using knowledge of them to go about our activities. Instead, it is a case of fluid, concernful activity that springs from our particular ends and aims. In fact, Heidegger goes so far as to say 'that knowing is a mode of Dasein founded upon being-in-the-world,'[31] and his point here is that a knowing subject standing over and against a known object presupposes the meaningful context in which we live and through which our identity is determined and objects disclosed.

Heidegger makes the structure of this meaningful context explicit through an analysis of our environment that he depicts as a working-world: that is, a world in which we work with, work on, and work to produce things. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger calls the entities that we work with 'equipment' or 'ready-to-hand' tools, and they differ from 'present-at-hand' objects insofar as they are understood in their use and not necessarily trough detached epistemic observation.[32] Heidegger picks a hammer as his tool of choice to flesh-out the distinction between 'ready-to-hand' and 'present-at-hand' and to illustrate the set-up of our work-world in general. The activity of hammering, Heidegger tells us,

> does not simply have knowledge about the hammer's character as equipment, but it has appropriated this equipment in a way that could not be more suitable... The less we just stare at the hammer-thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is – as equipment. The hammering itself uncovers the specific 'manipulability' of the hammer. The kind of being which equipment possesses – in which it manifests itself in its own right – we call *readiness-to-hand*.[33]

The lesson that Heidegger wants his readers to draw from this discussion is that a ready-to-hand hammer is revealed as the hammer that it is in its circumspective use; it is, in other words, the exercise of a practical skill and not abstract analysis that discloses the hammer as a the tool that it is. More importantly, Heidegger hopes to show us that a hammer is what it is in its use only through certain relations and that these relations are indicative of and amount to the structural basis of our environment.

Our concernful and circumspective dealings with a hammer in a workplace allude to a 'totality of equipment' without which the activity of hammering and the hammer itself would make no sense. A hammer is a hammer only in relation to nails, skill saws, tape measures, tool-belts, and the other pieces of equipment that make up the working world. But a hammer also is what it is only insofar as it refers to the 'whereof' or the raw materials that it works upon, say, wood or steel, and the 'towards-which' or end product produced in its use, like a piece of furniture or the frame of a house. Finally, Heidegger tells us that a hammer is intelligible as a hammer insofar as it points to a 'public world' from whence it was manufactured and to which the products of its workings will be sent. Taken together the 'totality of equipment', 'whereof', 'towards-which' and 'public world' add up to our work-world and the necessary relationships that reveal the hammer as the ready-to-hand entity that it is.

Although the examination of hammering up to now has uncovered the structural basis of our environment, Heidegger introduces three additional concepts – involvement,

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[31] *BT* 90/62

[32] For an account and summary of the various interpretations of 'ready-to-hand' in the secondary literature, see McManus 68-75

[33] *BT* 98/69

for-the-sake-of-which, and significance – to clarify and explicate the purposive aspects of our meaningful world. Following Heidegger's talk of hammering, we can say that a hammer is involved in a particular activity to the extent that it refers to other entities involved in the same activity. So, for example, a hammer is involved in the activity of building a house insofar as it is held in the hand of a carpenter and used to hit nails into a piece of wood for the purpose of putting up a wall. The involvement of a hammer, in other words, refers to the referential totality needed for-the-sake-of building a wall. But putting up a wall is not the end of the involvement chain:

> With hammering there is an involvement in making something fast; with making something fast, there is an involvement in protection against bad weather; and this protection 'is' for the sake of providing shelter for Dasein – that is to say, for the sake of a possibility of Dasein's being.[34]

Here Heidegger shows us that the final for-the-sake-of-which in involved activity refers to a potentiality-for-being; and in the case of building a home, it refers to our *being* safe in stormy weather. Yet in order to engage in the activity of building a house at all, we must understand *both* the activities involved in building such a house *and* the fact that building and dwelling are potentialities for us. Heidegger calls this understanding significance, and in his technical terminology the working-environment that exemplifies the worldliness of our world can be summed up as a totality of involvements that organize our significant activity and that reveal entities and aspects of our world as the entities and aspects that they are by pointing to a purpose that is tied to one of our potentialities-for-being.

At this point in the analysis it should be clear that the life-world of our everyday activities is distinct from the world understood as a collection of ready-to-hand entities or the totality of entities that can be present-at-hand. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger distinguishes between four different meanings of the term 'world':

> 1. 'World' is used as an ontical concept, and signifies the totality of those entities which can be present-at-hand within the world.
> 2. 'World' functions as an ontological term, and signifies the being of those entities which we have just mentioned. Indeed, 'world' can become a term for any realm which encompasses a multiplicity of entities: for instance, when one talks of the 'world' of a mathematician, 'world' signifies the realm of possible objects of mathematics.
> 3. 'World' can be understood in another ontical sense – not, however, as those entities which Dasein essentially is not and which can be encountered within-the-world, bur rather the *'wherein'* a factical Dasein as such can be said to 'live'. 'World' has here a pre-ontological existentiell signification. Here again there are different possibilities: 'world' may stand for the 'public' we-world, or one's 'own' closest domestic environment.
> 4. Finally, 'world' designated the ontological-existential concept of *worldliness*. Worldliness itself may have as its modes whatever structural wholes any special 'worlds' may have at the time; but it embraces in itself the *a priori* character of worldliness in general.[35]

This classification of worlds rests on the 'ontological difference' between beings and being: that is, ontic-sciences are concerned with beings or particular *facts* about beings, whereas ontology is concerned with the *being* of beings or 'that on the basis of which entities are already understood.'[36] Heidegger's ontic-ontological distinction is mirrored in his existentiell-existentiale distinction: 'existentiell' refers to *facts* about our existence,

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[34] *BT* 116/84
[35] *BT* 93/64-5
[36] *BT* 25-6/6

whereas 'existentiale' denotes the *being* of Dasein. With ontological difference in place, 'World-1' can be seen as the sum total of all present-at-hand entities, say, protons, neutrons, electrons, quarks, photons, the properties they have, the ways they interact, etc. 'World-2' amounts to the scientific laws or physical theories which tell us *that* and *what* present-at-hand entities are. 'World-3' stands for the existentiell worlds we find ourselves in, such as the 'scientific world' or the 'world of construction.' And 'World-4' refers to the various features of our existentiale structure (worldliness, being-in, being-with, etc.) that enable functioning of our existentiell worlds. Although Heidegger's appeal to our work environment amounts to a description of an existentiell world, he is trying to get us to see that an evolving network of ends and relations present certain entities and aspects of the world and govern the happenings of our daily activities. The worldliness of the world is, in other words, a regulated referential totality that determines the meaningful presentation of its component parts and helps define the identity of existent Daseins. And the fact that our essence is defined by living in a world where we actively engage with entities is precisely what distinguishes our existence from that of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand things.

Being-With: Response-ability and Normativity

Dasein's world is not simply one in which we deal with inanimate objects, but one in which we encounter other human beings. And after elucidating the worldliness of the world in which we act, Heidegger considers the extent to which others facilitate our agency. Specifically, Heidegger examines how others show up within our work-world as the suppliers and consumers that enable our activities, and then offers an account of the generality and normativity that sets the standard for all our intelligible interactions with the world. When explicating these ideas in this section, I build upon but also go beyond anything that is explicitly stated in *Being and Time* by arguing that our agency is a function of our ability to recognize and respond to the possibilities that others make available along with the demands they place upon us.

In order to illustrate the fact that others undergird our actions, Heidegger returns to an earlier discussion of our average everydayness. He writes:

> In our 'description' of that environment which is closest to us – the work-world of the craftsman, for example – the outcome was that along with the equipment to be found when one is at work, those others for whom the work is destined are 'encountered too'. If this is ready-to-hand, then there lies in the kind of being which belongs to it (that is, in its involvement) an essential assignment or reference to possible wearers, for instance, for whom it should be cut to the figure. Similarly, when material is put to use, we encounter its producer or supplier as one who 'serves' well or badly.[37]

Through this example Heidegger demonstrates that others show up as the kind of being from whom we receive the materials with which we work and for whom the finished products of our labour are designed. For example, my ability to take up carpentry depends on others supplying me with the lumber and tools required to build a house, but it also requires a consumer who is willing to purchase the home once it is finished. As suppliers and consumers, others provide us with the various potentialities-for-being that dictate our identity and disclose aspects of our world. And whilst this may look like a trivial point, it actually indicates of the fact that our potentialities-for-being are related to a set of others who enable our agency.

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[37] *BT* 153/118

To fully appreciate the extent to which our agency is facilitated by relationships with others, it is important to remember that we are always in a position to alter the course of our existence by adopting a different potentiality-for-being. Potentialities-for-being can now be taken as a series of social roles made possible by others – we can, for example, only ever take-up a teaching post at a university if there are students who want to be taught, and we can only ever be a mechanic if people need their cars fixed – and our freedom is found in our ability to recognize and respond to the opportunities that others present us with and the claims they foist upon us.[38] In other words, we are only ever able to own up to the fact that our being is an issue for us by responding to a distinct set of potentialities that others make available, and Heidegger calls this response-ability solicitude.

Solicitude, for Heidegger, is 'a state of Dasein's being.'[39] He introduces the term by distinguishing it from the concern we have for ready-to-hand entities in our work-environment:

> Concern is a character-of-being which being-with cannot have as its own, even though being-with, like concern, is a *being toward* entities encountered within the world. But those entities toward which Dasein as being-with comports itself do not have the kind of being which belongs to equipment ready-to-hand; they are themselves Dasein. These entities are not objects of concern, but rather of *solicitude*.[40]

'Solicitude' is Maquarrie and Robinson's translation of *Fürsorge*, and in their notes on the translation they say that *Fürsorge* is 'the kind of care which we find in "parental care" or "taking care of the children," or even in the kind of care which is administered by welfare agencies.'[41] Heidegger, for his part, says "'welfare work", as a factical social arrangement, is grounded in Dasein's state of being as being-with.'[42] And he continues: 'Being for, against, or without one another, passing one another by, not "mattering" to one another – these are possible ways of solicitude.'[43] The latter phenomenon, however, are 'deficient and indifferent modes that characterize average everyday being-with-one-another.'[44] And Heidegger goes on to offer two 'extreme possibilities' of solicitude's positive modes: *leaping in*, and *leaping ahead*. Leaping in 'takes over for the other that with which he is to concern himself,' whereas leaping ahead doesn't so much take over the others concerns but 'helps the other to become transparent to himself *in* his care and to become free for it.'[45] Heidegger captures the distinction between these two phenomena in terms of domination (leaping in) and liberation (leaping ahead).[46] But it seems that only in the 'extreme case' is leaping in a form of domination. And for the most part I imagine leaping in for someone involves taking care of them without necessarily taking away the

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[38] I have followed Heidegger's lead by offering examples of social roles drawn from our work-world, but my status as a Canadian citizen is also underwritten by publically endorsed institutions that broadly shape how I view political events and cultural happenings around the world. My place as a son or brother is determined by my interactions with family members and does much to shape my understanding of loyalty and love. And as we shall see in Chapter 4, even the language I use and the way the world shows up through it is a socially regulated phenomenon. Of course, we do not choose our citizenship, family, or natural language the way we choose between professions. But it is possible to renounce citizenship, disown family, or play with language such that when doing so we adopt a different way of being-in-the-world.

[39] *BT* 159/122

[40] *BT* 157/121

[41] *BT* 157n4

[42] *BT* 158/121

[43] *BT* 158/121

[44] *BT* 158/121

[45] *BT* 158-9/122

[46] *BT* 159/122

issues and objects of their concern. In any event, and as indicated earlier, our agency is found in our ability to recognize and respond to the opportunities that others present as well as the demands they place upon us. And this explains Heidegger's oft overlooked assertion that 'Dasein "is" essentially for the sake of others.'[47]

Although the potentialities-for-being that we adopt are a response to possibilities that others make available, social roles are not designed for any particular individual since others of a similar education and ability can equally take them up. Heidegger spells this out when he writes: 'The subject character of one's own Dasein and that of others is to be defined existentially – that is, in terms of certain ways in which *one* may be.'[48] Similarly, he says:

> The others who are thus 'encountered' in a ready-to-hand, environmental context of equipment are not somehow added on in thought to some thing which is proximally just present-at-hand; such 'things' are encountered from out of the world in which they are ready-to-hand for others – a world which is always mine too in advance.[49]

Here we see that our potentialities-for-being are impersonal. And the public character of our environment calls attention to the fact that being-with-others is not simply based on the services others provide or seek to exact from us, but also rests on the related claim that our interaction with equipment is only intelligible if others recognize and repeat it. To wit, others are always with us insofar as the intelligibility of our activities presuppose the recognition and repetition of those engagements by other human beings.

The public nature of our world can be taken in both an ontological and ontic sense. As an *ontological* aspect of our existence – that is, as a necessary structural feature of human beings that enables entities to show up as the entities that they are – publicness underwrites the efficient functioning of our activities by ensuring that each individual interacts with entities in a similar fashion. Publicness, Heidegger says, 'controls every way in which the world and Dasein get interpreted', and through publicness 'we have the *same thing* in view, because it is in *the same* averageness that we have a common understanding of what is said.'[50] The common understanding implicit in our engagement with entities indicates the extent to which others must recognize those activities (as useful, valuable, necessary, etc) and open up a world or institutional space in which we can undertake them in the first place. Of course, whether or not our activities are actually recognized depends on the specific situation that we find ourselves in. And this speaks to the *ontic* inflection of our relations with others: i.e., that we always find ourselves in a concrete or particular public world that regulates the various endeavors that we can take up. Lastly, our meaningful interactions with the world require a certain amount of iterability: that is, our activities must, in principle and from an *ontological* point of view, be repeatable by both ourselves and others in different contexts in order for any sort of publicness to obtain. But again, the acts that are actually repeated depend on the *ontic* circumstances in which we dwell.

In less technical language, the public character of our world along with the recognition-repetition condition that underwrite its operation are best understood as the *generality* and *normativity* exemplified by the entities that show up within it.[51] A chisel, for example, is a chisel to everyone familiar with such a tool. It continues to be a chisel no

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[47] *BT* 160/123
[48] *BT* 163/126
[49] *BT* 154/118
[50] *BT* 165/127, 212/168
[51] For a detailed discussion of the generality and normativity of equipment see Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991) p.151-4

matter which one of us uses it. And it can be picked up by anyone at any time and employed in a variety of ways. Needless to say, there are limits to the coherent use of equipment: we can obviously use a chisel to carve a piece of wood or pry open a can of paint; but it would surely strike others as absurd if we attempted to chop a tree with it. In sum, normal or appropriate ways to use a chisel exist. And though these norms may change from place to place, such standards are often expressed in nothing more complex than the statement: 'This is just what *one* does with chisels.'

Whilst others provide us with the potentialities-for-being from which we choose and set the standards for our intelligible interactions with the world, most of Heidegger's work on being-with in *Being and Time* is devoted to a description of the inauthenticity in which social norms stifle our agency and dissemble the entities present within our world. Worse still, Heidegger's explicit discussion of authentic choice and action in *Being and Time* is often interpreted in existentialist terms such that we assert our freedom through questioning and transcending public practice. Since Heidegger's account of inauthenticity and authenticity stand as potential objections to my claim that our freedom is a function of our ability to respond to others, I quickly show that *both* our inauthentic and authentic existences are made possible by others through a reading of *das Man*. From here I go on to examine our tendency to lead an inauthentic life that *das Man* enables, but also look at the conditions that allow us to overcome this tendency. After explicating the conditions that enable our authentic existence, I consider an existentialist account of authenticity as 'inherently destructive' of *das Man*. Finally, against this existentialist interpretation I argue that authenticity is actually a matter of making *das Man* mine.

Being-with: *Das Man*

Heidegger introduces his conceptions of inauthenticity and authenticity through a discussion of *das Man*. *Das Man* is the collective and impersonal other who establishes the norms that enable all our meaningful activity, and Heidegger introduces the term in what is clearly one of the most polemical passages in his text:

> Dasein, as everyday being-with-one-another, stands in *subjection* to others. It itself *is* not; its being has been taken away by the others. Dasein's everyday possibilities of being are for the others to dispose of as they please. These others, moreover, are not *definite* others. On the contrary, any other can represent them. What is decisive is just that inconspicuous domination by others which has already been taken over unawares from Dasein as being-with. One belongs to the others oneself and enhances their power. 'The others' whom one thus designates in order to cover up the fact of one's belonging to them essentially oneself, are those who proximally and for the most part '*are there*' in everyday being-with-one-another. The 'who' is not this one, not that one, not oneself, not some people, and not the sum of them all. The 'who' is the neuter, the 'they' [*das Man*].[52]

In the paragraphs that follow, Heidegger goes on to speak about 'the dictatorship of *das Man*' where 'we take pleasure and enjoy ourselves the way *they* take pleasure; we read, see and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge;' and so on.[53] He says *das Man* effectively levels down all possibilities of being.[54] And finally, Heidegger believes that the average everyday intelligibility offered by *das Man* has a tendency to undermine our

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[52] *BT* 164/126
[53] *BT* 164/127
[54] *BT* 165/127

genuine interaction with ourselves and our world. Through publicness, Heidegger claims, 'everything gets obscured.'[55]

To truly understand Heidegger's apparent antipathy towards *das Man*, it is crucial to distinguish between the 'they' as an aspect of our existentiale structure, the existentiell manifestation of that structure, and the way we relate to the existentiell manifestations.[56] According to Heidegger, '*das Man is an existentiale.*'[57] And as an existentiale, *das Man* stands for Dasein's being-with-others insofar as *das Man* grounds our ability to take a stand on our existence by providing us with possibilities and also sets the standards through which the world is presented to us. Dasein, as Heidegger puts it, 'is for the sake of the "they" in an everyday manner [since our potentialities-for-being are set down by and point to others], and the "they" itself articulates the referential context of significance.'[58] Heidegger can hardly deride a basic feature of our existentiale structure, but *das Man's* existentiell manifestations are leveling. 'As something factical,' Heidegger says,

> Dasein's projection of itself understandingly is in each case already alongside a world that has been discovered. From this world it takes its possibilities, and it does so first in accordance with the way things have been interpreted by the 'they.' This interpretation has already restricted the possible options of choice to what lies within the range of the familiar, the attainable, the respectable – that which is fitting and proper. This leveling off of Dasein's possibilities to what is proximally at its everyday disposal also results in a dimming down of the possible as such. The average everydayness of concern becomes blind to its possibilities, and tranquilizes itself with that which is merely 'actual.'[59]

Whilst recognition and repetition are conditions of our intelligible interaction with the world, others may simply fail to recognize or repeat a particular activity and thereby dim down the various potentialities-for-being available to us – and it seems that a portion of Heidegger's apparent disdain for *das Man* is directed at the factical they's ability to restrict the set of possibilities actually open to Dasein. More importantly, Heidegger's hostility towards *das Man* is a product of the play between our primordial freedom – that our being is an issue for us – and the way we relate to that freedom. Dasein, Heidegger tells us, 'is in each case essentially its own possibility,' and 'it can, in its very being, choose itself and win itself; [but] it can also lose itself and never win itself.'[60] When we choose and win ourselves, we exist *authentically*: that is, when we own up to the fact that our being is an issue by choosing one of the potentialities-for-being that *das Man* makes available. But we are also capable of being *inauthentic* insofar as we disown our ability to choose by letting the *das Man* endorsed everyday way of going about things carry us into the future without any critical attention. And it appears to be the *inauthenticity* that *das Man* enables – and not *das Man* itself – that Heidegger fulminates against.[61]

For all of Heidegger's talk of dictatorship, leveling-down, and obscurantism, *das Man* is part of Dasein's positive constitution and an aspect of both our inauthentic and authentic existence. As an *existentiell* modification of *das Man*, our *inauthentic* 'they-self'

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[55] *BT* 165/127

[56] I say '*apparent*' antipathy towards *das Man*, because Heidegger often insists that his discussion of *das Man* (and related phenomenon) is value neutral. See *BT* 211, 219-20, 223-4/167, 175-6, 179

[57] *BT* 167/129

[58] *BT* 167/129

[59] *BT* 239/194

[60] *BT* 9/42

[61] It should be noted that in §27 of *Being and Time* Heidegger blurs the distinction between *das Man* as an *existentiale* and its *existentiell* manifestations to the point at which the text can be read as if inauthenticity is an *existentiale*. For such a reading, see Richard Wolin, *The Politics of Being* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990) p.16-65

gives into our tendency to lose our grip on the world through the general interpretation of the world that *das Man* offers. And we succumb to the stable, readily available social roles that *das Man* provides to the point at which we forget that we are in a position to choose our particular path in life. Yet as an *existentiell* modification of *das Man*, we as an *authentic* 'being-one's-self' clarify our situation, take hold of its distinctive character, own up to our ability to choose, and effectively make the 'they' mine by projecting one of the available potentialities-for-being into an indeterminate future.[62] Briefly, our 'they-self' is settled into our everyday way of doing things, but as a 'being-one's-self' we are never absolutely at home in our social role. And to apprehend our tendency or ability to lead an inauthentic or authentic life, we need to examine the way *das Man* relates to falling, fallenness, anxiety, guilt, death, conscience, and anticipatory-resoluteness.

Inauthenticity: Falling and Fallenness

Inauthenticity, for Heidegger, is a form of 'untruth' that results when we fall into and are absorbed by the activities that define our identity and create the context through which entities and aspects of our world are disclosed. This absorption, Heidegger asserts, 'has mostly the character of being lost in *das Man*,' and he adds that '*because Dasein is essentially falling, its state of being is such that it is in 'untruth.'*'[63] To be in untruth refers to two interrelated phenomena: the fact that falling into a given activity encourages us to turn away from the truth of our existence, and the fallenness of our everyday way of being-in-the-world. Turning away from the truth of our existence amounts to ignoring the fact that our identity is always open to change, whereas the fallenness of our everyday way of being-in-the-world alludes to the ambiguous, implicit, or unquestioned understanding we have of the world when we turn away from ourselves in the course of our involvements. Both our falling into and the fallenness of our everyday activities are characteristic of our inauthentic existence. But in order to appreciate our *tendency* to lead an inauthentic life we need to take a closer look at falling and fallenness.

Falling refers to the fact that we are always engaged in one activity or another, and it is a formal feature of our existentiale structure insofar as activities determine our identity and disclose entities. 'In the kind of handling and being-busy which is absorbed in the thing one is handling,' Heidegger says, 'an essential structure of care – falling – makes itself known.'[64] However, Heidegger also claims that when Dasein falls into a publically available activity 'it gets *entangled* in its own concern,' and 'it can yield to this tendency of falling to such a degree that it thereby cuts itself off from the possibility of returning to itself.'[65] Needless to say, all activities demand that we turn away from ourselves to a certain extent – 'the self must forget itself if, lost in the world of equipment, it is to be able "actually" to go to work and manipulate something'[66] – but when we are *fascinated* with our current concerns we 'not only forget the forgotten but forget the forgetting itself.'[67] To forget the forgetting means that we are so entwined with our everyday activities that we fail to take responsibility for our path in life and just press

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[62] Although Heidegger explicitly refers to *das Man* as in *existentiale* in §27 of *Being and Time*, he does not explicitly refer to Dasein's 'they-self' as an inauthentic *existentiell* modification of *das Man*. Heidegger does, however, compare and contrast the 'they-self' with Dasein's authentic 'being-one's-self', which is an *existentiell* modification of *das Man*, and I think it is charitable to assume that Dasein's inauthentic 'they-self' is also an *existentiell* modification of *das Man*. See *BT* 167-8/129-30.

[63] *BT* 264/222

[64] *BT* 420/369

[65] *HCT* 281

[66] *BT* 405/354

[67] *BP* 290

on with our present publically available activity. Simply pressing on with our given activities, Heidegger says, 'brings Dasein *tranquility*.'[68] Yet as tranquillized, Dasein 'drifts along towards an alienation in which its ownmost potentiality-for-being is hidden from it.'[69] Our ownmost potentiality-for-being is to be that being whose identity is constantly open to change, and this means that fascination with and tranquilization by our everyday activities alienates us from the fact that our existence is ours to choose. And again, when alienated from the truth of our existence we lead an inauthentic life.

Although alienation from the truth of our existence results in an inauthentic relation to ourselves, it also accounts for the untruth or 'fallenness' of our everyday way of being-in-the-world in which entities and aspects of the world are 'precisely the sort of thing that has been uncovered, but at the same time they have been disguised.'[70] Fallenness, for Heidegger, 'means an absorption in being-with-one-another insofar as the latter is guided by idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity,'[71] and Heidegger opens his discussion of idle talk by assuring his readers that the apparent invective is not to be taken in a derogatory way. 'Terminologically', he says, 'it signifies a positive phenomenon which constitutes the kind of being of everyday Dasein's understanding.'[72] As a positive phenomenon, idle talk is indicative of the generality that enables our natural languages to communicate about the world; for in order to communicate with others about our specific situation we must abstract from the specificity of that situation. And in doing so, we detach ourselves from the concrete particularity of our current activity. 'When Dasein maintains itself in idle talk', Heidegger claims, 'it is...cut off from its primary and primordial genuine relationship-of-being towards the world, towards Dasein-with, and towards its very being-in.'[73] And once detached from our primordial engagement with others and the world, we easily slip into 'gossip' or 'passing the word along' – 'a process by which its initial lack of grounds to stand upon becomes aggravated to complete groundlessness.'[74] Groundless gossip fosters a free-floating curiosity through which Dasein 'does not dwell on something definitely and thematically grasped, but prefers characteristically to jump from one thing to another.'[75] Uprooted from our world, it also becomes difficult for us to distinguish genuine understanding from its superficial counterparts, and this ambiguity extends 'not only to the world, but just as much to being-with-one-another as such, and even to Dasein's being towards itself.'[76] In the end, idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity pull us away from the 'mineness' of what Heidegger will later call our 'existential situation' of choice and action such that '[entities] show themselves, but in a mode of semblance.'[77] And we human beings are in untruth through the vague, implicit, and unquestioned understanding of the world that results when we fail to take responsibility for ourselves in the course of our practical activities.

Just as publically available activities encourage us to turn away from the fact that we are always in a position to choose our path in life, so too does the generality of our everyday discourse obscure the possibilities from which we may choose. And Heidegger describes *das Man's* tendency to drag us away from the truths of our existence and existential situation as a 'plunge.' Dasein, Heidegger writes, 'plunges out of itself and into

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[68] *BT* 222/177
[69] *BT* 222/178
[70] *BT* 264/224
[71] *BT* 220/181
[72] *BT* 211/167
[73] *BT* 214/170
[74] *BT* 212/168
[75] *HCT* 276
[76] *BT* 217/173
[77] *BT* 264/222

itself, and into the groundlessness and nullity of inauthentic everydayness.'[78] And then he continues:

> This downward plunge into and within the groundlessness and nullity of the inauthentic being of the "they", has a kind of motion which constantly tears the understanding away from the projecting of authentic possibilities, and into the tranquillized supposition that it possesses everything, or that everything is within reach.[79]

Since the publicness of our everyday activities and the generality of our idle talk plunge us into inauthenticity, it seems that the social norms characteristic of our relationships with others hinder as opposed to facilitate our freedom. And only by analyzing what I called the individuating conditions of agency – anxiety, guilt, death, and conscience – and then examining their connection to *das Man* in anticipatory-resoluteness will we see the extent to which our freedom is a function of our response-ability to others.

Anxiety, Guilt, Death, Conscience

Whilst we are generally absorbed in our activities and lost in *das Man*, anxiety as a 'fundamental attunement' allows us to overcome our immersion in the mundane by indicating the 'nullity' or 'not-at-home-ness' of our existence that enables us to question our current identity and potentially adopt an alternative way of life. In a fit of anxiety, Heidegger tells us, 'everyday familiarity collapses,'[80] and he goes on to say that 'anxiety is anxious in the face of the 'nothing'.'[81] To assert that anxiety is anxious in the face of nothingness means that, in the grip of anxiety, we are not threatened by this or that determinate object, but alarmed by the contingent and questionable character of the potentialities-for-being we inherit as well as the 'not yet' nature of the potentialities that we can project. As Heidegger puts it:

> Anxiousness as an attunement is a way of being-in-the-world; that in the face of which we have anxiety is thrown being-in-the-world; that which we have anxiety about is our potentiality-for-being-in-the-world. Thus the entire phenomenon of anxiety shows Dasein as factically existing being-in-the-world.[82]

Less abstractly, anxiety discloses the fact that our existence is indebted to a past that was not of our making but also that we are responsible for our existence insofar as we can project certain possibilities that our inheritance makes available into an indeterminate future. In the language of Division II, anxiety acts as our conscience by calling us to own-up to our being-guilty and being-towards-death, and it is precisely by owning-up to being the 'null basis of a nullity' that we are able to live an authentic life.[83]

Our existential guilt illustrates the fact that we lack complete control over the situation we find ourselves in. Being-guilty, for Heidegger, amounts to 'being-the-basis

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[78] *BT* 223/178
[79] *BT* 223/178
[80] *BT* 233/189
[81] *BT* 393/343
[82] *BT* 235/191
[83] Heidegger also characterizes anxiety as something that motivates our 'flight' into inauthenticity. See *BT* 228-31/184-6. Hubert Dreyfus and Jane Ruben argue that this makes Heidegger's account of authenticity and inauthenticity incoherent. See Hubert Dreyfus and Jane Ruben's appendix to Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991) p.333-40. For a response that defends the coherency of Heidegger's position, see Taylor Carman's 'Must We Be Inauthentic' in *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity*, ed. Wrathall & Malpas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000) p.13-28

for a being that has been defined by a 'not", which means that 'Dasein is something that has been thrown; it has been brought to its 'there', but *not* of its own accord."[84] As guilty, we are always acting in a world that we did not create but to which we are nevertheless *indebted* for our basic understanding of ourselves as well as our potentialities-for-being. Although we are necessarily conditioned by the world we inherit, the 'thrownness' and 'not' of our existence also speak to the contingency of our situation and our ability to question its significance: that is, our guilt suggests that we are never entirely at home with or identical to our particular potentiality-for-being and therefore we maintain a certain critical distance from that potentiality which allows us to question its importance. The contingency and questionability of our identity is conducive to existential angst; but at the same time they allow us to take responsibility for our existence by deciding which potentialities in our inheritance are of utmost importance to us. Concretely, we take over our past and come to terms with our guilt by projecting a particular possibility into the future. But we are only ever able to own up to our existence if there is a 'not-yet' into which we project – and this 'not-yet' is indicated by our death.

Death, for Heidegger, 'is the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein', and it 'reveals itself as that *possibility which is one's ownmost, which is non-relational, and which is not to be outstripped.*'[85] Death is our 'ownmost', because our very being-in-the-world hangs in the balance. It is 'non-relational' insofar as no one else can die our death for us. Death is 'not to be outstripped', since we cannot escape death. And it is always and only a 'possibility', because death stands before us as a 'not yet' that we will never *actualize* so long as we exists. Heidegger's account of death as our ownmost, non-relational, and not to be outstripped possibility has been questioned on its 'possibility'. Sartre, for example, calls attention to the fact that we cannot experience our own death; for once we are dead, we can't experience anything. And if death stands beyond our experience, it is neither a possibility for us – i.e., a 'not-yet' into which we can project – nor part of our existential structure.[86] Sartre is obviously right to say that death cannot be experienced in the same way that the possibilities of having breakfast or becoming a carpenter can be. Yet he is wrong to suggest that death has no place in our existence, since death not only refers to our end but also indicates the way we relate to that end. In Heidegger's words,

> The 'ending' which we have in view when we speak of death does not signify Dasein's being-at-an-end, but *being-towards-the-end* of this entity. Death is a way to be, which Dasein takes over as soon as it is.[87]

As a phenomenon of life, death individuates: that is, it sheds light on the fact that we are radically incomplete, that the course of our existence is always open to change, and that our very being can be chosen in a way that counts for us. Death also shows us that all our possibilities are conditioned and constrained by impossibility – we are, in other words, always dying insofar as our potentialities-for-being constantly drop away in the face of death[88] – and as our ultimate 'not yet', death discloses the fact that our existence is comprised of and stretched over a series of decisions that add up to our life as a whole. Finally, and like the contingency and questionability brought to light by our guilt, both the indeterminate future that death opens up as well as the steady negation of possibilities that death implies are cause for anxiety. And when taken together with the

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[84] *BT* 329/283-4
[85] *BT* 294/250-1
[86] Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Being and Nothingness*, tr. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1956) p.680-707
[87] *BT* 289/245
[88] For a detailed discussion of death as the constant closing down of our possibilities see Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p.276-284

'not' of our inheritance and the 'not-yet' of our potentialities-for-being reveal us as 'being-the-basis of a nullity (and this being-the-basis is itself null).'[89]

As the null basis of a nullity, we are capable of calling ourselves out of our current concerns and thus of placing ourselves in a position to own up to our existence. This 'call' comes from our conscience and it asserts nothing. '*Conscience*', Heidegger says, '*discourses solely and constantly in the mode of keeping silent*.'[90] The silent nature of the call is characteristic of its source – namely, the nullity at the heart of our existence – and it is precisely the play between our present identity and the structural fact that our identity is always open to change that allow Heidegger to assert that 'the call comes *from* me and yet from *beyond me and over me*.'[91] Simply put, the voice of conscience speaks for the 'nothingness' of our existence by remaining silent and reminding us that we are never entirely at home in our world, because our identity cannot be reduced to the situation we find ourselves in.[92] Unsurprisingly, the call of conscience manifests itself in a moment of anxiety and it is 'what makes it possible first and foremost for Dasein to project itself upon its ownmost *potentiality-for-being*.'[93] In a word, anxiety serves as our conscience by indicating the contingency and indeterminacy of our character and thereby summoning us from our immersion in our activities so that we become an authentic self.

Authenticity: Anticipatory-Resoluteness

We exist authentically when we own up to the truth of our existence: namely, that our being is an issue for us. Dasein, Heidegger says, 'discloses itself to itself in and as its ownmost potentiality-for-being,' and he adds 'this *authentic* disclosedness shows the phenomenon of the most primordial truth in the mode of authenticity.'[94] Owning up to the truth of our existence involves our anticipation of death and the resolution upon a particular potentiality-for-being. Through the anticipation of death we free ourselves from our fascination with the present so that we can take a stand on our existence. But taking a stand on our existence also requires that we clarify our current situation to the point at which we can appropriate a potentiality and project it into the future. Thus, authenticity also entails coming to terms with the truth of the world around us. 'Truth, in the most primordial sense, is Dasein's disclosedness, to which the uncoveredness of entities within-the-world belongs.'[95] The appropriation and projection of a potentiality allows for a certain 'steadfastness' through which we are able to overcome our curiosity and provides a modicum of unity in our otherwise dispersed existence. This steadiness does not, however, demand that we rigidly commit to a specific social role. Rather, it suggests that we must remember that our life is ours to choose and that the choices that

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[89] *BT* 331/285
[90] *BT* 318/273
[91] *BT* 320/275
[92] Stephen Mulhall questions the extent to which we can actually call ourselves out of our inauthentic existence. 'For Heidegger,' he says, 'the voice utters a call that Dasein makes from itself to itself; it is the voice of Dasein's repressed but not extinguished capacity for genuine selfhood. And yet if that capacity is genuinely repressed, how can it possibly speak out?' Mulhall then goes on to suggest that this dilemma is insuperable and that the call must come from another. If, however, the distinction between inauthentic and authentic is one of degree and not kind, and given that our existentiale structure allows for both modes of existence, then it seems that the voice of conscience can be 'repressed' but nevertheless capable of calling out us. In other words, if the battle between our authentic and inauthentic selves is a constant struggle in which neither party absolutely defeats the other, then the 'repressed' party is always in a position to call out. See Stephen Mulhall, *Heidegger and* Being and Time (New York: Routledge, 2005) p.143-4
[93] *BT* 322/277
[94] *BT* 264/221
[95] *BT 265/223*

we make are both a function of our past and an expression of the person we anticipate becoming. Authenticity, in Heidegger's terms, is a matter of 'anticipatory-resoluteness' through which we choose and win ourselves by clarifying our situation and then making or affirming the choices that come to define us as the individuals that we are.

Anticipation bespeaks our ability to understand and direct ourselves towards our ownmost, non-relational, and not to be outstripped possibility: death. In anticipation, Heidegger says, 'one becomes free *for* one's own death,' which means

> one is liberated from one's lostness in those possibilities which may accidentally thrust themselves upon one; and one is liberated in such a way that for the first time one can factically choose among the factical possibilities lying ahead of that possibility which is not to be outstripped.[96]

Though being-towards-death discloses our lostness in *das Man* and brings us face to face with the fact that our being is an issue, our anticipation of death is simply an existentiale or structural possibility that requires a specific existentiell comportment to be actualized. And Heidegger calls this comportment 'resoluteness'.

Heidegger defines resoluteness as '*reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost being-guilty*,' which means 'letting oneself be called forth to one's ownmost *being*-guilty.'[97] Being-guilty, as was noted above, captures the fact that we are indebted to a past that we did not create, but for which we are responsible. We take responsibility for our past by projecting one of the potentialities that our past makes available. Yet in order to genuinely project one possibility over another, we must have a clear view of the possibilities accessible in our situation. So again resoluteness involves a distinctive mode of disclosedness as well as the choice of a specific potentiality-for-being. This distinctive mode of disclosedness is a case of 'Dasein letting itself be summoned out of its lostness in the they,' and Heidegger goes on to say that, 'when resolute, Dasein has brought itself back from falling, and has done so precisely in order to be more authentically "there" in the "moment of *vision*" as regards to the situation which has been disclosed.'[98] Once called out of the idle talk and ambiguity of our average everydayness, we find ourselves in a position to own up to our existence by resolving on a specific possibility, and Heidegger spells out the second aspect of resoluteness by asserting that it 'exists only as a resolution which understandingly projects itself.'[99] Of course, projective understanding intimates our anticipatory relation to death, which means that resoluteness '*harbours in itself authentic being-towards-death, as the possible existentiell modality of its own authenticity*.'[100]

Our anticipation of death along with our resolute projection of a potentiality into the future affords us a certain amount of 'self-constancy' that we are lacking in our inauthentic state. As indicated earlier, our inauthentic existence entails a fascination with our present concerns as well as a curiosity that has us leaping from novelty to novelty, and it is only by '*pulling [ourselves] together* from the *dispersion and disconnectedness* of the very things that have come to pass'[101] that we are able to live an authentic life. We effectively pull ourselves together and achieve some stability when we take a stand on our existence. 'The phenomenon of this authentic potentiality-for-being', Heidegger tells us,

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[96] *BT* 309/264
[97] *BT* 343/297, 353/305
[98] *BT* 345/299, 376/328
[99] *BT* 345/299
[100] *BT* 353/305
[101] *BT* 442/390

> opens our eyes for the *constancy of the self* in the sense of its having achieved some sort of position. *The constancy of the self*, in the double sense of steadiness and steadfastness, is the *authentic* counter-possibility to the non-self-constancy which is characteristic of irresolute falling. Existentially, '*self-constancy*' signifies nothing other than anticipatory resoluteness.[102]

Charles Guignon takes Heidegger's discussion of 'steadiness and steadfastness' to mean that 'an authentic life is lived as a unified flow characterized by cumulativeness and direction.'[103] In fact, he goes on to say that 'such a life is lived as a coherent story,'[104] and 'like a well-crafted story, there is a beginning, a development, and an ending that gives the whole its *point*.'[105] Lastly, Guignon believes that the meaning of our life is only intelligible in terms of our finitude: 'The individual who faces up to death lives each moment as part of the totality of life, and carries forward the past as part of a coherent, cumulative narrative.'[106] Guignon is obviously right to highlight the distinctively temporal structure of our authentic existence – since it is precisely by owning up to our past and resolutely projecting into the future that we are able to overcome our lostness in the present – but his appeals to 'narrative unity' and grasping life as a 'cohesive whole' tend to obscure the extent to which we, as a being whose being is an issue, are always able to alter the course of our existence. As Heidegger puts it,

> [Dasein] simply cannot *become rigid* as regards the situation, but must understand that the resolution, in accordance with its own meaning as a disclosure, must be *held open* and free for the current factical possibility. The certainty of the resolution signifies that one *holds oneself free for* the possibility of *taking it back*.[107]

Guignon's assertion that authentic Dasein 'lives each moment as an integral component of the overall story that it is shaping in its actions' and his description of our authentic 'moment of vision' as one 'in which the whole of life – stretched out from beginning to end – is transparent in its temporal structure'[108] also neglect the fact that our 'being-towards-death' means that our life is never complete and thus impossible to view as a complete and coherent whole.[109] Recognizing that we are always in a position to drop a particular commitment and adopt another, and aware of the limits death places on grasping our life as a whole, Taylor Carman and Hubert Dreyfus offer a 'formal' account of authenticity. According to Carman, Heidegger replaces 'the very idea of human existence understood *as a unified whole* with a concrete internal interpretation of Dasein *owning up wholly* – that is, *wholeheartedly* – to itself in its existence.'[110] Dreyfus captures what it is for us to own-up to our existence when he says that authentic Dasein is '*constantly* facing its nothingness,' and Dreyfus further suggests that the formal difference between irresoluteness and resoluteness is reflected in a structural difference in the temporality of our inauthentic and authentic modes of existence: that is, as inauthentic we forget our past and simply await the future when engaged in our everyday activities, whereas as

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[102] *BT* 369/322

[103] Guignon, Charles, 'Authenticity, Moral Values and Psychotherapy' in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed Guignon (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006) p.282

[104] Guignon, 'Authenticity, Moral Values and Psychotherapy' p.283

[105] Guignon, Charles, 'Philosophy and Authenticity: Heidegger's Search for a Ground for Philosophizing' in *Heidegger Authenticity and Modernity*, ed. Wrathall and Malpas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000) p.85

[106] Guignon, 'Philosophy and Authenticity' p.89

[107] *BT* 355/307-8

[108] Guignon, 'Philosophy and Authenticity' p.89

[109] For a lengthy discussion of this criticism see Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p.271-6

[110] Carman, p.276

authentic we regularly clarify our inheritance and anticipate our death whilst engaging in those activities.[111] In short, we lead an inauthentic life when we turn away from the fact that our being is an issue for us and obscure the possibilities we are presented with, but as authentic we own up to the truth of our existence by clarifying our situation and continually choosing to make the choices that determine our direction in life.

Authenticity: Existential Decisionism

Heidegger's interpretation of the individuating conditions of agency that bring us back from our lostness in *das Man* open the door to decisionistic readings of *Being and Time* that contradict my claim that our agency originates in our response-ability to others. Michael Zimmerman, for example, presents a 'voluntaristic-individualistic interpretation of authenticity' whereby we 'struggle to let our truth break through.'[112] In *The Philosophical Discourses of Modernity*, Jürgen Habermas argues that Heidegger's *magnum opus* offers a 'decisionism of empty resoluteness.'[113] And Richard Wolin recently compared Heidegger's account of authenticity with Carl Schmitt's concept of sovereignty whereby political action is grounded in 'an absolute decision created out of nothing.'[114] In fact, Wolin goes so far as to assert that:

> A philosophy of existence such as Heidegger's presupposes that all traditional contents and truths have lost their substance; and thus all that remains is *naked facticity*, that is the sheer fact of existence. Thus, unlike traditional hermeneutics, which believes that the past contains a store of semantic potentials that are inherently worthy of redemption, *Existenzphilosophie* in its Heideggerian variant tends to be inherently destructive of tradition.[115]

There is, to be sure, textual support for such an interpretation, specifically in Heidegger's explications of anxiety, guilt, death, conscience, and anticipatory-resoluteness. But after summarizing Wolin's take on *Being and Time*, I consider the distinctive part heritage, fate, and destiny play in our decisions and contend that authenticity entails a more faithful relation to our tradition in which we make the potentialities that others present us with our own.

Wolin opens his discussion of Heideggerian decisionism through an appeal to the irreducible contingency of our particular mode of being that results from our guilt and thrownness. 'The concept of "thrownness,"' Wolin writes, 'speaks to both the sheer arbitrariness of our lot in life and also the ultimate *groundlessness* of human existence.'[116] This groundlessness is the origin of our 'not-at-home-ness' insofar as it shows us that the 'everyday "rules" and "public norms" that are the "common sense" sense of the "they"' could have been otherwise and that our world is 'bereft of any absolute assurances.'[117] Indeed, it is the anxiety produced by this abyssal aspect of our guilt and the lack of any determinate essence that enables us to choose our own path in life. Angst, as Wolin puts it, indicates the '*terrifying contingency* of all human existence.'[118] But he adds: 'it is precisely

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111 Dreyfus, p.326
112 Zimmerman, Michael, *Eclipse of the Self* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1981) p.199
113 Habermas, Jürgen, *The Philosophical Discourses of Modernity*, tr. Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987) p.141
114 Schmitt, Carl, *Political Theology,* tr. Schwab (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985) p.67
115 Wolin, p.32
116 Wolin, p.47
117 Wolin, p.49
118 Wolin, p.47

this lack of an *a priori*, metaphysical determination of our being-in-the-world that is simultaneously the source of our *freedom*: i.e., our capacity to choose or will our own potentiality for being.'[119] Briefly, if there is nothing we are destined to be, then presumably we are free to decide upon the existential possibilities that come define us as the human beings that we are.

Further evidence for a decisionistic interpretation of authenticity can be found in Heidegger's description of the conscience that calls us out of our lostness in the 'they'. According to Heidegger, 'the call dispenses with any kind of utterance. It does not put itself into words at all; yet it remains nothing less than obscure and indefinite.'[120] As Wolin sees it, the reason for this reticence is based on the fact that 'the grounds of our everyday being-in-the-world – 'language' and 'communication' included – *have been so thoroughly appropriated by the they* that the entire realm of human 'being-with-others' must be *consigned a priori to the subaltern sphere of inauthenticity*' that as authentic we are seeking to overcome.[121] If, in other words, the call dictated the set of potentialities from which we must choose, then it would simply mirror the restrictions others place on our ability to take a stand on our being. So again, Wolin suggests that conscience remains silent in order to ensure that we are absolutely free to own-up to our existence by making decisions as we see fit.[122]

Wolin also reads decisionism into the master concept of authenticity itself: namely, anticipatory-resoluteness. Through the anticipation of death, we are freed from our absorption in the present, and thus able to decide upon the course of our existence. But much like Heidegger's characterization of conscience, Wolin sees no criteria in the notion of anticipatory-resoluteness to serve as a genuine guide in our decision-making process. Here Wolin quotes Heidegger asking himself on what basis we make a decision in a moment of resolve and then answering himself by stating that '*only* the resolution itself can give the answer... Only in resolution is resoluteness sure of itself.'[123] Again, the lack of concrete direction contained in Heidegger's concept of anticipatory-resoluteness seems to afford us a maximal amount of freedom when we take a decision. And Wolin thinks this is in keeping with Heideggerian authenticity to the extent that 'it is "we" who must *decide*, in accordance with what Heidegger is fond of calling our "ownmost potentiality-for-being."'[124]

Finally, Wolin argues that the arbitrary nature of our cultural inheritance, the absence of any normative content issuing from our conscience, and the lack of criteria directing Dasein's resolute decisions leads to decisionism-cum-voluntarism; for once the groundlessness of all traditional social norms has been unmasked, Wolin believes that 'the only remaining basis for moral orientation is a *decision ex nihilo, a radical assertion of will*.'[125] In order to indict Heidegger on this voluntaristic detail, Wolin links anticipatory-resoluteness to Nietzsche's notion of the will to power and Carl Schmitt's claim that the sovereign is he who decides on the state of exception. As Wolin sees it:

> Nietzsche singles out one of the most essential features of decisionism as a philosophy of human conduct: at issue is not the specific material content or direction of the will, but *the sheer quantity of volitional force with which a decision is realized*.[126]

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[119] Wolin, p.47
[120] *BT* 318/273
[121] Wolin, p.44-5, 50
[122] Wolin, p.43
[123] Wolin, p.51-2, *BT* 345/298
[124] Wolin, p.40
[125] Wolin, p.39
[126] Wolin, p.39

Similarly, Schmitt claims that 'making a decision is more important than how a decision is made,' and he goes on to say, 'the decision frees itself from all normative ties and becomes in a true sense absolute... [The] norm is destroyed in the exception.'[127] What binds these thinkers together with Heidegger is their collective belief in the contingency of Dasein's historical circumstance. And after the authority of traditional social norms has been swept away in the face of our individual drives, Wolin assumes that all we can do is leap into the void and assert ourselves by establishing the values we choose to follow through a sovereign act of will. 'Like Nietzsche's *Übermensch*,' Wolin writes, 'resolute Dasein is beyond good and evil and must establish its own law.'[128]

Authenticity: Facticity, Fate, and Situations

To his credit, Wolin recognizes that a purely decisionistic-cum-voluntaristic interpretation of *Being and Time* is tendentious and ignores the fact that authentic selfhood is only actualized in a historically given *collectivity*. And in light of his earlier claim that all traditional truths lose their substance in Heidegger's philosophy of existence, it is striking to see Wolin turn around and say that authentic Dasein 'situates itself in relation to a meaningful historical continuum, and [that] this act endows its projection toward the future with content and direction.'[129] Wolin's apparent about-face is grounded in what he calls a 'more attentive reading' of resoluteness and an appreciation of our heritage, fate, and destiny.[130] And once we have come to terms with the place of these concepts in the existential analytic, it is clear that Heidegger is not promoting a decisionism of empty resoluteness, but actually working towards an account of choice and action as immersed in and guided by a set of socio-historical possibilities that are meaningful to and binding on us since they define who we are.

A closer reading of Heidegger's account of authenticity reveals that it is not a case of willfully creating potentialities-for-being out of nothing, but a matter of coming to terms with the potentialities-for-being that we inherit so that we can project one of those potentialities into the future. 'As *authentic being-one's-self*,' Heidegger asserts, 'resoluteness does not detach Dasein from its world.' Instead, he says 'resoluteness brings the self right into its current concernful being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes into solicitous being with others.'[131] As we have seen, this deeper concrete disclosure of our current situation amounts to overcoming the untruth of idle talk such that we have a clear view of the potentialities-for-being between which we must choose. And Heidegger could hardly be clearer about this than when he writes: 'resolution does not withdraw itself from "actuality," but first discovers what is factically possible.'[132] Heidegger's appeal to a solicitous being with others should also remind us that 'even [our] resolutions remain dependent upon the 'they' and its world.'[133] And the fact that our choices are dependent on *das Man* suggests that our authentic projections presuppose an ineluctable openness to our cultural inheritance. 'Dasein,' as Heidegger puts it, 'draws its authentic possibilities of existence from thrownness.'[134]

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[127] Schmitt, p.12, 55-6
[128] Wolin, p.53
[129] Wolin, p.60
[130] Wolin, p.55
[131] *BT* 344/298
[132] *BT* 346/299
[133] *BT* 345-6/299
[134] *BT* 435/383

Heidegger explicates the extent to which our cultural inheritance is the source of our significant potentialities-for-being by appealing to three inter-related phenomena: heritage, fate, and destiny. It is worth noting that we can relate to our history *inauthentically* by forgetting our past and simply pressing into the future in an indifferent fashion. But as *authentic*, we relate to our inheritance by 'disclosing the current factical possibilities of existing, and disclosing them *in terms of the heritage* which that existence, as thrown, *takes over*.'[135] When we take over our heritage *as* our heritage, Heidegger says we repeat one of the possibility it presents us with by choosing a hero.[136] And here it is clear that authenticity not only involves the willful projection of a potentiality, but also our openness to fate:

> Once one has grasped the finitude of one's existence, it snatches one back from the endless multiplicity of possibilities which offer themselves as closest to one – those of comfortableness, shirking, and taking things lightly – and brings Dasein into the simplicity of its *fate*. This is how we designate Dasein's primordial historizing, which lies in authentic resoluteness and in which Dasein *hands* itself *down* to itself, free for death, in a possibility which it has inherited and yet chosen.[137]

Fate, for Heidegger, signifies the potentialities-for-being that our cultural inheritance makes available to us in a specific situation. But as fated to the potentialities that are presented to us at any point in history, our authentic historizing is a co-historizing. We, in other words, are always in a socio-historical community that collectively determines our inherited potentialities-for-being. And this, for Heidegger, means that our individual fate is bound up with the destiny of an historical people. Destiny, he writes, 'is not something that puts itself together out of individual fates;' rather 'our fates have already been guided in advance in our being with one another in the same world and in our resoluteness for definite possibilities.'[138] And destiny is best understood as the historical drift of those collective practices and norms that make our world intelligible and allow us to come to terms with the exigencies and possibilities of our current situation. Ultimately, heritage, fate, and destiny highlight the fact that our choices rest on our openness to and disclosure of a historical world that we share with others.

Whilst our potentialities-for-being are prescribed by our past, Wolin claims that decisionism creeps back into *Being and Time* through Heidegger's appeal to our choice of a hero. Wolin asks: 'On what basis is the hero to be chosen?' And he goes on to say that 'unless some criteria of selection are provided, we run the risk once more of relapsing into the vertiginous arbitrariness of pure decisionism.'[139] As indicated earlier, Heidegger is not concerned with offering criteria for our decision-making; he simply says that authentic repetition is 'grounded existentially in anticipatory resoluteness.'[140] However, for Wolin the idea of authentic repetition of historically given potentialities was designed to supplement the otherwise empty concept of anticipatory-resoluteness, so now we end up in a position where 'resolve is grounded in repetition (the choice of a proper hero), and repetition is grounded in resolve.'[141] According to Wolin, this means that Heidegger has returned to a position in which we willfully assert ourselves by choosing the potentialities-for-being that come to define us as the person that we are; but instead of

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[135] *BT* 435/383
[136] *BT* 437/385
[137] *BT* 435/384
[138] *BT* 436/384
[139] Wolin, p.64
[140] *BT* 437/385
[141] Wolin, p.64

projecting possibilities out of an abyss, we survive by 'parasitically feeding off whatever choices happen to be served up by the contemporary historical hour.'[142]

In the end, Wolin sees this attempt to reconcile Dasein's decisions with fate as a failure. Destiny, he writes,

> is meant to provide the existentiell basis for the empty self-referentiality of authentic decision, thereby furnishing a measure of content for an otherwise ungrounded, free-floating will. However, the "fatalistic" implications of this category subsequently undermine the autonomy of authentic resolve... Since this manner of reconciling the opposition is unpalatable, Heidegger at times lurches to the opposite extreme, suggesting that destiny itself can be "chosen" or "willed". But with this move, we have essentially relapsed into the same decisionistic arbitrariness that the concept of destiny was intended to counteract in the first place.[143]

Heidegger is, of course, aware of a potential tension between destiny and decision,[144] but it is precisely the coupling of thrownness with projection that undergirds our agency in an existential situation.

'Situation' is Heidegger's technical term for the existential space in which we make a decision: 'it is the "there" which is disclosed in resoluteness.'[145] The "there" refers to the set of factical possibilities that our destiny makes available and from which we must choose in a moment of vision. And the situation combines what I have called the public and individuating conditions of agency. As Heidegger puts it:

> *Only an entity which, in its being, is essentially* ***futural*** *so that it is free for its death and can let itself be thrown back upon its factical "there" by shattering itself against death – that is to say, only an entity which, as futural, is equiprimordially in the process of* ***having-been****, can, by handing down to itself the possibility it has inherited, take over its own thrownness and be* ***in a moment of vision*** *for "its time".*[146]

Here we see that instead of undermining our agency, fate is the condition of possibility for it. This means that Wolin is right to speak of a decisionism in which we choose our fate or make decisions in relation to destiny. But he is wrong to say that this leads us to an arbitrary decisionism, since our choices are actually a response to the various concrete demands that others place upon us in a given socio-historical circumstance. We may, in other words, have no recourse to objective criteria that determine the correct course of action in a certain situation, but situations are such that they pull us in several different directions by providing us with a determinate range of meaningful potentialities-for-being that are bound up with our current identity and which will help shape the person we become. In short, Heidegger's understanding of authenticity has nothing to do with the abolition of our agency in service of a collective destiny, nor is it a case of existential decisionism in which we willfully overcome social norms in order to assert our true self. Rather, a genuinely authentic life is best seen as an enriched engagement with others whereby we take responsibility for our existence by coming to terms with our heritage, clarifying her current situation, and projecting one of its potentialities into the future.

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[142] Wolin, p.64

[143] Wolin, p.63

[144] In §31 of *Being and Time* Heidegger says: 'Has not Dasein's being become more enigmatical now that we have explicated the existential constitution of the being of the 'there' in the sense of thrown projection? It has indeed.' *BT* 188/148. For a detailed discussion of the '*a priori* enigma' that is our existence, see Simon Critchley and Reiner Schürmann, *On Heidegger's* Being and Time (New York: Routledge, 2008) p.132-150

[145] *BT* 346/299

[146] *BT* 437/385

Authenticity and Creativity

As we have seen, we are only ever able to own up to our existence – that is, we are only ever able choose our particular way of being – by repeating one of the possibilities available in our heritage through the projection of that possibility into an indeterminate future. Put differently, if there were no potentialities-for-being present in the situation we inherit, then we would be unable to take a stand on our existence by projecting one possibility over another. This latter formulation calls attention to a conservative aspect of authenticity: that is, defining agency in terms of our ability to adopt one of the potentialities present in our inheritance suggests that our choices are restricted to ways of being that are currently available. And thus Heidegger's concept of authenticity fails to capture the freedom we tend to associate with the presentation of new potentialities-for-being. In the following chapters I explore this conceptual limit in detail by first rejecting John Haugeland's claim that authenticity entails holding ourselves free for the possibility 'taking it all back', and then accepting the later Heidegger's belief that *Being and Time* is characterized by an oblivion of being. But in the remainder of this chapter I briefly review the textual basis for my conservative reading of *Being and Time*, state what it means to project an inherited possibility, examine the extent to which such a projection could account for the creation of a new potentiality, and then distinguish the nullity of our existence from concealed potentialities.

The conservative current in Heidegger's account of authenticity is captured by the fact that our actual 'anticipatory-resoluteness' depends on certain *factical* or *ontic* possibilities *present* in our cultural inheritance. Heidegger asserts:

> In resoluteness the issue for Dasein is its ownmost potentiality-for-being, which, as something thrown, can project itself only upon definite factical possibilities. Resolution does not withdraw itself from 'actuality', but discovers first what is factically possible; and it does so by seizing upon it in whatever way is possible for it as its ownmost potentiality-for-being in the 'they'.[147]

As this passage illustrates, we always find ourselves thrown into a particular public world that regulates the various potentialities-for-being upon which we can project. In 21st century London we can choose to become an investment banker or a corporate lawyer, but we can hardly project the possibility of being an Ancient Greek oracle or *hetaerae*. Similarly, a 15th century Spaniard could have been a conquistador or knight-errant, but the options of becoming an elected member of the *Cortes Generales* or the star player for FC Barcelona were simply unavailable. These examples show that we are only ever in a position to project the possibilities present in our inheritance, so again: '*resolution is precisely the disclosive projection and determination of what is factically possible at the time.*'[148]

Of course, the strength of a conservative interpretation of authenticity depends on what 'factically possible' means and the extent to which the repetition of historical possibilities can itself account for cultural evolution. In *Being-in-the-World*, Dreyfus calls the potentialities-for-being available in a given situation 'existential possibilities' or 'live options,' and he takes his cue from Heidegger who suggests that these options are a subset of and differ from things that are logically or physically possible in a specific set of circumstances. As Heidegger puts it, 'the being-possible which Dasein is existentially in every case is to be sharply distinguished both from empty logical possibility and from the

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[147] *BT* 346/299
[148] *BT* 345/298

contingency of something present-at-hand.'[149] And to elucidate the distinction Heidegger is driving at here, Dreyfus offers the following example:

> If [a] carpenter sees that it is lunchtime, it is logically possible for him to eat rocks, and physically possible for him to eat acorns. He could also arbitrarily choose not to eat at all and go fishing. However, given his cultural background, his current mood of, let's say, professional seriousness, and his current involvement in his work, only a certain range of possibilities, say knackwurst or bratwurst, are actually available to him.[150]

On Dreyfus' reading it is the background of a particular culture that makes existential possibilities present and distinguishes them from purely logical or physical potentialities. Here 'background' refers to the *das Man* directed standards that present entities as entities and govern all our practical and intelligible engagements with the world. This means that the possibilities available in any given situation depend on the extent to which others recognize those options as useful, valuable, or necessary and therefore willingly create and maintain the institutional structures needed to sustain them. 'The being-possible which is essential for Dasein,' Heidegger writes, 'pertains to the ways of its solicitude for others and of its concern with the world.'[151] Though the options we are presented with depend on others, this does not mean that our potentialities-for-being are restricted to the familiar or respectable.[152] Provided they have sufficient numbers and resources, marginalized groups ranging from the Future of Humanity Institute to the Klu Klux Klan are more than capable of opening up unusual or abhorrent existential potentialities. And we may even pillage history books or literary works in search of alternative potentialities once actualized by others. But as Don Quixote's failed attempt to become a knight-errant illustrates, making past heroes present depends on the support of existent others. Thus, the potentialities-for-being present in our heritage stand for those familiar, marginalized, or past possibilities that obtain the recognition and institutional backing of contemporary others.

Whilst our authentic choices and actions are bound by the potentialities-for-being available in our cultural inheritance, Heidegger's notion of 'repetition' leaves some wiggle room for cultural innovation. Heidegger writes, 'the repeating of that which is possible does not bring again something that is "past", nor does it bind the "present" back to what has already been "outstripped."'[153] And he goes on to say:

> Arising, as it does, from a resolute projection of oneself, repetition does not let itself be persuaded of something by what is "past", just in order that this, as something which was formerly actual, may recur. Rather, the repetition makes a *reciprocative rejoinder* to the possibility of that existence which has-been-there.[154]

Heidegger's point here is that the projection of an inherited potentiality-for-being always occurs in a specific situation and is appropriated with a particular directedness toward the future that may have been lacking in its initial instantiation. A Christian, for example, may choose Christ as her hero, but this does not mean that she has to be born of a virgin, offer a sermon on the mount, or be condemned to death by the Pharisees. Instead, she must take Christ's actions and teachings to heart and use them in a way that

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[149] *BT* 183/143
[150] Dreyfus, p.190
[151] *BT* 183/143
[152] Although they may very well be in the first instance. See *BT* 239/194
[153] *BT* 437/385
[154] *BT* 437/386

is applicable to her current circumstance and the direction her life is heading. And there is little reason to doubt that appropriating past heroes in contemporary contexts will occasionally result in an innovative way of life, but these appropriations still depend on the projection of what is available in our heritage. And to the extent that authenticity is a case of choosing to choose our self by resolutely projecting a potentiality present in our inheritance, authentic being-one's-self *qua* authentic being-one's-self is not, by definition, engaged in the process of presenting new possibilities.

To fully appreciate the subtlety of this point it is worth returning to Heidegger's concept of resoluteness one last time. Heidegger tells us that when resolute, 'Dasein has brought itself back from falling, and has done so precisely in order to be more authentically 'there' in the 'moment of vision' as regards to the situation which has been disclosed.'[155] Again, to be more authentically 'there' means that we must clarify or come to terms with our cultural inheritance before we can consciously project one potentiality-for-being over another. In the act of clarifying our situation we may, of course, discover potentialities-for-being that were otherwise obscured, and thereby provide ourselves with a set of possibilities that we were otherwise ignorant of. But when coming to terms with our heritage we may also discover genuine lacunae in our tradition: that is, and apart from finding potentialities that have been marginalized or long since forgotten, we may discover that there are certain questions, aporias, or absences in our inheritance that have yet to be explored and that the exploration of which may reveal potentialities-for-being and entities and aspects of the world that were concealed in all previous circumstances. And here we run up against a conceptual 'creativity limit' of Heideggerian authenticity. For whilst we can take a stand on our existence by adopting potentialities-for-being that are present in our current situation, we cannot project unavailable potentialities.

Finally, the potentialities-for-being and entities concealed in our inheritance can be distinguished from the nullity of our existence insofar as that nullity is characterized as an individuating phenomenon that facilitates our choices and actions. As noted above, anxiety indicates the 'not' of our existential guilt: i.e., that the potentialities we inherit are contingent and open to change. This allows us to question our current possibility and opens us up to alternative ways of being, including those that are concealed in our cultural inheritance. But anxiety also indicates the 'not yet' of death: namely, that we can take responsibility for our existence by projecting one of the possibilities present in our cultural inheritance into the future. And if the authentic projection of potentialities-for-being that the nullity of our existence enables is parasitic upon the possibilities present in a specific socio-historical situation, then authenticity precludes a thoughtful engagement with concealed possibilities. In sum, authenticity is Heidegger's word for a particular way in which we relate to ourselves through the possibilities present in our inheritance, but it does not describe how we creatively respond to and reveal those potentialities-for-being that are concealed in our culture.

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[155] *BT* 345/299

2. Taking it Back:
Haugeland on Ownedness and Truth

In the previous chapter, I examined Heidegger's account of agency as it is presented in *Being and Time* and argued that our freedom is a function of our ability to recognize and respond to the various possibilities that others make available. In doing so, I considered two potential objections to my interpretation of *Being and Time*. First, most of Heidegger's work on being-with-others in Division I is dedicated to a discussion of the way social norms facilitate our tendency to cover-up the fact we are always in a position to determine the course of our existence. Second, Heidegger's analysis of choice and action in Division II is often read as a depiction of the circumstances that free us from the norms of our community so that we can willfully create our own way of life. In response to these challenges I showed how the tendency toward inauthenticity that our social norms produce can be overcome through anxiety, and then I argued that, far from liberating us from communal norms so that we can posit our own potentiality-for-being, authenticity actually involves cultivating a clear sense of the potentialities available in our cultural inheritance and then choosing to make one of those potentialities one's own. Finally, I indicated a conservative aspect in Heidegger's account of our authentic existence: that is, characterizing agency in terms of our ability to clarify and adopt one of the potentialities present in our community suggests that our choices and actions are restricted to options that are currently available. Thus, the concept of authenticity fails to capture the freedom we tend to associate with cultural transformation or artistic creativity.

This chapter considers a powerful objection to what I see as the conservative tendencies in *Being and Time* via a reading of John Haugeland's work on the relationship between truth and authenticity as these notions are expressed in Heidegger's *magnum opus*. Unlike scholars who read Heidegger's account of authenticity as a formalized version of Nietzscheian or Kierkegaardian existentialism,[156] Haugeland reads Heidegger's appeal to anxiety, guilt, death, conscience, and resoluteness as crucial features in Heidegger's attempt to come to terms with the meaning of being. Briefly, Haugeland argues that the self-understanding achieved when we adopt a particular potentiality-for-being involves both understanding and disclosing the being of entities and aspects of our world – 'in knowing how to be me,' as he puts it, 'I must know how to deal with the entities amidst which I work and live'[157] – so turning toward ourselves entails 'getting the entities *themselves* right.'[158] This, for Haugeland, means that when we take responsibility for our existence by choosing a specific potentiality we take responsibility for the truth of entities disclosed therein. Yet taking responsibility for the truth of entities not only entails getting our facts right; it also involves testing the potentialities and disclosures of being through which we have access to facts, and therefore requires that we open ourselves up to the possibility of taking potentialities and disclosures back. And if, as Haugeland suggests, authenticity entails opening ourselves up to the possibility of taking potentialities and disclosures of being back, then Haugeland's interpretation of authenticity casts doubt on what I have called the 'creativity limit' in *Being and Time*.

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156 For a Nietzsche-inspired 'will to power' reading of authenticity, see Wolin, p. 16-65. For a reading of authenticity as an attempt to secularize Kierkegaard's existentialist account of religious experience, see Hubert Dreyfus and Jane Ruben's appendix to Hubert Dreyfus' *Being-in-the-World* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991) p.283-340

157 Haugeland, John, 'Truth and Finitude: Heidegger's Transcendental Existentialism' in *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity*, ed. Wrathall & Malpas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000) p.58-9

158 Haugeland, p.55

Since Haugeland presents his reading of authenticity in relation to truth, I begin this chapter by recasting my conservative reading of authenticity in terms of Heidegger's claim that we are in truth and in untruth. I then offer a detailed sketch of Haugeland's position and put forward several objections to it. First, I contend that his emphasis on authentic truth fails to account for the truth of our inauthentic existence, and therefore fails to appreciate the fact that we get entities right in our average everydayness as well. Second, and in light my previous criticism, I argue that Haugeland misses the extent to which authenticity is only a *modified* way in which we relate to the world as it is presented in everydayness. Third, I claim that Haugeland produces an account of authenticity that only makes intuitive sense in the empirical sciences but actually lacks a conceptual basis full stop. The idea here is that if entities are only *meaningfully* presented via disclosures of being, then those entities cannot serve as an *intelligible*, independent standard upon which disclosures are based. Finally, I consider an alternative to Haugeland's grounding of ontic and ontological truths in existential truth via a different reading of Heidegger's claim that 'the most primordial, and indeed the most authentic, disclosedness in which Dasein, as a potentiality-for-being, can be, is the *truth of existence*.'[159]

Authentic Truth and Inauthentic Un/truth

Heidegger tells us in *Being and Time* that 'the goddess of truth who guides Parmenides puts two pathways before him, one of uncovering, one of hiding,' and Heidegger goes on to say that 'this signifies nothing else than that Dasein is already both in the truth and in untruth.'[160] To be in the truth, for Heidegger, means that we human beings find ourselves in a world full of entities that are intelligible to us and available for our comportments. Heidegger's word for the intelligibility and availability of entities within our world is uncovering, and this uncovering is achieved through the various potentialities-for-being that make up our everyday existence. 'To Dasein's being and its potentiality-for-being as being-in-the-world,' Heidegger maintains, 'disclosedness and uncovering belong essentially.'[161] Yet Heidegger claims that being in the truth is also an instance of untruth insofar as the entities present in our daily activities are 'precisely the sort of thing that has been uncovered, but at the same time they have been disguised.'[162] Put otherwise, the intelligibility achieved in our daily activities entails a certain amount of dissemblance. And in *Being and Time* Heidegger captures the relation between everyday intelligibility and the dissemblance it entails through an analysis of our inauthentic and authentic existences.

As we have seen, inauthenticty involves the untruth that results when we fail own up to our existence in the course of our everyday activities, whereas authenticity entails the truth attained when we take responsibility for ourselves in the course of those very same endeavours. The bulk of Heidegger's discussion on these themes in *Being and Time* simply identifies untruth with inauthenticity and truth with authenticity. But the fact that we are able to undertake a given activity as either inauthentic or authentic implies that the same entities are present to a certain degree in both our inauthentic and authentic modes of being. There is, in other words, a *truth* common to both our inauthentic and authentic existences. And appealing to a distinction Heidegger makes between various types of truth and untruth in a 1934 lecture course, 'On the Essence of Truth,' allows us to: sharpen the distinction between inauthentic untruth and authentic truth; elucidate the

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[159] *BT* 264/221
[160] *BT* 270-1/228
[161] *BT* 265/223
[162] *BT* 264/224

truth that is common to both our inauthentic and authentic existences as presented in *Being and Time*; and explicate the 'creativity limit' that authenticity entails.

In the aforementioned course, Heidegger claims that '*truth* as *unconcealment* is essentially related to *concealment*,' and he adds that concealment has a dual sense:

1. What has not yet been taken from concealment.
2. The concealed that was once taken from concealment, but sank back into concealment.[163]

The first, Heideger says, 'is the concealed, pure and simple,' whereas 'the second, which has passed through a process of unconcealing, is the hidden, the covered up, the disguised.'[164] Sense (1) refers to ontological untruth whereby a disclosure or potentiality-for-being through which an entity can present itself is lacking. Sense (2) refers to ontic untruth in which an entity is present through a potentiality but we lack an explicit understanding of it. This dual sense of untruth suggests that truth comes in two forms: the ontological truth of potentialities-for-being that create the context through which entities are present in the first place, and the ontic truth involved in making entities that are present explicitly understood. Since authenticity and inauthenticity as conceived in *Being and Time* are simply modified ways in which we relate to *available* potentialities-for-being and the way entities and aspects of the world are disclosed through them, the truth common to our inauthentic and authentic existences is ontological. This also means that the difference between the truth attained in our inauthentic existence and that achieved in authenticity is *ontic*: as authentic we make entities that are present *explicitly* known, but as inauthentic entities that are present remain *implicitly* understood. The implicit nature of the inauthentic presentation of entities speaks to the un/truth[165] Heidegger sees in our everyday existence, whereas the clarity achieved when we take a stand on our being indicates the truth of authenticity. This distinction also shows us that the truth at stake in authenticity is *not* that of uncovering new potentialities-for-being. But in order to appreciate the distinctions between the *implicit* un/truth of inauthenticity, the *explicit* truth of authenticity, and what I take to be a deeper *ontological untruth* of concealing alternative potentialities-for-being at work in both our inauthentic and authentic existences, we need to examine the distinction Heidegger makes between understanding and interpretation as well as the difference between discourse and idle talk.

Understanding, for Heidegger, is not essentially a cognitive phenomenon. 'With the term understanding,' Heidegger writes, 'we have in mind a fundamental existentiale, which is neither a definite species of cognition distinguished, let us say, from explaining and conceiving, nor is it any cognition at all in the sense of grasping something thematically.'[166] Instead, understanding involves practical skill: 'In ordinary language, we say "He understands how to handle men," "He knows how to talk." Understanding here means "knowing how," "being capable of."'[167] As our example of carpentry in chapter 1 illustrated, our everyday activities create the context in which entities and aspects of our world are disclosed. But this disclosure is tacit and unthematic, and it is only through interpretation that what is implicitly disclosed in our practical activities becomes explicitly expressed. 'That which is disclosed in understanding', Heidegger tells us, 'is already accessible in such a way that its 'as which' can be made to stand out explicitly. The 'as'

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[163] *B&T* 171

[164] *B&T* 171

[165] Since entities and aspects of our world are disclosed, but also obscured or disguised in our inauthentic existence, I've adopted the device of adding a '/' to un/truth in order to indicated that there is both truth and untruth at work in our inauthentic engagement with the world.

[166] *BT* 385/336

[167] *HCT* 298

makes up the structure of the explicitness of something that is understood; it constitutes the interpretation.'[168] In *Being and Time*, Heidegger links the explicitness of interpretation with our perceptual awareness of entities and aspects of the world *as* the entities and aspects that they are. He says:

> Perception is consummated when one *addresses* oneself to something as something and *discusses* it as such. This amounts to *interpretation* in the broadest sense; and on the basis of such interpretation, perception becomes an act of *making determinate*.[169]

Whereas understanding involves *using* an entity *as* the entity that it is, interpretation consists in abstracting from our practical activities such that we *see* the entity that we use *as* the entity that it is. And in *Heidegger's Analytic*, Taylor Carman articulates the distinction between understanding and interpretation nicely when he says:

> If understanding in Heidegger's sense consists in *knowing how*, then interpretation – the explicitation of that understanding – must consist in manifesting, demonstrating, or *showing* the *how* that we know in understanding. If understanding is *knowing how*, interpretation must be a kind of *showing how*.[170]

The fact that interpretation involves *expressing* our understanding indicates a conceptual relation between interpretation and Heidegger's account of discourse as the articulation of intelligibility.[171] It also implies that the shift from understanding to interpretation is a transition from the disclosure of entities achieved in our everyday activities to that disclosure's explicit presentation in significations. And if we map the distinction between understanding and interpretation onto the distinction between our inauthentic and authentic modes of existence, then our inauthentic activities consist in the *implicit* understanding we have of the world in our practical comportments and our authentic existence amount to an *explicit* interpretation of the world attained in discourse.[172]

Identifying the un/truth of inauthenticity with the implicit understanding of the world we have in our everyday activities and the truth of authenticity with the explicit interpretation of the world achieved in discourse is, however, problematic for two related reasons: first, our practical comportments are permeated with and often made possible by discursive communication; and second, Heidegger equates the un/truth of our inauthentic existence with our idle use of language. In order to address these concerns and thereby offer a complete account of the nature and relation between truth and untruth in *Being and Time*, we need to look at the difference between discourse (*Rede*) and idle talk (*Gerede*) along with the relation between language and the concrete particularity of the context in which we act.

Discourse, for Heidegger, refers to the way we articulate the intelligible world.[173] And although interpretations of 'discourse' range *from* reducing it to the non-linguistic way we divvy up the world in our practical activity *to* claiming it is nothing more than our

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[168] *BT* 189/149
[169] *BT* 88-9/61-2
[170] Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p.210
[171] See Carman, p.205
[172] Mapping the distinction between understanding and interpretation onto the inauthentic and authentic distinction also helps make sense of Heidegger claim that the entities present in our daily activities are 'precisely the sort of thing that has been uncovered, but at the same time they have been disguised.' For the entities present in our daily activities have been disclosed, but insofar as that disclosure is implicit they remain hidden to a certain extent. And this again means that the un/truth of our inauthentic existence refers to the dearth of explicit awareness we have of the entities disclosed in our everyday activities.
[173] *BT* 203-4/161

natural languages, Carman does much to capture the meaning of discourse when he says it is 'the entire domain of Dasein's expressive and communicative possibilities in virtue of which things become interpretable for it, and by it, as such.'[174] Heidegger, for his part, breaks discourse down into three constitutive components: 'what the discourse is about; what is said in the talk, as such; and the communication and making known.'[175] The distinction between 'what is said in the talk' and 'what is talked about' speaks to the difference between the signs we use to interpret entities and the entities that we interpret. And communication enables our discursive interpretation of entities insofar recognition and the repeated use of a sign in similar yet distinct contexts is required to fix the meaning of that sign. Publicness, as Heidegger puts it, 'controls every way in which the world and Dasein get interpreted,' and through it we are 'essentially manifest in a mutual attunement and a mutual understanding.'[176]

The fact that the meaningful use of a sign requires recognition and repetition in divergent contexts means that our communicative practices are subject to the generality of *das Man* and thus pull us away from the specificity of the situation we find ourselves in at any given moment. Again, Heidegger's word for the concrete particularity of the context each of us finds ourselves in is 'mineness', and it indicates the fact that when we understand the being of entities we do so through an adopted potentiality-for-being in a specific, socio-historical setting. For instance, the raw materials and equipment used to build a house, along with the words we use to speak about them, show up and mean subtly different and more detailed things to a carpenter working on a construction site than they do for an academic writing about said entities from the confines of a library. However, the carpenter is bound to make sense of herself and her situation in terms that are available to the academic, and this speaks to a tension between the particular understanding the carpenter has of her situation and the generality inherent in the words with which she makes that understanding explicit.

Since all our interpretations of the world are essentially public, they are subject to what Carman calls the '*generic drift* of discourse, which at its most mundane devolves into idle talk.'[177] Idle talk, as noted above, 'constitutes the kind of being of everyday Dasein's understanding and interpreting.'[178] Specifically, idle talk exemplifies 'the possibility of understanding everything without previously making the thing one's own.'[179] And such discursive understanding, Heidegger says, 'serves not so much to keep being-in-the-world open for us in an articulated understanding, as rather to close it off, and cover up entities within the world.'[180] In a word, idle talk is cut off from and invariably obscures the entities and aspects of our world disclosed in our concrete activities, and this is why Heidegger considers the idle talk of our inauthentic existence a source of un/truth.

It is, however, important to note that the obscurity and ungrounded nature of idle talk is not a function of our discursive comportments as such. 'Discourse,' Heidegger says, 'has the *possibility* of becoming idle talk', but it 'belongs to the essential state of Dasein's being and has a share in constituting Dasein's disclosedness.'[181] And when our talk steers clear of idle speculation in that instant when a speaker makes the entity spoken of her own, Heidegger thinks discourse keeps 'being-in-the-world open for us in an

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[174] Taylor Carman, 'Must We Be Inauthentic?' in *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity*, ed. Wrathall & Malpas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), p.19
[175] *BT* 206/162
[176] *BT* 164/211, 205/162
[177] Carman, MWBI, p.20
[178] *BT* 211/167
[179] *BT* 213/169
[180] *BT* 213/169
[181] *BT* 213/169 Emphasis added

articulated understanding.'[182] To continue with our earlier example, a carpenter on a construction site is in a position to test and verify the terms that elucidate and facilitate her practical activities in a way that an academic sitting in a library is not. This suggests that the distinction between authentic talk and inauthentic idle talk is a difference between terms that are used to explicate entities disclosed in a concrete situation and those that vaguely and unquestioningly refer to the aspects of our world presented in our everyday activities. And it is precisely by explicating the implicit presentation of entities that our activities entail that we clarify our current situation and are thus in a position to take responsibility for our existence.

After articulating the distinction between untruth as 'the concealed, pure and simple' and 'the unconcealed, but hidden', the difference between understanding and interpretation, and the distinction between discourse and idle talk, we are finally in a position to offer a full account of the nature and relation between authentic truth and inauthentic un/truth as it appears in *Being and Time*. Given that authentic and inauthentic engagements with the world equally create a context in which entities are disclosed, the truth common to our inauthentic and authentic existences is ontological. The ontological understanding implicit in all our activities is made ontically explicit through discursive interpretation when we take responsibility for our own existence by testing the terms through which we explicate the world *against* our concrete experience. Yet the ontological truth inherent in our everyday activities remains ontically implicit when we fail to take responsibility for our existence and the words with which we elucidate the world. And it is the *explicit* or *confirmed* interpretation of what we *implicitly* or *obscurely* understand that distinguishes authentic truth from the inauthentic un/truth of our everyday existence.

Characterizing the un/truth of our inauthentic existence as an implicit or obscure understanding of entities present in our world is consistent with Heidegger's claim that 'only insofar as Dasein has been disclosed has it also been closed off; and only insofar as entities within the world have been uncovered along with Dasein, have such entities, as possibility encounterable within-the-world, been covered up (hidden) or disguised.'[183] Equating authentic truth with our explicit or confirmed interpretation of what we implicitly or obscurely understand in our daily existence is in keeping with Heidegger's belief that 'resoluteness, as *authentic being-one's-self*, does not detach Dasein from its world, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating 'I'...[Rather] resoluteness brings the self right into its current concernful being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes into solicitous being with others' such that 'the common-sense ambiguity of that publicness in which nobody resolves upon anything' is overcome[184] And the fact that authenticity entails an explicit, confirmed, or more faithful understanding of the entities disclosed but otherwise disguised in our current situation supports my conservative interpretation of authenticity – namely, that authentic choice and action presupposes the presence of potentialities-for-being, and thus does not capture the freedom we associate with the creation of new possibilities – and points to a deeper *ontological untruth* always at work in *both* our inauthentic *and* authentic existences: i.e., the covering-up of disclosures or potentialities-for-being through which entities and aspect of the world that are currently 'concealed, pure and simple' could be revealed.

Haugeland's Heidegger

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[182] *BT* 213/169
[183] *BT* 265/222
[184] *BT* 344-5/298-9

In an essay entitled 'Truth and Finitude,' John Haugeland reads Heidegger's appeal to anxiety, guilt, death, conscience, and resoluteness as key features in his attempt to come to terms with the meaning of being. Haugeland writes:

> *Everything* in *Being and Time* has to do with the question of being – and, with it, truth. The existential concepts are introduced for this reason and this reason only. Our task as readers is to understand how.[185]

The connection Haugeland sees between existentialism and the meaning of being can be traced back to the fact that our self-understanding incorporates an understanding of the being of entities and aspects of our world – 'in knowing how to be me', as he puts it, 'I must know how to deal with the entities amidst which I work and live'[186] – so turning towards ourselves entails 'getting the entities *themselves* right.'[187] This, for Haugeland, implies that when we take responsibility for our existence we take responsibility for the truth of entities as well. And the basis for Haugeland's interpretation can be found in two important passages where Heidegger connects authenticity with the most primordial phenomenon of truth. '*Authentic* disclosedness,' Heidegger asserts,

> shows the phenomenon of the most primordial truth in the mode of authenticity. The most primordial, and indeed the most authentic, disclosedness in which Dasein, as a potentiality-for-being, can be, is the *truth of existence*. This becomes existentially and ontologically definite only in connection with the analysis of Dasein's authenticity.[188]

And after examining human beings in their average everydayness in Division I of *Being and Time*, Heidegger begins Division II by saying:

> *Our existential analysis of Dasein up till now cannot lay claim to primordiality*. Its for-having never included more than the *inauthentic* being of Dasein, and of Dasein as *less* than a *whole*. If the interpretation of Dasein's being is to become primordial, as a foundation for working out the basic questions of ontology, then it must first have brought to light existentially in the being of Dasein in its possibilities of *authenticity* and *totality*.[189]

Identifying authenticity with the most primordial phenomenon of truth, for Haugeland, means that when we take responsibility for our existence we not only take responsibility for the truth of entities, but also take responsibility for the truth of the disclosures of being through which we have access to entities. 'Ontological truth,' Haugeland claims, 'is beholden to *entities* – the very same entities as ontical truth is beholden to.'[190] And when confronted with 'a failure of ontological truth,' Haugeland says, 'the only responsible response (eventually) is to take it all back.'[191] Finally, Haugeland argues that our ability to take it all back is based on our finitude, and this suggests that being-towards-death is 'the fulcrum of [Heidegger's] entire ontology.'[192]

Haugeland's account of authenticity stands as a strong objection to what I take to be a conservative tendency in *Being and Time*: namely, that identifying agency with our ability to clarify and adopt one of the potentialities present in our particular community

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[185] Haugeland, p.66
[186] Haugeland, p.58-59
[187] Haugeland, p.55
[188] *BT* 264/221
[189] *BT* 276/233
[190] Haugeland, p.75
[191] Haugeland, p.75
[192] Haugeland, p.44

suggests that our choices and actions are restricted to options that are currently available. Specifically, I see Haugeland's interpretation of authenticity as a serious challenge to my reading of *Being and Time*, because like me Haugeland thinks authenticity entails clarifying our cultural inheritance. But unlike me, Haugeland believes that this clarification also involves questioning, testing, and opening ourselves up to the possibility of taking that inheritance back. And although Haugeland never explicitly says as much, if authenticity entails holding ourselves open to the possibility of taking our inheritance back, then it also entails opening ourselves up to the reception and projection of new potentialities. So in order to bolster my interpretation of authenticity, I offer a fairly detailed summary of Haugeland's position and then put forward several criticisms of it.

Haugeland begins his reading of Division II by defining several of Heidegger's key terms and illustrating how they relate to their traditional predecessors. 'It is *definitive* of Dasein,' Haugeland writes, 'that it is the entity that understands being, hence can comport itself towards entities *as entities*.'[193] *Entities* is Heidegger's term of art for '*everything* that there *is* – no more, no less.'[194] And Haugeland is quick to point out that the class of entities is not reducible to Kantian objects that can be known through theoretical judgments, such as the physical objects studied by physics, but also includes 'ready-to-hand' entities, like tools and other kinds of equipment, and 'existing' entities, such as Dasein. This means that 'all objects are entities, but not all entities are objects,' so Haugeland treats Heideggerian entities as a generalization of Kant's notion of objects.[195] Similarly, Haugeland reads Heidegger's conception of *comportment* as a generalization of Kantian knowledge and then a further generalization of Husserl's idea of intentionality insofar as *comportment toward entities* includes not only knowledge of objects (Kant) and other cognitive attitudes like perception (Husserl), but also non-cognitive engagements with the world such as our skillful use of equipment and our fluid interactions with other human beings. Yet on Heidegger's account we are only able to comport ourselves toward physical objects, equipment, and other human beings *as* the entities that they are if we have an understanding of the *being* of those entities. 'The *being* of entities,' Haugeland writes, 'is that in terms of which they are *intelligible as entities*,' and he goes on to say, 'the qualifier "as entities" is short for this: with regard to the fact *that* they are (at all) and with regard to *what* they are.'[196] As an example of the way being makes entities intelligible, Haugeland appeals to the way physical theories make physical entities accessible. 'The *being* of the physical – the essence and actuality of physical entities – is spelled out by the laws of physics,' and therefore '*disclosure* of the being of the physical is the condition of possibility of comportment toward physical entities *as* physical entities.'[197] *Disclosedness* is Heidegger's word for the fact that we understand the being of entities, and Haugeland sees it as a successor of Kant's transcendental apperception. Apperception, for Kant, 'is consciousness of an object that is, or at least could be, conscious of itself as conscious of that object,'[198] and according to Kant 'the fact that it could be conscious of itself in being conscious of an object is a prerequisite to the possibility of its being conscious of the object *as an object* at all.'[199] This, Haugland says, 'is why apperception is *transcendental*,'[200] and he claims that disclosedness is *transcendental* for a structurally similar reason: that is, any disclosing of entities *as* entities 'is *at once* a disclosing of Dasein itself *and* a disclosing

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193 Haugeland, p.46
194 Haugeland, p.45
195 Haugeland, p.45
196 Haugeland, p.47
197 Haugeland, p.48
198 Haugeland, p.46
199 Haugeland, p.46
200 Haugeland, p.46

of the being of entities.'[201] And in order to show how our self-disclosure is simultaneously a disclosure of the being of entities and thus a condition through which we are able to comport ourselves to entities *as* entities, Haugeland shows how discovering the truth about the entities toward which we comport ourselves is grounded in the disclosure of being we achieve through our authentic, resolute being-towards-death.

Haugeland illustrates the extent to which truth is rooted in our authentic existence in three steps. First, he shows why discovering the truth about entities presupposes a disclosure of their being. Discovery is Heidegger's word for our *ontic* comportments towards entities *as* entities, and such comportments are ontic precisely because they have to do with *facts* (or ontic truth) about entities. Disclosure, as noted above, is *ontological* because it deals with the *being* of entities (or ontological truth) that enables facts about them to appear. And again, the initial step in Haugeland's account is to show how disclosing being makes discovering the truth about entities possible, but in doing so he also shows how our comportment toward entities are beholden to facts about the entities that they discover. Step two shows how our disclosure of being (and the entities discovered therein) is inseparable from our self-disclosure (or potentiality-for-being), and therefore also indicates how our self-disclosure both enables our discovery of facts and binds us to truths about them. Finally, Haugeland illustrates how our self-disclosure, and thus the disclosure of being and thereby our discovery of facts, is grounded in and achieved when we own up to our finitude (or existential truth).

Haugeland begins his account of Heidegger's derivation of discovery (the ontic or factual truth of entities) from disclosure (the ontological truth of being) by indicating that each has three moments: understanding (*versteden*), telling (*Rede*), and sofindingness (*Befindlichkeit*). Understanding is *competence* or *know-how* whereby understanding a hammer is to know how to hammer with it. Telling is the *articulation of intelligibility*, and it involves expressing the distinctions that make up one's environment. So, Haugeland asserts, 'when hammering, I can *tell* whether I am swinging hard enough, whether the nail is going in straight, or whether the board is splitting; and these distinctions *articulate* what, in knowing how to hammer, I understand.'[202] Lastly, sofindingness refers to the fact that we are 'always responsive to what *matters* in our current, concrete situation,'[203] and in the case of hammering it involves being responsive to the strength of the hammer, the fit of the boards, the angle of the nail, and so on. Although the aforementioned definitions of understanding, telling, and sofindingness are neutral between discovery (ontic) and disclosure (ontological), each of the examples is ontic: that is, they indicated how we competently use, distinguish between, and respond to entities as they are or are not *in fact*. In contrast, ontological understanding, telling, and sofindingness grasp entities in terms of a distinction between what is *possible* and what is *impossible* for them. As Haugland puts it, 'projecting entities onto their possibilities is the same thing as projecting them onto their being.'[204] Insofar as physical entities are concerned, specifying what is possible and impossible for such entities is what the laws of physics do, and understanding physical entities in terms of these laws means nothing more than projecting them onto their possibilities. As for tools, what is possible for them is how they *can* be used and how they *ought* to function in such use. Thus, a hammer *can* be used to pull a nail and it *ought* not break in the process, but propping open a door with a hammer is ruled out for a hammer *as* a hammer, and so is a hammer that breaks when

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[201] Haugeland, p.47
[202] Haugeland, p.52
[203] Haugeland, p.52
[204] Haugeland, p.53

pulling said nail. The ability to project a hammer onto its possibilities is an example of ontological understanding, making all the determinate distinctions between what is possible and impossible for a hammer is an example of ontological telling, and the fact that making the distinction between the possible and the impossible *matters* for our use of a hammer is an example of ontological sofindingness. The fact that distinguishing between what is possible and impossible is important for our comportment towards entities means that ontic truth and correctly directing ourselves toward entities is a distinct possibility and also the goal of our comportments. And this, in turn, implies that our comportments are *beholden to* the entities to which they are directed. As Haugeland puts it: 'Beholdenness belongs to the essential aim of any comportment toward an entity *as* an entity – namely, that it gets the entity itself "right."'[205] In sum, disclosing what is possible and impossible for an entity is necessary if we are to discover the truth about that entity, and this, for example, is why the 'disclosure of the *being* of the physical is the condition of possibility of comportment toward physical entities *as* physical entities.'[206]

After indicating how discovering facts about entities presupposes the disclosure of their being, step two in the grounding of ontic truth in our authentic existence shows that our disclosure of being is inseparable from our self-disclosure, and therefore illustrates how our self-disclosure enables our discovery of entities and binds us to the facts about them. As noted above, Heidegger characterizes us as beings whose identity can be changed by adopting an alternative potentiality-for-being. It also implies that concrete self-disclosure is a case of coming to terms with the social role one currently holds. If, for example, I am a teacher, then I must come to terms with the materials I teach, the times at which I am teaching, and to whom I am obliged to teach. And by coming to terms with such things 'we understand *ourselves* as entities and as the entities that we are – that is, as *who* we are.'[207] Of course, I could not be a teacher without comporting myself toward the materials I teach, the students I supervise, and so on, and this means that my self-understanding presupposes that I understand the being of the entities with which I engage. If, as Haugeland says,

> my self-understanding depends on my understanding of the being of other entities, then I must also *be able* to project those entities onto their possibilities. *This* ability, therefore, belongs essentially to my ability-to-be *me*. My ability to project those entities onto their possibilities is not merely another possibility onto which I project myself, but rather is *part of* my ability to project myself onto my own possibility at all. In other words, my *self*-understanding literally *incorporates* an understanding of the being of other entities.[208]

Whilst self-understanding incorporates an understanding of the being of other entities, it also involves an imperative to be true to one's potentiality-for-being and thereby discover the truth about the entities with which one deals. For instance, being a teacher requires that I do what I am supposed to do as a teacher (master the material, give lectures, grade papers, and the like), but in order to do that I must get the entities I deal with *as a teacher* right. This, for Haugeland, means self-disclosure amounts to taking responsibility for our existence as well as the truth.[209] And the fact that taking responsibility for our existence entails a disclosure of being and thus the discovery entities suggests that self-disclosure is a condition through which the truth about entities is attained. It also indicates the link

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[205] Haugeland, p.57
[206] Haugeland, p.48
[207] Haugeland, p.58
[208] Haugeland, p.59
[209] Haugeland, p.60

between authenticity and fundamental ontology, and spelling this out takes us to the final stage of grounding ontic truth in the 'existentialist' elements of Heidegger's thought.

On Haugeland's account, taking responsibility for our existence means that we own it, and he chooses to translate Heidegger's words for authenticity and inauthenticity, *Eigentlichkeit* and *Uneigentlichkeit*, as ownedness and unownedness.[210] The distinction Haugland sees between ownedness and unownedness is one of disclosedness: unowned disclosedness is *public* whereas owned disclosedness is *resolute*. Public disclosedness refers to the disclosure of being that is commonly accepted in a given socio-historical context. As an example, Haugeland cites the fact that physicists learn the theories that disclose the being of physical entities as part of their education and broader cultural heritage, and such a disclosure is 'unowned' precisely because we generally fail to take responsibility for, or question the assumptions that disclose the physical and allow physicists to do the work that they do. In contrast, resolute disclosedness, as an 'owned' disclosure of being, involves taking responsibility for the disclosure of being one inherits by calling it into question. As Haugeland puts it: 'taking responsibility for something is not only taking it as something that matters, but also *not* taking it for granted.'[211] This means that when we take responsibility for our existence we not only take responsibility for getting the entities one deals with right (ontic truth) but also the disclosure of being (ontological truth) that enables those entities to appear in the first place. Taking responsibility for a disclosure of being means holding oneself open for the possibility of taking back a disclosure when it fails to disclose entities and aspects of the world *as* the entities and aspects that they are. Haugeland writes:

> Ontological truth is beholden to *entities* – the very same entities that ontical truth is beholden to, and via the very same means of discovery. The difference lies in the character of the potential failure and the required response. A failure of ontical truth is a mis-discovery of an entity, such as a factual mistake. With more or less work, it can be identified and life goes on. A failure of ontological truth is a systematic breakdown that undermines everything – which just means a breakdown that *cannot* be "fixed up with a bit of work." So the only responsible response is to take it all back; which means that life, *that* life, does *not* 'go on.' But this response too is a response to discovered entities, and only to them – a refusal to accept what we might paradoxically call "*real*" impossibilities among them. Intransigent impossibilities can *only* show up among entities as ostensibly discovered. To be sure, they may turn out in the end not to have been discovered entities after all; but that eventuality *presupposes* ostensible discoveries of entities.[212]

Although Haugeland doesn't offer a concrete instance of 'taking it all back', he alludes to Kuhnian paradigm shifts and the move from a Newtonian to Einsteinian conception of the universe is a clear example.[213] Haugeland's main point, however, is this: if disclosures of being (or ontological truths) are arbitrary and neither beholden to entities nor binding on us, then ontic truth would not really be a kind of *truth* at all.[214] And it is precisely our resolute being-towards-death (or existential truth) in which we take responsibility for our existence by owning up to our finitude that enables us to question and test a given disclosure of being (or ontological truth).

Death, as the mark of our mortality, indicates the limits of our understanding and highlights the fact that we are in a position to 'take it all back'. Haugeland articulates the

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[210] Haugeland, p.62
[211] Haugeland, p.72
[212] Haugeland, p.75
[213] Haugeland, p.73
[214] Haugeland, p.76

bounds of our understanding through an appeal to Kant's distinction between divine knowledge and human understanding:

> Infinite (divine) knowledge is perfect-in-itself in that it is not in any way *limited* by what it knows. Infinite just means unlimited: unbounded and unbound. Such knowledge is therefore originary or creative; that's how the relationship to what it knows is non-arbitrary (in effect, what is known is bounded and bound by the knowing of it).[215]

In contrast:

> Finite human knowledge...is *not* perfect-in-itself. Since it is not originary, it can only be knowledge insofar as it is bounded and bound by what it knows. But that means that whatever it knows must stand over against it as an *object*. So, finite knowledge can *only* (at best) be *objective* – it falls short of being creative.[216]

Since our understanding is imperfect and bound by the objects it understands, it is subject to revision and open to being replaced. And whilst the *possibility* of revising or replacing a particular understanding of being is a function of the finite nature of our knowledge, as we have seen our *ability* to make any such change is also based on our finitude or what Heidegger calls the "'not yet" which belongs to Dasein as its possible death.'[217] And again, if we own up to our death by orienting our life toward it, that is, if we own up to the fact that we are always in a position to alter the course of our existence so long as we are alive, then we are in a position to take responsibility for ourselves, the disclosure of being in which we dwell, and the truth about entities discovered therein. As Haugeland puts it, 'disclosure itself is *beholden* for its "success" to entities as discovered,'[218] and 'that beholden disclosure is *binding* on Dasein in that its very life depends on it.'[219] As authentic, Haugeland continues, 'resolute Dasein *takes over* that beholden bindingness – binds *itself* – in existential responsibility.'[220] And the fact that we can take responsibility for a disclosure of being by taking responsibility for ourselves means that 'resolute being toward death is the condition of the possibility of *ontological truth*.'[221]

In the end, authenticity is a condition of possibility for ontological truth to the extent that taking responsibility for our finite existence, and thus owning up to the finite nature of our understanding along with our ability to take that understanding back, allows and in fact requires us to question and test the truth of a given disclosure of being. In the case of physics, being authentic amounts to questioning, testing, and coming to terms with the laws that specify the essence and actuality of physical entities. And since coming to terms with the laws of physics is itself a condition through which we discover facts about physical entities, being authentic is not only a condition of possibility for attaining the ontological truth of physical *being* but a condition of possibility for reaching the ontical truth of physical *entities* as well. This, on Haugeland's account, means that resolute being-towards-death is 'the fulcrum of [Heidegger's] entire ontology,'[222] and it explains why Heidegger thinks the most primordial phenomenon of truth is achieved in

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[215] Haugeland, p.76
[216] Haugeland, p.76-7
[217] *BT* 287/243
[218] Haugeland, p.76
[219] Haugeland, p.76
[220] Haugeland, p.76
[221] Haugeland, p.76
[222] Haugeland, p.44

the mode of authenticity. 'In our ontological clarification of the proposition that "Dasein is in the truth,"' Heidegger writes, 'we have called attention to the primordial disclosedness of this entity as the *truth of existence*; and for a delimitation of its character,' Heidegger goes on to say, 'we have referred to the analysis of Dasein's authenticity.'[223]

Haugeland's *Heidegger?*

For all the subtly and innovation in Haugeland's argument, I think it fails as a reading of *Being and Time* for three reasons. First, Haugeland's emphasis on authentic truth fails to account for the truth of our inauthentic existence, and thus fails to appreciate the fact that we get entities right in our average everydayness as well. Second, and following from my first point, Haugeland misses the extent to which authenticity is only a *modified* way in which we relate to entities and aspects of the world as they are manifest in everydayness. Third, Haugeland produces an account of authenticity that only makes intuitive sense in the empirical sciences but actually lacks a conceptual basis full stop. The objection here is that if entities are only *meaningfully* presented through disclosures of being, then those entities cannot serve as an *intelligible*, independent standard upon which disclosures are based. I will consider each of these objections in turn, but I dedicate most of my attention to the final point since it undermines what I see as the driving force behind Haugeland's claim that authenticity entails holding ourselves open to the possibility of taking our inheritance back.

The Truth of Everydayness

Although Haugeland argues that the disclosure of being and thus the discovery of truth about entities is grounded in our authentic existence, Heidegger clearly thinks that, at least to a certain extent, being is disclosed and entities are discovered in our inauthentic existence as well. When fallen into a given activity, Heidegger writes, 'entities have not been completely hidden.'[224] In fact, Heidegger says such entities are 'precisely the sort of thing that has been uncovered.'[225] And it is fairly obvious that carpenters, physicists, and teachers who fail to own up to the truth of their existence nevertheless have an understanding of the various entities and aspects of the world that enable them to be the (inauthentic) carpenters, physicists, and teachers that they are. Haugeland, of course, implicitly acknowledges this when he says 'it is *definitive* of Dasein that it is the entity that understands being.'[226] But again the fact that the truth about entities (ontic truth) and the truth about disclosures of being (ontological truth) are only attained when we take responsibility for our existence (existential truth) seems to suggests that we do not have purchase on the truth in our inauthentic mode of being. Indeed, Haugeland appears to say as much when he writes:

> If those possibilities themselves (the disclosed being of the entities) were to remain arbitrary [without the grounding achieved in existential truth], and therefore neither beholden [to entities] nor binging [on us], then the achievement of the first two stages [the grounding of ontic truth in ontological truth] would be hollow at best – even ontical truth would not be a sort of truth after all.[227]

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[223] *BT* 343/297
[224] *BT* 264/224
[225] *BT* 264/224
[226] Haugeland, p.46
[227] Haugeland, p.76

Even if his account does not rule out the possibility of inauthentic truth in principle, Haugeland's failure to explicate the truth attained in our inauthentic existence means that he overlooks the extent to which authenticity is only a *modified* way in which we relate to the truth present in our average everydayness. And this is a serious omission. For the fact that authenticity is simply the explicit discovery of what is implicitly disclosed in our inauthentic existence calls into question Haugeland's claim that '*owned* Dasein, as taking over responsibility for its ontological heritage, no longer takes it for granted,' but instead 'holds itself free for taking it back.'[228] This omission also means that Haugeland misses the type of truth we are *primarily* trying to come to terms when authentic: namely, that we are beings for whom our being is an issue. But in order to appreciate the force of these objections, we need to take a closer look at the relationship between authenticity and falling as well as Heidegger's account of 'taking it back' in an existential situation.

The Modification of Everydayness

Falling into a given activity determines our particular identity and dictates the way entities and aspects of the world are presented to us. But when we are fascinated with our current concerns we fail to take responsibility for ourselves. And when combined with the public nature of our activities, this failure facilitates the vague understanding we have of our world in our everyday life. Haugeland aligns falling with our inauthentic existence – 'falling' he writes, 'is the basic characteristic of Dasein that, in each case, it inevitably tends toward unownedness'[229] – and as indicated earlier he sees the distinction between inauthenticity and authenticity as a difference in disclosure whereby inauthentic disclosure is *public* and authentic disclosure is *resolute*. Public disclosedness refers to the disclosure of being that is commonly accepted in a specific, socio-historical context, and it is 'unowned' precisely because we generally fail to take responsibility for and question the assumptions of the disclosure of being in which we dwell. Resolute disclosedness is an 'owned' disclosure of being, because it involves taking responsibility for the disclosure we inherit by calling it into question and holding ourselves free for the possibility of taking it back. Aligning inauthenticity with the falling of public disclosures of being and authenticity with resolute disclosedness that questions and potentially overcomes public disclosedness is, however, fairly misleading, since Heidegger believes '*authentic* existence is not something which floats above falling everydayness.'[230] In fact, Heidegger says 'it is only a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon.'[231] And Heidegger asserts: '*Authentic being-one's-self* does not rest upon an exceptional condition of the subject, a condition that has been detached from the "they"; *it is rather an existentiell modification of the "they" – of the "they" as an essential existentiale.*'[232] As we have seen, this modification amounts to an explicit understanding of facts that are implicitly disclosed in all our activities, and resoluteness as such does not require us to take responsibility for publically disclosures by calling them into question. In Haugeland's terms this means that our owned disclosures of being are just as public as our unowned disclosures. It also implies that the entities present in our world when we are authentic are the *same* as those present when we are inauthentic. What has changed is the *way* we see and relate to those entities when we resolutely take responsibility for *ourselves*. And to appreciate what this

[228] Haugeland, p.72
[229] Haugeland, p.63
[230] *BT* 224/179
[231] *BT* 224/179
[232] *BT* 168/130

change amounts to we need to return to Heidegger's account of our 'existential situation.'

Heidegger tells us that an existential situation 'is the "there" which is disclosed in resoluteness.'[233] And if, as Heidegger says, '*resolution is precisely the disclosive projection and determination of what is factically possible at the time*,'[234] then our existential situation is simply the range of potentialities-of-being available for us to act upon at any particular moment. Of course, determining what is actually possible for us at any given time requires that we step back from the activity we have fallen into and overcome idle talk so that we have a clear view of the situation we find ourselves in. This is why Heidegger claims that '*for* das Man...*the situation is essentially something that has been closed off*,' and depicts resoluteness as a 'moment of vision' in which we are 'brought back from distraction with the objects of one's closest concern' so that we '*encounter for the first time* what can be "in time" as ready-to-hand or present-at-hand.'[235] However, the *primary* point of getting clear about the situation we are in is not, as Haugeland suggests, 'all the double checking, and so on, that ferrets out which apparent discoveries are wrong and so vindicates those that are right.'[236] Instead, we clarify our situation so that we as beings whose essence it is to choose our being can actually make that choice by adopting an available potentiality. Dreyfus spells this out nicely in a response to Haugeland when he writes: 'Dasein copes with equipment and pursues truth not merely for the sake of understanding entities in *their* being but ultimately for the sake of taking a stand on *its own* being.'[237] In Heidegger's words:

> With Dasein's lostness in the 'they', that factical potentiality-for-being which is closest to it (the tasks, rules, and standards, the urgency and extent, of concernful and solicitous being-in-the-world) has already been decided upon. The 'they' has always kept Dasein from taking hold of these possibilities of being. The 'they' even hides the manner in which it has tacitly relived Dasein of the burden of explicility *choosing* these possibilities. It remains indefinite who has 'really' done the choosing. So Dasein makes no choice, gets carried along by the nobody, and thus ensnares itself in inauthenticity. This process can be reversed only if Dasein specifically brings itself back to itself from its lostness in the 'they'. But this bringing-back must have that kind of being *by the neglect of which* Dasein has lost itself in inauthenticity. When Dasein thus brings itself back from the 'they', the they-self is modified in an existentiell manner so that it becomes *authentic* being-one's-self. This must be accomplished by *making up for not choosing*. But 'making up' for not choosing signifies *choosing to make this choice* – deciding for a potentiality-for-being, and making this decision from one's own self. In choosing to make this choice, Dasein *makes possible*, first and foremost, it's authentic potentiality-for-being.[238]

Since taking a stand on our own being requires the *presence* of a range of possibilities from which we must choose and act upon, Heidegger says 'resolution does not withdraw itself from "actuality", but discovers first what is factically possible.'[239] It does so, he continues, 'by seizing upon it in whatever way is possible for it as its ownmost potentiality-for-being in *das Man*.'[240] And this means that taking responsibility for ourselves involves owning up

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[233] *BT* 346/299
[234] *BT* 345/298
[235] *BT* 436/300, 387-8/338
[236] Haugeland, p.71
[237] Hubert Dreyfus, 'Responses' in *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity*, ed. Wrathall & Malpas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), p.314
[238] *BT* 312-3/268
[239] *BT* 346/299
[240] *BT* 346/299

to our ability to choose by clarifying our existential situation such that we can actually adopt one of the possibilities it presents us with.

Construing authenticity as a clarification of our existential situation so that we are placed in a position to take responsibility for our existence by choosing and acting upon an available possibility puts us in a position to see what Heidegger intends with his talk of holding ourselves free for the possibility of taking it back. Specifically, it shows us that what we take back is not, as Haugeland has it, a disclosure of being; rather we shift from one activity to another within our existential situation or broader socio-historical destiny. In other words, we do not open ourselves up to the possibility of taking back the way the world is disclosed through the laws of physics or the institution of carpentry. Rather, we hold ourselves free for the possibility of giving up being a physicist in order to be a carpenter. As Heidegger puts it:

> [We] simply cannot *become rigid* as regards the situation, but must understand that the resolution, in accordance with its own meaning as disclosure, must be *held open* and free for the current factical possibilities. The certainty of resolution signifies that one *holds oneself free for* the possibility of *taking it back* – a possibility which is factically necessary.[241]

The possibility of taking back the activity we have chosen is a necessity for beings whose being is an issue for them, but this does not entail questioning, testing, and potentially doing away with the disclosure of being which makes that activity possible. In fact, questioning, testing, and doing away with the disclosure of being that enables our activities undermines our ability to be authentic by restricting our ability to act. 'Life', as Haugeland puts it, 'does *not* "go on."'[242] And if, on Heidegger's account, authenticity is merely a modified way in which we relate to ourselves and the world as it is disclosed in our destining of being, and if resoluteness does not detach us from the possibilities present in our situation but provides us with a clearer view of them so that we can actually exercise our freedom to choose, then there appears to be little support for Haugeland's claim that authenticity involves examining our disclosures of being to the point at which we discover a 'systematic breakdown that undermines everything' such that 'the only responsible response is to take it all back.'[243]

The Groundlessness of Everydayness

Whilst Haugeland acknowledges that there is no textual support in *Being and Time* for his claim that authenticity involves examining our disclosures of being and therefore holding ourselves open for the possibility of taking them back, he does think his reading of authenticity is consistent with Heidegger's intentions to the extent that our ability to adopt a particular activity requires that we get entities, and thus the disclosures of being that present entities, *right*.[244] Put otherwise, Haugeland's belief that taking responsibility for our existence entails taking responsibility for the truth of entities and the disclosure of being in which we dwell is based on his belief that our comportment towards entities and the disclosure of being that makes those comportments possible are open to critical evaluation against the entities themselves. It is, of course, fairly uncontroversial to claim that our comportments are subject to evaluation against the entities towards which we comport ourselves. We can, for example, test the truth of our descriptions of a particle

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[241] *BT* 355/307-8
[242] Haugeland, p.75
[243] Haugeland, p.75
[244] Haugeland, p.69

by examining whether or not there is such a particle and whether or not it is in the state described. We can also distinguish between our correct and incorrect uses of a hammer to the extent that the correct use enables us to successfully build a wall whereas the incorrect use does not. And Haugeland is certainly right to say that being a physicist or a carpenter requires that we get our facts straight about the entities that we deal with. It is, however, far more controversial for Haugeland to maintain that our disclosures of being are to beholden to entities themselves, since disclosures of being are precisely what makes any discovery of entities and thus our comportment to them possible. If, in other words, a particle or a hammer is only ever meaningfully presented to us through the laws of physics or the institution of carpentry, then it is difficult to see how said particle or hammer could function as an intelligible, independent standard to which we could comport ourselves and through which we could assess the laws and institutions that make them available. And if no sense can be made of testing disclosures of being against entities themselves, then *a fortiori* no sense can be made of Haugeland's claim that authenticity entails testing disclosures of being against entities themselves.

To strengthen and tease out the implications of this objection, it is worth looking in greater detail at the case Haugeland makes for his position via an analogy to Thomas Kuhn's account of scientific discoveries in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. In the 'special case' of empirical science, Haugeland identifies fallenness with the success of what Kuhn calls normal science.[245] And on Kuhn's account, normal science progresses when scientists solve specific puzzles presented to them through a particular paradigm.[246] 'Paradigm' is Kuhn's word for 'accepted examples of actual scientific practice – examples which include law, theory, application, and instrumentation together – [that] provide models from which spring particular coherent traditions of scientific research.'[247] As an example of a paradigm, Kuhn cites Newton's Laws and states that the Newtonian paradigm 'told scientists what sorts of entities the universe did and did not contain' as well as 'what many of their research problems should be' so that for 18th and 19th century science 'quantity-of-matter was a fundamental ontological category for physical scientists, and the forces that act between bits of matter were a dominant topic of research.'[248] Since paradigms determine what counts as an entity and what scientists are able to do with said entities, Haugeland links Kuhnian paradigms to Heideggerian disclosures of being. However, Kuhn claims 'no part of the aim of normal science is to call forth new sorts of phenomeon.'[249] Instead, 'normal-scientific research is directed to the articulation of those phenomena and theories that the paradigm already supplies.'[250] And Kuhn goes so far as to say that the practice of normal science 'resists' and is 'often intolerant' of any attempt to challenge the paradigm upon which its research is based.[251] For Haugeland, this suggests that normal science is inauthentic, and it is only by examining Haugeland's analogy between authenticity and Kuhnian paradigm shifts that we come to see what Haugeland means when he says authenticity entails testing disclosures of being against entities and thus holding ourselves free for the possibility of taking a disclosure back.

According to Kuhn, scientific discovery 'commences with the awareness of anomaly, i.e. with the recognition that nature has somehow violated the paradigm-induced expectations that govern normal science.' It continues, Kuhn says, 'with a more or less extended exploration of the area of anomaly.' Finally, scientific discovery 'closes

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[245] Haugeland, p.63
[246] Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) p.35-9
[247] Kuhn, p.10
[248] Kuhn, p.40-1
[249] Kuhn, p.24
[250] Kuhn, p.24
[251] Kuhn, p.24

only when the paradigm theory has been adjusted so that the anomalous has become the expected.'[252] As an example, Kuhn again turns to Newton:

> Newton's new theory of light and color originated in the discovery that none of the existing pre-paradigm theories would account for the length of the spectrum, and the wave theory that replaced Newton's was announced in the midst of growing concern about anomalies in the relation of diffraction and polarization effects to Newton's theory.[253]

Haugeland calls Kuhnian anomalies 'discovered impossibilities', and he claims that the resolute, responsible, and authentic scientist refuses to accept a discovered impossibility within a discipline as it is normally practiced, and therefore holds herself open to the possibility of taking her particular paradigm back.[254] When, in Kuhn's words,

> the awareness of anomaly has lasted so long and penetrated so deep one can appropriately describe the fields affected by it as in a state of growing crisis. Because it demands large-scale paradigm destruction and major shifts in the problems and techniques of normal science, the emergence of new theories is generally preceded by a period of pronounced professional insecurity. As one might expect, that insecurity is generated by the persistent failure of the puzzles of normal science to come out as they should. Failure of existing rules is the prelude to a search for new ones.[255]

For Haugeland, the fact that discovered impossibilities call on a responsible scientist to take her paradigm back suggests that paradigms are measured against entities that are discovered through but nevertheless distinct from a given paradigm. As he puts it: 'Discovery of entities does indeed presuppose – hence is "relative" to – Dasein's disclosure of their being (or a paradigm),' but 'whether a way of life with its ontical comportments *works* or not is not ultimately up to Dasein,' and this means that a disclosure of being (or paradigm) 'is *beholden* for its "success" to those very entities as discovered – entities that are independent of it in the concrete and inescapable sense that they are *out of control*.'[256] If, as Haugeland claims, entities are distinct from disclosures of being, then entities can stand as meaningful, self-sufficient standards to test the truth of disclosures. And since Haugeland thinks taking responsibility for our existence entails getting entities right, he thinks that authenticity requires that we test the disclosures that present entities against the entities themselves.

Though testing disclosures of being against the entities they disclose makes intuitive sense in the 'special case' of empirical science – 'nature itself,' Kuhn says, 'must first undermine professional security by making prior achievements seem problematic'[257] – it is counter intuitive to suggest that hammers, works of art, and the citizens of a state exist as standards independent of the industrial, artistic, and political institutions that make them possible. If, however, no sense can be made of testing industrial, artistic, or political institutions against hammers, works of art, or the citizens of a state as they are 'in themselves', and given that Haugeland thinks testing disclosures of being against self-sufficient entities is a condition through which we take responsibility for our existence, then authenticity on Haugeland's interpretation appears to be impossible for everyone save the practitioners of empirical science. This, of course, is an absurd conclusion. It is

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[252] Kuhn, p.52-3
[253] Kuhn, p.67
[254] Haugeland, p.63-4,
[255] Kuhn, p.67-8
[256] Haugeland, p.75-76
[257] Kuhn, p.169

certainly not one that Haugeland makes in his text. And in order to establish that this objection actually follows from Haugeland's view, we need to examine in greater detail the connection he makes between authenticity and paradigm shifts in the natural sciences as well as the 'discovered impossibilities' that he thinks make such shifts possible.

Recall, the link Haugeland sees between authenticity and paradigm shifts is based on the relatively straightforward belief that 'in knowing how to be me I must know how to deal with the entities amidst which I work and live'[258] This, for Haugeland, means that one of the most important features of our everyday activities is that they get the entities right. 'What *matters* is that the entities, as ontically discovered, be in fact *possible* – that is, *not im*possible – according to the understanding of their being.'[259] As Haugeland sees it, our activities 'can impugn the ontical truth of others if their respective discoverings of entities as entities are mutually *incompatible*,' and 'discoverings of entities are incompatible just in case the entities themselves, as (ostensibly) discovered, would be *impossible*.'[260] For example:

> If you discover both that your son is now at school and now at home, then something must be *wrong*, for he *cannot* be in two places at once. Likewise, if you discover that something is a hammer but shatters against a nail, or that something is an electric current but generates no magnetic field. Since that would be impossible, *something* is wrong.[261]

When impossibilities are discovered, Haugeland says, you 'double-check', 're-examine your means of discovery', and 'seek confirmation from other people' until 'it becomes clear *which* of your earlier *apparent* discoveries was wrong.'[262] Such procedures 'make feasible a non-arbitrary distinction between (mere) *appearance* and *reality*,' but Haugeland acknowledges that

> there is and can be no antecedent *guarantee* that all that double-checking and whatnot, no matter how assiduous, will actually succeed. That is, no matter how hard the relevant individual and community try, they may no find a way to reconcile their apparent discoveries with what they know to be possible. What then?[263]

Haugeland answers:

> A discovered impossibility rests on two factors: what is in fact discovered [ontical truth] and what is ruled out by the projection onto possibilities [ontological truth]. The careful and persistent double-checking has eliminated the discoveries as the culprit. That leaves the possibilities – in other words, the *being* of the entities discovered.[264]

Haugeland then articulates the difference between discovered impossibilities at the ontic and ontological level in terms of different failures with different responses:

> A failure of ontical truth is a misdiscovery of an entity, such as a factual mistake. With more or less work, it can be identified and corrected; and life goes on. A failure of ontological truth is a systematic breakdown that undermines everything – which just

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[258] Haugeland, p.58-59
[259] Haugeland, p.54
[260] Haugeland, p.56
[261] Haugeland, p.56
[262] Haugeland, p.56
[263] Haugeland, p.72
[264] Haugeland, p.73

> means a breakdown that *cannot* be "fixed up with a bit of work." So the only responsible response is to take it all back; which means that life, *that* life, does *not* 'go on.'[265]

Both responses, however, are responses to discovered entities, or what Haugeland calls 'a refusal to accept what we might paradoxically call "*real*" impossibilities among them.'[266] So again, 'ontological truth is beholden to *entities* – the very same entities that ontical truth is beholden to, and via the very same means of discovery.'[267] This implies that something like an appearance-reality distinction exists at the ontological level such that disclosures of being – which determine entities *as entities* – are bound by entities that are intelligible independent of them. And this, for Haugland, is 'an important result', for again:

> If the possibilities themselves (the disclosed being of the entities) were to remain arbitrary, and therefore neither beholden [to entities] nor binding [on us], then the achievement of the first two stages [of grounding ontical truth] would be hollow at best – even ontical truth would not be a sort of *truth* after all.[268]

In the end, Haugeland leaves us with a picture of authenticity-induced paradigm shifts in which we take responsibility for our existence by ensuring that we get the entities we deal with right. This process begins by making sure that our comportments to the entities that are presented through a given disclosure of being are in fact true. As an astrophysicist, we may look to see if our descriptions and predictions of Mercury's orbit are correct, and as a carpenter we can test the tools of our profession by putting them to use. When our predictions fail or our tools aren't up to the task, we can check and see if we have made a mistake in our calculations or tool selection. This provocation to look and see is initially a response to a discovered impossibility amongst a specific set of entities (ostensibly) discovered by a particular disclosure of being. If, however, we are unable to resolve the apparent incompatible discoveries through fact checking, then we turn to questioning the disclosure of being which makes certain facts available to us. This is also a response to a discovered impossibility amongst a specific set of entities (ostensibly) discovered through a given disclosure of being. But we can no longer test our comportments against facts about (ostensibly) discovered entities. Instead, we are required to test our disclosures of being against the entities as they are in themselves. In the case of the astrophysicist, Newton's Laws should be measured against Mercury itself, whereas the statesmen must assess state institutions against its citizens, the artist should hold the art community to account through an appeal to a work of art, and the carpenter must test her practices of building against the tools she builds with. The trouble is that whilst we tend to think of Mercury as having an existence independent of the laws and theories through which we understand it, there is no such thing as a citizen without a state, a work of art without the art community, or a hammer apart from the practices that make it the tool that it is.[269]

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[265] Haugeland, p.75
[266] Haugeland, p.75
[267] Haugeland, p.75
[268] Haugeland, p.75
[269] Of course, citizens of a particular state may call into question particular policies, or seek inclusion under specific legislation. The civil-rights movement in the United States in the 1960s is a good example of this phenomenon. Similarly, artists can transform the art community through an innovative artwork. And I take it that this is precisely what Duchamp's 'Fountain' was intended to do. But the civil-rights activist was not a self-sufficient rights-bearing entity that served as an independent standard to test the institutions of state. And Duchamp's 'Fountain' was not an artwork in-and-of-itself against which the current standards of the art community could be measured. Instead, both stood as indeterminate entities that sought to challenge and expand the scope of existent political and artistic institutions, respectively.

And if, as Haugeland claims, taking responsibility for our existence involves testing disclosures of being against independent entities and therefore holding ourselves open to the possibility of taking that disclosure of being back, then again only practitioners of the empirical sciences are capable of authenticity.

Perhaps more troubling for Haugeland's position is that there is good reason to think that it is impossible to test disclosures of being against independent entities *even* in the 'special case' of empirical science. If, as Haugeland puts it, 'disclosure of the being of the physical is the condition of the possibility of comportment toward physical entities as physical entities,' then no sense can be made of comporting ourselves toward physical entities *as* physical entities without disclosing their being. And if we cannot *meaningfully* comport ourselves to physical entities apart from a disclosure of their being, then it is difficult to see how physical entities could function as an *intelligible*, independent standard against which their disclosure of being is tested. Both Kuhn and Heidegger are sensitive to the intuitive appeal of realism in the empirical sciences, but they are also aware of the difficulties involved in making sense of self-sufficient entities. And after indicating both Kuhn's and Heidegger's rejection of Haugeland's realism (and thus the interpretation of authenticity that comes with it), I will develop an alternative account to Haugeland's grounding of ontological truth in existential truth through a reading of Kuhn's work on paradigm shifts.

Although Haugeland appeals to Kuhn to help make his case that disclosures of being can be tested against entities themselves, Kuhn is clearly skeptical of this idea: 'No process yet disclosed by the historical study of scientific development at all resembles the methodological stereotype of falsification by direct comparison with nature.'[270] Instead, Kuhn says, 'the decision to reject one paradigm is always simultaneously the decision to accept another, and the judgment leading to decision involves the comparison of both paradigms with nature *and* with each other.'[271] Kuhn's invocation of 'nature' in this passage suggests that he shares some sympathy with Haugeland's position, but much of the rest of Kuhn's text calls that viewpoint into question. After examining the record of past scientific research, Kuhn remarks:

> The historian of science may be tempted to exclaim that when paradigms change, the world itself changes with them. Led by a new paradigm, scientists adopt new instruments and look in new places. Even more important, during revolutions scientists see new and different things when looking through familiar instruments in places they have looked before. It is rather as if the professional community had been suddenly transported to another planet where familiar objects are seen in a different light and are joined by unfamiliar ones as well. Of course, nothing of quite that sort does occur: there is no geographical transplantation; outside the laboratory everyday affairs usually continue as before. Nevertheless, paradigm changes do cause scientists to see the world of their research-engagement differently. Insofar as their only recourse to that world is through what they see and what they do, we may want to say that after a revolution scientists are responding to a different world.[272]

Of competing paradigms, Kuhn writes:

> When paradigms enter, as they must, into a debate about paradigm choice, their role is necessarily circular. Each group uses its own paradigm to argue in that paradigms

[270] Kuhn, p.77
[271] Kuhn, p.77
[272] Kuhn, p.111

> defense... As in political revolutions, so in paradigm choice – there is no standard higher than the assent of the relevant community.[273]

And in a postscript responding to the so-called relativistic tendencies of his initial text, Kuhn asserts:

> There is, I think, no theory-independent way to reconstruct phrases like 'really there'; the notion of a match between the ontology of a theory and its 'real' counterpart in nature now seem to me illusive in principle.[274]

In short, Kuhn thinks that even in the sciences no sense can be made of testing a paradigm against self-sufficient entities. And Kuhn ends *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* by saying 'we may...have to relinquish the notion, explicit or implicit, that changes of paradigm carry scientists and those who learn from them closer to the truth.'[275]

Heidegger, for his part, occasionally makes reference to 'nature' and the 'real' in *Being and Time*, but he ultimately dismisses the robust realism of intelligible independent entities that Haugeland assumes in his attempt to ground ontological truth in the truth of our existence. Two passages in *Being and Time* are often cited in support of Heidegger's 'realism'. The first reads:

> Being (not entities) is dependent upon the understanding of being; that is to say, reality (not the real) is dependent upon care.[276]

And the second appears in a discussion about truth and Newton's Laws:

> 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... To say that before Newton his laws were neither true nor false cannot signify that before him there were no such entities as have been uncovered and pointed out by those laws. Through Newton the laws became true and with them entities became accessible in themselves to Dasein. Once entities have been uncovered they show themselves precisely as entities which beforehand already were.[277]

Each citation appeals to the distinction between being and entities in order to combine something like *transcendental* idealism with *empirical* realism such that the *disclosure* of an entity is dependent on a given paradigm, but the actual *facts* about said entities are not.[278] Yet attention to the text surrounding the aforementioned passages suggests that no meaningful comportment to, or intelligible engagement with entities is possible outside a paradigm or disclosure of being. Of Newton's Laws, Heidegger says,

> 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.[279]

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[273] Kuhn, p.94
[274] Kuhn, p.206
[275] Kuhn, p.170
[276] *BT* 255/212
[277] *BT* 269/226-7
[278] For Heidegger's own account (and partial acceptance and partial rejection) of both realism and idealism, see *BT* 251/207
[279] *BT* 269/226

And in the case of 'nature' and 'real' entities, Heidegger writes:

> When Dasein does not exist, 'independence' 'is' not either, nor 'is' the 'in-itself'. In such a case this sort of thing can be neither understood nor not understood. In such a case even entities within-the-world can neither be discovered nor lie hidden. *In such a case* it cannot be said that entities are, nor can it be said that they are not. But *now*, as long as there is an understanding of being and therefore an understanding of the presence-at-hand, it can indeed be said that *in this case* entities will still continue to be.[280]

Combining the last two passages with the first two leaves us with what I would like to call a 'meaningless realism' in which entities *exist* independent of us, but their *being* – namely, *that* and *what* they are – is unintelligible. As Carman puts it:

> Without Dasein there would "be" no *being*, which is to say there would be no understanding of being, so that *that* and *what* entities are would add up to nothing intelligible. But occurrent entities would still be, nonetheless.[281]

This 'meaningless realism' is consistent with what John Richardson calls 'internal realism' in which 'it is our world, our web of purposes and grasps, that lets such a thing as "clouds" appear, but just when and how they appear is settled outside us.'[282] But the most important point for present purposes is that nothing intelligible can be said or understood about entities apart from a particular paradigm or disclosure of being. 'In no case,' Heidegger says, 'is Dasein untouched and unseduced by this [normal or everyday] way in which things have been interpreted, set before the open country of a 'world-in-itself' so that is just beholds what it encounters.'[283] And in a later lecture series Heidegger explicitly denies any attempt to ground disclosures of being in anything, let alone test their truth against entities themselves:

> Being 'is' in essence: ground/reason. Therefore being can never first have a ground/reason that would supposedly ground it. Accordingly, ground/reason is missing from being. Ground/reason remains at a remove from being. Being 'is' the abyss in the sense of such a remaining apart of reason from being. To the extent that being as such grounds, it remains groundless.[284]

This, in Haugeland's idiom, means that ontological truth is *not* beholden to entities. It also undermines Haugeland's grounding of ontological truth in existential truth insofar as Haugeland's account of existential truth involves taking responsibility for our existence by testing disclosures of being against independent entities. Finally, if existential truth does not involve taking responsibility for our existence by testing disclosures of being against entities themselves, then Haugeland no longer has reason to think that taking responsibility for our existence entails holding ourselves open to the possibility of taking disclosures of being back.

Potentialities-for-Being as the Most Primordial Phenomenon of Truth

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[280] *BT* 255/212
[281] Carman, p.202
[282] Richardson, p.240
[283] *BT* 213/169-70
[284] *PR* 51

Relinquishing the notion of intelligible independent entities or what Kuhn called science's steady movement 'closer to the truth' does not, however, mean that disclosures of being or paradigms are beyond question or incapable of being replaced. And taking a closer look at Kuhn's analysis of normal science and paradigm change *both* provides us with an overview of how human understanding develops in all our research endeavours *and* exemplifies an alternative to Haugeland's reading of Heidegger's assertion that 'the most primordial, and indeed the most authentic, disclosedness in which Dasein, as a potentiality-for-being, can be, is the *truth of existence*.'[285]

As a puzzle-solving activity, Kuhn says normal science 'is a highly cumulative enterprise, eminently successful in its aim, the steady extension of the scope and precision of scientific knowledge.'[286] Yet 'normal science does not aim at novelties of fact or theory and, when successful, finds none.'[287] This is because there are 'rules that limit both the nature of acceptable solutions and the steps by which they are to be obtained,' such that paradigms of normal science provide 'a criterion for choosing problems that, while the paradigm is taken for granted, can be assumed to have solutions.'[288] For Kuhn, this means 'normal-scientific research is directed to the articulation of those phenomena and theories that a paradigm already supplies.'[289] And he concludes: 'One of the reasons why normal science seems to progress so rapidly is that its practitioners concentrate on problems that only their own lack of ingenuity should keep them from solving.'[290]

Whilst normal science does not aim to discover novelties of fact or theory, Kuhn acknowledges that 'new and unsuspecting phenomena are repeatedly uncovered by scientific research, and radical new theories have again and again been invented by scientists.'[291] This implies that 'research under a paradigm must be a particularly effective way of inducing paradigm change.'[292] And normal science induces such change when anomalies 'produced inadvertently by a game played under one set of rules' requires 'the elaboration of another set [of rules]' for 'their assimilation.'[293] Anomalies, as noted above, 'are generated by the persistent failure of the puzzles of normal science to come out as they should,'[294] and Kuhn says, 'the single most prevalent claim advanced by the proponents of a new paradigm is that they can solve the problems that have led the old one into crisis.'[295] However, new paradigms that claim to solve old problems are generally incommensurable with the previous paradigm. 'The proponents of competing paradigms practice their trades in different worlds,' to the extent that a new paradigm 'cannot be made logically or even probabilistically compelling for those who refuse to step into the circle,' therefore 'the transfer of allegiance from paradigm to paradigm is a conversion experience that cannot be forced.'[296] This, for Kuhn, means that scientific revolutions are 'a special sort of change involving a certain sort of reconstruction of group commitments.'[297] And Kuhn sums up the process of a paradigm shift as follows:

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[285] *BT* 264/221
[286] Kuhn, p.52
[287] Kuhn, p.52
[288] Kuhn, p.38, 37
[289] Kuhn, p.24
[290] Kuhn, p.37
[291] Kuhn, p.52
[292] Kuhn, p.52
[293] Kuhn, p.52
[294] Kuhn, p.68
[295] Kuhn, p.153
[296] Kuhn, p.150, 94, 151
[297] Kuhn, p.180-1

> Paradigm-testing occurs only after persistent failure to solve a noteworthy puzzle has given rise to crisis. And even then it occurs only after the sense of the crisis has evoked an alternative candidate for paradigm. In the sciences the testing situation never consists, as puzzle-solving does, simply in the comparison of a single paradigm with nature. Instead, testing occurs as part of the competition between two rival paradigms for the allegiance of the scientific community.[298]

Kuhn spells this out through a detailed analysis of the Copernican, Newtonian, chemical, and Einsteinian revolutions, but the main point of each example is this: 'Paradigms gain their status because they are more successful than their competitors in solving a few problems that the group of practitioners has come to recognize as acute.'[299]

Kuhn's emphasis on anomalies, puzzles, and successful problem solving suggests that paradigm shifts are *not* induced and carried out by the observation of independent entities, but rather are motivated by a given paradigm's inability to help a given human community achieve a specific end. This process begins in the way that is fairly similar to Haugeland's description of paradigm shifts: namely, it is a response to an anomaly that is presented to us through a particular paradigm. Anomalies, however, are not reducible to 'discovered impossibilities' or 'incompatible appearances' amongst a certain set of entities presented to us through a specific paradigm. Rather, anomalies often appear as a gap or lack in our current understanding: they are unsolved puzzles or possibilities that remain concealed in light of the way our world is currently presented. Why, for example, can't we explain or accurately predict Mercury's orbit? Or what laws should we adopt if we want to ensure equal opportunity with the maximum amount of liberty for our citizens? Heidegger's word for an unsolved puzzle or a concealed possibility is 'mystery'. And if we are unable to solve a problem with the means provided by our current paradigm, then we begin questioning the status of the paradigm that presented us with the mystery. This questioning is not, however, a matter of comparing the suspect paradigm with 'nature', but instead is a case of measuring it against new paradigms that claim to solve the same problem. And as we have seen, a paradigm shift occurs if scientists come to see that a new paradigm is better at helping them achieve their research aims.

Changing the terms of paradigm testing from 'matching theory with reality' to 'success in achieving an end' allows Kuhn to generalize his account of paradigm shifts beyond the realm of empirical science where the notion of independent entities makes intuitive sense. In fact, Kuhn develops his conception of scientific revolutions through an analogy with the distinctly human activity of politics:

> Political revolutions are inaugurated by a growing sense, often restricted to a segment of the political community, that existing institutions have ceased adequately to meet the problems posed by an environment that they have in part created. In much the same way, scientific revolutions are inaugurated by a growing sense, again often restricted to a narrow subdivision of the scientific community, that an existing paradigm has ceased to function adequately in the exploration of an aspect of nature to which that paradigm itself had previously led the way. In both political and scientific development the sense of malfunction that can lead to crisis is a prerequisite for paradigm changes.[300]

Kuhn also thinks that regular research in the arts and humanities is similar in structure to the puzzle-solving progress of normal science. Just as normal scientists 'add to the scope and precision with which [their] paradigm can be applied,' so too do 'the theologian who

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[298] Kuhn, p.145
[299] Kuhn, p.23
[300] Kuhn, p.92

articulates dogma or the philosopher who refines the Kantian imperatives contribute to progress.'[301] And Kuhn leaves us with a picture of progress and paradigm shifts that applies to all disciplines of discovery whereby researchers in a particular field attempt to solve the problems of their discipline with methods their discipline provides until they arrive at an anomaly insolvable by traditional means and thus are required to question, test, and replace the assumptions of their discipline until their end is achieved.

Although Kuhn never specifies ontological status of paradigms, identifying the basis of paradigm selection with the ends of a specific human community allows us to offer an alternative interpretation of Haugeland's attempt to ground ontological truth in the truth of our existence. Remember, authenticity on Haugeland's account is a condition of possibility for ontological truth insofar as taking responsibility for our existence entails holding ourselves open to the possibility of questioning and testing the truth of a given disclosure of being. Disclosures are questioned and tested against independent entities, and all of this questioning and testing is done because 'my ability to project those entities onto their possibilities is not merely another possibility onto which I project myself, but is rather *part of* my ability to project myself onto my own possibilities.'[302] Yet once we fully appreciate the fact that the being of entities – *that* and *what* entities are – is bound by our potentialities-for-being, then it no longer makes sense to say that ontological truth is grounded in our ability to take responsibility for our existence by testing our disclosure of being against self-sufficient entities. Instead, we come to see that ontological truth is 'grounded' in existential truth to the extent the being of entities is actually determined by our way of life. As Heidegger puts it: 'The most primordial, and indeed the most authentic, disclosedness in which Dasein, as a potentiality-for-being, can be, is the *truth of existence*.'[303]

In an attempt to illustrate this phenomenon, Mark Wrathall considers the conflict between two definitions of 'gold': the medieval 'Gold is the noblest of the metals,' and the modern 'Gold is an element with the atomic number 79.'[304] According to Wrathall:

> The fight between the medieval and modern conceptions of gold is based ultimately in different ways of picking out salient entities in the world – that is, different ways of responding to some evident property or properties that they possess. One way of being disposed might lead us to find the true being of a thing in the extent to which it approaches God by being like Him. Another way of being disposed might lead us to find the true being of a thing in its ability to be turned into a resource, flexibly and efficiently on call for use. When someone disposed to the world in the first way uncovers a lump of gold, and subsequently defines gold as such and such a *kind* of thing, what she takes to be an essential property will be driven by her background sense of what is most essential in everything is its nearness to God. When someone disposed to the world in the second way uncovers it, she will take the essential properties to be whatever it is about it that allows us to break it down into a resource, and flexibly switch it around and order it, since our background sense for technological efficiency shapes our experience of everything.[305]

Like Kuhn claims about competing paradigms, Wrathall says 'neither camp could ever persuade the other that their essential definition was correct, because, on the basis of their respective definitions, each would reject exactly those particular substances that the

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[301] Kuhn, p.36, 162
[302] Haugeland, p.59
[303] *BT* 264/221
[304] Wrathall, Mark, *Heidegger and Unconcealment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) [Hereafter HU] p.29
[305] Wrathall, HU, p.31-2

other took as decisive evidence in favor of his or her definition.'[306] Heidegger echoes this sentiment when he writes:

> Every time we attempt to prove an essential determination through single, or even all, actual and possible facts, there results the remarkable state of affairs that we have already presupposed the legitimacy of the essential determination, indeed must presuppose it, just in order to grasp and produce the facts that are supposed to serves as proof.[307]

And this is consistent with Wrathall's main point: *that* and *what* 'gold' is depends on the whether worshiping God or attaining technological efficiency is the end of our activities. It is also consistent with Heidegger's claim that 'Dasein's *disclosedness* is the *most primordial* phenomenon of truth,'[308] it implies that the being of entities (ontological truth) is relative to our potentialities-for-being (existential truth), and finally it means that paradigms can be questioned and tested against the various and potentially incommensurable ways of life we as a human community adopt.

Identifying disclosures of being with our potentialities-for-being does, however, raise a lingering question about the relationship between authenticity and paradigm shifts. For if authenticity is case of recognizing the contingency of our current potentiality-for-being and taking responsibility for our existence by (potentially) adopting an alternative way of life, then authenticity appears to entail holding ourselves open to the possibility of taking a disclosure of being back after all. Yet as we have seen, what is taken back when we take responsibility for our existence not the presence of a particular disclosure of being, say, the way the world is disclosed through chemical theories or the institution of cinematography; rather, we exchange one potentiality-for-being, like being a chemist, for another potentiality-for-being, such as being a filmmaker, that are bound to the various disclosures of being present in our cultural inheritance or socio-historical destiny. This, again, is why Heidegger's claims that '*authentic* existence is not something which floats above falling everydayness,' but 'is only a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon.'[309] As noted above, the modified way in which everydayness is seized upon is ontic: that is, as authentic we make the potentialities-for-being present in our cultural inheritance explicit, but we do not question or take back those potentialities in order to create something new. In Heidegger's words:

> The resoluteness in which Dasein comes back to itself discloses current factical possibilities of authentic existing, and discloses them *in terms of the heritage* which that resoluteness, as thrown, *takes over*.[310]

The disclosure of available possibilities is built into the idea of authenticity insofar as taking responsibility for our existence actually requires us to adopt a given potentiality-for-being. And it is precisely the demand to choose and act upon an available possibility that speaks to the conservative tendencies I see in *Being and Time*: namely, the covering-up of potentialities-for-being through which entities and aspects of the world that are currently concealed could be revealed. Yet the strongest support for what I take to be the creativity limit in Heidegger's account of authenticity is found in a criticism Heidegger subsequently leveled at his *magnum opus*: that the language of *Being and Time* leads to an

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[306] Wrathall, HU, p.29
[307] *GA* 45: 79
[308] *BT* 263/221
[309] *BT* 224/179
[310] *BT* 435/383

oblivion of being.[311] Therefore, in the following chapter I examine the extent to which the metaphysics of transcendental subjectivity embedded in *Being and Time's* analysis of human agency obscure being, and briefly consider Heidegger's attempt to elucidate being in his later work through an alternative vocabulary of releasement.

[311] See *TB* 29, but also *BW* 231

3. The Oblivion of Being:
Metaphysics, Technology, and Releasement

Although I have been focusing on Heidegger's account of the conditions that enable us to choose and act as we do, Heidegger sees his analysis of human agency as a means to achieve his *primary* end of clarifying and coming to terms with the meaning of being. As he puts it: 'We shall proceed towards the concept of being by way of an interpretation of a special entity, Dasein, in which we shall arrive at the horizon for the understanding of being and for the possibility of interpreting it.'[312] In order to arrive at the horizon for an understanding of being, Heidegger breaks the first part of *Being and Time* down into three divisions in which he begins with a 'Preparatory Fundamental Analysis of Dasein', moves to a discussion of 'Dasein and Temporality', and concludes with a study of 'Time and Being'. However in *Being and Time* as we have it, Heidegger decided against publishing the third division in which the decisive turn from Dasein to being was set to take place, because the concepts and methods employed in his text prevented it.[313] So after offering an extremely dense and detailed interpretation of what it means to be a human being, Heidegger asks if the question of being 'can...be answered by going back to the *primordial constitution-of-being* of that Dasein by which being is understood?'[314] In the 'Letter on Humanism' Heidegger writes:

> The adequate execution and completion of this other thinking that abandons subjectivity is surely made more difficult by the fact that in the publication of *Being and Time* the third division of the first part, "Time and Being," was held back. Here everything is reversed. The division in question was held back because thinking failed in the adequate saying of this turning and did not succeed with the help of the language of metaphysics.[315]

And in a late publication that bears the same title as the withheld division of *Being and Time*, Heidegger goes so far as to say that his early 'transcendental manner of questioning still speaks the language of metaphysics,' so 'the fundamental experience of *Being and Time* is that of the oblivion of being.'[316] This, of course, is a remarkable claim, given that Heidegger's stated aim in his *magnum opus* is to work out the meaning of being. It also implies that Heidegger's analysis of human agency in *Being and Time* thwarted his attempt to turn from Dasein to being. And in this chapter I argue that the conservative trend I see in *Being and Time* coincides with what Heidegger later saw as the oblivion of being at work in that text: namely, that human activity (and Heidegger's reliance on concepts relating to it) obscures the potentialities-for-being through which entities and aspects of the world that are currently concealed could be revealed.

Heidegger, alas, does very little to clarify what he meant when characterizing the limits of *Being and Time* in terms of metaphysics, subjectivity, or the oblivion of being, so I begin this chapter by explaining what metaphysics and subjectivity mean for the later Heidegger and briefly state why he believes they lead to the oblivion of being. I then go on to offer a fairly detailed account of the relation between Dasein and being as it is presented in *Being and Time* and developed in the later essays in order to pin-down what is obliterated in *Being and Time's* oblivion of being. From here I demonstrate why the early Heidegger's emphasis on choice and action engenders the oblivion of being by making connections between *Being and Time* and the later Heidegger's critique of technology. In

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[312] *BT* 63/39
[313] See *BW* 231, *CP* 317, *TB* 29, *N4* 141
[314] *BT* 488/437
[315] *BW* 231
[316] *TB* 29

doing so, I draw on Bret Davis' alternate readings of resoluteness to show how the idea of subjectivity and the jargon of authenticity prevented Heidegger's intended turn from Dasein to being. Finally, I look at the later Heidegger's effort to come to terms with the meaning of being through a revised vocabulary of releasement, and I succinctly discuss the meditative thinking that makes cultural transformation and artistic creativity possible.

Metaphysics: Realism and Idealism

Metaphysics, for Heidegger, is concerned with the 'being of beings' insofar as it aims to state 'what beings are in their being.'[317] But since metaphysics focuses on the being of specific beings, it fails to consider the nature of being itself. In Heidegger's words:

> The "question of being' in the sense of the metaphysical question about beings as such precisely does *not ask* thematically about being. Being remains forgotten.[318]

And this is because

> metaphysics recognizes the clearing of being either solely as the view of what is present in "outward appearance" (*idea*) or critically as what is seen as a result of categorical representation on the part of subjectivity.[319]

The distinction Heidegger makes within metaphysics between 'being as the presence of ideas' and 'being as the representations of a subject' bespeaks the traditional distinction between realism and idealism. And although Heidegger claims that his early work 'stands *wholly outside of an orientation to [realism and idealism] and their ways of formulating questions*,'[320] we need to offer a quick sketch realism and idealism and their place in *Being and Time* if we want to see the devastating impact metaphysics had on Heidegger's text.

As a metaphysical thesis, realism asserts that a set of objects or a state of affairs *meaningfully exist* without any relation to human understanding. Descartes captures the idea of independent existence when he defines a substance as 'a thing which exists in such a way as to depend on no other thing for its existence.'[321] And Heidegger notes that God has often been invoked as an example of such a substance to the extent that *being as such* is thought in terms of its relation to beings as their first cause and thus itself as the highest of those beings.[322] More recently, realism has simply identified being with the 'actuality' of entities. 'Real beings are what truly is,' Heidegger says, 'because actuality constitutes the true essence of thatness.'[323] And Michael Devitt, one of the most ardent realists writing today, expresses the notion that entities have an existence *as well as* an essence independent of our understanding when he avers:

> An object has objective existence, in some sense, if it exists and has its nature whatever we believe, think, or can discover: it is independent of the cognitive activities of the mind... It is not *constituted* by our knowledge, by our epistemic values, by our capacity to refer to it,

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317 *Pm* p.312
318 *IM* 20/14
319 *BW* 235
320 *HCT* 167
321 Descartes, p.177
322 See *EP* 15
323 *EP* 15

> by our imposition of concepts, theories, or languages... For the realist, the world exists *independently of the mental*.[324]

The world that Devitt refers to in this passage resembles Heidegger's definition of the world as 'the totality of entities which can be present-at-hand.'[325] Speaking of the world of empirical sciences, Heidegger also remarks: 'To say that before Newton his laws were neither true nor false cannot signify that before him there were no such entities as have been uncovered and pointed out by those laws.'[326] And the strongest endorsement of realism in *Being and Time* comes when Heidegger writes: 'Entities *are*, quite independently of the experience by which they are disclosed, the acquaintance in which they are discovered, and the grasping in which their nature is ascertained.'[327]

Whilst Heidegger accepts that entities *exist* independent of our experience, he emphatically rejects the realist notion that the *essence*, *meaning*, or *being* of entities can be thought in terms of an ultimate being, such as God, or is simply reducible to the sum-total of the discrete, substantial, present-at-hand entities. Meaning, Heidegger says, is 'not a property attaching to entities.'[328] And although 'being is always the being of an entity,' 'the being of entities "is" not itself an entity.'[329] In an attempt to 'prevent the almost ineradicable habit of representing "being" as something standing somewhere on its own that then on occasion comes face to face with human beings,' Heidegger even puts the word 'being' under erasure in some of his writings.[330] The problem with substantial interpretations of being is that they assert the existence of intelligible beings independent of our comportments, but then fail to explain how the intelligibility of our concepts, theories, and languages through which we understand beings is determined by beings independent of them:

> This relationship [between *intellectus* and *res*] thus pertains to a connection between an ideal content of judgment and the real thing as that which is judged *about*. Is this agreement real or ideal in its kind of being, or neither of these? *How are we to take ontologically the relation between an ideal entity and something that is real and present-at-hand*?...
>
> Or is the ontological meaning of the relation between real and ideal something about which we must not inquire? Yet the relation is to be one which *subsists*. What does such 'subsisting' mean ontologically?
>
> Why should this not be a legitimate question? Is it accidental that no headway has been made with this problem in over two thousand years? Has the question already been perverted in the very way it has been approached – in the ontologically unclarified separation of the real and ideal?[331]

Perhaps more troubling for the realist interpretation of being is that by simply positing the intelligibility of beings they miss the very being that makes those beings intelligible. Specifically, on substantial accounts of being 'it appears as though the human being is excepted from being.'[332] Yet Heidegger claims, 'he is not only not excepted, i.e., not only

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[324] Devitt, Michael, *Realism and Truth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) p.15-6
[325] *BT* 93/64
[326] *BT* 269/227
[327] *BT* 228/183
[328] *BT* 193/151
[329] *BT* 29/9, 26/6
[330] *Pm* 310
[331] *BT* 259/216-7
[332] *Pm* 310

included in being, but 'being', in needing the human being, is obliged to relinquish the appearance of independence.'[333] Wilfred Sellars spells out this idea when he writes:

> Instead of coming to have a concept of something because we have noticed that sort of thing, to have the ability to notice a sort of thing is already to have the concept of that sort of thing, and cannot account for it.[334]

Ignoring, as Devitt does, the extent to which our concepts, theories, or languages specify the meaning of a given entity means that realist interpretations of being as God or the set of substantial entities fail to 'ask in what way the essence of human being belongs to the truth of being.'[335] And this, again, implies that being remains forgotten.

After rejecting realist interpretations of *being* for identifying being with beings and thus failing to ask about the relation between being and human beings, Heidegger turns to an examination of idealism, which, at its most basic, 'amounts to the understanding that being can never be explained by entities but is already that which is "transcendental" for every entity.'[336] The fact that idealism avoids identifying being with entities means that it has an advantage 'in principle' over realism.[337] And historical versions of idealism can be found in Kant's transcendental idealism:

> The order and regularity in the appearances, which we entitle *nature*, we ourselves introduce. We could never find them in appearances, had we not ourselves, or the nature of our mind, originally set them there.[338]

Hegel's absolute idealism:

> In pressing forward to its true existence, consciousness will arrive at a point at which it gets rid of its semblance of being burdened with something alien, with what is only for it, and with some sort of 'other,' at a point where appearances become identical with essence.[339]

Nietzsche's perspective-based idealism:

> Questions, what things 'in-themselves' may be like, apart from our sense receptivity and the activity of our understanding, must be rebutted with the question: how could we know that things exist? 'Thingness' was first created by us.[340]

And even Heidegger appears to endorse a brand of idealism when he claims 'meaning is an *existentiale* of Dasein, not a property attaching to entities.'[341] Or more forcefully, when he writes, 'only as long as Dasein *is* (that is, only as long as an understanding of being is ontically possible), "is there" being.'[342] And in a letter to Husserl outlining the aims of *Being and Time*, Heidegger expresses some sympathy with idealism by explaining Dasein's distinctive status in the idiom of transcendental philosophy:

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[333] *Pm* 310
[334] Sellars, Wilfred, 'Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind,' in Feigl and Scriven, *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science: Vol 1* (Minneapolis: University of Minnestoa Press, 1956) §10
[335] *BW* 226
[336] *BT* 251/208
[337] *BT* 251/208
[338] *CPR* A125
[339] *PS* 56-7 §89
[340] *WTP* 569
[341] *BT* 193/151
[342] *BT* 255/212

> What is the kind of being of that being in which 'world' is constituted? That is the central problem of *Being and Time* – i.e., a fundamental ontology of Dasein. It must be shown that the kind of being of human Dasein is totally different from that of all other entities, and that as what it is, it harbors precisely in itself the possibility of transcendental constitution.[343]

Heidegger, however, is critical of traditional forms of idealism for developing their stances in response to the realist-inspired subject-object distinction by 'tracing [the being of] every entity to a subject or consciousness.'[344] This, for Heidegger, means that the oblivion of being enacted by idealism is merely the opposite of that induced by realism: that is, substantial interpretations obliterate being by overlooking the extent to which beings need man, but subjectivist accounts obscure being by failing to appreciate the extent to which man needs beings. Yet even this formulation of the problem repeats the subject-object distinction that Heidegger is trying to overcome – 'subject and object,' he says, 'do not coincide with Dasein and world'[345] – and his primary objection to both realism and idealism is that they equally omit the fact that in our basic state of being-in-the-world 'there is no such thing as the "side-by-side-ness" of an entity called "Dasein" with another entity called "world."'[346] Thus to see why Heidegger said 'the fundamental experience of *Being and Time* is that of the oblivion of being,'[347] we need to bear in mind but move beyond the traditional realist-idealist distinction by taking a closer look at the relation between Dasein and being as it is presented in *Being and Time* and developed in Heidegger's later work.

Dasein and Being in *Being and Time*

As we have seen, Heidegger attempts to come to terms with the meaning of being through an analysis of the being to whom and understanding of being belongs: the human being. Our understanding of being is exemplified in our potentialities-for-being. Driving a car, writing an essay, or consoling a friend after the death of a loved-one all involve interacting with entities in ways that presuppose we have some understanding of certain facts about them. Driving a car assumes that we know how to operate a motor-vehicle through the use of its various mechanisms – steering wheel, gas and break pedals, gear-shifter, etc – and requires that we are aware of the traffic laws, road signs, and fueling procedures that enable us to reach our desired destination. Similarly, writing a successful essay shows that we comprehend our topic of choice and a specific form of expression, but also indicates a grasp of word-processing software, computers, research materials, academic institutions, and so on. And we cannot console a friend without a sense of empathy and the social norms that are generally invoked when a loved-one dies. In each of the aforementioned ways of *being* in the world, we have an implicit grasp of what it *means* for specific entities *to be*, and so an implicit understanding of the *being* of those entities: namely, 'that which determines entities as entities.'[348]

The implicit understanding we have of the world in our daily activities can be questioned, tested, expanded, and made explicit. When driving a car we may ask how

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[343] Quote taken from Cristina Lafont, *Heidegger, Language, and World-disclosure*, tr. Harman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) p.21
[344] *BT* 251/208
[345] *BT* 87/60
[346] *BT* 81/56
[347] *TB* 29
[348] *BT* 25/6

internal combustion engines work, wonder about the chemical composition of the fuel that propels our vehicle, seek to understand the origin of our traffic laws, or question the financial system through which our car was purchased in the first place. Thematizing the understanding implicit in our various potentialities-for-being leads to the production of academic disciplines or areas of research such as mechanics, chemistry, jurisprudence, or economics. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger offers mathematics, physics, biology, the human sciences, and theology as examples of the *ontic* sciences through which we explicate the facts that are implicitly present in our everyday activities.[349] Heidegger, however, points out that our ability to understand entities in our daily activities or more detailed research agendas is based on certain *ontological* norms or assumptions that Heidegger calls the 'basic concepts [that] determine the way in which we get an understanding beforehand of the area or subject-matter underlying all the objects a science takes as its theme.'[350] Peano's axioms, for instance, specify the nature of numbers and our ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide them as we do. Theories of natural law put forward by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau similarly set the standard through which state institutions in the late 18th century assigned rights to citizens. And although specific axioms and theories often remain implicit, they are presupposed by every human activity and mode of inquiry insofar as the ontological assumptions of a given domain determine *that* and *what* entities *are* within said domain. Being, as Heidegger puts it, is 'that on the basis of which entities are already understood.'[351]

Heidegger occasionally calls being a 'horizon of disclosure' and he compares it to a field of vision: that is, just as a field of vision is required for us to see the objects of sight, so too is a horizon in which entities are disclosed necessary if we are to engage with said entities.[352] But it is crucial to note that the 'ontological assumptions' or 'horizons of disclosure' that determine *that* and *what* entities *are* within a specific domain are *not* themselves prior to, but are actually indistinguishable from our potentialities-for-being. Put otherwise, being a mathematician or a statesman presupposes the institutions that specify the nature of numbers or the status of citizens, but the institutions that specify the nature of numbers or the status of citizens also presuppose the mathematicians and statesmen that institute and uphold them.[353] In Heidegger's words:

> To intentionality, as comportment toward *beings*, there always belongs an *understanding of the being* of those beings to which the intentio refers. Henceforth it will be clear that this understanding of the being of beings is connected with the *understanding of world*, which is the presupposition for the experience of an intraworldly being. But, now, since world-understanding is as the same time an *understanding-of-itself* by the Dasein – for being-in-the-world constitutes a determination of Dasein – the understanding of the being that belongs to intentionality *embraces* Dasein's being as well as the being of intraworldly beings which are not Daseins.[354]

The internal relation between understanding our own being and understanding what it means for entities to be explains Heidegger's claim that an 'understanding of being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein's being,' such that 'with and through [Dasein's]

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[349] *BT* 29-30/9-10
[350] *BT* 30/10
[351] *BT* 25-6/6
[352] *DT* 63
[353] By 'institutions' I mean the collection of axioms, laws, theories, norms, and practices of application that together add up to the ontological assumptions that determine *that* and *what* entities *are* within a sphere of activity or mode of inquiry.
[354] *BP* 175

being, this [understanding of] being is disclosed.'[355] And since we always understand our own being through a series of concrete but conceivably different potentialities-for-being, *that* and *what* entities *are* depends on and varies between the different potentialities-for-being we adopt.[356]

Although driving a car, writing an essay, consoling a friend, or doing advanced research determine the being of the disparate entities that show up for a driver, essayist, consoler, or researcher, there is a unity running through our different potentialities-for-being insofar as each is a distinctly human activity that determines what it means for a given entity to be. This, for Heidegger, implies that the meaning of being can be worked out through an examination of the formal conditions that characterize all our activities. '*Fundamental ontology*, from which alone all other ontologies can take their rise, must be sought in the *existential analytic of Dasein*.'[357] And in *Being and Time* Heidegger offers a provisional 'interpretation of *time* as the possible horizon for any understanding whatsoever of being.'[358] The connection Heidegger sees between time and human activity is captured by the fact that we are *thrown* into a specific historical context that presents us with different potentialities-for-being. And when we adopt a particular possibility that our *past* makes available by *projecting* that possibility into the *future*, entities and aspects of the world show up *as* the entities and aspects that they are through the projected potentiality. Heidegger accordingly describes Dasein as '*thrown possibility* through and through,' and he identifies the temporality of all our worldly activities with the horizon of disclosure in which entities appear.[359] 'World time,' Heidegger writes,

> is 'more objective' than any possible object because, with the disclosedness of the world, it already becomes 'objectified' in an ecstatico-horizonal manner as the condition for the possibility of entities within the world.[360]

Of course, if temporality is the defining feature of our worldly activities, and if our worldly activities determine what it means for an entity *to be*, then temporality determines what it means for an entity *to be*. And Heidegger's considered, but still questionable view at the end of his unfinished *magnum opus* is that being, 'as that which determines entities as entities, [or] that on the basis of which entities are already understood,' is time.[361]

Heidegger's identification of being with the temporal horizon of our activities in his early work seems to undercut the subject-object distinction that sustains idealism and realism insofar as *being* a particular person, say, a mathematician or a statesman, cannot be distinguished from the *being* of the entities we engage with, say, numbers or our fellow citizens. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger struggles to express this idea in various ways:

> When Dasein directs itself towards something and grasps it, it does not somehow first get out of an inner sphere in which it has been encapsulated, but its primary kind of being is

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[355] *BT* 32/12

[356] This, to my mind, suggests that Heidegger's ontological pluralism in *Being and Time* extends well beyond the three distinct types of entities he explicitly discusses – present-at-hand, ready-to-hand, Dasein – to include, biological entities, social entities, historical entities, emotional entities, divine entities, and so on. For a discussion of this idea in terms of a 'plural realism', see Dreyfus, p.261-3.

[357] *BT* 34/13

[358] *BT* 19/1

[359] *BT* 183/144

[360] *BT* 471/419

[361] *BT* 25-6/6. I say 'considered, but still questionable' because Heidegger concludes *Being and Time* by asking: 'Does *time* itself manifest itself as the horizon of *Being*?' See *BT* 488/437

> such that it is always 'outside' amidst entities which it encounters and which belong to a world already discovered[362]

Or again, 'there is no such thing as the "side-by-side-ness" of an entity called "Dasein" with another entity called "world."'[363] And in his Nietzsche lectures, Heidegger tries to capture the internal relation or mutual dependence between Dasein and beings when he writes: 'Beings are only where perceiving is, and perceiving is only where beings are.'[364] Yet in the same lecture series Heidegger states that *Being and Time's* attempt to overcome the subject-object distinction 'confronts the danger of unwillingly becoming merely another entrenchment of subjectivity.'[365] Similarly, Heidegger tells us in his enigmatic but deeply personal *Contributions to Philosophy* that 'in *Being and Time* Dasein still stood in the shadow of the "anthropological," the "subjectivistic," and the "individualistic."'[366] And as we have seen, Heidegger's late lecture on 'Time and Being' claimed that his early transcendental manner of questioning brought about the oblivion of being.[367]

The entrenchment of subjectivity in *Being and Time* is exemplified by Heidegger's belief that 'being "is" only in the understanding of those entities to whose being something like an understanding of being belongs.'[368] Heidegger's view that the being of beings is determined by the temporal horizon of our potentialities-for-being also looks a lot like an idealist 'tracing every entity to a subject.'[369] This suggests that the oblivion of being engendered in Heidegger's *magnum opus* is that of an idealist: namely, it obscures being by failing to appreciate the extent to which man needs beings. But in a transitional essay from 1930, 'On the Essence of Truth,' Heidegger implicitly indicates a broader and deeper oblivion of being at work in *Being and Time* when he writes:

> As insistent, man is turned toward the most readily available beings. But he insists only by being already ek-sistent, since, after all, he takes beings as his standard. However, in taking its standard, humanity is turned away from the mystery. The insistent turning toward what is readily available and the ek-sistent turning away from the mystery belong together. They are one and the same. Yet turning toward and away from is based on a turning to and fro proper to Dasein. Man's flight from the mystery toward what is readily available, onward from one current thing to the next, passing the mystery by – this is *erring*.[370]

Insistence is Heidegger's new term for human activity. And similar to *Being and Time*, the presentation of entities and aspects of our world is achieved through our projections. 'To let be,' Heidegger says, 'is to engage oneself with beings.'[371] Our ability to present entities and aspects of the world through our activities is now characterized as a form of freedom, and following *Being and Time* Heidegger identifies this presentation with truth: 'Freedom, understood as letting beings be, is the fulfillment and consummation of the essence of truth in the sense of the disclosure of beings.'[372] What, however, distinguishes Heidegger's account of truth in *Being and Time* from that offered in 'On the Essence of Truth' is truth's relation to untruth. For whereas *Being and Time* equates un/truth with the

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[362] *BT* 89/62
[363] *BT* 81/56
[364] *N3* 49
[365] *N4* 141
[366] *CP* 208 §172, *TB* 29
[367] *TB* 29
[368] *BT* 251/208, 228/183
[369] *BT* 251/208
[370] *BW* 133
[371] *BW* 125
[372] *BW* 127

obscure or implicit understanding we have of entities present in our daily existence, 'On the Essence of Truth' defines untruth in terms of the being of entities concealed in our everyday endeavours. As Heidegger puts it:

> 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 abides. Here there *is* concealment.[373]

Of course, Heidegger's analysis of the human being in *Being and Time* focused exclusively on the way entities are presented in our specific potentialities-for-being and thereby concealed being as a whole. And when speaking of *Being and Time's* assertion that the meaning of being is a projection based on our activities in one of his last seminars, Heidegger admits that his language easily leads to a form of subject-centered idealism:

> What is inappropriate in this formulation of the question is that it makes it all too possible to understand "project" as a human performance. Accordingly, project is then taken to be a structure of subjectivity – which is how Sartre takes it, by basing himself on Descartes (for whom *aletheia* as *aletheia* does not arise). In order to counter this mistaken conception and to retain the meaning of "project" as it is to be taken (that of the opening disclosure), the thinking after *Being and Time* replaced the expression "meaning of being" with "truth of being."[374]

Or again:

> Meaning in *Being and Time* is defined in terms of a projected region, and projection is the accomplishment of Dasein, which means the ecstatic instancy in the openness of being. By ek-sisting, Dasein includes *meaning*. The thinking that proceeds from *Being and Time*, in that it gives up the word "meaning of being" in favour of "truth of being", henceforth emphasizes the openness of being itself, rather than the openness of Dasein in regard to this openness of being. This signifies "the turn" in which thinking always more decisively turns to being as being.[375]

The shift in terminology from the meaning of being that we project to the truth of being as such suggests that Heidegger moved away from the strict identification of being with human beings that is implied in statements such as: 'only as long as Dasein *is*, "is there" being.'[376] And in a recent description of Heidegger's turn from humans to being, John Richardson writes:

> To put it roughly or simply: [Heidegger] turns from a more fully idealist picture which has us the makers or projectors of being, to a more qualified view which gives being a certain independence from us. He adopts, that is, a greater "realism" with respect to being.[377]

This 'certain independence' does not, however, mean that being is entirely independent of us. Rather, it is Richardson's attempt to capture an idea that Heidegger's emphasis on projection obscured: namely, 'that being, relative to the manifestation of being, *needs* man, and, conversely, man is only man insofar as he stands within the manifestation of

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[373] *BW* 129-30
[374] *FoS* 40-1
[375] *FoS* 47
[376] *BT* 255/212
[377] Richardson, John, *Heidegger* (New York: Routledge, 2012) p.212

being.'[378] Later in this chapter, I will offer a detailed analysis of the extent to which the entrenchment of subjectivity embodied in Heidegger's account of resolute projection errs by overlooking the mystery of being. But to properly appreciate Heidegger's claim that *Being and Time* engenders the oblivion of being, we first need to examine Heidegger's conceptions of being as a whole as it is presented and developed in his later work.

Being After *Being and Time*

Heidegger, following Rilke, begins his account of being as a whole by suggesting it is comprised of two parts – being in the sense of a 'lightening-unifying presence' and being in the sense of that which is 'unillumined by us' – and he quotes Rilke's claim that, 'like the moon, so life surely has a side that is constantly turned away from us, and that is not its opposite but its completion to perfection, to plenitude, to the real, whole, and full sphere and globe of being.'[379] In 'On the Essence of Truth,' Heidegger asserts 'the openness of being as a whole does not coincide with the sum of all immediately familiar beings,' and he goes on to say that 'from the point of view of everyday calculations and pre-occupations this "as a whole" appears to be incalculable and incomprehensible.'[380] Finally in *The Piety of Thinking*, Heidegger claims that 'the dark is the secret mystery of what is light,' and adds that 'it is hard to keep the dark pure and clear, to preserve it form admixture with a brightness that does not belong to it.'[381]

The poetic distinction between the 'light' and 'dark' sides of being as a whole is made slightly more mundane in Heidegger's distinction between 'world' and 'earth' as it appears in 'The Origin of the Work of Art.' Heidegger's use of 'world' in OWA is similar to his third and fourth use of that term in *Being and Time*: it refers to the activities and ontological assumptions of a particular culture that create a context in which entities and aspects of the world are presented as the entities and aspects that they are. And in OWA, Heidegger appeals to the place of a temple in Ancient Greek society to elucidate the phenomenon he is trying to indicate with the word 'world':

> It is the temple-work that first fits together and at the same time gathers around itself the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire the shape of destiny for human being. The all-governing expanse of this open relational context is the world of this historical people... [And through the temple-work,] tree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are.[382]

Heidegger's work in OWA is distinguished from that of *Being and Time* by the fact that the presence of entities is not simply a function of worldly human activity, but is also facilitated by the earthly features of artworks. And after telling us that through the temple-work entities and aspects of the Greek world are presented as the entities and aspects that they are, Heidegger says:

> The early Greeks called this emerging and rising in itself and in all things *phusis*. It clears and illuminates, also, that on which and in which man bases his dwelling. We call this ground the *earth*.[383]

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[378] *MHC* 40
[379] *PLT* 121
[380] *BW* 129
[381] *PT* 56
[382] *PLT* 41
[383] *PLT* 41

Heidegger is quick to point out that *earth* is 'not to be associated with the idea of a mass of matter deposited somewhere, or with the merely astronomical idea of a planet.'[384] Instead, 'earth is that whence the arising brings back and shelters everything that arises without violation. In the things that arise, earth is present as a sheltering agent.'[385] Lastly, 'the world grounds itself on the earth' such that 'to the open, there belongs both world and earth.'[386] Heidegger's invocation of the earthly aspects of the temple-work allows him to move beyond the subject-centered account of being offered in *Being and Time* in two ways. First, it emphasizes the fact that beings are just as much a part of being as human beings insofar as 'the temple-work, in setting up a world, does not cause the material [or marble] to disappear, but rather causes it to come forth for the very first time.'[387] Second, it speaks to the broader self-concealing of being as a whole that is necessary if specific beings are to stand out within a world. 'The earth,' Heidegger says, 'is the spontaneous forthcoming of that which is continually self-secluding.'[388] As far as OWA is concerned, it is the play between 'world' and 'earth' that enables entities and aspects of the world to appear as the entities and aspects that they are. 'Truth,' in short, 'is present only as the conflict between lighting and concealing in the opposition of world and earth.'[389]

In an ingenious attempt to make sense of what Heidegger sees as the light and dark sides of being, Julian Young marks the 'world-earth' distinction with a distinction between 'being' and 'Being.' World, on Young's interpretation, 'is the background, and usually unnoticed understanding which determines for the members of an historical culture what, for them, fundamentally, there *is*.'[390] It is, in other words, 'the entry conditions, the ground plan, the "being of beings" which something must satisfy in order to show up as a being in the world in question.'[391] And Young identifies Heidegger's use of the word 'world' with 'being' in the small-b sense: the ontological assumptions or horizons of disclosure that presents what is present.[392] We do, however,

> know that belonging to our 'truth', in the sense of 'world', there is an indefinitely large totality of other 'truths', alternative horizons of disclosure, 'views' disclosing other 'sides' of our world of beings that are equally disclosive of Being (reality) itself, yet blocked by our disclosure and, in fact, utterly unintelligible to us.[393]

It is, Young tells us, 'this region of ineffability, the, as it were, epistemological 'depth' to Being, which Heidegger calls 'earth."[394] This, for Young, implies that the world, as the 'presencing of what is present', is 'only one aspect, one 'facet' of Being, of a reality which, since it is a 'plentitude' of such facets, remains infinitely 'withdrawn', 'closed', 'concealed', and 'unintelligible' from within a particular world.[395] It also means 'that every

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384 *PLT* 41
385 *PLT* 41
386 *PLT* 54, 55
387 *PLT* 45
388 *PLT* 47
389 *PLT* 60
390 Young, Julian, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) [Hereafter: HPA] p.23
391 Young, HPA, p.23
392 Young, Julian, *Heidegger's Later Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) [Hereafter: HLP] p.10
393 Young, HPA, p.39-40
394 Young, HPA, p.40
395 Young, HPA, p.43

material thing possesses an unlimited plenitude of aspects which lie beyond the realm of what is intelligible to us,' so that Rilke's 'moon simile applies not only to a world as a whole but also to the individual beings contained in it.'[396] And the sum-total of all entities revealed and concealed leaves us with capital-B Being: "that which really is' or simply 'reality' taken in the infinite 'plenitude' of all its 'facets."[397] Finally, and just as world is grounded in earth, Young thinks being is grounded in Being. To illustrate this point Young cites Heidegger's claim that the essence of being can be called Being and then examines what 'essence' might mean here in light of the different ways Heidegger says essence can be used: '(1) *quidditas* – the 'what' – khoinon; (2) enabling – condition of possibility; (3) ground of enabling.'[398] According to Young, only beings have 'whatness' whereas 'being is the condition of possibility of our apprehensions of beings, and Being is the ground of being.'[399] As the ground of being, Being is 'that in virtue of which a given mode of being obtains.'[400] This, for Young, is why Heidegger often speaks of Being as an origin or source that 'gives,' 'sends,' or 'destines' the presence of what is present.[401] And in his final analysis, Young indicates the distinction between being and Being by saying: 'that while being is the *transcendental* ground of our world of beings, Being, as the generative ground of being, is its *generative* ground.'[402]

Although Young's distinction between being and Being does much to elucidate Heidegger's allusions to the light and dark sides of being as a whole, Young's emphasis on 'material things,' 'that which really is,' and 'reality in the plentitude of all its facets' gives the impression that the dark side of being is *simply* a concealed constellation of self-sufficient entities that are 'standing somewhere on [their] own that then on occasion come face to face with human beings.'[403] What depends on us, Young writes,

> is not *what* we experience as characterizing reality...but rather the fact that *that particular feature rather than some other*...is disclosed. What is subjective is not *what* we experience as characterizing reality but rather the *selection* we make from the infinite richness of attributes possessed by reality itself.[404]

But as we have seen, Heidegger thinks nothing can be coherently said or known about self-sufficient entities independent of a disclosure of their being. Heidegger also insisted that the 'earth' is 'not to be associated with the idea of a mass of matter deposited somewhere.'[405] And in order to get a more accurate sense of what Heidegger means by the dark side of being we need to examine his account of the 'clearing'.

Heidegger's most sustained discussion of the clearing occurs in an essay entitled 'The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking.' The aim of this essay is to 'subject the point of departure of the question in *Being and Time* to an immanent criticism,'[406] and he does so by distinguishing traditional metaphysical philosophies of subjectivity from a new post-metaphysical thinking about the clearing of being. 'Since the beginning of philosophy,' Heidegger asserts,

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396 Young, HPA, p.48
397 Young, HLP, p.13
398 *Pm* 136
399 Young, HLP, p.15
400 Young, HLP, p.15
401 Young, HLP, p.24
402 Young, HLP, p.16
403 *Pm* 310
404 Young, HLP, p.28
405 *PLT* 41
406 *BW* 431

> the being of beings has shown itself as the ground. The ground is that from which beings as such are what they are in their becoming, perishing, and persisting as something that can be known, handled, and worked upon. As the ground, being brings beings in each case to presencing. The ground shows itself as presence. The present of presence consists in the fact that it brings what is present each in its own way to presence.[407]

This 'metaphysics of presence' begins with Plato's distinction between immutable forms and our embodied perception of them, and eventually divides into modern realism and idealism in which the being of beings is thought in terms of 'their presence in the form of substantiality and subjectivity.'[408] However with Descartes *ego cogito*, Heidegger says, 'philosophy steps on firm ground for the first time' insofar as substance, as 'what truly presences,' is identified with the subject.[409] And Heidegger believes this idea is clearly articulated in the work of Hegel and Husserl:

> When Hegel explains in the Preface [to his *System of Science*], 'the true (in philosophy) is to be understood and expressed, not as substance, but, just as much, as subject,' then this means: the being of beings, the presence of what is present, is manifest and thus complete presence only when it becomes present as such for itself in the absolute idea.[410]

Likewise:

> [Husserl's] transcendental reduction to absolute subjectivity gives and secures the possibility of grounding the objectivity of all objects (the being of beings) in their valid structure and consistency, that is, in their constitution, in and through subjectivity. Thus transcendental subjectivity proves to be, [as Husserl puts it in the *Formal and Transcendental Logic*], 'the sole absolute being.'[411]

Identifying the presence of what is present with the subject – as Hegel, Husserl, and (implicitly) the early Heidegger do – means for the later Heidegger that:

> Philosophy knows nothing of the clearing. Philosophy does speak about the light of reason, but does not heed the clearing of being. The *lumen naturale*, the light of reason, throws light only on the open. It does concern the clearing, but so little does it form it that it needs it in order to be able to illuminate what is present in the clearing. This is true not only of philosophy's *method*, but also and primarily of its *matter*, that is, the presence of what is present.[412]

Thus, Heidegger believes it necessary to abandon philosophy's method, subject-object inspired realisms and idealisms, and its matter, the presence of what is present, in order to think of the clearing that is presupposed by, but also unaccounted for in all previous philosophy.

The clearing, for Heidegger, 'is the open region for everything that becomes present and absent.'[413] It is an 'openness that grants a possible letting appear,' or an open -region that 'grants first of all the possibility of the path to presence, and grants the

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[407] *BW* 432
[408] *BW* 438
[409] *BW* 438
[410] *BW* 438
[411] *BW* 440
[412] *BW* 443
[413] *BW* 442

possible presencing of that presence itself.'[414] Heidegger tells us that the German word for clearing, *Lichtung*, 'is formed in accordance with the older words *Waldung* [foresting] and *Felung* [fielding],' and he develops his idea of the clearing accordingly:

> The forest clearing [*Lichtung*] is experienced in contrast to dense forest, called *Dickung* in our older language. The substantive *Lichtung* goes back to the verb *lichten*. The adjective *licht* is the same word as "light." To lighten something means to make it light, free and open, e.g. to make the forest free of trees at one place. The free space thus originating is the clearing.[415]

Heidegger, however, is quick to point out that 'what is light in the sense of being free and open has nothing in common with the adjective "light" which means "bright."'[416] Of course, light in the sense of bright 'can stream into the clearing, into its openness, and let brightness play with darkness in it,' but 'light never first creates the clearing.'[417] Instead, Heidegger says, 'light presupposes it.'[418]

The fact that the being of beings presupposes the clearing suggests that the clearing cannot be identified with beings (realism) or potentialities-for-being (idealism).[419] Rather, *Lichtung* can be thought of as something like a space that enables the disparate potentialities-for-being through which beings are present. And Mark Wrathall offers a perspicuous interpretation of the clearing along these lines when he writes: 'There is a clearing within which an understanding of being can prevail while incompatible possibilities of being are concealed.'[420] These possibilities are not limited to Young's Rilke-inspired notion that material things possess a plentitude of aspects that lie beyond the realm of what is currently intelligible to us, but also include disparate disclosures of being in which the very essence of an entity is different.[421] 'The question "What is a thing?"' Heidegger writes, 'is an historical question.'[422] And this, for Heidegger, means 'there is being only in this or that particular historical character: *physis*, *logos*, *en*, *idea*, *energeia*, Substantiality, Objectivity, Subjectivity, the Will, the Will to Power, the Will to Will.'[423] With the recognition that being has a history, Wrathall says, 'Heidegger was pushed to ask what makes it possible for any one of a plurality of understandings of being or essence to prevail.'[424] And on Wrathall's account the answer Heidegger arrived at 'was that there must be a clearing that allows one way of being disposed to the world to come into operation, while withholding other potential ways of being disposed.'[425]

The withheld disclosures of being and the disparate presentation of entities that they include amount to the dark side of being, but Wrathall says that treating the clearing as a space of possibilities 'might make it sound like the clearing is a gallery of possibilities – that it keeps different determinate ways of being in the world locked in the back room

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414 *BW* 441, 445
415 *BW* 441
416 *BW* 441-2
417 *BW* 442
418 *BW* 442
419 Heidegger does, however, identify the clearing with our potentialities in *Being and Time*. See *BT* 171/133
420 Wrathall, HU, p.14
421 Although Heidegger draws on Rilke's moon metaphor, he also worries that the metaphor may tempt us into treating being as an object, and thus he explicitly states that being is not reducible to an object or even the totality of objects. See *PLT*, p.121, 129
422 *WT* 52
423 *ID* 66-7
424 Wrathall, HU, p.33
425 Wrathall, HU, p.33

while exhibiting one at a time."[426] This, however, is a misleading, since 'it treats ways of being as if they were themselves in being.'[427] And Wrathall claims 'the clearing makes some possibilities possible, not by putting some determinate possibilities in cold storage, but by making it the case that there are no other determinate possibilities available.'[428] Heidegger captures this phenomenon in 'On the Essence of Truth' when he says 'the insistent turning toward what is readily available and the ek-sistent turning away from the mystery belong together.'[429] And it is precisely because we conceal a host of alternative potentialities in the course of our everyday activities that we are able to carry out said activities. The concealment of possibilities, Heidegger asserts,

> leaves historical human beings in the sphere of what is practicable with what they are capable of. Thus left, humanity completes its "world" on the basis of the latest needs and aims, and fills out the world by means of proposing and planning.[430]

As an example of the requisite play between revealed and concealed disclosures of being, Wrathall says 'our experience of the natural world as resources could not authoritatively shape our experience of the world if we were aware that one would be equally justified in experiencing it as God's creation.'[431] The fact that the clearing presents a possible way of being by concealing alterative potentialities means that the clearing also conceal itself as the space of possibilities. 'The clearing only works,' Wrathall asserts, 'when it is not uncovered.'[432] And Heidegger says the clearing is not 'the mere clearing of presence, but the clearing of presence concealing itself, the clearing of a self-concealing sheltering.'[433] Taken together, the concealing of various potentialities-for-being along with the self-concealing of the clearing speaks to the 'mystery of being', and it is only by cultivating an awareness of the clearing that we open ourselves up to alternative disclosures and thus to a different experience of the various entities disclosed therein.

With Heidegger's account of dark side of being in place, we are finally in a position to see what Heidegger meant when he said 'the fundamental experience of *Being and Time* is that of the oblivion of being.'[434] Specifically, Heidegger's later account of being as a whole shows us that his early identification of being with the temporal horizon of human activity not only obscures the extent to which man needs beings, but also effectively conceals the clearing of being upon which our activities and the disclosure of entities achieved through them is based. This second form of concealment coincides with what I have called the 'creativity limit' in *Being and Time*: namely, that Heidegger's reliance on concepts relating to human agency obliterates the alternative potentialities-for-being through which entities and aspects of the world that are currently concealed could be revealed. To overcome this oblivion of being, the later Heidegger replaces his account of authentic choice and action with a vocabulary of releasement. But before turning to Heidegger's revised attempt to articulate the truth of being, and thereby examining the conditions that enable cultural transformation and artistic creativity, I will explain precisely why transcendental subjectivity and the jargon of authenticity lead to

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426 Wrathall, HU, p.34
427 Wrathall, HU, p.34
428 Wrathall, HU, p.34
429 *BW* 133
430 *GA* 9:195
431 Wrathall, HU, p.34
432 Wrathall, HU, p.34
433 *BW* 448
434 *TB* 29

the oblivion of being by drawing some parallels between Heidegger's account of modern technology and his concept of resoluteness as it is presented in *Being and Time*.

Technology and Authenticity

Heidegger begins his analysis of technology by considering two common answers to the question concerning its essence: technology is a means to an end, or technology is a human activity. 'The two definitions,' Heidegger tells us, 'belong together. For to posit ends and procure and utilize the means to them is a human activity,' such that 'the manufacture and utilization of equipment, tools, and machines, the manufactured and used things themselves, and the needs and ends that they serve, all belong to what technology is.'[435] Heidegger says this view of technology is correct, but then claims that 'the correct instrumental definition of technology still does not show us technology's essence.'[436] Since 'if we inquire, step by step, into what technology, represented as means, actually is, then we shall arrive at revealing.'[437] And Heidegger defines the essence of modern technology as *das Gestell* or the 'enframing' of our world in which 'the real reveals itself as resource.'[438]

The real reveals itself as resource through technological institutions that objectify nature for the purposes of production and consumption. As Heidegger puts it in 'What are Poets For?':

> Man places before himself the world as the whole of everything objective, and he places himself against that world. Man sets up the world toward himself, and delivers nature over to himself. We must think of this placing-here, this producing, in its broad and multifarious nature. Where nature is not satisfactory to man's representations, he reframes or redisposes it. Man produces new things where they are lacking to him. Man transposes things where they are in his way. Man interposes something between himself and things that distract him from his purpose. Man exposes things when he boosts them for sale and use. Man exposes when he sets forth his own achievement and plays up his own profession. By multifarious producing, the world is brought to stand and into position.[439]

Bringing the world to a stand and placing it in position is achieved via the projection of a specific set of ontological assumptions that present nature as a spatiotemporally ordered manifold of moving points of mass. This projection, Heidegger claims, turns 'nature into something objective for mathematical representation,' and 'such representation is already the decisive deployment of nature into calculations.'[440] Importantly, the objectification achieved in our technological mode of being is not restricted to natural phenomena. Instead, it 'includes all the areas of being that equip the whole of beings: objectified nature, the business of culture, manufactured politics, and the gloss of ideals overlying everything.'[441] Modern technological institutions, in sum, determine *that* and *what* all entities *are* in light of our particular activities and ends.

Although with technological institutions the world is 'purposefully made over according to the frame of mind of man's command,'[442] Heidegger points out that

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[435] *QCT* 4
[436] *QCT* 6
[437] *QCT* 5, 12
[438] *QCT* 24
[439] *PLT* 107-108
[440] *CPC* 7
[441] *EP* 93
[442] *PLT* 109

'technology is a way of revealing' that is 'sent', 'destined', or 'granted' to us by being.[443] Specifically, '[enframing] is the way in which the real reveals itself as resource.'[444] And as a *possible* presentation of reality, Heidegger sees nothing wrong with technology *per se*. 'There is,' he says, 'no demonry of technology,' and enframing 'is a destining that in no way confines us to a stultified compulsion to push on blindly with technology or...to rebel helplessly against it and curse it as the work of the devil.'[445] What, however, worries Heidegger about technological institutions is the way reality reveals itself *simply* as resource. 'The essence of enframing,' Heidegger writes, 'is that setting-upon gathered into itself which entraps the truth of its own coming to presence with oblivion.'[446] And Heidegger goes on to assert:

> The coming to presence of enframing is the danger. As the danger, being turns about into the oblivion of its coming to presence, turns away from this coming to presence, and in that way simultaneously turns counter to the truth of its coming to presence.[447]

Turning away from the truth of its coming to presence means that our technological disclosure of being obscures the fact that it is just *one* of *many* possible ways in which the real can reveal itself. What enframing overlooks, Young's writes,

> is *not* our horizon of disclosure but rather its *horizonal character* – the perspective character of our basic perspective on things – it elevates its account of the being of beings into *the* (one and only) categorical account of reality.[448]

Heidegger expresses the danger of taking our technological disclosure of being and treating it as if it were absolute when he exclaims:

> The world now appears as an object open to the attacks of calculative thought, attacks that nothing is believed able any longer to resist. Nature becomes a gigantic gasoline station, an energy source for modern technology and industry.[449]

Or less polemically:

> A living thing can indeed be grasped as a spatiotemporal magnitude of motion, but then it is no longer apprehended as living.[450]

In each of these passages we see that technology represents a *specific* 'destining of being' or 'presentation of reality' that is achieved *through* our activities. But they also suggest that technology is a cause for concern when enframing 'drives out every other possibility of revealing.'[451][452]

Enframing drives out alternative disclosures of being because the objectification of entities enables us to immerse ourselves in calculated activities in which we posit and

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[443] *QCT* 12, 31-2
[444] *QCT* 24
[445] *QCT* 28, 25-6
[446] *QCT* 36
[447] *QCT* 41
[448] Young, HLP, p.29
[449] *DT* 50
[450] *QCT* 120
[451] *QCT* 27
[452] For a detailed account of the concrete dangers posed by technology – including, the violation of nature, humanity's homelessness, and a loss of the gods – see Young HLP.

pursue our ends. Heidegger captures this idea in various ways at different points in his career. In *Being and Time* he characterizes it as our tendency to forget that we are always in a position to alter our current potentiality when engaging in that potentiality:

> When one is wholly devoted to something and 'really' busies oneself with it, one does not do so just alongside the work itself, or alongside the tool, or alongside both of them 'together'. The unity of the relations in which concern circumspectively 'operates', has been established already by letting-things-be-involved – which is based upon temporality.
>
> A specific kind of *forgetting* is essential for the temporality that is constitutive for letting something be involved. The self must forget itself if, lost in the world of equipment, it is to be able 'actually' to go to work and manipulate something. But all the same, inasmuch as an *awaiting* always leads the way in the unity of the temporalizing of concern, concernful Dasein's own potentiality-for-being has, as we shall show, been given a position in care.[453]

As noted above, the notion of forgetfulness is repeated in 'On the Essence of Truth', but with reference to the concealment of being as a whole rather than Dasein:

> 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 abides. Here there *is* concealment.[454]

And in a late lecture in which Heidegger is reflecting on the concealed clearing as well as the possibility of changes in historical understandings, he says:

> Entities are reordered, and indeed not merely by an entity that is not yet accessible to us, and perhaps never will be, but by something concealed which conceals itself precisely when we, holding ourselves in the clearing, are left to the discretion of, or even captivated by, entities. From this we derive and essential insight: the clearing, in which beings are, is not simply bounded and delimited by something hidden but by something self-concealing.[455]

Heidegger indicates the common thread running through each citation when he asserts: 'The oblivion of being announces itself when man always observes and handles only entities.'[456] And again, the essence and dominance of enframing consists in the fact that objectification allows us to focus on and manipulate a specific set of entities to achieve a particular end. 'Nature is set up by the human,' Heidegger's writes, 'so that it may be accountable to him and to his plans for it.'[457]

Rendering the world accountable to our ends implies that 'what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but does so, rather, exclusively as resource.'[458] And when entities 'no longer stand over and against us as objects' but instead show up as 'completely unautonomous,' Heidegger says the world is subject to our 'unconditional self-assertion.'[459] This, for Heidegger, means that 'the essence of modern technology...is

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[453] *BT* 405/354
[454] *BW* 129-130
[455] *GA* 45: 210
[456] *BW* 258
[457] *CPC* 7
[458] *QCT* 26-7
[459] *QCT* 17, *PLT* 111

identical to the essence of modern metaphysics.'[460] And in *The End of Philosophy, The Question Concerning Technology*, and *Nietzsche: Vol. I-IV*, Heidegger repeatedly characterizes our modern technological mode of being as the logical conclusion of a metaphysical tradition inaugurated with Plato's distinction between our *perceptions* of reality and reality *itself* and culminating in Nietzsche's inversion or ultimate annulment of Plato's distinction such that our *perceptions* just are reality *itself*. Specifically, Heidegger sees the unconditional self-assertion of our technological institutions as a concrete instantiation of Nietzsche's notion that 'the innermost essence of being is will to power.'[461] With our technological institutions the world is, again, 'purposefully made over according to the frame of mind of man's command.'[462] Similarly, Heidegger says Nietzsche's "'Overman" is man who *is* man from out of the reality determined through the will.'[463] And where 'the will to will forces the calculation and arrangement of everything for itself,' Heidegger remarks, 'the oblivion of being is completed.'[464] The metaphysics that underlies modern technology and leads to this complete oblivion of being is a form of subject-centered idealism:

> Metaphysically thought, the essence of the ego consists rather in its making every other being something standing over against it, its object, its over-and-against, its projected object... Thereby the ego proceeds to the totality of being and presents this to itself as something to be mastered. Only in the reign of subjectivity does there become historically possible an epoch of cosmic discoveries and planetary conquests, for only subjectivity marks off the essential bounds of an unconditioned objectivity and does so ultimately as a claim of its will.[465]

Technology, in short, and as an expression of an idealism that 'trac[es] every entity to a subject,'[466] reduces the real to resources that serve our various ends. And in doing so, it both effaces our dependence on beings and conceals the clearing of being. 'Enframing,' in Heidegger's terms, 'blocks the shining-forth and holding-sway of truth,' and gives rise to the delusion that 'man everywhere and always encounters only himself.'[467]

As noted above, Heidegger took his early account of our worldly existence to transcend the traditional subject-object distinction that culminates in our technological will to power. And there is no doubt that his rejection of representational theories of truth as well as his distinction between various regional ontologies (mathematics, physics, biology, the human sciences, theology, etc) and ontological kinds (present-at-hand, ready-to-hand, Dasein) differentiate Heidegger's work in *Being and Time* from his depiction of the idealism that undergirds technology and reduces the world to resources. However, the fact that Heidegger offers a fundamental ontology in which the being of entities is determined by the temporal horizon of human activities at the very least resembles Heidegger's understanding of technology in which 'nature is set up by the human, halted by him, so that it may be accountable to him and his plans for it.'[468] Heidegger's critique of modern technology is also of a piece with his critique of *Being and Time* insofar as both give rise to the oblivion of being. And returning to Heidegger's account of resoluteness through an examination of the diverse relations Bret Davis sees between *Entschlossenheit* and *Wille* allows us to: illustrate the extent to which *Being and Time* is an articulation of

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[460] *QCT* 116
[461] *WTP* §693. See *QCT* 79
[462] *PLT* 109
[463] *QCT* 96
[464] *EP* 92-3
[465] *P* 137
[466] *BT* 251/208
[467] *QCT* 28, 27
[468] *CPC* 7

our modern technological existence; signal the early Heidegger's effort to move beyond the metaphysics of transcendental subjectivity; and finally show why Heidegger's initial attempt to come to terms with the truth of being 'did not succeed with the help of the language of metaphysics.'[469]

Resoluteness, as you may recall, '*is precisely the disclosive projection and determination of what is factically possible at the time*.'[470] And after explaining that resoluteness involves taking a stand on our existence by projecting a given possibility into and indeterminate future, Heidegger tells us 'we have now arrived at that truth of Dasein which is most primordial because it is authentic.'[471] Authenticity, as 'the choosing to choose a kind of being-one's-self,'[472] is the most primordial phenomenon truth since *that* and *what* entities *are* is determined by the various potentialities-for-being we choose and act upon. 'To Dasein,' as Heidegger puts it, 'its potentiality-for-being-in-the-world is an issue, and this includes concerning itself with entities within the world and uncovering them circumspectively.'[473] Resoluteness, in brief, 'brings the being of the "there" into the existence of its situation,' and, 'as resolute, Dasein is already *taking action*.'[474]

In a comprehensive study of the will in Heidegger's work as a whole, Davis acknowledges that Heidegger rarely uses the word *Wille* in *Being and Time*, but then argues that willful assertion is implicitly present and questioned in Heidegger's account of resoluteness. As Davis puts it, *Being and Time* oscillates 'between resolute willing and an open resolve to interrupt willing,' and thereby foreshadows '*both* Heidegger's embrace of the will in the first half of the 1930s *and* his later critique of the will beginning in the later part of that decade.'[475] The ambiguity in Heidegger's use of resoluteness, for Davis, means that several potential interpretations of the term are available:

> 1. The notion of *Entschlossenheit* in *Being and Time* is – despite later developments in Heidegger's thinking and despite his later self-reinterpretations – a matter of willful resolve.
>
> 2. Despite certain misleading expressions in *Being and Time*, which can be attributed to 'the metaphysical residues' inappropriate to the 'original experience' behind the text, the term *Entschlossenheit* already exclusively refers to the later Heidegger's 'non-willing' explanations of *Ent-schlossenheit*.
>
> 3. The ambiguity of *Entschlossenheit* is rather that of the dynamic ambivalence, where authentic Dasein not only wills to resolutely choose its possibility of being, but also resolves to repeat an interruption of this willing.[476]

The first potential interpretation of resoluteness identifies *Being and Time* with the willful subjectivity that underlies modern technology. The second allows for a reading of *Being and Time* in which the oblivion of being that technology involves is already overcome. The third exemplifies Heidegger's actual inability to transcend the metaphysics of willful subjectivity within the framework of *Being and Time*. And analyzing each reading will help

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469 *BW* 231
470 *BT* 345/298
471 *BT* 343/297
472 *BT* 314/270
473 *BT* 271/228
474 *BT* 347/300
475 Bret Davis, *Heidegger and the Will* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007), p.59, 24
476 Davis also adds another potential interpretation: 'The inconsistencies between the various connotations of *Entschlossenheit* in *Being and Time* are irresolvable. It contains undeniable elements of will, while in other respects foreshadowing his later thought of *Gelassenheit*.' See Davis, p.41-2

us see why Heidegger abandoned resoluteness for releasement in his effort to move beyond the metaphysics of transcendental subjectivity as well as overcome the oblivion of being that enframing entails.

Davis cites two passages in support of his interpretation of *Entschlossenheit* as willful resolve:

> Dasein always understands itself in terms of its existence – in terms of a possibility of itself: to be itself or not itself. Dasein has either chosen these possibilities itself, or gotten itself into them, or grown up in them already. Only the particular Dasein decides its existence, whether it does so by taking hold or by neglecting.[477]

And:

> In the light of the 'for-the-sake-of-which' of one's self-chosen potentiality-for-being, resolute Dasein frees itself for its world... Resoluteness, by its ontological essence, is always the resoluteness of some factical Dasein at a particular time. The essence of Dasein as an entity is its existence. Resoluteness 'exists' only as a resolution which understandingly projects itself. But on what basis does Dasein disclose itself in resoluteness? On what is it to resolve? *Only* the resolution itself can give the answer.[478]

According to Davis, it is not difficult to hear 'willful overtones' or even 'the marching tune of an existential voluntarism' in these citations, and he substantiates this point in two passages of his own that compare Heidegger's work to Nietzsche's:

> In anxiety, one could infer, individual Dasein comes face-to-face with its lack of ground, with an abysmal Nothing, and in the fact of this Nothing resolutely wills a project that gives structure and meaning to its world. Read in this manner, the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, in the wake of Nietzsche and his proclamation of the death of God, calls on each of us to resolutely will to take on the burden of imposing meaning on an otherwise meaningless world.[479]

And:

> In choosing itself, it would seem, Dasein wills itself, wills its projections and even its factical limitations. While fully facing up to its always already having been thrown into a world of facticities and limited possibilities, in a supreme and ingenious act of ecstatic-incorporation, Dasein would take over these limits as its own: in its ideal moments of authentic choosing, Dasein then perhaps becomes like Nietzsche's Zarathustra, who finally succeeds in 'willing backwards' by changing every 'it was' into a 'thus I willed it!'[480]

Aligning Heidegger's notion of resoluteness with Nietzsche's Zarathustra implies that authentic Dasein is a 'man who *is* man from out of the reality determined through the will.'[481] This also suggests that Heidegger is committed to the subject-centered idealism that grounds our technological institutions. But Davis believes Heidegger's adherence to an idealism that traces the being of every entity back to a subject receives its clearest expression in Heidegger's account of worldliness.

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[477] *BT* 33/12
[478] *BT* 344-5/298
[479] Davis, p.42
[480] Davis, p.39
[481] *QCT* 96

Worldiness, for Davis, is related to willful resolve insofar as the being of entities is determined by our projected potentialities-for-being. 'The being of things leads back to Dasein,' Davis writes, 'because the world in which these things are found is structured first of all by Dasein's projected for-the-sake-of-which.'[482] Davis then notes that 'for-the-sake-of' translates *Umwillen* such that 'for what sake' is actually a question of 'for what will?'[483] Heidegger himself makes this connection explicit in his lectures following *Being and Time*. 'World,' Heidegger asserts, 'is primarily defined by the for-the-sake-of-which... But a for-the-sake-of-which, a purposiveness, is only possible where there is a will.'[484] In fact, Heidegger goes so far as to say: 'Will is, in our terms, *Ent-schlossenheit*, in which he who wills stations himself abroad among beings in order to keep them firmly within his field of action.'[485] And there is even a passage in *Being and Time* that suggests tracing the meaning of being back to our projected 'for-the-sake-of-which' reduces the world to a gigantic petrol station:

> 'Nature' is not to be understood as that which is just present-at-hand, nor as the *power of Nature*. The wood is a forest of timber, the mountain a quarry of rock; the river is water-power, the wind is wind 'in the sails'. As the 'environment' is discovered, the 'Nature' thus discovered is encountered too. If its kind of being as ready-to-hand is disregarded, this 'Nature' itself can be discovered and defined simply in its pure presence-at-hand.[486]

Heidegger makes a distinction here between nature as ready-to-hand and present-at-hand that indicates his commitment to an ontological pluralism foreign to our technological institutions. But both the present-at-hand and ready-to-hand accounts of nature overlook the nature that 'stirs and strives' and effectively set nature up so that it is accountable to our plans for it.[487] 'Beings,' in Davis words, 'are allowed to show themselves only as material for willful manipulation.'[488] And insofar as our projected potentialities-for-being reduce the world to materials for our willful manipulation, the metaphysics underlying our technological engagement with the world finds expression in *Being and Time*.

Although the early Heidegger's belief that the being of entities is determined by the temporal horizon of our activities can easily be taken as a technological reduction of the world to resources, Heidegger thought identifying the being of entities with the being of a particular person undermines the subject-object distinction that engenders idealism. And Heidegger occasionally reads his later notions of 'releasement towards things' and 'openness to mystery' back into his earlier work on resoluteness and authenticity. The clearest example of this can be found in a comment Heidegger makes in 1953 on a passage from lectures given in 1935. The initial formulation is as follows:

> Questioning is willing-to-know. Whoever wills, whoever lays his whole Dasein into a will, *is* resolute. Resoluteness delays nothing, does not shirk, but acts from the moment and without fail. *Ent-schlossenheit* is no mere resolution to act, but the decisive inception of action that reaches ahead and through all action. To will is to be resolute.[489]

The later comment reads:

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[482] Davis, p.35
[483] Davis, p.35
[484] *GA* 26: 238
[485] *N1* 59/48
[486] *BT* 100/70
[487] *BT* 100/70
[488] Davis, p.173
[489] *IM* 16

> The essence of willing is traced back here to *Ent-schlossenheit*. But the essence of *Ent-scholossenheit* lies in the de-concelament of human Dasein *for* the clearing of being, and by no means in an accumulation of force for 'activity.'[490]

In 1947 Heidegger also offers a similar (re-)reading of *Being and Time* when he writes:

> If we understand what *Being and Time* calls 'projection' as a representational positing, we take it to be an achievement of subjectivity and do not think it in the only way the 'understanding of being' in the context of the 'existential analysis' of 'being-in-the-world' can be thought – namely as the ecstatic relation to the clearing of being.[491]

Davis takes Heidegger's later interpretations of his earlier work as a second possible reading of resoluteness in *Being and Time* in which the term 'already exclusively refers to the later Heidegger's "non-willing" explanations of *Ent-scholossenheit*.'[492] And there are at least two passages in *Being and Time* that suggest there is an openness to a clearing that 'lets beings be' prior to our activities. First:

> Manipulative dealings no more relate themselves merely to that in which we let something be involved than they do to what is involved itself. Letting something be involved is constituted rather in the unity of a retention which awaits, and it is constituted in such a manner, indeed, that the making-present which arises from this makes possible the characteristic absorption of concern in its equipmental world.[493]

And second:

> Letting something 'be' does not mean that we must first bring it into its being and produce it; it means rather that something which is already an 'entity' must be discovered in its readiness-to-hand, and that we must thus let the entity which has this being be encountered. This '*a priori*' letting-something-be-involved is the condition for the possibility of encountering anything ready-to-hand.[494]

Davis, however, reminds us that 'letting a thing be here is a matter of letting it serve a purpose in Dasein's totality of equipment. A letting is required to reveal things, but these things are revealed – one is tempted to say – as ready-for-willing.'[495] Davis also points out that:

> [Heidegger's] later texts involve a twofold self-reinterpretation by the later Heidegger. On the one hand, there is the self-critical (and wholly legitimate) attempt to rethink certain key terms of his earlier thought. But, on the other hand, there is also an attempt to read these later developments back into the earlier texts, as if he were *simply* clarifying what had been originally intended there. Separating these two aspects of his self-(re)interpretations is as difficult as it is important, as the earlier thought does indeed often contain saplings which, when cultivated (i.e., both watered and pruned), grew into the later thought. Therefore, while the later Heidegger's self-(re)interpretations should be carefully attended to, they should certainly not be considered as exclusively authoritative.[496]

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[490] *IM* 16
[491] *BW* 259
[492] Davis, p.41-2
[493] *BT* 405/354
[494] *BT* 85/117
[495] Davis, p.34
[496] Davis, p.45

Finally, Heidegger explicitly admits that *Being and Time* ended abruptly because 'thinking failed in the adequate saying of the turning and did not succeed with the help of the language of metaphysics.'[497] And Davis' final interpretation of resoluteness as both the interruption and repetition of willing indicates that the context in which resoluteness is presented in *Being and Time* opens up but then immediately forecloses the possibility of identifying *Entschlossenheit* with the later 'ecstatic relation to the clearing of being.'

Heidegger's account of resoluteness appears as part of his broader discussion of authenticity and the phenomena that make authenticity possible: namely, anxiety, guilt, death, and the call of conscience. For Davis, these phenomenon signal an interruption of our willful activities that opens us up to alternative potentialities-for-being, and he cites Charles Scott's reading of death as our 'ownmost possibility' to illustrate this point. Death, Scott writes,

> discloses human being as non-selflike possibility without the identity of subjectivity... When Heidegger says that an individual is forced by the forward run of existence to take over its most proper and true being in possibility, he is saying that the individual's world and life are de-centered and ruptured by the individual's resolve. In this resolve the thought of selfhood, subjectivity, and self-constitution are set aside. In resolve one opens out in the world in the 'understanding design' of Dasein's mortal openness.[498]

The mortal openness to which Scott refers is what the later Heidegger calls our openness to the open-region of being whereby 'being, by way of its own nature, lets the place of openness (the lighting-clearing of the there) happen, and introduces it as a place of the sort in which each being emerges or arises in its own way.'[499] Heidegger, for his part, never characterizes being as an open-region that sends us disparate disclosures of being in *Being and Time*, and he explicitly identifies the clearing with Dasein:

> When we talk in an ontically figurative way of the *lumen naturale* in man, we have in mind nothing other than the existential-ontological structure of this entity, that it *is* in such a way as to be its "there". To say that it is "illuminated" means that *as* being-in-the-world it is cleared in itself, not through any other entity, but in such a way that it *is* itself the clearing. Only for an entity which is existentially cleared in this way does that which is present-at-hand become accessible in the light or hidden in the dark. By its very nature, Dasein brings its "there" along with it.[500]

Heidegger does, however, depict us as thrown into a socio-historical destiny from which we must choose our potentialities-for-being:

> The resoluteness in which Dasein comes back to itself, discloses current factical possibilities of authentic existing, and discloses them *in terms of the heritage* which that resoluteness, as thrown, *takes over*. In one's coming back resolutely to one's thrownness, there is hidden a *handing down* to oneself of the possibilities that have come down to one.[501]

Translated into the terms of Heidegger's later work, this passage seems to suggest that we our open to potentialities-for-being that are sent, destined, or granted to us. It also implies that the disturbance of our willful activities achieved when we let ourselves be

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[497] *BW* 231
[498] Charles Scott, *The* Question *of Ethics: Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990) p.99-100.
[499] *PLT* 59
[500] *BT* 171/133
[501] *BT* 435/383

'thrown back upon [our] factical "there" by shattering [ourselves] against death' allows us to choose between disparate potentialities-for-being.[502] And Heidegger clearly thinks we lead an authentic life when we resolutely project one of the possibilities our past makes available into the future. Resoluteness, as he puts it, is the '*reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost being-guilty*,' which means 'letting oneself be called forth to one's ownmost *being*-guilty.'[503]

Both Scott and Davis are right to say the individuating conditions of authenticity interrupt our willful activities and open us up to a range of inherited potentialities-for-being, but Davis points out that 'the call of conscience in *Being and Time* is not *only* a matter of interrupting the will; for it is also a call to once again will resolutely.'[504] And Heidegger says 'when the call is rightly understood...as a calling-back which calls forth into its factical potentiality-for-being-its-self at the same time,' then 'to hear the call authentically signifies bringing oneself into a factical taking-action.'[505] The call to re-assert our will after the interruption of willful activity follows from the notion of authenticity as choosing to choose: that is, taking responsibility for our existence requires that we adopt one of the potentialities-for-being that our cultural inheritance makes available. Likewise, and although anxiety does interrupt our everyday life, the motivation to return to willful activity is an inextricable aspect of anxiety: 'Anxiety in the face of death is anxiety "in the face of" that potentiality-for-being which is one's ownmost,' and 'for the most part Dasein covers up its ownmost being-towards-death, fleeing *in the face* of it.'[506] Combining the necessary projection of a given potentiality built into the idea of authenticity with the interruption of but also the motivation to return to willful activity induced by anxiety means, on Davis' third interpretation, that resoluteness would 'not only be the willful resolve of Dasein to a particular project, but would also be the resolve to repeat the interruption of willing in the experience of deathliness.'[507]

Whilst the interruption of our activities opens us up to alternative potentialities-for-being, the call and motivation to re-assert our will that resoluteness entails effectively restricts our openness to the potentialities available in our cultural inheritance; for as we have seen, no sense can be made of receptively-projecting absent potentialities. This means that the openness of authenticity hints at our openness to the mystery of being, but it cannot be equated with what the later Heidegger calls our openness to the open-region and the different destinings of being through which aspects of our world that are currently concealed could be revealed. Heidegger's belief that resoluteness exists only as a resolution that projects itself – 'the primary meaning of existentiality' he says 'is the future'[508] – along with his emphasis on *handing down to ourselves* potentialities-for-being also conceals the extent to which entities are sent, destined, or granted to us by suggesting that the being of entities is determined by the specific potentiality that we individually project. Of course, identifying the being of entities with the will of a subject is precisely what Heidegger believes leads to the oblivion of being achieved in modern technology, and John Richardson succinctly captures the connection between *Being and Time* and Heidegger's account of enframing that I have been detailing when he writes:

> It is Nietzsche who above all articulates our modern understanding – and gets at its unifying core – in his notion of will to power. And although Heidegger never says so, I think he saw it as also articulated in *Being and Time*, with its pragmatic-existentialist picture

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[502] *BT* 437/385
[503] *BT* 343/297, 353/305
[504] Davis, p.55
[505] *BT* 341/294
[506] *BT* 295/251
[507] Davis, p.53
[508] *BT* 376/327

> of Dasein: as defined by its projects with things, and its capacity to achieve an individualizing control over those projects, in authenticity.[509]

Heidegger accordingly leaves the language of metaphysics and the jargon of authenticity behind in his later attempt to come to terms with the truth of being, and in an essay on his intended turn from Dasein to being Heidegger acknowledges the conceptual limits of *Being and Time* when he asserts:

> Only when man, in the disclosing coming-to-pass of the insight [into being] by which he himself is beheld, renounces human self-will and projects himself toward that insight, away from himself, does he correspond in his essence to the claim of that insight.[510]

Lastly, the ambivalent circling between resolute willing and an open resolve to interrupt willing means, for Davis, that the task of interpreting resoluteness in *Being and Time* is a double one:

> On the one hand, criticizing the residual tendencies of Dasein-analysis toward 'becoming another entrenchment' in that from which the text is attempting to free itself: the self-understanding of man as willful subjectivity; and, on the other hand, catching glimpses of what is to come: the 'mortal' who dwells beyond the epoch of will in a region of releasement or non-willing.[511]

Davis is also right to assert that 'only by investigating the early Heidegger can we fully see the necessity of the mature position of releasement, but it is only with the latter thought that Heidegger succeeds in overcoming a thinking that is a willing.'[512] And as we shall see, Heidegger's attempt to reverse the oblivion of being by overcoming willful subjectivity via a revised vocabulary of releasement amounts to overcoming the conceptual limits of authenticity that effectively conceal alternative destinings of being.

Releasement

Heidegger's work on releasement initially appeared in a slim volume, *Discourse on Thinking*, that contained a memorial address to the composer, Conradin Kreutzer, and an excerpt from a dialogue that has since been published in its entirety in a collection of dialogues entitled *Country Path Conversations*. Releasement translates *Gelassenheit*, and the word signifies the renunciation or abandonment of self-assertion. Specifically, Heidegger identifies releasement with a waitful and meditative form of thought that enables us to rise above the oblivion of being brought about by the willful and calculative thinking characteristic of modern technology. Heidegger's use of releasement also allows him to adequately express the mutual dependence between man and being. And after offering an account of the releasement that opens us to the open-region of being, we will finally be in a position to discuss the processes of cultural transformation and artistic creativity.

Releasement, for Heidegger, lies 'beyond the distinction between activity and passivity...because releasement does *not* belong to the domain of the will.'[513] And it is achieved through our (enigmatic) willing not to will:

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[509] Richardson, p.209
[510] *QCT* 47
[511] Davis, p.50
[512] Davis, p.50
[513] *DT* 61

> Releasement is indeed the release of oneself from transcendental representation and so a relinquishing of the willing of a horizon. Such relinquishing no longer stems from a willing, except that the occasion for releasing oneself to belonging to the open-region requires a trace of willing. This trace, however, vanishes while releasing oneself and is completely extinguished in releasement.[514]

Richard Wolin reads Heidegger's work on releasement as 'summary justification of passivity and inaction' in which 'the powers of human reason and will are devalued.'[515] But, as Davis notes, 'to think merely of an "extinguished will' would still be to think within the domain of the will.'[516] Davis then goes on to offer two potential readings of *Nicht-wollen*: *not*-willing which 'remains in the domain of the will as the simple negation or mere deficiency of willing,' and the *non*-willing that 'indicates a way of being radically other than both the active and the passive modes within the domain of the will.'[517] And according to Heidegger, real releasement 'would be pure resting in itself of that willing, which, renouncing willing, has released itself to what is not will.'[518]

To illustrate the way of being beyond the domain of the will Heidegger discusses a distinct type of waiting that releases us from but is also prior to our willful activities. Heidegger begins his account of the waiting of releasement by differentiating it from the awaiting of calculative thought. Awaiting is calculative insofar as it involves the positing of an entity that is supposed to appear, and it is bound up with both the active and passive sides of the will to the extent that anticipation is based on a projection that we are simultaneously striving to achieve and expecting to receive. When, however, we genuinely wait we leave open what we are waiting for such that we are released from our willful activities and into an open relation with the clearing of being where we neither actively project nor passively accept but just let beings be.[519] Waiting, in other words, and like anxiety, interrupts our willful activities and gives us a chance to recognize that things could be otherwise. Yet unlike the anxiety that inspires us to re-assert our will by projecting an available potentiality, waiting opens us to the openness of the clearing that destines various disclosures of beings. And it is our openness to a particular destining of being which presents specific entities that undergirds our calculative thought and enables our willful activities:

> *Scientist:* Now authentic releasement consists in this: that man in his very nature belongs to the open-region, i.e., he is released to it.
> *Scholar:* Not occasionally, but – how shall we say it – prior to everything.
> *Scientist:* The prior, of which we really cannot think...
> *Teacher:* ...because the nature of thinking begins there.
> *Scientist:* Thus man's nature is released to the open-region in what is prior to thought.[520]

Whereas Heidegger's early writings emphasized the individual agent's projection of a potentiality-for-being to the point at which 'the character of "having been" arises, in a certain way, from the future,'[521] Heidegger's later work accentuates our thrownness into a historical 'destining of revealing that holds complete sway over men.'[522] The priority

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[514] *DT* 79-80
[515] Wolin, p.147
[516] Davis, p.201
[517] Davis, p.187
[518] *DT* 85
[519] *DT* 68
[520] *DT* 82-3
[521] *BT* 373/326
[522] *BW* 330

Heidegger eventually places on our past is based on the fact that we must be open to a destining of being and the entities granted therein before we can project an identity-defining activity. And the waiting of releasement is, for Heidegger, beyond the domain of the will precisely because it signifies an interruption of willing and at the same time denotes our openness to a destining of being that is prior to the calculative thinking of our willful activities.[523]

Waiting enables our openness to destinings of being through an 'in-dwelling releasement to the open-region.'[524] Dwelling in the open-region of being is best thought of as a steadfast and enduring confrontation with our mortality that is distinct from what Heidegger characterizes as our anxious relation to death in *Being and Time*. Again for the early Heidegger anxiety in the face of death interrupts our immersion in a given activity and opens us to different potentialities-for-being. But as we have seen anxiety also motivates an immediate return to our willful activities to the point at which we drive out alternative possibilities of revealing. This action-inducing anxiety is itself a function of our willful activities insofar as they present the world beyond our activities as an empty void, and for the later Heidegger this means that anxiety actually prevents us from 'being capable of death as death.'[525] Under the illusion of willful subjectivity, Young writes,

> we take it that there is *no* other 'side' to our world of beings, that its inhabitants are 'suspended' in a 'complete emptiness.' Given such a taking, death presents itself, of course, as absolute annihilation. As a result, to avoid the terror of 'blindly staring towards the end,' life becomes the anxiety of evasion.[526]

When, however, we are released from our willful activities, Heidegger says we realize that death is not the nothingness of annihilation, but rather 'the *side of life* that is averted from us,' that 'death and the realm of the dead belong to the whole of beings as its other side,' and that 'there are regions and places which, being averted from us, seem to be something negative, but are nothing of the kind if we think all things as being within the widest orbit of beings.'[527] The shift in our notion of death from 'the "nothing" of the possible impossibility of [our] existence'[528] to 'the whole of beings as its other side'[529] means that being-towards-death no longer results in action-inducing anxiety, but what Young calls an 'equanimity' that frees us for and enables us to dwell within the 'mystery of being.'[530] As Heidegger puts it: 'Releasement, thus composedly steadfast, would be a receiving of the regioning of the open-region.'[531]

Although anxiety interrupts our everyday activities and encourages us to own up to the fact that our being is an issue by self-consciously and resolutely choosing between the various potentialities-for-being available in our current situation, waiting interrupts our identity-defining activities and assuages the anxiety that spurs a return to self-assertion so that we can see beyond current possibilities and are open to the mystery of

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[523] Julian Young expresses a similar thought when he writes: 'Human beings never make their own ultimate horizons of disclosure... This, I think, is a matter not of observation but of logic. Since conspiring or planning is an instance of what Heidegger calls "calculative thought," and since thinking of this type always presupposes and happened within a horizon of disclosure, conspiring to create one's ultimate horizon of disclosure would require one to "calculate" before one could "calculate."' See Young HLP p.23
[524] *DT* 82
[525] *PLT* 151
[526] Young, HLP p.68
[527] *PLT* 125
[528] *BT* 310/266
[529] *PLT* 125
[530] Young, HLP p.69
[531] *DT* 81

being. In our current case, Heidegger suggests waiting allows us to 'catch sight of the essence of modern technology' as simply *one* destining of being and thus 'brings into appearance the saving power in its arising.'[532] Waiting, in other words, speaks to the 'patient noble-mindedness' we need in order to see that the metaphysical assumptions of our modern technological mode of being mistakenly drive out every other possibility of revealing.[533] And once we are released from this error, we are in principle open to seeing the world as something other than resources for our willful activities:

> Releasement towards things and openness to the mystery belong together. They grant us the possibility of dwelling in the world in a totally different way. They promise us a new ground and foundation upon which we can stand and endure the world of technology without being imperiled by it.[534]

As a way of being that directs us toward things and opens us to the mystery, releasement reverses the oblivion of being achieved through our willful activities by both indicating the extent to which man needs beings and providing us with a certain insight into the clearing of being that sends specific possibilities of revealing whilst concealing others. With this insight, we are effectively open to being as a whole and thereby the disparate destinings of being concealed in our current activities. Heidegger calls our openness to the clearing 'the real nature of the spontaneity of thinking,' since receiving an alternative destining of being enables us to project new potentialities.[535] And in order to see how releasement facilitates the movement of history via cultural transformations and artistic creativity, we need to look at the later Heidegger's account of our essential relation to being: namely, the meditative thinking through which we correspond to the clearing.

Thinking Historically

In Heidegger's final public seminar he admits that 'there was not yet in *Being and Time* a genuine knowledge of the history of being.'[536] The history of being, for Heidegger, refers to 'the changing forms in which being shows itself epochally and historically' such that 'the objectness in which at any given time nature, man, history, and language exhibit themselves always itself remains only *one* kind of presencing.'[537] Heidegger occasionally divides the history of being into three distinct epochs whereby the Greeks encountered beings as emergent natural phenomena, the medievals engaged with entities as aspects of God's creation, and we moderns experience objects as resources for production and consumption.[538] But more often than not Heidegger characterizes the history of being in terms of the various words – *physis, logos, en, idea, energeia, substantiality, objectivity, subjectivity, will, will to power, etc* – and ontological assumptions that determine the being of entities in a particular period. Metaphysics, Heidegger says,

> grounds an age in that through a specific interpretation of what is and through a specific comprehension of truth it gives to that age the basis upon which it is essentially formed. This basis holds complete dominion over all the phenomena that distinguish the age.[539]

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[532] *QCT* 32, 28
[533] *DT* 85
[534] *DT* 55
[535] *DT* 81
[536] *FoS* 78
[537] *TB* 263
[538] See *CP* 120 §84, *PR* 91, *PLT* 74
[539] *QCT* 115

The early Heidegger's failure to appreciate the extent to which *that* and *what* entities *are* differs between historical epochs is based on his strict equation of being with what are presented as the permanent, fundamental, and world-constituting features of Dasein. Specifically, Heidegger's initial identification of being with the seemingly essential aspects of human activity obscures what Heidegger eventually saw as the sending of specific disclosures of beings *from* being and the extent to which the human essence changes in order to accept such sendings. Heidegger, for his part, implicitly marks the distinction between his earlier and later work when he writes:

> The essential worth of man does not consist in his being the substance of beings, as the "subject" among them, so that as the tyrant of being he may deign to release the beingness of beings into an all too loudly bruited "objectivity."
>
> Man is rather "thrown" from being itself into the truth of being, so that ek-sisting in this fashion he might guard the truth of being, in order that beings might appear in the light of being as the beings that they are. Man does not decide whether and how beings appear, whether and how God and the gods or history and nature come forward into the clearing of being, come to presence and depart. The advent of beings lies in the destiny of being, but for man it is ever a question of finding what is fitting in his essence that corresponds to such destiny; for in accord with this destiny man as ek-sisting has to guard the truth of being. Man is the shepherd of being.[540]

The later Heidegger's attention to the history and destiny of being showed him that 'thought becomes a product of sheer fantasy when we represent it as a universal human faculty,' and the bulk of his work after *Being and Time* suggests that the existence of man is historical to the point at which different destinings of being 'bestow on [man] the foundation of a new essence.'[541] This, however, does not mean that man is somehow excluded from being, for again Heidegger asserts:

> The fundamental idea of my thinking is exactly that being, relative to the manifestation of being, *needs* man, and conversely, man is only man insofar as he stands within the manifestation of being. Thus, the question as to what extent I am concerned only with being and have forgotten man ought to be settled. One cannot pose a question about being without posing a question about the essence of man.[542]

And in his later writings, Heidegger tries to capture the mutual dependence between man and being through a discussion of the meditative thinking in which our essence is both constituted by and constitutes historical destinings of being. 'The human essence,' as Davis puts it, 'is not only historical in the sense of being determined historically; man is also historical in that he is in all times called on to essentially participate in this historical determining.'[543]

Meditative thinking enables the movement of history by corresponding to the clearing or open-region of being. This correspondence is achieved when we are released from our current identity-defining activity and thereby open to the countless horizons of disclosure that comprise the clearing. Heidegger indicates the correspondence between humans and being by stressing the partial identity between our *openness* to being attained in meditative thinking and the *openness* of the clearing of being itself. Again, our 'relation

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[540] *BW* 234
[541] *PT* 57
[542] *MHC* 40
[543] Davis, p.212

to the open-region is [a type of] waiting' through which we are open for or 'released into an engagement with the openness of the open-region.[544] The partial identity between the essence of meditative thinking and the essence of the open-region is necessary if any genuine correspondence between man and being is to take place. It is also required if Heidegger's analysis of meditative thinking is to indicate the truth of being in a way that his existential analytic in *Being and Time* could not.[545] But the later Heidegger is clearly at pains to avoid letting his thought slip into a form of transcendental idealism or willful subjectivity. 'Man's essence,' he says, 'is to be found by looking away from man,'[546] and of thinking itself Heidegger writes:

> *Teacher:* ...If thinking is what distinguishes man's nature, then surely the essence of this nature, namely the nature of thinking, can be seen only by looking away from thinking.
> *Scholar:* But thinking, understood in a traditional way, as representing is a kind of willing; Kant, too, understands thinking this way when he characterizes it as spontaneity. To think is to will, and to will is to think.
> *Scientist:* Then the statement that the nature of thinking is something other than thinking means that thinking is something other than willing.[547]

When we look away from man we realize that man is essentially his response to being, and thinking is something other than willing to the extent that our reception of a specific destining is prior to our projection of an identity-defining activity. Yet even though 'being itself and how being itself concerns our thinking does not depend on our thinking alone,' receiving a specific destining of being 'denotes a process of letting things come to oneself in which one does not simply take things in, but rather takes up a position to what shows itself.'[548] This is why Heidegger says 'the advent of beings lies in the destiny of being, but for man it is ever a question of finding what is fitting in his essence that corresponds to such destiny.'[549] And insofar as meditative thinking fosters the movement of history through the presentation of an alternative destining of being, it is not simply a case of waitful releasement into the clearing but also involves the construction of a new 'house of being.'[550] 'The *Geschick* of being,' in short, 'remains the history of the essence of Western humanity insofar as historical humanity is engaged in constructively inhabiting the lighting and clearing of being.'[551]

Constructively inhabiting the clearing of being is a form of artistic creativity. Art, in Heidegger's terms,

> breaks open an open place, in whose openness everything is other than usual. By virtue of the projected sketch set into the work of the unconcealedness of what is, which casts itself toward us, everything ordinary and hitherto existing becomes unbeing. This unbeing has lost the capacity to give and keep being as measure. The curious fact here is that the work in no way affects hitherto existing entities by causal connections. The working of the work

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544 *DT* 65, 72
545 On the extent to which an *analysis* of meditative thinking enables Heidegger to speak directly of being see: 'Now do you mean that [releasement to being] depends on whether we engage in explaining the essence of this non-willing, or do you mean that it depends on whether we engage in non-willing?... I mean in a certain manner both.' *CPC* 42
546 *DT* 58
547 *DT* 58-9
548 *IM* 172, *Pm* 279
549 *BW* 234
550 *BW* 217
551 *PR* 93

> does not consist in the taking effect of a cause. It lies in a change, happening from out of the work, of the unconcealedness of what is, and this means, of being.[552]

Altering the unconcealedness of being by revealing the extra-ordinary and concealing the ordinary speaks to the historical character of art. 'Whenever art happens,' Heidegger says, 'history either begins or starts over again.'[553] And this history, Heidegger tells us, is 'not a sequence of events of whatever sort,' but rather 'the transporting of a people into its appointed task as entrance into that people's endowment.'[554] Heidegger offers the Greek temple as his primary example of an artwork that establishes the essence of a given historical community in light of a particular destining of being, but he also alludes to God's covenant with the Jews, the crucifixion, the various names thinkers apply to being, and Hitler's founding of a new German state as instances of history-making art.[555] Dreyfus indicates the commonality between these seemingly disparate examples of 'art' by calling them cultural paradigms. 'A cultural paradigm,' Dreyfus says,

> collects the scattered practices of a group, unifies them into coherent possibilities for action, and holds them up to the people who can then act and relate to each other in terms of that exemplar. Works of art, when performing this function, are not merely representations or symbols, but actually produced a shared understanding.[556]

The fact that epoch-defining paradigms produce a shared understanding for a specific historical community speaks to the communicative dimension of art, and Heidegger accordingly identifies our constructive relation to the clearing with innovative uses of language. Meditative thinking, he says, 'attends to the clearing of being in that it puts its saying of being into language as the home of ek-sistence.'[557] Similarly, 'poetic creation, which lets us dwell, is a kind of building.'[558] This, for Heidegger, means that 'language is at once the house of being and the home of human beings.'[559] It again implies that 'history is the poet's and thinker's struggle to find a word for beings as a whole.'[560] And after exploring the releasement that opens us to alternative dispensations of being that comprise the clearing in this chapter, the following chapter explains how poets and thinkers use language creatively to transform our relation to the clearing and thus present us with new potentialities-for-being.

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[552] *PLT* 70
[553] *PLT* 74
[554] *PLT* 74
[555] See *PLT* 60
[556] Hubert Dreyfus, 'Nihilism, Art, Technology, and Politics' in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Guignon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) p.354
[557] *BW* 262
[558] *PLT* 213
[559] *BW* 262
[560] *N3* 19

4. Words as Works of Art

Pragmatism, Communication, and Constitution

In 'The Origin of the Work of Art', Heidegger tells us 'art is truth setting itself to work.'[561] The truth that sets itself to work in the work of art is not what we traditionally understand by truth – i.e., the accurate representation of reality through a certain idea, image, or sign – but rather the disclosure of reality that is achieved in the presentation of a world. Heidegger offers two key examples of this phenomenon in OWA: a painting of a pair of peasant shoes by Vincent Van Gogh and an Ancient Greek temple. According to Heidegger 'the Van Gogh painting is the disclosure of what the equipment, the pair of peasant shoes, *is* in truth,'[562] and in this instance truth sets itself to work in the work of art by clearly presenting the peasant shoes as the peasant shoes that they are in relation to the soil, grain, and other aspects of a peasant woman's world.[563] Of the Greek temple Heidegger remarks:

> It is the temple-work that first fits together and at the same time gathers around itself the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire the shape of destiny for human being. The all-governing expanse of this open relational context is the world of this historical people... [And through the temple-work,] tree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are.[564]

Whereas the Van Gogh painting explicitly presents the peasant shoes by making them stand out against other features of the peasant woman's world, the Greek temple serves as a reference point which constitutes a specific historical world and all that appears in it. Speaking of the temple, Heidegger says 'the work opens up a *world* and keeps it abidingly in force,' and it is precisely 'the temple, in its standing there, [that] first gives to things their look and to men their outlook on themselves.'[565] Here truth sets itself to work in the work of art by creating a context in which entities, aspects, and dimensions of reality are concurrently determined and disclosed as the entities, aspects, and dimensions that they are. Despite the apparent lack of wordiness in painting, architecture, and other forms of art, Heidegger brings OWA to a close with the assertion: '*All art*, as the letting happen of the advent of the truth of what is, is, as such, *essentially poetry*.'[566] The reduction of *all* our creative activities to poetry[567] is related to the communication achieved via their symbolic form[568] as well as a function of their ability to 'bring beings into being' through a 'poetic projection' that 'sets itself into the work as figure' and 'thrusts up the unfamiliar and extraordinary and at the same time thrusts down the ordinary and what we believe to

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561 *PLT* 38

562 *PLT* 35

563 The clarity of presentation in this example is not merely a 'better visualization', but rather the first explicit presentation of the peasant shoes as the shoes that they are. See *PLT* 33-5

564 *PLT* 41

565 *PLT* 43, 42

566 *PLT* 70

567 In 'The Origin of the Work of Art' Heidegger writes: 'Poetry is thought of here in so broad a sense and at the same time in such an intimate unity of being with language and word, that we must leave open whether art, in all its modes from architecture to poesy, exhausts the nature of poetry. See *PLT* 72. Yet *Being and Time* provides an answer to this open question: For if art is identical with the happening of truth, and truth happens in, say, scientific research, then the traditional art-forms do not exhaust the nature of art. See Heidegger's discussion of Newton's Laws at *BT* 226-7/269-70.

568 'The work makes public something other than itself; it manifests something other; it is allegory. In the work of art something other is brought together with the thing that is made. To bring together is, in Greek, *sumballein*. The work is a symbol.' See *PLT* 19

be such.'[569] In fact, Heidegger says 'language itself is poetry in the essential [disclosive] sense,' and he claims that 'language alone brings what is, as something that is, into the open for the first time.'[570] As a totality of signs[571] organized in a system of reference relations, 'language, by *naming* beings for the first time, first brings beings to word and appearance' and 'only this naming nominates beings *to* their being *from out of* their being.'[572] Heidegger even goes so far as to cite the final line in Stefan George's poem, 'Words', which reads: 'Where the word breaks off no thing may be,'[573] but in OWA Heidegger never shows us what enables signs, names, and words to bring beings into being. Therefore, this chapter looks back to *Being and Time* and forward to Heidegger's later essays on language to see how truth happens, how words work, and how words work as works of art.

Specifically, this chapter begins with a brief summary of Heidegger's considered views on truth and then maps them onto to OWA to tentatively sketch what is at stake when truth sets itself to work in works of art. I then offer a reading of propositional truth and our disclosedness in *Being and Time* that explicitly commits the early Heidegger to a pragmatic view of language whereby our intelligible use of words presupposes the meaningful disclosure of our world achieved in our practical activities. The idea here is that if entities are concealed, then no sense can be made of our assertions indicating or failing to indicate said entities. Although the disclosure of entities may be necessary for assertions to indicate them, the unconcealment of entities is not sufficient for explaining how the meaning of a specific sign is fixed to them. What is more, basing our intelligible use of words on the meaningful disclosure of entities achieved in our practical activities raises doubts about the extent to which 'language alone brings what is, as something that is, into the open for the first time.'[574] Thus, I complicate the picture of language presented in *Being and Time* by looking at Heidegger's concept of discourse as well as a communicative approach to language in order to elucidate the distinct set of norms that fix our words to dimensions of our world disclosed through our purposive activities. The fact that our meaningful use of words presupposes discursive norms that swing free from practical activity does, however, open the door to a constitutive model of language in which the allegedly meaningful disclosure of entities achieved in our practical activities presupposes our meaningful use of language. Much of Heidegger's later work is consistent with the constitutive view, and I endorse it insofar as it can explain his claim that language alone brings beings into being. But this approach to language appears to do away with the idea that entities must be intelligibly disclosed before our assertions can indicate them, and thus calls into question Heidegger's adherence to the traditional notion of propositional truth. In an attempt to address this criticism of the constitutive view, I examine the way thinkers and poets alter our discursive norms through formal indications and poetic projections to create new potentialities-for-being and in doing so I show that the origin and subsequent operation of propositional truth is best understood as the determination of an otherwise indeterminate signification through the filling of an empty indication or projection. Finally, I return to a theme set out at the beginning of this thesis by arguing that any successful presentation of an alternative potentiality-for-

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569 *PLT* 72-3

570 *PLT* 72, 71

571 In §17 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger restricts the meaning of 'sign' to entities that indicate the worldly or entity-constituting contours of our world. But for the purposes of this chapter, I will uses 'sign', 'word', 'name', 'symbol', 'assertion', 'proposition', 'expression', 'language', and 'artwork' to refer interchangeably to entities (or a collection of said entities) in which some form of truth happens.

572 *PLT* 71

573 *OWL* 60

574 *PLT* 71

being by thinkers, artists, or, to use Heidegger's term, 'poets' requires that others recognize said potentiality as useful, valuable, or necessary and thus be willing to support the institutions that sustain said potentiality.

Truth as Unconcealment

Heidegger's preferred term for truth is unconcealment. Unconcealment translates the Greek word *aletheia*. *Aletheia* is a privative notion that 'consists in taking entities out of their hiddenness and letting them be seen in their unhiddenness.'[575] Heidegger revised the words and examples he used to explicate unconcealment throughout his career, but Wrathall perspicuously divides Heidegger's considered views on truth into four planks of a single platform in which each plank refers to a different mode of unconcealment. As a platform the four planks provide the basis for our meaningful engagement with entities and aspects of our world, and Wrathall characterizes each of the planks as follows:

> 1. Propositional truth (correctness, *Richtigkeit*). An assertion or proposition is true when it corresponds with a state of affairs.
>
> 2. The truth (uncoveredness or discoveredness, *Entdecktheit*) of entities. An entity is true when it is uncovered, that is, made available for comportment.
>
> 3. The truth of being. There is an unconcealment (*Unverborgenheit*) of being when an understanding of the being or essence of everything that is shapes all the possibilities for comportment in the world.
>
> 4. Truth as the clearing (*Lichtung*). There is a clearing within which an understanding of being or essence can prevail while incompatible possibilities of being are concealed or held back.[576]

Planks 1-3, Wrathall writes, 'give us possibilities for different experiences of entities and different actions with entities, for different goals to be pursued, or forms of life to be lived.'[577] Put otherwise, planks 1-3 are concerned with the unconcealment of entities in which the presence of a particular horizon of disclosure (plank 3) creates the context through which facts about entities are present (plank 2) such that we can say things about them (plank 1). Plank 4, in contrast, is concerned with 'the space that allows those possibilities to be actual possibilities' and can be taken as the withholding of 'possibilities that are incompatible with the [truth of being] that is currently operative.'[578]

Aligning the planks of Wrathall's platform with the examples of art Heidegger offers in OWA will help us see what Heidegger means when he says 'art is truth setting itself to work.'[579] Insofar as the Van Gogh painting explicitly presents the peasant shoes by making them standout against the other aspects of the peasant woman's world, it resembles propositional truth (plank 1).[580] Van Gogh can explicitly present the peasant shoes, because salient fact about the shoes and other features of the peasant woman's world have been implicitly disclosed (plank 2) through the practices and institutions that make farming the horizon of disclosure that it is (plank 3). Finally, engaging in the actual

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[575] *BT* 212/262
[576] Wrathall, HU, p.12-4
[577] Wrathall, HU, p.14
[578] Wrathall, HU p.14, 34
[579] *PLT* 38
[580] I say 'resembles' because in *Being and Time* Heidegger characterizes assertoric truth as a matter of dimming down the worldly context surrounding the entity a particular assertion is about. See *BT* 197/155

practice of farming that presents the peasant shoes as an item of equipment precludes other ways of comporting ourselves to the shoes such that they would show up as having a specific place in three-dimensional space or a given chemical structure (plank 4). Unlike the Van Gogh painting, the Greek temple established the horizon of disclosure (plank 3) that presented trees and grass, and eagles and bulls as entities (plank 2) that the Greeks could comport themselves toward (plank 1). And as we have seen through Heidegger's discussion of the history of being, the Ancient Greek temple's reception of a specific truth of being effectively conceals the medieval Christian and modern technological distinings (plank 4). The different truths at work in the Van Gogh painting and the Greek temple speak to their disparate status as world-explicating vs. world-founding works of art. For whereas the Van Gogh painting explicitly presents the aspects of a historical world already implicitly opened up, the Greek temple 'breaks open an open place' such that through the temple-work 'the concepts of an historical people's nature, i.e., of its belonging to world history, are formed for that folk.'[581] And as we shall see, the distinction between the truth at work in the Van Gogh painting and the truth at work in the Greek temple is roughly reflected in the distinction between propositional truth and Dasein's disclosedness as they are presented in *Being and Time*.

Propositional Truth and Dasein's Disclosedness

Heidegger begins his discussion of truth in §44 of *Being and Time* by saying that his 'analysis takes its departure from the *traditional conception of truth*, and attempts to lay bare the ontological foundations of that conception.'[582] The traditional conception of truth treats assertions as the *site* of truth and claims that the *essence* of truth lies in the agreement of an assertion with its object. Heidegger, however, wonders 'what is tacitly posited in this relational totality of the *adaequatio intellectus et rei*? And what ontological character does that which is thus posited have itself?'[583] Heidegger's answer to the first question is *aletheia* or unconcealment: if aspects of the world were concealed, then our assertions would never be able to correspond to them in an intelligible way. Hence, Heidegger calls unconcealment the 'primordial phenomenon of truth,' and he sees the agreement between assertions and other aspects of reality as parasitic upon it.[584] As for the second question, Heidegger identifies the ontological character of *aletheia* with the formal features of human existence that enable humans to disclose the world. 'Only with Dasein's *disclosedness*,' Heidegger writes, 'is the *most primordial* phenomenon of truth attained,'[585] and he goes so far as to say 'entities are uncovered only *when* Dasein *is*; and only as long as Dasein *is*, are they disclosed.'[586] In order to illustrate the extent to which assertoric truth presupposes the meaningful disclosure of reality achieved through our distinct way of being-in-the-world, we need to analyze Heidegger's notions of agreement and disclosedness in detail.

Throughout his career, Heidegger rejected traditional correspondence theories of truth that equated truth with the agreement between an ideal, mental, or linguistic representation and reality. The problem with these theories is their inability to explain the way that representations and reality agree: that is, elucidating truth in terms of a relation between ideal content and real objects doesn't amount to an account of the truth relation

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581 *PLT* 70-1
582 *BT* 214/257
583 *BT* 215/258
584 *BT* 215/258
585 *BT* 226/269
586 *BT* 226/269

itself. In short, for a correspondence theory of truth to do any work, it cannot simply assert that *intellectus* and *res* correspond; rather it must specify the content of that so-called correspondence.[587]

Though Heidegger dismisses classical correspondence theories of truth as empty, he *is* concerned with offering a phenomenological account of our experience with the way assertions relate to the world. For Heidegger, the agreement between an assertion and its object is a characteristic of our engagement with reality. 'Asserting,' Heidegger writes, 'is a way of being towards the thing itself that is.'[588] And far from identifying propositions as a kind of ideal, mental, or linguistic representation, Heidegger suggests we experience assertions as a set of ready-to-hand signs that work by directing us toward specific aspects of our environment:

> Suppose someone here in the classroom states the proposition 'the board is black' and does so in an immediately given context of question and answer. To what do we then attend in understanding the statement? To the phonetic articulation? Or to the representation that performs the making of the statement and for which then the sounds uttered are 'signs'? No, rather we direct ourselves to the blackboard itself, here on the wall! In the perception of this board, in making present and thinking about the blackboard and nothing else, we participate in the performance of the statement. What the statement immediately presents is that *about which* it states something.[589]

In this example, the assertion 'the board is black' corresponds not by *representing* a fact, say, the board being black, but by providing us with a certain direction or orientation to the board that *presents* the board as it is, namely, black.[590] Heidegger characterizes the orientation that enables an assertion to indicate its object as a kind of 'uncovering'. Through assertions 'the entity itself which one has in mind shows itself *just as* it is in itself; that is to say, it shows that it, in its selfsameness, is just as it gets pointed out in the assertion as being – just as *it* gets uncovered as being.'[591] From here Heidegger writes:

> 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' in its uncoveredness. The *being-true* (*truth*) of the assertion must be understood as *being-uncovering*.[592]

The being-true of an assertion as being-uncovering is, however, 'ontologically possibly only on the basis of being-in-the-world.'[593] And Heidegger says 'this latter phenomenon, which we have known as a basic state of Dasein, is the *foundation* for the primordial phenomenon of truth.'[594]

The basic state of Dasein 'embraces the whole of that structure-of-being which has become explicit through the phenomenon of care.'[595] Care is Heidegger's word of choice for the fact that the being of Dasein means 'ahead-of-itself-being-already-in-(the-world) as being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world),' and the care-structure is comprised of a series of inter-related phenomena – including, worldliness, being-with-

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[587] See *BT* 216/259, *MFL* 125
[588] *BT* 218/260
[589] *MFL* 125-6
[590] Put otherwise, the truth of an assertion is confirmed when that assertion orients us towards a certain object such that through this orientation we can see or engage with the object as the object that it is.
[591] *BT* 261/218
[592] *BT* 261/217
[593] *BT* 261/219
[594] *BT* 261/219
[595] *BT* 264/221

others, attunement, understanding, and discourse – that enable us to disclose entities and aspects of the world as the entities and aspects that they are. The worldliness of the world is the referential totality that determines the meaningful presentation of its component parts and helps define the identity of existent human beings. Being-with-others refers to the fact that others facilitate our world-disclosing activities by providing us with the materials with which we work and consuming the products of our labour. In doing so, others effectively regulate the activities available to us, and this means that our disclosure of the world is factically possible and intelligible as such if and only if others support our disclosive practices. Attunement indicates that we are is always disposed to the world in a specific and meaningful way through the various practices that comprise our cultural inheritance, whereas understanding exemplifies our ability to appropriate our inheritance through the act of taking up one of the practices present in that inheritance. Finally, discourse speaks to the set of communicative norms that enable us to explicitly articulate and partake in the attunements and understandings that reveal the world. Together, the ontological aspects of our care-structure constitute the context through which we meaningfully disclose entities and aspects of the world as the entities and aspects that they are. And insofar as 'entities are uncovered only *when* Dasein *is*; and only as long as Dasein *is*, are they disclosed,' Heidegger maintains that the truth of 'assertion is grounded in Dasein's uncovering, or rather in its *disclosedness*.'[596]

The fact that Heidegger confusingly identified both of the truth of assertion and the truth of Dasein with 'uncovering' led Ernst Tugendhat to accuse Heidegger of (a) conflating propositional truth with a specific condition of possibility for propositional truth, and thus (b) absurdly suggesting that propositions constitute the very disclosure of entities through which their truth is to be assessed.[597] But Heidegger's attempt to lay bare the ontological foundations of the traditional concept of truth implies that he is actually offering us an account of two different types of truth: namely, the ontic truth involved in making entities that are present explicitly understood, and the ontological truth of a specific disclosure of being that creates the context through which entities are present in the first place. Pointedly, Heidegger sees the uncovering of assertions as the type of truth that makes disclosed entities explicitly understood. Through assertions, Heidegger says, 'that which is manifest may be made *explicitly* manifest in its definite character.'[598] And Heidegger equates the disclosure brought about through our distinct way of being-in-the-world as the type of truth that creates the context through which entities can be initially disclosed. 'The [explicit] uncoveredness of entities within the world is *grounded* in the world's disclosedness. But disclosedness is that basic character of Dasein according to which it *is* its 'there."[599] Breaking truth down into 'uncovering as making explicit' and 'unconcealment as making manifest' highlights the extent to which the truth of assertions presupposes our disclosedness – for again if no entities or aspects of the world were manifest, then there would be nothing for our assertions to indicate – and it implies that, *pace* Tugendhat, Heidegger thought the truth of propositions is determined by entities that are presented prior to propositional judgments and through the disclosedness of our worldly activities.

The Priority of Practice

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[596] *BT* 269/226
[597] Tugendhat, Ernst, 'Heidegger's Idea of Truth' in *Critical Heidegger* (New York: Routledge, 1996) p.228
[598] *BT* 155/197
[599] *BT* 220/263

Characterizing propositional truth as presupposing the meaningful disclosure of entities achieved in our activities suggests that the early Heidegger was committed to a pragmatic view of language whereby

> our ability to use language is grounded in some prior grasp of the *nonsemantic significance* of the context in which we find ourselves. It is only because we have first understood the nature of reality that we can then come to comprehend the meanings of words. Language is seen as a tool for communicating and ordering this prior grasp of reality. Although language may play a very important role in making the world intelligible, it is itself possible only against the background of an understanding that is *non*linguistic.[600]

Dreyfus and Wrathall are arguably the most influential proponents of a pragmatic take on language, and both draw their inspiration from Heidegger's account of the worldliness of our work-environment and the practical understanding that that environment entails.[601] Dreyfus defines the non-semantic significance that grounds our linguistic activity as 'the relational whole of in-order-tos and for-the-sake-of-whichs in which entities and activities that involve equipment have a point.'[602] On Dreyfus's reading, we disclose the component parts that make up a particular activity by engaging in that activity. He writes, 'the whole current situation is articulated by coping,' and he goes on to say, 'when I pick up a hammer and hammer with it, I articulate one of its significations, *i.e.* the fact that it is used to pound in nails; and if I use it to pull nails, I articulate another.'[603] Similarly, Wrathall says our meaningful use of language is 'dependent on and derivative of the meanings we encounter as we inhabit an intelligible world.'[604] These primary meanings constitute what Heidegger calls the basic structure of Dasein, and Wrathall says they are comprised of 'the relationships or involvements that entities have with us and other things *in a practical situation*.'[605] In short, our primary disclosure of entities is achieved via our practical engagement with said entities in a specific holistic context, and language 'gets its meaning by fitting into and contributing to [that] meaningful whole.'[606]

In *Being-in-the-world*, Dreyfus details the derivation of linguistic meaning from a meaningful historical context, through practical understanding, and to interpretation and assertion. On the pragmatic approach, the meaning of a sign is grounded in the meaning of a broader 'truth of being' into which all humans are thrown. The meaning of a truth of being is, as Heidegger puts it,

> that wherein the understandability of something maintains itself – even that of something which does not come into view explicitly and thematically. 'Meaning' signifies the 'upon-which' of a primary projection in terms of which something can be understood in its possibility as that which it is... All ontical experience of entities – both circumspective calculation of the ready-to-hand, and positive scientific cognition of the present-at-hand – is based upon projections which in every case are more or less transparent.[607]

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[600] Guignon, Charles, *Heidegger and the Problem of Knowledge* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983) p.117-8

[601] For the purposes of this short section, I treat Dreyfus and Wrathall as sharing the same view. It is, however, worth noting that whilst Wrathall's initial work on this topic (1999) more or less accepts Dreyfus' (1991) position, Wrathall will be distinguishing Dreyfus' 'vertical' account of understanding (which I detail here) from his own 'horizontal' account in a forthcoming paper.

[602] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, p.223

[603] Dreyfus, p.215

[604] Wrathall, HU, p.130

[605] Wrathall, HU, p.130

[606] Dreyfus, p.219

[607] *BT* 370-1/324

The meaning of a specific truth of being is difficult to define precisely because it is the background upon which we are able to define anything at all. But again, truths of being can be crudely characterized as the worldviews of different epochs that allow different entities and aspects of the world to show up as the entities and aspects that they are. Heidegger captures the part truths of being play in our lives when he writes:

> The everyday way in which things have been disclosed is one into which Dasein has grown in the first instance... In it, out of it, and against it, all genuine understanding, interpreting, and communicating, all re-discovering and appropriating anew, are preformed.[608]

Following Heidegger's lead, Dreyfus attempts to exemplify these truths of being when he asserts: 'The Greeks encountered *things* in their beauty and power, and people as poets, statesmen and heroes; the Christians encountered *creatures* to be catalogued and used appropriately, and people as saints and sinners; and we moderns encounter *objects* to be controlled and organized by subjects in order to satisfy their desires.'[609] And whilst it may be difficult to tease out the concrete content of the Greek, Christian, and modern worldviews, formally these truths of being are simply the set of norms, relations, and ontological assumptions upon which all activities and entities in the Greek, Christian, and modern worlds make sense.

Although a truth of being opens up the world in countless ways and presents us with numerous potentialities-for-being, the significance of our inherited possibilities is initially and implicitly articulated when we take a stand on our existence. Taking a stand on our existence is achieved when we adopt a particular potentiality-for-being, exhibit a certain practical understanding of the world, and express that possibility's importance to us by projecting it into the future. As we have seen, adopting a particular possibility also involves revealing certain entities and aspects of the world whilst concealing others. In the act of hammering a carpenter discloses the hammer as a tool designed for pounding nails into a piece of wood, yet hammering itself fails to reveal the chemical composition or physical properties that enable a hammer to do the job that it does. Perhaps more to the point, successfully engaging in the act of carpentry prevents the a carpenter from pausing their activity in order to analyze the chemical composition or physical properties of a hammer in the way a chemist or physicist would. And by taking a stand on our existence through, say, becoming a carpenter, or a chemist, or a physicist, we hone in on and articulate one way of being-in-the-world that our truth of being makes available.

The specific significance that we implicitly articulate in our active engagement with the world is capable of being explicitly expressed in interpretation. 'That which is disclosed in understanding,' Heidegger writes, 'is already accessible in such a way that its 'as which' can be made to stand out explicitly. The 'as' makes up the structure of the explicitness of something that is understood; it constitutes the interpretation.'[610] Whereas understanding discloses entities through a certain *use*, interpretation involves abstracting from our practical engagement with the world and using signs to explicitly *see* what we understand *as* the entities or aspects that they are. In Dreyfus' words: 'We have already been using something as something (using doorknobs for opening doors), but [in interpretation] we *see it* as something for something (see the doorknob *as* something for opening doors.'[611] Heidegger clarifies the transition from implicit practical understanding

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[608] *BT* 213/169
[609] Dreyfus, p.338
[610] *BT* 189/149
[611] Dreyfus, p.196

to explicit linguistic interpretation by breaking down the 'fore-structure' of interpretation into its basic parts – 'fore-having', 'fore-sight', and 'fore-conception' – and indicating the extent to which the latter concepts presuppose yet explicitly articulate the former. 'Fore-having' refers to the truth of being we have prior to any practical understanding or interpretation:

> In every case this interpretation is grounded in *something we have in advance* – in a *fore-having*. As the appropriation of understanding, the interpretation operates in being towards a totality of involvements which is already understood.[612]

As noted above, the truth of being into which we have been thrown serves as the foundation for our practical engagement with the world. But taking up a practical activity amounts to adopting a certain perspective on our cultural inheritance. And Heidegger calls the perspective we take on our cultural inheritance 'fore-sight':

> When something is understood but is still veiled, it becomes unveiled by an act of appropriation, and this is always done under the guidance of a point-of-view, which fixes that with regard to which what is understood is to be interpreted. In every case interpretation is grounded in *something we see in advance* – in a *fore-sight*. This fore-sight 'takes the first cut' out of what has been taken into our fore-having, and it does so with a view to a definite way in which this can be interpreted.[613]

Our truth of being, fore-having, and practical understanding, fore-sight, facilitate our understanding of the world before any explicit interpretation has occurred. And once certain entities and aspects of the world are presented through our cultural inheritance and particular practical activity, we reach the final feature of Heidegger's fore-structure of interpretation, 'fore-conception':

> Anything which is held in our fore-having and towards which we set our sights fore-sightedly', becomes conceptualizable through the interpretation. In such an interpretation, the way in which the entity we are interpreting is to be conceived can be drawn from the entity itself, or the interpretation can force the entity into concepts which it is opposed in its manner of Being. In either case, the interpretation has already decided for a definite way of conceiving it, either with finality or with reservations; it is grounded in *something we grasp in advance* – in a *fore-conception*.[614]

Heidegger's appeal to 'conceptualization' and his claim that 'interpretation has already decided for a definite way of conceiving' suggests that the third stage in his interpretive fore-structure entails seeing something *as* something. Once entities and aspects of our world have been disclosed in a discrete way, it is then possible to assign predicates to subjects and make judgments about them. 'To significations,' Heidegger writes, 'words accrue,' and he treats language as 'a totality of words' that 'as an entity within the world we may come across as ready-to-hand.'[615] As ready-to-hand, language does its job in the context of practical activity by pointing out characteristics of the work in progress, providing predicates for subjects involved in the referential whole, and allowing communication to take place in the course of our activity. As an example of this phenomenon, Dreyfus offers the assertion 'This hammer is too heavy' and says: 'Clearly,

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[612] *BT* 191/150
[613] *BT* 191/150
[614] *BT* 191/150
[615] *BT* 161/204

it is not too heavy in isolation, but it is too heavy for this specific job, and I point this out to someone on the job with me.'[616] Here we see that the statement 'This hammer is too heavy' picks out an aspect of our environment, 'This hammer', provides it with a predicate, 'too heavy', and in doing so is capable of indicating to others that this hammer is too heavy for the task at-hand. Assertions, in short, take what is implicitly disclosed in our practical activity and make it explicit.

With that said, we are now in a position to see how, on the pragmatic account, disclosedness is a condition of possibility for propositional truth and our meaningful use of words more generally. Propositional truth presupposes the meaningful disclosure of entities achieved in our practical activities to the extent that assertions are about specific entities that determine the assertion's truth-value. To continue with our talk of hammers, the assertion 'This hammer is heavy' is true or false in virtue of being about a given hammer. But for this assertion to be about a specific hammer, that hammer must be meaningfully disclosed. As Heidegger puts it: 'in order for something to be a possible about-which for an assertion,' the about-which of the assertion 'must *already* be somehow given for the assertion as *unveiled* and accessible.'[617] However the ability of true or false assertions to meaningfully assert something about the world not only depends on the disclosure of entities in a particular context; for it also relies on that context itself. In Wrathall's words:

> A sculptor and a carpenter might mean very different things in asserting 'the hammer is heavy' as a result of the different practices, goals, equipmental contexts, etc., within which they each use a hammer. Likewise, whether the assertion 'the hammer is heavy' is true will depend on the background which is 'communicated' by the speaker and hearer.[618]

The distinct background significance of sculptors and carpenters sheds light on the fact that the meaning and truth of assertions are determined by the meaningful context in which they are used and the entities and aspects of the world disclosed therein. And insofar as the meaning and truth of assertions presuppose the meaningful disclosure of entities in the context of our practical activities, Heidegger feels justified in calling the disclosure achieved via the worldliness of our purposive activities 'the *most primordial* phenomenon of truth.'[619]

Limits of the Pragmatic Approach

The fact that, on the pragmatic approach to language, our meaningful use of words presupposes the meaningful disclosure of entities in a practical context implies that words, insofar as they are works of art, work like the Van Gogh painting. Take, for example, Seamus Heaney's poem 'The Human Chain':

> Seeing the bags of meal passed hand to hand
> In close-up by the aid workers, and soldiers
> Firing over the mob, I was braced again
>
> With a grip on two sack corners,
> Two packed wads of grain I'd worked to lugs

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[616] Dreyfus, p.209
[617] *BP* 209
[618] Mark Wrathall, 'Heidegger and Truth as Correspondence,' *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 7:1 (1999), p.81-2
[619] *BT* 221/263

To give me purchase, ready for the heave –

The eye-to-eye, one-two, one-two upswing
Onto the trailer, then the stoop and drag and drain
Of the next lift. Nothing surpassed

That quick unburdening, backbreak's truest payback,
A letting go which will not come again.
Or it will, once. And for all.[620]

Taken in light of the pragmatic account of language, Heaney is offering us an explicit presentation of the experience and process of loading a trailer with grain that appears destined for people in need of emergency aid. Heaney is able to offer this presentation, because the various entities and phenomena – bags of meal, the trailer, aid workers, soldiers, and even the stresses and strains that are part of the activity – have been meaningfully, if implicitly disclosed through the activity of dealing with a crisis. Since the significance of Heaney's poem presupposes the disclosure of a meaningful world, the poem is an example of world-explicating but not world-founding art. More importantly, and insofar the pragmatic approach requires that a meaningful world is disclosed prior to our meaningful use of language, neither Heaney's poem nor any other symbolic work could count as world-founding art. In fact, the pragmatic model implies that world-foundation *only* occurs through a transformation in our non-linguistic practical activities. Of course, the later Heidegger thinks the creative use of language is world-founding. 'Poetry,' he writes, 'founds the ground of the possibility that man can become historical, in other words can become a people.'[621] He also endorses an idea that appears to stand in direct contradiction the pragmatic model: 'Only the word makes a thing appear as the thing it is and thus lets it be present.'[622] And no matter how we characterize the relation between Heidegger's early and later work on language,[623] one thing is clear: the pragmatic interpretation lacks the conceptual tools to explain how words work as world-founding works of art.[624]

Perhaps more troubling for the pragmatic view of language is the fact that even if the meaningful disclosure of entities achieved in our practical activities is a necessary condition for our use of words, the disclosure of a specific entity is not sufficient for showing how the content of an otherwise indeterminate sign is fixed to that entity. Take the assertion: 'The hammer is broken.' This assertion can only correspond to a given hammer in a particular context through the meaningful disclosure of that hammer in that context. But the disclosure of that hammer does not in-and-of-itself show us how or why the sign 'hammer' as opposed to the sign 'wrench' is taken to have its meaning fixed by the broken hammer. To appreciate the force of this objection, consider the fact that a host of non-human animals are capable of engaging in goal-directed activity. Beavers, for

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620 Seamus Heaney, *The Human Chain* (London: Faber & Faber, 2010) p.18

621 *GA* 39: 216

622 *OWL* 65

623 Roughly speaking, Carman (2003), Dreyfus (1991), and Taylor (2005) see a shift from a pragmatic view of language in *Being and Time* to a constitutive approach in the later essays. Wrathall (2011) argues that Heidegger is committed to the pragmatic model in both his early and later work, whereas Lafont (2000) contends that the constitutive view is implicitly present in *Being and Time* and then explicitly endorsed in his later writings.

624 This is obviously only a decisive objection to the pragmatic view of language if words (broadly conceived to include the symbolic nature of the Greek temple) actually work as world-founding works of art. I accept that they do, and later in this chapter I will attempt to show how words found worlds through several of my own examples.

instance, cut down trees for the purpose of building dams and their under-water homes. In doing so, beavers create a context in which trees, rivers, rocks, etc are disclosed in relation to each other and the beaver's ability to build and dwell. Yet the fact that beavers engage in disclosive, goal-directed activity without having produced anything resembling the natural languages we use to communicate our understanding of the world suggests that there is more to our meaningful use of language than the worldliness of our practical activities. In sum, our meaningful use of words may presuppose a purposive context, but practical activity alone is not enough to underwrite our coherent use of signs. And in an effort to understand how the meaning of a given word is fixed to a specific entity, we have to examine Heidegger's discussion of discourse and *das Man*.

Practice and Communication

In *Heidegger's Analytic*, Taylor Carman endorses the idea that the worldly context and practical understanding of our everyday activities are necessary conditions for our meaningful use of words. But he recognizes that worldliness and understanding are not sufficient for explaining our intelligible use of language. And so he appeals to two additional features of our formal existential structure, discourse and *das Man*, in order to develop a communicative approach to language whereby 'expressive gestures are parasitic on the norms they uncover in our everyday practical world, but they are also subject to norms of their own.'[625] Carman accordingly identifies Heidegger's use of 'discourse' in *Being and Time* with 'the way in which our world is coherently articulated, not just pragmatically or teleologically in terms of ends and activities, but expressively and communicatively, that is, in terms of how it makes sense to express our understanding and convey it to others.'[626] The distinction Carman makes between the pragmatic and discursive articulations of our world rests on: (a) the conceptual relationship between discourse as 'the articulation of intelligibility' and Heidegger's account of interpretation as 'understanding made explicit'; and (b) the difference between our practical understanding and its articulation in interpretation. Specifically, discourse is a condition of explicit understanding insofar as the signs we use to interpret the world disclosed in our practical activities are subject to a set of norms that stand apart from the norms governing our practices. And to grasp the nature of these distinct discursive norms, we need to say a bit more about the nature of our practical understanding as well as the relation between understanding, interpretation, and discourse.

Carman, following Dreyfus, believes our practical understanding consists in *using* entities *as* the entities that they are in the course of our activities, and Carman tells us this understanding is 'normative and aspectual but typically tacit and unthematic.'[627] The normativity involved in our practices is teleological: that is, success in any given activity is relative to a particular end, say, that of building a house, and subject to a certain set of rules that must be followed if the end is to be attained, in the case of building a house these rules are determined by the local environment, strength of materials, various aesthetic considerations, etc. Understanding is also aspectual insofar as it involves the competent use of entities *as* entities. Yet Carman says 'the aspects under which we cope with things do not typically swing free of the things themselves, but rather constitute them as the things that they are.'[628] And in an attempt to illustrate this point, Carman appeals to Wittgenstein's discussion of aspect seeing in *Philosophy of Psychology – A*

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[625] Carman 2003, 215
[626] Carman 2003, 205-6
[627] Carman, p.246
[628] Carman, p.246

Fragment. Here Wittgenstein suggests it would make little sense to look at a knife and fork and say: "'Now I see this as a knife and fork" This utterance would not be understood. Any more than: "Now it is a fork for me" or "It can be a fork too.'"[629] And Wittgenstein goes on to write: 'One doesn't "*take*" what one knows to be the cutlery at a meal *for* cutlery; any more than one ordinarily tries to move one's mouth as one eats.'[630] Wittgenstein's claim is that a fork just *is* a fork in our daily activity, so it is pointless to insist that one *sees* it *as* a fork. And Carman offers a felicitous gloss on this idea when he says 'we do not normally interpret things as the things they are, we just understand them by dealing with them appropriately.'[631] In short, the purposive structures of our practical activities disclose specific dimensions of the world as the dimensions that they are, but this disclosure is implicit and unexpressed.

The explicit expression of entities meaningfully disclosed in our practical activity involves a specific interpretation of those entities *as* the entities that they are. Carman, like Dreyfus, marks the distinction between understanding and interpretation with the distinction between *using as* and *see as*. And citing the fact that 'the German word for interpretation, *Auslegung*, literally means *laying out*,' Carman says, 'interpretation, as Heidegger intends it, is literally a kind of *exhibiting* or *showing*.'[632] Carman is quick to point out that interpretation always takes place in the context of our practical activities. Words, he says, "accrue' to significations not by referring to a bare object, but by being an integrated part of a practice, a custom, an institution.'[633] But Carman also points out that '[signs] are unique inasmuch as they function *not* by receding inconspicuously into the background of our practical attention, as equipment generally does, but by standing out explicitly and *showing* something.'[634] The fact that signs stand out from the totality of which they are a part speaks to a division that Heidegger sees between 'what is said in the talk' and 'what are talk is about.'[635] According to Carman, 'the distinction between what is said and what is talked about emerges for Heidegger only in interpretation, that is, in our understanding of something explicitly *as* something.'[636] And Carman goes on to say that 'the word "as" in that formulation marks the semantic gap: To understand *x as y* is to understand *x* (what is talked about) explicitly under the aspect *y* (what is said of it).'[637] Take, for example, Jastrow's ambiguous duck-rabbit: first we see it *as* a duck and then we see it *as* a rabbit. And Carman says when the 'illustration oscillates between looking like a duck and looking like a rabbit, it is not the object *per se* that is undergoing any change, but our interpretation or reading of it.'[638] Unlike the *using as* of understanding in which entities just are the entities that they are, the *seeing as* of interpretation expresses alternative aspects of things. And 'only when we can speak of alternative or competing aspects', Carman writes, 'does it make sense to describe our perceptual reports with the qualifier '*as* such and such."[639] Again, *seeing* entities and aspects of the world '*as* such and such' signifies a break between the content of our interpretations and the entities we interpret, and this break facilitates the distinction between meaningful purposive activity and a discursive realm opened up by interpretation:

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[629] *RPPI* §122
[630] *RPPI* §123
[631] Carman 2003, 247
[632] Carman, p.210-1
[633] Carman, p.225
[634] Carman, p.233
[635] See *BT* 206/162
[636] Carman, p.246
[637] Carman, p.246
[638] Carman, p.215-6, 246-7
[639] Carman, p.247

> What distinguishes interpretation from understanding is the emergence of an explicit phenomenological difference between *what* we understand and *how* we understand it. Only in light of this difference does it become possible to draw a conceptual distinction between semantic contents and the objects of reference, for only then can we genuinely countenance different ways of understanding one and the same thing, and so too the idea that one understanding may be right and another wrong or one true and another false.[640]

The phenomenological distinction between *what* we understand and *how* we understand it lends credence to Carman's claim that there are different norms governing our practical activity and the expressions we use to interpret them. And Carman borrows Heidegger's example of a turn signal to substantiate his point:

> Consider what it is that allows signs to function interpretively as they do. For the turn signal to succeed in signaling a turn, we must already have a shared understanding not just of the equipmental context of cars, streets, and traffic, or of purposive acts such as driving, turning and crossing the street. We must also know how to respond to and deal with appropriate and meaningful interpretive gestures themselves appropriately and meaningfully.[641]

There are, in other words, 'norms not just for *doing*, but also for *showing* and *saying*.'[642] And on Carman's account, discourse refers to a distinct set of discursive norms that cut across but are not reducible to the norms governing our practical activities.

Discursive norms, like the rules regulating our active engagement with the world, undergird our meaningful use of language. But unlike the teleological nature of purposive activity, the source of discursive norms is based upon our ability to communicate with others. Communication, on Carman's account, 'consists in *sharing* an orientation and an understanding *with* others', and it is a condition of expression insofar as being-with-others 'establishes a criteria for distinguishing expressions from non-expressions.'[643] Carman cites several of Wittgenstein's remarks on the incoherence of a private language due to the public nature of rule following to illustrate the extent to which communication enables our meaningful use of signs:[644]

> Suppose I write 'S' in a diary or calendar every time I have a certain sensation. Wittgenstein says, 'I will remark first of all that a definition of the sign cannot be formulated.' Moreover, 'What reason have we for calling 'S' the sign for a *sensation*?'[645]

Briefly, a private definition regulating the correct use of 'S' cannot be formulated because there are no standards or norms independent of the language user to confirm whether or not she is *in fact* using the definition consistently or correctly:

> To *think* one is following a rule is not to follow a rule. And that's why it's not possible to follow a rule 'privately': otherwise, thinking one was following a rule would be the same thing as following it.[646]

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[640] Carman, p.246
[641] Carman, p.235
[642] Carman, p.235
[643] Carman, p.240-241, 248
[644] For a defense of reading Wittgenstein's so-called argument against private language in light of his discussion of the public nature of following a rule see Kripke (1982) as well as Malcolm (1995). For an argument against this view see Baker and Hacker (1985).
[645] Carman, p.248, *PI* §258, 261

Ultimately, the rule governing the proper use of a given expression, the meaning of the expression itself, and the expression's ability to refer to something in the world remains indeterminate in the absence of the consistency achieved through communal consensus. 'A person goes by a sign-post,' Wittgenstein says, 'only insofar as there is an established usage, a custom.'[647] In *Zettel* he writes: 'Our language-game only works when a certain agreement prevails.'[648] And Wittgenstein succinctly summarizes his position in his *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* when he says 'the phenomenon of language is based on regularity, on agreement in action.'[649]

Wittgenstein's invocation of agreement and custom as characteristics of the way our words work reflects the fact that our discursive norms are always bound by the normative authority of what Heidegger calls *das Man.* Again, *das Man* 'controls every way in which the world and Dasein get interpreted,'[650] and it is through *das Man* that 'we have the *same thing* in view, because it is in *the same* averageness that we have a common understanding of what is said.'[651] The averageness that enables a common understanding of what is said refers to the communal consistency with which an expression is used to signify certain aspects of the world. And this consistency is achieved through the collective *recognition* of the way signs are used in a given context as well as the *repetition* of that use in corresponding contexts. The word 'hammer', for example, is able to point out an object used to pound nails into a piece of wood, because it has been consistently used in the context of a workshop to describe just such an object. Likewise, a flashing light on an automobile is able to announce the direction a driver is heading, and in doing so illustrate other salient aspects of the transport system, because others recognize and repeatedly respond to the flashing light in similar ways. Of course, the serviceability of a sign is extremely general, but the fact is that we find ourselves thrown into a world where a customary use of expressions determines the way the world shows up for us. These customary uses amount to the specific discursive norms through which the intelligibility of our world is articulated or by which the essence of an entity is expressed. And Carman sums up his discussion of discourse nicely when he says: 'just as the generic intelligibility of equipment is constituted by the anonymous norms governing its use, so too what I mean in ordinary discourse is dictated not by my intentions, individualistically construed, but by the anonymous discursive norms, Heidegger even says social "dictatorship", of *das Man*.'[652]

Carman's account of the distinct discursive norms that enable signs to indicate dimensions of our world disclosed in our practical activities addresses the fact that the meaningful disclosure of entities in the context of our activities is alone not enough to explain how the meaning of an otherwise arbitrary sign be fixed to an entity. And after examining some of the formal features of our existence that enable us to disclose the world and make that disclosure explicit via our use of signs – worldliness, understanding, discourse, and *das Man* – we are now able to offer a revised account of how truth happens and how our words work: certain practical contexts implicitly disclose entities and aspects of the world as the entities and aspect that they are, and through the collective repetition and recognition of specific signs in a given context those signs are able to explicitly present the entities and aspects disclosed in said context.

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[646] *PI* §202
[647] *PI* §198
[648] *Z* §430
[649] *RFM* 342
[650] *BT* 127/165
[651] *BT* 168/212
[652] Carman, Taylor, 'Was Heidegger a Linguistic Idealist' in *Inquiry*, 45: 2, (2002) p.214.

Limits of the Communicative Approach

Although Carman's communicative approach to language has an advantage over the pragmatic view insofar as it allows him to explain the way the meaning of otherwise indeterminate signs are fixed to entities that are disclosed in our practical activities, his acceptance of the priority of practice – 'expressive gestures are parasitic on the norms they uncover in our everyday practical world'[653] – appears to commit him to the claim that words work as world-explicating but not world-founding works of art. However this commitment is only apparent insofar as Carman's appeal to a distinct set of discursive norms that 'swing free' from our practical activity (but are also a condition of possibility for our meaningful use of signs) suggests that world-explicating works are actually world-founding. And in order to show how this is so, I return to Heidegger's discussion of Van Gogh, link it to Heidegger's discussion of signs in *Being and Time*, and then consider the extent to which Carman's account of the discursive norms underwriting our meaningful use of words undercuts his adherence to idea that entities must be meaningfully disclosed in our practical activities in order for our words to work.

Heidegger's account of Van Gogh's painting of a pair of peasant shoes emerges within a broader discussion of equipment of which Heidegger takes the peasant shoes to be an example. 'The equipmental quality of equipment,' Heidegger claims, 'consists in its usefulness.'[654] And he spells this out when he remarks:

> The peasant woman wears her shoes in the field. Only here are they what they are. They are all the more generally so, the less the peasant woman thinks about the shoes while she is at work, or looks at them at all, or is even aware of them. She stands and walks in them. That is how the shoes actually serve.[655]

Heidegger then turns to an analysis of Van Gogh's 'self-sufficient' painting of peasant shoes. From the painting, he says,

> we cannot even tell where these shoes stand... There is nothing surrounding this pair of peasant shoes in or to which they might belong... There are not even clods of soil from the field or the field-path sticking to them, which would at least hint a their use.[656]

And yet:

> From the dark opening of the worn insides of the shoes the toilsome tread of the worker stares forth. In the stiffly rugged heaviness of the shoes there is the accumulated tenacity of her slow trudge through the far-spreading and ever-uniform furrows of the field swept by raw wind. On the leather lie the dampness and richness of the soil. Under the soles slides the loneliness of the field-path as evening falls. In the shoes vibrates the silent call of the earth, its quiet give of the ripening grain and its unexplained self-refusal in the fallow desolation of the wintery field.[657]

According to Heidegger, and insofar as the peasant woman 'simply wears' her cleats, 'it is only in the picture that we notice all this about the shoes.'[658] This, for Heidegger, means

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[653] Carman 2003, 215
[654] *PLT* 32
[655] *PLT* 32
[656] *PLT* 33
[657] *PLT* 33
[658] *PLT* 33

that the painting 'did not, as it might seem at first, serve merely for a better visualization of what a piece of equipment is. Rather, the equipmentality of equipment first genuinely arrives at its appearance through the work and only in the work.'[659] Thus, 'the Van Gogh painting is the disclosure of what the equipment, the pair of peasant shoes, *is* in truth.'[660] That is, peasant shoes are presented as the peasant shoes that they are in relation to the work-world that constitutes them. And Heidegger brings his discussion of the Van Gogh painting to a close by telling us that 'the work, therefore, is not the reproduction of some particular entity that happens to be present at any give time; it is, on the contrary, the reproduction of the thing's general essence.'[661]

Whilst the discussion in this chapter has thus far detailed the aspects of our existence that enable our words to work, focusing on assertions and propositional truth means we have more or less restricted ourselves to explicating just one way in which our words are used: to indicate specific entities. However in *Being and Time* Heidegger tells us that a sign is not a thing that simply refers to another thing, but rather is "*an item of equipment which explicitly raises a totality of equipment into our circumspection so that together with it the worldly totality of equipment announces itself.*"[662] Heidegger also asserts:

> A sign addresses itself to the circumspection of our concernful dealings, and it does so in such a way that the circumspection which goes along with it, following where it points, brings into an explicit 'survey' whatever aroundness the environment may have at the time. This circumspective survey does not *grasp* the ready-to-hand; what it achieves is rather an orientation within our environment.[663]

And he even goes so far as to say:

> Signs of the kind we have described let what is ready-to-hand be encountered; more precisely, they let some context of it become accessible in such a way that our concernful dealings take on an orientation and hold it secure.[664]

Read in light of these passages but substituting 'sign' for 'work', Heidegger's claim that 'the equipmentality of equipment *first* genuinely arrives at its appearance through the work and *only* in the work'[665] implies that signs, by presenting us with the general essence of things, are the medium through which we understand the *being* of that entity. Of course, if signs are the medium through which we understand the being of an entity, and if our understanding of the being of entities determines *that* and *what* entities *are*, then signs are the medium that determine *that* and *what* entities *are*. As we have seen, the later Heidegger accepts this claim: 'language, by *naming* beings for the first time, first brings beings to word and appearance' and 'only this naming nominates beings *to* their being *from out of* their being.'[666] Carman is also bound to this conclusion insofar as he: (a) sees a gap between practical understanding and discursive interpretation; (b) characterizes signs as 'interpretive tools' and discourse as '*the* hermeneutic condition par excellence;' and (c) tells us that interpretation 'means explicit understanding, making sense of something *as* something – primitively *entities as entities*, that is, as *being*.'[667] And if the substitution

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[659] *PLT* 35
[660] *PLT* 35
[661] *PLT* 36
[662] *BT* 80/110
[663] *BT* 108-9/78
[664] *BT* 108-9/78
[665] *PLT* 35 [Emphasis added]
[666] *PLT* 71
[667] Carman, p.234, 235, 12

between 'sign' and 'work' can be reversed, then the Van Gogh painting, like the Greek temple, and unlike my initial ascription of its world-explicating status, 'opens up a *world* and keeps it abidingly in force.'[668]

More importantly, *combining* Carman's claim that our meaningful use of words presupposes discursive norms that swing free from practical activity *with* his recognition that signs have a 'transcendental function in their capacity to highlight or organize an entire complex of equipment by establishing our circumspective orientation within it'[669] calls into question his adherence to the idea that entities are meaningfully disclosed in our practical activities prior to our meaningful use of words. Charles Guignon offers a fairly clear account of this notion when he writes:

> 'Facts' about what a culture takes as important can serve as a basis for language only if they are encountered by us *as* facts of such and such a type. But the ability to pick out and identify the *relevant* facts about the world presupposes some prior mastery of the multiplicity of a language. Without this capacity for the articulation there would be no capacity for evaluating the role the facts are suppose to play and, hence, no foundation for articulating the facts as relevant.[670]

Heidegger, for his part, tells us in *Being and Time* that 'attunement and understanding are determined equiprimordially by *discourse*.'[671] And in 'Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry' Heidegger acknowledges the extent to which our practical activities presuppose language when he writes:

> The essence of language does not consist entirely in being a means of giving information. This definition does not touch its essential essence, but merely indicates an effect of its essence. Language is not a mere tool, one of the many which man possesses; on the contrary, it is only language that affords the very possibility of standing in the openness of the existent. Only where there is language, is there world, i.e., the perpetually altering circuit of decision and production, of action and responsibility.[672]

All of this suggests that Carman's appeal to a distinct set of discursive norms that enable our meaningful use of signs commits him to a constitutive view of language in which, as Guignon puts it,

> language generates and first makes possible our full-blown sense of the world. The constitutivist maintains that the mastery of the field of significance of a *world* (as opposed to, say, an animal's dexterity in its natural environment) presupposes some prior mastery of the articulated structure of language... Here there is no way to identify a non-semantic field of meaning which can be grasped independently of the language that serves to constitute it.[673]

But in order to assess the extent to which the distinction Carman sees between purposive and discursive norms undermines the priority he accords to practical activity, we need to examine the constitutivist's account of the 'semantic dimension' that opens up the distinctly human world and determines the meaning of all that appears within it.

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668 *PLT* 43, 42
669 Carman, p.234
670 Guignon, p.121
671 *BT* 172/133
672 *EB* 300
673 Guignon, p.118

Communication and Constitution

In an essay on Heidegger's philosophy of language that deals with Heidegger's claim that 'only speech enables man to be the living being he is as man,'[674] Charles Taylor distinguishes between two traditional approaches to language: an enframing theory and a constitutive model. Taylor traces the roots of the enframing approach back to Hobbes, Locke, and Condillac, and he says the theory

> attempts to understand language within the framework of a picture of human life, behavior, purposes, or mental functioning, which is itself described and defined without reference to language. Language can be seen as arising within this framework, and fulfilling some function within it, but the framework itself precedes, or at least can be characterized independently of language.[675]

The constitutive model originates in the work of Hamann, Herder, and Humboldt, and Taylor tells us the constitutive approach

> gives us a picture of language as making possible new purposes, new levels of behavior, new meanings, and hence as not explicable within the framework picture of human life conceived without language.[676]

Taylor thinks there are some doubts about Heidegger's commitment to the constitutive view in his early work, but he says Heidegger's later views on language 'stand squarely within this tradition.'[677] And Taylor aims to indicate the inadequacies of the enframing theory via a reading of the constitutive tradition and Heidegger's place within it.

Taylor begins his essay by explicating a debate between Condillac and Herder over the alleged origin of language from our pre-linguistic purposive activities. Condillac offers a 'just so' story of how language might have developed between two children in a desert by transitioning from the mere emission of animal cries to the use of words with meaning. The transition, for Condillac, occurs when an instituted sign (words) replaces a natural sign (animal cries). What changes with the instituted sign is that we have represented a phenomenon such that we can now use the representation to explicitly focus on and manipulate the phenomenon. The transition from a natural to an instituted sign provides us with a conscious overview of our situation and thereby puts us in control of it in a way that we previously were not. But on Condillac's account, language is itself understood in terms of certain elements – ideas, signs, and their associations – that preceded language's arising. This, Taylor says, means 'the theory establishes maximum possible continuity between before and after,' and he surmises 'that it is precisely this continuity which gives the theory its seeming clarity and explanatory power: language is robbed of its mysterious character, is related to elements that seem unproblematic.'[678]

Herder begins with the thought that language is itself a distinct type of awareness that he calls 'reflective.' He then claims that Condillac's theory presupposes the very intelligibility of those ideas and signs that his theory of meaningful language is intended to explain. Herder's criticism rests on the very same the distinction Carman makes

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[674] *PLT* 187
[675] Taylor, Charles, 'Heidegger on Language' in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Dreyfus and Wrathall (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005) p.435
[676] Taylor, p.435-6
[677] Taylor, p.431
[678] Taylor, p.435

between meaningful practical understanding and discursive interpretation, and Taylor spells this distinction out nicely when he writes:

> Pre-linguistic beings can react to the things which surround them. But language enables them to grasp something *as* what it is... [Here the] basic idea seems to be that while a pre-linguistic animal can learn to respond to some object appropriately in the light of its purpose, only the being with language can identify the object as of a certain kind, can, as we might put it, attribute such and such a property to it. An animal, in other terms, can learn to give the right response to an object – fleeing a predator, say, or going after food – where 'rightness' means 'appropriating to its (non-linguistic) purpose.' But language use involves another kind of rightness. Using the right word involves identifying an object as having the properties that justify using that word. We can't give an account of this rightness in terms of extra-linguistic purpose. Rightness is here irreducible to success in some extra-linguistic task.[679]

For Herder the shift from animal understanding to linguistic expression amounts to a transition from purposive activity to a new reflective plane that Taylor calls the 'semantic dimension.'[680] The defining feature of the semantic dimension is discursive normativity that is not reducible to goal-directed activity. In Taylor's terms: 'To move from non-linguistic to linguistic agency is to move to a world in which a new kind of issue is at play, a right use of signs which is not reducible to task-rightness.'[681] And according to Herder, Condillac's continuity thesis completely misses the discursive normativity of the semantic dimension that swings free from our purposive activities and makes the intelligibility of signs, ideas, and their associations possible.

The discursive normativity that enables us to identify entities *as* entities through our meaningful use of signs is, as we have seen, based on communication. 'The first, and inescapable locus of language,' Taylor tells us, 'is in exchange between interlocutors.'[682] This exchange, for Taylor, 'creates what one might call a public space, or a common vantage point from which we survey the world together... It serves to found public space, that is, to place certain matters before *us*.'[683] The foundation of this public space

> enables us to relate to things in new ways, e.g. as loci of features, and to have new emotions, and goals, and relationships, as well as being responsive to issues of strong value. We might say: language transforms our world, using the last word in a clearly Heidegger-derived sense. That is, we are talking not of the cosmos out there, which preceded us and is indifferent to us, but of the world of involvements, including all the things they incorporate in their meaning for us.[684]

As an example of the new phenomena language makes possible, Taylor says 'gregarious apes may have (what we call) a "dominant male", but only language beings can distinguish between leader, king, president, and the like.'[685] Similarly, 'linguistic beings are capable of new feelings that affectively reflect their richer sense of the world: not just anger, but indignation; not just desire, but love and admiration.'[686] However the new phenomena that language 'brings into being' are not restricted to 'crucially human

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[679] Taylor, p.435
[680] Taylor, p.435
[681] Taylor, p.436
[682] Taylor, p.440
[683] Taylor p.259 (1985)
[684] Taylor, p.438
[685] Taylor, p.437
[686] Taylor, p.437

feelings, activities, [and] relations.'[687] For even in the case of the description of physical objects or what Hobbes, Locke, and Condillac take as the content of our pre-linguistic activity, 'language opens us out to the domain of meaning it encodes.'[688] Specifically:

> What descriptive speech encodes is our attribution of properties to things. But possessing this descriptive language is the condition of our being sensitive to the issues of irreducible rightness which must be guiding us if we are really to be attributing properties.[689]

This, on Taylor's account, does not commit Heidegger to a version of linguistic idealism which denies the *existence* of language-independent entities – 'manifesting through the symbol,' he says, 'involves an element of creation, the making, one might say, of the medium in which reality can for the first time *appear*' – but it does rule out the possibility of grounding the meaning of signs in some prior, non-semantic significance since 'the expression makes possible its own content.'[690] And Taylor illustrates the extent to which the discursive normativity enabling our meaningful use of signs undermines any attempt to ground language in a supposed non-semantic significance through a reading of the 'anti-humanism' in Heidegger's claim that 'it is language that first brings man about.'[691]

Heidegger, as you may recall, ends his 'Letter on Hummanism' with the assertion: 'language is at once the house of being and the home of human beings.'[692] Taylor thinks this statement gives language more than an instrumental status, and in fact suggests that it is essential to the clearing. Briefly, Heidegger takes Herder's notion of the reflection, which makes the semantic dimension sound a lot like a form of human consciousness, and turns it around such that language itself opens access to meaning and makes possible the distinctly human mode of being. As Taylor puts it:

> Language is seen as the condition of the human world being disclosed. The disclosure is not intrapsychic, but occurs in the space between humans; indeed, it helps to define the space that humans share.[693]

Heidegger's primary example of this phenomenon is, again, the Greek temple:

> It is the temple-work that first fits together and at the same time gathers around itself the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire the shape of destiny for human being. The all-governing expanse of this open relational context is the world of this historical people... [And through the temple-work,] tree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are.[694]

Here we see that the temple establishes the horizon for all meaningful Greek activity and determines *that* and *what* entities are for the Greeks. Taylor accordingly tells us that language opens up a clearing 'in which features are located, which is also a locus of strong goods, of objects of the specifically human emotions, of human relations.'[695] And he adds: 'it is only through the clearing that we have any idea of doing at all, that action is

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[687] Taylor, p.437
[688] Taylor, p.439
[689] Taylor, p.439
[690] Taylor, p.446, 439
[691] *PLT* 190
[692] *BW* 262
[693] Taylor, p.442
[694] *PLT* 41
[695] Taylor, p.448

in our repository.'[696] Put otherwise, our ability to engage in meaningful activities and interact with intelligible entities presupposes the disclosure of those activities and entities as meaningful and intelligible through language. Signs, Heidegger says, 'let what is ready-to-hand be encountered; more precisely, they let some context of it become accessible in such a way that our concernful dealings take on an orientation and hold it secure.'[697] Of course, if signs determine activities and entities as meaningful, then it is hard to see how activities and entities could determine the meaning of a sign. This, Taylor claims, 'is why [Herder] accused Condillac of begging the question.'[698] And it explains why Carman's account of discursive norms undercuts his commitment to the idea that the (alleged) meaningful disclosure of entities achieved in our practices (supposedly) undergirds our meaningful use of signs.

On Taylor's constitutive interpretation of Heidegger, in sum, words do not work in the context of *meaningful* activity, but rather work by making a context of activity *meaningful*. This, in Carman's vocabulary, means that the discursive norms established through the collective recognition and repetition of a given sign in a specific situation allow us to make sense of that situation *as* a situation.[699] Take, for example, Carman's invocation of Heidegger's turn signal:

> Consider what it is that allows signs to function interpretively as they do. For the turn signal to succeed in signaling a turn, we must already have a shared understanding not just of the equipmental context of cars, streets, and traffic, or of purposive acts such as driving, turning and crossing the street. We must also know how to respond to and deal with appropriate and meaningful interpretive gestures themselves appropriately and meaningfully.[700]

In this passage, Carman suggests that we must *already* have a shared understanding of *both* a purposive activity and the discursive norms that render that activity intelligible in order for a specific sign to function. But it is *only* through (or because of) the discursive norms that render a given activity *intelligible* via a specific set of signs that we have a shared *understanding* of a specific purposive activity, and therefore it makes no sense to speak of having a shared understanding of a purposive activity *prior* to the functioning of a sign. As Heidegger puts it: 'It is not so much that we see the objects and things but rather first talk about them. To put it more precisely: we do not say what we see, but rather the reverse, we see what *one says* about things.'[701] This, for Taylor, means 'expression is no longer simply inert... [Instead] expression must be seen as creative, language opens us out to the doming of meaning it encodes.'[702]

Limits of the Constitutive Approach

The fact that, on the constitutive view, language 'makes possible its own content' and 'helps define the space that humans share' clearly suggests that words work as world-founding works of art.[703] In the following section I will show how, through formal indications and poetic projections, 'language alone brings what is, as something that is,

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[696] Taylor, p.444
[697] *BT* 108-9/78
[698] Taylor, p.435
[699] See Carman, p.12
[700] Carman, p.235
[701] *HCT* 56
[702] Taylor, p.439
[703] Taylor 439, 442

into the open for the first time.'[704] But in this section I consider an objection to the constitutive view that I alluded to in my previous discussion of propositional truth: i.e., that Heidegger's characterization of propositional truth as 'being-uncovering' absurdly implies that propositions constitute the very disclosure of entities through which their truth is to be assessed. Ernst Tugendhat, Cristina Lafont, and William Smith develop this criticism mostly in the context of *Being and Time*. So after summarizing their position, I apply it to Heidegger's later work by illustrating the extent to which the constitutive view appears to rule out the possibility of words working as world-explicating works of art. Finally, and in the subsequent section, I state that the origin and eventual operation of propositional truth is best taken as the determination of an otherwise indeterminate sign through the filling of an empty indication or projection.

Heidegger, according to Tugenhat, commits a *non sequitur* in *Being and Time* when he treats the disclosedness that makes propositional truth possible as the most basic concept of truth – 'From the fact that there are no angles without lines', so the objection goes, 'it does not follow that lines are original angles.'[705] – and Tugendhat wonders what right Heidegger has to use the term *truth* to denote a necessary condition for the truth of propositions?[706] Similarly, Cristina Lafont says Heidegger conflates the definition of truth as correspondence with the availability of evidence that serves as the criterion for the ascertainment of truth. Yet Lafont asserts: 'Just as evidence and truth cannot be identified with one another, and just as evidence cannot count as a definition of truth, it is equally impossible for the condition of possibility of evidence to be identified with truth.'[707] And like Tugendhat, Lafont asks: 'What justification and what significance does it have that Heidegger chooses "truth," of all words, to designate this other phenomenon [of unconcealment]?'[708] Lastly, William Smith writes: 'Though clearly prior and necessary for the traditional conception of propositional truth, how can these ontological conditions ('uncovering', 'disclosedness') be rightly understood as *truth* themselves?'[709] Whilst Tugendhat, Lafont, and Smith all question the validity of Heidegger's leap from a condition of possibility for propositional truth to the most primordial phenomenon of truth, the weightier objection behind their collective 'What right?' contention is that Heidegger's appeal to uncovering and disclosedness ignores what Tugendhat calls 'the specific sense of truth': namely, that truth is not simply a case of uncovering entities and aspects of the world, but a case of uncovering them *as they are in themselves*. Truth, in other words, is normative (since it is some evaluative act or judgment that is said to be true of the world) and bivalent (whatever is true could also have been false), but Tugendhat claims that treating truth as uncovering renders falsehood unintelligible, for false propositions as well as true ones can be said to uncover entities and aspects of the world, though precisely ***not*** *as they are in themselves*.[710] And if, as Tugendhat maintains, Heidegger's account of truth fails to distinguish false uncovering from true uncovering, then it can hardly count as a convincing account of truth. Thus, Tugendhat concludes by saying:

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[704] *PLT* 71

[705] This is Daniel Dahlstrom's gloss on Tugendhat's objection. See Daniel Dahlstrom *Heidegger's Concept of Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) p.399

[706] Tugendhat, p.228

[707] Lafont, Cristina, *Heidegger, Language and World-disclosure* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) p.120

[708] Lafont, p.116

[709] Smith, William, 'Why Tudgendhat's Critique of Heidegger's Conception of Truth Remains a Critical Problem' in *Inquiry* 50 (2007) p.160

[710] Tugendhat, p.232

'Instead of broadening the specific concept of truth, Heidegger simply gave the word truth another meaning.'[711]

Tugendhat's interpretation of Heidegger, along with the defense it receives in the work of Lafont and Smith, rests on a particular reading of a key passage (partially quoted above) in which Heidegger defines propositional truth as being-uncovering:

> 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' in its uncoveredness. The *being-true* (*truth*) of the assertion must be understood as *being-uncovering*. Therefore, truth has by no means the structure of an agreement between knowing and the object in the sense of a likening of one entity (the subject) to another (the object).[712]

For the purposes of his critique, Tugendhat breaks this passage down into three distinct definitions of propositional truth:

> 1. The assertion is true when it so indicates or discloses the state of affairs just as it is in itself.
> 2. The assertion is true means: it discloses the state of affairs in itself.
> 3. The assertion is true means: it uncovers the state of affairs.[713]

Finally, Tugendhat takes the sentence on the subject-object relation to highlight the fact that the truth of an assertion is not some agreement between a mental representation and its object, but rather that an assertion is true by uncovering or pointing out inner-worldly entities and thereby allowing them to stand as a measure of appraisal.[714] On Tugendhat's account, Heidegger shifts from the traditional definition of propositional truth (with its critical 'just as' and 'in itself' clauses) in sentence (1) to a redefinition of propositional truth as uncovering *simpliciter* in sentence (3).[715] The validity of this shift, according to Tugendhat, depends on a certain ambiguity in the word 'uncovering'. Broadly speaking, 'uncovering' means 'pointing out' in general, and Tugendhat claims that 'in this sense every assertion uncovers, the false just as well as the true.'[716] In the narrow sense, 'uncovering' is a unique feature that contrasts with the false assertions that 'cover up'. And it is only in the narrow sense, Tugendhat contends, that Heidegger's redefinition of propositional truth as 'uncovering' becomes a convincing account of truth; for on the narrow reading Heidegger needs neither the 'just as' nor 'in itself' clause associated with propositional truth because *only* true assertions uncover entities and aspects of the world *as they are in themselves*.[717] Heidegger, however, seems to endorse the broad sense of uncovering when he writes that, in false assertions, 'entities have not been completely hidden; they are precisely the sort of thing that has been uncovered, but at the same time they have been disguised.'[718] This, for Tugendhat, means 'the covering up of false assertions does not exclude a certain uncovering.'[719] And insofar as false statements uncover entities and aspects of the world, truth as 'being-uncovering' cannot account for the necessary difference between true and false assertions. At this point, 'the specific sense of truth is, as it were, submerged in the notion of uncovering as *apophansis* [i.e.

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[711] Tugendhat, p.236
[712] *BT* 261/217
[713] Tugendhat, p.230-1
[714] Tugendhat, p.231
[715] Tugendhat, p.231
[716] Tugendhat, p.232
[717] Tugendhat, p.232
[718] *BT* 264/222
[719] Tugendhat, p.232

pointing out in general],' and Tugendhat brings his discussion of Heidegger's account of propositional truth to a close by suggesting 'it is simply not possible to get around the supplement "as it is itself" in the course of characterizing the true assertion.'[720]

Although Tugendhat sees Heidegger's redefinition of propositional truth in terms of 'uncovering' as effacing the normativity and bivalence we traditionally associate with truth, Tugendhat also thinks this objection applies to Heidegger's account of *aletheia* insofar as Heidegger extends the concept of truth to cover Dasein's disclosedness itself.[721] This extension takes place when Heidegger writes: 'What makes the very uncovering [of assertions] possible must necessarily be called "true" in a still more primordial sense.'[722] And it is important for Tugendhat's interpretation that Heidegger does not see himself as dismissing or supplanting the traditional notion of truth as correctness. As Heidegger puts it: 'In proposing our "definition of 'truth"' we have not *shaken off* the tradition, but we have *appropriated* it primordially.'[723] Tugendhat identifies truth in the more primordial sense with the disclosure of entities achieved in our practical activities, and he recognizes that Heidegger treats our disclosedness as the foundation upon which assertions are able to 'uncover' inner-worldly entities.[724] Yet Tugendhat sees Heidegger using the same notion of truth for uncovering and disclosedness – 'Heidegger handles propositional truth and comes to the conclusion that it must be understood as 'uncovering' (or – as Heidegger says later – unconcealment). This finding then allows him to extend the concept of truth to all that can be uncovered and to any disclosure'[725] – and once the concept of truth has been applied to disclosedness, Tugendhat wonders to what extent the world-disclosure achieved in our practical activities (that serve as a condition of possibility for propositional truth) can themselves be characterized as true or correct? Tugendhat's answer is clear: 'That [Heidegger] calls disclosure in and of itself truth leads to the result that [disclosure] is precisely not related to the truth but is protected from the question of truth.'[726] And Tugendhat says: 'It becomes pointless to inquire into the truth of this [world-disclosure] since that would only mean inquiring into the truth of a truth.'[727] Tugendhat's worry is that whilst world-disclosures retain the name 'truth', they actually have no access to an independent standard that could determine the correctness of a given disclosure. Lafont echoes this criticism when she writes:

> The world-disclosure that is contained in a specific language becomes the final authority for judging the intra-worldly knowledge that this world-disclosure has made possible in the first place; in this sense, it comes to be regarded as "the essence of truth." But this world-disclosure it itself not open to revision on the basis of intra-worldly experience.[728]

Similarly, Smith summarizes Tugendhat's main objections like this:

> Because being-uncovering and disclosednesss have no recourse to a normative criterion that would account for their ability to differentiate between the success and failure of particular 'uncoverings' or 'disclosures', they are inadequate as definitions of truth: they

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[720] Tugendhat, p.232-3
[721] Tugendhat, p.235
[722] *BT* 263/220
[723] *BT* 262/220
[724] Tugendhat, p.235-6
[725] Tugendhat, p.235
[726] Tugendhat, p.238
[727] Tugendhat, p.237
[728] Lafont, p.7

> lack the critical dimension or 'specific sense' that is absolutely necessary for them to be understood as truth.[729]

With these criticisms in place, Tugendhat claims 'Heidegger tied the philosophy of subjectivity down to the dogmatism of self-certainty.'[730] Lafont argues that if world-disclosures are not open to revision, then they 'cannot be understood as co-determining our process of learning.'[731] And Smith sums all of this up nicely when he says 'Heidegger's work as a whole lacks any appeal to critical consciousness.'[732]

On the pragmatic interpretation of *Being and Time*, the claim that Heidegger redefines the traditional conception of propositional truth – with its key 'just as' and 'in itself' clauses – is unfounded insofar as Heidegger is concerned to show that assertions can indicate or fail to indicate entities if and only if entities are disclosed as the entities that they are via the primordial truth of our practical activities.[733] Yet on a constitutive reading of Heidegger's *magnum opus* that brings it in line with his later work, Heidegger (unwittingly) replaces the unconcealment of entities allegedly achieved in our practical activities with the disclosure attained through discourse and language.[734] And if discourse and language have world-disclosing status, then Tugendhat's objection that the term 'truth' cannot be applied to world-disclosing phenomena can be leveled at both *Being and Time* and Heidegger's constitutive writings as a whole. However to see what this criticism amounts to in light of Heidegger's explicitly constitutive work, we need to return to the initial distinction I made between world-explicating and world-founding works of art.

World-explicating works of art explicitly present entities and aspects of an historical world already implicitly opened up. And insofar as world-explicating works of art explicitly present a world implicitly disclosed, the truth that sets itself to work in these works is concerned with *facts* (ontic truth). In contrast, world-founding works of art open up the world of a distinct historical community and thereby create the context through which facts about entities and aspects of the world are present in the first place. And insofar as world-founding works of art create the context in which facts are initially present, the truth that sets itself to work in these works of art is concerned with *being* (ontological truth). The distinction between world-explicating and world-founding works of art is present in OWA to the extent that the Van Gogh painting is 'the reproduction of the [peasant shoe's] general essence,' whereas the Greek temple 'portrays nothing' and 'first gives to things their look and to men their outlook on themselves.'[735] But if, as Heidegger claims, all works of art are poetic projections of language, and if, as the constitutivist's maintain, language makes possible its own content, then no sense can be made of the Van Gogh painting *reproducing* the peasant shoe's general essence or of words working as world-explicating works of art in general. Put differently, if there is no standard against which to test the truth of a given work of art, then we cannot speak of them as being true or false in a traditional way. And following Lafont, and Smith, we might say that the 'being-uncovering' of a particular work of art binds us to a particular world-disclosure that is 'itself not open to revision on the basis of intra-worldly experience,' and therefore 'lacks any appeal to critical consciousness.'[736]

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[729] Smith, p.163
[730] Tugendhat, p.240
[731] Lafont, p.7
[732] Smith, p.163
[733] See Wrathall (1999)
[734] Lafont (2000) offers just such a reading. And I've suggested that Carman's (2003) account of discourse commits him to a similar interpretation.
[735] *PLT* 36, 41, 42
[736] Lafont, p.7, Smith, p.163

As indicated in chapter three, the releasement that opens us to the mystery of being suggests that it is perfectly possible to have a 'critical consciousness' and 'revise a given world-disclosure' without positing the existence of an independent standard against which world-disclosures must be tested. Therefore, in the remainder of this chapter I will focus my attention on the way thinkers and poets transform our world through formal indications and poetic projections, defend the constitutive view of language by showing how propositional truth and world-explicating works are art are possible on constitutive terms, and conclude with a few words about art as response-ability.

Words as World-Founding Works of Art

Words, on the constitutive view that I endorse, work by opening up a meaningful human world: that is, they constitute what Taylor various called the semantic dimension or clearing in which the activities and entities of a particular historical world are disclosed *as* the activities and entities that they are. Crucially, the clearing is a public or common space that is set up between interlocutors through the consistent use of signs in similar but distinct contexts such that signs fix the meaning of entities that show up in a given context.[737] The consistent use of signs in similar but distinct contexts amount to the discursive norms that regulate our meaningful use of words and the way entities and aspects of the world are presented with them. If, however, the consistent use of signs constitutes the discursive norms that regulate our meaningful use of words and the way the world shows up with them, then breaking with that consistency or simply introducing an unregulated sign through the creative use of language effectively interrupts our settled discursive engagement with the world and therefore frees us to present the world in alternative ways. And via an analysis of formal indications and poetic projections we will come to see how thinkers and poets alter our discursive norms and thereby direct us to overlooked phenomena or new potentialities-for-being.

Heidegger introduced his notion of 'formal indication' as a potential method for overcoming what he saw as the current philosophical vocabulary's inability to articulate lived experience or our concrete way of life.[738] Specifically, Heidegger was worried that the tendency of assertions or definite descriptions to focus on discrete entities and thus 'dim down' the worldly context in which they are presented hindered his ability to offer a phenomenological account of the understanding of being implicit in our everyday existence. 'A phenomenological concept,' as he puts it in *Being and Time*, 'may degenerate if communicated in the form of an assertion.'[739] Accordingly, Heidegger characterizes formal indications as 'empty' or 'indeterminate' significations that are designed to point us back to what he calls 'the mode *in which the object is originally accessible*.'[740] The meaningful context of our practical activities is the way objects are initially accessible for the early Heidegger. And whilst there is no room for suggesting that formal indications provide us with direct access to a pre-linguistic but nevertheless meaningful world on a constitutive view of language, it is worth looking at how formal indications function by prohibiting any immediate or definite description of a phenomenon and thus have the potential to transform our current understanding.

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737 Again, in Heidegger's words: 'It is not so much that we see the objects and things but rather first talk about them. To put it more precisely: we do not say what we see, but rather the reverse, we see what *one says* about things.' See *HCT* 56

738 See *PIA* 22-8, *PRL* 38-45

739 *BT* 60-1/36

740 *PIA* 17

In *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, Heidegger says formal indications have a 'prohibitive (restraining, defensive) character.'[741] Likewise, in his lectures on the phenomenology of religious life Heidegger claims that formal indications are intended as a 'warning' that is meant to 'hold in abeyance' the way we have come to identify entities and aspects of the world.[742] In fact,

> the formal indication prevents every drifting off into autonomous, blind, dogmatic attempts to fix the categorical sense, attempts which would be detached from the presupposition of the interpretation, from its preconception, its nexus, and its time, and which would then purport to determine an objectivity in itself, apart from a thorough discussion of its ontotlogical sense.[743]

The idea here is that formal indications stop us from fixating upon a predetermined theoretical conception of a given phenomenon and instead leave us to grasp it in its holistic context. Again, formal indications do this through their empty or indeterminate character such that we are forced to question and search for their meaning. Heidegger even says that the best work in phenomenology 'serves to implicate the reader into pressing further and working through the matters under investigation.'[744] The fact that formal indications stop us in our tracks and then push us to look elsewhere speaks to their transformative potential. Formal indications, Heidegger says, are a beginning, a 'method of approach.'[745] And he even claims they have a crucial role in the destruction of the history of metaphysics:

> Concretely, the formal indication is to be clarified partially where it comes into play in each case but more fundamentally in connection with phenomenological destruction as a basic element of the interpretation of the history of the spirit from a phenomenological standpoint.[746]

Of course, formal indications cannot transform our understanding on their own – 'they can only ever address the challenge of...a transformation to us'[747] – but they are clearly intended to disrupt the norms governing our current use of words in order to change the way we relate to the world through language.

Heidegger, of course, was not simply concerned to articulate the function of formal indications; he also explicitly put the concept to use in much of his early work. In *Being and Time*, for example, he claims that his analysis of Dasein formally indicates,[748] and it is fairly obvious that his neologisms, like *Befindlichkeit*, along with his own unusual use of terms, such as *Wahrheit*, are attempts to interrupt our usual assumptions and direct us toward something we failed to notice with our current vocabulary: *Befindlichkeit* for the fact that we always find ourselves situated in and disposed to the world in a particular way, and *Wahrheit* for unconcealment. Although it is not easy to see how Heidegger's entire analysis of Dasein formally indicates, Denis McManus perspicaciously asks us to focus on our initial experience of reading Heidegger's *magnum opus*. He writes:

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741 *PIA* 105
742 *PRL* 44
743 *PIA* 105
744 *HCT* 26
745 *PIA* 100
746 *PIA* 105
747 FCM 296
748 *BT* 152/117

> If formal indications are to destabilize our 'self-satisfaction and adhering to what is idly spoken of' and to provoke us into 'looking and seeing,' they must positively *resist* assimilation to 'results' – to 'definite bits of knowledge' – about the (actually indeterminate) subject matter of the words in which we have come to 'coast along.' There clearly is a sense in which we experience such 'resistance' when we open *Being and Time*.[749]

McManus is quick to point out that *Being and Time* doesn't simply resist assimilation into results; it also indicates: that is, Heidegger identifies Dasein 'indicatively or indexically as "us"' and offers a 'description of *our* everyday life' such that 'we find ourselves trying to see to what it might be in our lives [at which] these descriptions are pointing.'[750] In fact, McManus concludes, 'eliciting this kind of turning back to our experience may actually be the point of the exercise.'[751] On Heidegger's use of individual formal indicators, Daniel Dahlstrom says,

> for the most part, [they] are not neologisms or technical concepts. Instead, they are drawn from the normal use of language as it informs a way of life. Yet, precisely because of this origin, he shapes these concepts into 'formal indications' as a warning that genuine access to what they point to is not at all common. Such access requires a certain indirection, reversal, and even transformation of usage, one that runs counter to the customary 'plunge' into the usual ways of considering things, where the talk is less than explicit and the interpretation remains implicit.[752]

Both of these readings are consistent with Heidegger's claim that formal indications prevent us from fixing on a predetermined concept by violating discursive norms such that their emptiness shows us something we otherwise overlooked: namely, our lived experience or genuine way of life. But McManus' and Dahlstrom's interpretations also speak to a lacuna in Heidegger's account of formal indications: i.e., the early Heidegger's unflagging attempt to return us to the meaningful world we find ourselves in made it difficult for him to see the way empty or indeterminate signs open us up to alternate worlds. So to see how the creative use of language establishes new horizons of disclosure we need to turn to Heidegger's later account of poetic projections.

'Poetic projection,' Heidegger writes, 'never takes its gift from the ordinary and traditional' and 'it always contains the abundance of the unfamiliar and extraordinary, which means that it contains strife with the familiar and ordinary.'[753] Poetic projections are not confined to poesy – the arrangement of words in verse that we generally associate with poems – but rather refer to all projective sayings 'which, in preparing the sayable, simultaneously brings the unsayable as such into a world.'[754] Like the indeterminacy of formal indications, poetic projections have an 'inexhaustible range' of 'complex spaces of semantic vibration' such that they cannot be reduced to definitions.[755] And in an essay entitled 'Language in the Poem', Heidegger tells us that 'we shall hear nothing of what the poem says so long as we bring to it only this or that dull sense of unambiguous meaning.'[756] The vibration of projective sayings implies that they, too, break from normal usage and thus *both* prohibit immediate description *and* have the potential to transform

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[749] McManus, Denis, 'The Provocation to Look and See' *in Wittgenstein and Heidegger*, ed. Egan, Reynolds & Wendland (London: Routledge, 2003) p.60
[750] McManus, p.60
[751] McManus, p.61
[752] Dahlstrom, p.249
[753] *PLT* 73, 74
[754] *PLT* 71
[755] *GA* 52: 15
[756] *OWL* 192

our understanding. But in his later work, Heidegger is less interested in how specific words prohibit and transform and more concerned to show us what prohibition entails and how change happens through readings of Friedrich Hölderlin and Stefan George.

Hölderlin's words for prohibition are 'festival' and 'holiday,' and Heidegger tells us that celebrating a festival or holiday means 'setting oneself outside of everyday activity, the cessation of work.'[757] Heidegger picks up on Hölderlin's invocation of Dionysus as an indication of a festival's disorienting effect in which we 'step into the wonder that around us the world worlds at all.'[758] But more importantly, Heidegger calls attention to the relation between 'holiday' and 'holy-day,' and then tries to explain how being jarred out of the ordinary puts poets in a position to 'found the holy.'[759] The holy is the 'abode' or 'ether...in which alone gods are gods.'[760] Gods are gods when they have authority or hold sway over humanity, and by founding the holy the poet 'stakes out a site' from which a 'default' or 'absent' god can return to determining the essence of all that shows up in a particular historical world.[761] Poets establish this site by finding the right name for the gods such that they may appear, and when the word is lacking for a divine authority the poets 'sing to the trace of the absent gods.'[762] The exact content of Heidegger's Hölderlin-inspired talk of poets founding the holy by singing or finding a name for a defaulted god is debatable,[763] and in a moment I will offer some examples to elucidate the phenomenon I think Heidegger is getting at, but first we need a sense of what it means for the right name to bring a being into being.

Heidegger's most detailed analysis of names bringing a being into being takes place in a set of essays that offer an interpretation of Stefan George's poem 'Words'. The poem reads:

> Wonder or dream from distant land
> I carried to my country's strand
>
> And waited till the twilit norn
> Had found the name within her bourn–
>
> Then I could grasp it close and strong
> It blooms and shines now the front along...
>
> Once I returned from happy sail,
> I had a prize so rich and frail,
>
> She sought for long and tidings told:
> 'No likes of this these depths enfold.'
>
> And straight it vanished from my hand,
> The treasure never graced my land...
>
> So I renounced and sadly see:
> Where the word breaks off no thing may be.[764]

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[757] *GA* 52: 64
[758] *GA* 52: 64
[759] *Ister* p.138
[760] *PLT* 92
[761] *GA* 4: 148
[762] *PLT* 92
[763] For different readings see Dreyfus (2006), Young (2001), Philipse (1998), Richardson (2013).
[764] Quoted in *OWL* 140

Heidegger begins his reading by asserting that we need to get a sense of what words, things, and being might be if we are to understand the final line: 'Where the word breaks off no thing may be.' Heidegger notes that the narrative takes place in a 'distant land' of 'wonder and dream' from which the poet is confidently returning with a treasure. Heidegger then says the poet does not want to keep the treasure to himself, but intends to portray it.

> In order to do this, [however], names are necessary. They are the words by which what already is and is believed to be is made so concrete and full of being that it henceforth shines and blooms and thus reigns as the beautiful everywhere in the land. The names are words that portray.[765]

On this reading, the poet holds an existent thing in his hand and simply needs to find a name for it, and this implies that 'names and words are like a staple supply coordinated with the thing and retroactively given to them for portrayal.'[766] Yet, Heidegger claims, this reading fails to capture the poet's disturbance insofar as

> what is disturbing is the fact that *with* the absence of the word, the treasure disappears. Thus, it is the word which first hold the treasure in its presence, indeed first fetches and brings it there and preserves it. Suddenly the word shows a different, a higher rule. It is no longer just a name-giving grasp reaching for what is present and already portrayed; it is not only a means of portraying what lies before us. On the contrary, the word first bestows presence, that is, being in which things appear.[767]

Here we see that the poet's task as well as the poet's relation to language differs markedly from what Heidegger thought he could achieve with formal indications. For whereas formal indications pointed us to allegedly existent but overlooked concrete phenomenon, the poet's use of language is an attempt to pluck an obscure treasure from a land of dreams. Put otherwise, Heidegger introduced and invoked formal indications to provide us with a genuine overview of our current existential situation, but Heidegger sees poetic projections as opening us up to the mystery of being. Of course, the fact that poetic projections are open to the mystery means that finding the right name to bring a being into being can be nothing like the accurate representation of reality, or even an the indeterminate direction of formal indications. Instead, finding the right name to bring a being into being is a matter of creating a discursive space in which that being may be. But this is hardly any clearer than Hölderlin's talk of poets founding the holy, so I will first follow Dreyfus' by identifying the holy with cultural paradigms and then I will offer two examples of poets creating a discursive space via poetic projections.

A cultural paradigm, for Dreyfus, 'collects the scattered practices of a group, unifies them into coherent possibilities for action, and holds them up to the people who can then act and relate to each other in terms of that exemplar.'[768] As an instance of a cultural paradigm, Dreyfus appeals to Clifford Geertz account of the Balinese cockfight:

> It provides a metasocial commentary upon the whole matter of assorting human beings into fixed hierarchical ranks and then organizing the major part of collective existence

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[765] *OWL* 144
[766] *OWL* 144
[767] *OWL* 144
[768] Dreyfus, 'Nihilism, Art, Technology, and Politics' p.354

> around that assortment. Its function, if you want to call it that, is interpretive: it is a Balinese reading of Balinese experience, a story they tell themselves about themselves.[769]

Dreyfus, following Geertz, is right to say that cultural paradigms provide an authoritative example that guides possible courses of action within a given society. But relying on Geertz's claim that cultural paradigms 'collect scattered practices' and 'hold them up to a people' fails to capture the radicality Heidegger sees in poetic projections that 'thrust up the unfamiliar and extraordinary and at the same time thrust down the ordinary and what we believe to be such.'[770] And to get a sense of the extent to which poets and thinkers thrust down the ordinary and thrust up the extra-ordinary we will take a *brief* look at the transition to liberal democracy in the Western world that was made possible (in part) by the writings of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau and then *quickly* examine the transition from Newtonian to Einsteinian mechanics in the natural science.

Hobbes' *Leviathan*, Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*, and Rousseau's *Social Contract* each in their own way help wrest the concept of freedom from its traditional Christian domain and install it in the political sphere such that liberal democracy became a real possibility for people in Britain, France, the United States, and the West in general. Although a proper account of this transition is obviously beyond the scope of this thesis, Hobbes' attempt to trace the origin of political institutions to a state of nature in which humans are free (to do whatever we need to do to survive) and equal (insofar as we are all equally subject to violent death) is perhaps in keeping with the Christian notion of free will (and original sin). But it was also seen as questioning divine authority, and it certainly gave the concept of freedom a distinctly political ring. Locke tames Hobbes' idea of freedom such that the logical conclusion to be drawn from his state of nature is not absolute government, but a form of representative democracy that respects the rights of individuals. Finally, Rousseau develops this idea to the point at which we can understand our freedom in terms of self-legislation and then extends this thought to the state such that if the state laws express our general will then we are free when we follow them. I take it as a given that each of the above texts functioned prohibitively and transformative upon their publication (and in many ways still do today). But more importantly, I take it that their innovative use of the concept of freedom did not point to something that was present in their respective societies, but actually created a discursive space that brought liberal democracy into being.

Whereas Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau presented us with an alternative horizon of disclosure through the innovative use of concept they inherited from the Christian tradition, Einstein transformed the world through the introduction of a new vocabulary. Of course, that vocabulary was not created *ex nihilo*. Instead, Einstein inherited the language of Newtonian mechanics that, for example, allows us to build a combustion engine or send shuttles to the moon. But Newton's language also fails to adequately describe the inner-workings of an atom or explain Mercury's perihelion. And it was only by recognizing such limits and then developing his theories of special and general relativity that Einstein and his successors were able to create new possibilities, such as nuclear power or a Mercury rover, for human beings. As Kuhn puts it, 'changes in the standards governing permissible problems, concepts, and explanations can transform science... I shall even suggest a sense in which they transform the world.'[771]

Returning to Heidegger's terminology we can say that, like the Greek temple, the work of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Einstein are examples of poetic projections that

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[769] Geertz, Clifford, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1973), p.448
[770] *PLT* 72-3
[771] Kuhn, p.106

open up a world and hold it abidingly in place. Specifically, the words of these thinkers work as world-founding works of art by 'founding the holy' or altering our current 'discursive space' such that we are capable of receiving a new 'god', 'cultural paradigm', or 'destining of being' through which entities and aspects of reality that were completely concealed could be revealed. It is, I think, hardly a stretch to say of the developments in liberal democracy and atomic physics that they 'fit together and at the same time gather around [themselves] the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire the shape and destiny for human being.'[772] Updating Heidegger, we could even assert: 'the all-governing expanse of this open relational context [of representative government and nuclear technology] is the world of [*our*] historical people.'[773] And by now it should be clear that truth sets itself to work in the work of art when poets and thinkers introduce new words or creatively use existing terms to transform our relation to the clearing and thus present us with new ways of being.

Truth and Explication

Still, two nagging issues remain: namely, if 'language alone brings what is, as something that is, into the open for the first time,'[774] then no sense can be made of our language corresponding or failing to correspond to reality. Similarly, if there is nothing for our language to correspond to, and if all art is language, then there is nothing outside of art that it could possibly explicate. We are, however, now in a position to see that poetic projections are not arbitrary. Specifically, Heidegger discussion of George's 'Words' illustrated the extent to which finding the right word is crucial to bringing a being into being. 'With the absence of the word,' Heidegger tells us, 'the treasure disappears,' but then he says 'it by no means disintegrates into nothingness. It remains a treasure.'[775] To say that it remains a treasure means that it remains mysterious; that we need to keep searching for the right word if the treasure is to grace our land. But once we have found the right word and brought a being into being, that word, insofar as consistency in usage is required for the word itself to be meaningful, is 'stapled' to the being it brought about. Put otherwise, the indeterminate meaning of a poetic projection opens up a discursive space in which we may bring a particular being into being, but that being can only be brought into being if the sign itself eventually comes to have its meaning fixed to the being it is bringing about. Take, for example, Locke's use of the word freedom. Insofar as he is breaking with traditional uses of the term in an attempt to attribute certain rights to human beings that they have otherwise lacked, the term remains ambiguous or indeterminate. With, however, enough explanation and use the meaning Locke intends by freedom will eventually be fixed to what are simultaneously becoming right-bearing human beings. Of course, once the meaning of freedom and right-bearing human beings have been fixed, it becomes perfectly possible to use the word freedom incorrectly in our everyday use by, say, calling an animal or an inanimate object 'free'. The identification of freedom with right-bearing human beings also enables us to take our freedom for granted, to forget its origin, and to use the word idly, and thus requires that we be (at least occasionally) explicitly reminded of precisely what freedom means. And all of this implies that a constitutivist can coherently speak of signs corresponding with reality and words working as world-explicating works of art.

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[772] *PLT* 41
[773] *PLT* 41
[774] *PLT* 72, 71
[775] *OWL* 146

Creativity as Response-ablity

Although I have done much to explain how truth happens, how words work, and how words work as works of art, the introduction of a new word or the innovative use of an old one by a poet or thinker is not sufficient for explaining how words work as works of art. For 'just as a work cannot be without being created but is essentially in need of creators, so what is created cannot itself come into being without those who preserve it.'[776] And this means 'in the work, truth is thrown toward the coming preservers, that is, toward an historical group of men.'[777] Translated into the language of *Being and Time*, the fact that artwork needs 'preservers' shows us that any successful presentation of an alternative potentiality-for-being by a poet or thinker requires that others recognize said potentiality as useful, valuable, or necessary and therefore be willing to support the institutions that sustain said potentiality. Locke's *Two Treatises*, for example, would not have made liberal democracy a genuine possibility had the American Founders failed to see value in his notion of life, liberty, and the protection of property. Similarly, Einstein's theory of special relativity would not have transformed the face of international relations if Oppenheimer, his colleagues, and the US Government did not see the strategic need for developing an atomic bomb. Taken together, these examples illustrate that artistic creativity is a form of response-ability to the wants and needs of others. But they also raise a serious question: namely, on what basis are we to evaluate and ultimately decide for or against adopting a new potentiality-for-being? Whilst I do not claim to have anything like a definitive answer to the aforementioned question, I will explain what is at stake and then sketch a potential way forward in my conclusion.

[776] *PLT* 64
[777] *PLT* 73

Conclusion

Characterizing freedom as a function of our ability to respond to the disparate demands other people place on us suggests that the value of an agent's action is bound up with the extent to which others see those actions as satisfying certain wants and needs. Put otherwise, the possible ways of life available to an agent in a particular culture depend on others recognizing those options as useful, valuable, or necessary and thus being willing to create and maintain the institutional structures needed to support them. For example, we can become mechanics or professors if others need their cars repaired or are looking for a university degree. But the satisfaction of any given desire requires the production and consumption of a vast array of inter-personal relations, distinct skill-sets, and material resources. And the mechanic or professor can only meet the needs and wants of others by adopting their particular role in, say, the broader auto-industry or system of higher education. Tracing the value of our actions to the disparate demands others place upon us implies that moral worth is rooted in our responsibility to others. But it also raises the specter of moral relativism – different cultural and historical communities tend to recognize different ways of life as worthwhile – and its corollary: that the good in any given community is simply an expression of power-relations between a certain set of people. With that said, this thesis comes to a close by pointing in the direction of future research: namely, exploring the extent to which ethical relations between humans originates in the responsibility we have for one another and suggesting that the work of Emmanuel Levinas, Alistair MacIntyre, and Isaiah Berlin show that the goods pursued in various human communities is not purely a function of power-relations within those communities, but a response to the disparate wants and needs human beings have *as* human beings.

Whilst the writings of Martin Heidegger offered an ideal sounding board for the questions at play in my thesis, Heidegger (notoriously) asserted that his life-long work on the meaning of being had nothing to do with moral philosophy, and the ethical implications of Heidegger's claim that human beings are essentially for the sake of others were only really developed in the writings of one of Heidegger's most famous students and critics: Emmanuel Levinas.[778] Levinas, unlike Heidegger, thought that ethics was first philosophy: i.e., Levinas argued that an *a priori* receptivity between self and other was a necessary condition, not only for concrete interactions between human beings, but also our ability to raise Heidegger's question of the meaning of being. Much of Levinas' work is dedicated to describing what he calls the 'ethical relation' between self and other. In the ethical relation, the self is characterized as both a host and hostage to the other: a 'host' because the self must welcome the other if there is to be any relation between the two, but 'hostage' because the self is constituted by meeting the demands that the other places upon her. This, for Levinas, means that the ethical relation is one of responsibility – that is, the *ability* of the self to *respond* to the wants and needs of others – and Levinas goes so far as to call the ethical relation one of infinite responsibility, for the wants and needs of others are inexhaustible. Levinas' appeal to infinite responsibility and what he labels the existence of a 'third man' (who interrupts the ethical relation between self and other by placing competing demands on the self) introduces the question of justice: i.e., that the self, with her finite set of resources, must decide how to distribute those resources in the face of the infinite demands that others place upon her. Unfortunately, and although Levinas' work examines the necessary conditions for the existence of any ethical relationship between human beings whatsoever, he never develops a determinate

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[778] The summary I offer of Levinas is drawn from: Levinas, Emmanuel, *Totality and Infinity*, tr. Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquensne University Press, 1969)

moral or political theory to explain how or in what way the self should divide her resources in the face of infinite responsibility. Perhaps more troubling, Levinas' critics and sympathizers alike worry that his characterization of the ethical relation as an infinite but indeterminate responsibility of the self to others opens the door to a form of moral relativism in which the power relations in given communities actually determine the various demands others are able to express and indeed the various ways the self is able to meet those demands. In short, and insofar as Levinas is incapable of deducing a determinate moral philosophy from his account of the ethical relation, he is liable to be lumped into a category with Thrasymachus, who, as a character in Plato's *Republic*, asserts that 'justice is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger.'[779]

Although I appreciate the ambitious nature of this project, the goal of my future research is to deduce a determinate moral theory from Levinas' conception of the ethical relation, and thereby avoid the identification of his work with relativism, whilst nevertheless acknowledging the role power relations play in the goods pursued in a given community. I plan to do so, not by restricting myself to Levinas' texts, but by drawing on and elucidating the relations between a distinctive school and a prominent theme in Anglo-American philosophy: namely, virtue ethics and value pluralism. The connection I see between Levinas and the writing of virtue ethicists is based on the way both treat ethics as the art of inter-personal relations designed to meet wants and needs that human beings have *as* human beings. Taking inspiration from Aristotle's discussion of *eudemonia* in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Alastair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* argues that humans flourish when the goods inherent in their nature are cultivated, expressed, or satisfied in their actions.[780] And like Levinas, MacIntyre's *Dependant Rational Animals* claims that ethical concerns originate in the self-other relation and indeed that our goods are achieved in certain inter-subjective relationships and the communities that sustain them.[781] Linking Levinas' conception of responsibility with MacIntyre's virtue ethics helps explain how the responsible self should divide her resources in light of the disparate demands that others place upon her: i.e., that her actions should be directed towards the fulfillment or achievement of the goods inherent in our nature. But this doesn't entirely solve the problem of developing a determinate criterion to guide the actions of an agent; for both Levinas and MacIntyre recognize that there are multiple and incommensurable human goods that agents could take into account. Levinas, in dialogue with Jacques Derrida, and in an allusion to Kierkegaard, calls the moment of practical decision making one of madness. In *After Virtue*, MacIntyre articulates the incommensurability of human goods by arguing that there are no neutral standards available by appeal to which a rational agent could come up with the ultimate conclusions of moral philosophy. And in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, MacIntyre contends that moral disputes proceed from incompatible premises that are embodied in rival traditions of practical rationality.[782] From the standpoint of a given agent, the incommensurability of human goods need not cripple her ability to act, because the distinct traditions of practical rationality provide their members with a determinate criterion for action. Still, tension between rival traditions is a key component of MacIntyre's moral view, and a form of moral relativism is implicit in his work insofar as he sees disparate goods as expressed or embedded in specific, historically grounded social practices. MacIntyre defends his writings against the threat of relativism exemplified in Thrasymachus' statement above by: (a) asserting that the conflicts between rival traditions can be called into question or overcome by

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[779] Plato, *Republic*, tr. Grube (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993) 338c
[780] MacIntyre, Alastair, *After Virtue*, (London: Duckworth, 1985)
[781] MacIntryre, Alastair, *Dependent Rational Animals*, (Chicago: Open Court, 1999)
[782] MacIntryre, Alastair, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1988)

highlighting internal inconsistencies in a particular practice; (b) appealing to imaginative reconstructions or empathy when it comes to solving moral dilemmas in other traditions for which an analogous problem has already been solved in one's own culture; and (c) invoking certain epistemic crises in the views of others in order to put them on a solid footing. Yet MacIntyre's response to the charge of relativism in his own case brings him dangerously close to contradicting his earlier endorsement of incommensurability and his rejection of a universally valid form of practical reasoning.

In place of MacIntyre's own response, I hope to show that both his and Levinas' ends would be better served by aligning their positions with the value pluralism of Isaiah Berlin.[783] Berlin, like other value-pluralists, believes that there is an objective set of human goods, but that these goods are incommensurable insofar as they cannot be reduced to something they have in common (for if they had something in common, they would simply be plural values that feed into a single good). The existence of incommensurable human goods, say, happiness, beauty, truth, freedom, power, self-abnegation, and so on, suggests that certain values can conflict – the pursuit of happiness may, for example, have to be sacrificed in the name of truth – and it also implies that there is no rational measure to determine which is the better way of life – that of the ascetic or the aesthete. Though value pluralists are primarily concerned with the status of moral facts and not the essence of ethical action, combining Levinas' conception of the ethical relation with MacIntyre's virtue ethics and Berlin's value pluralism leaves us with a moral universe in which (a) ethics originates in inter-personal relationships where an agent looks out for the good of others by responding to their needs; (b) different communities pursue distinct goods or satisfy different human needs; and (c) the criterion for determining the moral worth of an agent's action is the extent to which that action is recognized by others as directed towards the goods her community accepts or the needs it aims to satisfy. With this particular conception of morality in place, we are now in a position to see the precise role power-relations play in moral reality: the good is not reducible to power, but the goods pursued in a given society are a function of power-relations within that society insofar as they require the recognition of a set of others who are willing to sustain them.

[783] The summary that follows is drawn from: Berlin, Isaiah, *Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

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